

THE CEYLON HISTORICAL JOURNAL

VOL. XXV

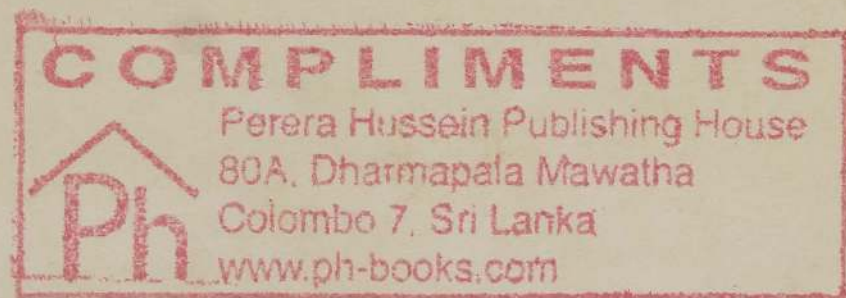
OCTOBER 1978

Nos. 1 — 4

CONTENTS

Minor chronicles & traditional Sinhala historical writings	ANANDA S. KULASURIYA
Agriculture in mediaeval Sri Lanka	W. I. SIRIWEERA
In search of a "Lost Language"	J. B. DISANAYAKA
Early agricultural settlements	N. PUNYASIRI PERERA
The external factor in Sri Lanka's history	SENAKE BANDARANAYAKE
A forgotten aspect of Sinhala-Tamil relations	AMARADASA LIYANAGAMAGE
Dipavamsa and Mahavamsa	C. E. GODAKUMBURA
The vacant 'Throne' and the Buddha statue	W. B. MARCUS FERNANDO
Theory of proportions of figures	C. WIKRAMAGAMAGE
Wooden architecture of Sri Lanka	L. K. KARUNARATNE
Sinhala princes in Lisbon	M. H. GOONATILLEKA
Simon Kat — Translator	KATHARINE SMITH DIEHL
Nineteenth century elites	D. A. KOTELAWELE
Arunachalam and colonial education	SARATHCHANDRA WICKRAMASURIYA
The Colombo-Kandy railway	INDRANI MUNASINGHE
Rice and irrigation in the 19th century	A. C. M. AMEER ALI
Tamil diglossia situation	S. THANANJAYARAJASINGHAM
John de Silva and the nationalist theatre	SARATH AMUNUGAMA

TWENTY FIFTH ANNIVERSARY VOLUME



The Ceylon Historical Journal

Volume Twenty Five

Numbers 1 - 4

Editor

Senake Bandaranayake



Tisara Prakasakayo Ltd

PUBLISHERS • DUTUGEMUNU STREET • DEHIWALA • SRI LANKA

Arch

The Ceylon
Historical Journal

First Printed ... October 1978

Volume Twenty Five

The Ceylon Historical Journal is a non-political review founded with the design of encouraging and facilitating the scientific study of the economic, social, political and religious history, as well as of the literature, arts and sciences, of the past and present peoples of Sri Lanka. The Journal offers a broad hospitality for divergent views and does not identify itself with any one school. Responsibility for opinions expressed in articles published, and for accuracy of statements contained in them, rests solely with the individual authors.

Printed at the
TISARA PRESS

Dutugemunu St., Dehiwala, Sri Lanka.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: TISARA PRESS, DEHIWALA, SRI LANKA

OUR CONTRIBUTORS

- Ananda S. Kulasuriya** Doctiur fr L'Universite (Paris)
Professor of Sinhalese, University
of Sri Lanka, Vidyalandkara Campus,
Kelaniya.
- W. I. Siriweera** Ph.D. (Lond.), Senior Lecturer in
History, University of Sri Lanka,
Peradeniya Campus, Peradeniya.
- J. B. Disanayaka** M.A. (Calif.), Senior Lecturer in
Linguistics, University of Sri Lanka,
Colombo Campus, Colombo.
- N. Punyasiri Perera** Ph.D. (Leeds), Professor of Land
Use Studies, University of Zambia,
Lusaka.
- Senake Bandaranayake** D. Phil. (Oxon.), Senior Lecturer in
Archaeology, University of Sri
Lanka, Vidyalandkara Campus,
Kelaniya.
- Amaradasa Liyanagamage** Ph.D. (Lond.), Professor of History,
University of Sri Lanka, Vidyalandkara
Campus, Kelaniya.
- C. E. Godakumbura** D.Lit. (Lond.), Commissioner of
Archaeology, Department of
Archaeology, Colombo. 1960-1967.
(d. 1977)
- W. B. Marcus Fernando** M.A. (Lond.), Visiting Lecturer in
Archaeology, University of Sri
Lanka, Vidyalandkara Campus,
Kelaniya and **formerly** Assistant
Commissioner of Archaeology, De-
partment of Archaeology, Colombo.

- Chandra Wickramagamage** Ph.D. (Lancaster), Lecturer in Languages and Cultural Studies, University of Sri Lanka, Vidyodaya Campus, Gangodawila.
- L. K. Karunaratne** M.S.L.I.A., Department of Archaeology, Colombo.
- M. H. Goonatilleka** Ph.D. (Cey.), Head, Department of Fine Arts, University of Sri Lanka, Vidyalankara Campus Kelaniya.
- Katharine Smith Diehl** An American research worker attached for some time to the American Institute of Indian Studies, Calcutta.
- D. A. Kotelawela** Ph.D. (Lond.), Senior Lecturer in History, University of Sri Lanka, Vidyalankara Campus, Kelaniya.
- Sarathchandra Wickramasuriya** Ph.D. (Cey.), Senior Lecturer in English, University of Sri Lanka, Peradeniya Campus, Peradeniya.
- Indrani Munasinghe** Ph.D. (Lond.), Lecturer, Department of History, University of Sri Lanka, Colombo Campus, Colombo.
- A. C. L. Ameer Ali** M.Phil. (Lond.), Senior Lecturer in Economics, University of Sri Lanka, Peradeniya Campus, Peradeniya.
- S. Thananjayarajasingham** Ph.D. (Edinburgh), Head, Department of Tamil and Hindu Culture, University of Sri Lanka, Vidyalankara Campus, Kelaniya 1974-1977 (d. 1977).
- Sarath Amunugama** M.A. (Saskatchewan), Secretary, Ministry of State, Colombo.

CONTENTS

The Minor Chronicles and Other Traditional Writings in Sinhalese and Their Historical Value	ANANDA S. KULASURIYA .. 1
Agriculture in Mediaeval Sri Lanka	W. I. SIRIWEERA .. 34
In Search of a "Lost Language" — Some Observations on the Complex Origins of Sinhala	J. B. DISANAYAKA .. 51
Early Agricultural Settlements in Sri Lanka in Relation to Natural Resources	N. PUNYASIRI PERERA .. 58
The External Factor in Sri Lanka's Historical Formation	SENAKE BANDARANAYAKE .. 74
A Forgotten Aspect of the Relations between the Sinhalese and the Tamils	AMARADASA LIYANAGAMAGE .. 95
The Dipavamsa and the Mahavamsa	C.E. GODAKUMBURA .. 143
The Vacant 'Throne' and the Buddha Statue in Sri Lanka	W. B. MARCUS FERNANDO .. 153
Theory of Proportions of Figures in Painting and Sculpture	C. WIKRAMAGAMAGE .. 161
The Wooden Architecture of Sri Lanka	L. K. KARUNARATNE .. 174

Two Sinhala Princes at the Court of Lisbon in Portugal M. H. GOONATILLEKA ..	186
Simon Kat, Translator 1624-1704 KATHARINE SMITH DIEHL ..	193
Nineteenth Century Elites and their Antecedents D. A. KOTELAWELE ..	204
A Study of Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam's Attitudes to Colonial English Education in Sri Lanka SARATHCHANDRA WICKRAMASURIYA ..	213
The Colombo-Kandy Railway INDRANI MUNASINGHE ..	239
Rice and Irrigation in 19th Century Sri Lanka A. C. M. AMEER ALI ..	250
The Tamil Diglossia Situation in Sri Lanka S. THANANJAYARAJASINGHAM ..	275
John de Silva and the Sinhala Nationalist Theatre SARATH AMUNUGAMA ..	285

THE MINOR CHRONICLES AND OTHER TRADITIONAL WRITINGS IN SINHALESE AND THEIR HISTORICAL VALUE

ANANDA S. KULASURIYA

No single branch of documents has received such scant attention from scholars as the minor chronicles and traditional histories in Sinhalese. It is true that over the years their existence has been noted and passing reference made to them. In recent times, as will be pointed out in this paper, even critical editions of some of the latter works have been supplied. But this has been rather the exception than the rule. There are several reasons for this situation. One is the continued reliance of students of history on the classical Pali sources. The unique character of the *Mahavamsa* and its overriding importance has been another. The tendency to regard all Sinhalese writings almost exclusively as derivatives of Pali works has been a third factor which has militated against the use of Sinhalese works. Four, the extremely confused and unsatisfactory state of many of the traditional histories has been a major cause of their neglect. These documents are not readily available and no systematic lists of them have been prepared. And finally, their poor literary quality was undoubtedly a reason which kept the Sinhalese *literati* away from them. But when it is realized that for the study of the medieval history of Sri Lanka the Pali chronicles have a diminishing value whereas the Sinhalese works possess an increasing usefulness, one begins to appreciate why these writings can no longer be treated as they have hitherto been.

It is proposed here to outline the contents of these documents and examine, in somewhat greater detail, the traditional writings. An attempt will also be made to find out what they offer the student of history by way of source material, and to note the problems they raise and their limitations. The paper concludes with some remarks on Sinhalese historiography.

Amongst the classical Pali works, the *Mahavamsa* remains, despite its limitations, the most important single source of information. Its claim to be so regarded for the early period and even for later times is its historical continuity. The Sinhalese works are less ambitious in conception, often less systematic in the collection and presentation of material and, on the whole, less exhaustive than the *Mahavamsa*. A good many of them deal with certain limited topics such as the history of the Bo-Tree or the Tooth-Relic and the traditions relating to them. Others deal with events concerning the social history and folk-lore of the people. Among the documents of a later period are to be found a large number of clumsy and rambling narratives, dealing with miscellaneous topics. Yet all of them provide useful information that is hard to come by in the classical sources. For this reason alone, if for no other, their continued neglect has to be viewed with concern. The time has come when research workers can no longer afford to ignore them.

The earliest extant records, preserved for us in the Pali language, were not the first records made. Their authors themselves mention the fact that they were based on earlier traditions that were preserved in the language of the land (*dipa-bhasa*, *sadesa-bhasa*). Drawing freely from those earlier traditions, the early chroniclers produced, in course of time, historical works in Pali, the most celebrated of which was the *Mahavamsa*. Fairly detailed analyses of these works and evaluations of them as sources of history have been given by scholars¹. Literary

1. Geiger, W., "The Trustworthiness of the Mahavamsa", *Indian Historical Quarterly (IHQ)* VI, (1930); Geiger, W., *The Mahavamsa or the Great Chronicle of Ceylon*. Translated into English (London, 1912. Reprinted 1950). Introd. pp. ix - lxiii; Godakumbura, C. E., "The Culavamsa", *Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society (CBRAS)*, XXXVIII (1949), pp. 123-125; Perera, L. S., "The Sources of Ceylon History", *University of Ceylon, History of Ceylon (UCHC)*, Vol. I, Part I (Colombo, 1959), pp. 46-73; Wickramasinghe, Sirima: *The Age of Parakramabahu I*, Ph.D. Thesis, University of London, 1958, unpublished), Sources; Perera, L. S., "The Pali Chronicle of Ceylon", *Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon*. Edited by Philips, C. H. (London, 1961), pp. 29-43; *Unapurana-sabito-mahavamsa—The Mahavamsa*. Pali text together with some late additions. Edited by Ven. A. P. Buddhadatta Mahathera (Colombo, 2502/1959). pp. v-xvi; Jayawickrama, N. A., "Literary Activity in Pali", *Education in Ceylon. A Centenary Volume*, Part I (Colombo, 1969), ch. vii, pp. 61-73...

works and late historical writings based upon the *Mahavamsa* or its sources have been compiled from very early times. The value of these documents is to be judged by their proximity to the events they deal with; the closer they are to the events they record, the more helpful and dependable they are. These writings constitute the principal sources for the study of the ancient and early medieval periods. But for the late medieval period, the Sinhalese literary and historical works are of greater importance. In the *Pujavaliya* (13th century), for instance, we have a document which brings the historical record up to the fourth decade of the century, whilst providing at the same time a wealth of detail not available in the principal sources.

Some features of the *Mahavamsa* are worth noting in order to understand what it offers by way of source material and to recognize its limitations. In its complete form, it is a chronicle in six distinctive parts which together represent the continuous historical record of twenty five centuries—a remarkable achievement and rare legacy for any nation or country. Part I deals with the early history, chiefly dynastic and ecclesiastical, and ends at ch. 37, v. 50 with the reign of king Mahasena, 360 A.C. It was written by the Elder Mahanama around 500 A.C. Part II continues the story from ch. 37, v. 51 to ch. 79 v. 84. The author who, “according to the Sinhalese tradition” was a monk named Dhammakitti Thero narrates the history of the Island beginning with king Sirimeghavanna up to the reign of king Parakkamabahu I (360 A.C. - 1186 A.C.). Its authorship has been attributed also to Moggollana Thero, author of the *Abhidhanappadipika*². It is quite possible that this portion of the work consisting of forty two chapters was written by more than one hand. Indeed, the suggestion has been made that the first part of this consisting of chapters 37 - 72 up to the reign of king Gajabahu and the latter part consisting of sixteen chapters devoted to the reign of king Parakkamabahu I bear distinctive features³. The third part deals with the period from king Vijayabahu II, the successor of Parakkamabahu I to the end of king Parakkamabahu IV of Kurunagala (circa 1325 A.C.). This part is of unknown authorship. Whoever its author was, he continues the work in the same manner as his predecessor the Elder Dhammakitti who in turn tried to emulate

2. Pannananda Nayaka Thero, Yagirala, *Mahavamsa*, Part III (Gonagala 2474/1935) Introduction, pp. v-vi.

3. See Wickramasinghe, Sirima, *op. cit.* Liyanagamage, A., *The Decline of Polonnaruwa and the Rise of Dambadeniya* (Colombo, 1968), p. 5.

the work of Mahanama Thero. The history of a period of nearly one hundred and fifty years is covered in just eleven chapters, six of which are devoted to the reign of king Parakkamabahu II. The value of this part of the chronicle is much less than the early part. Part IV which takes up the story at ch. 90, v. 103 ends with ch. 100. It was composed by a monk named Tibbotuvave Siddhartha Buddharaksita Sthavira in the 18th century, on the invitation of the reigning king Kirti Sri Rajasinha. Many events of importance have here been left unrecorded, as might be expected, since the work was written long after the period to which the events relate, and the author was more concerned with narrating contemporary events centring round the personality of the ruling monarch. Chapter 101 is the fifth part which brings the story up to the end of the last king of Kandy, Sri Vikrama Rajasinha (1815 A.C.). It was added as a supplement by the venerable Hikkaduwe Siri Sumangala Thero and his colleague Pandita Devarakkita Batuvan-tudave in the 19th century (1877 A.C.). The latter parts of the *Mahavamsa*, especially Parts II, III and IV, have sometimes been referred to as the *Culavamsa*. This use is unwarranted for the work itself is nowhere called so in the body of the text by any of its authors. The term was used to designate the Lesser Dynasty to distinguish it from the Great Dynasty which latter was termed the "Mahavamsa". The sixth and final part covering the British occupation takes up the story at ch. 101, v. 30 and continues to ch. 114, v. 23. This part which has been published as *Mahavamsa, Part III* was composed by the Venerable Yagirala Pannananda Nayaka Thero (1935)⁴. Seven additional chapters intended to supplement the sketchy account contained in Part V which brings the story up to the reign of king Kirti Sri Rajasinha, and consisting of 578 stanzas have been included at the end of the work. These have been composed by the Venerable Harumalgoda Sri Sumangala Thero who did so on the invitation of the Venerable Moragolle Nanobhasatissa Mahathero.

Thus, the *Mahavamsa*, although it possesses an undoubted value as the sole historical work that narrates the principal events from the earliest times to the present century and is held in high esteem as an authentic record of those events, suffers from certain inadequacies. Two of them are (1) it was the work of many hands; the authors were sometimes far removed from the events they purported to record and were consequently not always sufficiently well informed about them. They

4. *op. cit.*

did not also share the same point of view (2) its portions relating to the late medieval period were written down very much later and were based on Sinhalese works written in the intervening period.

The minor chronicles referred to in this article would include at least three categories of writings which, on the basis of their subject-matter, may be set out as follows:—

- (1) Histories of the Sangha and Sasana.
- (2) Religious Writings of Historical Interest.
- (3) Secular Historical Works.

By later writings in Sinhalese, one would understand lesser works of a historical or quasi-historical character, dating from about the 14th century. A few of them may have been composed even earlier but the majority of them appear to have attained their final form during the Kandyan period. A few Sinhalese literary works in verse containing matter of historical interest and a large number of lithic records and charters engraved on copper plates have not been included in this survey. Some of the works may be conveniently included in more than one category especially in both (1) and (2); which goes to prove that the subjects they deal with and the information they contain are of a miscellaneous nature. Many are based on Pali originals. Where they are not directly based on Pali sources, they draw freely from them and are thus indirectly indebted to them.

In the first category may be included the *Pujavaliya* of Mayurapada Sthavira, already mentioned, the *Katikavatas*, the *Nikaya Samgrahaya* and the *Sanga-Sarana*. To the second category belong the *Thupavamsaya*, the *Bodhi Vamsaya* and the *Anagata Vamsaya*, the *Dalada Sirita* and the *Dhatu Vamsaya*, the two Sinhalese versions of the Pali *Hatthavanagollavihara Vamsa* entitled *Elu Attanagalu Vamsaya* and the *Saddharma-Ratnakaraya*. The third category of works where the emphasis lay more on secular events rather than on religious developments would contain, by and large, the *Rajavalis* (lit. "King-Lists"). Besides the *Raja-ratnakaraya* and the different versions of the popular *Rajavaliya*, this includes such minor works as the *Sulu Rajavaliya*, the *Vanni Rajavaliya*, the *Alakesvara Yuddhaya*, the *Sri Lanka Kadaim Pota* (*Siri Lak Kadayim Pota*), the *Kurunagala Vistaraya*, the *Buddharajavaliya*, *Bamba Uppattiya*, *Sulu Pujavaliya*, the *Matale Kadaim Pota*, *Kula Nitiya* and the *Janavamsaya*.

Two modern works dating from the 19th century, *Itihasaya* and the *Simhala Mahavamsaya* may be mentioned as examples of Sinhalese historical writing in the same tradition. The latter work, however, is only a translation of the Pali chronicle.

(1) Histories of Buddhism and the Buddhist Samgha

A typical work of the first category is the *Pujavaliya*⁵ (completed 1266 A.C.). It comprises an account of the offerings made to the Buddha and the acts of piety performed in his name, during the course of his recorded births. The last two chapters of the work (33 and 34) give an account of the origin and growth of the Order in India and its expansion under the patronage of the kings of Sri Lanka. The work has been composed with the special object of recording the services rendered to Buddhism by king Parakramabahu II of Dambadeniya.

Chapter 34 is of special interest. It deals with the careers of Vijayabahu III and Parakramabahu II, both kings of Dambadeniya, who were very likely contemporaries of the author. From the point of view of the present survey, the section dealing with the reign of Parakramabahu II is specially important as it furnishes valuable details, difficult to be found elsewhere. The writer was the head of the monastic college of Vakirigala, a flourishing institution which received the king's patronage. He was evidently quite familiar with the happenings in the Dambadeniya kingdom and there is little doubt that many of the episodes he relates are eye-witness accounts. These have been enriched by details of geography and folk-lore. From it could be gleaned useful information pertaining to contemporary social and cultural conditions. For instance, the author refers to the ordination ceremony *malukam pujava* performed by king Vijayabahu III and another performed by king Parakramabahu II himself at Dastota in the thirty fifth year of his reign; and that the latter lived happily at Jambudroni engaging himself in acts of piety and rejoicing over the fortunes of his sons.

The fact that the author maintained excellent relations with the king, enjoyed his patronage and eventually won his admiration on the completion of the work and also was on good terms with the king's minister Deva Pratiraja, through whom the work was presented to the king, does not detract from its historical value.

5. Ed. Saddhatissa Sthavira, Bentota, Panadura, 1930.

The *Nikaya Samgrahaya*⁶ is a history of the Samgha and the Sasana written by the Venerable Devaraksita Jayabahu Dharmakirti Sangharaja of Gadaladeniya in 1385 A.C. As its other title *Sasanavataraya* indicates, it recounts the principal events in the growth of the Sasana from its inception to the author's day. Greater emphasis is laid on the evils that befell it and its eventual triumph. The work gives a concise account of the different sects and the schisms that occurred within them from time to time, leading to the triumph of the monks of the Mahavihara fraternity over their rivals of the other schools. It may be because the author was more concerned with sectarian disputes rather than the broad outlines of the history of Buddhism in Sri Lanka, that he fails to mention such events as the arrival of the Bo-Tree and the Tooth-Relic. The author pays special attention to the religious work of the Dharmakirtis and their supporters, the kings of Gampola.

The *Sanga Sarana*⁷ is a little work purporting to be an eulogy of the Samgha. It is a collection of tales based on Pali commentaries like the *Manorathapurani* and deals with the lives of the Buddhist brethren. The composition of an unknown author, it has obviously been inspired by the *Butsarana* and the *Daham Sarana*, and was evidently intended to complete the series which described the virtues of the Triple Gem (*Tun Sarana*). Nineteen of the thirty nine stories which the work contains are concerned with the lives of Buddhist saints of early Lanka. The work may be, on literary and stylistic grounds, assigned to the 14th century. It was about that time that Buddhist stories especially those with an indigenous background like some of those to be found in the *Saddharmalamkara* and those connected with important episodes in the history of Buddhism in Lanka narrated in the *Bodhivamsaya* and the histories of other sacred relics, came to be written down anew.

These tales are intended to glorify the virtue of piety. Those depicting the lives of the monks in early days are set against the backdrop of king Kavantissa's reign (circa 2nd century B.C.) when Buddhism was flourishing in the land. They would have been written down by monks of a later day. Some of them, if not all, are bound to have been considerably transformed in the hands of the authors who retold them.

6. Ed. de Silva, S., Mendis Gunasekara, A., Gunawardhana, W. F., 1922. An English translation of the work was published by C. M. Fernando in 1908, sometime after the edition of M. de Z. Wickremasinghe in 1890. There are several later editions of the work. See also Godakumbura, C. E., *Sinhalese Literature*, pp. 122-124.

7. Ed. Tennakone, R. (Colombo, 2498/1954).

Others might have been their own creations for these tales are presented with the object of extolling the sanctity and piety of the members of the Order and instilling faith in the minds of a simple rural audience rather than offering truthful biographical sketches of historical figures. To the extent that they afford glimpses into the life of monks in early times, the relations that subsisted between them and the simple-minded peasantry who were their benefactors and of the attitudes of the authors themselves to events of a bygone age, they are not without value.

We have in Sinhalese a class of works known as *Katikavat*⁸ (pl. "Constitutions"). They usually take the form of codes of conduct for monks, and hence, by their very nature, throw light on early monastic life and discipline as well as the relations between the king and the *Samgha*. These codes are of two kinds. One set consists of the codes drawn up to serve the needs of individual monastic establishments while the other was concerned with the activities of the entire monastic community. The first codes so drawn up were inscribed on stone slabs and set up at the monasteries whose interests they were intended to serve. One such is the Slab Inscription of Kasyapa V (914 - 923 A.C.) at Anuradhapura. The earliest instance of the second category we come across is the Galvihara Slab Inscription of Parakramabahu I (1153 - 1186 A.C.) at Polonnaruva. An earlier instance of the latter category is referred to in the reign of king Voharaka Tissa which evidently has not survived.

A *Katikavata* is, in fact, a code of conduct giving rules agreed upon by a synod of monks for the guidance of the brethren. Such an agreement would contain a record of the proceedings of the synod. The minutes of those meetings were drawn up and recorded by the chief monk who usually presided at the convocation. The king, as head of state, was jointly responsible with the head of the Order of monks in summoning such a meeting. Such monastic records are generally introduced by a historical sketch of the Order from the Buddha's time, its establishment in Sri Lanka, the vicissitudes through which it has gone and the immediate incidents that led to the summoning of each convention. The agreed rules were finally written down in a terse, legalistic language.

Of the available *katikavat*, the one promulgated in the reign of king Parakramabahu II (1236 - 1270 A.C.) by the Venerable Medham-

8. Suraweera, A. V., *Sinhala Katikavat ha Bhiksu Samajaya* (Colombo, 1971); *Katikavat Sangara*. Ed. Jayatilaka, D. B. (Colombo, 1922). See also Godakumbura, C. E., *op. cit.*, pp. 20-22.

kara Mahasami, head of the forest-dwelling monks and his Council of Elders, is a document of historical value. This record, the celebrated *Dambadeni Katikavata* follows the tradition of the *Maha Parakramabahu Katikavata*, in style and procedure. It states that in addition to the latter, it was guided by another code drawn up in the reign of Vathimi Vijayabahu (Vijayabahu III) by Samgharaksita Mahasvami. The *katikavata* contains a fairly exhaustive list of monastic rules and claims to include the contents of an earlier code, very probably those of the *Maha-Parakramabahu Katikavata*. Two centuries later (i.e. in the 15th century), a new *katikavata* was drawn up by king Sri Parakramabahu VI of Kotte in the thirty fifth year of his reign.

(2) Religious Writings of Historical Interest

The second category of works comprises mostly histories of sacred monuments and relics. One of them, the *Elu Attanagalu Vamsaya* is more a biography of King Siri-Sangabo than a history of the monastery which it claims to be. Whether these works are described as religious writings of historical interest or historical writings of religious interest, their central feature is that they are a blend of both religious and secular history with details of biography and hagiography thrown into the bargain. The excesses and exaggerations resulting from the author's religious fervour could of course be discounted and separated from the hard core of historical fact.

The earliest extant work of this sort, though not necessarily the first to have been composed, is the *Thupavamsaya*⁹ or "History of the Maha Thupa", written by an author named Sakalavidyacakravarti Parakrama Pandita. The work may have been composed in the late 12th or early 13th century A.C. It is similar to the Pali *Mahathupavamsa* of Vacissara Thero (12th century) written not very much earlier. The author of the Pali work refers (stanzas 2 - 3) to the existence of two versions of the History of the Maha Thupa, one in Sinhalese and the other in Pali. Both of them were defective in their own way, hence the new version. The work is primarily concerned with the history of the Great Stupa built by King Duttha Gamani Abhaya but, like other such works, it deals, in its introductory section, with the history of the other *Stupas* as well. In this respect it shares a feature with other histories of sacred objects, such as the Histories of the Bo Tree, the Tooth Relic,

9. Ed. Dhammaratana Thero, Buddegama (Paliyagoda, 1896); Godakumbura, *op. cit.* pp. 107-110.

the Frontal Bone Relic etc., which in addition to the particular relic whose history each of them records, deals with the story of other relics as well.

It is not possible to say definitely if the *Thupavamsaya* was composed before the Pali version of Vacissara Thero or after. It is extremely unlikely that this was the Sinhalese version referred to by the Pali writer. The language of the Sinhalese work does not warrant such an assumption. On the other hand, it is quite possible that the Sinhalese author, like Vacissara Thero, drew from a common source or sources. If this were the case, a plausible conclusion would be that the works are contemporaneous.

In general, the *Thupavamsaya* is more detailed than the Pali work. The additions often take the form of literary embellishments. The author shows a particular fondness for an appropriate turn of phrase and a diction captivating to the ear—both features which tend to reinforce the argument that the practice of reciting aloud the Story of the Maha Thupa was still in vogue.¹⁰ The design of the work and the arrangement of the material also point to the fact that the author was steering an independent course.

By far the greater part of the work thus pertains to a period anterior to the writer's own. If the work in its present form is taken to have been completed about the end of the 12th century or the beginning of the 13th, then some of the details introduced by the author may be taken as being applicable to the author's time.

One of the sacred objects held in deep veneration by the people of this island is the Bo Tree. Quite early in the history of Buddhism, the Sacred sapling was planted in Anuradhapura. The Elder Upatissa wrote the *Mahabodhivamsa* in Pali in the 10th century A.C., drawing inspiration and material from a *Mahabodhivamsa atthakatha*. This celebrated work, a classic in Pali prose, was followed by a glossary (*gatapadaya*) in Sinhalese and a sub-commentary (*tika*) in Pali. Not long afterwards Gurulugomi wrote his *Dharma Pradipikava*, "Mirror of the Dhamma", which too was intended to expound in greater detail certain matters referred to in the Pali work. These works refer to an earlier Sinhalese work on the subject from which those authors evidently drew.

10. *Epigraphia Zeylanica*, Vol. IV, No. 33, pp. 252 ff.

The *Bodhi Vamsaya*¹¹ (also known as *Simhala Bodhivamsaya*, *Elu Bodhivamsaya*) is a Sinhalese translation of the Pali classic of Upatissa Thero, by the scholar-monk Vilgammula Samgharaja (14th century A.C.). It contains everything of importance in the Pali work and some information that is new. The author had at his disposal not only the Pali work but the later Sinhalese glossary, the more detailed exposition of Gurulugomi and the Pali sub-commentary.

The *Anagatavamsaya*¹² is another work of the same author. Unlike the *Bodhivamsaya* however, it does not deal with a historical object or historical personage but is an account of the "Life of the Buddha Maitreya", the Buddha to be. The learned editor of the Sinhalese work has concluded that the work is based on the Pali *Anagatavamsa* and its commentary entitled *Samanta-bhaddika*. Its historical importance lies in the consideration that it is the first work entirely devoted to the life of an apocalyptic character. The life of the Buddha Maitreya had become popular since the days of the *Pujavaliya*. The growth and spread of this concept would be historically and culturally interesting as a development in popular religion. It would be of interest to ascertain if this had any relation to the evolution of the idea of individuals aspiring to become a Buddha—a development that had gained popularity in Mahayana Buddhism.

Next in importance to the Histories of the Bo Tree are the Chronicles of the Tooth Relic. During the medieval period and after the Tooth Relic looms large in the scheme of things, doubtless because by that time it had become a symbol of sovereignty. This, combined with the fact that it was a movable relic and one which every ruling king was in duty bound to protect from all manner of hostile agencies, gave it a special political and social significance. Kingship began to be associated with the custodianship of the sacred object. And during those troubled times, one witnesses the spectacle of rival claimants to the throne striving to gain possession of it. Several times in the course of the island's history, it had been sought by foreign invaders who sometimes succeeded in removing it. But always through political diplomacy or military expedition, it was retrieved and restored. In times of internal crisis it was removed to a safe place where it could be sheltered from

11. Ed. Dhammaratana Sthavira, Baddegama Kirti Sri, Valigama 2471/1929.

12. Ed. Vataddara Medhananda Thero, *Metē Budu Sirita nam vu Anagata Vamsaya* (Jinalamkara Press, 2478/1934).

enemy attacks. In the eyes of the people, it was not merely an object of religious veneration but a national treasure that played an important part in their social and cultural life.

Two works dealing with the story of the Tooth Relic appear in the 14th century A.C. The first is the *Dalada Sirita*¹³ and the other the *Dalada Pujavaliya*.¹⁴ The former gives in its seventh and concluding chapter the rites (*sirit*) to be observed at the ritual of the Tooth Relic. Its six preceding chapters, recounting the history of the relics and especially of the Tooth Relic in India, its introduction to the Island in the reign of King Kit Siri Mevan (Kitti Siri Meghavanna), the services rendered and protection afforded to it by Sinhalese kings from the time it was first introduced here until the reign of King Parakramabahu IV of Kurunagala during whose reign and under whose patronage probably, it was written, are intended to be an introduction to the rites themselves. (It may be worthwhile mentioning here that the Tooth Relic is always referred to along with the Alms Bowl Relic, at least up to the end of this period). If the title of the work is an indication of its nature and contents, one may reasonably infer that it is both a history of the Tooth Relic and an account of the rites to be observed in its worship. The word *sirita* means both "life history", "life story" and "rite". The *Dalada Pujavaliya* deals with the same theme and contains the same subject matter, with the difference that its author lays somewhat more emphasis in the acts of piety performed in its honour.

Both works draw from the Pali poem, *Dathavamsa* of the Elder Dharmakirti and there is no attempt to mask the derivation. Though containing much traditional material both works are useful as historical sources, especially their final chapters. The last chapter of the first, besides furnishing valuable details of the ritual procedure that was followed, mentions the musical instruments used in the performance of the rites, the different types of offerings made in honour of the Relic, the role of the king, his retinue and administrative officers, the role of the Samgha and the duties of a host of other officials connected with the ritual. The *Dalada Pujavaliya* refers to the construction of irrigation works and the improvement of agriculture by the king. Some of this information tends to confirm the accounts in other sources, whereas in

13. Ed. Sorata Nayaka Thero, Valivitiye (Colombo, 2499/1955).

14. Ed. Jotipala Sthavira, G. and Pannanasekhara Sthavira, K. (Horana, 2498/1954.)

other instances, it differs in detail. For instance, the list of kings given in chapter 6 of the former work follows the *Pujavaliya*, and the rules to be observed at the ritual appearing in chapter 7 which were set down at the instance of King Parakramabahu himself, are entirely new, not appearing in the principal source, the *Dathuwamsa*. Likewise, it is mentioned in the other work that King Parakramabahu II “in order to ensure the continuity of learning, provided employment to Sanskrit scholars and scholars proficient in medicine, Sinhalese and Pali, and entrusted each one of them with ten people”.¹⁵ This, as well as the reference to the “gem-set drum” (*mini beraya*) for the Tooth Relic and the Alms Bowl Relic which are said to have been removed to the Soli (Cola) Country along with the remaining relics, do not occur in any other work.

The *Dhatuwamsaya*¹⁶ is another work which like the *Thupavamsaya*, *Bodhivamsaya*, *Anagatavamsaya* and *Dalada Sirita* was translated into Sinhalese from a Pali original which in turn had been based on a Sinhalese source. It was meant to be an account of the Buddha’s Frontal Bone Relic (*nalatadhatu*) and is the work of a Thero named Kakusanda (Pali Kakusandha). The author, about whom nothing more than the name is known, came probably from somewhere in Ruhuna because he displays an intimate knowledge of the region and the traditions connected with it.

As in the case of other works dealing with the history of the Relics, this too contains an introductory account of the Relics in general with a life of the Buddha. The account, however, is soon narrowed down to a description of the Relics that were enshrined in the Ruhunu country, particularly the Frontal Bone Relic. Historically interesting are the stories of the Ruhunu rulers, its chieftains and *theros*. Much of the information contained therein relates to an epoch anterior to the one under discussion, being confined to the time of King Kavan Tissa. It was during

15. එසේම ශාස්ත්‍රය පැවැත්න මැනවයි සංස්කෘත දන්තා පණ්ඩිතවරුන්ටද වෛද්‍ය ශාස්ත්‍රයද එ මගද දන්තා පණ්ඩිතවරුන්ට ද වෘත්ති සලස්වා දූශ දූශ දෙනා බැගින් පාවා දී ශාස්ත්‍රාභාසය කරවා *Ibid.*, p. 50. If the variant reading දුසිදස දෙදෙනා බැගින් පාවාදී be adopted, it would mean, “handed over to each one of them two male and two female servants”. It is not clear from the context whether each scholar was given ten people in order to serve them or to be trained under them. If the first reading “entrusted each one of them with ten people” here adopted, is taken as correct, it could be construed to mean that they were handed over to the scholars to be trained, although the other interpretation that they were given over as servants cannot be completely ruled out. The latter reading, however, makes it clear that the males and females were given as servants.

16. Ed. Sri Sumedhamkara Sthavira, Dambagasare, 3rd edition (Colombo, 1930) Godakumbura, *op. cit.*, pp. 116-118.

that king's reign that the Relic was enshrined in the island. Godakumbura has suggested¹⁷ that those stories which do not occur in the *Mahavamsa*, supply evidence of the existence of a Chronicle of the Ruhuna Country which may have been called the *Robanavamsa*, which is no longer extant. Since there was no large monastery in Ruhuna to keep such a chronicle alive, it might have died a natural death. The stories are of value as recording and preserving the traditions of Ruhuna.

The Relic was to be enshrined in Seruvila, in the north-east of Sri Lanka. It is said that Sumana, the Naga King who accompanied the Buddha on his visit to the Island was appointed custodian of the site by the master. There he was joined by his mother Indaka Manavika and her retinue of Naga maidens. The book thus deals with the history of the *stupa* at Seruvila where the Relic was enshrined, and the other episodes are ancillary to the main theme.

From the beginning the Relic was connected with Ruhuna. It was included in the share of the Malla kings at the time the sacred relics were apportioned. It had been brought to the Island by the time of King Mahanaga, who had been appointed ruler of Magama by his brother, King Devanampiya Tissa. Having seen the Relic and hearing of the prophecy said to have been made by the Buddha himself that the Relic was to be enshrined at Seruvila by a ruler of Magama, the king made offerings to it. The practice was continued by his descendants to the time of King Gothabhaya. There follows an account of King Kavan Tissa who also came to hear of the prophecy and built the *stupa* at Seruvila. The central part of the work is the construction of the *stupa* of which the author gives a graphic description, reminiscent of a similar account in the *Thupavamsaya*.

In its present form, the work may be assigned to the 14th century A.C., if not earlier. It contains material, as is evident from the remarks made above, belonging to a much earlier period. Certain passages in the work suggest that it may have been written in the Dambadeniya Period (13th century A.C.). It could also be that it was completed in its present form in about the 14th century with earlier portions having been incorporated into it. It falls in line with the chronicles of sacred objects which came to be written in the 14th century.

17. *loc. cit.*

The history of Attanagalla is narrated in a Sinhalese chronicle, the *Attanagaluwamsaya* of which two independent versions exist¹⁸. The first was composed in 1382 A.C., the other shortly afterwards. The story of the monastery and the life of the revered king Siri Sangabo (Pali Siri Samghabodhi) was written in Pali by Vedeha Thero in the 13th century. The Sinhalese work which is described as a *Sanne* (verbal paraphrase) of the Pali original is in reality more than a mere literal translation. It contains details which throw interesting sidelights on some aspects of the social order of the time, when the work was composed. Its author is Satrusimha Kunjara, a contemporary of Alagak-konara and Arthanayaka, ministers of King Bhuvanekabahu V of Gampola. The work may have been a composition of the Dharmakirti Fraternity whose patron the king was.

It is not known as to who wrote the other work, but it was copied by a pupil of Vidagama Maitreya Sthavira in the 15th century. The work was probably composed by a scholar of the same fraternity. It is referred to as the Vidagama rescension in order to distinguish it from the earlier one. The subject-matter and arrangement of material are identical. There are minor variations and some additional details as, for instance, those connected with the episode of the removal of the Tooth Relic to Kotmale.

The last important work of this class is the *Saddharma Ratnakaraya*¹⁹. Its title means "Gem-mine of the Good Doctrine" and it is basically a religious work. It was completed in 1417 A.C. by Vimalakirti Sthavira who belonged to the Dharmakirti Fraternity and who bore the title "Dhammadinnacariya". The work has been expressly designed to be the compendium of Buddhist doctrine for the period, falling in line with earlier works of the same tradition. Its chief source of information is the *Sara Samgaha*. However, it draws freely from such Pali poems as Vanaratana Medhamkara Thero's *Jinacarita*, Vedeha Thero's *Samantakuta-vannana* as well as the *Jinabodhavali*, *Saddharmalankaraya* and *Nikaya Samgrahaya* of Dharmakirti Sthavira. The invitation to compose the work came from a monk named Vikramabahu Mahasthavira, probably the Elder of the monastery by that name and a lay devotee named Virasundara Kumara.

18. (1) Ed. Cumaratunga, M., *Elu Attanagalu Vamsa Vivaranaya* (Colombo, 2466 B.E.); (2) Ed. Tennakone, R., *Elu Attanagalu Vamsaya* (Vidagama) Godakumbura, *op. cit.*, pp. 121-122.

19. Ed. Dharmakirti, K. L. (Colombo 2456/1912); Godakumbura, *op. cit.*, pp. 94-97.

This large work consisting of 36 chapters contains two, the twelfth and the thirteenth, which may be historically useful. Chapter twelve deals with the miraculous powers of the Teaching and carries an account of the First Convocation for the recital of the Scriptures, based on the *Nikaya Samgrahaya*. The history of the *sasana* is brought up to the time of the writing of the work, and the last part of the chapter is devoted to a narration of the acts of piety of King Parakramabahu VI. Chapter 13 deals with the history of the construction of the early *caityas* and *dagabas*. An account is given of the places hallowed by the Buddha's visit to the island. It contains details taken from the *Samantakuta-vannana*. Stories of the Bo Tree and the Mahathupa are next given and these are followed by a description of the *stupas* built up to the time of King Saddhatissa. The final chapter (36) gives details of the Dharmakirti Fraternity of *Gadaladeniya*.

(3) Secular Historical Works

Purely secular historical works in Sinhalese are of comparatively late origin. The earliest of them is perhaps the *Dambadeni Asna*²⁰, if the *Kandavuru Sirita*,²¹ a brief account of the daily routine of a king, be excluded. It is a short historical sketch of the life and doings of King Parakramabahu of Dambadeniya, written in the form of an eulogy on the king and relates the latter's accession to the throne, his war with the Javaka Candrabhanu, the king's victory and the acts of piety he performed thereafter in honour of the Tooth Relic. The title of the work may be rendered as "Dambadeniya Story", but as the introductory sentence states, it is rather a story "to be heard with religious faith by all pious and intelligent people of Lanka including kings and courtiers" than an account to be merely read. In accordance with this exhortation, the work has been composed in a sonorous diction which bears traces of the rhythmic prose style characteristic of some of the writings of the early 14th century.

Though only a short piece of writing, it contains interesting historical and linguistic material. The lists of the Dambadeniya flora, its arts and crafts, weapons, forms of dress and musical instruments have much that is yet to be explained.

20. Ed. Ranasinha, D. D. (1928); Godakumbura, *op. cit.*, pp. 110-111.

21. Jayatilaka, D. B., *Simhala Sathitya Lipi*. Ed. Lanerolle, J. Imp. Colombo 1965 pp. 67-70.

This eulogy has to be distinguished from secular historical works of a more general character. The latter which include some quasi-historical works too, consist of popular writings in prose, often interspersed with verse, dealing with a variety of subjects such as the stories and traditions of villages, townships, districts and kingdoms. They are known by various names such as *Kadayim Pot* ("Boundary Books"), *Vitti Pot* ("Books of Incidents") and *Vistara* (Descriptions)²²; they are not clearly differentiated in subject-matter, one from another. They include stories and traditions current in the 14th century, but some of them probably dating from an earlier period. To a later period belong two other classes of works preserving similar traditional matter, though dealing primarily with more specific aspects such as land-holdings, family histories and genealogies. They are *Lekam Miti* (Land Registers) *Bandaravali* (Bandara Genealogies) and *Vadulu* or *Nidahan Vadulu* ('Repositories'). They are invaluable storehouses of folk-lore and were, until some decades ago, preserved as heirlooms in village homes in certain parts of the country. Such works are now increasingly harder to come by. Still, however, they are available in the districts of Uva, Bintanna, Matale, Nuvarakalaviya, Tamankaduva, Hat Korale, Sabaragamuva and Giruva Pattuva.

The *Kadayim*, *Vitti* and *Vistara* type of composition appears to have been inspired by similar motives—the compilation of historical and topographical material on an islandwide or territorial basis. C. E. Godakumbura has drawn attention to the existence of several different manuscripts of such accounts of the whole island which have been preserved under the name *Lankavistaraya*²³. They describe the geography and legendary history of the different kingdoms, provinces and districts of Sri Lanka, often including details of their territorial limits. They demonstrate also that, to the Sinhalese compilers, history and geography were inseparable disciplines.

Of the secular historical works proper, two chronicles—or more precisely a single chronicle and a group of writings—stand out prominently. They are the *Raja-ratnakaraya* and the different *Rajavali*²⁴.

22. Ed. Marambe, A. S. W., *Tri Sinhale Kadaim saba Vitti*, 1926, ; de Silva, W. A., "Sinhalese Vitti and Kadaimpot", *CBRAS*, Vol. XXX, No. 80 (1927), pp. 303-325; *Catalogue of Palm Leaf Manuscripts in the Library of the Colombo Museum*, Vol. I (1938), pp. 283 ff., 315-316, 381-385; Godakumbura, , *SL.*, pp. 132-134; de Silva, Sri Charles, ed. *Siri Lak Kadayim Pota* (1961).

23. "Historical Writing in Sinhalese" in Philips, C. H. Ed. *Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon* (London, 1961), pp. 72-86.

24. See Godakumbura, *SL.*, pp. 127 ff.

The *Rajaratnakaraya*²⁵, though a relatively small work, may be said to belong to a different tradition in that it is more in line with the historical eulogies than with those works deriving from the popular traditions, such as *Kadayim*, *Vitti* and *Vistara*. It centres on the personality of King Viravikrama of Kandy who came to the throne in 2085 B.E. i.e. 1542 C.E. It was written in that year by Valgampaya Mahathera, head of the Abhayaraja Pirivena and is thus the earliest of these works. Its primary concern is to narrate the story of the king and his family, the Mehenavaravamsa. The first part of the work is a historical sketch from King Vijaya to Bhuvanekabahu of Kotte. Quotations from such works as the *Mahavamsa*, *Dathavamsa*, *Mahabodhivamsa*, *Rasavabini*, *Dharma-pradipikava* and *Nikaya Samgrahaya* show the author's indebtedness to earlier sources. Although the work has been edited twice, once in the last quarter of the 19th century and again in the first half of the present and was translated into English too, the text is still in need of a critical edition.²⁶

It is quite possible that some of the *Vitti Pot* were later elaborated and amplified from other popular sources and made into more detailed histories, out of which grew that class of chronicles known as the *Rajavali*. To put it in another way, the *Rajavali* derived from the popular histories drawing copiously from them. Certainly from the linguistic and stylistic point of view, they seem to have been more influenced by the popular writings than by those of the learned authors. They do not, however, appear to have totally ignored the latter works. Some manuscripts of *Vitti Pot* have been alternatively styled *Rajavaliya*. One of the better known versions of the *Rajavaliya* is the *Vanni Rajavaliya* which might have originated from the Vanni Hatpattuva in the present Kurunagala district. The title of the work, like other similar ones e.g. *Kurunagala Vistaraya*, *Yapanuvara Vistaraya*, betrays the provenance of such writings as well as the approximate period of their composition. They date from about the 14th and 15th centuries. A story which occurs in nearly all the manuscripts of these texts is that of the Malala (or Male) princes, who, according to legend, came to this island from South India (Andhra-desa) to perform occult ceremonies in order to cure King Panduvasa. Parakramapura (or Nuvarakale) in this district is itself

25. Ed. Saddhananda Terunvahanse, W. (1887), Tissera, R. N. (1929).

26. Such an edition has been made and recently submitted and accepted as a dissertation for the M.A. Degree of the University of Sri Lanka (Vidyalandara Campus), Amarakoon, D. P., *Rajaratnakaraya*, 1975 (unpublished).

associated with the same king. The Malala princes are said to have settled down in Hat Korale and one of the motives for writing the *Vitti Pot* and the *Rajavali* may have been, as Godakumbura suggests, to record the tradition concerning this community, which may have held an important position in society in the province, at the time.²⁷ Other provincial or district versions of the *Rajavaliya* exist such as the *Harispattu Rajavaliya*, *Vijitavalle Rajavaliya* etc. The colophon of some of these texts shows that they were written for some important families in the district and have come down as family heirlooms.

The *Rajavali* which were originally histories of provinces or districts, developed into histories of the whole island. Such compositions were known as *Maha Rajavali* and they were again abridged into *Rajavali*. When one refers to the *Rajavaliya* as a text, it should be clearly understood that there is no definite single work by that name, but several works or different rescensions of a text.

The traditions recorded in these works may have been first put to writing in about the 14th century. Since the texts were primarily concerned with popular traditions, the copyists who ultimately were responsible for their transmission attached greater importance to the stories than to the language in which they were couched. This explains the differences in language and style as well as the additions and omissions that are to be observed in different versions of the same episode.

Some *Rajavali* manuscripts are preceded by versions of the *Bambappattiya* which contains mainly a legendary account of the origin of the universe. We shall have to refer to this type of work again when we deal with the Sinhalese historians' ideas of the origin of the world, man and society and so forth.

The *Rajavali* are histories of the lineage of kings. Naturally, the origin of kingship in the world was a subject that came within the purview of our chroniclers. They deal with the origin of kingship and the kings of Sri Lanka whose origins they trace from the first king of men, Mahasammata. The *Rajavali* chroniclers may have taken the outline of this story from the *Mahavamsa*, but they add much interesting detail thus filling up its bare bones with flesh and blood, as it were. The origin of the Sakyas, the legend of Sinhabahu and the founding of the Sinhalese race, the story of King Panduvasudeva and the ceremonies

27. "Historical Writing in Sinhalese" in Philips, C. H. (Ed.) *Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon*, pp. 72-86.

performed for the cure of his illness and the cult of the goddess Pattini are some of the topics dealt with before a summary of the reigns of the kings of Sri Lanka is taken up.

The summary of the reigns of kings given in these texts does not entirely follow the *Mahavamsa*. Wickremasinghe says that the text he consulted was based on the *Pujavaliya* (*Catalogue of Manuscripts*, p. 76). In a typical text,²⁸ a king named Ganatissa is included between Pandukabhaya and Mutatissa (Mutasiva). Such a name appears neither in the *Mahavamsa* nor in the *Pujavaliya*, but appears in the *Mahabodhivamsa*. With regard to the stories of King Dutthagamani and his warriors, the *Rajavali* accounts appear to agree with the versions in the *Thupavamsaya*. These features suggest that these chroniclers were not indebted to any single source for their information but had several independent sources at their disposal.

In the *Rajavaliya* edited by B. Gunasekara (1911), there is a gap of about 100 years in the island's history, from the reign of King Parakramabahu II of Dambadeniya to that of Vijayabahu V who, according to these sources, was removed to China by a stratagem.

From the 15th century, the history of the Kotte, Sitavaka and Kandy kings and their dealings with the Portuguese and the Dutch, (and in some versions e.g. Or. 6606 (73) with the British as well), are given with the same measure of detail. These accounts are based on contemporary records.

Let us now turn to another class of works of which the *Rajavali* are, in a sense, derivatives and to which they are related both in content and form—the *Kadayim Pot*. These works, as their title indicates, set out the main boundaries (*kadayim*) of the regions or territories of the island. A distinctive feature of these works is that, whilst giving the boundaries of regions, they mention the reasons for such a division and sometimes provide etymologies of place-names. In recording such details, the authors furnish the student with tales, anecdotes and episodes drawn from folk-lore. Thus, their rich and varied contents provide a veritable mine of information of historical, geographical and topographical material. Besides, these books provide details of lands and land tenure, cultivated fields, their sowing extent and produce. They give also traditional accounts of royal personages, local chiefs and others who have rendered distinguished services in the capacity of ministers,

28. Ed. Pemananda Thero, Vatuvalle (1926).

warriors, scholars or citizens. They provide also records of wars and invasions in addition to giving accounts of the construction of temples, reservoirs, canals, wells, bridges and roads as well as the founding of towns and cities. They give the traditional accounts of the origin of the universe, the evolution of the earth and its inhabitants, the division of the earth's surface, its oceans and rivers, mountains and lakes. Legendary accounts of the origin of kingship and the careers of kings from pre-historic times to the incidents connected with the the colonization of the island are also included. This type of information is generally intended to serve as a historical background to an account of the kings who ruled the island. They go on to trace the origins of these divisions and describe their physical features and the character of the people who occupied them.

In 1927, de Silva observed that a large number of these manuscripts that were "preserved by individuals and families as heirlooms of their former prosperity and the land and status held by their ancestors" had already disappeared "having been secured by collectors who have taken them away from the island. A small number is still in the possession of the villagers. Some of the books have been collected and preserved in the Colombo Museum Library and a few have been recently printed by private collectors. The books are written in colloquial Sinhalese".²⁹

That was, by no means, the first reference to be made to this class of works. More than forty years before, in 1885, L. de Zoysa³⁰ called attention to them. Therein he mentions three works: *Kurunagala Vistaraya*, *Mayarata Kadaim Pota* and *Tissava Kadaim Pota*. The first of these is fairly well known to students of history and literature; it was translated into English by Modder who gave also a description of its contents.³¹ The second is not generally known to exist as an independent work. According to de Zoysa's entry, it is a palm-leaf manuscript of 21 leaves, 15 in. long, 6 ll. to a page, and treats of the 28 *ratas* or districts into which the Maya Rata was divided and of their boundaries, cities, towns etc. It has been copied from a manuscript discovered in the Sat-korale. The *Tissava Kadaim Pota* is a manuscript of 48 palm-leaves, 12 in. long, 6 ll. to a page. It deals with the divisions of the island into

29. *loc. cit.*

30. *A Catalogue of Pali, Sinhalese and Sanskrit Manuscripts in the Temple Libraries of Ceylon* (Colombo, 1885).

31. "Kurunegala Vistaraya, with Notes on Kurunegala, Ancient and Modern", *CBRAS*, XII, No. 44, 1893, pp. 35-57.

3 provinces. It is deposited in the Tissava monastery, from which, in all probability, it derived its name, and in the Government Oriental Library, Colombo.

D. M. de Z. Wickremasinghe³² mentions (1900) a work called *Bamba Uppatti* or *Jagadananda Kathavastuva*, *Vittipota* and *Buddharajavaliya*. In another entry (76) he includes *Matale Disave Kadayin*, *Sirilaka Kadayuru* and *Kadayim Pota*, *Kurunagala Vistaraya*, *Yapanuwara Vistaraya* and *Jana-vamsaya* which last is noted by de Zoysa as well.

More recently these texts have received greater scholarly attention. Besides the edition of one of the most popular of them under the title of *Sirilak Kadayim Pota* with a useful introduction and other relevant material such as *Kadayim* verses in 1961, referred to earlier, a critical survey of the available manuscripts was made in 1974.³³ Here for the first time, an attempt has been made to give critical editions of 5 texts viz. *Sri Lankadvipaye Kadaimpota*, *Trisimbale Kadaimpota*, *Lakvidiya*, *Matale Kadaimpota* and *Dambadiva Alankaraya*. In addition, the author gives a representative selection of *Kadayim* verses. In the preparation of the first of these texts, 11 manuscripts and the printed text of A. J. W. Marambe have been consulted; for the second, 4 manuscripts and the above-mentioned printed text have been utilized, while the third is based on Ms. Or. 6606 (49) of the Nevill collection of manuscripts in the British Museum. Though Nevill himself does not refer to the manuscript by the present name, the title has been adopted on a suggestion of H. W. Codrington. In the catalogue of the manuscripts of the Temple Libraries of Sri Lanka, however, this text is entered under the title of *Lakdiva Vidhi*, *Lakdiva Vidhiya*.³⁴ In the text of the Nevill collection manuscripts utilized in the present work, it occurs at the end of a work entitled *Kula Nitiya*, evidently as a part of it—a fact which sheds light on the miscellaneous matter contained in these texts. For the *Matale Kadaimpota*, 6 manuscripts have been consulted while the last is based on Ms. No. 277581 (6) of the collection of manuscripts at the library of the University of Sri Lanka, Peradeniya Campus.

32. *Catalogue of the Sinhalese Manuscripts in the British Museum* (London, 1900).

33. Abeyawardana, H. A. P., *Kadaimpot Vimarsanaya*, a thesis submitted and accepted for the Ph.D. Degree of the University of Sri Lanka, Peradeniya Campus, 1974 (unpublished).

34. Somadasa, K. D., *Lankave Puskola Pot Namavaliya* (Colombo 1959, 1964, 2 parts). Part 1, p. 82. Part 2, p. 63.

Indispensable as these writings are to the student of history and culture, the present state of the manuscripts and printed versions render them very nearly unserviceable. The student who seeks to utilize them is confronted with many problems. In the first place, the miscellaneous matter contained therein is so disorganized and confused that great effort, care and caution are required before one could put some kind of order into this tangled mess. The first step in this direction has been taken in providing the bases of some important texts. The information contained in one version will have to be examined in relation to that of the others. Scribal errors, distortions and interpolations are not rare. The works are written in colloquial Sinhalese prose by unskilled writers who show scant respect for the norms of grammar, syntax and orthography. Being devoid of literary merit, they have generally not been taken seriously or valued by the Sinhalese *literati*. Secondly, the works are anonymous. The *Sri Lankadvipaye Kadaimpota*, referred to above, has been, though only by popular tradition, ascribed to Giratalane Unnanse. It is virtually impossible to identify the individual author or authors of a particular text. Judging by the nature of the texts, one could reasonably suppose that each of them was written by more than one single individual. It is likely that some at least of these texts grew in course of time and thus several hands were responsible for the compilation of a single text. It is not unlikely that the writers or copyists, while adding new material, either deliberately or unwittingly omitted, altered, modified and/or interpolated certain details. In these circumstances, the matter of datation becomes a serious problem. In respect of the period of composition, the texts range from about the 14th to the 19th century. A good many of them appear to have acquired their present form during the Kandyan period although the information they contain may be valid for an anterior epoch. A content-analysis of the writings together with an examination of literary and linguistic features as well as orthography will be a pre-requisite for their correct datation. The authenticity of the texts and the reliability of the information too remain to be investigated.

With these considerations in mind, the student would find that an analysis of a typical text will throw into sharper focus the nature and scope of these works. We have selected for this purpose one of the texts entitled *Buddharajavaliya* of anonymous authorship.

4. *Buddharajavaliya*³⁵

The present text is based on two manuscripts of Siri Sunanda Tripitaka Vidyalaya, Mirissa, two of Jinaraja Pirivena, Pottevela and the manuscripts of the National Museum, Colombo. The editor points out that all of them were not free of lacunae. While certain leaves were missing, others had been wrongly placed. The missing portions have been restored after consulting other manuscripts of the texts, *Rajavali* and *Vannirajavaliya* found in the Colombo museum. Certain episodes such as the acceptance of a secret doctrine by King Matvalasen, the heresy of the Nilapata Darsanaya and the bringing of the relics by the Arahant Somanetra have been restored on the basis of the information supplied by the *Nikaya Samgrahiya* and the *Suddharma-ratnavaliya*. Some episodes included in the work, as for instance the histories of kings, events concerning the Bo-Tree, the story of the Ruvanvali Saya, the arrival of the Malalas, the names and titles of the Vanni rulers, boundaries of the Vanni and geographical details concerning the sphere of the Bo-Tree are those that are dealt with in other similar works, and might have even existed as independent texts. But all such events have here been included in the manuscript text of the *Buddharajavaliya*. The printed edition runs into 63 demi 8vo pages.

The manuscripts used in the preparation of the present edition each had 65 leaves of 12" x 1 $\frac{1}{8}$ ". All four of them, the editor says, have been copied from a single original. The text could be divided into four major sections. The first beginning with a description of the origin of the universe ends with King Nissamka Malla and closely resembles the *Rajavaliya*. The second section deals with the establishment of the Sacred Bo-Tree at Anuradhapura while the third concerns the arrival of the Malalas. The last section gives details of regional boundaries (*kadayim*), commencing with those of the Vanni region. So much for the manuscripts.

Although the work is titled *Buddharajavaliya* which literally means "History of the Buddhas", it does not deal with that subject. It is true that the present text (like most others of its kind) contains information pertaining to the life and times of the Buddha Gautama, such as for instance, descriptions of the Sakya and Koliya clans. But the main concern of the writer has been to describe the deeds and achievements of

35. Ed. Dhammasiri Sthavira, Mirisse. Published by S. B. Wilbert Silva, Weligama, 1966.

Buddhist kings. It is in the sense of "History of Buddhist kings" (Baudddharajavaliya) that the title has to be construed. There is, in fact, another work which has been, with more justification, called *Buddharajavaliya*.³⁶ It ends with the statement: "Thus the unbroken royal line of Lord Buddha, Teacher of the Three Worlds, from King Mahasammata to the great king Suddhodana". Here the title has been used in the sense of "History of the Royal Family of the Buddha".

The writer begins his work with a brief cosmogony giving in outline the different spheres of the universe and the place of the earth with Mount Meru at its centre, in the entire scheme. At the four cardinal points are placed the four great continents, the southern being Jambudvipa which is also the most important. The whole account seems to be a preface to the description of Jambudvipa which follows. This account gives the location and extent of the central region (*madhya mandalaya*) and the region of the Bo-Tree within it, followed by an account mentioning its 41 constituent states. The two parts of the continent i.e. the central region and the remainder—are contrasted with reference to their glory. The former has been the land of good fortune where *Cakravarti* monarchs reign and Buddhas are born. Next comes an account of the origin of kingship beginning with the rise of the clan of King Mahasammata (the "Great Elect") who became so "by the consent of all" (*hama denage sammatayen . . . p. 4*). A brief description of the spread of kingship is followed by sketches of four important royal dynasties—Okkaka (Iksvaku), Sakya, Koliya and Simha. Here the writer gets an opportunity of introducing the subject of the establishment of kingship in Sri Lanka and there follows an account of the arrival of Prince Vijaya and his followers in the island as well as the three visits of the Buddha. Some interesting details are given in the Vijaya story: The prince is said to have embarked with his 700 followers and set sail "in the direction of the Ruhunu Country and, on account of the opposition of the citizens (of the city), landed at the port of Tammanna after they had sighted Mount Samantakuta and decided that the island was fit for human habitation". The incident is said to have occurred 1844 years after the end of Ravana's battle in Sri Lanka (p. 11). The rise of the Sinhalese royalty is preceded by these two episodes which, in the eyes of the author, had some bearing on the establishment of kingship in Sri Lanka. Separate accounts are devoted to delineate the dynasty of

36. The editor actually mentions two other works bearing the same name but containing different matter, *op. cit.*, pp. ix-x.

the kings of Anuradhapura, Ruhuna and Kalaniya. The fall of the Kalaniya kings preceded the rise of the Ruhuna kings. A relatively long sketch is given of the latter. This is followed by an account of the Lambhakarna dynasty. These last two sections together comprise a substantial portion—nearly one half of the first section of the work. This sketch ending with the reign of King Kirti Nissamka (Malla?) of Polonnaruwa, as mentioned before, comprises the first section which is nearly two-thirds of the entire text. The focus is on the kings and their several acts of piety which makes it in fact a *Rajavaliya*. Its form and structure are much like those of a version of a *Rajavaliya* and there is little doubt that much of this matter was drawn from a common source.

The second section commences with a miraculous story concerning the Bo-Tree. References are made to one King Sri Bodhi who had dealings with King Devanapa Tissa. There occurs a legend about Arahant Maliyadeva. The Malla princes too figure in the episode. Visits to Mahatota, Sripada at Samanala and Sripada in Makkama (Mecca?) and Mahiyangana are mentioned. Various other places and personalities such as Rohana Acari and Somanetra Terunvahanse are mentioned. This is followed by a legendary account of King Dutugamunu and the enshrinement of relics in the Ruvanvali Saya. The episode of the battle of the Kaku Mukkuras forms the concluding part of this section. This story deals with the arrival in the island of the Mukkaras under the leadership of Nala Mudaliya in the reign of King Bhatiya (?) and how they were eventually rewarded by the king with a territory for their settlement, in recognition of the military services rendered.

Section three contains a brief account of the coming of the Malala princes and this is followed by the last section dealing with boundaries. The territorial limits discussed here are chiefly those of the Vanni areas. The Pattus of Kandayutta, Udakahamullava and Madagalla are specifically mentioned along with the topographical details of those divisions. The contents and language of this section is typical of a *Kadayimpota*.

(5) The Writing of History

Historical writing in Sinhalese is, by no means, a recent phenomenon. The problem here is not one of finding out how late it developed but rather of locating how far back in time the practice was evolved. The best evidence of its remote antiquity is provided by the classical

Pali chronicles themselves whose authors refer to the existence of Sinhalese writings on which they based their own works. Indeed, the earliest records, or rather their memories, for the original records (themselves are no longer extant), go back to at least the 3rd century B.C. when Sri Lanka became Buddhist and sacred shrines of the new religion and monastic institutions associated with it came to be established. The early Buddhist scholar-monks developed the practice of recording the principal events connected with Buddhism, its institutions and the sacred objects associated with the Buddha's life—objects of religious devotion which the people worshipped and held in the highest veneration. The authors soon became accustomed to reckon important events in the country's history such as the consecration of kings, their social and religious benefactions, the termination of their reigns etc., from events of particular significance in the history of the religion such as the birth and *parinibbana* of the Buddha, the introduction of Buddhism to the Island, the arrival of the Sacred Bo-Tree and so forth. Quite early, they developed a sense of historic time in their attempts to work out systematic chronologies and synchronisms. Since the early writers were concerned also with narrating the story of their places of worship, they soon evolved and formulated their conceptions of space too. As a natural consequence of these developments they began to show a concern for details of geography and topography. Thus, the common criticism often levelled against Indian writers that they lacked a historical sense and were therefore incapable of distinguishing between history and legend would not be valid for early Sinhalese writers. This does not mean, however, that elements of myth and legend are not to be found in their writings.

The earliest historical records known to us are those that were kept in the religious establishments at Anuradhapura. They deal with the history of those establishments and the meritorious deeds of kings who rendered service to the new religion. Some of them are histories of the important places of worship and the sacred relics. Out of these records grew the chronicles of the *vamsa* literature which were translated into Pali and then re-translated into Sinhalese.³⁷

The earliest such work originally written in Sinhalese is referred to in the Pali commentarial literature as the *Sihalatthakatha Mahavamsa*.³⁸

37. Godakumbura, C. E., *SL.*, ch. xii.

38. *Vamsatthappakasini (Mahavamsa-tika)*, PTS Edition, Introduction, p. lxxiv.

Other such works known to us from the same source are *Uttaravihara-atthakatha*,³⁹ *Uttaravihara-mahavamsa*,⁴⁰ which doubtless contained the traditions of the Abhayagiri Vihara, *Mahacetiya-vamsatthakatha*⁴¹ which contained historical material concerning the Ruvanvali Saya and *Mahabodhivamsatthakatha* which dealt with the history of the sacred Bo-Tree. The traditions grouped round such Pali works as the *Simakatha* and the *Sabassavatthu-atthakatha* too perhaps go back to such Sinhalese sources.

It would be naive to believe that these works contained only information that was purely historical. They contained much that was legendary. This was bound to be the case with writings which were intended not merely to serve the needs of historical narrative but moral instruction and edification as well. Nonetheless, it is not difficult for the discerning reader to distinguish therein between what could be construed as historical and what is not.

These works, however, are no longer extant, having been perhaps eventually replaced by the Pali chronicles that derived from them. Once a more systematic exposition of the material contained in those original sources was available, the need for them disappeared. And thus with the absence of a strong need for their preservation, they became obsolete and died a natural death. It is perhaps worthy of note that all the Pali writings which derived from and eventually replaced them, explicitly declare that they are based on Sinhalese sources.

Attitude to Subject: A feature that is much in evidence about the attitude of these secular historians to their subject is that they do not appear to draw a distinction between history and legend. If by the term history one were to understand the record of events (without including memories of them) and by legend a traditional story popularly regarded as historical, the distinction is fairly clear. But if the former term is taken to include, as it sometimes is, the memories of those events which in fact took place, the line of demarcation is vague. Our popular writers treat traditional stories and historical fact together, more or less on the same level. They are not perturbed either by having to include myths (which word is interpreted to mean narratives organizing data on beliefs about supernatural powers, about the origins of the universe and of social institutions or about the history of the people). These writers, as the analysis of the typical work we have given illustrates, include in their

39. *Ibid.*, p. 125.

40. *Ibid.* p. 132.

41. *Ibid.* p. 509.

writings elements of myth, legend and history. Myths, incorporating the traditional beliefs of the writers on the origin of the universe, mankind and the institution of kingship form an integral part of these secular histories which treat of the lives and doings of kings who actually ruled.

Legends that interested the common people engaged the special attention of the writers. Those that were connected with popular ceremonies had a particular attraction for them. Thus, the Malayaraja Kathava was incorporated into the system of occult ceremonies regularly performed in Sinhalese villages. Likewise the people were interested in the story of King Panduvasudeva who was cured of his illness through the performance of such a ceremony. Around the cult of the goddess Pattini which had spread among the people there arose various popular games. The story of King Gajabahu's visit to the Cola court, how he avenged the wrongs of the Cola king, the homage he paid to the insignia of the goddess, how he brought them to Sri Lanka and the establishment of the ceremonies and pageants in honour of the goddess is recorded in these texts. Perhaps for the same reason, the writers, drawing from contemporary folk-lore, include interesting anecdotes about prominent personalities like kings, queens and courtiers.

The content of history was determined partly by the motives which inspired the writers and partly by the sources they utilized. We find the interest shifting from predominantly religious themes in the minor chronicles to political and social subjects in the secular histories and traditional writings. But the religious interest is not entirely lacking in the latter group of works though it is not generally uppermost in the minds of the writers. The main concern of the Sinhalese chroniclers remained the history of the *Samgha* and the *Sasana*, the history of the sacred relics and places of worship and the careers of kings and revered Buddhist personages. From the Pali chronicles they derived much of their subject matter and from the chroniclers they inherited the Buddhist historical tradition. The object of the literary endeavour of the *Mahavamsa* writers which "wasto arouse the serene joy and emotion of the wise" was certainly shared by the Sinhalese writers of the minor chronicles. When the history of the island came to be identified with the history of the *Sasana*, the concept of *dharmadvipa* evolved and established, and the reigning kings viewed as the instruments by which the destiny of a people was to be fulfilled, the writing of history gained a firmer anchorage. Religious themes excited the imagination of the authors no less

than that of their audience and acts of piety were extolled in the most glowing terms.⁴² Their aims and perspectives, though different from those of modern historians, were clear. Besides the one already referred to, the writers considered the moral instruction and edification of their audience a part of their obligation. By recounting with enthusiasm the various acts of piety performed through the ages, they impressed upon them the value of such acts. Not infrequently they exhorted their hearers to emulate them. They also had before them a framework within which they could build. In the light of such considerations these works could be described as religious panegyrics despite the fact that their author chose the medium of prose (or prose interspersed with verse) to express their ideas.

The writers of the secular histories show a greater interest in politics and society. The records tend to become "annalistic" chronicles where the activities of kings are narrated with particular prominence being given to their regnal years. This tendency is to be found even in the traditional documents when the topic of political history is treated. Events of religious significance and the patronage of religion find a prominent place even in these works. The events themselves were sufficiently important to be remembered and recorded even in secular works. In the matter of selection and presentation, the *Buddharajavaliya* is a good example of how religious ideas are interwoven with secular history.

Conception of Man and Society: The Sinhalese historians' ideas of man and society are best illustrated by the story of the origin of the universe and the origin of man and life in the world. The story is based on the Agganna and Cakkavatti-sihanada Suttas of the Digha Nikaya and their commentaries. It is a Buddhist counterpart of the Puranic account of the origin of the universe. There is no creation nor a creator. The world and living beings came into existence according to the *karma* of the beings who are destined to be born on earth or in other abodes.⁴³

The context of the sermon (in the Agganna Sutta), it has been pointed out, shows that the Buddha intended to expose the falsity of the Brahmanic claim to superiority among men by going back into the

42. The practice of recording acts of piety performed by reigning monarchs and other notables in separate books called *pin-pot* (books of merit) is known to come down from very early times. The most celebrated instance is the *pin-pot* maintained by King Dutugamunu; it was read out to him whence the king lay in his death-bed. *Pin-pot* are known to be maintained, up to the present time, among certain families.

43. See Godakumbura, C. E. in Philips, C. H. (Ed.), *Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon*, pp. 72-86.

historical origins of human life. In origin, all humans were alike, and what later became caste or class distinctions were originally due to a differentiation into specific occupations on the part of human beings, who were all “like unto themselves and not unlike” (*anannesam sadisanam neva no asadisanam*). Two other notions run through the whole account. One is the fact of the gradual growth and evolution of the earth. At a certain stage of evolution, the earth was without vegetation or animal life. Very much later “outgrowths” like “mushrooms” sprang up and later still “creepers”. By the time settled human life has come into existence there is a reference to animals for some take to hunting. The other is a moral relativism “for what is reckoned immoral at one time is reckoned moral at another time”. These changes in the moral condition of man are due partly to changes in human nature such as the gradual growth of greed etc., and partly to changes in the physical and economic environment such as loss of abundance in nature and the lack of living space.⁴⁴

At that critical stage in the development of settled life, the people decided to divide up the rice fields and set boundaries thereto. When this had been done, some greedy individual watching over his own plot, stole another plot and made use of it. The others took him to task for that evil act saying that he had wrought evil and committed theft. Being warned not to repeat it for the second and third time, he refused to heed the warning. Whereupon they took him and beat him some with the hands some with clods and some with sticks. In such circumstances did stealing appear, and censure and lying and punishment became known.⁴⁵ Very soon the prevailing conditions proved inadequate to the task of ensuring property rights and securing just, efficient and deterrent punishment. The institution of kingship arose when the people gathered together to select from among their numbers the person most suitable to discharge the new functions. The people went up to him and offered to contribute a proportion of their rice on condition that he shows indignation when it should be shown, censures that which should be censured and banishes him who deserves to be banished. He consented and did so and the people kept their terms of the contract.

44. See Jayatilleke, K. N., *The Principles of International Law in the Buddhist Doctrine* Leyden, 1967, ch. iv “The Buddhist Conception of Society, Law and Human Rights”, pp. 509 ff; *Digha Nikaya* III (PTS Edition), pp. 80-98; Tr. Rhys Davids T. W., *Dialogues of the Buddha*, Part III, *Sacred Books of the Buddhists*, Vol. IV (PTS., London, 1937, pp. 77 ff.

45. Tr. Rhys Davids, *op. cit.*, p. 88.

He was elected the first king "by common consent". Mahasammata (the "Great Elect"). This is the first epithet used to describe the ruler of men. The term *khattiya*, used to refer to the Sovereign, the holder of power, was interpreted to mean "Lord of the fields (from *khetta*—field), a quaint departure from the traditional etymology in Sanskrit. *Raja* "Ruler" is construed as one who brings happiness by the Dhamma.

This view of the origin of man, society and kingship is shared by all schools of Buddhism and was widely known. The emphasis is on a democratic conception of the state, where the king who was elected by the people is very much a human person. This theory of kingship and the state is in marked contrast to the Brahmanical theory which postulated the notion of the divinity of kings. According to the Buddhist view "the king is merely a servant of the people and is entitled to levy taxes only in return for fulfilling his task of protection".⁴⁶

It is in the context of such ideas that the Sinhalese historians' conception of man, society and social institutions has to be viewed. In the works under discussion, there is no systematic formulation of any of these views. But our authors presuppose such views and proceed on the assumption that they were valid and just. This outlook on society which upheld such views as that man's condition was not determined by his birth but by his character and that the king, the ruler of men was *primus inter pares* appears to have been consistently maintained even in the face of contrary ideologies derived from Brahmanical and Puranic traditions which asserted themselves from time to time. The author of the *Janavamsaya* (History of Mankind), dealing especially with the castes, shared those views although he lived at a time when prevailing social and political conditions militated against the healthy development of such ideas. In the presence of such an enlightened outlook, certain acts of those who professed to belong to a more progressive age acquire a strange irony. Hugh Nevill has this to say in his introduction to the translation of the work: "This work is one in great repute among the Sinhalese, but copies of late have been sadly mutilated and tampered with, to suit the views of this or that class".⁴⁷

The *Janavamsaya* starts, after the invocation, with the famous stanza of the Vasala Sutta, uttered by the Buddha when he was questioned by

46. Basham, A. C., *Aspects of Ancient Indian Culture*, Bombay, 1966, p. 16.

47. Introduction, Translation and Notes in English *The Taprobanean*, Vol. I, 1886, pp. 73-93.

the Brahmin Aggika Bharadvaja wherein it is stated that one does not become a vasala or a brahmin by his birth but by his actions (character). The work recounts the story of the origin of this *kalpa* (time cycle), much like the *Bamba Uppattiya* which describes the origin and evolution of the world, proceeds to give an account of the election of *Mahasammata* and then traces the history of that dynasty. Then follows a description of the castes, which does not appear to follow a hierarchical order. The author does not attempt to justify the system nor to assert the superiority of one group to another.

Conception of Time and History: The idea of time underlying these writings and the historical tradition they embody may be said to be a development of the views represented in the Pali chronicles. Time is reckoned in *kalpas* (time cycles) and *yugas* (ages, mundane periods) and events in history are viewed in a cosmic framework. This involves the notion of time cycles. Man, society and institutions are subject to the law of birth, growth and decay. The concept of time cycles did not, however, interfere with the historian's awareness of historical fact. The lists of kings and their regnal years, synchronisms of contemporaries and the measurement of time-intervals between significant events reveal a sense of chronological order. Dates are usually given in the Buddhist era, but sometimes in the Saka Era and rarely in the Christian Era. Sometimes events are recorded with great precision. This is often the case when writers refer to important events such as the death of kings usually proximate to the date of composition of the work.

What has been said so far is enough to illustrate that these works contain useful matter which the historian can ill afford to ignore. It also helps to show some of their limitations. The most serious of them is the extremely unsatisfactory condition of the manuscripts themselves. They were composed by not-so-learned writers and copied by ignorant scribes. The language is popular, though lacking in refinement, often incoherent and sometimes coarse. The style is poor, often clumsy and inelegant, shorn of embellishment, and a falling off from the accepted norms of Sinhalese prose or the rich and ornate Pali verse of the chronicles. Some of the ideas expressed and the beliefs entertained may seem naive and even ludicrous to a latter day reader. But these writers are to be praised for what they have preserved than to be blamed for the faults found in their writings which were not all of their own making.

AGRICULTURE IN MEDIAEVAL SRI LANKA*

W. I. SIRIWEERA

THE study of economic history, and particularly of agricultural history deals with many matters which not only concern history but other branches of science as well, namely agronomics, agricultural engineering, botany, climatology, dietetics, demography and economics. The history of agriculture therefore should best be tackled by the historian together with specialists of other branches of science. Until new research methods are evolved from this co-operation the historian interested in ancient and mediaeval agriculture of Sri Lanka has to be contented with extremely sporadic and fragmentary references in the available literature which has after all, primarily a religious bias, with meagre archaeological evidence and the evidence in inscriptions which are mainly records of grants or injunctions of the royalty and the nobility. The purpose of this essay, therefore, is to piece together this evidence and build up a general picture of agriculture in the period between A.D. 1000 to 1500 with emphasis on changes that have taken place in the process of history. In doing so, difficulties created by the gaps in the chain of data have been surmounted by extrapolation and inference and by bringing arguments from parallel situations.

Geographically, Sri Lanka may be divided into three broad regions: a lowland dry zone, a lowland wet zone and the hilly region. The lowland dry zone which covers over two thirds of the land area of the island

* This paper was originally read before the Ceylon Studies Seminar, Peradeniya Campus. The author is grateful to Dr. G. H. Peiris, Mr. Derek de Silva, Mr. P. Andagama and the staff of the anthropology division, Colombo National Museum for their help.

has greater extents of land suitable for cultivation of rice, which is the staple diet of the people, than the wet zone. However, the shortage of water for agriculture constitutes the main problem in the former. Though it receives an annual rainfall of fifty to seventy five inches, this is confined mainly to the period of the north-east monsoon (October-April). The land is by no means uniformly flat: numerous rock outcrops and many ranges of hills, several exceeding 1000 feet in height and a few rising to over 2000 feet stand out from it. The ancient Sinhalese who took full advantage of differences in contour created large and small reservoirs by closing gaps between ridges and by damming rivers at higher levels to divert their waters along artificial canals. Thus, they built up a stupendous and intricate irrigation system to which modern engineers have accorded very high praise.

Almost every village in the level country of the dry zone, Jaffna peninsula excepted, had its own village tank which was capable of supplying water for the cultivation of an average of ten acres of ground. The village tanks being small, their construction and upkeep did not demand more labour than the village community could provide. The large reservoirs were used to supply these tanks when the rain failed and when there was a scarcity of water, thus ensuring a regular supply of water to immense tracts of land.

In a dry zone village in the past, as it is in the present, village houses were ordinarily located immediately below the tank bund, so that they were situated between the tank and the field which it served. Fruits and vegetables could be grown in the house site area and most of the dry highland which surrounded the village could be cultivated by shifting cultivation techniques.

Even though the Jaffna Peninsula belongs to the dry zone; it emerges as a separate region from the rest of the dry zone, and its structure and the history of its inhabitants are different from those of other dry zone regions. Its land surface is composed of a block of porous limestone with supplies of underground water which affords scope only for well irrigation; its soils are thin and poor and need careful tilling and manuring. The agricultural practices in this area must have developed along somewhat different lines from those of other parts of the dry zone, but the paucity of sources for this area prevents an examination of such practices.

In the wet zone there are perennial rivers and it receives the rains of both the south-west and north-east monsoons, the average annual precipitation being 85 to 125 inches. The vegetation is dense and luxuriant and the land is flat only near the coast: inland, it rises gradually, though often interrupted by high outcrops, to the foothills of the central mountains. Irrigation of paddy is in general only a matter of tapping some local perennial stream, and elaborate storage systems are unnecessary. The Chilaw, Colombo and Kegalle districts were populated in pre-Christian times, as numerous inscriptions in these areas attest.¹ But there is no inscriptional or archaeological evidence of the presence of a settled population in early times in the south-western region from the Kaluganga to Nilvala ganga, and in the Ratnapura district which lies immediately inland of it. The earliest inscription in this region belongs to the tenth century A.D.² It is said that Pasdun Korale (*Panayojana rattha*) in the present Kalutara district was a great swampy wilderness in the twelfth century when Parakramabahu I drained the swamps and marshes into the river and made the land habitable.³ But these regions played a vital role in the economy after the shift of the political centre from the Rajarata in the thirteenth century. Some of the forest products such as cinnamon which grew abundantly in the wet zone were also exploited from this period onwards.⁴

The Kandyan hilly region, a vast area of which belongs to the wet zone, is also well watered by perennial rivers and streams. The average annual rainfall is 85 to 125 inches rising from 140 to 200 inches in the upper valley of the Mahaveli river, and falling away to 100 to 65 inches in the mountains of Uva and the easterly hills, which form a drier sub-zone. By the end of the first century B.C. the lower mountain region in the valley of the Mahaveli river and the northern and western slopes of the Matale hills were populated.⁵ But the mountain region above about 2500 feet was largely unpopulated till the ninth and tenth cen-

1. C. W. Nicholas, "Historical Topography of Ancient and Mediaeval Ceylon", *JRASCB*, new series, Vol. VI, Special Number, 1963, p. 5.
2. C. W. Nicholas, *ibid.*, p. 124; *U.H.C.* I, pt. 1, Colombo, 1959, p. 10.
3. *Culavamsa*, LXVIII, 50-54.
4. The earliest reference to cinnamon of Sri Lanka is found in one of the letters of John of Montecorvino written in the last quarter of the thirteenth century, A.D. (*Cathay and the Way Thither*, ed. Yule, p. 213). Subsequently in the middle of the fourteenth century Ibn Batuta stated that the people of the Coromandel coast gave to the Sinhalese king gifts of cloth and took away cinnamon from the island. (*The Rehla of Ibn Batuta*, ed. Mahdi Hussain, Baroda, 1953, p. 217).
5. *U.H.C.* I, pt. 1, pp. 9-10.

turies.⁶ The large-scale settlements started there only after the fall of the Polonnaruva kingdom, in the thirteenth century. These areas, like the lowland wet zone, did not depend on artificial irrigation for the vitality of their economy. The terraced paddy fields which were skilfully constructed obtained their water from natural streams which rarely failed. The highland which could not be converted into paddy fields, because of the lack of water was used by the villager to build his house, to plant fruit trees and to grow vegetables and other crops. The forests which provided honey, jungle rope, firewood, fence sticks, timber, leaf manure and pasture for cattle were at a still higher level.

* * * *

Paddy production was the most important agricultural activity of the Sinhalese peasant and it was the pivot round which the economic life of the villager revolved. The basins of the Mahaveli and Malvatu rivers, where migrants from India, speaking an Aryan dialect, first established themselves in the sixth century B.C. can be safely taken as the locations of the first domestication of rice in Sri Lanka.

As in the rest of the rice cultures of Asia rice was grown in Sri Lanka by two sharply contrasting techniques. Whenever the land was flat enough and water so plentiful and manageable that it could be led to and away from the fields systematically rice was grown under water. Where the terrain made it difficult to construct fields flat enough to be flooded, a different method was used for growing rice. This, i.e. the 'slash and burn agricultural method' was not dependent upon perennial supply of water. The seed of this 'dry rice' (*goda goyam*)⁷ being once sown directly into the soil the crop grew in much the same way as any other grain of temperate climates. The varieties of paddy grown in wet fields were not suitable for dry land and vice versa.

The more extensive practice was that of wet rice cultivation and its process is described in various texts in detail. The preliminary operation was the eradication of the rank growth in the boundaries of the field and in the attached canal. Thereafter the field had to be ploughed and thoroughly cleansed of weeds and the soil had to be pulverised and

6. C. W. Nicholas, *op. cit.*, p. 5.

7. *Saddharmaratnavali*, ed. by D. B. Jayatilaka, Colombo, 1930, p. 125, p. 869. Hereafter referred to as *SRV*.

soaked until it became a mire of heavy mud.⁸ Paddy fields were manured⁹ most likely with cowdung and green leaves but to what extent land fertilization methods were used cannot be determined. Once the ground was ready seed paddy (*bijuvata*) was sown directly into the field. There is no reference to the technique of transplanting of seedlings though some form of transplanting seems to have existed at a somewhat later stage of history. In the seventeenth century, in referring to the agricultural practices in the Kandyan kingdom, Robert Knox stated: "Corn is grown about a span high, the women come and weed it, and pull it up where it grew too thick, and transplant it where it wants".¹⁰

The seeds being sown flow of water had to be regulated and dikes had to be kept in repair.¹¹ Shortly before the rice ripened the water was drained from the fields and about a month later rice was harvested. Two terms are used for the harvest in inscriptions: the first is *hasa* (grain) and the other is *karala*¹² which literally means ear of corn or paddy. The richest harvest one could reap from a fertile field was one *yala* for one *pala* of seeds sown the ratio being eighty to one.¹³

Ever since agriculture was first practised in this country the Sinhalese have developed their own forms of implements to suit their agricultural needs. The literary sources refer to a vast number of such implements used in agriculture, and what is remarkable is that, evidently, some of them have changed very little from what they were in the past. Despite being governed for one hundred and fifty years by a country which was the workshop of the world, the symbols of the capital instruments of the peasants remained the buffalo-drawn wooden plough.

The plough, which was known in most ancient societies, is mentioned in Sinhalese literature as *nangula* and was generally drawn by two

-
8. *Pujavaliya*, ed. Bentota Saddhatissa, Colombo, 1930, p. 355. Hereafter referred to as *PJV*; *SRV*, p. 151, p. 893.
 9. *Butsarana*, ed. Labugama Lankanauda, Colombo, 1923, p. 247; *goyam bhoga vanu pinisa kumburehi puvara lana govitana daksa ekek hu se*.
 10. Robert Knox, *An Historical Relation of Ceylon*, Glasgow, MCMXI, p. 17.
 11. *SRV*, p. 151, p. 771; *PJV*, p. 893.
 12. *Epigraphia Zeylanica*, III, No. 32, IV, No. 22. Hereafter referred to as *EZ*.
 13. *PJV*, p. 483; *Saddbarmalankara*, ed. Bentara Sraddhatissa, Panadura, 1934, p. 10; A *pala* was a quarter of an *amuna* and *yala* was equivalent to twenty *amunas*. (*EZ* II, pp. 220-235. M. B. Ariyapala, *Society in Mediaeval Ceylon*, Colombo, 1956, p. 154 ff.).

buffaloes.¹⁴ Made entirely of wood, the plough enjoyed a spurt in its development with the introduction of the metal hoe. The main component parts of the plough were a handle (*nivun kurulla*), plough hand (*nivun ata*), a hoe blade (*hi vala*), a plough rod (*nangul iba*), a yoke (*viyadanda*) and a rope (*rana*)¹⁵ which was used to tie the oxen to the yoke.

Like the plough, the leveller (*poruwa*)¹⁶ performed an important function in the preparation of the paddy field for sowing. There were two kinds of levellers namely the plough leveller (*nangul poruwa*) and the hand leveller (*at prouwa*). The plough leveller was drawn by buffaloes

14. *SRV*, p. 704, pp. 740-41; *Saddharmalankara*, *op. cit.*, p. 692; *PJV*, p. 355; Sometimes, the plough was drawn by only one bull. (*SRV*, p. 634). Even though, livestock production due to religious taboos and restrictions lagged far behind the level of production reached with crops, animal domestication was not neglected by the ancient Sinhalese. For instance, buffaloes and cattle were an integral part of the village economy. The former, were used to prepare the fields by dragging the plough, as well as puddling the mud with their feet and also to thresh paddy. Buffaloes could be hired and did not always have to be in a cultivator's possession. Domestic cattle too had been kept for hundreds of years in India and Sri Lanka for communication purposes and to obtain milk (*Ariyapala*, *op. cit.*, pp. 316-318; 343-346).

Among the animal bones found at Gedige, Anuradhapura in recent excavations there were two specimens of *Bos* (neat cattle) approximately dateable to a period between 400 B.C. and 200 A.D. (*Ancient Ceylon*, Journal of the Archaeological Survey Department of Ceylon, No. 2, December 1972, p. 159). Since these specimens display marks inflicted with metal knives, and ash and charcoal deposits were found in association, it is reasonable to believe that they are food remains. The consumption of beef, had since the first century A.D. according to literary sources, been considered as extremely base (H. Ellavala, *Social History of Early Ceylon*, Colombo, 1969, p. 67), and in late historical period the high caste Sinhalese considered eaters of beef as being low and unclean. Since artefact assemblages at Gedige comprising sophisticated objects indicate that occupants of Gedige possessed a relatively high social status, it appears as if these prohibitions on beef eating were introduced into the island somewhat later. Remains of *bos indicus* at times possessing knife marks have been found also at *Arikamedu* in horizons ranging from pre-Arretine phase to 100 A.D. as well as within a megalithic culture context in India (Wheeler, *Ancient India*, 1946, p. 115; Banerjee, *Iron Age in India*, 1965, p. 211). It appears as if beef was eaten during the period 800 B.C. - 100 A.D. by those who were within the main social framework in Peninsula India and Sri Lanka. It is possible that the 'tabu' on beef eating was imposed in Sri Lanka during the late Anuradhapura period when there was a marked increase of Hindu influences in Sinhalese culture.

The goat and fowl are also mentioned among livestock (*PJV*, p. 91; *Saddharmaratnakara*, *op. cit.*, p. 404). Goats have been bred for their meat and milk and fowl for their eggs in addition to flesh. Goats are referred to in large numbers among the grants made to Hindu and Buddhist establishments in the eleventh century Tamil inscriptions. The pig, however, is not referred to as a domesticated animal in ancient Sri Lanka, though its domestication was not unknown in ancient India. The bones of *sus* or pig found at Gedige (*Ancient Ceylon*, *op. cit.* p. 155), only indicate that wild boar also entered the diet of the ancient Sinhalese.

15. *SRV*, pp. 740-41; p. 777; *PJV*, p. 336.

16. *PJV*, p. 356.

to level the ground before sowing. The farmer stood behind the plank and manipulated the leveller as and when necessary. The hand leveller was a plank about two feet in length which was fixed to a long handle.

From the beginning to the end of the cultivation process the mamoty (*udalla*) was indispensable to the farmer. A mamoty believed to date back to the fifth century A.D. was found at Sigiriya and is presently on display, among other agricultural implements, at the National Museum, Colombo. Like most of the traditional implements the mamoty, too, differed widely depending on the regions in which it was used, their soil conditions and the manner of use. Sri Lanka, it is believed possessed in the past more than two dozen varieties which differed in shape and size.

The *yotta*¹⁷ was an implement dug out of wood with a long handle and was used to draw water out of or into a field. Suspended from the top of a structure made for it, this was manipulated by the farmer by swinging the handle.

The seed paddy for sowing was taken to the field in baskets made out of rattan, bamboo or palm leaves. In shape and size and in method of use it varied from region to region. The oblong shaped container was either pressed between the side of the body and the underside of the arm (at the armpit) or hung from the shoulder while the shallow small container was held in one hand. The vessels used for measuring paddy were numerous in sizes, shapes and capacities. Made out of wood, rattan, bamboo, palm leaves, elk hides etc. they were known by different names such as *laba*, *kuruni* and *hali*.

The reaping of paddy was performed with a metal sickle which had a handle made of wood. The traditional sickle (*dakatta*) was larger and heavier and had its local variations. This was used only in reaping paddy while the small one known as *pankatta* or *kurahan katta* was used in reaping subsidiary cereals like *kurakkan* (*eleusine coracana*) and *tana* (*setaria italica*). The *katta* or the bill-hook had a very long handle and was usually used for clearing forests.

A long pole with two prongs, known as the *koladebala* was used to stack the heaps of paddy in the threshing floor. A wooden implement shaped like a cricket bat and known as the *kolapatta* was used to beat the edges of the corn in the stack so as to bring the surface of the stack

17. *Kavyasekhara*, VIII, 39.

to a common level. The *datta* was a long stick with a hook at the end, which was used to brush away the straw from the paddy while the buffaloes went round and round threshing the paddy.

A fly catcher known as the *boku kulla*, made like a winnow with a long handle, was one among several means resorted to by the Sinhalese to achieve the object of protecting their grain crops from insects and pests. Various kinds of resins were applied inside the winnow and this implement was dragged early morning above the plants so that the disturbed insects and flies got stuck on to this. An instrument called the *takaporuwa* or "tiger box" was used to keep birds and beasts at bay. This was in the form of a box with a gadget inside, which when swung round made a dreadful noise.

The ancient Sinhalese peasant who like his modern counterpart was engaged in a constant struggle against nature, did not believe that techniques derived from the accumulated knowledge and experience of his ancestors and effort alone could bring the desired results from agriculture. To protect his cultivations from such dangers as draught, flood and pestilence he kept faith in superstitions and astrology and therefore, rational behaviour was intermingled with ritual and superstition.

He started all his activities in the field at a favourable constellation and sowing, ploughing, harvesting was done according to the guidance of the astrologer. On certain days and at certain unfavourable constellations activities in the paddy field were avoided.¹⁸ It was considered that plant diseases could be remedied by certain measures which were known as *kem*.¹⁹ For example, it was believed that if ashes of a burnt wood of a ruined hut were spread in the ridges of a paddy field, animals and birds would not destroy the crop.²⁰

Among the numerous varieties of paddy grown in wet-fields *rat hal*, *sinati* and *mavi* are often mentioned. The length of time required for the maturation of the crop depended on the variety of paddy that was sown. Certain varieties of paddy such as *sinati* required three to four

18. MS. *Navapatala Sangraha*, British Museum, Stowe OR fols. 37-51; *PJV*, p. 355. *Sekarasasekaramalai*, V. 129, vv. 130-140; *Sarajotimalai*, Eramangalappadam section.

19. *SRV*, p. 152; *PJV*, p. 356.

20. *Sarajotimalai*, Eramangalappadam section, v. 16.

months to ripen while some others needed four to five months. The variety named *mavi* required as much as six to seven months.²¹

The terms found in epigraphic and literary sources to denote paddy fields and their component parts are interesting. A large tract of fields was generally known as *varupata* or *viyala* though the latter term was also used to indicate land newly brought under cultivation. *Kumbura*, *kubura*, *keta* and *ketvata* were the terms for the paddy field and its small division bounded by ridges or small banks (*miyara* modern *niyara*) for the purpose of retaining water was *liyatda* modern *liyadda*. The threshing floor was known as *kamata*.²²

Systematic paddy cultivation beginning in the sixth century B.C. in areas around Malvatu, Daduru and Mahavali rivers soon spread to other parts of the island including some areas of the hill country. After the abandonment of the ancient Rajarata in the thirteenth century, more efforts were made to bring the wet zone and the hill country under cultivation.

Maha and *Yala*²³ were the two main seasons of paddy production, but there were three crops in some villages of Rajarata where fields were irrigated by means of reservoirs and did not depend on the uncertain rainfall. The Tonigala inscription of the fourth century A.D. refers to three crops: *pitadada hasa*, *akala hasa* and *mada hasa*,²⁴ which denote *maha*, *yala* and middle seasons. The third crop called *mada* in this inscription is still known as *mada* (middle) and is so called because it intervenes between the two major harvests. It is the least important of the three; and in many a year when the reservoirs are not full it is altogether neglected. This crop is not known in many districts of Sri Lanka including the greater part of the low country, where the cultivation of paddy depends entirely on the rainfall.

* * * * *

Shifting cultivation, the most primitive form of agriculture, which may be briefly defined as an economy of which the main characteristics are rotation of cultivating plots rather than of crops; clearing by means

21. *PJV*, p. 356; p. 665.

22. *EZ*, I, p. 93, o. 179; *EZ*, III, p. 234; *EZ*, IV, No. 5; *EZ*, V, pt. II, No. 26. *SRV*, p. 12, p. 667; *PJV*, p. 9, p. 143; p. 483; *Butsarana*, *op. cit.*, p. 245.

23. *SRV*, p. 352, *PJV*, p. 356; Ariyapala, *op. cit.* p. 33.

24. *EZ*, III, No. 17.

of fire; absence of draft animals and manuring and short periods of soil occupancy alternating with long fallow periods, also played an important role in the ancient Sinhalese economy. The field of the shifting cultivator which is called *caingin* in the Philippines, *humab* in Java, *ladang* in Malaya, *tamrai* in Thailand and *ray* in Indo-China is called *senā* or *hena* (anglicized as *chena* from the Tamil equivalent *chena*) in Sri Lanka. In ancient Sinhalese literature and inscriptions the terms *seben*, *sen* and *pitibim* are used to imply this mode of agriculture.

As in the present day, the shifting cultivator of ancient Sri Lanka burned as much of the wood as was possible or convenient in a selected area. Among the charred stumps and half burned tree trunks he cultivated his favourite cereals such as *undu* (*Phaseolus mungo*), *ma* (*Vigna cylindrica*), *mun* (*Phaseolus aureus*), *kurakkan* (*Eleusine coracana*), *iringu* (*Zea mays*), *tala* (*Corypha umbraculifera*), *amu* (*Paspalum scrobiculatum*), *aba* (*Brassica juncea*), *duru* (*Cuminum cyminum*), *tana* (*Setaria italica*) and vegetables such as *karabatu* (*Solenum* sp.), *tibbatu* (*Solenum indicum*), *vambatu* (*Solenum melongena*), *alupubul* (*Benincasa hispida*) and *vattakka* (*Cucurbita maxima*).²⁵

Sugarcane and cotton were grown in separate *chenas*²⁶ but the extent of such cultivations cannot be determined easily. It may be assumed that a large part of the island's requirements of cloth and sugar were produced here as weaving and pressing sugarcane were two important cottage industries of the country.²⁷ Sugar was not imported to the island till the sixteenth century when Barbosa referred to the import of sugar from Bengal²⁸ but cloths of the more sumptuous varieties were brought to the island especially from eastern India and China for the use of the royalty and the nobility.

25. *Butsarana*, *op. cit.*, p. 42, p. 95; *PJV*, pp. 96-97; p. 165; *SRV*, p. 585, p. 618; *Sinhala Thupavamsa*, edited Vataddara Medhananda, Colombo, 1950, p. 177; *Jataka Atiwa Gatapadaya*, *op. cit.*, p. 79, p. 188, p. 230; *Sinhala Bodhivamsa*, ed. Veragoda Amaramoli, Colombo, 1951, p. 40; *Vesaturudasanne*, ed. D. E. Hettiaratchi, Colombo, 1950, p. 67; *Saddharmalankara*, *op. cit.* p. 14; *Saddharmaratnakara*, *op. cit.*, p. 31; *EZ*, III, No. 17.

26. *Petavatthu*, P.T.S. edition, 1888, p.61; *Ummaggajatakaya*, ed. Batuvantudave Sri Devaraksita, 1957, p. 13; *SRV*, p. 929.

27. *Sammohavinodini*, P.T.S. edition, London 1923, p. 204; *Jataka Atiwa Gatapadaya*, *op. cit.*, p. 83. *Kankhavitarani Pitapota*, ed. Pannasekara, Colombo, 1936, p. 23; *SRV*, p. 929, *Saddharmalankara*, ed. K. Gnanavimala, Colombo, 1954, p. 579; Ariyapala, *op. cit.*, pp. 338-39; 341-42.

28. Duarte Barbosa, *A Description of the Coast of East Africa and Malabar in the Beginning of the Sixteenth Century*, Hakluyt Society, London, M.DCCC. LXVI, p. 167.

Shifting cultivators did not change their dwellings when they turned to new land; they remained, as it were, settled in fixed abodes. They, however, built a hut in the *chena* if it was too far away from their village and lived in such a shelter especially at the time when the ripening crop had to be protected against animals; returning with the harvest to their permanent houses in the village.²⁹ They also constructed wooden fences around *chenas* to guard the cultivations against stray cattle and wild animals.³⁰

The shifting cultivator had no permanent right over the land he cleared and cultivated but he had the right to use as much land as he needed or could cultivate with the expressed permission of the village headman or the king's officer. The person who cleared the land and planted the crop got the produce. As soon as the land was abandoned all rights were forfeited except those of the king who had a prerogative right over jungle land throughout the island.³¹ The king taxed the produce of the *chenas* but Nissankamalla (1187-1196) abolished such taxes³² and his action must have given a great impetus to *chena* cultivation. From his reign at least to the end of the sixteenth century no reference is made to taxes on the *chenas*.

* * * * *

House gardens or compounds were known as *gevalu* or *arub*.³³ Vegetables, yams such as sweet potatoes and ginger and cereals were grown in small quantities in these compounds in addition to coconut, arecanut, palmyra, *kitul* (*caryotauenns*), tamarind, betel, oranges, bananas, jak, pepper, etc.³⁴ which made the household self-sufficient.

Coconut cultivation was not limited to house gardens and was conducted on a larger scale in areas where climatic and soil conditions

29. *Saddharmalankara*, ed. Bentota Sraddhatissa, Panadura, 1934, p. 33; *Sarajotimalai*, Eramangalappadam, section V, 14.
30. *Visuddhimarga Sannaya*, ed. K. Dhammaratana, Vol. I, Colombo, 1925, p. 106, *SRV*, p. 228, p. 554.
31. W. I. Siriweera, "Land Tenure and Revenue in Mediaeval Ceylon", *Ceylon Journal of Historical and Social Studies*, new series, Vol. II, No. 1, January-June 1972, p. 13.
32. *EZ*, I, No. 9; *EZ*, II, p. 77, 87, 105, 138-139, 285; *EZ*, V, No. 42.
33. *EZ*, I, No. 8; *EZ*, II, No. 37.
34. *EZ*, I, No. 8; Wilhelm Geiger, *Culture of Ceylon in Mediaeval Times*, ed. Heinz Bechert, Wiesbaden, 1960, pp. 14, 42, 51, 86, 90.

were favourable because coconut entered into the life of the people as food, drink, light, fuel, household utensils and building materials.

The earliest reference to coconut in the *Mahavamsa* is in connection with heroic legend. According to this particular legend, during the battle between Dutugemunu and Elara in the second century B.C., the warrior Gotha is said to have seized a coconut tree and slaughtered the Tamils with it.³⁵ The *Culavamsa* refers to a large coconut plantation three *yojanas* in extent laid out in the sixth century A.D. by Aggabodhi I at a place close to Mannar,³⁶ and this is the first record of the formation of a proper coconut plantation in Sri Lanka though Megasthenes in the third century B.C. and Aelian in the second century A.D. have mentioned palms in Sri Lanka possibly referring to palmyras in the north and coconuts in the south.³⁷

The cultivation of coconut expanded after the thirteenth century and this coincides with the expansion and development of the settlements in the south-west and beginning of the decline and abandonment of the Rajarata. Once the Rajarata areas were neglected and the settlements in the south-western and southern coastal areas expanded there arose the compulsion to engage in types of cultivation which suited the climatic and soil conditions of the latter regions. Sesamum from which the oil was extracted for preparation of food in the dry zone (as it was done in ancient Mesopotamia) was not found in sufficient quantity here, and therefore the use of coconut in dietary habits had to be extended. The chronicles, literary texts and epigraphy vouch for the existence of extensive coconut plantations along the sea coast especially in areas such as Kalutara, Bentota, Totagamuva and Kapkanduru in Rohana.³⁸ The *Sandesa* poems refer to coconut plantations at Moratuwa, Kamburugamuva and from Kelaniya to Karagala.³⁹

35. *Mahavamsa*, XXV, 45.

36. *Culavamsa*, XLII, 15-16; There are many interpretations of the term *yojana*. It has been suggested that it is equal to two and half, three and half, nine and eighteen miles. See Monier Williams, *A Sanskrit English Dictionary*, Oxford, 1899, p. 858, Ariyapala, *op. cit.*, pp. 151-152.

37. *Ancient India as Described by Megasthenes and Arrian*, ed. J. W. McCrindle, revised second edition, Calcutta, 1960, pp. 60-61; p. 173 ff.

38. *EZ*, IV, No. 25; *Culavamsa*, XC, 93; *Rasavahini*, *Lankadippatti Vatthuni*, Saranatissa, B. E. 2434, p. 82; *Pujavali*, 34th chapter, ed. Medhankara, Colombo, 1932, p. 40.

39. *Kokila*, 105; *Tisara*, 40; *Hamsa*, 121, 162.

There is no definite evidence to show that coconuts or any products of the coconut were exported before the end of the fifteenth century, although there should have been a reasonable internal market for them as a large majority of the people had begun by this time to use coconut.

* * * * *

The basic working unit in agricultural production was the nucleus of individual family residing together in one house. Typically, this unit consisted of husband and wife and all unmarried children. Sometimes, married children remained at home as part of the working unit, in which case the spouse of the married child became a part of the household.

A few households included *dasas* or domestic servants whose labour was also utilized for agricultural purposes in addition to household work.⁴⁰ They shared household quarters and board, much as if they belonged to the family. In much the same way slaves (*vahalan*)⁴¹ attached to Buddhist monasteries cultivated some of the agricultural plots of these institutions.

Even the peasant cultivator hired labour for special agricultural operations, for it is one of the features of rural life that the demand for agricultural labour is never uniform throughout the year but varies with the season. The wages of such labourers were mostly paid in kind, particularly in paddy, though cash payments were not unknown.⁴² It is said that King Mahaculi Mahatissa in the first century B.C. laboured in disguise in the rice harvest and with the wage he received gave alms to a priest.⁴³

The gentry, those engaged in occupations other than agriculture, widows and sick old people mostly entrusted the cultivation of their paddy fields to farmers on *ande* tenure or crop sharing basis which has

40. Geiger, *op. cit.*, pp. 35-37; Ariyapala, *op. cit.*, pp. 310-312.

41. *EZ*, IV, No. 12, 16, 25; *Samantapasadika*, P.T.S. edition, London, 1924-47 p. 1001. Some people in mediaeval times made grants of slaves to monasteries, some became slaves themselves in monasteries to acquire merit and others liberated slaves in these institutions to acquire merit. Thus, the institution of slavery in Sri Lanka was a far milder form of servitude when compared to that of the Egyptian and Graeco-Roman civilizations. For further details, see S. Paranavitana, 'Interpretation of Vaharala', *EZ*, V, pp. 35-65; also Ariyapala, *op. cit.*, pp. 234-236.

42. *Sabassavattthupakarana*, ed. A. P. Buddadatta, Ambalangoda, 1959, p. 54; *SRV*, p. 219, p. 448, p. 886; *Saddharmalankara*, Sradhatissa, p. 598.

43. *Mahavamsa*, XXXIV, 3.

continued hitherto. This method was also practised in relation to monastic lands. The term *ande* which corresponds to Sanskrit *ardha* and Pali *addha* which means half occurs in Sinhalese literature from the thirteenth century onwards. The tenant who cultivated a plot of land held by another had according to this system to pay half of the crop to the latter. In certain cases the crop was divided in the proportion of two thirds for the land holder and one third (*tun ande*) for the tenant cultivator.⁴⁴

Yalman and Leach have referred to present day methods of exchanging labour known as *attan* or *kayiya*,⁴⁵ in the interior of Sri Lanka. According to the *attan* method a farmer works in the paddy field or the *chena* of another and in return receives the labour of the latter on an agreed day. According to the *kayiya* method, a group of relatives are summoned by a farmer to perform a particular agricultural task in the paddy field on the understanding that he would do reciprocal duties for them when required. Robert Knox, in the seventeenth century, has indicated the existence of similar practices in the Kandyan kingdom mainly at harvesting times,⁴⁶ but surprisingly neither literature nor inscriptions contain any reference to such obligations of reciprocity before that period. This is surprising because ancient Sinhalese village life was controlled by an intricate web of rights and duties generally associated with land tenure and caste. Individual behaviour was conditioned by group sanctions rather than by a sense of individual obligation prompted by private conscience. The cultivation of paddy and attendant problems of the control of water tended to create compact communities accustomed to mutual consultation and mutual aid in their daily life.

Labour obtained through the *rajakariya* system was utilized in certain agricultural operations of the king such as reclamation of forests, laying out new paddy fields and establishing parks. At times, labour due to the king was diverted to cultivate the land of the monasteries too.⁴⁷

44. W. I. Siriweera, *op. cit.*, pp. 23-24.

45. E. R. Leach, *Pul-Eliya: A Village in Ceylon* (A Study of Land Tenure and Kinship), Cambridge 1961, p. 264 ff.; Nur Yalman, *Under the Bo Tree: Studies in Caste Kinship and Marriage in the interior of Ceylon*, California, 1967, p. 44 ff.

46. Robert Knox, *op. cit.*, pp. 14-15.

47. *EZ*, I, p. 195, 199. The Buddannehala pillar inscription which records certain regulations concerning land of a monastery carries the provision *me rat yedenavun me kumburat pet sama kota diya pana kot* which has been translated as "employees in this district shall level the beds and lead the water to this field". See also, W. I. Siriweera, *op. cit.*, pp. 25-33.

In concluding this study, a question that poses itself as relevant is, whether Sri Lanka was self sufficient in food? The answer cannot be obtained through romanticized phrases such as 'granary of the east' that have been repeatedly used by story-tellers in glorifying the past. The chronicles record instances of famines during the reigns of Dūtthagamini (161-137 B.C.), Vattagamani (89-77 B.C.), Kunçanaga (187-189 A.D.), Sanghabodhi (247-249) and Upatissa I (365-406).⁴⁸ In the tenth century, Kassapa V (913-923) declared in an inscription that he, dispelled the fear of famine, "by affording facilities for the cultivation of fields by invocation of *Podun* [god Parjanya] and *Pulunda* [god Agni]".⁴⁹ Mahinda IV (956-972) claimed that he repaired "the dilapidated [tanks and ponds] and by means of the water thus supplied [put an end to] scarcity of food" in the island of Sri Lanka.⁵⁰ Once again famines are reported to have occurred during the times of Parakramabahu II (1236-70) and Bhuvanekabahu I (1272-84).⁵¹ The famine which occurred during the reign of Vattagamini was so serious that a considerable number of monks died while some others left the island to seek refuge abroad.⁵² The seriousness of most of the other famines or the threat of famines cannot be ascertained from available evidence. There is no doubt however, that the population in the whole country or in a part of it were affected by occasional famines though it would be unwise to conclude thereby that these famines had a permanent debilitating effect on the entire population or the economy leading in turn to the decline of agricultural prosperity. Famines referred to above have taken place approximately over a period of fifteen centuries and when considered the length of time they may even be negligible.

On the other hand with the extensive network of reservoirs and canals in the dry zone, agricultural production was enough to sustain the population of the country without additional imports or any grave hardship. The *Sabassaratthupakarana* and the *Anguttaratthakatha* dateable to the early Anuradhapura period, refer to three year old scented paddy (*tivassika-gandhasali*) which was processed by storing paddy in

48. *Mahavamsa*, XXXII, 29 refer to *bulu ka saya*; *Sammoha Vinodini*, P.T.S. edition, pp. 448-50; *Mahavamsa* XXXVI, 20, refer to *eknali saya*; *Hatthavanagalla vihara vamsa*, P.T.S. edition, ed., by C. E. Godakumbure, London, 1956, p. 15; *Mahavamsa*, XXXVI, 74-79; *Culavamsa*, XXXVII, 189-190.

49. *EZ*, I, No. 4, p. 43; *Artibus Asiae*, XVI, No. 3, pp. 179-181.

50. *EZ*, I, No. 20.

51. *Culavamsa*, LXXXVIII, 1-2; XC, 43.

52. *Sammohavinodini-Abhidhammapitaka Vibhangatthakatha*, ed. A. P. Buddadatta, P.T.S. London, 1923, pp. 445-451.

granaries for three years on various layers of aromatic drugs.⁵³ If such scented rice was ever partaken in Sri Lanka it was by members of politically and socially dominant groups namely the royalty, nobility and the priesthood. It was among them that the fiscal resources of the country which consisted mainly of the land revenue, were distributed. The *Vibhanga Atthakatha* of Buddhagosha states that a quantity of grain that could sustain 12,000 monks for three months was always stored at the Tissamaha vihara and also at the Cittalapabbata vihara.⁵⁴ The reliability of the assertion granted, this certainly required a surplus in the agricultural output. The large scale construction of dagobas as well as other architectural and irrigational works of imposing magnitude would also not have been possible if there had been no appreciable quantity of surplus food to feed a substantial work force.

Nevertheless, the popular belief that rice was exported from Sri Lanka is not applicable to most periods in any of our history. Only one solitary reference in the South Indian Sangam work, *Pattinapalai*, written in the second century A.D. indicates that foodstuffs were exported to South India from Sri Lanka (*Ilattunavu*)⁵⁵ but it does not specifically refer to rice and could mean any kind of food. On the other hand, there are specific references to the importing of rice into Sri Lanka from the mainland of India on certain occasions in the ninth century and after. The ninth century traveller, Ibn Khurdaobeh refers to importing rice to Serendib from Babattan in South India.⁵⁶ Al-Idrisi stated in the eleventh century that Jirbatam was a port in South India which was important as an export centre of rice to Sri Lanka.⁵⁷ According to Barbosa and Varthema in the sixteenth century rice was brought to Sri Lanka from the Coromandel.⁵⁸ These indicate that there had been ups and downs in agricultural productivity at various periods of history but the overall picture gives the impression that pre-thirteenth century Sri Lanka was self-sufficient in food except on a few occasions.

53. *Sahassaraththupakarana*, ed. A. P. Buddadatta, Colombo, 1959, pp. XVIII-XIX, p. 26, p. 80.

54. *Sammohavinodini*, *op. cit.*, p. 445.

55. *Pattinapalai*, ed. with commentary by Svami Vedachalam, Pallavaram, T. M. Press, 1919, line 191.

56. S. M. H. Nainar, *Arab Geographers' Knowledge of South India*, Madras, 1942, pp. 25-26.

57. H. M. Elliot, *The History of India as told by its own Historians*, London, 1867, Vol. I, p. 90.

58. Duarte Barbosa, *op. cit.*, p. 167; *The Travels of Ludovico Di Varthema*, ed. J. Vinter Jones, Hakluyt Society, London, M.DCCC. LXVII, pp. 191-192.

Agriculture which was not oriented to the market, assumed a downward swing towards the thirteenth, fourteenth and fifteenth centuries after the disintegration of the reservoir-based Rajarata civilization. During this period we do not hear of any architectural or irrigational undertaking that might be compared with those of the Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa kingdoms which required the intensive mobilization of manpower and economic resources. The coinage system also may reflect a decline in the economy. The currency upto the tenth century was of gold and the majority of eleventh century coins were of silver or of gold but the latter were so debased as to be hardly distinguishable from silver. In the twelfth and thirteenth centuries the old principal coin had become one of base metal or copper. The term *masuran* which indicated a gold coin in the Anuradhapura period was applied to a copper coin in the fourteenth century.⁵⁹ However, the disappearance of the gold coinage and the general debasement of currency cannot be taken as an unmistakable sign of the decline of the economy. For, it may even point to the contrary, as such a change might have taken place as a result of an expansion in the volume of trade, which made it difficult to meet the requisite supplies of gold, in a country where this metal is scarce.⁶⁰

The journey towards change in agricultural technology was slow largely because the country did not possess an industrialized base and because there was no excessive human pressure on land. Taking the country as a whole it seems unlikely that optimum land use was made at any given period of history. Optimum use of the dry zone Rajarata, considered as a separate entity, was made before the thirteenth century but thereafter the wet zone and the Kandyan hilly regions gained prominence in agricultural productivity. By this time, the subsistence character of the island's economy was beginning to be shaking.

With the arrival of the Europeans on the scene of Indian oceanic trade in the beginning of the sixteenth century the value of cash crops began to be realized much more than before, and the three European communities, the Portuguese, the Dutch and the British who held sway over Sri Lanka successively were largely interested in the preservation and development of cash crops in Sri Lanka which from their point of view formed a very lucrative pursuit. In these circumstances the established patterns of traditional agriculture changed resulting ultimately in the development of problems, economically—complicated and politically—intriguing.

59. H. W. Codrington, *Ceylon Coins and Currency*, Colombo, 1924, pp. 73-81.

60. A. Liyanagamage, *The Decline of Polonnaruwa and the Rise of Dambadeniya*, Colombo, 1968, p. 74.

IN SEARCH OF A "LOST LANGUAGE" SOME OBSERVATIONS ON THE COMPLEX ORIGINS OF SINHALA

J. B. DISANAYAKA

THE history of Sinhala writing, as can be reconstructed from the extant lithic records, does not go beyond the 3rd century B.C. The earliest dateable inscription belongs to a period almost contemporary with the introduction of Buddhism to Sri Lanka.¹ However, the date of the origin of the Sinhala language may be extended as far back as the 6th century B.C., which, according to the *Mahavamsa*, saw the first 'Aryan' settlement of the island. Vijaya and his followers, the first Aryan settlers in the island, were from some part of North India and one may, therefore, assume that the language they spoke was most probably a North Indian dialect. The *Mahavamsa*, however, makes no specific reference to the language of the first settlers and no written records of any kind exist for the period between the so-called arrival of Vijaya and the advent of Buddhism some three centuries later.

On the basis of the language of the earliest Sinhala inscriptions as well as of its system of writing which came to be referred to as 'Brahmi', it may be reasonable to conclude that the language of the Aryan migrants was one which bore close resemblance to some of the contemporary Indian Prakrits such as Magadhi.

What language did the 'pre-Vijayan' inhabitants of the island speak? To which linguistic family did it belong? These are some questions for which no conclusive answers have been so far provided.

1. Paranavitana, S., *Inscriptions of Ceylon*, Volume I, Colombo, 1970.

The aim of this paper is to delineate certain areas of potential research which may have significant bearings on the linguistic prehistory of pre-Vijayan Sri Lanka.

The prehistory of Sri Lanka is an almost unexplored field of inquiry. Neither the racial and ethnic structure of Sri Lanka nor the linguistic scene before Sinhala has been investigated with any scientific accuracy. Hence the student of prehistory has still to depend largely on folklore and legend for the reconstruction of Sri Lanka's distant past.

According to the island's chronicles and legendary traditions, the ethnic structure of the island before Vijaya was, no doubt, a mixed one. "It may be possible" observes Wijesekera, "to infer with some degree of certainty that the early population consisted of the legendary Nittewas, Yakkhas, and Rakshasas and Nagas who may be equated with the Negritoes, Australoids, and Mediterraneans".²

According to Adikaram, the maritime region that lies to the northeast of Anuradhapura was inhabited by groups of people known as Nagas, Yakkhas and Supannas.³ "Another least suspected source of racial infiltration into the island", postulates Wijesekera "may be the group of Indonesian islands".⁴ Whatever the origins of these different groups of people were, it is certain that the racial and ethnic structure of pre-Vijayan Sri Lanka was not a homogeneous one.

At the present state of our knowledge, we are unable to say whether these different groups of people spoke a single language or whether each had its own language or dialect. The only hypothesis we may posit is that at the beginning of the Aryan influx, the new masters would have superimposed their language on the native linguistic scene as the language of government and official communication.

This would have given rise to an ideal situation of languages-in-contact and bilingualism, and in the course of time, the languages of the indigenous peoples would have passed into oblivion. Not only did the Aryan language of the rulers become, perhaps, the only language of the Island, but it would have also begun to draw sustenance from the languages of the indigenes, a factor which may account for the distinctive character of Sinhala among the Indo-Aryan dialects.

2. Wijesekera, N. D., *The People of Ceylon*, Colombo, 1949, p. 46.

3. Adikaram, E. W. *Early History of Buddhism in Ceylon*, Colombo, 1953, p. III.

4. Wijesekera, N. D., *op. cit.*, p. 45.

A study of the vocabulary of Sinhala, for example, will shed some light on the nature of the impact of the native languages on contemporary Sinhala. The thirteenth century *Sidatsangarava*, the earliest extant grammar of the Sinhala language, records three categories of words into which the vocabulary of Sinhala could be analysed:⁵

- (a) 'tasama' (Skt. tatsama)
- (b) 'tabava' (Skt. tatbhava)
- (c) 'nipan' (Skt. nispanna)

The two categories of 'tasama' and 'tabava' designate words that have been either borrowed or derived from some other language. Examples cited by the author of the *Sidatsangarava* to illustrate these two classes of words are all of Indo-Aryan origin. The third category of words, referred to as 'nipan', embraces words that are of indigenous origin. It may be reasonable to assume that the origin of the 'nipan' words could be traced back to the 'lost language' or 'languages' of pre-Vijayan Sri Lanka.

Gunawardhana, a philologist who has studied the vocabulary of Sinhala in some detail, enumerates a list of about two hundred words which he considers as belonging to the 'nipan' category.⁶ He, furthermore, makes two general observations about this class of words. Firstly, that most of these words relate to everyday life, particularly of the simple village folk. Secondly, that some of these words have a corresponding Indo-Aryan counterpart. The latter, he illustrates with examples from the language of the 'Raksasas', a term which he employs to include 'Yakkhas' as well:⁷

	<i>Raksasas</i>	<i>Aryan</i>
'elephant'	ali	at; P. hatthi; S. hastin
'tiger'	koti	divi; P. dipi; S. dvipin
'coconut'	pol	neralu; P. nalikera; S. narikela
'jak fruit'	kos	pana; P.S. panasa
'to look'	bala	dak; P. dasa; S. dris
'to cut'	kapa	sid; P.S. chid
'to release'	liha	muda; P.S. much
'to speak'	doda	kiya; P.S. kath

5. *Sidatsangara Vivaranaya*, (ed.) Kumaratunga Munidasun and Amarasiri Guna vadu, Colombo, 1964, p. 73-80.

6. Gunawardhana, W. F., *Sinhalaya Vagvidya Muladharmam*, Colombo, 1973, p. 12-13.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 9-10.

Among the stock of words that Gunawardhana lists are those that refer to various animals and objects, plants and trees, which formed an integral part of the natural and domestic environment of the earliest inhabitants.

Even if we assume that these words are of local origin and that they were related to the one or the other of the 'lost languages', it still leaves some problems unresolved. What kind of genetic affinity do these 'lost languages' exhibit? Who were the ethnic groups that spoke these languages?

On the question of the genetic affinity of the lost languages and the ethnic structure of their speech-communities, the study of the Island languages such as those of the Maldives, Sumatra, Borneo, Celebes, and Java, to mention but a few, may offer new insights and perspectives.

In fact, it was suggested by Christian Lassen as early as 1847 that Sinhala was a language of Polynesian origin.⁸ This hypothesis was based on the linguistic affinity, firstly between Sinhala and Maldivian, the language of the Maldivian Islands, and secondly between Maldivian and the Polynesian languages. This school of thought, however, did not gain ground, for the consensus of opinion even at that time was in favour of the Indo-Aryan hypothesis. That Sinhala belongs to the Indo-Aryan family of languages has now been proved beyond doubt but the question of the nature and origin of the languages of Sri Lanka before the introduction of Sinhala is still an open one.

In my view, the 'lost language' or 'languages' of pre-Vijayan Sri Lanka could have been genetically related to the Island languages of South-East Asia. A number of factors seems to support this view.

Geographically, Sri Lanka forms a strategic link in the communication network between East and South Africa on the one hand, and the Indonesian and Polynesian Islands on the other. "Should one sail directly eastwards from a seaport on the eastern coast of Ceylon", observes Paranavitana, "the first landfall after passing the Andamans would be the Malay Peninsula. Similarly, a mariner sailing westward from a port in the Malay Peninsula, or the western coast of northern Sumatra, would touch land on the eastern or southern coast of Ceylon. It would, therefore, have been quite natural for the people of Ceylon and those of the Malay lands to have come in contact with each other if they took

8. Lassen, Christian. *Indische Alterthumkunde*, p. 553.

to seafaring".⁹ Paranavitana who adduces a wealth of evidence to prove that seafaring had been a pursuit held in high esteem among the earliest settlers of Ceylon, concludes thus: "Geographical considerations would thus lead one to the conclusion that the history of the Sinhalese and that of the Malays would have been influenced by each other".¹⁰

The eastern coast of Africa and the Indonesian and Polynesian Islands also seem to exhibit certain ethnic relations. Malagasy (Madagascar) located some 250 miles off the south-east coast of Africa, is ethnically related to Polynesia and Melanesia. Linguistically, too, Malagasy, the language spoken in this Island, has been identified as an Indonesian language. It is thus clear that there had been in the distant past constant communication between East and South Africa on the one hand and Indonesian and Polynesian Islands on the other, and that Sri Lanka, owing to her strategic position in the Indian ocean, would have been influenced by these Island cultures in more ways than one.

Divehibas, the language of the Maldive Islands, is the language that exhibits the closest resemblance and kinship to Sinhala. The view that has found general acceptance is that which postulates that Divehibas is a dialect of Sinhala. Geiger, for instance, states that "A true Sinhalese dialect is the Maldivian language which has branched off, it seems, shortly after the Proto-Sinhalese period"¹¹. However, Geiger himself admits that owing to "scanty material available till now" a full analysis of the linguistic structure of Divehibas has not been undertaken.

Thus the nature of the linguistic affinity between Sinhala and Divehibas has not been fully and conclusively investigated. Could it be possible that the 'lost languages' of pre-Vijayan Sri Lanka were more directly related to the earlier phases of Divehibas? It may be useful, in this context, to study Divehibas with a view to comparing it with the non-Indo-Aryan segment of the Sinhala vocabulary.

An equally potential area of inquiry will be the study of other Island languages of South East Asia and Polynesia aimed at comparing their grammatical and lexical structure with the non-Indo-Aryan segment of the Sinhala language. Gunasekara, for instance, lists a few Sinhala words which in his opinion may have come from the Malay language.¹²

9. Paranavitana, S., *Ceylon and Malaysia*, Colombo, 1966, p. 1.

10. *Idem*.

11. Geiger, Wilhelm, *A Grammar of the Sinhalese Language*, Colombo, 1938, p. 168.

12. Gunasekara, A. M., *A Comprehensive Grammar of the Sinhalese Language*, Colombo, 1891, p. 382.

Some of these could be 'loans' of a recent date. A word such as 'olu' (head), however, may provide fresh insights. In modern Sinhala, 'olu' is the most common word for the head. It exists alongside 'isa', 'iha' and 'hisa' all of which are phonological variants of the Indo-Aryan 'sirsa'. As remarked by Gunawardhana some of the words belonging to the pre-Vijayan languages continued to exist alongside their Indo-Aryan counterparts. Sinhala 'olu' which may be related to Malay 'ulu' or 'hulu' meaning 'head' or 'upper end' occurs as early as the 13th century A.C.¹³

A common form of address in colloquial Sinhala is 'bang' (ban). The history of this word is not known and it has not been attested in literary works. Could this be related to the Malay word 'bang' which is also a form of address towards elders?

The Malay word 'ambat', usually written 'hambat' means 'to run after', 'to follow'. Could the classical Sinhala words derived from the root 'hamba' (to chase, to follow, to drive away) and the spoken Sinhala words derived from 'amba' (to drive away) be related to the Malay word, in some genetic way?¹⁴

The impact of South-East Asian languages on the earliest stratum of Sinhala is not confined to the vocabulary only. Elements of morphological structure also tend to exhibit certain resemblances between the two groups of languages. The duplication of nouns as a process of pluralisation, for example, is a common feature of most South-East Asian languages such as Malay, Balinese etc.

The plural form of 'radja' (king) in Malay is 'radja radja'. The Balinese word 'marga' (road) when pluralised, becomes 'marga marga'. All nouns, however, cannot be subjected to this process of pluralisation.¹⁵ It is interesting to note that this process is not altogether unknown in spoken Sinhala. Observe, for instance, the following expressions:

'mal' (flower)

'mal mal hatte' (blouse with flowers)

'kotu' (square)

13. *Saddharmaratnavali*, (ed.) D. B. Jayatilaka, Colombo, p. 521.

14. *A Malay Dictionary*, (ed.) Dykstra.. For want of a better lexicon, the writer had to depend on a short dictionary prepared in the office of the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-2, United States Army Forces in the Far East.

15. *Ibid.*, p. vi.

- 'kotu kotu sarama' (sarong with squares)
- 'tit' (dot)
- 'tit tit sari' (sari with dots)
- 'iri' (stripe)
- 'iri iri kamise' (shirt with stripes)

It must, however, be noted that this process of duplication in spoken Sinhala is confined to certain semantic fields only, eg. the designs on textiles etc.

Similarly, could the imperative suffix 'la' in certain dialects of spoken Sinhala, as in 'dila' (give) be a remnant of the imperative suffix 'lah' in Malay, as in 'pergi-lah' (get away)¹⁶. The imperative suffix 'palla' in standard spoken Sinhala may also be interpreted as a contraction of 'pat-la' or 'pan-la', where 'pat' or 'pan' also serve as imperative suffixes in spoken Sinhala. Modern colloquial Sinhala also has an imperative suffix 'la' as in 'denava-la' (give) but this appears to be of rather recent origin.

At the present state of our linguistic knowledge, no definitive answers could be provided for the many questions posed in the present paper. Nevertheless, the hypothesis that the 'lost language' or 'languages' of pre-Vijayan Sri Lanka could be genetically related to the Island languages of South-East Asia and Polynesia calls for further investigation. For a fuller and more scientific investigation of the linguistic prehistory of the Island, the following fields of inquiry seem to be most relevant:

- (a) the discovery and identification of the non-Indo-Aryan and non-Dravidian segment of the Sinhala vocabulary.
- (b) a comprehensive survey of spoken Sinhala, with special emphasis on folk-speech.
- (c) a comparative study of the phonological and grammatical structure of Sinhala on the one hand, and of Island languages of South-East Asia and Polynesia, on the other.

16. *Ibid.*, p. ix.

EARLY AGRICULTURAL SETTLEMENTS IN SRI LANKA IN RELATION TO NATURAL RESOURCES

N. PUNYASIRI PERERA

THE position of Sri Lanka as a continental island in the Indian Ocean has profoundly influenced its mode of contact with the outside world. Its central position between the Red Sea and the Straits of Malacca and in relation to the monsoon winds of South Asia, assured Sri Lanka, of an important place in the shipping routes of the Indian Ocean. The available evidence indicates that during both the prehistoric¹ and early historic periods², and until probably the settlement of the Arabs; Sri Lanka was mainly populated by migrants from different parts of the Indian sub-continent. Naturally, many elements of the early Sri Lankian culture complex were also primarily derived from that source.³ Pre-historic man has left his stone implements, urn burials or even some fossilised skeletons enabling us to reconstruct a picture of the areas he roamed and lived.⁴ Likewise, from historic times, there are a myriad of stone inscriptions, monuments and schemes of water utilization for us to trace the growth of settlements and study their spread and areal differentiation. This investigation is mainly concerned with an attempt

1. Allchin, B., "The Late Stone Age of Ceylon", *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol. 99, 1958, pp. 179-201.
2. Basham, A. L., "Prince Vijaya and the Aryan Colonization of Ceylon", *Ceylon Historical Journal*, Vol. 1, (1952), pp. 1-10.
3. Kirk, William, "The Role of India in the Diffusion of Early Cultures", *The Geographical Journal*, Vol. 141, 1975, pp. 19-34.
4. There is an extensive literature on this. For example, Deraniyagala, P. E. P., *The Pleistocene of Ceylon*, Ceylon National Museums publication, Colombo, 1958.

to correlate the sites of these ancient landmarks with the distribution of the two basic natural resources of water supplies and soils so as to discern to what extent the availability, suitability and characteristics of these resources influenced the founding and dissemination of the early agricultural settlements. For a community whose food supplies were predominantly dependent on agriculture, these are the two most important natural resources, though there are others, such as climate, natural vegetation, physical features, rock types, geological structure and the degree of technological knowledge.

It seems necessary to first outline the geographical and historical background of the ancient Sinhala civilization, even though it is familiar ground for students of Sri Lanka's history. The island of Sri Lanka is 271 miles from north to south and 140 miles from east to west with an area of 25,332 square miles. The continental shelf around the coast is narrow round the southern part of the island but towards the north and north-west it widens out and merges with the platform that surrounds South India. Thus the southern-most part of peninsular India is separated from Sri Lanka by the shallow Gulf of Mannar and the shoals and sandbanks of the Adam's Bridge; the intervening sea being only 20 miles wide at the narrowest point.

The area closest to India is the north-west around Mannar and it is also the shallowest. Hence, it is reasonable to surmise, that it was to this area that the early migrants first set foot on the shores of Sri Lanka, in the 6th century B.C. according to Sinhala sources. The dry zone lowlands which include the above region forms about 70% of the total land area, and historically it is the most important, because it was the cradle of the ancient Sinhala civilization. The approximate line separating this from the wet zone has been demarcated on the basis of natural vegetation⁵ as a line joining Chilaw, Kurunegala, Matale, Ranganala, Teldeniya, Ragala, Boragas, Haldummulla and Dickwella; though it is generally taken to include the areas that receive less than 75 ins. of average annual rainfall. This may seem to be a great deal of rain for an area entitled dry, although a general average for most stations within it would be about 60 inches, and there are two areas in the north-west (Puttalam-Mannar) and south-east (Hambantota-Yala) which receives around 40 inches. Much of the rain is received from October to December from the north-east monsoon, and cyclonic storms; while

5. Perera, N. P., "The Boundary Between the Wet and Dry Zones of Sri Lanka", *Proc. Ceylon Assoc. Advancement of Science*, Part 1, 1973, p. 8.

the period from May to September, is the period of drought. But average annual rainfall figures are often seriously misleading, and in fact 60 inches still leaves the dry zone inadequately watered for field crops, due to the uneven seasonal distribution of the rains, their generally violent character, and consequently high run-off ; high yearly variation, and high evaporation rates in a climate where temperatures vary little throughout the year from an average of 80°F. The dry zone is broadly speaking topographically, an undulating plain, a succession of small shallow stream valleys and low interfluves. Throughout its length and breadth, like lone sentinels, rise a number of steep-sided rock hills and knobs, such as Sigiriya, Yapahuwa, Dimbulagala, Karandahela and Rajagala to mention only a few. Because of the steepness of their sides and of the commanding views they provide, many of them have been famous in history as the sites of fortresses, palaces and temples. Where such resistant rocks form ridges they have frequently been used by the ancient engineers as portions of bunds of the large irrigation tanks. Also in this region are innumerable low, bare rock mounds or *turtle backs*, whose form is due largely to a weathering known as *exfoliation*. These *turtle backs* are important in the dry zone as they form the abutments of the small irrigation tanks, on which the people of the dry zone depend so largely for their livelihood.

The main sources and bases for this study are the sites of the ancient inscriptions (Map 1), the distribution and the characteristics of the soils (Map 2), the distribution of the large irrigation schemes (Map 3) and the first edition of the one-inch-to-a-mile topographical maps of Sri Lanka completed in 1924. These topographical maps show the sites of most of the abandoned village tanks. If the site of an inscription is assumed to indicate that it was on or near a settlement of that period, then the distribution of these settlements, gives an indication of the settlement pattern of that period. Critics of this theory may point out, that in fact, most of the sites of the early inscriptions are on the surfaces of the gneissic rocks, and that those areas that do not contain such strata did not afford the facility of establishing inscriptions, like for example in the Mannar district, where the rocks are different and not so resistant. However, it should be mentioned that there are large areas in the dry zone like the region between the Mahaweli Ganga and the eastern coast, where the number of inscriptions are indeed very few, when compared with the large rock outcrops that occur in these areas, as suitable sites for inscriptions. The reasons for this will be discussed later.

Thus it is seen that within the dry zone itself, there are regional differences. When the map showing the sites of the inscriptions with the map showing the relative number of tanks (in use and abandoned, as indicated on the sheets of the one-inch maps (Map 4) is examined) we find that there is a close relationship between the density of the irrigation schemes, and the number of inscriptions. When these are further compared with the distribution and characteristics of the soil types some interesting and thought-provoking correlations emerge.

As mentioned earlier, it was to the northern and north-western coast of the island that most of the early immigrants set foot, having crossed the shallow sea even in frail boats or rafts, as some of the illicit immigrants do to this day. On the basis of linguistic affinities Paranavithana⁶ postulated that the ancient Sinhalese came from north-west India; that their language was a western Indian Prakrit, and that this was profoundly modified by a superposed linguistic stratum of eastern Indian origin. His idea of the homeland is supported by Chanmugam,⁷ who on the basis of anatomical measurements of the Sinhalese, thinks that they are related to Turko-Iranian types in present day Pakistan.

Whatever may be the centre of their emigration the point to be considered is that north-western India or even further India, is an area, where rice is a major crop grown in summer, while wheat is a winter crop. It is also a region where irrigation had been practised for millenia, not so much by surface water storage as in the dry zone, but by canals fed by rivers and subterranean sources.⁸ Hence it is not unreasonable to assume that these migrants were accustomed and had a knowledge of irrigated rice culture.

The climate and natural vegetation of the dry zone is in many ways different from that of the north-west or north-east India. So is the relief and the soils, except perhaps the alluvial soils. However, the areas of alluvial soils in the dry zone are comparatively very small compared with the vast expanses in the Indo-Gangetic plains or even those of peninsular India. Therefore the new environment of the emigrants to Sri Lanka was in many ways totally different from their homeland.

-
6. Paranavithana, S., "The Evolution of the Sinhalese Language, 1181-1199", in *Sri Sumangala Sabdakosaya*, (ed.) W. Sorata Maha Thera, Colombo, 1952.
 7. Chanmugam, P. K., "Anthropometry of Sinhalese and Ceylon Tamils", *Ceylon Journal of Science*, Vol. 4, pp. 1-18.
 8. Wheeler, R. E. M., "*The Indus Civilization*", (Supplementary volume to the Cambridge History of India) 3rd ed., Cambridge, 1968.

The landscape of Sri Lanka until the arrival of the "colonists" from north-western India may have been considerably altered by the settlement of pre-historic man. To study this aspect of the problem, research has still to be undertaken on the primeval landscape of the island. Perera⁹ has attempted to investigate this aspect, by a study of the human influences on the natural vegetation of the Sri Lanka highlands, on the basis of the nature of the stone implements collected by the Noones¹⁰ in the Bandarawela region and comparing them with the lives of some of the present day New Guinean tribes—the Chimbu,¹¹ who use similar tools, it is possible to surmise that these Bandarawellian folk were capable of clearing the forests and changing the environment to such an extent that the forest was replaced by the patena type of grassland. The Chimbu when first discovered were a neolithic people who had cleared the forest and practised agriculture and where many of the abandoned fields reverted not to a forest but to a grassland type of vegetation. Hence it is reasonable to assume that the Bandarawellian culture folk, also, practised a form of agriculture, probably more of the "chena" or shifting (slash and burn) type. The present state of pre-historic studies in this country, does not permit us to fix with any accuracy the century in which neolithic man first entered this country. Senaratne¹² is of the opinion that it was very much to a time after 1000 B.C. The urn burials and other megalithic remains in the region around Pomparippu in the north-west coastal area bears a similarity to the South Indian burial complexes.¹³ It is generally accepted that some of these cultural traits of the South Indian burial complexes were developed from traditions already extant among the neolithic-chalcolithic population of South India.¹⁴ If Arikamedu on the Coromandel Coast of South India, Mantai and the urn burials around Pomparippu can be linked and correlated, it might well be possible to show that the pre-historic people of this country had contacts with the seafarers from

-
9. Perera, N. P., "The Human Influences on the Vegetation of the Sri Lanka Highlands", *Vidyodaya, Journal of Arts, Science and Letters*, 1975. pp. 17-40.
 10. Noone, N. A. and Noone, H. V. V., "Stone Implements of Bandarawela" *Ceylon Journal of Science*, Vol. 3, pp. 9-24.
 11. Brookfield, H. C., "The Chimbu—A Mountain People of New Guinea", in *Geography as Human Ecology*, (ed.) Eyre, S. R. and Jones, G. R. J. Arnold, London, 1966.
 12. Senaratne S, P. F. "The Later Prehistory and Proto-history of Ceylon: Some Preliminary Problems", *Journal of the National Museum of Ceylon*, Vol. 1, 1965, pp. 7-19.
 13. Senaratne, S. P. F., op. cit., p. 12.
 14. Kirk, W., op. cit., p. 58.

the Roman world.¹⁵ What is pertinent to this study is that the immigrants in all probability mixed with the indigenous people, be they be the Yakkas and Nagas or some other native stock, and gradually adapted themselves to their new environment. In the absence of any tangible evidence of the culture of these indigenous folk, we have to assume that in this process of cultural assimilation, their culture was submerged and over-shadowed by the more advanced technology, skills and written language of the Sinhala-speaking immigrants. Even in relatively modern times, such cultural assimilation has taken place, as for example the Egyptian language by Arabic, and the Cornish language and culture in south-west England and South Wales by English. In the process of this adaptation the immigrants would have had to take cognizance of the different facets of their new environment, and so mould their practices to harmonize with their new ecosystem. A new technology was in the course of time gradually evolved by the mixing of these two and possibly other cultures, into a new and distinct local (native) trait and individuality. Thus arose the elements of a culture, which in course of time, efflorescened into what may be termed ancient Sinhala.

As mentioned earlier historical evidence corroborated by geography indicates the arrival of the Sinhala immigrants mainly to the shores of north-west Sri Lanka. In his studies of the soils of Sri Lanka, Panabokke¹⁶ has shown that the soils in this region are those classified as:

1. Regosols—map reference 15.
2. Solodized solonetz and solonchaks—map reference 13.
3. Grumusols—map reference 12.
4. Red-yellow latosols—map reference 8.
5. Reddish-brown earths and their drainage associates—map reference 1.
6. Alluvial soils—map reference 17.

At this stage it is appropriate and apposite to examine some of the salient characteristics of these soils, to show how their distinctive features affect the growth of crop plants and their water holding capacities for domestic and other uses. The ultimate aim is to demonstrate that for a people who were primarily dependent on agriculture for their food supplies, the soil type which would yield and sustain good harvests

15. Kirk, W., idem.

16. Panabokke, C. R., *The Soils of Ceylon and the Use of Fertilizers*, Colombo, 1967.

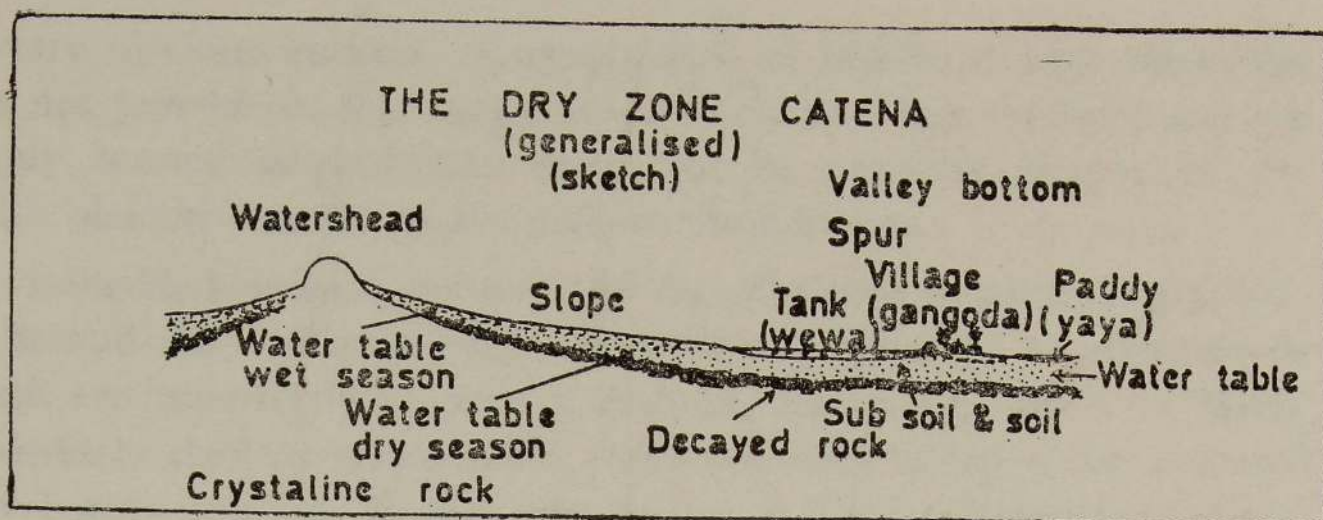
and simultaneously help in conserving water, would be the one that would be availed and utilized for dense settlement. Those that were naturally not so suitable would be largely unutilized and therefore largely unsettled.

Much of Mannar island and small pockets of the mainland littoral area is composed of regosols. It is a deep, excessively drained whitish sand. This indicates that rain water percolates at a rapid rate through these sands, and hence the main problem is to ensure an adequate moisture supply, in the surface soil layers for cereal food crops. Domestic water supplies however are found a few feet below the surface, in the fresh water lenses that build up in these sands. The principal plant of economic value that is grown is the sturdy palmyrah (*Borassus flabellifer*) with its deep feeding roots. Settlers in such an area though ensured of domestic water would have to get their food grains from outside. This would not be feasible in a subsistence economy, more so for a people who were mainly agriculturists.

The solodized solonetz and solanchaks, are found mainly on the north-western coastal area from about the estuary of the Moderagam Aru towards the north. These are soils that contain a high proportion of salts and hence unsuitable for the growth of mesophytic plants, both wild and domesticated, and nearly all the domesticated plants are mesophytes. To make it cultivable, large term drainage and reclamation measures are necessary. Compared with the regosols this type does not contain suitable water for domestic purposes, and hence are unsettled, even to this day.

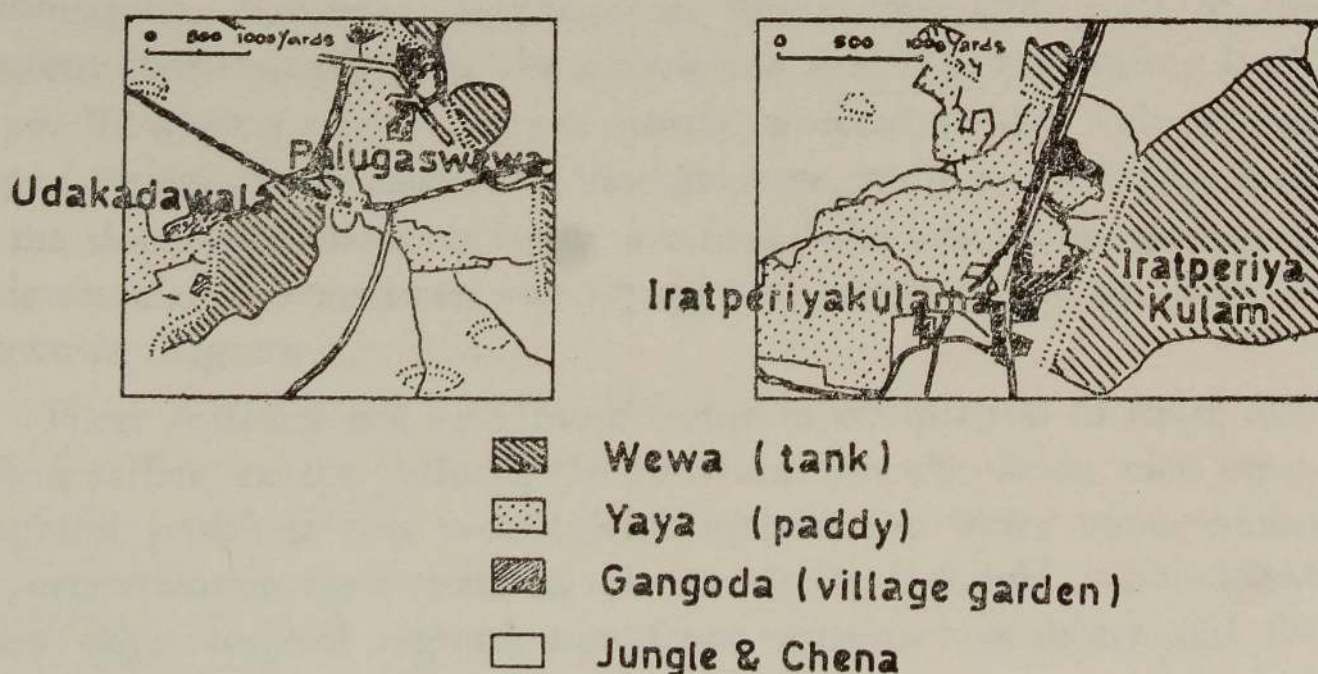
The red and yellow latosols which cover nearly a thousand square miles extends northwards from Puttalam to Mannar, and sweep across the north of the island to Mullativu on the east. The red latosols are very deep, excessively drained, moderately fine textured, reddish soils that occupy the crests, upper mid and lower mid slopes of the gently undulating landscape. The yellow latosols are imperfectly to poorly drained, very deep, moderately fine textured yellowish soils that occur on the lower slopes. If the story in the Mahawamsa is to be given any credence that Vijaya and his followers found their hands soiled a yellow tinge and hence called the place Thambapani; it could well be sustained that it could be due to the yellowish coloured soils that occupy these regions. Though ground water is available, it lies below an average depth of 100 feet and it was difficult to tap this deep source. Hence in this latosol region, there had been no settlement in the past, because

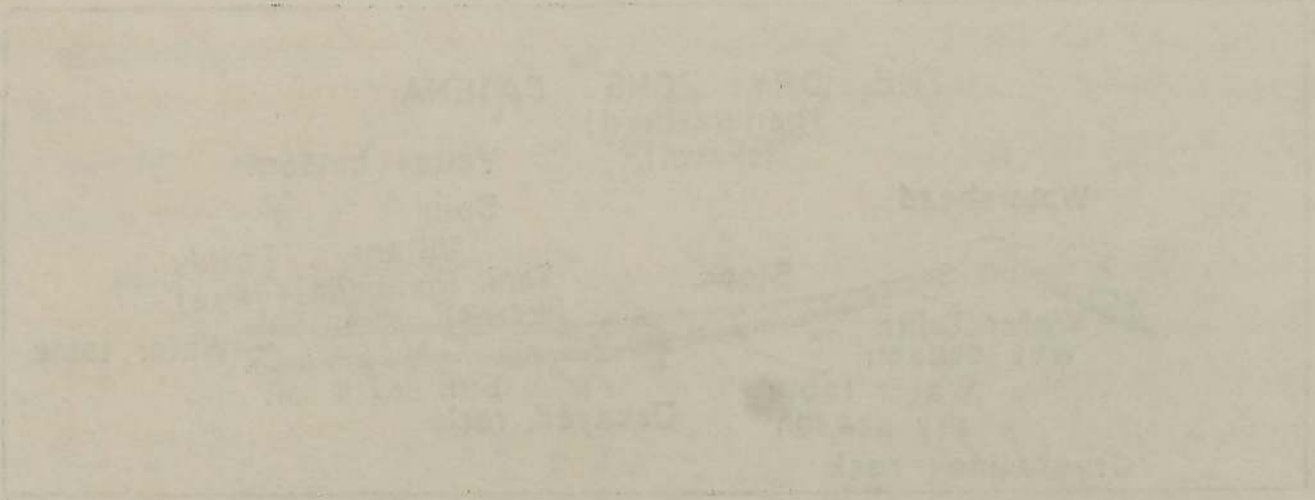
DIAGRAM 1



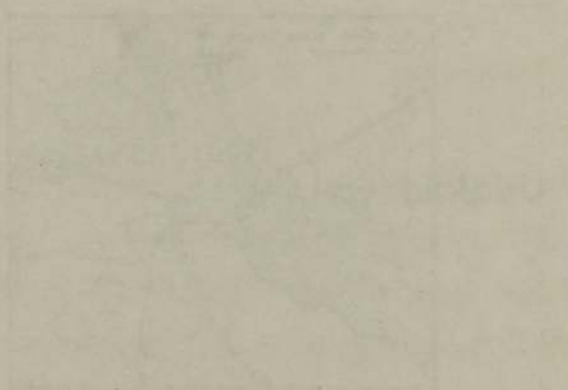
Top soil	Rock or thin soil	Lighter	Heavier soils	Tank	Loams	Paddy soils (gley)	
Ground water wet season	Little or none	Near surface	at surface	Tank	Near surface	Irrigated	
Ground water dry season	None	None	Little	Some	Tank	Near surface	Irrigated
Traditional Land use	Jungle	Jungle, chena (dry grains)	Jungle, chena (including elvi)	Tank	Garden	Paddy	

DIAGRAM 2 — Plan of tank settlements





Height (ft)	Area (sq ft)	Volume (cu ft)	Notes
10	100	1000	...
20	400	8000	...
30	900	27000	...
40	1600	64000	...



The following table shows the relationship between the height of the object and the time it takes to fall. The data is based on the assumption that the object is falling in a vacuum.

Height (ft) Time (sec) Velocity (ft/sec)

10 1.105 11.05

20 1.961 39.20

30 2.449 73.50

40 2.874 113.60

of very obvious reasons. Construction of surface storage reservoirs was not possible in this very porous freely draining medium, and the deeply located groundwater could not be exploited by any of the earlier devices known to the ancient civilizations.

Imbedded between the areas of the solodized solonetz and solonchaks and the red and yellow latosols are pockets of Grumusols which are imperfectly to poorly drained, dark grey, brown to black, moderately shallow clayey soils. They are very sticky when wet and very hard when dry. Wide cracks appear on drying. These characteristics make it difficult to work and grow any crops. Even the sparse and sporadic natural vegetation exhibits extremes of vegetative growth that even a plant that has a tree habit like divul (*Feronia elephantum*) is reduced to a stunted creeper.

The alluvial soils though suitable for raising crops, occur as narrow bands along the rivers that cut through the region of the latosols and solodized solonetz on their way to the sea. Yet, primarily because these rivers are not perennial, the flood plains they have built are necessarily narrow, and would not offer much scope for dense settlements in an otherwise inhospitable area. But these rivers served a useful means for the immigrants to penetrate inland and discover more productive soils on which to build their settlements.

The reddish-brown earths and their drainage associates are the most important soils of Sri Lanka in the sense that they not only occupy the largest extent of the land surface in comparison to soils but also because they provide the necessary edaphic conditions for a variety of crop plants. In the dry zone, they occur chiefly in the Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa, Vavuniya, Hambantota, Moneragala and parts of the adjacent districts, mainly on the undulating as well as the rolling landscape. In such a relief, they are mostly confined to the well-drained higher topographical aspects of the landscape, while in the lower parts of the slopes and valley bottoms are found the low humic gley soils. This association constitutes the typical soil catena of the dry zone as shown in diagram 1.

These soils are not only more fertile in comparison to those described earlier, except perhaps, the alluvium; but also lie in such topographical positions that would lend support for water conservation by surface storage reservoirs. In this connection it should be noted that many other tropical regions experience seasonal variability and in-

effectiveness of rainfall; and Tamil Nadu in particular, is very near to being a climatic homologue of the dry zone. But the dry zone, apart from the Jaffna peninsula, is handicapped in comparison with Tamil Nadu, by the poverty of its groundwater resources, which are virtually restricted to the variable surface layer of decayed rock, soil-forming material and soil, over impermeable crystalline rocks. Irrigation must therefore be mainly a matter of storing water in surface tanks, or of tapping the wet season flow of rivers by weirs or anicuts. These facts would give belief to the theory, that the method of surface water storage was in many respects an indigenous innovation, evolved and moulded to the particular milieu of the dry zone.

The fertility of these soils in comparison to the others of the dry one can also be shown by the fact that this soil type sustains a type of natural vegetation known as the tropical evergreen seasonal forest¹⁷, producing the highest amount of organic matter or biomass than any other type of dry zone vegetation. Such a forest consists of a number of strata or layers from the tallest and dominant Palu (*Manilkara hexandra*), Burutha (*Vitex pinata*), Halmilla (*Berrya cordifolia*) and Kaluwara (*Diospyros ebenum*) to an undergrowth of bushes and herbs. Such a variety of plant forms provides various niches for different types of animal life; from the herbivorous deer, sambhur, buffalo and elephant, to the carnivorous leopard and jackal. The dry season from May to August makes forest clearance an easy task when fire is aided by the strong winds, that blow through this region during this season.

It was as a consequence of this peculiar and unique arrangement of natural resources that the three-fold system of land use, characteristic of the dry zone village was possible. The centre of the settlement was the tank, the homesteads being grouped on one or both sides of the tank on relatively high ground, besides or between the tank bund (diagram 2). It is on this land that the drought susceptible crops are grown and the wells for drinking water sunk. This constitutes the *gangoda*. Adjacent to it, in the lower valley, is situated the *yaya* or paddy fields; on the water retaining low humic gley soils, and which is irrigated by means of canals leading from the tank. The irrigable upper slopes are forested, and cleared for shifting cultivation or *benas*. Here dry field crops find their place. It is thus seen that the drainage characteristics of the reddish-brown earths in the catenary sequence of the dry zone,

17. Perera, N. P., "The Physiognomic Vegetation Map of Sri Lanka", *Journal of Biogeography*, Vol. 2, 1975, pp. 1-19.

is one of the most important single factors, which determines the ecological adaptability of a wide variety of agricultural crops. Crops that provided a mixed diet, in the form of starches (rice and other grains), sugars (sugarcane, honey and fruits), oils (gingelly and coconut), proteins (undu beans) and also sustenance for cattle and other domesticated animals, as straw and stubble¹⁸.

Elsewhere in the dry zone, but especially in the present day Eastern Province and Uva, are three soil types that are not so productive as the reddish-brown earths. They are—

1. Reddish-brown earths and immature brown loams—map reference 2.
2. Reddish-brown earths, non-calcic brown soils and their drainage associates—map reference 3.
3. Non-calcic brown soils on old alluvium and alkali soils—map reference 11.

The first two types although they have the basic characteristics of the reddish-brown earths are generally inferior and infertile because of the high proportion of iron stone and quartz gravel found in the sub-soil. Of these two, the reddish brown earths and immature brown loams are better than the non-calcic brown soils, and support an ecosystem akin to the reddish-brown earths and their drainage associates. In the non-calcic brown soils and immature brown loams particularly in the lower Uva and Amparai district, the natural vegetation is also different, and consists of the upland savanna¹⁹, which is a mixed vegetation of tall shoulder-high grasses and trees of average height about 30 feet, the general appearance of which is like an uncared orchard. This type of vegetation contains a number of plants of economic value, and are also frequently fired to ease gathering of their produce. The soils on which the savanna grows, are so poor, that even today villagers would not clear these lands for chena cultivation, but would only clear the areas of high forest or *mukalana* on the richer reddish-brown earths^{19A}. It should be emphasised that although on the map only one type of soil is marked,

18. See (a) "Badulla Pillar Inscription", *Epigraphia Zeylanica*, Vol. 3, pp. 71-100.
 (b) "Tonigala Rock Inscription", *Epigraphia Zeylanica*, Vol. 3, pp. 172-188.
 (c) "Slab Inscription Near Stone Canoe, Anuradhapura", *Epigraphia Zeylanica*, Vol. 1, pp. 113-120.

19. Perera, N. P., op. cit., p. 17.

19 A. Perera, N. P., "The Ecological Status of the Savanna of Ceylon." i. The Upland Savanna, *Tropical Ecology*, Vol. 10, 1969, pp. 207-221.

it does not necessarily follow that on the ground this is exactly the position. Actually, what is indicated on the map, is only the main type and in this region the more productive reddish-brown earths would usually lie on the upper slopes in a complex and intricate pattern.

Similarly, the non-calcic brown soils on old alluvium and alkali soils—reference 11, are found mainly on the crests of the upper slopes while the alkali soils are on the middle and lower slopes. Here again, while the upper slopes are forested, the lower slopes consist of a type of savanna vegetation called *damana*.²⁰ These savanna soils are of little economic use. Holmes²¹ expressed the idea, that these *damana* savannas were once the paddy lands of the ancient Sinhalese civilizations, and that they became alkaline because of long continued irrigation. This is unacceptable for the following reasons.

1. Irrigation was not only practised here in ancient Sri Lanka but also in many other parts of the dry zone.
2. The rainfall of the dry zone is adequate to flush out any salts accumulated.
3. This alkalinity is due to the characteristics of certain minerals found in the parent rock.

If the soil map is compared with the map showing the relative number of tanks (map 4) as indicated on the first edition sheets of the one-inch survey maps it is found that there is a close concentration of these in the areas of the reddish-brown earths—reference 1. Elsewhere in the dry zone there is a decrease, the smallest number occurring in the region of the regosols, latosols, old alluvium and non-calcic brown soils. Considering the number of tanks in the Puttalam and Mannar districts it is clearly seen that the density is low. This is naturally because the solodized solonetz are either too alkaline or the latosols have very little soil moisture for the growth of crops. This same relationship is observed in parts of Uva, Trincomalee and Batticaloa and the coastal area of Hambantota. It is indeed difficult to believe that all the small tanks marked on the one-inch maps were in working condition at any single period; but the point that is relevant to this study, is that, the largest number of these tanks are found in the region of the reddish-brown earths—reference 1 (map 4 and table 2). This is substantiated by reference

20. Perera, N. P., op. cit., p. 17.

21. Holmes, C. H. "*The Grass, Fern and Savannah Lands of Ceylon; Their Nature and Ecological Significance*, (Imperial Forestry Institute Paper 28), Oxford, 1951.

in the *Mahavamsa* that the earliest tank constructed—the Abhayawewa, was on this soil type. It was constructed by Prince Anuradha on the southern side of the capital—Anuradhapura. This early work of the 4th century B.C. has not been identified, though Brohier²² is of the opinion that it was a small tank, which was blotted out by a larger project, as the people became better acquainted with the art of building reservoirs, and that Basavakkulama is the enlarged ancient Abhayawewa. This was constructed about 431 B.C. by Pandukhabhaya, the grandson of Panduvasadeva—the second king and brother-in-law of Prince Anuradha.

When the map showing the major tanks and canals are compared with the soils map the interesting correlation that emerges is that nearly all these large tanks irrigate the areas of reddish-brown soils and their drainage associates, and not even the areas of immature brown loams, non-calcic brown soils or those of old alluvium and alkali soils, except perhaps the larger schemes in the Deduru Oya basin.

The only large tank completely outside the reddish-brown earths is the Giant's tank which is the ancient Manamatta tank ascribed to Dhatusena (458-473 A.D.). Here the storage tank and the main irrigation canals had to be located in a different manner from the region of the reddish-brown earths. The chief reason, perhaps, which may be adduced for this alteration in general design, was the absence of gneissic rock on which to found the ends of the bunds, and the absence of rock foundation which was considered indispensable where large bodies of water had to be discharged. In the case of this tank, two nearly parallel lines of embankments were run out towards the sea for lengths varying from 1 to 3 miles. These lower ends were then joined by a wide flat curved bund. The bund thus enclosed the tank on three sides, rendering it possible to irrigate the land on both flanks as well as the land in front. Thus much of the alluvial soils were irrigated and not the others like the solodized solonetz and grumusols.

When this interrelation of soils and tanks is further correlated with the map showing the sites of the ancient inscriptions it is clearly evident that the sites of the ancient inscriptions are mostly either in areas of the reddish-brown earths or on alluvial soils. The largest concentration of inscriptions are in a broad band that sweeps across the Rajarata in the Anuradhapura, Kurunagala, Vavuniya and Polonnaruva districts in the

22. Brohier, R. L., *Ancient Irrigation Works of Ceylon*, Parts 1-3, Colombo, 1935-36.

valleys of the Maha oya, Deduru oya, Mi oya, Kala oya, Malwatu oya, Ma Oya, Yan Oya and the middle Mahaweli ganga and its tributary, the Amban ganga. In Ruhuna it is in the lower and middle Walawe ganga, Kirindi oya, Menik ganga, Kumbukkan oya and Heda oya. Elsewhere in the dry zone, there is a marked and striking absence of early inscriptions, except in certain isolated sites. Two other areas which show very few inscriptions are the Jaffna district and the wet zone, which contained the ancient Mayarata and Malaya.

According to the *Vamsatthappakasini*²³ the 'Aryans' opened up settlements where water was easily available. The *Mahavamsa*²⁴ mentions that no sooner they migrated to this country they settled down in eight different places as the first stage in their colonization movement. Settlements in other parts of the country, probably independent of the north-west region existed especially in the south-east of the island; and the *Mahavamsa*²⁵ states that the principality of Rohana was founded by the Sakka prince Rohana in 5 B.C.

As described earlier the soils, and the vegetation that these soils supported, in the north-west coastal area, was not conducive for agriculture, and hence the migrants had to proceed further inland to the region of the Tropical Seasonal Rain Forest in the reddish-brown earths. Once in this region, forest clearance proceeded apace, bringing into agricultural production extensive tracts of the reddish-brown earths. In course of time population had increased in the village terrains which provided the food and labour on which urban communities could grow. Thus in course of time four different types of settlements were established.

1. GAMA—consisting of paddy fields, garden land and chena. It usually consisted of a number of families belonging to the same kinship group and occupational group.²⁶
2. NIGAMA—a larger unit than the gama, which was also a market town at the meeting place of local routes, visited by local traders. Eg. Hopitigamu.²⁷

23. Vamsatthappakasini (ed.) Malalasekera, G. P., Vols. 1 and 2, London, 1935-36.

24. *Mahavamsa*, Vol. VI, pp. 43-45.

25. *Mahavamsa*, Vol. IX, pp. 9-11.

26. Codrington, H. W., *Ancient Land Tenure and Revenue in Ceylon*, Colombo, 1938.

27. See (a) "Badulla Pillar Inscription", *Epigraphia Zeylanica*, Vol. 3, pp. 71-100.
(b) "Polonnaruwa Hata-Da-Ge Vestibule Wall Inscription", *Epigraphia Zeylanica*, Vol. 2, pp. 91-96.

3. PATUN-GAMA—a more urbanized settlement than a nigama where both local and foreign merchants traded. It was usually situated by the shore and had a harbour. Eg. Mahatitta (Mantai) and Gokonna (Trincomalee).²⁸
4. PURA OR NAGARA—an urban settlement akin to a city with main streets and side streets containing markets where both local and foreign merchants traded. Usually the seats of government or of a principality containing palaces, temples etc.²⁹ Eg. Anuradhapura.

The irrigation works of Parakramabahu I constructed before and after he ascended the throne are a good indication of the areal extent of the Sinhala settlements till the time of the depopulation of the dry zone and the shift to the wet zone. The identification and description of these irrigation works has been well documented by Nicholas³⁰ and hence, there is no need to discuss them in this paper, except to point out some of the significant areas, which were left undeveloped by Parakrama Bahu I. They are as follows:—

1. The north-western and northern coastal area and the Jaffna peninsula.
2. The highlands above 1500 feet.
3. The eastern coastal area and the basin of the Maduru oya and the land lying between the east bank of the Mahaweli ganga north of Mahiyangana and the sea.
4. The wet zone lowlands except for certain pockets of settlements in the Kelani ganga, Kalu ganga, Gin ganga and Nilwala ganga basins.
5. Ruhuna.

It is also useful to this study to examine as to why these areas are not mentioned. Ruhuna at that period included the Dighavapi district (modern Gal-Oya valley), and lower Uva (Buttala-Moneragala). Parakramabahu I restored only four tanks³¹. This was probably due to the fact that it was in the Dighavapi district that he met fierce resistance

28. See *Upasakaganalankaraya*, (ed.) Sugunupala Thera, 1930.

29. Giles, H. A., *The Travels of Fa-Hsien* (399-414 A.D.), Cambridge, 1923.

30. Nicholas, C. W., "The Irrigation Works of King Parakramabahu I", *Ceylon Historical Journal*, Vol. 4, 1954-55, pp. 52-68.

31. Nicholas, C. W., "Historical Topography of Ancient and Mediaeval Ceylon," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Ceylon Branch*, Vol. 6, p. 29.

from Manabharana, the ruler of Rohana, who finally suffered defeat and gave up the struggle. But the struggle continued for sometime under the leadership of his mother, Queen Sugala, till she too was subdued later³².

The wet zone lowlands were covered with Tropical Rain Forest and marshes, but an attempt was made to drain and reclaim some of these areas, for example in Pasdun Korale³³. Likewise the highlands above 1500 feet were also uninhabited, as they were since the historic period up to the drift to the wet zone.

The north-west coastal area and the eastern coastal areas were uninhabited due to the unproductive soils; the nature and characteristics of which have been described earlier.

The Jaffna peninsula was probably settled but in this region irrigation was by means of wells and not by tanks. Thus the areas of dense settlement up to the end of the Polonnaruwa period were mainly confined to the areas of reddish-brown earths and the alluvial soils of the dry zone. From about the 13th century began the polarization of settlements into three main regions, one in the wet zone lowlands, the second in the Jaffna peninsula and the third in the hill country below 2,500 feet. The dry zone lowlands though not completely abandoned were generally depopulated. Thus in the course of nearly seventeen centuries the settlement geography had undergone fundamental changes.

As we have shown earlier the antiquity of the north-west coastal area goes back beyond the beginnings of Sri Lanka's history. The *Dipavamsa* mentions the place-name Thambapani near the mouth of the Aruvi Aru, that is in the vicinity of modern Arippu. Equally ancient but of greater importance than Thambapani was the port of Mahatittha, on the land opposite the Mannar island. Ptolemy's map names it Modouttou³⁴. There are four or five references in the inscriptions to the place Magana-nakara which Nicholas³⁵ identifies as lying in the neighbourhood of the mouth of the Moderagam Aru. The interesting point is that except for these port settlements there are hardly any references either in the ancient chronicles or in inscriptions to other major settlements, in the north-west coastal area.

32. Nicholas, C. W., op. cit., p. 30.

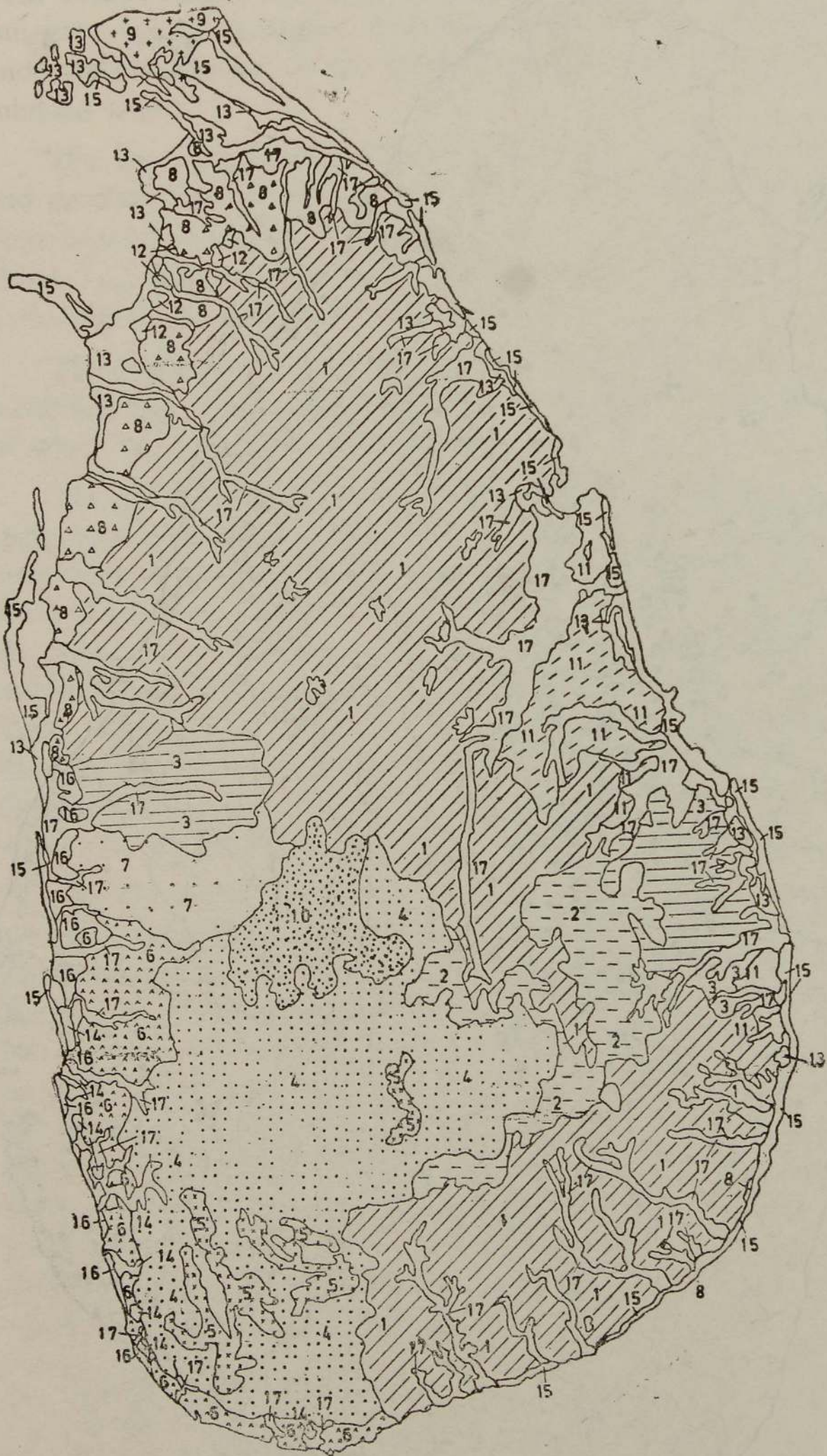
33. Nicholas, C. W., op. cit., p. 31.

34. Nicholas, C. W., idem.

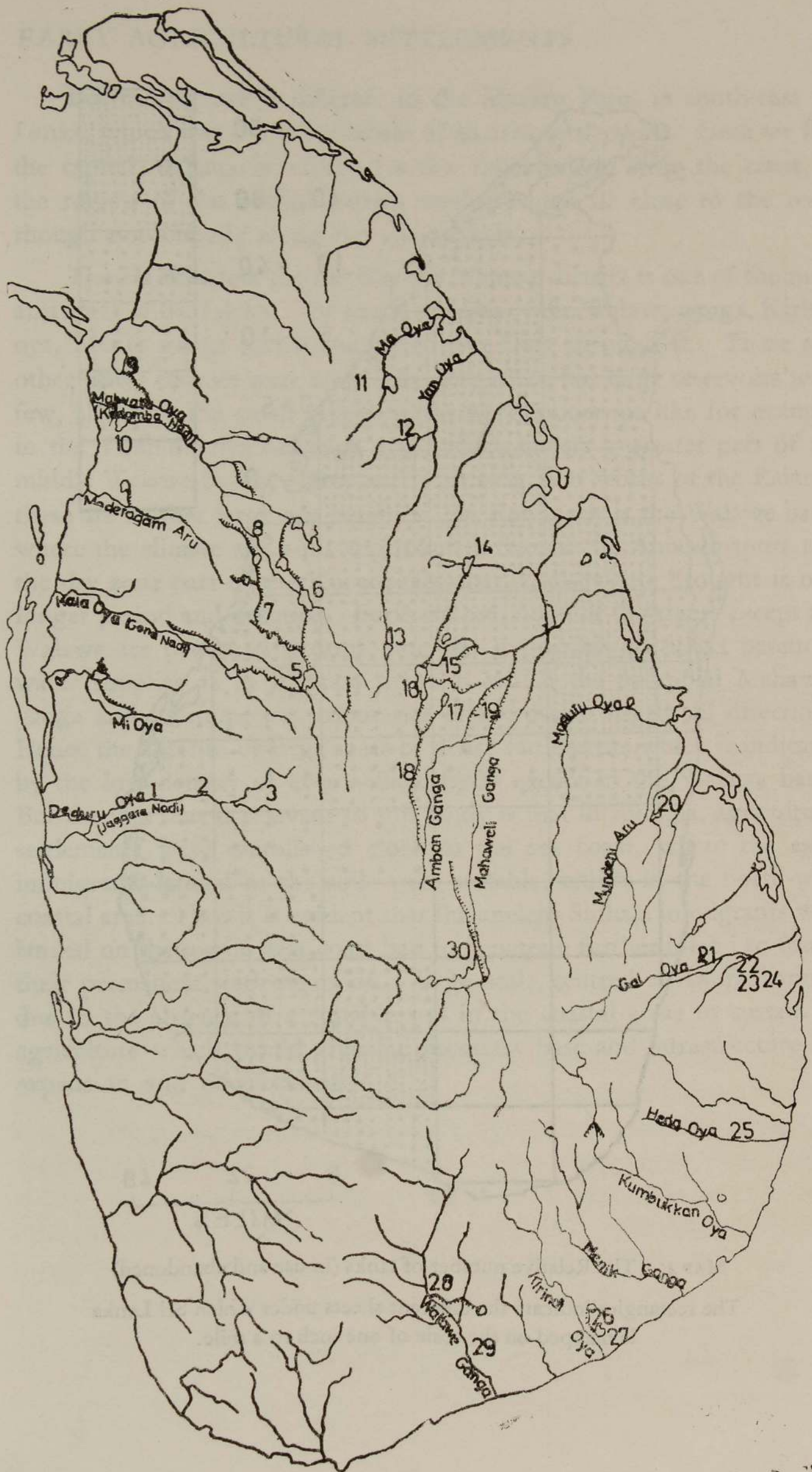
35. Nicholas, C. W., idem.



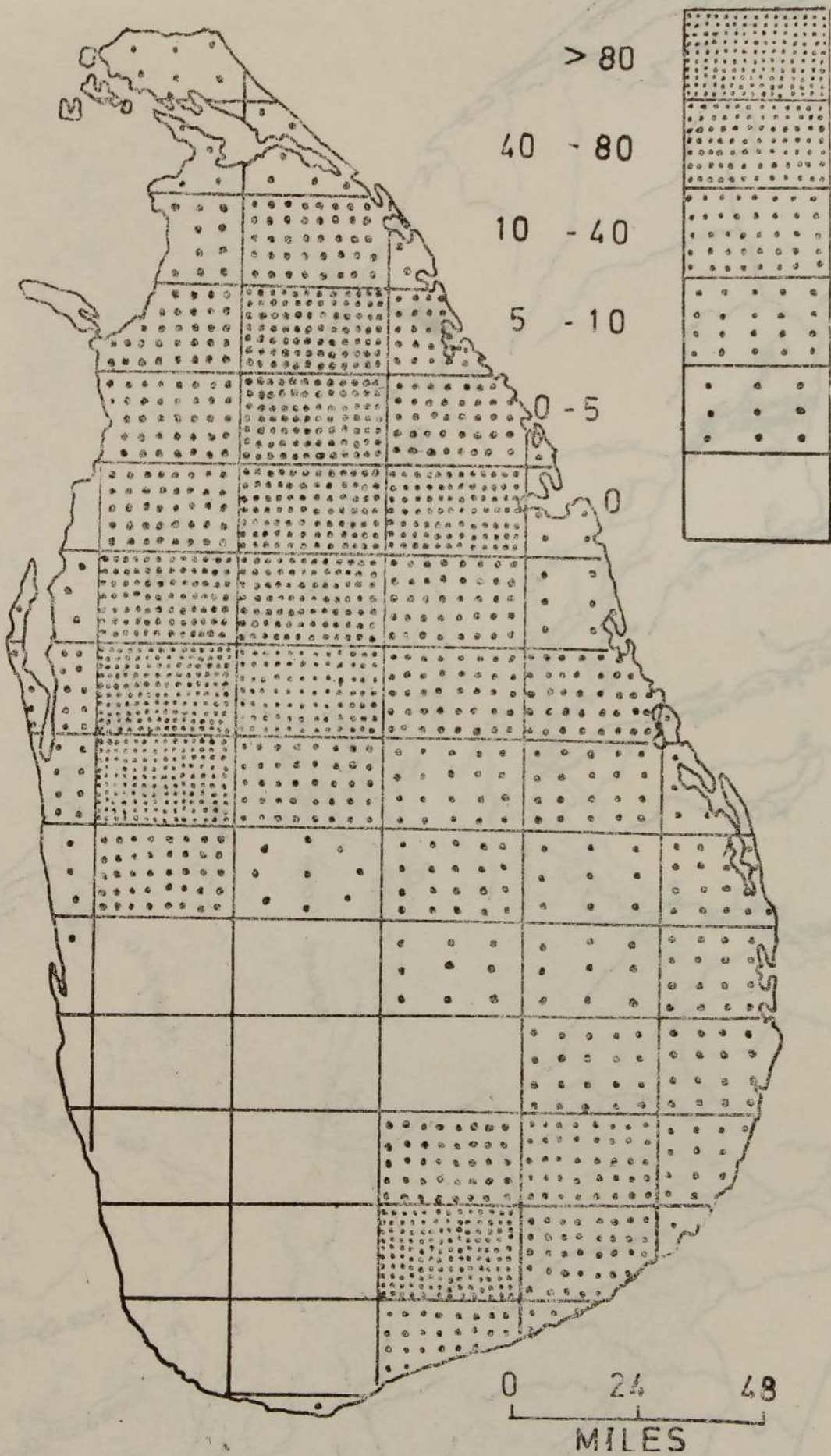
MAP 1: Location of ancient inscriptions, 3rd century B. C. to 3rd century A. C.



MAP 2: Abridged soil map (after C. R. Panat okke)



MAP 3: Rivers and large irrigation schemes



MAP 4: The Relative number of tanks (in use and abandoned)
 The rectangles indicate the different sheets under which Sri Lanka
 is mapped on the scale of one inch to a mile.

But the picture is different in the Magam Pattu in south-east Sri Lanka, which was the other centre of ancient settlements. Here we find the capital Mahagama, situated a few miles inland from the coast, in the region of the reddish-brown earths, which lie close to the coast though not actually along the coastal belt.

The Hambantota district like the Mannar district is one of the most arid areas of Sri Lanka. The lower courses of the Walawe ganga, Kirindi oya, Menik ganga and Kumbukkan oya flow through it. These and other water courses were tapped for irrigation, but large reservoirs were few, although the small village tanks were numerous like for example in the Timbulketiya one-inch map, which covers a greater part of the middle Walawe basin. Compared with irrigation works of the Rajarata these are neither large nor complex. In Ruhuna it is the Walawe basin where the climate and soils approximate that of the Anuradhapura and the dry zone part of the Kurunegala district, elsewhere drought is of a longer period and duration. Furthermore, none of the rivers except the Walawe are perennial streams, nor was it possible to divert perennial water supplies as in Rajarata through which the perennial Mahaweli ganga and its numerous tributaries criss-cross in nearly all directions. Hence the absence of large areas of dense settlements which is indicated by the low density of even village tanks except in the Walawe basin. But the fact that is relevant to this study is that in Ruhuna, agricultural settlements were established close to the sea coast, where the early immigrants landed as the soils were suitable, unlike in the north-west coastal area. Thus it is evident that the ancient Sinhala immigrants who landed on the north-west coast had to penetrate further inland to found their permanent settlements on a large scale, centred at Anuradhapura, due to the absence of a suitable soil in the coastal areas to sustain an agriculture which would give the necessary base and infrastructure for expansion and development.

THE EXTERNAL FACTOR IN SRI LANKA'S HISTORICAL FORMATION*

SENAKE BANDARANAYAKE

Sri Lanka is an island located at the centre of the Indian Ocean and at the southern extremity of the South Asian subcontinent. As an island its relationship with the external world around it, both by land (i.e. with Peninsular India) and by sea (i.e. with the countries of the Indian Ocean region and beyond), has been of particular importance in the evolution of Sri Lanka's history and culture. The way in which historians have looked at what we may call this "external factor" raises important issues of *approach*, *orientation* and *perspective* in historical studies. The principal objective of this article is to raise some of these questions of orientation and to outline some basic approaches to the role played by external factors in Sri Lanka's historical formation in the period before the 16th century.

Any confrontation with historical data—or even the simplest kind of "search for historical facts"—involves either explicitly or implicitly a certain theoretical framework or theoretical viewpoint on the part of the historical researcher. We may describe this "network of theory" as the sum total of mental or philosophical attitudes and the set of received beliefs and assumptions, of historical notions, methodologies and scholarly traditions which the student of history brings to bear on his or her field of survey. This complex of mental equipment is what basically determines which facts the observer chooses to see, which facts he or she chooses to link together and how he or she evaluates and

* This article is based on a Foundation Lecture delivered at the Bandaranaike Centre for International Studies, Colombo, in June 1975.

interprets such facts. This theoretical framework is inherited or implanted in the historian by virtue of his or her training and by the prevailing scholarly environment. It is rarely questioned and often, because it is never explicitly presented as a coherent framework, it is not questionable. Instead, each generation of scholars improves on the work of the previous generation by a variety of additive or critical methods. The net result is an increase in the quality and the quantity of data within the parameters of the established and inherited framework. At a certain stage in this process anomalies and contradictions appear between some of the available data and related parts of the inherited theoretical framework. At this point two paths of action are possible: the researcher who is inhibited by his or her training ignores, accommodates or explains away these anomalies; the bolder student, on the other hand, begins to search out that (often hidden) framework, to question it and finally begins to look for alternative theoretical models or to ask for the construction of new ones.

This somewhat simplified description of an important aspect of historical studies is offered here because the present article derives from the viewpoint that Sri Lankan historical studies have arrived at precisely such a critical juncture. Modern Sri Lankan historical science has made tremendous progress since it began in the late 19th or early 20th century, and particularly since the 1940's. The accumulation and critical verification of data is today highly advanced while the rate of research output has increased exponentially. Yet no single work of scholarship has yet questioned the basic assumptions and theoretical framework laid down many decades ago, while the subject as a whole has developed beyond recognition but basically within the parameters of that early framework.

The present article does not presume to offer a new theoretical framework in any total or coherent form. What it does attempt is to provide the outlines of a fresh orientation to the problems posed by its particular subject; an orientation which calls for a new way of looking at the available facts and which opens up new perspectives in the continuing search for further data. As such, for the most part it only makes explicit what is already implicit in the work of other scholars and its focus is not with the facts themselves but with the relationships between facts.¹ In effect, our concern here is to point out in a preliminary way

1. As the article contains facts drawn from a large number of sources—most of which are familiar to scholars working in the field of Sri Lankan historical studies—footnotes are dispensed with altogether except for two instances where specific references are made.

certain processes and patterns in Sri Lanka's history, rather than with any detailed consideration of such data as events, personalities and dates. Thus, this essay is rooted in the belief that the mere search for and verification of historical data is an insufficient and incomplete focus for the contemporary practice of historical science.

The scope of the article is limited basically to the period before 1500 A.C., that is to say before the contact with modern Europe and the European colonial invasions. For the reasons given above we do not offer anything like a detailed narrative or even a descriptive summary of Sri Lanka's connections and contacts with the external world, the world beyond our shores, in the period before the 16th century. Merely to record a list of events or to catalogue our political contacts, our cultural interchanges and our trading connections, is by itself unlikely to give us a *useful* understanding of our history. While it is true that we do not have any single comprehensive account of our external relations, some of the basic work in this respect has already been done by our historians and also by certain foreign scholars working on the history of our country. A high, primary level of knowledge has been reached, especially with regard to the period after the 3rd century B.C. The most readily available historical material such as the historical chronicles and a rich collection of inscriptions has been examined. A considerable amount of archaeological research has also been carried out. A host of foreign sources—including Indian, Chinese, Indonesian, Cambodian, Burmese, Thai, Persian, Arab, Greek, Latin and Italian records—have been looked at. In short, the preliminary ground has been well cleared by two or three generations of scholars.

The Challenge Facing Us in the Field of Historical Studies

We are confronted today with a challenge: to approach new levels of historical research and new dimensions of *useful* historical understanding. This challenge requires at least three things. *Firstly*, and obviously, it requires a great deal of new research into the source material using the entire range of modern historical methods and techniques. *Secondly*, we need to widen not merely the technical resources but the very scope and human resources of our inquiries—thus to involve a wide range of disciplines and people from all sections of our society in this study, on the one hand, and, on the other, to co-operate with Asian and African researchers in examining parallel and inter-related problems. *Thirdly*, we need to evolve a fresh theoretical framework and

theoretical perspectives that would help us not merely to discover new material but to employ our new methods and resources effectively and purposefully to serve the urgent needs of our country and our people; to lift historical research out of its purely academic context and out of its colonial historiographical limitations. This is a task which many of our scholars have already confronted in the last ten or twenty years. What they have achieved is a very valuable beginning; broader and more fundamental tasks lie ahead.

There is no "objectivity" in the study of history. The study of history is itself a historical phenomenon. In each generation we explore and interpret the past in keeping with the limitations and the resources, the demands, the horizons and the urgent necessities of our times. The "objectivity" that some academics talk of is merely the objectivity of techniques. This objectivity itself is variable. Techniques are constantly changing and improving, while "technique" itself is determined or circumscribed by theoretical outlook. What is vital for us is this: that historical science, not unlike the physical and natural sciences, should go about its task of investigating and interpreting its material, i.e. the past, in order to serve present needs.

The 16th Century as a Historical Threshold

The scope of this article ends with the 16th century. But before concluding these introductory remarks and beginning to deal with the period under consideration, it would be relevant to make some observations on the 16th century itself and the subsequent era. It is difficult to have a proper perspective of the past without a sense of how it distinguishes itself from the present.

The 16th century is an important threshold in Sri Lanka's history. It marks the beginning of that epoch which we might call "the era of intensive struggle against foreign invasion and foreign colonialism". Decisive changes in Sri Lanka's external relations and internal structures began at that time. For the first time in our history we were repeatedly invaded and parts of our country occupied by maritime powers who came from outside Asia. These powers came from countries which were outside the world we knew previously; to all intents and purposes as far as we were concerned they were outside the pale of civilisation. Ironically, for us, the opposite was true. These nations had begun, four or five hundred years before us, that process of development and modernisation, that transition from feudalism, which we began only

in the 19th and 20th century. Thus, for the first time, from the 16th century onwards we encountered invading powers whose social systems, scientific understanding and awareness of the world as a whole were more developed and more advanced than ours.

For at least 1,500 or 2,000 years previously we had taken our place as equals amongst the most advanced societies of the world. Foreign invasions in the past had been by peoples whose cultural levels were, generally speaking, comparable with ours, who were at the same stage of historical development as we were ourselves. Now, from the 16th century onwards, we faced an enemy whose military power—at least in quantitative terms—was weaker but whose world outlook and approaches not only to military but also to political, diplomatic, economic and social problems were more advanced than ours. They were ruthless in their determination to discover and to construct a new world at our expense; we were hesitantly trying to maintain and to preserve what we had. They were able to organise their resources systematically towards relatively clear objectives, to divide us amongst ourselves, to play up the narrow and short-term self interest of one prince or one feudal lord against another. We were unable to decisively unite against the invaders, to continue our struggle against them to the end, to find our own way in the world without somehow being dependent on one European expansionist power or another. We defeated them a hundred times in battle, but we were not able to win the war. It was clear that we could not achieve that ultimate victory without transforming ourselves. That process of transformation is far advanced today but also far from complete. In essence that process requires the development and thorough modernisation of our country and its complete freedom from foreign dependence in every sphere of our national life.

In terms of knowledge, we were continually undermined in our confrontation with the foreign invaders from the 16th century onwards by our failure to have an advanced understanding of ourselves and of the world, a failure to face up to the incorporation of our country in the new global political, economic and cultural structures that European expansionism and colonialism brought about.

Speaking very generally as far as our understanding of the world was concerned, it is possible to say that no such problem existed in the period before 1500. We can take up one example in order to illustrate this.

We have at either end of the Historical Period two crucial encounters with foreigners. The first is the meeting between Devanampiyatissa and the Arahata Mahinda at Mihintale in the 3rd century B.C. The second is the arrival of the Portuguese in Colombo in 1505 A.C. There is a vital difference in the way our traditional historians looked at these two encounters. The *Mahavamsa* account of the meeting between Tissa and Mahinda takes the form of a very profound philosophical dialogue. While only five verses are devoted to the well-known story of the deer, eight verses are given to this philosophical exchange. Whether this dialogue actually took place or not, what is clear is that our ancient historians wanted to suggest by this story that the level of cultural development in Sri Lanka in the 3rd century B.C. had reached a point at which the advanced Buddhist philosophical concepts that had arisen in the cultures of the Ganges valley were readily available to us and easily comprehended. In other words, our levels of consciousness and understanding were commensurate with the most advanced developments of that time. Similarly, other accounts dealing with events of that early period, when we were receiving many new political and cultural ideas from the subcontinent, exhibit a tremendous confidence in our own strength and dynamics and a real sense of excitement at putting these ideas to work in our own context.

In contrast to this we have the traditional account of the coming of the Portuguese as related in the *Rajavaliya*; "they wear coats and hats of iron. They do not stay a minute in one place, but walk here and there. They eat pieces of stone and drink blood. They give two or three gold or silver coins for one fish or one lime. The report of their cannon is louder than thunder.....their cannon balls fly many furlongs and shatter fortresses of granite". We may see not only a certain amount of surprise and bewilderment and certainly a lack of confidence in this description but also a hopelessly inadequate understanding of the realities of the time. In the same way, the later parts of the *Mahavamsa* (i.e. the so-called *Culavamsa*) first record the presence of the Portuguese in Sri Lanka only 100 years after their actual arrival, and then only refers to them as "those merchants in the seaport of Colombo, who had lived there for a long time (and) had become swollen with pride".

If we compare *the Portuguese accounts of Sri Lanka* with *the Sri Lankan accounts of the Portuguese*, we see at once the difference between their world outlook and understanding of reality and ours. This difference of levels does not come from a lack of civilisation or culture on our part.

The ignorance and even arrogance of our later period chroniclers is an expression, in fact, of a very long period of high civilisation. Sri Lanka had reached the most advanced levels of development as early as the first few centuries of the 1st millenium A.C., if not somewhat earlier. We had then been extremely well-equipped to face the world of that epoch. On the other hand, the world which was taking shape in the middle period of the 2nd millenium, was of an entirely different character. The old, feudal social formations of Asia, such as Sri Lanka, were too well-established and well-ensconced by that time to encourage and foster the rapid advances and transformations that were possible in the much less developed and less consolidated feudal societies of more recent origin in Europe. The leading social, economic and intellectual forces in our countries had been formed over many centuries. Capable of great sophistication and complexity, they saw little need to discover new worlds or to reach out to understand new levels of reality. A nation such as Portugal, in contrast, had started at a very low level of development, transformed itself very rapidly in a period of about 200 years and was setting to discover new worlds and new realities.

External Relations—Three Spheres of Analysis

Having said all that, we may turn to the relationship between ourselves and the world beyond our shores during the period before 1500. The conventional historical classification of Sri Lanka's external relations has been into three major divisions: cultural relations, economic and commercial relations; and thirdly, political, military and diplomatic relations. Such a method is logical and convenient and helps us to sort out an untidy mass of data. But it remains a purely descriptive classification. I propose therefore a more analytical or theoretical classification, based partly on geographical or geo-political factors.

First of all, this would involve examining the emergence of Sri Lanka as a geo-political entity in the context of the evolution of cultures and societies and the rise of state formations in Asia. This includes both the formation of Sri Lanka's prehistoric cultures and subsequently, in the historical period, the growth of a united and centralised state. The step-by-step historical process by which this country took shape and formed itself into a complex but homogeneous geo-political and geo-cultural entity is a vital aspect of the study of external relations.

In the second sphere of analysis, we would have to consider the implications of Sri Lanka's location as an offshore island a few miles

away from the great landmass of the South Asian subcontinent. On the one hand, we have as a major factor in Sri Lankan history its contiguity to the great concentration of land and people which is conveniently called "India". This consists in fact of a variety of cultures and peoples which are today concentrated into a number of modern nation states; including the Republic of India as it was constituted in the 1940's, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and two other controversial political units, Kashmir and Sikkim. On the other hand, we have as a factor of great consequence for us historically, Sri Lanka's separation from that landmass, its distinctly different evolution from the societies of the subcontinent. The length and breadth of Sri Lanka has been occupied by man for thousands of years. The political unity of this multi-national but unitary society and its basic cultural homogeneity is over 2000 years old. In other words, its distinct character and structure as an island civilisation stands in contradistinction to its close relationship with the South Asian mainland.

This phenomenon becomes much clearer in the third sphere of analysis, in which we must direct our attention to Sri Lanka's position at the centre of the Indian Ocean. In particular, we must look at its relationship with Southeast Asia and Eastern Asia, on one side, and with Western Asia, Africa and Europe on the other. Up to now, the contemporary historiographical attitude has been to interpret Sri Lanka's past very much in terms of a basic relationship with the Indian culture complex. Present research, however, is increasingly calling into question the validity of this model. A much more complex theoretical perspective is emerging. This sees Sri Lanka in a much wider Monsoon Asian and Indian Ocean context. Such a model will enable us to explore some of the hitherto unexplored or superficially investigated aspects of our historical connections with the outside world.

These three spheres of analysis—that is to say, one, the internal development of the country, two, its location as an offshore island off the South Asian subcontinent, and three, its position in the centre of the Indian ocean and its relationship to other Asian regions, and to Africa and Europe—are only convenient schematic divisions, not compartments. They have to be understood as three major strands in a closely woven fabric.

The essence of this division is the relationship between internal and external factors. In order to test the usefulness of this threefold scheme let us apply it to one or two areas of Sri Lankan history.

Prehistory and the Relationship Between Internal and External Factors

Let us first of all consider the prehistoric period. Man has lived in Sri Lanka for many, many thousands of years—at least from about 75,000 or 100,000 B.C. if not much earlier. We have a large collection of stone tools and even some human remains from this epoch. Despite this evidence of thousands of years of human habitation in the island, the general belief even amongst some historians has been that the present population of Sri Lanka are mainly the descendants of migrants from North and South India who have arrived in the island in historical or near-historical times. There is even a crude and vulgar equation which quite seriously suggests that those who speak Sinhalese are from North India and those who speak Tamil are from the South. This entire concept of migration is, in my opinion, a highly simplistic view of the external factor in the formation of our national ethnic (i.e. racial) composition. It is clearly the product of an extremely mechanistic and one-sided theoretical framework. It completely ignores the internal factor, places all emphasis on external factors and, at the same time, views these external factors in an extremely narrow way. However, even the scanty evidence available to us at present enables us to make a very different assessment of the matter.

We can say in general that the origin and character of our national ethnic structure must have two major aspects. Firstly, a process of internal development going very far back into the prehistory of our country and in continual progress even today. Secondly, the input of a wide variety of ethnic strains coming into the country from various regions.

The internal process has not been studied at all. We only know that the remains of the only prehistoric human species so far discovered, the so-called Balangoda Man, is closely related to both the “Vadda” and the “Sinhalese” ethnic strains; it could be said, at our present stage of investigations, that he seems to be an ancestor of them both. The study of our animals and animal remains has also important lessons to offer. While our animal species are closely related to those of other Asian regions, there are clear local specialisations and variations in biological evolution which makes it possible for us to differentiate our animal species from those of the South Asian subcontinent and the South-east Asian region.

Similarly, while there is no question that the people of Sri Lanka are basically of the same series of ethnic groups and have their closest ethnic affinities to those of the South Asian subcontinent, it is also clear that we have our own, distinctive racial mix formed in the course of our historical evolution. Moreover, while migration must have been an important factor in this, the quantitative assessment of this factor has yet to be properly worked out. Instead of a huge influx of prehistoric migrants, we may well visualise a situation such as this; the presence of a small number of migrants, the genetic diffusion of these migrant strains over a very large area and within the indigenous population, then the development of productive forces and an exponential increase of population within purely local parameters. Such an approach to this question would establish a more consistent relationship between external factors and internal factors than the hitherto prevailing concepts such as "the colonisation (sic.!) of Sri Lanka by migrant settlers from the subcontinent".

Again, the external factors themselves have not been properly studied either. Thus, although the connections with subcontinental ethnic groups are clear, the question of which subcontinental groups has not been examined in a comparative way. Even more serious is the neglect by historians of Sri Lanka's ethnic connections further afield. Even superficial observation makes it very clear that there are many South-east Asian affinities amongst its people. Prehistoric migrations of people from Malaya and Indonesia who crossed the Indian Ocean as far as Madagascar and the East African coast are well-documented. That some element of these must have reached the shores of Sri Lanka is very likely. Even in historic times, right up to the 19th century migrant peoples from these countries have been absorbed. Similarly, the historical significance of connections from a western direction have to be studied in depth. Southern Arabia and East Africa offer equally obvious ethnic correspondences. Ethnologists have noted Mediterranean, Himalayan, East Asian and Oceanic strains in our racial mix. In short, like all other countries of the world we have our own distinctive ethnic structure. Whatever exogenous ethnic strains went into its composition, a historical interpretation would have to investigate how this structure was formed in the encounter of man and environment and of man and man within the context of this country itself.

A study of prehistoric stone implements gives us equally interesting insights into Sri Lanka's external relations during the prehistoric period.

First of all, and most dominant is the fact that there are distinctive local specialisations of a very high level of development. Secondly and most interestingly is the fact that these stone tools seem as closely related to those of South-east Asia as they are to those of the South Asian subcontinent, although there are some dissident views about this.

The lessons of prehistory therefore, are quite clear. Firstly, that Sri Lanka's external connections are governed, conditioned and filtered at each juncture by the strength of its local traditions and of its internal dynamics. Secondly, that its close relationship with the South Asian subcontinent is qualified by equally important contacts with other parts of the Indian Ocean region, in particular with South-east Asia. It is an interesting factor that although this country is so close to India, its climate and environment is very much closer to that of South-east Asia as a whole. Clearly this has profoundly influenced its history from prehistoric times. We might in fact say, if we are speaking in terms of comparisons, that Sri Lanka has a subcontinental location and a South-east Asian character.

External and Internal Factors in the Early Historical Period

Let us now turn to the Historical Period, which begins in the reign of Devanampiyatissa in the 3rd century B.C., and see how we can concretely apply to this epoch the threefold scheme we outlined at the start.

The beginnings of settled civilisation in Sri Lanka have not yet been identified as yet, but present indications point to a period somewhere in the 1st millenium B.C., let us say, about 500 or 1000 years before Devanampiyatissa. Important developments in such areas as agricultural production, social organisation, culture, technology, languages and religion all took place in this Prehistoric and Early Historic period. Written history begins in the 3rd century B.C. and from this time onwards we begin to see clearly the new developments in agriculture, irrigation, language, religion and national political structure. Little or no research has been done on how this great historic leap in our national development took place, but many unfounded speculations have been made on the origins of our society and culture. The essence of these speculations has been the dominant tendency to interpret the early historical development of Sri Lanka purely in terms of *external factors*. Our people, our languages, our religious systems and most other cultural manifestations are all seen as transplantations from the subcontinent.

This view which sees all historical development as coming from outside rather than from inside a society was formulated during the colonial period and is clearly a product of colonial historiography, which we have not fully transformed as yet. Some of our patriotic writers and scholars have opposed this view, but in its place they have sometimes put forward theories which see Sri Lanka as the origin and source of Indian, and even of world culture. This ultra-nationalist view is only the other side of the coin from the colonialist viewpoint. It is equally unscientific and incorrect, although an understandable reaction to colonial oppression.

Sri Lanka and South Asia

Undoubtedly, the most important single factor in our external relations throughout history is our relationship with the South Asian subcontinent. We have already referred to some aspects of this with regard to our ethnic structure and our prehistory. So important has been this historical relationship, that almost all 19th and 20th century historical writing on Sri Lanka has been what we can describe as *Indo-centric*. What I mean by *Indo-centric* is the viewpoint which sees the South Asian subcontinent or "India" as the dominant factor and the basic source of Sri Lankan culture and society. Sri Lanka is thus seen as a somewhat special extension of the South Asian culture complex, or even as an outlying cultural province of India.

It is worth quoting an example or two of the more extreme statements made by foreign scholars in this connection. Thus, in a book re-published as late as 1961, the British cultural historian H. G. Quaritch Wales says that "the art of Ceylon is in general a reflection of India, without original developments".¹

Similarly, the Indian ethnologist M. D. Raghavan writes as follows in a book published by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations in 1969. "It is customary to name the successive periods of Ceylon History according to the predominant foreign influence in each. Thus we have the "Indian Period" to signify the period from Devanampiyatissa to the coming of the Portuguese. It is followed by the Portuguese, the Dutch and the British periods".²

A handful of our own scholars have also repeated and even developed the view that Sri Lankan culture is basically "Indian". Most of

2. H. G. Quaritch Wales, *The Making of Greater India*, 2nd ed., London, 1961.

3. M. D. Raghavan, *India in Ceylonese History, Society and Culture*, Bombay, 1969.

them, however, have been trying for a long time to combat this view, but having no alternative theoretical framework with which to break through the domination of colonial historiographical theory, no fundamental solution to the problem nor a basic change of viewpoint has been achieved in our work on a wide scale as yet. We often find our greatest scholars and patriots expressing what are essentially *Indo-centricist* views, but then in such a sophisticated form that their *Indo-centricity* is not evident at first glance. Thus, Coomaraswamy says that "Ceylon is a window on India" while Paranavitana holds that "The arts and crafts which flourished in ancient India were transplanted to Ceylon and, in the course of the succeeding centuries, developed there in accordance with the distinctive character of the Sinhalese people".

Our ancient historians and chroniclers had a very different approach. According to their level of development and understanding, they made what we can call a correct appraisal of the relationship between *internal factors* and *external factors*. While, in keeping with the Buddhist character of their writings, they relate the origins of the Sinhalese people and of the Buddhist religion to major events and personalities in the international Buddhist tradition, the entire conception of their chronicles is a recognition of the tremendous activity and energies exerted by Sri Lankan kings in the religious and economic and political construction of the country. In other words, they have an entirely national and a consistently autarchic viewpoint. They recognise all the time that the main-springs of historical development and progress in our country arose from the daily efforts of our people to build ourselves and that important and vital elements from abroad provided certain basic conditions for local developments but, were only meaningful to the extent that they coincided with our internal historical needs.

The "Law of the Internal Dynamic"

Today we are in a position to formulate this idea in modern terms. It can be summarised in two theoretical propositions. One, that all meaningful historical development in a country is basically a result of its own internal dynamism, in the *local* encounter between man and environment and man and man. We may call this "the law of the internal dynamic". Two, that external factors and external relations play a very important role in history in that they provide the broad conditions within which internal development takes place but that these conditions are only historically meaningful and valuable when they satisfy internal

necessities and are, therefore, subordinated to "the law of the internal dynamic".

It is precisely in the light of such theoretical approaches that we have to look at the whole history of our foreign relations, particularly at our relationship with the societies of the South Asian subcontinent. The long and rich story of our relations with India and the other regions of the subcontinent is common knowledge. Recent research has not basically altered the patterns of past knowledge, although we must freely admit that there remain many outstanding questions which have not been answered. But any work that we do on Sri Lanka's external relations with this area must take into account the operation of internal dynamics and our external relations with other parts of the world, especially with the other regions of Asia.

The concrete implications of this can be summarised into three statements:

One—Of all the modern states of South Asia as they exist today, Sri Lanka is the first country to have emerged in historical times as a distinct geo-political entity with a continuous national history lasting until modern times. The country that Devanampiyatissa, Dutugamunu and Parakramabahu ruled over 1000 or 2000 years ago is in every respect the same national and geo-political entity that constitutes the Republic of Sri Lanka. In other words we are one of the oldest geo-political formations in Asia, with a relatively homogenous Sri Lankan society and culture and a united and centralised state since the period B.C. There is no modern nation on the subcontinent which has precisely that kind of historical pattern.

Two—As a political, economic and cultural entity, Sri Lanka has consistently evolved in contradistinction to the political and cultural formation of the subcontinent. Although we are proud of the diversity of nationalities and regional cultures that form the rich and varied fabric of our nation, our political and cultural history is one of a dominantly *centripetal* tendency, i.e. a tendency towards centralisation, national standardisation and homogeneity. The historical pattern of the subcontinent is entirely in the opposite direction—i.e. dominantly *centrifugal*. Moreover, our political history is one of constant struggles to develop and maintain our independence from various power concentrations which developed on the subcontinent. Although throughout our history we have drawn heavily upon the very rich cultural traditions of that area in order to develop our own traditions, we have always stood distinctly apart and separate.

Three—Sri Lanka's wider relationships with the countries of Monsoon Asia as a whole and of the Indian Ocean region and beyond have been of great importance throughout its history, sometimes as important as the relationship with South Asia.

Sri Lanka and the Indian Ocean Region

If the study of our internal dynamics is the fundamental basis for a critique of the *Indo-centric* or *Indianist* view of the external factor in Sri Lanka's history, the narrowness of the *Indo-centric* viewpoint is clearly shown up by an examination of Sri Lanka's position in the Indian Ocean and its extremely complex relations with its neighbours to the East and the West.

It is a commonplace in the study of Asian history and of international affairs that Sri Lanka occupies one of the most strategic points at the very centre of the Indian Ocean. Before the emergence of industrial societies in Europe and North America (that is to say before the 17th or 18th century), the Indian Ocean was probably the busiest arena of world transport, communications, and trade. Across its seas, bays and gulfs travelled what was probably the largest absolute tonnage of goods of the pre-modern world. To the west of the Indian Ocean was the Mediterranean, where the three continents of Asia, Africa and Europe met. To its east lay the great Eastern Asian culture complex via the Straits of Malacca to the South China Sea, the Sea of Japan and the Pacific Ocean. The greatest population concentrations, the wealthiest economic units and some of the most brilliant civilisations known to man were in the littoral or hinterland regions of the Indian Ocean area and the monsoon Asian regions of the Western Pacific.

Sri Lanka was a vital and central point of linkage in this vast structure of maritime communications and commerce, cultural interchange and political contact. One example is sufficient to illustrate the scope of this historical role. Two great civilisations which lie at the extremities of Asia are those of the Chinese and the Iranians. They were connected from very ancient times by two routes, one, the famous caravan route across Central Asia, the other, the sea route across the Indian Ocean. Sri Lanka was often the central point at which those Chinese and the Iranians who used the sea route chose to meet and exchange goods. In short, it had a pivotal role in inter-Asian relations and communications throughout history—a significance which the European colonial powers were always quick to recognise.

During most periods of our history, we had a firmly based agrarian economy, a complete political and economic independence and a distinct sense of national awareness and national interest. Although ruling houses of foreign extraction and marriage links with foreign royal lines were well-known in our history, no foreign dynasties with alien interests ruled over us, for any length of time. Foreign trade was important but marginal to our economy. Thus, we were able to welcome foreign traders and to deal with them consistently on terms of equality, friendship and mutual benefit. For these reasons it seems that the ancient Sri Lankans had a distinct policy for encouraging an entrepot trade from our ports, a policy which they were able to follow much more consistently than some of the trading cities and ports on the sub-continent.

Sri Lanka's Knowledge and Experience of the External World

Our own historical records and those of related countries are full of references to Sri Lanka and its role in these Indian Ocean inter-connections. It is worthwhile taking a quick glance at what the ancient Sri Lankans knew about the world around them.

Our Buddhist chronicles and religious inscriptions from the 3rd century B.C. onwards are full of references to the international centres associated with the Buddhist religion. The historical topography of classical Buddhism was well-known not only to our monks and scholars but also to the ordinary people of our country. The very detailed description of the building of the Ruvanvalisaya in the 1st century B.C. records a large number of foreign contingents from various South Asian kingdoms. Visitors from the Ganges valley and Central India are of course mentioned. So also are people from Gandhara, now in modern Pakistan, from Kashmir, from Afghanistan and from Iran. Similarly, both our Sinhalese records and our Tamil traditions and historical writings show a great familiarity and often warm friendship with the culture and people of Southern India. Inscriptions and later Buddhist chronicles are rich in their references to our close links with the countries of South-east Asia, particularly Indonesia, Burma, Cambodia and Thailand and that great Asian trading empire, the Malay-Indonesian kingdom of Sri Vijaya. Historical records and oral traditions preserve memories of our close historical associations with the Arab world.

That Sri Lankan voyagers ventured much further afield is known from other contexts. There are recorded embassies and travels to Rome,

Egypt, South Arabia and Yemen in the West and to Mongolia, China, Korea and Japan in the East. A number of inscriptions exist at Indian sites such as Bodh Gaya, recording a long and relatively continuous tradition of visits to that religious centre right up to the 19th century. Our ties with the people of Oceania go deep into prehistory. The Australian indigenes are thought to be related to our Vadda peoples, while we share the outrigger canoe and the coconut palm with the island cultures of the Pacific. The palmyrah palm has come to us from Africa, while many elements of our material culture are common to East Africa and Southern Arabia. A sarong-like garment is worn in a continuous "maritime belt" which stretches from the Yemen to the Pacific Islands.

The most intriguing and most controversial work on this subject is that of our great scholar, Prof. Senarat Paranavitana. His readings of the so-called "interlinear inscriptions" indicate a more extensive and detailed Sri Lanka knowledge of the world than hitherto recorded. One of these records apparently refers to a Sri Lankan scholar-monk of the 4th century who spent fifteen years abroad, mostly in the Panjab. This monk had mastered a number of foreign languages including Greek, Latin, and Persian. On his return to Sri Lanka he compiled a massive work on the history and culture not only of South and Central Asia but also of a number of regions further west, including Greece and Rome. It is generally accepted by Sri Lankan scholars today that Paranavitana's readings have not been scientifically established so far, but whether we accept Paranavitana's readings or not, we must admit that his is a brilliant and inspired insight into some of the "lost" aspects of Sri Lankan historiography.

Because of the dominantly religious nature of our chronicles and inscriptions, our historical records have paid little attention to commercial and diplomatic contacts with foreign countries. Even religious connections recorded in early times deal only with the great international centres of Buddhism. It is only in fragments of surviving evidence that we get some glimpses of the highly sophisticated and extremely well-developed policy that Sri Lanka had concerning foreign trade and foreign commercial diplomacy. One such example is Parakramabahu I's inscription set up at Nagadipa—i.e. Nainativu, which contains an elaborate set of rules established for the foreign traders who used the harbour at Uratota, the modern Kayts. Another is the Galle Trilingual Slab. This is an inscription of the early 15th century in three languages, Tamil, Persian and Chinese, recording donations made by the Chinese Emperor

to Buddhist, Hindu and Islamic shrines in the area, in gratitude for the divine protection of and friendly reception to Chinese merchant voyagers to Sri Lanka. A third is the embassy and letter sent by Bhuvanaikabahu I to the Sultan of Egypt, containing several trading proposals and suggesting direct links between the two countries, asking for an Egyptian Ambassador to be sent to Sri Lanka and a trade representative to Aden.

A common myth which has been exploded many times but still persists is the idea that Sri Lanka did not have a naval tradition. It is clear that we had very wide maritime connections from prehistoric times. Our relationship with the Pacific Islands, with the Malay-Indonesian complex, with mainland Southeast Asia, with the Indus and Ganges basins, with Southern Arabia and East Africa is clear from our basic material culture, much of which is prehistoric and could only have been transmitted by sea. Our earliest historical records reveal a tradition of Sri Lankan sailors voyaging to the ports of the Indus and the Ganges. After the 5th century A.C. up to the Polonnaruwa Period in the 12th century there is a virtually uninterrupted development of our naval power. Seaborne expeditions to South India in the 9th and 10th centuries and to India, Burma and the Andaman Islands in the 12th century have been noted. Heavy Asian shipping in general, and probably that of Sri Lanka, seems to have had as large or larger a tonnage as the early ships of the European expansionists in the 16th century, while some indication of the level of naval expertise is preserved in the recorded names of Sinhalese admirals and naval captains who fought against or who sold their expert services to the Portuguese.

Foreign Notices About Sri Lanka

A study of the foreign documents on Sri Lanka reveals an even richer mass of information about our external relations. Although Sri Lanka is quite precisely referred to in Indian documents from the 3rd century B.C. onwards, as is the case with our own chronicles these refer mostly to religious and cultural contacts. The exception to this is the records of the South Indian international trading organisations from about the 8th century onwards. These documents relate to the extensive trading network centred on the triple relationship between Peninsular India, Southeast Asia and Sri Lanka. They show, for instance, that the Cola occupation of the 10th and 11th centuries may have been part of an attempt to establish and maintain a South Indian trading monopoly.

It is significant, though not inconsistent, that Chinese, Arab and Southeast Asian writings and documents on Sri Lanka are much richer than the subcontinental records. Chinese references date from 1st century and more or less continue through to the 15th. The records from countries to the west of us are equally important. The Iranians already refer to trade with Sri Lanka in the 4th century B.C. There are also several Greek references and the early Sri Lankan embassy to Rome is well known. Arab writings which includes both Asian and African sources, constitutes a very large body of material comparable with the Chinese. Early Arab and European maps show Sri Lanka as a huge territory extending substantially across the Indian Ocean. This is clearly indicative of the importance Sri Lanka must have had for the mariners and traders of the western regions.

External Factors, Foreign Trade and Three Great Historical Phases

Undoubtedly, Sri Lanka had a distinguished position as an international trading centre. For a long time, however, this trade was only in luxury items and an extremely marginal factor in our economy as a whole. So dominant was the great strength and autonomy of our agrarian economy that our external connections seemed far less important to us than they did to the foreigners who had relations with us. However, the historical patterns that emerge from new approaches and new studies seems to indicate at least three great phases in Sri Lankan history, each of which culminated in fundamental changes in the character of our economy and society. The first of these phases, and the one which we are most ignorant about, is in the 1st and 2nd millenium B.C. Clearly foreign contact was a major factor at least towards the latter part of this period. Prehistoric seaborne trade must have been one, if not the most important, impetus for the coming of foreigners and migrants to this country. The culmination of this phase of development was the great historical changes which we have already discussed which led to the establishment of a distinctive Sri Lankan civilisation and the creation of a unitary central state. This took place about 2000 or 2500 years ago, in the context of similar changes taking place in other regions of Asia, and constitutes the beginning of the Historical Period in our country—i.e. the commencement of the second phase.

This second great phase is a period of brilliant historical progress. Sri Lanka develops a great agrarian civilisation, with a strong, self-reliant and self-sufficient economy. Our culture, our technology, our

economic structures reach a very high level of development. This phase continues right through historic times and even, in a decaying form, into the 19th century.

In the meantime we enter upon a third period. The shadowy beginnings of this are discernible probably as early as the 7th century, but it becomes clearly visible from the 12th and 13th century onwards, and only becomes a fully developed process in the 16th century. We can call this a new era of foreign contact. Essentially, it involves a changing economic pattern within the country and a greater involvement with international trade. An immense increase in world trade seems to have taken place from the 7th or 8th century onwards. These trading patterns seem to have had their effect on Sri Lanka too. Our volume of foreign trade seems to expand considerably between the 8th and 12th centuries. Moreover, while the previous trade had been both in raw products and craft manufactures drawn from various parts of the country and also imported from elsewhere (as part of an entrepot trade) the developing tendency was for primary product agricultural exports from the Wet Zone. However, our agrarian economy itself continued to have phenomenal expansion during this period, culminating as we know in Parakramabahu's great irrigation works of the 12th century.

The effect of the new trade developments, however, became felt increasingly from the 13th century onwards. Trade became a much more important factor in our national economy, the ports and harbours of the western and southern region grew very rapidly and in my view mostly as a result of this changing economic structure there began that phenomenon which our historians call the drift to the South-West.

The increasing involvement of our basic national economy with international trade also led to foreign political involvement and interference in our internal affairs. A number of Indian feudalists invaded our country from about the 7th century onwards, culminating in the Chola occupation of the 10th and 11th century and the reign of terror of Magha of Kalinga in the 13th century. Invasions from Sri Vijaya and from Cambodia, a Sri Lankan invasion of Burma, the raids of the Chinese warlord Cheng-ho, are all new and strange developments in our foreign relations, ending in the Portuguese, Dutch and British invasions. Meanwhile, from the 13th century onwards we also see the rise of our own mercantile classes composed of both indigenous and migrant elements, including people of Arab, Indian and Indonesian extraction. These rising mercantile classes sometimes become even

strong enough to enter the national political structures, although they soon become absorbed into local landlord groups or are crushed by foreign colonialism and fail to develop any kind of indigenous and independent capitalism.

The net result of all this is a weakening of our agrarian economic base, an increasing involvement with world trade and, finally, the encounter with European expansionism. Sri Lanka is invaded and many of its vital ports and productive regions are occupied for periods of time by foreign colonialists. These same colonialists establish a stranglehold on Indian Ocean and world trade until finally our internal economy is totally distorted and we become victims of the world market dominated by European superpowers.

But this third phase in our history is not yet over. As in the 1st millenium B.C. throughout this third phase we have been developing our resources and learning a great deal about ourselves and about the world around us. Today Sri Lanka has begun to absorb the lessons of history from a thoroughly modern viewpoint and we have begun to transform our country. From our external connections we have learnt many lessons, both negative and positive and are applying these to our own context. The challenge that Sri Lanka faces today is both similar to and different from that which our ancestors faced in that transitional epoch of Pandukhabhaya, Devanampiyatissa and Dutugamunu in the last few centuries B.C. Like them, we are living through the end of one epoch and the beginnings of another, in which we can see the prospect of a new society and a new civilisation formed on a higher level than before. In such a context, the lessons of history concerning the relationship between external factors and internal dynamism, are a legitimate and important focus of historical research. Whether this research is relevant and significant depends, not only on the technical quality of that research, but also on its approach and orientation to the problems of the present as much as to the problematics in the study of the past.

A FORGOTTEN ASPECT OF THE RELATIONS BETWEEN THE SINHALESE AND THE TAMILS

The *Upasakajanalankara*: a re-examination of its date and
authorship and its significance in the history
of South India and Ceylon

AMARADASA LIYANAGAMAGE

In the rich and extensive Pali literature of Sri Lanka the *Upasakajanalankara* (*Uj.*)¹—(The Adornment of Buddhist Laity), which is a digest of the essentials of those teachings of the Buddha that are addressed primarily to the Buddhist laity (*upasaka*), occupies an important position. In the Pali literature, works written exclusively with the *upasaka* community in view are rare. Therefore the *Uj.* deserves consideration, being at once both significant and interesting. Although the doctrinal content of this text becomes important in this context, in this paper we are confined to a review of its date and authorship in the course of which, attention will be drawn to some interesting information found at the end of the text, which throws welcome light on an aspect of Sri Lanka's relations with South India in ancient times, with special reference to the thirteenth century. The *Uj.* was written in the Pandya

1. *Upasakajanalankara—a critical edition and study*, ed. H. Saddhatissa, Pali Text Society, London, 1965. (*Uj.*). For a review of this work by Dr. P. C. Jain, see *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, London, Vol. XXX, Pt. I (1967), pp. 202-203, where, however, the reviewer has missed the problems discussed in this paper.

Note.—We regret that due to printing difficulties diacritical marks have only been added to quotations from Pali texts and not to names and titles.—Ed.

country by a Buddhist monk from Sri Lanka (*Sihalacariya*). It is the circumstances in which this book came to be written that should arouse the interest of the historians of Sri Lanka no less than those of India.

The *Uj.* consists of nine chapters dealing with the Buddha's teachings for the laymen, namely the Three Refuges (*saranasilaniddesa*) Morality (*silaniddesa*), Ascetic Practices (*dhutanganiddesa*), Livelihood, (*ajivaniddesa*), Ten Domains of Meritorious Deeds (*dasapunnakiriyavatthu*), Harmful Actions (*antarayakaradhammaniddesa*), Mundane Happiness (*lokiyasampattiniddesa*), Supramundane Happiness (*lokuttarasampattiniddesa*) and the Accomplishment of Meritorious Results (*punnaphalasadhakaniddesa*).² Drawing his material from various sources both canonical and non-canonical, the author has worked out a comprehensive treatise to serve the needs of the *upasaka* community. The author states clearly that his work was based on the traditions of the *Mahavihara*.³ This was the great centre of Theravada Buddhism in ancient Sri Lanka located at Anuradhapura.⁴

Despite the importance of this text, it remained unpublished until the Pali Text Society of London selected it for publication a few years ago. Thus a critical edition of the *Uj.* by Ven. Dr. H. Saddhatissa appeared in 1965.⁵ Prior to this, however, it was translated into Sinhalese by Moratota Dhammakkhanda *Mabathera* as far back as 1803 A.D., during the reign of Sri Vikrama Rajasimha, the last of the kings of Kandy. This Sinhalese translation called the *Simhala Upasakajanalankaraya*, edited by a learned *thera*, was published in 1930.⁶

For some unknown reason, the *Uj.* has escaped the attention of Professor Gunapala Malalasekera in his survey of *The Pali Literature of Ceylon*.⁷ In fact the work is hardly mentioned. Dr. L. D. Barnett brought this text to the notice of Western scholars, through his article in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland* in 1901.⁸ A. P. Buddhadatta *Mabathera* has made a brief comment on the book in his *Pali Sabityaya* (Pali Literature) in 1957.⁹ In this context

2. *Ibid.*, pp. 1-27. For a summary of the contents of each chapter, see pp. 6-27.
3. *Ibid.*, Ch. IX, para. 20.
4. Walpola Rahula, *History of Buddhism in Ceylon, 3rd century B.C. - 10th century A.C.*, Colombo, 1956, pp. 48-61.
5. See note 1.
6. Ed. Karagampitiye Jotiratna, Weligama, 1930. See also C. E. Godakumbara, *Sinhalese Literature*, Colombo, 1955, pp. 54-55.
7. Reprinted, Colombo, 1958. First published, London, 1928. (PLC).
8. 'The *Upasakajanalankara*', pp. 87-90.
9. *Pali Sabityaya*, part II, Ambalangoda, 1957, parts I and II were printed together in one volume, Colombo, 1966. Our references are to this volume (1966), pp. 448-451, (PS.).

Ven. Dr. Saddhatissa's edition is the first important study of this valuable Pali text. In the preparation of his critical edition, together with a long introduction covering almost all aspects relevant to its study, there is little doubt that enormous labour, patience and care has gone into it, for all of which we are indebted to the learned editor. While appreciating his important contribution to our knowledge of this Pali text, we propose to put forward a few suggestions regarding its date and authorship. In the true spirit of genuine scholarship, the venerable editor has expressed his willingness to welcome such suggestions.¹⁰ Moreover, a review of its date and authorship becomes imperative, if we are to place in the proper perspective the interesting historical information found at the end of the text. Indeed we are more concerned with the latter aspect, and it is largely for that purpose that the former is re-examined here.

As stated in its colophon, the *Uj.* was composed by *Sihalacariya Bhadanta Ananda Mahathera*.¹¹ Thus its author was one Ananda Mahathera from Sri Lanka. It is clear from the discussion by Dr. Saddhatissa, that the identification of this Ananda Mahathera is by no means easy.¹² The problem is not peculiar to this work; many an ancient author preferred anonymity to publicity; others offered their names and information on their pupillary succession, but more often than not, inadequate to decide their identification. As in the present case, the problem becomes even more confounded when several authors bearing the same name flourished during the period, not far removed from each other. Placed in this situation, after a long discussion Dr. Saddhatissa arrived at the following conclusion on the date of composition of the *Uj.*: 'In the light of the above discussion, we may perhaps be permitted to conclude that Ananda, the author of the *Uj.*, was a thera of the Udumbaragiri fraternity connected with the forest-dwelling monks; that he began his Buddhist activities abroad during the early part of the 12th century, and that he wrote this work during the reign of Parakramabahu I, after the composition of Sariputta's *Saratthadipani* and Sumangala's *Abhidhammatthavikasini* and *Abhidhammatthavibhavini*.¹³ He has further concluded that the author of the *Uj.* is the same as Vanaratana (Arannaratana) Ananda Mahathera, who was the teacher of the celebrated authors,

10. *Uj.*, p. 10.

11. *Ibid.*, p. 358, Ch. IX, para. 21.

12. *Ibid.*, pp. 28-45.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 45.

Buddhappiya and Vedeha, with several learned works to their credit,¹⁴ to which we would draw attention in the sequel.

It appears to us—and that would be demonstrated later on—that the learned editor has lost sight of the most vital clues leading to the date of composition of this text and to its authorship, found within the *Uj.* itself. And instead of examining first the evidence within and around his own text, he has strayed far afield. Having bypassed evidence available to him closer home, he has looked out for extraneous evidence from as far-off lands as ancient Kalinga, calling its ruler Anantavarman Codaganga into the picture quite unnecessarily. Consequently, he has had to strain his evidence unduly to arrive at these conclusions which are not compatible with, and are indeed completely contradictory to the internal evidence of his own text.

Let us now see how we could take a fresh look at this evidence and bring out the significance of what has escaped the attention of the editor. The information on the authorship found in the colophon of the book, which the learned editor has examined is as follows:

- 1 *Sirivallabhanāmena vissute pavare pure*
saddho mahaddhano pubbe visālakulasambhavo,
- 2 *Lokuttamo ti paññāto āsi yo bhikkhu tena tu*
Jinasāsana appetuṃ dinnovāde susaṅghito,
- 3 *Paṇḍubbūmaṇḍale yo'bhū vañño sāmantabhūmipo*
saccasandho naye dakkho Colagaṅgo ti vissuto,
- 4 *Tena kārāpitā rammā vihārā varadassanā*
tayo āsuṃ mahikantā kiritam iva bhāsurā.
- 5 *Yo tesam pavaro āsi vihāro cārudassano*
sītalūdakasampanno nānādumagaṇālayo,
- 6 *Anekajanasamma — nayanālisamāgamo*
tassa kittilatāpuppha — mañjari viya bhāsuro,
- 7 *Tidasālayanissenī viyajantuparāyano*
aghāpahaṇo rammo Pharaṇi iti vissuto,
- 8 *Guṇākara-Perampalli iti viññūhi dassito,*
Laṅkādiṇḍipamhi sakale Damiḷanālasamākule
- 9 *Āgatā pātum attānaṃ bhūyo sāsana vuddhiyā,*
Tambapaṇṇiddhajātherā sadā saddhammagocarā
Āgamaṃ anurakkhantā yāsmiṃ vāsam akappayum,
- 10 *Tassa pubbuttare ramme pāsāde vasatā mayā*
racito 'yam alaṅkāro sadā sajjanarañjako ti.

14. *Ibid.*, pp. 33-45.

15. *Uj.*, pp. 357-358, Ch. IX, para. 21.

‘There was in the past a (Buddhist) monk known as Lokuttama, endowed with confidence, and born of a wealthy and illustrious family in the famous and excellent city of Sirivallabha. There lived in the Pandya country a feudatory ruler of a jungle (tract) known as Codaganga, truthful and well-versed in the Law and well-established in the advice given by that monk for the upliftment of the Dispensation of the Buddha. There were three *viharas* built by that king, beautiful and pleasant in appearance, which were radiant like a crown over the damsel of earth. Of these three *viharas* one was designated as Gunakara Perampalli by the learned. Blessed with cool water, it was the home of many kinds of trees, the concourse of the bee-like joyful eyes of numerous people, shining with the fame of this king like a cluster of flowers blossoming on the fame-like creeper. It was resorted to by the people even as a ladder leading to the Abode of the Thirty (gods), pleasant, dispelling evil (and) renowned as Pharani.¹⁶ When the entire island of Lanka was confused by the Tamil conflagration, the *theras* who abided always in the pasture-land of the good Law, and were like banners (raised over the island of) Tambapanni, seeking their own protection for the greater well-being of the Dispensation, came and dwelt there preserving (their) tradition in this *vihara*. This Adornment (to the lay community) which always pleased good men, was written by me while dwelling in a pleasant mansion situated towards the north-east of that (Perampalli).’¹⁷ This is followed by the concluding statement: ‘This Adornment of the Buddhist Laity was composed by Sihalacariya Bhadanta Ānanda Mahāthera has ended’. (*Iti Sihalācariya Bhadantā-nandamahātheraviracito Upāsakajanālaṅkāro niṭṭhito*).

Before examining the contents of this passage, it is necessary to take note of certain other references within the text which have a bearing on determining the upper limit of the period to which this book can be assigned. To these the learned editor has drawn attention,¹⁸ but has utilized them to take him to an earlier date for the text, while this evidence would take us some way in the reverse direction. Here we take note of the references to Sariputta *Mahasami's Saratthadīpani*,¹⁹ a sub-commentary to Buddhaghosa's *Samantapasadika*, the Commentary on the *Vinaya Pitaka*. Then there are references to the

16. *Uj.*, p. 37. The meaning of the word *Pharani* which has been taken as a proper name is not clear.

17. *Uj.*, p. 37, Dr. Saddhatissa's translation has been modified where necessary.

18. *Uj.*, pp. 31, 45-48.

19. *Uj.*, p. 224, Ch. II, para. 130.

Abhidhammatthavikasini,²⁰ a sub-commentary on Buddhist commentator Buddhadhatta's *Abhidhammavata*, and to the *Abhidhammatthavibhavini*,²¹ which is a sub-commentary on the *Abhidhamma* treatise called the *Abhidhammatthasamgaha*. Now the period to which Sariputta and his pupil Sumangala who wrote the two sub-commentaries referred to above, namely the *Abhidhammatthavikasini* and the *Abhidhammatthavibhavini* belonged, can be determined with a fair degree of certainty.

Sariputta flourished during the reign of Parakramabahu I (1153-1186). This is clearly confirmed by the *Culavamsa* which gives a glowing account of his religious activities, and by Sariputta's own works wherein he states that he enjoyed the generous patronage of Parakramabahu I, and that he composed these works while he was resident in the Jetavana Vihara in Polonnaruva built by this king, in several instances at the latter's own request.²² In its account of the construction of the Jetavana Vihara the *Culavamsa* states: 'For the *thera* named Sariputta who persevered firmly in discipline, he erected a vast and glorious *pasada* with rooms, terraces and chambers.'²³ Thus the fact that Sariputta belonged to the age of Parakramabahu I is clear and undisputable.

In the *Culavamsa*, the account of the construction of *viharas* by Parakramabahu I is preceded by its account of the unification of the Sangha. That the latter event took place in his twelfth regnal year in 1165 is confirmed by his own Polonnaruva Rock Inscription, as shown by D. M. De Zilva Wickramasinghe and S. Paranavitana.²⁵ Whether the *Culavamsa* narrative keeps to a chronological sequence we cannot say. If that were the case, the Jetavana Vihara wherein Sariputta was resident, was built after 1165 A.D. It is not unlikely that Parakramabahu considered the unification of the Sangha as one of the most urgent prerequisites for the prosperity of the *Sasana*, and would have given it priority over the construction of *viharas*. If this position is tenable, then Sariputta's writings accomplished while he was resident in the Jetavana-

20. *Uj.*, p. 116, *PLC.*, p. 200; *PS.* pp. 315-318.

21. *Uj.*, p. 116, *PLC.*, p. 200; *PS.*, pp. 326-328.

22. For a brief account of Sariputta and his writings see A. P. Buddhadatta, *Theravadi Bauddhacaryayo*, Ambalangoda, 1960, pp. 77-83, (*TBA*). Both the *Vinayatika* and the *Anguttaratika* were written at the request of Parakramabahu while Sariputta was resident in the Jetavana Vihara as stated in these texts. *Ibid.*, pp. 78-79.

23. *Culavamsa*, ed. Wilhelm Geiger, Vol. I, (1925), Vol II (1927), P.T.S., London, Ch. LXXVIII, 34, (*CV.*).

24. *Epigraphia Zeylanica*, Vol. II, p. 205, 259, (*EZ.*).

25. *University of Ceylon, History of Ceylon*, Vol. I, pt. I, (1959), pt. II (1960), Colombo, p. 569 (*UCHC.*).

Vihara have to be dated after 1165 A.D. Whatever be the reason, Sariputta also does not figure among the Venerable Elders such as Udumbaragiri Kassapa, Moggallana, Nagindapalliya, Nanda *Mahathera* and so forth, who were convened for the Council of Reformation referred to above.²⁶ When Sariputta's knowledge of the Dhamma ranks so high—indeed the greatest exponent of the Dhamma during the age of Parakramabahu if we go by his writings²⁷—why does he not figure in the deliberations of this great unification meeting? Even assuming that he was present there, why did his name go unrecorded both in the *Culavamsa*²⁸ and in the contemporary lithic record²⁹ of this great event? Was it because there was an elder spokesman for his fraternity in Udumbaragiri Kassapa, both being members of the forest-dwelling (*vanavasi*) community? More probably this could be due to Sariputta being comparatively young in age in relation to the venerable Elders who figured prominently in the synod. This is quite clear from Sariputta's own acknowledgement in his *Saratthadipani* and *Anguttara Tika* that he was a pupil of the Elder Maha-Kassapa and *anuthera* (*anunayaka*) Sumedha.³⁰ In the light of these considerations, it is more reasonable to place Sariputta's writings including the *Saratthadipani* cited by the author of the *Uj.*, not too early in the reign of Parakramabahu but in about the second decade, possibly after 1165. As for the *Saratthadipani* with which only we are concerned here, this assertion can be made beyond doubt. At the commencement of this work, Sariputta, in extolling the greatness of his teacher the Elder Maha-kassapa states, that the latter assisted Parakramabahu in bringing about the unification of the *Sasana*.³¹ We have already seen that this event had taken place in 1165 A.D.³² Therefore the date of the composition of the *Saratthadipani* has to be placed after that of the great synod, and definitely not before 1165 A.D.

Two other works cited by the author of the *Uj.*, the *Abhidhammatthavikasini* and the *Abhidhammatthavibhavini* were composed by Sariputta's pupil Sumangala.³³ These were written after his teacher's *Saratthadipani*.

26. *Cv.* LXXVIII, 1-27.

27. *PLC.* op. cit., pp. 190-195; see also note 22 above.

28. *Cv.* LXXVIII, 1-27.

29. *EZ.*, Vol. II, pp. 268-273.

30. The relevant verses are cited by A. P. Buddhadatta in his biographical sketch of Sariputta, see *Theravada Buddhacaryayo*, op. cit., pp. 80-81, see also *P.S.* op. cit., 249-252, 260-262.

31. *Saratthadipani*, ed. Bigalpola Devarakkhita, 1914, see opening verses, 1-9.

32. See above, notes 24 and 25.

33. *P.S.*, op. cit., p. 315-318; 326-328; on Sumangala see *TBA*, op. cit., pp. 97-105; *Uj.*, Introduction, p. 116.

For, in the *Abhidhammatthavikasini* its author Sumangala describes his teacher Sariputta as a resident of the Jetavana Vihara of Polonnaruva and as the author of the *Saratthadipani*. The *Abhidhammatthavibhavini* was written still later, as its author directs his readers to his *Abhidhammatthavikasini*³⁴ for detailed information on certain topics.³⁵

Based on our discussion so far, we are now in a position to arrive at one safe conclusion. The upper limit of the period during which the *Uj.* was composed cannot be stretched beyond 1165 A.D. at the most. The possible upper limit should really be brought down further, may be by a couple of decades. For we do not know the time gap between Sariputta's *Saratthadipani* and his pupil's *Abhidhammatthavibhavini*, both of which are quoted by our author. Moreover, it would have taken sometime for other scholars to become familiar with these works and to cite them in their writings. Be that what it is, we can safely conclude that the upper limit, stretched to its maximum, could not go beyond 1165 A.D.

We now return to the passage found in the colophon of the *Uj.* quoted earlier.³⁶ The most significant detail there, which unfortunately Dr. Saddhatissa seems to have bypassed, is the reference to a time 'when the entire island of Lanka was confused by the Tamil conflagration'.³⁷ In the face of this 'Tamil conflagration' (*Damilanala*), it is stated, the *theras* who were 'banners to the (island of) Tambapanni', seeking their own protection and that of their religion, fled to the Pandya country and found shelter and protection in the Perampalli. The author of the *Uj.* himself was one of the victims of this 'Tamil Conflagration' which took him to this Perampalli in the Pandya country, wherein this Pali text came to be written for the benefit of Buddhist laymen.

Now what is this 'Tamil Conflagration' which 'confused the entire island of Lanka'? Obviously this refers to a Tamil invasion from South India. Many are the invasions which originated from South India. Beginning with the incursions of adventurers like Sena, Guttika and Elara before the dawn of the Christian era, these developed into powerful and organised invasions by the tenth century, when the imperial

34. *Abhidhammatthavikasini*, ed. A. P. Buddhadatta, Ambalangoda, 1961, see verses in the colophon.

35. *Abhidhammatthavibhavini Tika*, ed. Pannasara and Wimaladhamma, Colombo, 1933, *PS.*, op. cit., p. 315.

36. See above, note 15.

37. See above, note 15, verse 8.

Colas occupied the northern part of Sri Lanka (Rajarattha) in the first decades of the eleventh century, and continued to rule there for roughly half a century until Vijayabahu's victory in 1070 A.D.³⁸ The Pandyas of the first empire also did not miss their turn prior to this, but achieved little. The Pali Chronicle describes the ravages caused by the Pandyas and the Colas, particularly the destruction of Buddhist monasteries, in a tone which reflects the contempt and indignation of its authors.³⁹ Buddhism did suffer considerably during this period, due as much to the lack of royal patronage.⁴⁰ But are these the events to which 'the Tamil Conflagration' refers? Possibly not. These events are far too removed from the likely age to which the *Uj.* seems to belong. We have already seen that the upper limit of the period during which it was composed, could not extend beyond 1165 A.D. The entire twelfth century, a little over three decades of which was taken by the stable, peaceful and glorious reign of Parakramabahu I (1153-1186), hardly witnessed any Tamil invasion of consequence, but for a spell of internal political instability between the death of Vijayabahu I in 1110 and the accession of Parakramabahu I in 1153.⁴¹ There is some evidence of Cola invasions a few years after Parakramabahu's death, notably during the reign of queen Lilavati (1197-1200), but these were sporadic, feeble and ineffective, and hardly caused the damage and confusion envisaged in the *Uj.*⁴²

Coming to the thirteenth century, in its second decade, we have detailed accounts of an invasion which caused virtually unprecedented devastation and damage to life and property alike. We refer to the invasion of Kalinga Magha with his 24,000 strong Kerala army, which took place about the year 1214. All of our chronicles, both Sinhala and Pali, detail the destruction caused by this invasion, using a terse and relentless language almost unknown in the descriptions of previous invasions. The *Culavamsa* recounts the course of this invasion thus:

'But since in consequence of the enormously accumulated various evil deeds of the dwellers in Lanka, the *devas* who were

38. *Mahavamsa (Mv.)*, ed. Wilhelm Geiger, PTS., London, 1908, Ch. XXI, 10-34; XXXIII, 37-77; *Cv.*, Ch. LV-LVIII, University of Ceylon, History, (*UCHC*), Vol. I, part I, Colombo, 1959, pp. 344-351; *Ibid.*, Vol. I, part II, Colombo, 1960, pp. 417-426.

39. *Cv.*, L, 33-36, LIV, 44-45, LV, 1-32.

40. *UCHC*, Vol. I, pt. II, 563-564, *Ceylon Historical Journal*, Vol. IV, pp. 113-114, (*CH*).

41. *CH*., Vol. IV, *Special Number on the Polonnaruwa Period*, 1954-1955, *UCHC* Vol. I, pt. II, pp. 438-486.

42. A. Liyanagamage, *The Decline of Polonnaruwa and the Rise of Dambadeniya*, (*DP RD*), Colombo, 1968, pp. 44-67.

everywhere entrusted with the protection of Lanka failed to carry out this protection, there landed a man who had a false creed, whose heart rejoiced in bad statesmanship, who was a forest-fire burning down the bushes in the forest of the good—that is generosity and the like—who was a sun whose actions closed the rows of night lotus flowers—that is the good doctrines—and a man destroying the grace of the groups of day lotuses—that is of peace—(a man) by name Magha, an unjust king sprung from the Kalinga line, in whom reflection was fooled by his great delusion, landed as leader of four and twenty thousand warriors from the Kalinga country and conquered the island of Lanka. The great scorching fire king Magha commanded his countless flames of fire—his warriors—to harass the great forest—the kingdom of Lanka. While thus his great warriors oppressed the people, boasting cruelly everywhere: “We are Kerala warriors”, they tore from the people their garments, their ornaments and the like, corrupted the good morals of the family which had been observed for ages, cut off hands and feet and the like (of the people), destroyed many houses and tied up cows, oxen and other (cattle) which they made their own property. After they had put fetters on the wealthy and rich people and had tortured them and taken away all their possessions, they made poor people of them. They wrecked image houses, destroyed many *cetiyas*, ravaged the *viharas* and maltreated the lay brethren. They flogged the children, tormented the five (groups of the) comrades of the Order, made the people carry burdens and forced them to do heavy labour. Many books known and famous they tore from their cord and strewed them hither and thither. The beautiful, vast, proud *cetiyas* like the Ratnavali (*cetiya*) and others which embodied as it were, the glory of former pious kings, they destroyed by overthrowing them and allowing alas! many of the bodily relics, their souls as it were, to disappear. Thus the Damila warriors in imitation of the warriors of Mara, destroyed in the evil of their nature, the laity and the Order.⁴³

The account continues:

‘The monarch forced the people to adopt a false faith and he brought great confusion into the four sharply divided castes. Villages and fields, houses and gardens, slaves, cattle, buffaloes

43. *Cv.*, LXXX, 54-70.

and whatever else belonged to the Sihalas, he delivered up to the Keralas. The viharas, the *parivenas*, and many sanctuaries he made over to one or the other of his warriors as dwelling! The treasures which belonged to the Buddha and were the property of the Order he seized and thus committed a number of sins in order to go to hell'.⁴⁴

Here we have quoted at length from the *Culavamsa* in order to demonstrate that the devastation caused by this invasion measures up to the conflagration proportions envisaged in the *Uj.*, beside its relevance to the later stages of our discussion.

The accounts of Mayurapada *Thera* who was the author of the *Pujavali*⁴⁵ and that of the author of the *Hatthavanagallaviharavamsa*⁴⁶ almost eye-witnesses of these events, not to mention several later authors,⁴⁷ reflect the same horror and indignation at the misdeeds of Magha. We have examined in great detail elsewhere the nature of Magha's rule and the policies that followed.⁴⁸ Suffice it to state here that he persecuted Buddhism with decided vehemence, and the Buddhist Sangha in particular, became a merciless target of onslaught. Making every allowance for possible exaggeration in the accounts of *bhikkhu* authors, there is little doubt that religious persecution, the like of which was never known before, became a reality. Among these invaders Magha stands unique in many respects.⁴⁹

Reduced to misery and helplessness under these conditions, members of the Sangha left their monasteries in Rajarattha and fled to the central, southern and south western parts of the country, away from where Magha held sway. The *Nikayasamgrahaya*, a History of Buddhism written in the fourteenth century states that 'monks fled in search of protection to Mayarata, leaving their books, the articles of use and the like lying wherever they were'.⁵⁰ There are other members of the Sangha who left the island, seeking protection in South Indian territories. It is stated in the *Culavamsa* that Vijayabahu III (1232-1235) who ultimately

44. *Cv.*, LXXX, 75-78.

45. *Pujavali*, 33-34, *Parichcheda (Pjv.)*, ed. A. V. Suravira, Colombo, 1961, pp. 108-109, *DPRD*, op. cit., pp. 11-16.

46. *Hatthavanagallaviharavamsa*, ed. C. E. Godakumbura, P.T.S., London, 1956 p. 30, para. 1, *DPRD*, op. cit., pp. 16-20.

47. *Nikayasamgrahaya (Nks.)*, ed. D. P. R. Samaranayake, Colombo, 1960, p. 87, *Daladasirita (Dal.s.)*, ed. Walivita Sorata, Colombo, 1954, p. 43.

48. *DPRD.*, op. cit., pp. 110-128.

49. *Ibid.*, 110-128.

50. *Nks.*, op. cit., p. 87.

succeeded in founding a Sinhalese kingdom in the south western part of the country, recalled these *mabatheras* from abroad. 'Now some of the Grand *theras* with Vacissara at the head, who sought that protection for Lanka on which depended the continuance of the Order, had crossed the vast ocean despite its raging waves, had betaken themselves to the lands of the Pandus, Colas and other (peoples). Now Vijayabahu sending forth his great dignitaries, summoned all these *theras* who were a mine of mercy back from there.⁵¹ The *Pujavali* which is contemporary with these events as stated earlier, makes almost the same statement.⁵² So does the *Daladasirita*, a Chronicle of the Tooth Relic written in the Saka year 1240 (1318 A.D.), which refers to the recall of 'the *mabatheras* who went to foreign lands on account of the Tamil confusion (caused by) king Magha.⁵³ On the basis of the foregoing evidence, we have no hesitation in identifying the 'Tamil Conflagration' referred to in the *Uj.* with the invasion of Magha. We also note that *Bhadanta* Ananda, the author of the *Uj.* was not alone in having had to leave his motherland under tragic circumstances. Evidently the *mabatheras* whom Vijayabahu III recalled to Sri Lanka from the countries of the Pandyas and the Colas, are the monks extolled as 'banners to (the island of) Tambapanni' in the *Uj.* whose author together with these venerable compatriots, shared a common misfortune. Thus we may hold with virtual certainty that like the Grand *thera* Vacissara referred to above, *Bhadanta* Ananda fled from Sri Lanka at the time of Magha's invasion or later during the latter's reign, took shelter in the Perampalli in the Pandya country and composed the *Uj.* there.

We are now in a position to narrow down the period of the composition of the *Uj.* further. The upper limit suggested earlier in our discussion, namely the year 1165 can now be safely brought down to 1214⁵⁴ the year in which Magha's invasion took place. The lower limit could also be determined similarly. Magha held sway in Rajarattha for a period of roughly four decades. It has now been established that Magha was finally defeated by the forces of Parakramabahu II (1236-1270) about the year 1255 A.D.⁵⁵ Thus the lower limit has to be placed about the year 1255 which marks the end of Magha's reign. That would enable us to conclude that the *Uj.* had been composed between 1214

51. *Cv.*, LXXXI, 20-22.

52. *Pjv.*, op. cit., p. 109.

53. *Dal.S.*, op. cit., pp. 43-44.

54. See above notes 24 ff., *UCHC.*, Vol. I, pt. II, p. 849.

55. *UCHC.*, Vol. I, pt. II, 620-623; *DPRD.*, op. cit., p. 130.

and 1255 during the period of Magha's rule in Sri Lanka. In the light of this conclusion arrived at by a re-examination of important evidence within his own text, and by taking into account the testimony of almost contemporary sources which he has not made use of, Dr. Saddhatissa's dating of the *Uj.* has necessarily to be revised. It can no longer be held that the author of the *Uj.* 'began his Buddhist activities abroad during the early part of the 12th century and that he wrote this work during the reign of Parakramabahu I' (1153-1186).

* * * * *

Before taking up the question of the identification of *Bhadanta Ananda* who composed the *Uj.*, we would consider the identity of his Pandyan patron Colaganga⁵⁶ who built the monasteries in which the fleeing monks from Sri Lanka including the author of the *Uj.*, found solace and comfort in their hour of need. In his identification of this Colaganga, Dr. Saddhatissa has made several inferences which, in our view, are completely unconvincing. Evidently he has followed Dr. L. D. Barnett, who as far back as 1901 when Indian historical research was way behind what it is today, suggested the possibility that this Colaganga could be identified with the well-known Anantavarman Colaganga of the Eastern Ganga dynasty.⁵⁷ Dr. Saddhatissa has taken pains to justify this suggestion without noticing the weakness of its foundation. The *Uj.* describes its Colaganga as a 'feudatory *vanni* king' (*vanno samantabhumipo*) in the Pandya country (*Pandubhumandala*).⁵⁸ The invasion of Kalinga by Kulottunga I (1070-1120), the Cola king, during the reign of Anantavarman Colaganga, and the reverses that the latter suffered are well known.⁵⁹ But this was a temporary setback and Anantavarman recovered his losses and assumed the titles of *Trikalingadhipati* and 'Lord of Utkala'. He was indeed the greatest ruler of the Eastern Ganga dynasty.⁶⁰ How this Anantavarman with his kingdom much to the north of the Godavari and his capital at Kalinganagara, came down all the way to become a Cola feudatory in the Pandya country, and to have been converted to Buddhism there from his ardent Saiva faith, is difficult to understand. Dr. Saddhatissa concludes: 'The fact that Anantavarman's mother was a Cola princess, Rajasundari, daughter of Rajendra Cola Virarajendra (A.D. 1063-1070) reveals none other than

56. See above, note 15.

57. *RAS*, 1901, pp. 87-90.

58. *Uj.*, pp. 40-41.

59. *The Colas*, K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, Second (Revised) Edition, 1955, pp. 321-323.

60. *The Struggle for Empire*, ed. K. M. Munshi and R. C. Majumdar, Bombay, 1957, pp. 205-207.

the above mentioned Cola Ganga, the provincial chieftain appointed by Kulottunga I. Hence he might have been mentioned by the author of the *Uj.* as a *vannasamanta*.⁶¹ There is nothing in common between Anantavarman Cola Ganga and the Colaganga of the *Uj.* other than the name Colaganga. So the entire argument rests on a very slender basis. According to our dating of the *Uj.*, its Colaganga should have flourished about the first half of the thirteenth century whereas Anantavarman's anointment took place in the year 1078 A.D. and his last known date is the Saka year 1072 (1150 A.D.).⁶² Thus on chronological grounds alone Anantavarman can be set aside.

Who then is the Colaganga of the *Uj.*? Whatever be his identity, he has to be regarded as a Pandyan ruler of the thirteenth century belonging to its first half most probably. The *Uj.* describes him as a 'feudatory *vanni* king' (*vanno samantabhumipo*) of the Pandya country (*Pandubhūmandala*). He is said to have been converted to Buddhism on the advice of a Buddhist monk named Lokuttama 'born to a wealthy and illustrious family in the famous and excellent city of Sirivallabha'. Colaganga built three *viharas*, one of which was the Perampalli. Colaganga's seat of authority and the place where these *viharas* were built is not stated in the text.⁶³ But it is possible that Sirivallabhapura referred to as the city wherefrom Lokuttama hailed, was also Colaganga's seat of authority in which these *viharas* were built. In any case, that these *viharas* were built in the Pandya country is beyond doubt, a point which Dr. Saddhatissa has missed, resulting in his search for these *viharas* in the Cola country.

Going on the passage quoted above, Sirivallabhapura has to be located in the Pandya country. Dr. Saddhatissa's attempt to equate it with Nagapattana in the Cola country goes decidedly against the *Uj.* according to which it is a Pandyan city. The name Sirivallabha reminds one, of the celebrated Pandyan ruler of that name who flourished during the first half of the ninth century, after whom the city has probably been named. As such, a Pandyan location for this city is more in keeping with this point too. Moreover there is no evidence that Nagapattana was ever called Sirivallabhapura. Other considerations aside, on textual evidence alone, we are inclined to conclude that Colaganga was a ruler in the Pandya country, and that Sirivallabhapura where he probably

61. *Uj.*, p. 41.

62. *The Struggle for Empire*, op. cit., p. 207.

63. See above, note 15; *Uj.*, see colophon.

built three *viharas* after his conversion to Buddhism, and possibly also where his capital was located, is a Pandyan city.⁶⁴ Attention may be drawn to several Pandya inscriptions ranging from the eleventh to the fifteenth centuries, which may perhaps take us in a helpful direction in our search for this city—Sirivallabhapura. A fifteenth century inscription from the Palavannathasvamin Temple at Karivallamvandanallur in the Tinnevely District, records a gift of land in Sirivallabhacaturvedimangalam. Another Tamil inscription from the Tinnevely Districts mentions Srivallavanmangalam as a *brahmadeya* in Kilkalakkuram in the modern Manapadaividu. The same place is again mentioned in an eleventh century inscription as a *brahmadeya* in *Kilkalakkuram*, a subdivision of Rajarajamandalam. And in two more inscriptions of about the twelfth century, from the Tinnevely District, the place is mentioned yet again. It should be noted that this place called Sirivallabha figures continually in epigraphic records during a period of not less than four centuries beginning from the eleventh. However, in none of these references does it find mention in a Buddhist connection; on the contrary it is of brahmanical significance, being a *brahmadeya* or *caturvedimangalam*. But this does not necessarily preclude the possibility that Colaganga, after his conversion to Buddhism evidently from Hinduism, built these *viharas* there. Nor should we imagine for that reason alone, that Sirivallabhapura should be a Buddhist city. For, as stated elsewhere in this paper, Buddhism in South India irrespective of whatever patronage it received from time to time, was a minority religion and it is well-known, for example, that ancient Kancipuram had Saivites, Vaisnavites, Jainas and Buddhists living in amity and maintaining their separate religious establishments, while it was never a Jaina or a Buddhist city. Moreover, we do not know how sympathetic Colaganga's successors were to Buddhism which the former had embraced on the persuasion of Lokuttama *Thera*. In the present circumstances, however, we would not press the proposed identification of Sirivallabhapura any further, which must only be decided after systematic archaeological investigation with an eye to the remains of these Buddhist establishments. In any case it is most unlikely that Colaganga was a Cola feudatory and that Sirivallabhapura was a Cola city. These conclusions run counter to the evidence of the *Uj.* itself.

64. *ARE*, op. cit., No. 278 of 1908; No. 442 of 1909; No. 422 of 1906; Nos. 449 and 451 of 1909; I am thankful to Prof. K. Indrapala for drawing my attention to this inscriptions. See also *The Colas*, op. cit., p. 645.

In any attempt at establishing the identity of Colaganga, Ananda Thera's patron in the Pandya country, the description in the *Uj.* that he was 'a feudatory *vanni* king' (*vanno samantabhūmipo*), has to be taken note of. The term *vanni* which is probably a second derivative in Tamil, is mentioned for the first time in the *Pujavali*, written during the reign of Parakramabahu II (1236-1270). There in its account of Vijayabahu III (1232-1235) and Parakramabahu II, the term occurs several times as well as in other Sinhalese literary works written thereafter.⁶⁵ In the *Culavamsa* too, in its first reference to this term in the account of Vijayabahu III, the Pali stanza seems to retain the term unchanged in *vannirajattam*.⁶⁶ However, the author of the *Uj.* seems to have rendered it into Pali as *vañño* and not *vanni* as in the *Culavamsa*. It should be noted that these references are from the thirteenth century contexts, the *Pujavali* certainly, and the *Uj.* almost certainly, if our arguments for its date are valid. Whatever be its Tamil affiliations, the terms *vanni* may be traced to Sanskrit and Pali *vana* meaning 'forest'. Sinhalese *vanni nirindu* and Pali *vanniraja* for 'vanni king' should convey the sense of 'a king (chieftain) of a forest tract'.⁶⁷ This meaning seems to be consistent with the sense implicit in its first occurrence in the *Culavamsa* with reference to the initial stages of the career of Vijayabahu III: 'Now at that time there was a king known by the name of Vijayabahu, belonging to the line of king Sanghabodhi, a man of splendid courage who after he had through fear of the foe withdrawn to diverse inaccessible forests and had long dwelt there, attained the dignity of a king of the *vanni*'.⁶⁸ Dr. K. Indrapala, however, thinks that the use of this term had a military connotation.⁶⁹ Be it what it is, suffice it to say that in the thirteenth century, in all probability a *vanni* king was a ruler of a forest tract, a petty chieftain wielding authority in a limited area, independent or semi-independent as the case may be, and more often than not owing allegiance to a principal ruler, nominally or otherwise. Sihalacariya or Sri Lankan teacher that *Bhadanta* Ananda was, he would have been quite conscious of the sense in which the term was used in Sri Lanka, when he used the term *vañño* to describe the political status of his Pandyan benefactor.

65. *Pjv.*, op. cit., p. 109, 116, 129, 136; *Nks.*, op. cit., 85; *Pavakumbasirita*, ed. Amarasiri Gunawardhana, Colombo, 1953, verses 28, 46; *Gira Sandesaya*, ed. Makuluduve Piyaratana, Colombo, 1948, verse 140.

66. *Cv.*, LXXXI, 10-11.

67. *UCHC*, Vol. I, pt. II, pp. 736-737; *DPRD*, op. cit., pp. 85-86.

68. *Cv.*, LXXX, 10-11.

69. 'The Origins of the Tamil Vanni chieftaincies of Ceylon', *The Ceylon Journal of the Humanities*, Vol. I, (1970), pp. 111-140.

Dr. Saddhatissa's attempt to extend the antiquity of *vanni* kings as far back as the reign of Aggabodhi I (571-604), based on popular and not very reliable narratives written as late as the eighteenth century, such as the *Vannirajavaliya* and *Yalpanavaipavamalai*, is not at all convincing.⁷⁰ On the basis of these considerations, we may hold that Colaganga, like his almost contemporary Sri Lankan counterpart Vijayabahu III, was a petty chieftain holding sway in an outlying area of the Pandya country. Quite clearly he did not belong to the main ruling dynasty of the Pandyas. Petty chieftain that he in all probability was, ruling possibly in some far-off insignificant township as suggested by us earlier in this discussion, defies easy identification of his person as well as his little town, which was no less than 'the famous and excellent city named Sirivallabha' to the grateful *Bhadanta* Ananda. We could now see clearly how far off this Colaganga is, not only in physical distance but also in the possible size of his kingdom, in his power and stature from the great Anantavarman Codaganga of the Eastern Ganga dynasty.

Political changes of a far-reaching nature were taking place in the Pandya country, though this is merely a coincidence—precisely at the time Magha invaded Sri Lanka and sacked Rajarattha, due to which our author Ananda *Thera* was compelled to leave his homeland in search of protection in the Pandya country. This happened about the year 1214. In a highly documented account, Professor K. A. Nilakanta Sastri sums up the position in the Pandya country: 'Towards the end of Kulottunga's (III) reign, the Pandya throne passed to Maravarman Sundara Pandya (1216), possibly after the demise of his brother Jetavarman Kulasekhara, and the new ruler lost no time in starting a war against the old Cola monarch who had, more than ten years before, deeply humiliated him and his elder brother in their own capital and perhaps also demolished their coronation hall in Madura. For the success of Sundara Pandya against Kulottunga III, we have to depend solely on the inscriptions of the former. The Cola inscriptions of the period observe a total silence which will cause no surprise when it is recollected how the inscriptions of Somesvara I, W. Calukya, omit all references to the battle of Koppam. But the records of Sundara Pandya are quite specific and full. And their account of the misfortunes of the Colas is by no means less trustworthy than the records of Pandya defeats in the inscriptions of Kulottunga himself.'⁷¹ After citing

70. *Uj.*, pp. 39-40.

71. *The Colas*, K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, op. cit., p. 393

the relevant inscriptional texts he concludes: 'The main incidents of the campaign were thus an invasion by Sundara Pandya of the Cola country reaching as far north as Cidambaram, and marked by considerable damage to life and property along the route of the march; the inability of Kulottunga to resist the advance of the Pandya ruler and his seeking refuge in flight; finally, the restoration, possibly after some negotiations, of the kingdom and crown of Kulottunga on condition that he acknowledged Sundara Pandya as suzerain. The tables were thus completely turned; in almost every detail, Sundara Pandya followed the example set by Kulottunga during his third campaign against the Pandya country. At one stroke the Pandya king not only destroyed the overlordship of the Cola and declared his own independence, but actually compelled his quondam superior to do homage to him in turn. This was in 1216-17. We shall see later that the attempt of the Cola ruler to regain his independence led to another Pandyan invasion with more disastrous results.⁷² This trend continued unarrested, and about the year 1217 the Cola emperor was imprisoned in his own capital, and had to be rescued by the Hoysala king Vira Narasimha who describes himself as 'the establisher of the Cola kingdom' (*Colarajyapratisthacarya*). Thus the Colas were being reduced to insignificance, giving rise to the second Pandya empire which rose to its zenith under Jatavarman Sundara Pandya and Jatavarman Vira Pandya in the second half of the thirteenth century.⁷³

The *vanno samanta* Colaganga of Uj. has to be placed in the Pandya country within this political framework. In the period to which Colaganga should belong according to our discussion above, one sees the rapid decline of the Colas and the conspicuous ascendancy of the Pandyas under Maravarman Sundara Pandya who carried war right into the heart of the Cola country. Its emperor Kulottunga was taken prisoner and had to accept Pandyan supremacy. In the face of these developments, it is impossible to concede Dr. Saddhatissa's contention that Colaganga of the Uj. was a Cola feudatory. If he was a feudatory at all, which he probably was going by the term *samanta* by which he is described, he would have owed allegiance to the Pandyan emperor, Maravarman

72. *Ibid.*, p. 395.

73. *Ibid.*, p. 395.

74. *Annual Report on Epigraphy (ARE)*: ARE for 1908, Nos. 202, 205 of 1908; ARE for 1913, Nos. 535, 549, 557, 559 of 1912; ARE for 1915, Nos. 409, 410, 413 of 1914; ARE for 1912, No. 140 of 1921; ARE for 1922, No. 203 of 1922, ARE for 1926, No. 194 of 1926.

Sundara Pandya most probably, on chronological grounds. Of this, however, we cannot be certain. Or he was simply a semi-independent local chieftain who fits in aptly to the description *vañño sāmanta bhūmipo*. There are of course numerous South Indian inscriptions wherein Colaganga occurs as the personal name of Pandya feudatories of the 13th century, but none of them answers the requirements of the *Uj.* except chronologically. Thus in the absence of records of this chieftain in the Pandya country known to us, at present there is no way of taking this identification to greater precision, though we have established the nature and political status of the Colaganga in question.

Nor can he be satisfactorily identified with any of the Colangangas who figure in the Sri Lankan sources. The first, a Colangangakumara, is evidently a foreign prince who lived at the court of Gajabahu II (1132-1153), and was taken prisoner by Parakramabahu I (1153-1186) during the latter's struggle with the former for the capture of Rajarattha.⁷⁵ There is nothing to connect *Uj.*'s Colaganga with this prince except the name that is common to them. Then comes the Codaganga described as a sister's son of the Kalinga king Nissankamalla (1187-1196). He was put to death at Polonnaruva by *Senapati* Kitti after a nine-month reign and thus quit the scene. He can therefore be left out.⁷⁶ The third, a Codagangadeva, is known from a fragmentary inscription from Trincomalee, dated 1223 A.D. He is believed to belong to the Kalinga line and to have invaded Sri Lanka either to help his Kalinga kinsmen or to seek his own fortunes, none of which seems to have met with success.⁷⁷ Chronologically he falls into the period where *Upasakajanalankara*'s Colaganga belongs, but we see no tangible link between the two. And lastly Bhuvanekabahu I (1272-1284) 'drove back all the Damila foes, Kalingarayara and Colangangadeva and the rest who landed from the opposite coast'.⁷⁸ Pandya invasions of Sri Lanka took place sufficiently close to Bhuvanekabahu's reign, but whether the invasion referred to here is one from the Pandya country is not clear.⁷⁹ The Colaganga who figures here, in point of time, is a little too removed from the age to which *Uj.*'s Colaganga belongs, but not inadmissible in the chronological setting. Apart from this, no connection can be established between the two. These references show that numerous were the Colangangas who

75. *Cv.*, LXX, 238.

76. *Cv.*, LXXX, 29.

77. *EZ.*, Vol. V, pp. 170-173.

78. *Cv.*, XC, 32.

79. *DPRD.*, op. cit., pp. 133-159; *UCHC.*, op. cit., pp. 631-633.

figure in the history of the South Indian region during this period. It is unsafe to attempt an identification based on a common nomenclature unsupported by more reliable evidence, the danger of which is best demonstrated by the episode of Anantavarman Codaganga examined earlier. Consequently we consider it safer to leave the Pandyan feudatory Colaganga unidentified. Such is also the fate of many of his counterparts, both in the Pandya country and Sri Lanka, of whom no records have survived.

* * * * *

And that brings us to the question of the identification of the author of the *Uj.*, *Bhadanta Ananda Mahathera*, described as a teacher from Sri Lanka (*Sibalacariya*). As shown by Dr. Saddhatissa, the identification of this *mahathera* is beset with numerous difficulties. Even so, now that we have circumscribed the age in which he flourished with a fair degree of certainty, namely the thirteenth century, more probably its first half, the question can be approached with greater advantage. Dr. Saddhatissa's conclusion cited above, that this *Ananda Thera* 'began his Buddhist activities abroad during the early part of the 12th century and that he wrote this work during the reign of Parkaramabahu I' (1153-1186) should now be substantially modified.⁸⁰ Of the several *Ananda Theras* known to us from our sources, the first who was the author of the *Mulatika*, which is the sub-commentary on Buddhaghosa's commentary on the *Abhidhamma Pitaka*, also called the *Paramatthappakasini* need not concern us. It belongs to a period as early as the tenth century, much anterior to our period.⁸¹ This *Ananda Thera* as well as the second, Dr. Saddhatissa has rightly eliminated. The second *Ananda* who was the author of a philosophical treatise in verse, the *Saddhammapayana*, is referred to as *Abhayagiricakkavatti* in his own work, suggesting thereby that he was possibly a celebrity of the Abhayagiri Vihara.⁸² The latter could not be equated with the author of the *Uj.* as it is stated there that this work was based on the traditions of the *Mahavihara*.⁸³ It is to the third *Ananda*, namely *Arannaratana* (*Vanaratana*) *Ananda*, who was the teacher of two eminent pupils, *Buddhappiya Dipankara* and *Vedeha*, that Dr. Saddhatissa ascribes the authorship of the *Uj.*⁸⁴ This identification deserves consideration, but it has its own problems which have to be resolved if it is to be accepted.

80. *Uj.*, p. 45.

81. *Uj.*, pp. 28-31; *PS.*, op.cit., pp. 267-268.

82. *PLC.*, op. cit., p. 212, *PS.*, op. cit., pp. 433-435.

83. *Uj.*, Ch. ix, para. 20, p.357.

84. *Uj.*, p. 33 ff.

The main problem is the age in which Buddhappiya, Vedeha, and their teacher Vanaratana Ananda flourished. The general belief in Sri Lanka is that these two reputed pupils of Ananda *Thera* were contemporaries of Parakramabahu II (1236-1270), and that their treatises dealing with Buddhist themes and grammar were composed during his reign.⁸⁵ But Professor S. Paranavitana is of the opinion that this date is too late by a century, and that these *theras* belong to the twelfth and not to the thirteenth century.⁸⁶ It appears that Dr. Saddhatissa has accepted this dating together with Paranavitana's arguments, in order to place the author of the *Uj.* in the twelfth century.⁸⁷ In the colophon of his grammatical work *Rupasiddhi*, Buddhappiya gives the following information on himself and his teacher: 'This perfect Rupasiddhi was composed by that monk who received the title of Buddhappiya and was named Dipankara—a disciple of Ananda, the eminent preceptor who was like unto a standard in Tambapanni—he (Dipankara) was renowned like a lamp in the Damila country, and being the resident superior of two monasteries including Baladicca, caused the religion to shine forth'.⁸⁸ In his other work, *Pajja-madhu* which is a Pali poem written in praise of the Buddha, it is stated in the colophon: 'May they drink deeply of these nectar-like verses (*pajjamadhu*)—made by the bee Buddhappiya, delighted with the Buddha's virtues—who constantly attends upon the lotus, the Venerable Elder Vanaratana (Jewel of the Forest), heavy-laden with the perfume of his virtues and always in bloom'.⁸⁹

In these works Buddhappiya's teacher Vanaratana is described as an eminent *thera* in Tambapanni, belonging to the Forest-Dwelling Community.⁹⁰ The latter's pupil Buddhappiya is compared to a lamp illuminating the Damila country. Further, it is added that he was the incumbent of two monasteries in the Tamil country, one of which is named Baladicca. The *Rupasiddhi Sanne*, the inter-verbal commentary on the *Rupasiddhi* written, according to Paranavitana, not long after the

85. G. P. Malalasekera, *PLC.*, op. cit., pp. 220-226.

86., "Negapatam and Theravada Buddhism in South India", *Journal of the Greater India Society*, Vol. XI, (1944), pp. 17-25. My references are to the Sinhalese translations of this article in *Sabitya Mandalaya Lipi Mala, Lanka Itihasaya, amka I*, Colombo, 1967, pp. 68-79, see p. 74 ff. A. P. Buddhadatta also holds that these *theras* belong to the 10th century, see *Theravadi Bauddhadicaryayo*, Ambalangoda, 1960, pp. 69-75, *PS.*, op. cit., pp. 400-402, 471-472.

87. *Uj.*, p. 34 ff.

88. *Rupasiddhi*, ed. Pannasekhara Mahanayakathera, Colombo, 1933, p. 303, cited in *PLC.*, op. cit., p. 220, *PS.*, p. 471, *Uj.*, p. 35, note 105.

89. *Pajjamadhu*, ed. Heyyantuduwe Devamitta, 1887. *PLC.*, pp. 220-221.

90. See above, note 88.

Rupasiddhi, adds that the other monastery was the *Cudamanikarama*.⁹¹ Paronavitana identifies the latter monastery as the well-known *Cudamanivarmavi ara* referred to in the celebrated Leyden Grant, built at the request of the Srivijaya emperor *Maravijayottungavarman*, and successively endowed by the Cola emperors Rajaraja I (985-1014), Rajendra I (1014-1032) and Kulottunga I (1120-1163).⁹² It is believed that the forms *Cūḍāmaṇikārāma*, *Cūḍāmaṇikarama* and *Culamanikarma* found in the manuscripts of the *Rupasiddhi Sanne* are clerical errors whereas the correct name of the *vihara* is *Cudamanivarma*.⁹³ There is no strong reason to dispute this identification, and we may accept that these two *viharas* were in the Cola country, and that if not both, one of them certainly—the *Cudamanivarma Vihara* certainly—was located in Nagapattana, or Negapatam as it is known now.⁹⁴ But this would not solve the problem of the identification of the author of the *Uj.*, *Ananda Thera*, as will be shown in the sequel, in the course of which we would return to *Buddhappiya* and *Vedeha* once again.

Paronavitana, and evidently following him Dr. Saddhatissa, identified the *Ananda Thera* who was the teacher of *Vedeha* and *Buddhappiya* with the *Ananda Thera* who figures in the Fragmentary Slab Inscription of *Sundaramahadevi* from *Polonnaruva*.⁹⁵ *Sundaramahadevi* was the queen of *Vikramabahu I* (1111-1132). She had outlived her husband as is evident from her *Maravidiya Rock Inscription* dated in the 27th regnal year of *Jayabahu I* (1110-1111).⁹⁶ Of these two inscriptions of *Sundaramahadevi*, the former which is fragmentary and lacking in a continuous text, eulogises one *Ananda Thera* 'who has attained psychic power, who is like unto a banner raised aloft in the land of Lanka, who is a *thera*.....the monks of *Tambarattha* and who, the wise one, has effected.....of the religious discipline among the *Colas*'.⁹⁷ From this

91. See above, note 86, S. Paronavitana, Sinhalese translation, op. cit., pp. 72-73.

92. *Ibid.*, p. 73; *Rupasiddhi* including the commentary edited by Dehigaspe Pannasara, Colombo, 1927, on the *Cudamanivarma Vihara*, see also, K.A. Nilakanta Sastri, *The Colas*, op. cit., pp. 185-186, 220, 318.

93. *Ibid.*, Paronavitana, p. 73.

94. See above, note 92.

95. *EZ.*, Vol. IV, pp 61-72; *Uj.*, pp 42-45, *JRAS* (Ceylon Branch), Vol. VII, New Series, p. 4.

96. *EZ.*, Vol. II, pp 194-202.

97. *ananda-nama-vidito jayati(ddhi)-patto*
Lamkatalussita-dhajo pavaro yati (so)
Yo Tambarattha-yati.....thera-bhuto

Colesu sasana.....kasi dhiro, *EZ.*, Vol. IV, pp 71-72. The portion referring to *Tambarattha* left with a lacuna here, later Paronavitana read as *yo Tambarattha-yati-suddhita-thera-bhuto*, *JRAS* (Ceylon Branch), New Series, Vol. VII, p. 4, note 20. However, Dr. Saddhatissa has attributed to Paronavitana more improvement in the text than the latter attempted, *Uj.*, p 42, note 140.

text it is clear that he was a *thera* of eminence in Sri Lanka, but we are less certain of the context in which Tambarattha occurs, and he appears to have either promoted or reformed the *Sasana* in the Cola country. It has also to be granted that this *thera* was a contemporary of Sundaramahadevi who was alive at least up to the 27th regnal year of Jayabahu I, *i.e.* 1137. That is to say that this *thera* flourished in the first half of the twelfth century, and we do not know if he was alive during the reign of Parakramabahu I (1153-1186). However, he does not figure among the great Elders who played a leading role in the synod held during the latter's reign.⁹⁸ Now as stated earlier, this Ananda *Thera* has been identified by Paranavitana and Dr. Saddhatissa as the teacher of Buddhappiya and Vedeha, who was also Ananda by name.⁹⁹ While there are certain considerations which took these scholars along this direction, there are one or two points, significant in our view, which remain unexplained. First, the teacher of Vedeha and Buddhappiya is nowhere referred to as being famous or indeed as having had anything to do with Buddhism in Tambarattha or Colarattha. On the other hand, *theras* who did have such connections with South India, as for example Buddharakkhita who was the author of the Pali poem *Jinalankara*¹⁰⁰ and Anuruddha *Thera* who was the author of the *Paramatthavinicchaya*¹⁰¹ and the *Namarupapriccheda* devoted to the exposition of the Abhidhamma, are specifically referred to as such in their own writings. These writings refer to these authors as being held in high esteem in Colarattha and Tambarattha. It is significant that in Sundaramahadevi's inscription, the Ananda *Thera* figuring there is described together with his connection with Buddhism in South India, making reference to Colarattha and Tambarattha.¹⁰² Both Buddhappiya and Vedeha, as reflected in their writings, were devoutly beholden to their teacher and made generous acknowledgement.¹⁰³ In his *Rupasiddhi* it is stated that Buddhappiya was 'a lamp

98. *Cv.*, LXXVIII, 1-30; *EZ.*, II, pp 268-273.

99. See above, note 95.

100. Ed. Dipankara *Thera* and Batapole Sri Dharmapala *Thera*, Alutgama, 1915, p. 290.

101. Ed. Devananda *Nayaka Thera*, Colombo, 1926, p 337, see also *Uj.*, pp 357-358, para. 21.

102. *EZ.*, Vol. IV, pp. 71-72.

103. *PLC.*, op. cit., pp. 220-226, see colophon of *Rupasiddhi*, op. cit., *Pajjamadhu*, op. cit., (see above note 89); In Vedeha's *Samantakutavannana*, ed. C. E. Godakumbura, PTS., 1958, p. 75, Ananda *Thera* is described as:

Bhuvanodbarmhi pannato ravivambaramandale

Arannaratanananda mahathero mahagani

Jivitam viya yo sathhasasanassa mahakavi

Saro suppatipattisu sathhasagaraparago

This and other relevant sections of these Pali texts relating to this Ananda *Thera* are cited by Dr. Saddhatissa, see *Uj.*, p. 35, notes 105, 106, 107, 108, 109.

unto the Damila Country' and that he was the incumbent of two monasteries there, one of which was called Baladicca. Of his teacher Ananda, what he had to say is that he was 'the eminent perceptor who was like unto a standard in Tambapanni.'¹⁰⁴ The difference between the description of the teacher and that of the pupil is significant. According to this text as well as to works written by these two pupils, their teacher Vanaratana Ananda had little or nothing to do with South India. It was his pupil Buddhappiya also called Coliya Dipankara, who was held in high esteem in South India—'a lamp unto the Damila country'. If this Ananda *Thera* had so much to do with Buddhism in South India leading to such fame and eminence there to match the description in Sundaramahadevi's inscription, it is difficult to imagine that Buddhappiya would fail to mention it in fairness to his venerable teacher, whom he has extolled in the most generous terms. It would have been most embarrassing to Buddhappiya to call himself 'a lamp unto the Damila country', while ignoring his teacher's claim to fame in the Tamil lands abroad. This is a very unlikely situation in an age when grateful pupils were prepared to credit to their teachers much more than their due. Apart from this, it should also be noted that the epithet *Arannaratana* or *Vanaratana*—'Jewel of the Forest'—by which these two pupils described their teacher Ananda, is not found in Sundaramahadevi's inscription in the description of its Ananda.¹⁰⁵ This is also a striking omission, especially in the light of the fact that Sundaramahadevi had extended her patronage to the Dimbulagala Vihara which was the leading centre of the Forest Dwelling Community. The Mahavidiya Rock Inscription cited above bears witness to this.¹⁰⁶ It is again rather unlikely that this honorific epithet attached to the name of a leading *mahathera*, who was held in high regard by Sundaramahadevi herself, connected with an institution which received this queen's patronage, would be ungraciously omitted in a public document. The description—a standard unto Tambapanni (Lanka)—common to both the epigraphs cited above, and the writings of Buddhappiya, with reference to the two Anandas, is not of specific significance, being a rather frequently used expression of reverence to Elders of considerable standing. For in the *Uj.* the

104. *Vikkhyatanandatheravhayavaragurunam Tambapanni dbajanam
sisso Dipankarakhyiddami avasumatidipaladdhappakaso
Baladiccadivasadvitayam adhivasam sasanam jotayi so
So'yam Buddhappiyo yati imam ujukam - Rupasiddhim akasi*
See colophon of *Rupasiddhi*, op. cit.

105. *EZ.*, Vol. IV, pp. 71-72; see above, note 103.

106. *EZ.*, Vol. II, pp. 185-189.

theras who took shelter in the Pandya country during 'the Tamil conflagration' considered earlier, are also referred to as 'banners unto Tambapanni', but it is rather doubtful whether all those monks who fled to South India in the face of this calamity really deserve this superlative assessment.

In the light of the above discussion, we are inclined to conclude that the Ananda *Thera* of Sundaramahadevi's inscription and the Vanaratana Ananda *Thera*, who was the teacher of Vedeha and Buddhappiya, are not one and the same. They were two different *theras*, no doubt both of them Elders of eminence and fame but within different demarcations—possibly also separated by a considerable chronological gap. A further conclusion which follows therefrom is that the Ananda *Thera* who was the author of the *Uj.* could not be identified with the Ananda *Thera* of Sundaramahadevi's inscription either. Quite clearly they are two different Elders, the most decisive objection against their identification being chronological. The Ananda figuring in Sundaramahadevi's inscription flourished during the first half of the twelfth century, as shown above. In all probability, much prior to 1137, *i.e.* the 27th regnal year of Jayabahu I (1110-1111) which marks the last known date and record of this queen, this Ananda would have been an Elder of advanced age and erudition, competent to undertake the promotion of Buddhism abroad, and to match the description—'a banner raised aloft in the land of Lanka' and 'a pre-eminent sage' (*pavara yati*) occurring in the epigraph. If that were the position, it is impossible to imagine that this *thera* was alive as late as 1214, the year of Magha's invasion after which the author of the *Uj.* was compelled to leave Sri Lanka following 'the Tamil conflagration' and to take shelter in the Pandya country, as shown by us in the earlier stages of this discussion. Thus it is clear that Dr. Saddhatissa's equation of these two venerable Elders, though both were Ananda by name, is not a tenable proposition.

Having considered the identification of the teacher, Ananda *Thera*, we now return to his two pupils, Vedeha and Buddhappiya with a view to determining the age in which they flourished. There is no reason to contest Paronavitana's identification of Buddhappiya's second *vihara* in the Damilarattha—the first was the Baladicca Vihara as stated in his *Rupasiddhi*—as the Cudamanivarma Vihara at Nagapattana, the building of which commenced in the 21st year of the Cola emperor Rajaraja I (985-1014) at the request of the Indonesian emperor Maravijayottungavarman. This *vihara* was successively endowed by the Cola emperors,

Rajaraja (985-1014), Rajendra I (1012-1044) and Kulottunga I (1070-1120)¹⁰⁷ Paranavitana's conclusion that Buddhappiya flourished in the twelfth century as against the traditional view that both Buddhappiya and Vedeha belong to the thirteenth century, rests on a valid foundation. Two decisive points of evidence furnished by him are: Attention is drawn to a passage dealing with a controversy on the consumption of intoxicating liquor, found in the *Vimativinodani*, the third sub-commentary on the *Vinayathakatha*, ascribed to the Elder Coliya Kassapa. This controversy which centred round the issue as to whether demerit accrued to one if intoxicating liquor is taken without one's own knowledge, had flared up in the Tamil country (Damilarattha). This was settled by Buddhappiya *Mabathera* who held that demerit resulted from taking intoxicating liquor, consciously or unconsciously. But taking recourse to the *Saratthadipani Vinayatika* which rules that demerit results only from consuming intoxicating liquor consciously, dissidents raised their heads once again. This episode, in the opinion of Paranavitana, points to the fact that Buddhappiya flourished either before Sariputta or contemporaneously with him.¹⁰⁸ Sariputta lived during the age of Parakramabahu I (1153-1186) and, as shown above, the *Saratthadipani* was composed after 1165 A.D. The second point made by Paranavitana is that the author of the Pali grammatical work *Padasadhana*, in his work, criticises some of views expressed by Buddhappiya in his grammar, *Rupasiddhi*.¹⁰⁹ It is clear from the statement in the colophon of the *Padasadhana*, that its author, Piyadassi was a pupil of Moggallana, a senior prelate who played a leading role in the unification of the Sangha during the reign of Parakramabahu I.¹¹⁰ Piyadassi thus was a junior contemporary of Elder Moggallana who was already a veteran monk during the early stages of Parakramabahu's reign. These two arguments, strong in themselves, taken together with the approximate dating of the Cudamanivarma Vihara at Nagapattana, of which Buddhappiya seems to have been the incumbent, fortify the conclusion of Paranavitana that Buddhappiya belonged to the twelfth century, possibly to the reign of Parakramabahu I.

However, there are one or two arguments that can be raised against this view. Generally most authors who flourished during the age of

107. *The Colas*, op. cit., pp. 185-186, 220, 318, Paranavitana, *Lanka Itihasya*, *Amka I*, op. cit., p. 72 ff., see above, note 86.

108. *Ibid.*, Paranavitana, pp. 74-79.

109. *Ibid.*, pp. 76-79, *Padasadhana*, ed. Ratmalane Sri Dharmananda Thera, 1932.

110. *Padasadhana*, op. cit., see opening verses, *UCHC.*, Vol. I, pt. II, op. cit., pp. 567-568-87.

Parakramabahu I, never failed to acknowledge this ruler's patronage which they enjoyed, making reference to Parakramabahu's unification of the Sangha and to the *viharas* built by him, in which not a few of them were resident.¹¹¹ It is striking that neither Buddhappiya nor his colleague Vedeha makes any reference to Parakramabahu, or to any royal patron for that matter. In the case of the former, one might say that this was due to his preferential connection with South India. But what about Vedeha who composed several works on divergent topics, the *Rasavahini*, *Samantakutavannana* and the *Sihalasaddalakkhana*?¹¹² In these works, the author gives information on his teacher, preceptor and so forth but makes no reference to the reigning monarch. This position is a little unusual unless we assume that these *theras* confined themselves to their own spheres of activity regardless of royal favour. Malalasekera assigns both Buddhappiya and Vedeha to the thirteenth century, to the reign of Parakramabahu II (1236-1270) to be more precise, but without sufficient explanation.¹¹³ But both Paranavitana and A. P. Buddhadatta *Thera* would not bring them down to so late a period.¹¹⁴ Vedeha's *Sihalasaddalakkhana*, a work on Sinhalese grammar, is equated by some scholars with the Sinhalese grammar, *Sidat sangarava*.¹¹⁵ That the last named work was composed during the reign of Parakramabahu II can be established, but that Vedeha was its author, and that it is the same as the *Sihalasaddalakkhana* referred to above, are assertions for which there is no proof at present.¹¹⁶ One other point to be raised is that Buddhappiya's Cudamani Vihara in the Cola country, at the time of its foundation during the reign of Rajaraja I (985-1014), would have been a Mahayanist institution, going on the fact that the Sailendra rulers on whose request it was built, were Mahayana Buddhists.¹¹⁷ How this *vihara* came under the control of the Theravadins at such an early stage, barely two centuries after its inauguration, remains unexplained. Perhaps Sri Lanka's

-
111. A. P. Buddhadatta has cited quite a few of them in his *PS.*, op. cit., pp. 256-262; 315-318, Sariputta's *Saratthadipani*, Buddhana's *Vinayattamanjusa*, Suman-gala's *Abhidhammatthavikasini* for example, are a few of such works where the acknowledgement is made.
112. *Rasavahini*, ed. Kirialle Nanavimala, Colombo, 1961, *Samantakutavannana* op. cit., see above, note 103; *Sihalasaddhalakkhana*, probably not extant, but in the opinion of some scholars this is the same as the well-known Sinhalese grammatical work *Sidat Sangara*, ed. Dharmarama Thera, Fourth edition, 1931,
113. *PLC.*, op. cit. 220-226.
114. A. P. Buddhadatta, *Theravadi Bauddhacaryayo*, second edition, Ambalangoda, 1960, Paranavitana, *Lanka Itihasaya*, *Amka I*, op. cit., p. 72 ff.
115. *PLC.*, op. cit., p. 223.
116. *Sinhalese Literature*, C. E. Godakumbura, Colombo, 1955, pp. 318-320.
117. *Artibus Asiae*, Vol. XXIV, pp. 241-248; Nalanda Copper Plates of Devapaladeva in *Epigraphia Indica*.

Mahavihara had its impact on the conversion, but much remains yet to be known. One more significant point, for which Paranavitana has offered no explanation, is that in the list of *acaryas* given in the *Nikaya-samgrahaya* - A History of the Buddhist Church—written during the reign of Bhuvanekabahu V (1372-1408) of Gampola, those mentioned after Sariputta are Sangharakkhita, Sumangala, Dharmakirti, Nagasena, Ananda, Vedeha, Buddhappiya and Anavamadassi.¹¹⁸ Not only do Ananda, Vedeha and Buddhappiya find mention consecutively, but down in the list well after several of Sariputta's successors. On the basis of the *Nikaya-samgrahaya*, one may suggest the thirteenth century as the period in which these reputed authors and their teacher Ananda *Mahathera* flourished. These considerations, though significant, are not strong enough to invalidate Paranavitana's arguments for assigning Buddhappiya, and therefore Vedeha as well, to the twelfth century, possibly to the early part of the reign of Parakramabahu I.

Now that we have some hold on the bearings of the chronological framework in which Buddhappiya and Vedeha have to be accommodated, the next issue to be considered is the place of their teacher Ananda *Thera* within that framework. Once that is determined, it would be possible to decide whether the latter and the author of the *Uj.* could be equated. Going on the basis of the date assigned to Buddhappiya early in the reign of Parakramabahu I (1153-1186) in the preceding discussion, his teacher has to be placed further up in the chronological scheme. If Buddhappiya is to be regarded as a junior contemporary of Moggallana whose career extended much beyond the commencement of the reign of Parakramabahu I in 1153, possibly into the reign of Vijayabahu I (1055-1110) as argued by Paranavitana with good reasons, then obviously Buddhappiya's teacher Ananda *Thera* has to be placed along with Elder Moggallana. Considering Ananda's seniority in age, which emerges from the foregoing account, coupled with the erudition and fervent commitment to the Dhamma credited to him by his pupils, both Buddhappiya and Vedeha, it is surprising that he does not figure in any of the great religious events of the age, notably in the synod held in the reign of Parakramabahu I, unless we assume that he had not lived to witness them. Considering the probable age to which this Ananda *Thera* seems to belong on the basis of the discussion above, although the possibility should not be ruled out entirely it is most

118. *Nks.*, op. cit., p. 89.

unlikely that he was alive as late as 1214, which is the date of Magha's invasion, subsequent to which the *Uj.* had been composed in our view. Having given due consideration to Dr. Saddhatissa's proposition to equate the author of the *Uj.* with the teacher of Buddhappiya and Vedeha, both Ananda by name, we are now compelled to abandon it.

Having disposed of several Anandas who do not answer to the requirements of the identity of *Bhadanta* Ananda, the author of the *Uj.*, we are left with one more of some standing to be examined. We refer to the author of the *Padasadhana Sanne* who was also Ananda by name. A. P. Buddhadatta *Mabathera* hinted at the possibility that this Ananda *Thera* could be identified with the author of the *Uj.*, but gave no reasons.¹¹⁹ The *Padasadhana* is a Pali grammatical work based on the *Moggallana-vyakarana* and, as stated in its colophon, was written by Piyadassi *Thera* who was a pupil of the celebrated Elder Moggallana who figured prominently in the synod held during the reign of Parakramabahu I (1153-1186).¹²⁰ More details regarding this author are found in his work, but we are not concerned with them here as the age to which he belongs is clear. He has to be taken as a contemporary of Parakramabahu I in whose reign, his teacher Moggallana was a senior and prominent Elder. It was to this *Padasadhana* that the present Ananda had written an inter-verbal paraphrase known as the *Padasadhana Sanne*. The work gives us useful information on the author on the basis of which he could be identified and placed in the appropriate chronological position. Thereafter the possibility of his identification with the author of the *Uj.* could be taken up for consideration.

The pupillary succession to which this Ananda belonged can be established almost beyond doubt. It is stated in his own work, the *Padasadhana Sanne*, that he was a pupil of Dimbulagala Medhankara *Mabathera*, and that he also received instruction from Sangharakkhita *Mahasami*.¹²¹ Both of these *mabatheras* can be identified. The two of them figure in the *Dambadeni Katikavata*, the Code of Discipline, promulgated at the end of the synod held during the reign of Parakramabahu II (1236-1270), for the guidance of the Sangha. This synod was held in the thirtieth year of his reign in 1266 A.D.¹²² At this synod Medhankara

119. *Uj.*, pp. 33-34; *PS.*, op. cit., pp. 237-238, 448-451, *Padasadhana* with *Sanne*, Colombo, 1932.

120. *PLC.*, op. cit., p. 205.

121. See verses in the colophon of the *Padasadhana Sanne*, op. cit.

122. See *Dambadeni Katikavata* in *Katikavat Sangara*, ed. D. B. Jayatilaka, reprinted Colombo, 1955, pp. 6-21, *UCHC.*, Vol. I, pt. II, op. cit., pp. 746-750.

played a leading role, and is referred to as the chief pupil of Buddhavamsa Vanaratana *Mahathera*. Further he is described as 'the chief patron of the Dispensation at the time' (*tatkala Sāsanānuśāsaka*). In the document cited above, both Medhankara and his teacher Buddhavamsa Vanaratana, figure as members of 'the forest-dwelling' community.¹²³ So were they according to other sources as well.¹²⁴ Medhankara also took part in the reformation of the Sangha during the reign of Vijayabahu III (1232-1235) together with Sangharakkhita referred to above.¹²⁵ Vijayabahu III entrusted his son Prince Parakramabahu (II) to the Sangha headed by Sangharakkhita *Mahasami*, as stated in the *Pujavali* which belongs to the period of these events.¹²⁶ Biographical information on Medhankara found in the *Nikayasamgrahaya*, in its account of the synod held during the reign of Parakramabahu II, is quite consistent with what is stated in the *Dambadeni Katikavata*.¹²⁷ This evidence taken together, makes it quite clear that, both Sangharakkhita and Medhankara who were the teachers of this Ananda *Thera*, flourished during the reigns of Vijayabahu III and Parakramabahu II.

What more do we know of Medhankara and Sangharakkhita? It is stated in Medhankara's *Vinayarthasamuccaya*, a compendium on *Vinaya* rules translated into Sinhalese from the original Pali, that he composed this work 'having listened to the *Vinaya Pitaka* together with its *tika* at (the feet of) Moggallana *Mahathera* who was the author of the *Moggallāyanavyākaraṇa*, and Sariputta *Mahathera*', author of several works named therein.¹²⁸ Thus Medhankara while being a pupil of Buddhavamsa Vanaratana, had also studied under both Sariputta and Moggallana. As we have seen already, Elder Moggallana was a *mahathera* of advanced age at the time of the synod held in the reign of Parakramabahu I (1153-1186) in 1165 A. D. From this we could observe that, although Medhankara flourished during the times of Vijayabahu III (1232-1235) and Parakramabahu II (1236-1270) his early career extends right back to the time of Parakramabahu I (1153-1186). The reformation of the Sangha during the reign of Parakramabahu II took place after the lapse of 1809 years from the *Parinibbana*, according to the *Nikayasamgrahaya*.¹²⁹ Thus

123. *Katikavat Sangara*, op. cit., pp. 8-9.

124. *Nks.*, op. cit., pp. 88-89, see also A. P. Buddhadatta, *Theravadi Baudbhacaryayo*, op. cit., pp. 112-115.

125. *Katikavat Sangara*, op. cit., p. 8.

126. *Pujavali*, Ch. 33-34, ed. A. V. Suravira, Colombo, 1961, p. 112.

127. *Nks.*, op. cit., pp. 88-89, *Katikavat Sangara*, op. cit., pp. 7-9.

128. See colophon of *Vinayarthasamnceaya; PLC.*, op. cit., pp. 201-202.

129. *Nks.*, op. cit., p. 89.

Medhankara, at the time he participated in this synod, referred to as 'the chief patron of the Dispensation at the time', would have been quite advanced in age, as much as Elder Moggallana and Elder Kassapa were very elderly prelates at the time they participated in the synod held during the reign of Parakramabahu I in 1165 A.D.

Now could this Medhankara's pupil who was the author of the *Padasadhana Sanne* referred to above, and the author of the *Uj.*, both Ananda by name, be identified as one? Not impossible, but highly improbable—is the likely answer resulting from the above survey. We have concluded earlier that the *Uj.* was written most likely during the first half of the thirteenth century. The *Uj.* refers to the *theras* who sought protection in South Indian territories as 'banners unto Tambapanni' which probably meant seniority in age as well as erudition of a high order and fervent devotion to the *Dhamma*. It is implied that the author of the *Uj.* himself belonged to this venerable group and was of advanced age. He is also referred to as *Bhadanta* and *Mahathera*, honorific epithets which are generally applicable to monks of age and standing. As to whether the author of the *Padasadhana Sanne*, fits into this description, especially from the point of view of his likely age during the period in which the *Uj.* appears to have been composed, we are far from certain. However, the possibility of such an identification need not be ruled out completely. For his teacher's career extends right back to the age of Parakramabahu I (1153-1186), as he had received instruction from Sariputta as well as his senior, Elder Moggallana. Moreover the age gap between teacher and pupil need not necessarily be thought of as being wide. Thus, though the Ananda of *Padasadhana Sanne* figures slightly lower in the time scale, chronological considerations would not be a serious obstacle to his identification with the author of the *Uj.* But there is no evidence direct or indirect, which strengthens the possibility of this identification. In this connection, a point to be noted is that, though not as a rule, in most instances, authors who composed more than one work during this period, mention their earlier compositions in a brief biographical note usually found at the conclusion of their works.¹³⁰ If both the *Uj.* and the *Padasadhana Sanne* were the works of the same author, of which the former is memorable for the circumstances under which it came to be written, one would expect it to be mentioned with great interest. This is particularly so, as the *Uj.* is likely to take precedence over the *Padasadhana Sanne* with regard to the

130. See for example the concluding verses of Vedeha's *Rasavahini*, op. cit.

time of its composition. Even if the reverse was the order of writing, then the author of the *Uj.* would have mentioned his *Padasadhana Sanne* as well. There is yet another point to be observed. The author of the *Padasadhana Sanne* makes very generous acknowledgements concerning his teachers, namely Medhankara and Sangharakkhita.¹³¹ This gracious gesture is totally missing in the *Uj.* where not even a passing reference is made to the teachers of the author. It is difficult to imagine that *Padasadhana Sanne's* Ananda Thera who was particularly conscious of his teachers, would behave differently on this point in the *Uj.*, if it had been written by him.¹³² Moreover, members of the 'forest-dwelling' community (*Vanavasi*) to which both Medhankara and his pupil Ananda belonged, were highly conscious of their Vanavasi affiliations, and these are invariably mentioned in their writings. Both Medhankara and his pupil Ananda kept to this tradition in their works.¹³³ The author of the *Uj.* has been generous with compliments for his Pandyan patron Colaganga, but makes not even a passing reference either to his teachers or to Vanavasi affiliations. The work ends with the statement: 'This *Upasakajanalankara* composed by *Sihalacariya Bhaddanta Ananda Mahathera* is concluded'. This is in contrast to the spirit of the Ananda of the *Padasadhana Sanne* who was deeply beholden to his teachers and the Vanavasi fraternity. Taking this into account, one can hardly believe that these two works are of the same author. The points noted above though minor, are not without significance. In addition to these comes the chronological position which is also not a very satisfactory synchronism, though not a serious problem in itself. In these circumstances, we see no positive basis on which these two Anandas could be equated. Although we have engaged ourselves in a tedious exercise by trying to identify the Ananda Thera of the *Uj.* with an Ananda already known to us from Sri Lanka, it may well be that there is no case for such an identification. Perhaps he is different from all the Anandas known to us from Sri Lanka, an Ananda by himself, who probably had no pupils to perpetuate his name but his own work, the *Upasakajanalankara* which has survived through the ages and come down to us.

* * * * *

Finally, we come to the historical significance of the information embodied in the colophon of the *Uj.* As stated earlier, it gives a brief

131. See colophon of *Padasadhana Sanne*, op. cit.

132. *Uj.*, pp. 357-358.

133. *PS.*, op. cit., p. 237.

statement of the circumstances in which this work came to be written. 'When the entire Island of Lanka was confused by the 'Tamil conflagration', the *theras* who were 'banners unto Tambapanni' went over to the Pandya country 'seeking their own protection for the well-being of the dispensation', dwelt in the Perampalli (Mahavihara) built by Colaganga. This Perampalli was one of the three *viharas* built by this ruler, whom we have identified as a local chieftain. Colaganga had been converted to Buddhism by a Buddhist Elder named Lokuttama who hailed from the city of Sirivallabha. Where these viharas were built and where Colaganga ruled from is not stated in the text but, as shown above, it could possibly be the city of Sirivallabha in the Pandya country.

The most significant detail here is the reference to the 'Tamil conflagration' when members of Sri Lanka's Sangha were compelled, ironically as it were, to seek protection in the homelands of the Tamil invaders themselves in Southern India. "The Tamil conflagration', identified above as Kalinga Magha's invasion, led to unprecedented destruction and merciless persecution of Buddhism, in which all sections of the Buddhist fold, *bhikkhu-bhikkhuni-upāsaka-upāsikā*—suffered alike, while the Sangha as a whole, had to bear the brunt of it. Magha's army is described as having consisted of 24,000 Keralas estimated even higher later in these sources. They are said to have oppressed the people "boasting cruelly everywhere: 'we are Kerala warriors'." Thus it is significant to note that, while these Tamils headed by Magha brought about the destruction described in the Sri Lankan chronicles, it is again in the South Indian kingdoms though not necessarily in Kerala that the fleeing Buddhist monks from Sri Lanka found shelter and protection. The *Uj.* refers to three such *viharas* wherein evidently these monks found protection, one of which was the Perampalli in the Pandya country, where the author of this work found comfort and solace. The *Culavamsa* has a detailed account of this invasion which led to these tragic consequences; and that we have already cited in the above discussion. From the *Culavamsa* it is clear that during Magha's reign of terror, these monks found protection not only in the Pandya country: 'Now some of these Grand *theras* with *Vacissara* at the head, who sought that protection for Lanka on which depended the continuance of the Order, had crossed the vast ocean despite its raging waves, had betaken themselves to the lands of the Pandyas, Colas, and other (peoples).' Having founded his capital at Dambadeniya away from where Magha held sway, Vijaya-bahu III (1232-1236) requested these *theras* to return to Sri Lanka which

some of them did indeed.¹³⁴ This, however, is not the first instance when Buddhist monks from Sri Lanka found such protection in South Indian territories. As far back as the second and first centuries B.C., when a South Indian Tamil invasion took place leading to the displacement of Vattagamani Abhaya, aggravated further by the simultaneous visitation of a severe famine, Buddhist monks fled to Malaya and Rohana within the Island while others sought shelter in the Cola-Pandya countries.¹³⁵ It is also both interesting and relevant to note that one of the warriors of Dutthagamani Abhaya who fought the Tamil invaders in the second century B.C., subsequently entered the Buddhist Order after crossing over to South India—again the homelands of the Tamils whom he had fought in the mundane half of his career—and found peace in the monasteries there.¹³⁶ We ventured to cite a few of these instances out of a fairly large body of evidence, on the subject of Buddhism in South India and¹³⁷ its relations with Sri Lanka, while discussing a thirteenth century situation only in order to take cognizance of the antecedents. This subject is a rewarding area for a separate investigation. The position reflected in the colophon of the *Uj.* is by no means an isolated episode; it is part of a long story which is outside the scope of this paper. Here we would be confined to the *Uj.* episode and its immediate surroundings in the thirteenth century.

Not only did Buddhist monks persecuted by Magha and his Kerala army find shelter and protection in South India. More significant indeed it is, that *mabatheras* from the Cola country in particular, assisted Parakramabahu II (1236-1270) in no small measure, in his efforts at the restoration of Buddhism soon after Magha's expulsion thereby making amends as it were, for the damage done by Magha and his Kerala warriors. The *Culavamsa* states: 'Then the king (Parakramabahu II) sent many gifts to the Cola country and caused to be brought over to Tambapanni many respected Cola *bhikkhus* who had moral discipline and were versed in the three *Pitakas* and so established harmony between the two Orders.'¹³⁸ This ruler invited to Sri Lanka a leading *mabathera* named Dhammakitthi, 'radiant in the glory of moral discipline' from Tambarattha which, in the opinion of some scholars is to be located

134. *Cv.*, LXXXI, 20-26 (*Sammohavinodani*), PTS., Ed. p. 445 ff.

135. Vibhaniga Atthakatha (*Sammohavinodani*) PTS., Ed. p. 445 ff.

136. *Rasavahini*, op. cit., pp. 208-215; for a Sinhalese version of this story see *Saddharmalankaraya*, ed. Kirialle Nanavimala, Colombo, 1954, pp. 544-555.

137. On the subject of Buddhism in South India so far no adequate study has appeared. However, there is a brief survey published in Sinhala: *Dakunu Indiyave Baudha Itihasya* by Hisalle Dharmmaratana, Colombo 1964, reprinted 1970.

138. *Cv.*, LXXXIV, 9-10.

in the Cola country, but in the Ligor region of the Malay Peninsula, according to Paranavitana¹³⁹ Parakramabahu II was also keen to improve the knowledge of the Dhamma in the *bhikkhu* community, which was then at a very low ebb. 'With the reflection that *theras* who were acquainted with the sacred texts were rare in the Island, he had all books brought from Jambudipa, had many *bhikkhus* instructed in the sacred texts, as also in all sciences such as philosophy, grammar and the like, and thus made of them cultivated people¹⁴⁰. Although Jambudipa meant the entire Indian subcontinent and even much more, in this context, in all probability, it meant the Cola country where Theravada Buddhism was very much alive during this period. Moreover, in the *Culavamsa* there are many instances when Sri Lankan kings who only went to 'the other coast', are described as having gone to Jambudipa¹⁴¹. Learned treatises were composed by Cola monks on *Abhidhamma*, grammar and forth, subjects on which books are said to have been brought to Sri Lanka from Jambudipa during the reign of Parakramabahu II, have come down to us. Some of them indeed were written not too long before the age of this rule¹⁴². Thus not only the *mahatheras* from the Cola country but also their learned treatises on the Dhamma and so forth, some of them written by themselves, came to the aid of Parakramabahu II in his efforts at the restoration of Buddhism. It should be noted that these relations went on while Magha was ruling in Rajarattha as well as after his defeat. At the conclusion of the great Higher Ordination (*Upasampada*) ceremony, held towards the end of Parakramabahu's (II) reign, when lavish gifts were distributed among the participant *bhikkhus*, their colleagues in South India were not forgotten. Parakramabahu II sent many remaining articles of use to the *bhikkhus* settled in the Pandya and Cola countries¹⁴³.

There is evidence that these friendly relations between the Buddhists of Sri Lanka and those of South India continued into the next century and possibly even later. Not long after the reign of Parakramabahu II, his namesake Parakramabahu IV (1302-1326) who ruled from Kurunegala, elevated to high office an outstanding Cola *mahathera*

139. *Cv.* LXXXIV, 11-16, W. Geiger, *Cv.*, English translation, Pt. II, Colombo, 1953, p. 155, note 2. *JRAS* (Ceylon Branch), Vol. VII, pp. 3-6, R. A. L. H. Gunawardhana, *University of Ceylon Review*, Vol. XXV (1967), pp. 12-17.

140. *Cv.* LXXXIV, 26-27.

141. *Cv.* XXXVIII, 86-87; XLIV, 103-106, 126-127, 145-154.

142. *Mohavicchedavi Abhidhammatikatha-vannana*, ed. A. P. Buddhadattha and A. K. Warder, PTS. London 1961, *Vimativinodani* ed. Somalokatissa *Thera* Colombo 1935 *Rupasiddhi* and *Pajjamaḍḍu*, op. cit.

143. *Cv.* LXXXIX, 67-68.

'To the office of royal teacher the king appointed a Grand *thera* from the Cola country, a self-controlled man versed in various tongues and intimate with philosophic works.¹⁴⁴ In addition it is stated: 'In fair Viddumagama, not far from the town of Rajagama he had a splendid *vihara* built, connected with the Sirighananda Parivena, with a Bodhi Tree and an image house and assigned it to his teacher, the Grand *thera* from the Cola country.¹⁴⁵ This Cola *bhikkhu* appointed to the position of royal preceptor and heavily patronised by the king, seems to have occupied a place of pre-eminence. The evidence cited above, would suffice to take a glimpse of the friendly religious relations that linked Sri Lanka with South India during the thirteenth century. The information furnished by the *Uj.* has to be placed in the wider context of Sri Lanka's, relations with South India, by doing which only a proper and significant perspective would emerge.

We are thankful to the author of this part of the *Culavamsa* for his brief notices of this aspect of Sri Lanka's relations with South India. This information is contained in a new section of the *Culavamsa* which begins with the reign of Vijayabahu II (1187-1189), the immediate successor of Parakramabahu I. Composed by a different author, the treatment of his material in this part of the Chronicle, in some respects, is different from that of previous authors.¹⁴⁶ In the previous parts of this Chronicle, hardly any reference is found on this aspect of Sri Lanka's relations with South India, except for the accounts of Tamil invasions, detailing the course of destruction, especially of Buddhist monasteries.¹⁴⁷ On the other hand, we see a thread running through the centuries, almost from the beginning of the Christian era, or even a little earlier, of the story of Buddhism in South India with which Sri Lanka seems to have been linked. This story has to be reconstructed largely or almost entirely, on the basis of the writings of the inmates of the Buddhist monasteries in South India and on those of the *mabatheras* of Sri Lanka who had dealings with these overseas Buddhist establishments. In the Buddhist Commentarial literature as well as in other writings, which belong to a time both before and after the age of the celebrated Buddhist Commentator Buddhaghosa, scattered but valuable information is found. This information throws light on these monastic establishments, their inmates, and their contribution to the exposition of the Dhamma.¹⁴⁸ The earlier

144. *Cv.*, XC, 80-81.

145. *Cv.*, XC, 98-99.

146. *Cv.*, LXXX, 1 ff., *DPRD*, op. cit., pp. 5-10, 69 ff.

147. *Cv.*, L, 33-36, LXIV, 44-45, LV, 20-21.

148. *PLC*, op. cit., pp. 105-116.

periods aside, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries there is evidence of flourishing Buddhist monasteries in the Cola country. Their inmates like Coliya Kassapa who composed the important *Abhidhamma* text *Mohavicchedani*, and Coliya Dipankara also called Buddhappiya, who composed the Pali grammar *Rupasiddhi* and the Pali poem *Pajjamadhu* considered earlier in our discussion, bear witness to vigorous Buddhist activity. These Cola *mahatheras* maintained lively relations with Buddhist monasteries in Sri Lanka and in the case of some such as Coliya Dipankara, their teachers were from Sri Lanka.¹⁴⁹ Archaeological excavation which has not made much progress, is likely to yield results that would complement the story, which at present rests mainly on literary tradition, again largely extraneous to the Pali chronicles of Sri Lanka.

Why the Pali chroniclers almost completely bypassed this aspect of Sri Lanka's relations with South India, is not easy to understand. After all the authorship of the entire range of the Pali literature including the Chronicles, belongs to the *bhikkhu* community. Part of it would have been irrelevant to their accounts, and partly it could have resulted from the bad memory of the destruction of Buddhist *viharas* in the course of South Indian invasions. But this would not be an adequate explanation for almost a total eclipse of this part of the story. However, it is heartening to note that what has been bypassed by these chroniclers, is partly made up for by the accounts and reminiscences of other members of the Sangha who were themselves its participants.

Apart from Buddhism, trade was another important factor which linked Sri Lanka with South India. In fact the first Tamils mentioned in the *Mahavamsa*, namely Sena and Guttika who wrested power and ruled at Anuradhapura for some years, are described as 'sons of horse freighters' (*assanavika putta*).¹⁵⁰ Horse traders referred to as *kudiraccetti* figure in later South Indian inscriptions.¹⁵¹ Some of the earliest Hindu temples in Sri Lanka emerged at the sea ports such as Mahatittha (Mantai) on the north-western coast and Gokanna on the north eastern coast (Trincomalee), where South Indian traders landed. The temple at Mahatittha¹⁵² seems to date back to the fourth century at least, while the one at Gokanna dates back to the reign of Mahasena, (278-301) in the preceding century.¹⁵³ The twelfth century

149. See above, notes 138-141; *PLC*, op. cit., pp. 220-226, 110 ff., 173-174.

150. *Mv.*, XXI, 10-11.

151. *The Colas*, op.cit., p. 607.

152. C. W. Nicholas, *JRAS* (Ceylon Branch), Vol. VI, (sp. number), pp. 75-80; *UHC*, Vol. I, pt. I, op. cit., p. 386; *Dathavamsa*, ed. Asabha Tissa Thera, *Kalaniya*, 1883, p. 74, verse 300 ff.

153. *Mv.*, XXXVII, 40-41.

Dathavamsa, a Chronicle of the Tooth Relic which claims to be based on an earlier Sinhalese work, states that Dantakumara and Hemamala who brought the Tooth Relic to Sri Lanka, landed at Mahatittha in the ninth year of Sirimeghavanna (301-328) and spent the first night in a *Devalaya* at Mahatittha before they proceeded to Anuradhapura.¹⁵⁴ Subsequent references to this *Devalaya* are found in epigraphic sources as well.¹⁵⁵ The temple at Gokanna dates back to about the same period or even earlier.¹⁵⁶ These Hindu temples thus emerged at sea ports primarily to minister to the needs of South Indian traders. On rare occasions, these traders played the role of informants on political developments in Sri Lanka for the benefit of the rulers in their homelands. At least one such instance is recorded in the *Culavamsa* in the last phase of the Anuradhapura Kingdom.¹⁵⁷ Such instances, however, were rare, and it appears that these traders generally avoided that dangerous path, possibly in their own interests. Politics and commerce were not allowed to endanger each other, and generally they functioned within their own respective spheres. Proof of this can be seen in the presence of the members of 'The Sri Lanka Trading Corporation'—*Tennilankai Valanjiyar*—in the countries of the Colas and the Pandyas, during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Evidence of their presence there can be traced in the inscriptions dated in the reigns of Kulottunga III (1178-1216), Maravarman Sundara Pandya (circa 1236) and Jatavarman Vira Pandya (accession 1253/4).¹⁵⁸ This trade was by no means one-way traffic. Powerful South Indian trading corporations with ramifications in distant Indian territories as well as in South East Asia across the seas, included Sri Lanka in their orbit of activity. Evidence of this is found not only in centrally situated capitals like Polonnaruva,¹⁵⁹ but also in out-of-the-way villages, far apart from each other.¹⁶⁰ The well known *Nanadesis*, a corporation with an international character signified by its name, was also known in Sri Lanka. During the reign of Queen Lilavati at the end of the twelfth century, the *Nanadesi* merchants set up a customs-house

154. *Dathavamsa*, ed. Asabha Tissa Thera, Kalaniya, 1883, p. 74, verse 300 ff.

155. *EZ.*, Vol. III, p. 132-133, 225.

156. *JRAS* (Ceylon Branch), New Series, Vol. VI (Special Number), p. 44, *UCHC.* op. cit., Vol. I, pt. I, p. 386.

157. *Cv.*, LV, 13-14.

158. *ARE*, op. cit., No. 505 of 1922; *ARE*, 1915, pp. 101-102, para. 32; Nos. 406-407 of 1914; No. 598 of 1926-1927, pp. 92-93, para. 46. On the interpretations of *Tennilankai*, see *DPRD*, op. cit., pp. 76-78.

159. *The Colas*, op. cit., pp. 595-598; *EZ.*, Vol. II, pp. 235-237; see K. Indrapala, 'South Indian Mercantile Communities in Ceylon, circa A.D. 950-1250', *Ceylon Journal of Historical and Social Studies*, Vol. I (New Series), (1971), pp. 101-113.

160. *UCHC.*, Vol. I, pt. II, op. cit., p. 550.

at Anuradhapura, the proceeds of which were utilized to meet the requirements of an alms-house.¹⁶¹ It is necessary to underline that political relations between Sri Lanka and these countries were far from friendly during the periods in which these traders figure. For example, the *Nanadesis* seem to have carried on their trade during the reign of Queen Lilavati as shown above, while her reign was marred by three Cola invasions, to which Paranavitana had drawn attention.¹⁶² Similarly, Vira Pandya invaded Sri Lanka during the reign of Parakramabahu II (1236-1270), while the members of the *Tennilankai Valanjiyar* were present in the Pandya country.¹⁶³ Thus, on the whole, political rivalry does not seem to have interrupted commercial relations between Sri Lanka and South India in any serious way. To those of us in modern times, this would be a strange phenomenon, when political rivalry is very sensitively reflected in trade, leading to 'economic sanctions', 'most favoured nation status' and so forth. True to their trade, these merchants went their way regardless of the politics of the territories in which they engaged in lucrative business. As long as they were confined to their trade, kings had no reason to interfere with them. This was a general characteristic of trade in many parts of Asia in ancient times. It is however, argued that the confrontation between the Sailendras of Sri Vijaya and the Colas during the reign of Rajendra I (1012-1044), was dictated by a conflict of interests in the lucrative trade with China, and one may be inclined to say that the Cola conquest of Sri Lanka in the first half of the eleventh century was part of the same grand design.¹⁶⁴ Whatever be the validity of the argument for Sri Vijaya, as far as Sri Lanka is concerned, it remains yet to be proved that trade was a decisive factor which led to the Cola conquest. In any case this would not alter the general picture considered above.

From the brief survey attempted above, it is clear that commercial and religious intercourse between Sri Lanka and South India continued unabated along a lively course through the centuries, regardless of political rivalry. On the one hand, we see powerful trading corporations like the *Tennilankai Valanjiyar* and the *Nanadesa Tisaiyayirattu Ainnuruvar* as well as individual traders, on both sides of the Palk Straits, busy with their commercial activity for the realisation of mundane objectives. On the other hand, we see leading members of the Buddhist Sangha

161. *EZ*, Vol. I, pp. 180-182.

162. *JRAS* (Ceylon Branch), Vol. XXXI, pp. 384-387.

163. *DPRD*, op. cit., p. 149 ff.

164. *The Colas*, op. cit. pp. 210-220; *UCHC*, Vol. I, pt. I, p. 350.

belonging to flourishing monasteries in the Tamil country and Sri Lanka maintaining intimate relations, engaged in the study of the Dhamma and the preparation of learned treatises for its exposition untrammelled, as it were, by the political rivalries of the royal houses on either side of the maritime corridor. Cola *mabatheras* like Dipankara and Kassapa were held in the highest esteem in Ceylon, and nowhere in the record is the slightest insinuation that they hailed from an 'enemy' territory or that they belonged to a different racial group. We have seen that one of them was appointed to the position of royal preceptor receiving the highest patronage from the Sinhalese ruler. Indeed the Cola *mabatheras*, for their part, were very proud of their Ceylonese teachers, and made generous acknowledgement of their great learning and moral rectitude. As in the case of Buddhappiya, they even upheld the viewpoint of the Mahavihara of Anuradhapura not only on doctrinal matters but even on issues connected with discipline, the controversy on the consumption of intoxicating liquor cited above, being an example. We also note that Sri Lankan *mabatheras* were equally proud of their connection with the Cola country, as is confirmed by Buddharakkhita who refers to himself in his *Jinalankara* as one 'who has received consecration at the hands of eminent scholars in Lanka and in the Coliya (country and ?) Tambarattha'.¹⁶⁵ Such was the intimacy of the relationship between the Sangha of Sri Lanka and that of the Tamil lands in Southern India. In passing, it is worth recalling that well over a thousand years after the Buddha's demise, thousands of miles away from where the Buddha had preached, in the Southern extremity of the Indian sub-continent in its Tamil country, and in the Island of Sri Lanka the *mabatheras* considered above, upheld his message with fervent devotion and sincerity, no matter what beset their way, be it war or persecution—a position best illustrated by *Bhadanta Ananda Mabathera* who composed a treatise for 'The Adornment of the Buddhist Laity' after exposure to great personal distress in the face of 'the Tamil conflagration'.

Traced above is an outline of an aspect of Sri Lanka's relations with South India, which is virtually missing in the Pali Chronicles. It is Sri Lanka's political relations with South India that emerge into bold relief in these narratives. Detailed there is the course of South Indian invasions beginning with the incursions of Sena and Guttika and such

165. *Laddhabhisako vara-panditehi - Lankatale Coliya Tambaratthe, Jinalankaravannana*, ed. Dipankara Thera and Dharmapala Thera, Alutgama, 1915, p. 290.

adventurers in pre-Christian times, and developing into powerful invasions centuries later, such as those that led to the Cola conquest of northern Sri Lanka in the eleventh century.¹⁶⁶ Subsequent invasions are also noted though not in such great detail as that of Magha, considered above. In these descriptions of invasions, the destruction of Buddhist monastic establishments is highlighted. The accusations are repeated with each account of these invasions, using a language in which emotion and anger is unmistakable. The climax is reached with Magha's invasion which, as shown by us elsewhere, is a great deal different from the previous invasions both in its destructive effect, and more important, in its objectives.¹⁶⁷ There is little doubt that Buddhism suffered not a little as a result of the ravages of these invaders, no less than due to lack of royal patronage which was vital. However, there is one issue which needs clarification. It is very doubtful that the Colas or the Pandyas for that matter, destroyed Buddhism with a persecutionist objective,—a position which is contradictory to their attitude to this religion in their homelands. In the foregoing discussion, we have seen flourishing Buddhist monasteries in the Cola country dateable well within the periods of these invasions. Moreover, we have seen Buddhist monks from Sri Lanka such as the author of the *Uj.*, who had fled to the Cola-Pandya countries when their homeland was invaded by the Tamils. As such, a persecutionist policy by the invading Tamils is inconsistent with the position considered above. No doubt Buddhism occupied a minority position there, but was allowed to have its own existence, with some degree of royal patronage rather than persecution. Now and again one could see an element of uneasiness and even intolerance which is by no means exceptional to Buddhism, for well within the broad Hindu fold, Vaisnavaites and Saivaites at times had their own differences.¹⁶⁸ But that would not alter the overall picture of a spirit

166. *Mv.*, XXI, 10-34; XXXIII, 56 ff., *Cv.*, XXXVIII, 29-37; L, 12-36; LV, 1-34.

167. *Cv.*, LXXX, 54-79; *DPRD*, op. cit., pp. 110-128.

168. In *Rasavahini*, op. cit., pp. 56-58, is a story which cannot be dated satisfactorily, but of considerable antiquity, pointing in this direction. This refers to an incident in an Isvara temple at Kavirapattana in the Cola country where the Buddha has been depicted as worshipping Isvara, on a painted tablet. The lay Buddhists there who considered the Buddha superior to all other gods, annoyed at this insult, rushed to the palace and complained to the king, who in turn asked them to demonstrate the superiority of the Buddha over other gods. They agreed, and requested the king to remove the painted tablet from there, deposit it in a *devalaya*, cover it with a white cloth, and keep its doors closed for seven days. The king acted accordingly. The lay Buddhists resorted to an act of faith, and god Sakra came to their aid. On the seventh day the king accompanied

(Footnote contd. overleaf)

of religious tolerance. Taken in this light, it is difficult to imagine that they turned persecutionist the moment they crossed the narrow sea and landed in the Island of Sri Lanka.

Why then are such serious accusations made against these Tamils? They are compared to blood-sucking *yakkhas* and *rakkhasas*,¹⁶⁹ and leaving every possible margin for exaggeration it is yet inconceivable why such harsh language had been used unless they were guilty. The sack and pillage of Buddhist monasteries and sacred shrines is the constant accusation pointed at the Tamils in the Chronicles of Sri Lanka. If the destruction of the Buddhist religion for the realisation of a persecutionist objective is ruled out, what else is it that led them along this destructive path? It is most probable that the motivating factor was the desire to rob these monastic establishments of their enormous wealth. Royal patronage extended through the centuries led to the accumulation of untold wealth in these monasteries. As far back as the fifth century, the Chinese pilgrim Fa-Hien who visited Sri Lanka bears testimony to this.¹⁷⁰ There is the story of a Sinhalese king, who entered a Buddhist monastic treasury and seeing its wealth turned avaricious, thereby polluting his piety. In this instance, however, it merely ended with the creation of impious thoughts in the mind of the king. In many other instances, these impious desires created by the enormous monastic wealth, took even Sinhalese kings on a spree of destruction which did not end until they were relieved of the accumulated treasure. Monastic wealth thus attracted not a few of the Sinhalese kings, which in turn, took them on a path of destruction that in no way differs from that of the Tamil invaders. Once they lacked the funds to fight their wars or to execute other forms of mundane designs, nothing prevented them from laying their hands on the property of the Buddha or of the gods, and were in the end appropriately condemned to hell by the angry chroniclers. Dathopatisa I (639-650), Kassapa II (650-659) and Vikramabahu I (1111-1132) for example, are some of the Sinhalese kings whose misdeeds in this sphere, hardly differ in intensity and effect from those of the Tamil invaders. 'Dathopatisa exhausted the whole property of former kings and seized

by the ministers and retinue opened the Devalaya to find in the painted tablet, Isvara worshipping the Buddha at his feet. The king and his ministers were surprised at what had happened; shed their false views and faith in Isvara and embraced Buddhism. The Devalaya was demolished and a Buddhist Vihara was built in its place. For its Sinhalese version see *Saddharmalankaraya*, op. cit., pp. 246-249). See also *The Colas*, op. cit., pp. 643-645.

169. *Cv.*, L, 33-36; LV, 20-21; LXXXI, 3-4.

170. *Buddhist Records of the Western World*, ed. Samuel Beal, p. lxxxv ff.

all the objects of value in the three fraternities and in the relic temples. He broke in pieces all the golden images and took the gold for himself, and plundered all the golden wreaths and other offerings. In the Thuparama likewise he took away the golden crowning ornament on the temple and smashed the umbrella on the *cetiya* which was studded with costly precious stones'.¹⁷¹ Kassapa II did much the same 'to provide for his army'.¹⁷² Vikramabahu I was even more ruthless: 'King Vikramabahu took the maintenance villages which belonged to the Buddha and so forth, and gave them to his attendants. In Pulatthinagara he gave over several *viharas* distinguished by (the possession of relics) to foreign soldiers to live in. Precious stones, pearls and the like, presented by the pious as offerings for the relic of the Alms Bowl and for the Sacred Tooth Relic, the sandalwood, the aloes, the camphor, the many images of gold and the like which he took forcibly, he used as it pleased him. Beholding this manifold evil committed against the Order and the laity, the ascetics in the eight *viharas*, looked up to people as worthy of honour, and the Pamsukulin *bhikkhus* belonging to the two divisions were wroth at the matter, and thinking it better to remove themselves from the vicinity of people who like those erring from the faith, wrought in this way so much evil against the Order, they took the sacred Tooth Relic and the Alms Relic, betook themselves to Rohana and settled themselves here and there in places where it pleased them. In the same way, people of good family, scattered here and there kept themselves hidden in places which seemed good to them and made their abode there'.¹⁷³ The ferocity of his misdeeds is recounted further in the narrative. Thus Vikramabahu plundered *viharas* and image-houses and so forth and relieved them of their wealth, converted *viharas* into residences for foreign soldiers, harassed the people of good family, so that the *bhikkhus* were compelled to leave Rajarattha taking away with them the Tooth Relic and the Alms Bowl and to seek shelter in far off Rohana. This is almost exactly what happened under Magha if only the latter was even more ruthless. There is a striking similarity between the two accounts in the *Culavamsa*, and we see that both Vikramabahu and Magha, were moving on the same track but with different objectives. The latter was impelled by a persecutionist objective in addition to a desire for the acquisition of monastic wealth, while the former's eyes were fixed on wealth only.

171. *Cv.*, XLIV, 130-133.

172. *Cv.*, XLIV, 137-141.

173. *Cv.*, LXI, 54-61.

We have cited these instances in order to demonstrate that, some Sinhalese kings were not second to the Colas and Pandyas and even to Magha himself, when they set out on a spree of plunder of monastic wealth. Such Sinhalese kings, it must be noted, were very few in number, whereas almost every Tamil invasion invariably led to the despoilation of Buddhist monasteries and shrines, with little sympathy for the sanctity and veneration in which they were held by the Buddhists. This is not a plea to condone the misdeeds of the Tamil invaders which the chroniclers condemn not without reason, but a call to be dispassionate in the evaluation of the chronicle-narratives bearing on the subject. The despoilation of Buddhist monastic establishments by the Tamil invaders, except during the age of Magha, who belongs to a class of his own, would have been largely for the purpose of relieving them of their wealth and treasure, donated by the pious over the generations. On the basis of the available evidence, one can hardly come to the conclusion that these invaders persecuted Buddhism for the realisation of a religious objective. On the contrary, there is contemporary epigraphic testimony to the Cola patronage of the Velgam Vihara called the Rajaraja Perumpalli, during the Cola occupation of Sri Lanka in the first half of the eleventh century.¹⁷⁴ It is both interesting and significant to note that this particular Buddhist Vihara, an impressive establishment going by its extant ruins, is barely fifteen miles from the Konesvara Temple in Trincomalee, which would almost certainly have received Cola support. This, however, is not to suggest that the Colas extended their patronage to Buddhism on a large scale. On the contrary, at the end of Cola rule Buddhism was very much on the decline, which necessitated a great deal of effort on the part of Vijayabahu I (1055-1110) for its restoration.¹⁷⁵ Hindu Colas in an occupied territory would hardly have bothered to promote the religion of the subject people. On the other hand the point to be made here is that neither have they gone out of their way to persecute Buddhism as a matter of policy, which certainly Magha did. The significance of the Velgam Vihara or Rajaraja Perumpalli lies in that context, though it need not be overestimated. The position of Buddhism in the Cola country, and the attitude of its rulers towards that religion should not be lost sight of, in forming a conclusion on the religious policy of the Colas in Sri Lanka.

174. *Epigraphia Tamilica*, Vol. I, Part I, pp. 37-50.

175. *UCHC*, Vol. I, pt. II, op. cit., pp. 563-566.

Wartime conditions under which Buddhist monasteries and shrines were invariably looted in order to lay hands on their wealth consisting of gold, jewels, gems and so forth, need not be construed as reflecting the general condition and official policy. During times of war, the moral tone of a people, especially of the soldiers in the battlefield is not very high, whatever be the ethics and objectives of the rulers for whom they fight. This could be particularly so when the fighting was on foreign soil, especially by armies which had a substantial mercenary element. In these circumstances, excesses were likely to have been the rule rather than the exception. In a situation which is in many respects different from the one projected here, where one expected less unbecoming behaviour, note the irresponsibility which characterised the soldiers of Parakramabahu I (1153-1186) in the hour of their first victory in Polonnaruva, in his campaigns for the unification of Sri Lanka. Quite against the wishes of Parakramabahu and their commander, these soldiers set out on a spree of plunder and loot so that 'splendid Pulatthinagara afflicted by the soldiers, was at the time (in wild agitation) like the sea, when at the end of a world age it is lashed by the sea'.¹⁷⁶ Under powerful princes and very able commanders, often these soldiers in their own countries, seem to have had scanty respect for military ethics. It is against this background that the Tamil invasions have to be viewed. The authors of our chronicles recorded the course of destruction which marked the lines of invasion bereft of causal explanation, which is now left to the present historian.

About the invasions themselves, irrespective of whether they ended in the persecution of Buddhism or not, one more point remains to be clarified. We have seen how South Indian invasions of Sri Lanka, of varying character, led by opportunistic adventurers as well as powerful emperors, had taken place during the centuries, with origins going back to pre-Christian times. Considering the geographical setting in which Sri Lanka was separated from South India by a narrow stretch of sea of some twenty two miles, these invasions were inevitable. The Island of Sri Lanka, in its relation to the Indian mainland, is very similar to the geographical location of the British Isles in relation to the European mainland. In such a geographical setting, continental politics invariably had repercussions on the Islands. It was the age of *Digvijaya* in India and the neighbouring regions, not disproved by the Asokan exception of *Dharmavijaya*. South Indian rulers, Pandya, Cola and so forth, in-

176. *Cv.*, LX, 251-253.

cluded Sri Lanka in their orbit of expansion, no less than they did Indian territories as far North as Kalinga and the Ganges, if only these rulers were powerful enough to muster the men and resources needed for these grand expeditions.¹⁷⁷ The ambition of the Cola rulers during the age of Rajaraja I (985-1014) and Rajendra I (1012-1044), cast its eye across the seas on the powerful Indonesian empire of Sri Vijaya as well. Every new conquest was an additional laurel which shed lustre on their achievements, highlighted in eloquent terms in their grand *prasastis*. That was the position on the Indian side. As for Sri Lanka, a small island with relatively less resources, its rulers could scarcely match their Indian counterparts. At best they could resist the Indian invaders, but with doubtful success if the confrontation was with powerful Indian emperors like Rajaraja I and Rajendra I. With all these limitations, the Sinhalese kings did not miss it if an opportunity offered itself, and if only they could muster the men and resources, particularly with a weakened Indian situation, to take their armies across to South India. This Sena II (853-887), Parakramabahu I (1153-1186) and the Kalinga king Nissankamalla (1187-1196) did with some success, but by no means extraordinary.¹⁷⁸ These kings, like their Indian counterparts in their own records, are highlighted in the Sri Lankan sources. Thus we see that these invasions, from whichever side they originated, were a matter of power rather than one of ethics. The Tamil invasions of Sri Lanka should be placed in this perspective, for a proper understanding of the course of events.

Such in all probability was the setting in which these Tamil invasions had taken place. What has survived uppermost in the Sri Lankan records, however, is the story of the destruction caused by them, more particularly the harm done to Buddhism and Buddhist institutions. Tamils came to be regarded as the inveterate enemies of the Sinhalese and their religion.

It is best to sum up the position in the words of Mayurapada *Thera*, author of the *Pujavali* and contemporary of Magha who personified all that was reprehensible in the Tamil invaders, in the unanimous opinion of Sri Lankan chroniclers: 'Therefore in this Island of Lanka, the residence of those holding wrong views will not be permanent just as that of the *yakkhas* could not be permanent. Even if kings who hold

177. *The Colas*, op. cit., pp. 178-185, 208-223.

178. *UCHC*, Vol. I, Pt. I, op. cit., pp. 328-330; *ibid.*, pt. II, pp. 475-486; *DPRD*, op. cit., 46-51.

wrong views ruled the Island of Lanka by forcible occupation at some time, their families had not been established due to the power of the Buddha himself. Therefore as the island is fitting for kings with the right views, their families will flourish certainly. For this reason, kings who are the Lords of Lanka, should cultivate love and reverence to the Buddha, and should not delay in the re-establishment of the Dispensation. (They should) rule protecting the wheel of power and the wheel of the *Dhamma*, thereby protecting their families'.¹⁷⁹ Writing with the bitter memory of Magha's misdeeds fresh in his mind, probably having seen them for himself, Mayurapada's angry tone reflected in this passage is understandable. The good words said of the early invaders like Sena and Guittika and Elara in the older chronicle *Mahavamsa*, are not only missing in Mayurapada's *Pujavali*, but they are branded as unrighteous rulers whereas the former had the exact opposite to say. In other words, the author of the *Pujavali* was telescoping into past events the views of his own age, showing that by the thirteenth century in which this author was writing, the record of relations between the Sinhalese and the Tamils had crystalised for the adverse. This aspect of the problem requires further consideration, but has to be left out for the present. Suffice it to state that the stand taken by these chroniclers is not without justification in their own right. Having conceded that, we would do well to recall the judicious observation of Wilhelm Geiger who investigated and edited Sri Lanka's Pali Chronicles with such great care, 'Not what is said but what is left unsaid is the besetting difficulty of Sinhalese history'.¹⁸⁰

The *Upasakajanalankara* which became the subject of this paper is significant in that it has something to say on 'what is left unsaid'. It provides a clue—indeed there can be many elsewhere if only we look for them—which would take us to the untold part of the story of Sri Lanka's relations with South India. For that reason this work was selected as the subject of this paper in the initial stages of which, its date and authorship was re-examined. At the end of this brief survey of

179. *Ese heyin me Lakdiva mithyadrsti gatwange vasaya nam pera yaksayange vasaya sthira nuwva se ma sthira nove ma ya. mithyadrsti gat rajek Lakdiva balatkarayen kisi kaleka rajyaya kale vi namut ovunge vamsapratistha novunu Budunge ma anubhava visesayek ma ya. ese heyin me Lakdiva samyadrsti gat rajunta ma sihena heyin unge kulapraveniya pavatinne ma ekantaya. me me karanayen Lankadhipati rajun visin Budun kerehi svabhava vu adara bahumanayen da sasana pratisthavehi apremadava agnacakra Dharmacakra raksa kota rajya kota kulapraveniya raksa kala yutu. Pujavali, op. cit., p. 49.*

180. *Culavamsa* (English Translation), Part I, p. v.

Sri Lanka's relations with the Tamils of South India, attempted in the light shed by the *Uj.*, we are reminded of Shakespeare's dictum: 'The evil that men do liveth after them but the good is oft interred with their bones' inappropriate though it is, in a historical essay.

THE DIPAVAMSA AND THE MAHAVAMSA

An Historical Examination of the Pali Chronicles of Sri Lanka

C. E. GODAKUMBURA

Recently the present writer had the occasion to compare the story of Vijaya in the two Pali chronicles, the *Dipavamsa*¹ and the *Mahavamsa*. The version of the *Mahavamsa*² will be familiar to most of our readers, and it need not be repeated here. The writer should, however, relate what the *Dipavamsa* tells us, as this has apparently not been fully noticed or commented on by scholars who have written on the chronicles of the Sinhalese.³ It runs as follows (*Dipavamsa*, ix, v. 2): "The daughter of the Vanga king lived together in the forest with a lion dwelling in the wilderness, and in consequence gave birth to two children. (3) Sihabahu and Sivali were beautiful youths; the name of their mother was Susima;

1. *D*, ix. (For abbreviations used in text and notes see **Bibliography** below)

2. *M*, vi.

3. *EM*, introduction, p. xxii: Malalasekera points out that while the *M-t* calls Sihabahu's mother Suppadevi, the *D* (ix, 3) has it as Susima; but he has noted nothing about the sons or their names. Mendis (*PCH*, p. 40) points out that the story of the princess and the lion seems to have been influenced by the *Padakusalamanava-jataka* (No. 432). Further he says that (op. cit. p. 41) the story of Kuveni seems to have been influenced also by the *Devaddhamma-jataka*. As in the story of the Simhala (*Divyavadana*) here too the term 'yakkha' is replaced by 'raksasa'.

As late as 1958, a contributor to *HIPC* says, "*Dipavamsa*, composed in the fifth century A.D....." op. cit. p. 31. The statement needs no comment, since no first hand knowledge of the Pali Chronicles of Ceylon is evidenced in this paper.

and their father was called the Lion. (4) When their sixteenth year had elapsed, (Sihabahu) departed from his cave, and then built a most excellent city called Sihapura. (5) The son of the Lion, a powerful king, ruled over a great kingdom, in Lalarattha in the most excellent city of Sihapura. (6) Thirty two brothers were the sons of Sihabahu; Vijaya and Sumitta were the eldest among them, beautiful princes". The rest is similar to the *Mahavamsa*, but contains much less of details.

Let us consider the variations between the *Dipavamsa* and the *Mahavamsa* in the introductory portion alone, and try to assess their importance in the development of the Aryan tradition in Sri Lanka. First of all we must consider the nature of the repetitions. In verse 2 of the *Dipavamsa*, ix, extracted above, the father of the two children of the Vanga Princess was a lion; but in verse 3 he is "one called the Lion (*Sihavahayo*)". Verse 4 and 5 both contain the name of the city Sihapura, in a way that we would not find in a regular composition. Here one may compare the *Mahavamsa*, vi, 35-36.

When compared with the *Mahavamsa* (vi, 1), in the *Dipavamsa* the connection of the wayward princess's mother with the people of Kalinga is not found, but the *Dipavamsa* gives her name as Susima. The *Mahavamsa* gives no name. The *Mahavamsa Tika*, however, supplies the name Suppadevi (vol. I, p. 243, line 25). The most important difference is that according to the *Dipavamsa* the two children of the Lion were both boys; it is not stated that they were twins. Their names are: Sihabahu and Sivali. Hence no brother-sister marriage. Sivali is a common masculine name. In the *Mahavamsa* the two children are brother and sister, Sihabahu and Sihasivali, and are twins (vi, 9); and the brother marries the sister. The thirty-two sons of Sihabahu are also twins according to the *Mahavamsa* (*yamake*, vi, 37), but there is no such definitions in the *Dipavamsa*.

How did such changes and additions accrue to a simple story of the elopement of a "civilized" princess with a rough and primitive man, perhaps yet dwelling in a cave? To find out the answer one must turn to the *Mahavamsa-tika*. This precisely implies that the commentaries (*Atthakatha*) are the sources of the details, when it refers to the *Atthakatha*, particularly the *Uttaravihara-atthakatha* for further details. We first have a simple tale concerning a princess of the newly Aryanized Vangas who had escaped the custody of the home and eloped with an "uncivilized" wild forest dwelling man who has had his dwelling in a cave and was known as "Lion (*Siba*)", possibly the name of his tribe just as Bear, Monkey, etc. of the *Ramayana*; and had given birth to two

sons. The eldest of these was the father of Vijaya, the best known leader of those who made an Aryan settlement (*janapada*) in the island of Tambapanni or Lanka. The Buddhist teachers from North India were accustomed to the idea of twins. In the *Ramayana* itself there were twin brothers, Laksmana and Satrughna. The custom of brother-sister marriages was also familiar to them, as apparently it was practised by the new "civilized" people to preserve race, caste and family. The ancestors of the Sakyas, the Buddha's family, who built Kapilavatthu in the forest were the issue of such marriages.⁴ The forebears of the Licchavis were generations of brother-sister twins, their first grandparents also being a pair of similar twins miraculously produced and preserved to maturity.⁵ In the *Dasaratha-jataka*, Sita herself was the younger sister of Rama and Lakshmana. These teachers could introduce such an alteration to show that Vijaya was of the same race, both through his father and his mother. Then the parricide, Sihabahu's killing of the Lion. Such an anecdote will be fascinating to them. Had not Ajatasattu killed his father Bimbisara! Yet the father was full of compassion towards his son up to the last. A moral also has been brought in. As long as the father, "Lion", had compassion (*metta*) towards his son Sihabahu, the arrow would not strike him; the moment the Lion gave way to wrath (*krodha*) and got into a fury against his own son, the latter was able to strike and kill his father.

A simple story that was current among the early pre-Mahinda Aryan settlers in the island had grown up with the embellishments, changes and additions put in by the early teachers, who were the first commentators. What the poet who composed the epic, the *Mahavamsa*, had left out, such details as names of persons and places, sizes of things and quantities of materials, the logical order of the events, etc. etc., were supplied by the author of the *Mahavamsa-tika*, as is done in the case of other Buddhist stories which they regularly made use of for the edification of their listeners. In concluding the story of Gamani (-Abhaya) from the *Mahavamsa*, Geiger says ".....In the *Mahavamsa* the stream of the popular epic is mingled with the tradition of priestcraft" (*DM*,

-
4. (i) *Sumangalavilasini* (*Dighanikayatthakatha*), *Ambatthasuttavannana*, "Dasiputtavada".
 (ii) *Paramatthajotika* (*Suttanipatatthakatha*), No. 25, *Sammaparibbajaniya-suttavannana*.
5. (i) *Paramatthajotika*, vagga 2, sutta 1; *Ratana-suttavannana*.
 (ii) See also *Pujavaliya*, ch. 20: Bandula-Mallika gave birth to sixteen pairs of sons.

p. 22). This is true of the Vijaya legend and some of the other stories also, although the present writer would prefer to substitute 'priestcraft' by commentator-teachers (*atthakatha-acariya*).

Both the *Dipavamsa* (ix, 7) and the *Mahavamsa* (vi, 39) speak of the wild behaviour of Vijaya. This would have been so, because we can picture the lad growing up with the primitive people of the *janapada* and the city founded in the forest by his father. Sihabahu had followed the practice of the age. In order to avoid future rivalries, he left the country of Lala to his uncle (step-father) and mother, and cleared the forest when he founded a kingdom. Only the *Mahavamsa* tells us this. The founding of their city is similar to the manner in which Kapilavatthu was founded by the Okkaka princes and Koliya-nagara by a king called Rama, as found in the stories connected with the Sakyas. In the *Dipavamsa* Vijaya was only *asikkhito*, 'uneducated' 'untrained'; but in the *Mahavamsa* he is *visamacara* "of evil conduct". There is a wide difference of meaning and implications between the epithets used to describe the prince. According to the *Dipavamsa*, people from the settlement (*janapada*) and merchants (*negama*) made complaints against Vijaya; but the *Mahavamsa* goes further to say that all the citizens (*mahajano*) did not want the prince and demanded that he be killed. The *Dipavamsa* says that the attendants (*paricarika*,*ix, 10) and their families were ordered to be removed. In the *Mahavamsa* the followers of Vijaya (*parivarika*,*vi, 42) and their people were banished, and it adds that the number was seven hundred men, and further says that their heads were half-shaven. Are these not poetic embellishments, after additions by preachers taken from current practices, or other similar tales? The repeated use of the word *janapada* and its derivative *janapada* (the first *a* long : *D*, ix, 8, 10) and the use of the word *negama* (*D*, ix, 8) in the *Dipavamsa* point to an early period of the Aryan settlements. What we notice in the *Dipavamsa* is that the Aryan settlers and business men did not approve of Prince Vijaya who was keeping the company of the primitive people, un-aryanized, nevertheless the relatives of his grandfather.

The encounter of Vijaya and his men with the Yakkhas and the episode of Kuvani (Pali: Kuvanra) are not met with in *Dipavamsa*, chapter IX. We notice the story of Vijaya of the *Dipavamsa*, ending with the verse 37 (*D*, p. 57, line 11):

Atthatimsati vassani rajjam karesi khattiyo.

* The writer is not unmindful of the similarity between *ca* and *va* in both Burmese and Sinhalese scripts.

After the additions of the Buddhist teachers the same text is repeated in line 20. Then the history follows. In the clear interpolation there is mention of the Yakkhas not being expelled by the Buddha.

The stories relating to the Nagas and Yakkhas occupying Lanka before Vijaya are, the present writer ventures to suggest, what the Buddhist teachers brought from their countries in India. The Nagas are certainly the primitives known to the Buddhist community in India. Yakkhas were the non-humans they spoke of. The Rakshasas that the later chronicles⁶ speak of as inhabiting Lanka also came from the story of the Indian epic, the *Ramayana* at a much later date.

The miraculous element increases in the other narratives of the *Mahavamsa* (xviii - xix) also. Let us, for example, take the story of the message sent to bring the branch of the Bodhi tree. The *Dipavamsa* (iv, 82) relates the journey of Arittha to Pataliputta thus: "He started off working towards the north (ib, sv, 83), (ib. , xv. 86). He arrived at a seaport and got aboard a large boat, crossed the sea and reached dry land (ib. 87). He went over the Vinjha range, and reached the city of Pataliputta. The *Mahavamsa* gives the day of his departure according to the lunar year (xviii, 7) and says "having embarked filled with zeal, at the haven of Jambukola and having passed over the great ocean he came, by the power of the thera's will, to the pleasant Pupphapura even on the day of his departure". Here a miraculous occurrence is introduced, and we also notice the name of the port Jambukola. In the return journey of Arittha too, the *Dipavamsa* is clearer about the natural geographical descriptions (*Dipavamsa*, xvi, 2). The Prince (*Khattiya-Asoka*) having passed through three kingdoms in the Vinjha forests (*Vinjha-atavisu*) having passed through the great forest (*braba-rannam = mahavana*), the prince came to the ocean". The *Mahavamsa* again is shorter as to the geographical account of the journey, but mentions the port in India, Tamalitti. The *Mahavamsa*, xix, 6: "Arittha was the first to embark on that same ship, he fared forth from the city, and passing over the Vinjha forest (*Vinjhatavim*) the Prince arrived, just in one week, at Tamalitti". At the arrival in Lanka also the *Dipavamsa* mentions no port (xvi, 30-31); but the *Mahavamsa* has the name Jambukola (xix, 60).

6. In the *Rajavaliya*, a Sinhalese chronicle which should be placed after the 15th century, says that after Ravana's war there were only Yakkhas in Sri Lanka (*R*, p. 162). The Ravana story became popular in Sri Lanka only after about the thirteenth century A.D. In the *Pujavaliya* no mention is made of the Rakshasas (*P*, p. 49).

What we see is that the land geography of India⁷ was of no interest to the composers of the Epic, the *Mahavamsa*, but by his time the sea ports both in Lanka and the mainland had gained importance.

The few facts pointed out in the foregoing will convince students and scholars interested in the early history of not only Sri Lanka, but also of the neighbouring countries as well, of the necessity to make further comparisons of the chronicles of Sri Lanka, both Sinhalese and Pali, and not continue to depend on what was done over seventy years ago, when the study of the ancient historical texts was in its infancy and archaeological research had just begun. We should also try to arrive at a correct text of the *Dipavamsa*, so far as is possible from the material remaining.

For the text of the *Dipavamsa* we have only one archetype to rely on, that is the defective manuscript in Burmese characters brought to Sri Lanka in A.D. 1812 by Kapugama Dhammakkhandha Thera (later Modliar George Nadoris de Silva).⁸ Even so, the critical scholar will be able to extract much of the original *Dipavamsa* from Oldenberg's text and his notes aided by a studious comparison of the *Mahavamsa* and the *Mahavamsa-tika*. One should bear in mind that early copyists of the *Dipavamsa* in Sri Lanka, and then in Burma after it was taken there were influenced by the *Mahavamsa*; and then after the copy was brought to Sri Lanka, the readers would have been the more confused due to the state of Pali learning which had been reduced to a very low standard, and also its then recent revival. Corrections and additions to ancient texts are inevitable during such periods. This possibly is what made the early students of the chronicles to deduce that the *Mahavamsa* was based on the *Dipavamsa*.

In using the Pali chronicles, it has become the habit among scholars to date the *Mahavamsa* (up to ch. 37, v. 50) in the Fifth century A.D. and the *Dipavamsa* in the Fourth century A.D., because they bring the

7. Vinjha = Vindhya, possibly due to the confusion of the ligature *ndh* with *njb* in the Burmese and the Cambodian scripts. It is not *Vindhyacala*—22.5° N., 76° E., south of Avanti. Probably it is the Vindhyagiri of the earlier versions of the *Ramayana* story. Compare *Janakiharana*, (Colombo), 1967, 1969), xx, 32-33.

ihanugodham nisi candrarasmibhir nisevyamanah suratasramantare—(32, 1)
payah pravahah saritah saritpatim girin ca vindhyam prathate'yam antara (33, 1)
The geography of the *Dipavamsa* provides further evidence for our contention that the River Godavari and the Vindhya mountain of the original *Janakiharana* are not the river and the mountain range that go by the names now.

8. D., Oldenberg, introduction, p. 11. Oldenberg's statement that the archetype of the *D* was from Siam is possibly due to an error. It was brought from Burma. For Kapugama see *COMDC*, Vol. I, Vide op. cit. Indexes.

history up to the end of the reign of King Mahasena (A.D. 276-303).⁹ A casual reading of the *Dipavamsa* as we have it in Oldenberg's edition is sufficient to show that this text does not belong to one date, and it is not a regular composition by one author, but an epic that has gradually evolved.

The chapters i-xvi appear to have been begun soon after the arrival of the Buddhist teachers with Mahinda Thera, and completed after the planting of the shoot of the Bodhi tree at Anuradhapura. This would have been meant for reading out or reciting to the people who gathered at the completion of the establishment of the Buddhist faith in the island, and the 'Aryan way' of life propagated by the teachers from the Maurya country, culminating with the introduction of the Bodhi cult. It would have been used, wholly or in parts, at the Bodhi-puja festivals which followed.

Chapter xvii is a summary repetition of events narrated in the chapters i-xv, with the addition of the demise of the Thera Mahinda. It begins with a descriptive account of the island of Lanka, and was evidently meant for recital at the ceremonies connected with the cremation of the Thera. At Mahinda festivals on the anniversary of the demise of the Thera, either this chapter alone or the whole of the *Dipavamsa* was read out. King Dhatusena (A.D. 459-477) had this custom repeated at the spot where the remains of the Thera were cremated (*Mahavamsa*, xxxviii, vv. 55-59). The Mahinda ceremonies in that instance followed the Bodhi-puja, where one would expect the lifestory of the Theri Sangamitta to be read out.

Chapter xviii has been added after the death of the Theri Sangamitta. Here is a long account of the names of Theris from the time of the Buddha, and this must have been what made G. C. Mendis to deduce that the *Dipavamsa* was the chronicles of the Bhikkuni-nikaya.¹⁰ The last ten verses (45-54) of this chapter should go with the next; but it is placed here perhaps to complete the number of syllables required for the *bhanavara*. Otherwise chapter xix should have begun with the last two verses of chapter xviii:

Kakavannassa yo putto Abhayo nama khattiyo.....

This chapter is devoted to Abhaya Dutthagamani and some of the kings who followed him. Chapter xix speaks of the sons of Kakavanna Saddhatissa (v. 16) and also Mahatissa (v. 21):

Kakavannassa atrajo Mahatisso Mahamati.....

9. The date of the *Mahavamsa* has been discussed already by the writer. See *JCBRAS* November, 1949 and *COMDC*, Vol. I, p. xxv, p. 64.

10. *Pali Sabhitya*, I, pp. 148-149.

There is some confusion here. The last verse again speaks of Abhaya Dutthagamani.

Chapter xx begins again with Tissa, the son of Kakavanna, with no mention that he was the brother of Abhaya. Here we come to a fresh composition, which did not follow the story of Dutthagamani. It is not possible to state a reason for this, except perhaps that the narrators left the dead alone, and concentrated on the living. A mixture of two original sources is also possible. From chapter xx the history of the island continues up to the end of chapter xxii, where again we notice at least two hands, a mixture of different originals. Here particularly a careful examination is necessary to see whether verses of the *Mahavamsa* have not influenced the copyists, both in the early centuries, before copies were taken to Burma, and after 1812 when a manuscript was brought to Sri Lanka. A comparison has been already made by Geiger;¹¹ but much further investigations are possible with our widened knowledge of more different texts, manuscript sources, advanced methods of textual criticism, and skill in archaeological research, to bring out a text of the *Dipavamsa* as faithful to the original as possible. Concentrated hard work will assuredly bring its reward to a diligent scholar of Pali and of early Sri Lankan history.

With regard to Geiger's dating of the *Culavamsa* (i.e. the continuations of the *Mahavamsa*) and his reliance on a statement relating to a *Datadhatuvamsa*¹² at *Mahavamsa*, xxxvii, 73, may the writer refer the reader to his paper "*Culavamsa, its authorship and date*".* To this short article it may be now added that it is possible that the *Culavamsa* got its name at a time when it was a short continuation of the history of the island after King Mahasena, although now, as we have the two parts, the *Culavamsa* is longer than the *Mahavamsa*. In this respect we may compare the position with regard to the *Vinaya* texts, the *Mahavagga* and the *Culavagga*. It is quite probable that the first portion of the *Culavamsa* was begun immediately after the bringing of the Tooth Relic to Sri Lanka, and added to chapter 37. As against what the writer has said about the highly ornate style in the early chapters of the *Culavamsa*, even in chapter 37 itself, he is now able to state that Sanskrit poetry was written by Sinhalese scholars about the same time as the composition of the *Mahavamsa*, in the early sixth century A.D. (for example, the *Padyacudamani* and the verses of Mahanama Thera at Bodhgaya). Sanskrit had begun to have a place among the Sinhalese *literati* by this time.

11. See *DM*, p. 8.

12. See *DM*, p. 18.

* See F/N on p.151.

Postscript: In *Dipavamsa* and *Mahavamsa* (page 48) Geiger says that the *Dipavamsatthakatha*, mentioned in the *Mahavamsa-tika*,¹³ may be a commentary on the *Dipavamsa*. This does not seem to be correct. We may compare the position with regard to the *Mahavamsa*. The commentary on the *Mahavamsa*, the *Vamatthappakasini* is *Mahavamsa-tika*, and not *Mahavamsatthakatha*, the reason being that the *Mahavamsa* itself was considered an *atthakatha*, being outside the 'Pali' text, that is, the T(r)ipitaka, the word of the Master. Among the Sinhalese in the early days any work which did not fall within the Pitakas was considered an *atthakatha*; and thus the *Dipavamsa* and the *Mahavamsa* fell into that category, although they were not always referred to as such. Thus the *Dipavamsatthakatha* is the *Dipavamsa* itself. If it were a commentary on this chronicle, it would have been called *Dipavamsa-tika*, with perhaps a further distinguishing title.

13. *JCBRAS*, November, 1944.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Buddhadatta Mahathera, A. P., *Pali Sahitya*, Vol. I, Ambalangoda, 1960, (PS I), Vol. II, Maradana, 1957 (PS II).
- Geiger, Wilhelm, *The Dipavamsa and Mahavamsa and Their Historical Development in Ceylon*, translated into English by Ethel M. Coomaraswamy, Colombo, Colombo, 1908 (DM).
- Godakumbura, C. E. :
- (1) "Culavamsa, its authorship and date" in *JCBRAS*, Nov. 1949.
 - (2) *Catalogue of Oriental Manuscripts in Danish Collections (COMDC)*, Vol. I, (Ceylonese MSS) in print.
 - (3) *COMDC*, Vol. II (Pali MSS in Burmese and Cambodian scripts) in print.
- Merdis, G. C., *Problems in Ceylon History*, Colombo, n.d. (PC+).
- Philips, C. H., editor, *Historians of India, Pakistan and Ceylon*, London, 1961 (HIPC).
- The Dipavamsa, an Ancient Buddhist Historical Record*, edited and translated by Hermann Oldenberg, London, 1879 (D).
- Dipavamsaya*, editions in the Sinhalese character with Sinhalese translation: (1) BE 2470: Siri Silananda Thera and Siri Nanavimala Thera (DS); (2) AD 1959: K. Nanavimala Thera (DSK).
- Extended Mahavamsa*, ed. Malalasekera, G. P.; RASCB, Colombo, 1937 (EM).
- The Janakiharana* (1) ed. Godakumbura, C. E. and Paranavitana, S., Colombo, 1967, (2) edition with Sinhalese translation, etc., Godakumbura, Colombo, 1969.
- The Mahavamsa*, (1) ed. Geiger: PTS, London, 1908 (M) (2) *ibid*, translation, Colombo 1950.
- Pujwaliya*, edited, Bentota Saddhatissa Thera, Panadura, 1930, (PS)
- Ibid.*, chs. 33-34, ed. A. V. Suravira, Colombo, 1961 (P).
- Rajavaliya*, ed. A. V. Suravira, Colombo, 1976 (R).
- Vamsatthappakasini*, commentary on the *Mahavamsa*, (1) ed. Malalasekera, PTS, Vols. I and II, London, 1935 (M-t); (2) Edition in the Sinhalese character by Sumangala and Batuwantudawe, Colombo, 1883; (3) Edition in the Nagari character by S. V. Sohoni, Patna, 1971.

THE VACANT 'THRONE' AND THE BUDDHA STATUE IN SRI LANKA

W. B. MARCUS FERNANDO

Inscribed sculptural items are so scarce in Sri Lanka that the working out of a chronology for the island's sculpture has become an almost hopeless task. A few scholars have offered their propositions backed by argument. These various propositions which try to establish different and contradictory viewpoints are not of much use at the present stage since most of them have yet to be proved beyond doubt, and cannot be relied upon in the attempt to provide a chronology.

What is true of the sculpture of Lanka in general is also true of the Buddha statue. The dates assigned by various scholars to individual Buddha statues of the island are widely divergent. We have so far not got anywhere near to deciding the time the Buddha statue was first made in this country or the time it was first adopted here for purposes of worship. These twin problems remain to be tackled and despite the inconclusive nature of the available evidence it may be possible to get closer to a solution by its re-examination. This is also bound to revive the interest in the subject. If and when there comes a real breakthrough then the propositions of researchers would either prove untenable or fall into line and bring about a clearer picture. Till then the search must go on.

The present paper is an attempt to bring up some of the literary and other evidence not discussed so far and also to marshal and review some literary evidence already alluded to by other writers.

We may take it as an established fact that the vacant throne (*asana*) of the Buddha, taken as indicating His presence was venerated at one time in this country. The paper 'Asanaghara' in the *Paranavitana Felicitation Volume* by Godakumbura furnishes the evidence. We may as further proof point out that the Pali passage from the Commentaries, referring to the circumstances in which it was permissible to lop off the branches of a *bodhi*-tree, cited by the author in that paper¹ shows that there were *asanas* which had relics deposited in them and others which did not. As Adikaram points out, the Commentaries prove that there was in this country the belief that the existence of the Buddha's relics was equivalent to His own existence.² The *Mahavamsa* also repeats the same idea at Ch. XVII, v. 3— "If we behold the relics we behold the Conqueror." We are justified therefore in taking the inclusion of relics in the *asana* as further proof of the latter having been venerated. That the *asana* worship in Lanka began earlier than the worship of the Buddha statue should appear probable. The chronicles furnish the evidence that this was in fact so.

Both the *Dipavamsa* (*Dip.*) and the *Mahavamsa* (*Mhv.*), the latter read with its commentary the *Vamsatthappakasini*, record that the Buddha after having successfully mediated in the dispute between the Naga kings Culodara and Mahodara, sat for a while on the seat which had earlier been the bone of contention in the dispute, and gave it over to the Nagas for the purposes of veneration (*Dip.*, Ch. II, v. 50; *Mhv.*, Ch. I, v. 69). The seat was in a manner of speaking consecrated by His having sat on it, and would have been worshipped in lieu of Him. Both chronicles refer in the same breadth to a Rajayatana (Sin. *Kiripalu*, Bot. *Buchanania Latifolia*) tree which was also indicated at the same time as an object of veneration. The association of the Rajayatana tree appears to point to a time when tree-worship, a cult originating in pre-Buddhist times, was fresh in the minds of the people of this country. Be that as it may, the occurrence of this episode with the earlier strata of material in the chronicles may be taken as sufficient indication that the veneration of the vacant throne was known in the country when the earlier source material of the chronicles was taking shape.

In the description of the first construction of the Lovamahapaya the items named as being beyond price there, are the Palace (i.e. the Lovamahapaya itself), the *asana* and the pavilion. There is no mention of a Buddha image, but the *asana* referred to is fully described (*Mhv.*,

1. Godakumbura, C. E., 'Asanaghara' in *Paranavitana Felicitation Volume*, p. 16.
 2. Adikaram, E. W., *The Early History of Buddhism in Ceylon*, p. 137.

Ch. XXVII, vv. 32 ff.). On this exceedingly beautiful *asana* covered with costly cushions was placed a beautiful fan of ivory. It also had over it a white parasol. This then was obviously a 'throne' provided to symbolize the presence of the Buddha. Thus the making of vacant *asanas* in lieu of the Buddha may well have been in vogue here in the 2nd century B.C. when the Lovamahapaya was first built.

Some of the '*mal-asanas*' of the present day found beside dagobas and meant for use as flower-altars have a close resemblance to the *asanas*. At some stage of *asana*-worship the devotees may have kept the flowers on the *asana* itself. It is probably in this way that the *mal-asana* may have had its origin and how the popular name of the flower altar came to preserve for us the term *asana* long after the 'throne' itself was forgotten.

Before coming to discuss the Buddha statue we wish to acknowledge our indebtedness to two scholars who have been addressing their minds to the subject, both of whom have cited references from the Pali Commentaries and the Chronicles—Ven. Walpola Rahula³ and our former chief and guru Dr. C. E. Godakumbura.⁴

In his *History of Buddhism in Ceylon* Ven. Rahula Thero refers to "the great and beautiful stone image that was placed of old by Devanampiyatissa in the Thuparama".⁵ He adds "If we accept this statement, Ceylon had the earliest Buddha-image in the world. Whether Devanampiyatissa had actually this image made, or whether a later tradition attributed to the first Buddhist king of Ceylon an ancient image of unknown origin that was found at the Thuparama, we cannot be definite. Merely because we do not find Buddha images among the early sculptures at Sanchi and Bharhut in India, it is not logical to conclude that there were no Buddha images made in the third century B.C. anywhere else either. Was there anything to prevent the birth of new ideas in the island in advance of the continent?" Although the Ven. Thero thus speaks both for and against the great antiquity claimed for this particular statue he finally remains non-committal.

He, however, invites our attention to a number of circumstances⁶ indicated by references in the Commentaries to prove that the commentator gave a wide berth to the image-house and the Buddha statue although the Buddha statue had come into being in Lanka by the time

3. Rahula, W., *History of Buddhism in Ceylon*.

4. Godakumbura, C. E., *op. cit.*, and *Buddha Statues of Ceylon* in the 'Art Series' of the Archaeological Department, Ceylon.

5. Quoted from *Mhv.*, XXXVI, v. 128.

6. Rahula, W., *op. cit.*, pp 121-129.

the Pali Commentaries were written. He shows that the Buddha statue is referred to in the Commentaries only in two contexts and that the image-house is not mentioned at all. He suggests two alternative explanations for this 'surprising' situation:

1. that at the time the old Sinhalese Commentaries were written there were no image houses in monasteries and that even those images existing at the time were very few and of little importance, and that the writers of the Pali Commentaries who faithfully followed the original did not go out of their way to refer to images as they were an innovation in the old system of worship;

2. that the Buddha statue may have been popularized by Mahayanists and the Commentaries written under the auspices of the Mahavihara which was opposed to Mahayanism did not, therefore, refer to anything Mahayanistic.

As the Ven. Thero himself points out⁷ the Pali Commentator often goes out of his way to refer to contemporary events and things. Again, if the Commentator did not wish to refer to anything Mahayanistic, how do we find him, in fact, referring to the Buddha statue in the two following contexts as shown by references in the Commentaries pointed out by the Ven. Thero himself?⁸

- (a) At almsgivings wisemen used to place an image or a casket with relics and to offer food and drink first to the image or the casket;
- (b) in the discussion as to when it was lawful to cut a branch of a *bodhi*-tree, it was said that it should be cut only if it interferes with a *thupa* or an image with relics.

Since the Commentator has in fact made rather complimentary references to the Buddha statue it was unlikely that he would have refrained from referring to the image-house by reason of the possible popularization of the Buddha statue by Mahayanists. The references in these two contexts indicate that at the time of the writing of the Pali Chronicles there were Buddha statues both portable and otherwise and that honour was paid to a statue only if it enclosed relics.

All Buddha statues referred to in the *Mahavamsa* (we mean that part of the book as differentiated from the *Culavamsa*), with the possible exception of the statue removed from Thuparama to Pacinatissa

7. Rahula, W., *op. cit.* p. 128, n. 1.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 125.

pabbatarama by Jetthatissa, were associated with the *bodhi*-tree. Godakumbura, in fact, thinks that even this statue could have been associated with a *bodhi*-tree.⁹

Very probably, at the time of the writing of the Pali Chronicles the Buddha statue was housed in the *bodhighara*, which was a structure built around the tree and not over it. The statuette of the Buddha, referred to in the *Mahavamsa* (Ch. XXX, vv. 72-73) among the items enshrined in the relic chamber of the Mahathupa (i.e. Ruvanvalisaya) was only one of the accessories to a miniature *bodhi*-tree. Among the other appurtenances of this *bodhi*-tree were seven vacant 'thrones' and a couch. The Buddha statuette referred to was also accommodated on another 'throne'. Each of the eight thrones was worth a *koti* (i.e. ten millions). So was the couch. The fact that the chronicle records the worth of the *asanas* and of the couch but not that of the statuette is significant. There is no doubt that the Buddha statue had become at least an important accessory object of the *bodhi*-tree, if not an object of veneration, by the time the *Mahavamsa* was written, and if a statue had not been mentioned in the source material, there would have been a strong temptation for supplying in the record what could by that time have appeared as a conspicuous omission. It is also possible that the use of the Buddha statue as an accessory object to the *bodhi*-tree had begun by the time the source material of the *Mahavamsa* was being written down.

With regard to the "great and beautiful stone image that was placed of old by Devanampiya Tissa in the Thuparama" which was later removed by Jetthatissa to Pacinatissa pabbatarama, referred to for the first time in the latter's reign (*Mhv.*, Ch. XXXVI, v. 128 f.), the question arises as to why there was no mention of this reportedly unique statue for the long period of five centuries in the interim? This in our opinion makes it very probable that a Buddha statue of a later day was attributed to the first Buddhist King of Lanka in order to add to it the glow of antiquity. Though this statue was "great and beautiful" what place did it hold in the hearts of men? Jetthatissa after rebuilding the Lovamahapaya offered there a jewel worth sixty thousand (*Mhv.*, Ch. XXXVI, v. 125). Significantly this was the same fane with a vacant 'throne' in it and where there is no mention of a Buddha statue. This king also offered two precious gems to the Great Thupa (*Mhv.*, Ch. XXXVI, v. 126). Nothing similar is recorded at this time in connection with the Buddha statue—not even in connection with the "great and beautiful statue" the king transported to his own vihara.

Sanghatissa I (243-247 A.D.) fixed four great gems each worth a hundred thousand in the middle of the four suns (probably on the

9. Godakumbura, C. E., *Buddha Statues of Ceylon*, p. 18.

muddhavedi) of the Mahathupa (*Mhv.*, Ch. XXXVI, vv. 65, 66). Sanghabodhi (247-249 A.D.) staged his famous *satyakkriya* at the Mahathupa (*Mhv.*, Ch. XXXVI, vv. 74-77). Sri-Meghavanna (303-328 A.D.) made a gold image of the saint Mahinda and took it in great festivity from Mihintale to Anuradhapura (*Culavamsa*, Ch. XXXVII, vv. 68 ff.). No comparable enthusiasm was shown even upto this time, towards the Buddha statue.

The arrival of the Tooth Relic in the reign of Sri Meghavanna is likely to have kindled a new enthusiasm for the bodily relics of the Buddha and it would have been this enthusiasm which eventually led to the inclusion of relics in Buddha statues.

Sri Meghavanna's successor Jetthatissa II (328-337 A.D.) the royal ivory carver of repute, made a charming Bodhisattva figure and an *asana* with an umbrella (*Culavamsa*, Ch. XXXVII, vv. 102, 103). Here we still see the *asana* being made in preference to the Buddha statue.

The Buddha statue would have been adopted for purposes of worship only after the relics came to be deposited in them. To our mind, there is a passage in the chronicle which indicates the time at which this happened. There came a famine and pestilence in the reign of Upatissa I (365-406 A.D.), who was only two reigns away from the arrival of the Tooth Relic. The king caused to be made a solid gold image of the Buddha enclosing relics (*Sambuddhadhatuno sabba sovanna bimbam*). The statue was obviously a seated statue, in the hands of which was placed a bowl of water. The statue was taken around the town and the water sprinkled while the bhikkhus chanted the *Ratana sutta* (*Culavamsa*, Ch. XXXVII, vv. 189 ff). When in former times famine, pestilence and the fear of demons scourged the city of Visala, "holy water" was sprinkled under the instructions of the Master himself. That was during the lifetime of the Buddha and now in lieu of Him was taken a statue which enclosed His relics, because as was said earlier, the existence of the relics was considered equivalent to the existence of the Buddha himself. Geiger, however, does not interpret in this manner the passage which refers to this Buddha statue. He had a difficulty with regard to the implication of the words which meant an "all-gold statue of the relics of the Buddha" and tried to explain away the difficulty thus in a footnote "P. *Sambuddhadhatuno* lit., the relic of the Perfectly Enlightened One. As Buddha himself has entered Nirvana, an image of his outward appearance as he was in life, can only be a 'relic' of him."¹⁰ The *Culavamsa* adds that 'In the south-west corner of the Royal Palace he (Upatissa I)

10. *Culavamsa* (Geiger's Translation), p. 19, f.n. 2.

had a house built for the Uposatha festival and a house with an image of the Buddha as well as a pleasant garden surmounted by a wall'. The king tarried there on three particular days of the month and on extraordinary festival days observing the eight precepts.¹¹ Though it is not clear here whether the king was at the Uposatha Hall or image-house, it is more likely that he stayed at the latter. The image referred to could well have been the golden image caused to be made by him, and this probably was the manner in which image worship quietly began.

Within a quarter century of Upatissa I there began a period of Tamil supremacy and Dhatusena who restored the Sinhala rule was very enthusiastic about Buddha statues. The worship of the Buddha statue had probably come to stay by this time.

There is but one instance of enthusiasm shown over a Buddha statue by a king prior to Upatissa I. This king's predecessor on the throne, Buddhadasa (337-365 A.D.) is said to have placed a gem in the eye of the image of the Buddha at Abhayuttara Vihara. This statue could have been the same 'great and beautiful statue' referred to above. This gem is said to have been lost. For this to have happened the statue should even at this time have been left in the open. Not only was the gem lost, but the loss does not appear to have been much felt till Dhatusena made good the loss a century later.

Godakumbura¹² draws our attention to the 'interesting' fact that while the *Mahavamsa* records that Gotabhaya set up three stone statues (obviously of the Buddha)¹³ and a stone throne at the three entrances to the *bodhigghara*, the *Dipavamsa*, which refers to Gotabhaya as Meghavanna Abhaya, is silent about these statues but mentions only the 'throne'. We may add that there is no reference at all to a Buddha statue in the whole of the *Dipavamsa* although there are references in it to the 'thrones' of the type under discussion.

Two scholars of standing have, however, made an apparently strong case for a much greater antiquity for the Buddha statue and we might here discuss their propositions. The earlier scholars more or less accepted the position that Sri Lanka learnt the making of Buddha statues from the Indian mainland, but some of the more recent scholars have been asking why the Buddha statue could not have been evolved here and adopted by the sub-continent.

Heinz Mode one of the scholars believing in the Sri Lanka origin of the Buddha statue refers in his *Die buddhistische Plastik Ceylons* to Siri Gunasinghe's paper "Ceylon and the Buddha Image in the Round" in

11. *Culavamsa*, XXXVII, vv. 200-202.

12. Godakumbura, C. E., 'Asanaghara' in *op. cit.*, p. 161.

13. Parenthesis ours.

Artibus Asiae, Vol. XIX where the latter, who also supports the Lanka origin of the Buddha statue, claims that the *vahalkadas* of Lanka's dagobas had three niches, the central one of which had a Buddha statue. Gunasinghe also points out that this was suggested by Smither as well. Unfortunately, at least the upper part of the *vahalkadas* of all ancient dagobas coming down to us would have been rebuilt several times since the original construction and the niches can well be a later incorporation. For instance, the dagobas of Sri Lanka as originally constructed had only one *chatra* hoisted on a shaft arising from the top of the dome of the dagoba. In the course of the centuries the number of *chatras* increased till the present *chatravali* was finally evolved.¹⁴ No structural dagoba has survived with this feature in its original form.

What Mode says in his attempt to establish the antiquity of the niches of the *vahalkada*, and therefore of the Buddha statue¹⁵ has been translated for me as follows:—

“The limestone jacket of Kanthaka cetiya which is found well preserved rises far over the top terrace and includes the *vahalkada* so that those *vahalkadas* cannot be of a later date than the stone jacket of Lanjatissa, unless there has been a completely arbitrary reconstruction”.

There was no arbitrary reconstruction of the *vahalkadas* but there would have been partial reconstructions of an evolutionary nature. It would have been quite a natural thing to include a Buddha statue in the *vahalkada* after the Buddha statue reached its eminence in the eyes of the people, at a date much later than that of the first construction of the *vahalkada*. It must be admitted that we do not have the architectural details of the *vahalkadas* as originally constructed, or even those belonging to an early stage of its evolution.

The foregoing would show that the Buddha statue in Sri Lanka assumed importance as an object of worship about the beginning of the 5th century A.D. We know that the building of colossal dagobas was given up in the 4th century. This was very probably due to the shift of interest from the dagoba to the Tooth Relic. From that time, for a while, the Tooth Relic was the biggest attraction for the devotee; and then the Buddha statue invested with relics also competed for recognition. These circumstances seem to indicate that the popularization of the Buddha statue could have been a deliberate attempt by the Theravadins in order to wean away the devotee from the Tooth Relic which was in the hands of the Mahayanists.

14. Vide the present writer's paper 'Evolution of the chattravali in Ceylon in *Artibus Asiae*, Vol. XXXVI, v. 2, pp. 75-80.

15. Mode, Heinz, *Die Buddhistische Plastiken Ceylons*, p. ?

THEORY OF PROPORTIONS OF FIGURES IN PAINTING AND SCULPTURE

C. WIKRAMAGAMAGE

Models

Artists, in the East and the West, chose remarkable and elegant features from several very handsome males and females and incorporated them in their work. Such ideal human forms, as accepted by sculptors, are called perfect human forms. Sukracarya, an Indian master artist, says that "perchance one in a million has perfect form, perfect beauty. So only that image is perfect which conforms to the standard of beauty laid down in the *Sastras*".¹ For the Western artists, Leon Battista Alberti, the Italian master says: "so we too, chose many bodies, considered to be the most beautiful by those who knew, and took from each and all their dimensions, which we then compared with one another, and leaving out of account the extremes on both sides, we took the mean figures validated by the majority of *exempeda*".² These two statements show that the basic theory of model forms is necessarily based on the natural beauty found in the human body. They have considered not one type of human form as a model of the male figure, but several. Durer had five such types which corresponded to Indian types of male figures. Four of these types are equivalent to Lomazzo's 9, 8, and 7 headlengths and the very slender man.³ Indian artists describe the 108 *angulas* in height and girth type as the best; this is equivalent to Durer's type of nine heads.⁴

1. *Sukraniti*, translated by A. N. Tagore in *Some Notes on Indian Artistic Anatomy*, p. 3.
2. *Leon Battista Alberti on Painting and on Sculpture*, translated by Cecil Grayson, London, 1972, p. 135.
3. E. Panofsky, *Meaning of Visual Art*, G. Britain, 1970, p. 123; *The Human Figure by Albrecht Durer*, translated by Walter L. Stauss, New York, 1972, pl. 88-91.
4. E. Panofsky, *Meaning of Visual Art*, p. 123.

Through those various forms artists expressed different things, i.e., human, superhuman and divine qualities. Leon Battista Alberti explains the human forms :

“If I am not mistaken, the sculptor’s art of achieving likeness is directed to the two ends: one is that the image he makes should resemble this particular creature, say a man. They are not concerned to represent the portrait of Socrates or Plato or some known person, believing they have done enough if they have succeeded in making their work like a man, albeit a completely unknown one. The other end is the one pursued by those who strive to represent and imitate not simply a man, but a particular person say Caesar or Cato in this attitude and this dress, either seated or speaking in court, or some other known person”.⁵

The second kind of human form expressed superhuman qualities that are based around a historical person. For instance, the image of the Buddha represents superhuman characteristics through the marks such as *usnisa*, long-lobed ears, *urna* and halo. His long arms which are based on superhuman proportions, represent not only superhuman qualities but also superhuman appearance. Buddhist artists, in this way, symbolised the Buddha nature and represented it in an anthropomorphic form, thus giving expression to the Great Wisdom and the Great Compassion. If we take the image of Jesus Christ, its halo, the sagacious face and the hand posture represent the superhuman character and express Wisdom and Compassion in relation to God the Father.

For the third kind of image, there is no archetypal historical personage with divine qualities. Images such as those of Brahma, Visnu, Siva and Avalokitesvara represent divinity in human form. “In India as well as in other ancient countries of the world, the deities were mostly conceived of anthropomorphically and represented as mortals in mythology and art”.⁶ According to the Hindu theory of divine representation “*pratima* is *purusa*”;⁷ but as the supreme soul consists of both *purusa* and *prakerti*, *purusa* alone cannot exist anywhere. So all images of gods should have a *pindika* or pedestal which represents *prakerti*.⁸ But the image of Avalokitesvara as a Bodhisattva expresses wisdom and

5. Leon Battista Alberti *on Painting and on Sculpture*, p. 135.

6. J. N. Banerjea, *Development of Hindu Iconography*, Calcutta, 1941, p. 34.

7. *Agnipurana*, Ch. 56.

8. Tarapada Bhattacharya, *The Canons of Indian Art*, Calcutta, 1947.

compassion as their intermediate personification. The images of the Dhyani Buddhas are representations of the *Dharmakaya*, or infinite wisdom and the Great Compassion in the form of *Yab-yum*.⁹

The Indian theory of the beauty of the figures of gods has been explained by Sukracarya as follows: "Standing or seated comfortably, on their appropriate seats or mounts, eyes fixed without blinking, beardless and youthful as a boy of sixteen, gloriously dressed and arrayed, glorious in complexion and in action (granting blessings or benedictions), enveloped in clothes down to the feet, and decked with glorious ornaments—this is how the artist should conceive his deity".¹⁰ Archaeological evidence shows that all images belonging to Hindu, Buddhist and Jain art have a youthful appearance with strong and intelligent character, except a few special cases. Gandhara artists, through foreign influence, made Buddha images with a beard which were not generally accepted by Buddhists for a long time. Images of Buddhas, Bodhisattvas, Tirthankaras and principal Hindu gods were made according to the above-mentioned theory and have the proportions of the ideal man or *mahapurusa* who is necessarily perfect in beauty and form.

Proportions (metrology)

The full height of the standard male figure and its compass of fathom are equal. This is the early Buddhist theory of proportions of the human figure found in the Pali *Nikayas*. In the *Mahapadana Sutta* of the *Digha Nikaya* we find the description of this theory of proportions of the human figure which explains that the *Mahapurusa* has a compass of arms equal to his full height.¹¹ It is noteworthy that this theory of proportions was not necessarily originated by Buddhists, and its application to Egyptian, Greek and Roman iconometry is evident.¹² In the old canon as well as in the new canon of Egyptian art, it is said that the full height of the standard male figure is equal to its arm-span, or fathom.¹³ Again the fathom is the largest unit of measurement of Egyptian metrology.

-
9. Blanche Christine Olschak, *Mystic Art of Ancient Tibet*, London, 1973, p. 126.
 10. A. M. Tagore, *Some Notes on Indian Artistic Anatomy*, p. 14.
 11. *The Digha Nikaya*, (PTS), II, 1966, p. 18.
 12. Eric Iverson, *Canon and Proportions in Egyptian Art*, Denmark, 1955, pp. 22-3; *Selections from the Notebooks of Leonardo da Vinci*, translated by Imra A. Richte, London 1959, p. 147; *The Literary Works of Leonardo da Vinci*, I, p. 255; *Journal of Hellenic Studies*, XXV, pp. 227-255.
 13. *Canon and Proportions in Egyptian Art*, p. 22.

The extent of the fathom has been identified as the distance from the tip of the thumb of one outstretched hand to the tip of the other and the full height of the male figure is described in the old canon as the length from the sole of the feet to the hairline on the forehead, exactly the same as in early Indian canons of art.¹⁴ In the late canon of Egyptian art the fathom was considered as the length from the tip of the middle finger of one outstretched hand to the tip of the other and full height from the sole of the foot to the eyeline. As a metrological unit, the fathom has sub-divisions such as cubit, handbreadth and finger equal to Indian metrological units: *kara*, *kala* and *angula*. Their Roman equivalents are cubit, palm and finger.

This theory of relative units of measurement has been described in detail in the canons of art in the East and the West as essential rules to be followed by artists. The master artists of Egypt divided the fathom into four small cubits, each containing six sub-divisions called handbreadths. Each handbreadth is again sub-divided into four equal parts called fingers and each finger has sub-divisions: $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{3}$, $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{8}$, $\frac{1}{15}$. Thus, the fathom, cubit, handbreadth and finger are very important units of measurement in Egyptian metrology.

In the foregoing discussion, we have seen that the fathom is the largest metrological unit of measurement and that its evolution appeared in the late Egyptian canons. In the old Egyptian canon, the cubit is explained as the distance from elbow to the tip of the outstretched thumb also called the small cubit. After about the XXVI th dynasty, the new canon was employed. According to this the length from the elbow to the tip of the outstretched middle finger was considered as the royal cubit. Early Indian canons of art used the term *kara* for the equivalent of the Egyptian cubit. After the development of Indian metrology the term *kara* fell into disuse and *tala* was employed instead of *kara*.

Already we have mentioned that the handbreadth and finger in Egyptian metrology are equal to the Indian metrological units, *kala* and *angula* respectively. Just as in Egyptian canons, in the Indian canons too, the finger was subdivided into $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{3}$, $\frac{1}{4}$, $\frac{1}{8}$, $\frac{1}{16}$. The *angula* was divided exactly in the same manner. $\frac{1}{16}$ th of an *angula* in Indian canons is identical with $\frac{1}{2}$ of *yava* which is $\frac{1}{8}$ th of an *angula*.

The following table shows the metrological relationship in different art traditions :

14. *Brhatsambhita*, Ch. 68, v. 7.

**Full Height of Male Figure of 96 Relative Inches
in Height and Girth**

Egyptian

Fathom		Cubit		Hand- breadth		Finger
1	x	4	x	6	x	4

Indian

Fathom		<i>Kara</i>		<i>Kala</i>		<i>Angula</i>
1	x	4	x	6	x	4

Roman

Fathom		Cubit		Palm		Finger
1	x	4	x	6	x	4

So the basic formula is as follows :

$$\begin{array}{l}
 \text{Egyptian :} \quad F \times C \times H \times I = 96 \\
 \text{Indian :} \quad F \times C \times K \times I = 96 \quad I \times 4 \times 6 \times 4 \\
 \text{Roman :} \quad F \times C \times P \times I = 96
 \end{array}$$

It is a well-known fact that the length and the width of the face is the same as the length of a palm from the wrist to the tip of the outstretched middle finger.¹⁵ The value of the face length according to the nine *tala* system is 1/9th of the full height, which is equal to the face length given in the *Painter's Manual of Mount Athos*, a Byzantine canon.¹⁶ Vitruvius and Leonardo da Vinci gave another type of face length of 1/10th of the full height, while Durer gives the face lengths: 1/9th, 1/8th and 1/7th. These are exactly the same as the face lengths of 10, 9, 8 and 7 *tala* types given in Indian canons of iconometry. The face is divided into three equal parts; from hairline to eyeline, to end of nose, and to chin. This also was a theory common to artists in the East and the West. The width of the face is maintained as the distance from ear to ear, which equals the length from hairline to chin. In early Buddhist scriptures, Buddha's face is compared to the full moon in shape. Leonardo da Vinci describes the face of the standard male figure as a square. As far as the equality of the face is concerned there is no difference between the two statements. Consideration of the full height according to the face length is also a common theory. For instance, the male figure of nine units is explained as follows:¹⁷

15. Jean Paul Richter, *The Literary Works of Leonardo da Vinci*, I, Oxford, 1939, p. 245; *Cennino Cennini, The Craftman's Handbook*, translated by Daniel V. Thomson, New York, 1960, pp. 48-9.
16. *Meaning of Visual Art*, pp. 03-127.
17. *Ibid.*, pp. 103-4.

1	unit is allowed to the face	(= 1/9)
3	to the torso	(= 3/9)
2	each to the upper and lower parts of leg	(= 2/9 x 2)
1/3	to the top of the head	} (= 1/9)
1/3	height of the foot	
1/3	to the throat	

If we take the face length as 12 inches, the above-mentioned units can be explained more systematically thus:—

Face	12 inches	(= 108/9 x 1)
Torso	36 "	(= 108/9 x 3)
Thigh	24 "	(= 108/9 x 2)
Shin	24 "	(= 108/9 x 2)
Foot	4 "	(= 108/9 x 1/3)
Throat	4 "	(= 108/9 x 1/3)
Head	4 "	(= 108/9 x 1/3)

Total height = 108 inches or 9 faces (= 12 in. x 9).

The above-mentioned male figure of nine faces is equivalent to the Indian nine *tala* type of male figure:

Face	12 inches	(= 108/9 x 1)
Torso	36 "	(= 108/9 x 3)
Thigh	24 "	(= 108/9 x 2)
Shin	24 "	(= 108/9 x 2)
Throat	3 "	(= 108/9 x 1/4)
Head	3 "	(= 108/9 x 1/4)
Knee	3 "	(= 108/9 x 1/4)
Feet	3 "	(= 108/9 x 1/4)

Total height = 108 inches or 9 faces (= 12 x 9). Further comparison is given in the following tables:

SYSTEM OF NINE MEASURES OR TYPE OF NINE EQUAL PARTS

	Indian Navatala type	Painters Manual of Mount Atbos Durer Gauricus (1609)	Cennino Cennini Trattato della Pittura (1437)	Filarete Trattato della Architettura (1464)	Philander Vetrui-Commentar (1544)	Vasari Introduzion.s della Scultura (1550)
Vertical Measurements of the body						
Skull	1	1	1	1	1	1/3
Face	1/3	1/3	1/3	1/3	1/3	1
Neck	1	1	1	1	1	1/3
Neck to Chest	1	1	1	1	1	1
Chest to Navel	1	1	1	1	1	1
Navel to Penis	2	2	2	2	2	2
Thigh	1/3	1/3	(1/3?)	2	1/3	1(1/3?)
Knee	2	2	2	2	2	2
Skin	1/3	1/3	1/3	1/2	1/3	1/3
Foot						
Full height total	9	9	9?	9	9	9

SYSTEM OF TEN MEASURES

<i>Vertical Measurements of the Body</i>	<i>Indian</i>	<i>Lomazzo Ghiberti I Commentari (1455)</i>	<i>Ludovico Dolce Aretino (1557)</i>
Skull	—	1/2	1/3
Face	1	1	1
Neck	1/3	1/2	2/3
Neck to Chest ...	1	1	1
Chest to Navel ...	1	1	1
Navel to Penis ...	1	1	1
Thigh	2½	2½	2
Knee	5/12	—	(½?)
Shin	2½	2	3 (2?)
Foot	2/3	1/2	(½?)
	10	10	10

In the case of finding the face length according to full height, one should divide the full height of the proposed figure by the number of its large equal parts to get the face length. For instance, we take a male figure of 96 inches in height, its number of large equal parts : 8 ($96 \div 8$) then we find the face length as 12 inches. This method is applicable to all types of figures according to Indian metrology. In the case of male figures, application of the method is as follows :

Seven tala type

Full height = 84 inches
 Number of large equal parts = 7
 Face length = $84 \div 7 = 12$
 This is similar to Durer's type A.¹⁸

Eight tala type

Full height = 96 inches
 Number of large equal parts = 8
 Face length = $96 \div 8 = 12$
 This is similar to Durer's type B.¹⁹

18. *The Human Figure by Albrecht Durer*, pl. 88, 91,
 19. *Ibid*,

Nine tala type

Full height	... ..	= 108 inches
Number of large equal parts		= 9
Face length	... ..	= $100 \div 9 = 12$

This is similar to Durer's type D.²⁰

Ten tala type

Full height	... ..	= 120 inches
Number of large equal parts		= 10
Face length	... ..	= $120 \div 10 = 12$

This is similar to the Vitruvian type of 10 head-lengths.²¹

The ten *tala* system was employed by some Indian artists for the images of superhuman beings, such as Buddhas, Tirthankaras and also for divine figures of Brahma, Visnu and Siva. For those superhuman and divine images, the face length was extended up to $13\frac{1}{2}$ inches. As a result of further development, the ten *tala* system was subdivided into three types as follows :

- Uttama* or the great type; its face length $13\frac{1}{4}$ inches,
- Madhyama* or middling type; its face length 13 inches,
- Adhama* or small type; its face length $12\frac{1}{4}$ inches.

The *Manasara*, a South Indian canon of art and architecture, gives these three types with different face lengths:

- Uttama* or the great type; its face length is 13 inches,
- Madhyama* or middling type; its face length is $12\frac{1}{4}$ inches,
- Adhama* or small type; its face length is 12 inches.

The largest type of face ever recorded in Indian canons is $14\frac{1}{2}$ inches and it was recommended by the Dravida artists.²² It is noteworthy that with the extensions of the face length, the length of the palm also was extended due to the equality of face length and the length of palm.

Nevertheless each part of the human body has a fixed ratio to the others. So each unit of measurement given in the canons of proportions is necessarily bound with this relationship of parts of the body to the whole. Galen reports that "Chrisippus.....holds that beauty does not consist in the element but in the harmonious proportion of the parts, the proportion of one finger to the other, of all the fingers to the rest

20. Ibid.

21. *Meaning of Visual Art*, p. 95; *The Literary Works of Leonardo da Vinci*, p. I, p. 255.

22. *Development of Hindu Iconography*, p. 360.

of the hand, of the rest of the hand to the wrist, of these two to the forearm, of the forearm to the whole arm, in fine, of all parts to all others, as it is written in the canon of Polyclitus".²³ This was a system well-known to the Egyptian artists and they expressed it by means of squared grids which had certain geometrical qualities and potentialities. So any line drawn at random between two points of any figure constructed according to the canons will of necessity perform a geometrical function and create geometrical figures.

Elsewhere we have pointed out that the standard proportions of the male figure have been taken from living models considered the most beautiful. Now we can understand that this "beautiful comes about, little by little, through many numbers" as Polyclitus says.²⁴ Indian aesthetics from the very beginning recognized these principles, and developed its canons in accordance with them. The *Brhatsambhita*²⁵ gives five different types of men and their proportions: *Hamsa* type of man 96 units, *Sasa* 99 units, *Rucaka* 102 units, *Bhadra* 105 units and *Malavya* 108 units in height as well as in girth. Of these the *Hamsa* and *Malavya* types were taken as model forms and in the Indian metric system they were classified as *Asta-tala* and *Nava-tala* types respectively. In each case, the full heights of these types are equivalent to arm-spans.

As we have mentioned before, each unit of measurement in Egyptian metrology was reconsidered after about the XXVIth dynasty, after which a new canon was developed. As a result of the new canon the small cubit (distance from the elbow to the tip of the outstretched thumb) fell into disuse and was replaced for all purposes by the royal cubit. The difference between the old and the new canon is as follows:—

Old Canon

- Fathom : Distance from the tip of the thumb of one's outstretched hand to the tip of the other.
- Full height : From the sole of the foot to the hairline on the forehead.
- Cubit : Distance from the elbow to the tip of the outstretched thumb.

New Canon

- Fathom : Distance from the tip of the middle finger of one outstretched hand to the tip of the other.
- Full height : From the sole of the foot to the eyeline.
- Cubit : Distance from elbow to the tip of the middle finger.

23. *Meaning of Visual Art*, p. 92.

24. *Archaeologischer Anzeiger*, No. I, p. 10; *Meaning of Visual Art*, p. 96.

5. Ch. 68, v. 7.

In Buddhist and Hindu iconometry the fathom and *kara* fell into disuse and the *tala* system was employed for all purposes. The value of the *tala* is identified with the face length and the palm length. Sculptors and painters by using the *tala* system brought all types of proportions into a systematic order. With the growth of spiritual symbolism in Indian art, artists paid careful attention to the mask as the most important part of a figure through which divine qualities can be expressed more fruitfully. This is the reason why face length was extended up to $13\frac{1}{4}$ inches, as we have seen before. As a result of this change, the face became bigger than before, but the basic theory of the equal length and width of the face still remained the same.

Lepsius mentioned that the system of the horizontal lines of the human figure was developed by the Egyptian artists about the XIIth Dynasty into the "classical" grid, which divided the height of the human figure into 18 squares from the sole of the foot to the hairline on the forehead. Later about the XXVIth Dynasty it was replaced by the "Late" grid which divides such figures into 21 squares from the sole of the foot to the eyeline.²⁶ In India, the same system was employed especially for the face at an early period and later applied to the entire figure.

For the making of vertical lines Indian artists used a special instrument called *lambaphalaka*, for the same purpose as Leon Battista Alberti used the *finitorium*. This was a very useful and essential instrument and an Indian artist used it very carefully in the making of divine images. The other important instrument used by the artists was the measuring rod. Italian artists called it *exempeda*,²⁷ while Indian artists called it *salaka*. It is a thin wooden ruler as long as the length of the figure one wishes to measure from the sole of the foot to the hairline on the forehead. Artists in Sri Lanka still use these two instruments and they call them *lambatatuwa* and *lapata* respectively.²⁸

Measuring Ruler

The artist's ruler in different traditions is divided into certain units, as follows:—

Egyptian : The full height of the figure is divided into large equal parts called cubits. Each cubit is subdivided into 6 equal parts called handbreadths. Each handbreadth is

26. *Canon of Proportions in Egyptian Art*, p. 30.

27. *Leon Battista Alberti on Painting and on Sculpture*, p. 131.

28. A. K. Coomaraswamy, *Medieval Sinhalese Art*, Second Ed., New York 1956, p. 152.

again subdivided into 4 equal parts called fingers, while each finger has smaller divisions of $1/2$, $1/3$, $1/4$, $1/8$ and $1/16$.

- Roman :**
- (i) The full height of the figure is divided into cubits. Each cubit is subdivided into 6 palms and each palm is subdivided into 4 fingers.
 - (ii) Leon Battista Alberti divides the full height of the figure into certain large equal parts called feet. Each foot is subdivided into 10 inches and each inch is again subdivided into 10 parts called minutes.

Indian : The full height is divided into a number of large equal parts, and each division is called a *tala*. Each *tala* is subdivided into 12 parts called *angulas*. Each *angula* is subdivided into small parts called *yayas*.

The metric system used by the artists of Egypt, Greece, Rome and India have a remarkable and surprising correspondence. This conformity, especially between Egypt and Greece, has been explained as the result of a direct transmission of the Egyptian system.²⁹ It is true that the Roman system is based on the Greek system. Moreover, we have seen that the Indian metric system also has the same degree of conformity as the others. In this case, if we compare not only the metric relationship but also other archaeological evidence, there is no doubt that from early historical periods Egypt, Greece, Rome and India were known to each other, and of course, shared their metric knowledge to a certain extent, as they did other concepts. The place where this metric system originated, however, is still in question. At the same time, we must bear in mind that not only the Egyptian metric system but also the Greek, Roman and Indian systems as well were derived from a standardisation of certain natural proportions found in the human body. However, to explain the basic knowledge which directed these artistic traditions to the same point there must have been a common root older than the Egyptian tradition.

As far as the Indian metric system is concerned, Indian artists developed their metric system starting from about the 5th century B.C., through the Maurya, Kusana and Pala Dynasties. Strabo mentions that during the first century B.C. India and Rome had diplomatic relationships.³⁰ A Pandya king, in about 20 B.C., sent an embassy to the Roman

29. *Canon of Proportions in Egyptian Art*, p. 23, n. 1.

30. *Development of Hindu Iconography*, p. 197.

Empire during the reign of the Emperor Augustus. The work of Vitruvius written in about 25 B.C., has a close connection with Indian canons of art and architecture. Erwin Panofsky, speaking about the Vitruvian metric system says : "I have no doubt that the origin of this system..... is to be sought in the East".³¹ J. N. Banerjea thinks that Vitruvius learned it somewhere in South India.³² The Vitruvian school has played a very important role in the history of Roman art and architecture until Leon Battista Alberti introduced his new system called *exempeda*. Similarly the relationship between the Indian and the Byzantine metric systems also is evident. With the spread of Buddhism the Indian metric system was also adopted by some Southeast Asian traditions.

31. *Meaning of Visual Art*, p. 105.

32. *Canons of Indian Art*, p. 197.

THE WOODEN ARCHITECTURE OF SRI LANKA

L. K. KARUNARATNE

Historically, Sri Lanka's building traditions display two basic and closely related methods. The first of these is trabeated—or post-and-lintel—timber construction. This is seen in open columniated structures without walls or in buildings with screen walls or half-walls in light materials. The roof structure also has timber beams and rafters, while the covering of the pitched roof is of organic materials such as coconut palm thatch, rice straw, etc., or of baked clay tiles. Wooden columns, posts and beams are used throughout to support the roof. The most important structural aspect of such a building is its *skeletal timber frame*.

The second structural method is closely related to the first and could even be considered merely a variant form. This is mud or masonry construction with high walls or half walls. The masonry is usually burnt brick laid in plaster. Other materials employed include wattle-and-daub, mud brick laid in puddle, compressed earth and forms of rubble or dressed stone construction. Usually *the timber skeleton* still forms an integral part of such a building. In the most primitive wattle-and-daub structures, which are still used extensively, and in the highly developed architecture of the Anuradhapura and Polonnaruva Periods (3rd century B.C.—13th century A.C.), the use of timber posts and columns remains a common feature. Of course, in certain phases of building activity during the historical period some sections of the wooden columniation were replaced by stone pillars but this brought about no change in the constructional method. In more recent times, the masonry walls rise to the full height of a building and themselves

act as the vertical load-bearing elements in place of the columns. Timber beams and rafters however still remain the basic supporting framework of the roof.

Of course some variations and combinations of these constructional methods can be found, but it would be true to say that traditional and historical building activity in Sri Lanka can be reduced in essence to these two methods.

A third, and exceptional, method is displayed in buildings which are of wholly masonry construction. These use brick or stone masonry. Buildings which are entirely made of brick masonry are described in classical literature as *ginjakavasathas*, while the Sinhalese term *gedige* is applied to both brick and stone constructions.¹ Although there could be some connection between the second method described above and the present one, the distinguishing feature of this third method is the use of corbelled arches and vaults *in lieu* of a timber beam framework. Of course brick and stone corbelling and other methods of stone slab construction still retain the trabeated principle. The character and style of such structures, however, are entirely different from that of wooden construction. It is clear that although corbelling and even arcuated construction was known to Sri Lankan builders, it had little place in the indigenous architectural tradition. Its earliest use does not seem to have been before the 7th or 8th century A.C. and it is only prominently featured in a handful of important monuments at Polonnaruva. These are brick masonry structures dating from the 12th century. A similar number of stone monuments also exist, drawn from different periods of history. These are all invariably in imported South Indian styles. Due to its rarity and its exceptional and largely imported character this third constructional method occupies only a subsidiary position in the history of Sri Lankan building.

Despite the dominant position that timber construction occupies in Sri Lanka's architecture, very little attention has been paid to it in historical studies so far. The literature on the subject does not extend much beyond two pioneering essays by Coomaraswamy and Lewis²,

1. Paranavitane, S., "Gedige", *Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol. XXXVI, (Colombo), 1945, pp. 126 - 129.
2. Coomaraswamy, A. K., *Mediaeval Sinhalese Art*, (1st ed. 1908), 2nd ed., New York, 1956 (Chap. V: "Architecture"; Chap. 41: "Woodwork"); Lewis, J. P., "Kandyan Architecture" in Cave, H. W., *The Book of Ceylon*, London, 1908, pp. 325 - 377.

an article by the present author³, and some recent studies.⁴ The present paper sets out to explore some aspects of the wooden architecture of the country.

We still have in Sri Lanka a number of historical buildings of timber construction, in a fair state of preservation. These belong mostly to the Kandy Period (17th - 19th century), although some at least have been established on much earlier foundations. They consist of Buddhist shrines, devales, preaching halls, audience halls, residences, simple dwellings, resting houses, granaries and bridges. Some are of elaborate construction, while most of them are fairly simple structures displaying excellent carpentry work and wood carving. The masonry work is usually limited to a stone plinth and wattle-and-daub screen walls enclosing some parts of a building. Short stone pillars, or piles, are sometimes used to elevate the building above the level of the plinth or the ground. The roofs are invariably tiled in all but the simplest structures and have pottery finials and ornamental drip tiles at the roof edge.

The most basic building type that we encounter everywhere in both rural and urban areas is the hut or shed of timber, thatch and mud construction. Its most developed form is the village house. This has a raised platform of earth with timber posts planted on the platform and a thatched roof on a framework of timber. The walls are usually of wattle-and-daub. In simpler versions both thatched screen walls and wall-less open structures can be seen. The basic groundplan is rectangular with one or two rooms and an open veranda. More elaborate versions had rooms built around an open central courtyard. Palaces and manorial buildings extended this basic architectural pattern and constructional method, using similar or more expensive materials. The timber framework of the village house displays both rudimentary and developed constructional methods, extending from bamboos, tree trunks and branches to dressed and jointed timbers. The doors and relatively small windows are also of purely wooden construction with strong timber window bars set deep into the frame.

3. Karunaratne, L. K., "Architecture in Wood", *Ancient Ceylon*, No. 1, Colombo, 1971, pp. 121 - 126.

4. E.g. Godakumbura, C. E., *Sinhalese Architecture* (Arts of Ceylon — 3), Colombo, 1963, pp. 16 - 17, 24 - 26; Godakumbura, C. E., *Medawala Vihara Frescoes*, (Art Series, No. 3), Colombo, (1964), pp. 12 - 14; Bandaranayake, S., *Sinhalese Monastic Architecture*, Leiden, 1974, pp. 13 - 16, 362 ff.; Bandaranayake, S., "Sri Lanka and Monsoon Asia: Patterns of Local and Regional Architectural Development and the Problem of the Traditional Sri Lankan Roof", *Senarat Paranavitana Commemoration Volume* (forthcoming).

The village house has in its compound a grain store or *bissa*. This is usually a mud and reed structure placed on stout beams and posts. It has a conical roof of timber rafters radiating from a central plate or boss and is covered with straw or palm leaf thatch. More elaborate storage bins, as at the Ambakka devale, consist of two large square containers made by placing four crossing beams over stone pillars, with wattle-and-daub walls and a tiled roof.

Whilst not much attention to decorative detail is seen in a village house, public buildings such as even the simplest resting halls display a sophisticated carpentry and elaborate ornamental carvings. The resting halls or *ambalamas* at Panavitiya,⁵ Mangalagama⁶ and Ambakka⁷ have wooden pillars, beams and rafters and a tiled roof. The simplest method employed involved four crossing beams placed on large, round boulders placed at the four corners. The pillars were set in these foundation beams. In turn, these pillars supported the beams and rafters of the roof. The rafters radiate from a plate attached to a short ridge beam. The pillars, roof beams and posts were elaborately carved with decorative motifs and scenes, while the underside of the rafters were deeply notched and shaped to form a continuous frill-like effect. The use of the foundation cross beams placed on boulders served more than one purpose. It lifted the timbers of the building above ground level, affording protection from damp and termites and at the same time provided seating facilities and also ventilation.

The shrine room on stone piles of varying heights—known in Sinhalese architectural terminology as a *tampita viharage*—is another type of building frequently met with in the architecture of the Kandy Period. The most basic version of this type of building is represented by the example at Madavala.⁸ Here, four cross beams and a wooden floor are placed over the stone pillars. On this raised platform is erected a small central shrine room enclosed by wattle-and-daub walls. A veranda runs all round, with a railing of turned wooden balusters on the outside edge. A wooden staircase leads up to the platform and a single, heavily carved doorway forms the only entrance to the shrine room. The roof of this type of structure is invariably of the two-angled sloping type normally referred to as the Kandyan roof. It is covered with flat tiles laid to a pattern.

5. *Administration Report of the Archaeological Commissioner for 1960 - 61*, Colombo 1962, p. 31, Plan V; see also, Karunaratne, L. K., op. cit.

6. Coomaraswamy, A. K., op. cit., p. 130.

7. *Administration Report of the Archaeological Commissioner for 1948*, pp. 7 - 8.

8. Godakumbura, C. E., op. cit. (1964), pp. 12 - 14.

An oblong hall for drumming and other rituals and known as a *digge* is a feature of a *devale*, which is a shrine or temple dedicated to theistic religious traditions. Sometimes it is closely associated with or exists within a Buddhist context. The roof of such a *digge* is of simple pitched construction. The *digge* can be open, walled or half-walled. The woodwork of such buildings is of very careful and detailed construction and ornately carved. The most elaborate example of such a *digge* is that at Ambakka devale.⁹ This has a series of carved wooden pillars arranged in groups of four and placed in rows on either side of the long hall. Above these pillars the crossing beams, pillar brackets and rafters are all carved. At the hipped, front end of the roof 26 rafters meet at a single giant pin or boss. This pin, which is also in effect a kind of king post, is itself so elaborately carved and the end that hangs below the rafters so intricately finished that it forms a dramatic decorative element. As the hall is an open, columniated structure without any walls, this structural and ornamental wood work forms an integral part of the architectural style of this monument. At the end of the hall is the main shrine of the deity. This is often a multi-storied structure with a number of roofs at various levels, elevated balconies and a central, high pitched roof surmounted by a pinnacle.

The *digge* clearly preserves an architectural type—the large, open, columniated hall or pavilion—which must have served a number of different uses in different contexts. One of the best examples of a secular version of such a hall is the *Magulmaduva* or Royal Audience Hall at Kandy.¹⁰ This is very similar to the *digge* at Ambakka, but being an entirely freestanding building not attached to any other structure, it represents a pure version of this architectural type. This audience hall was begun in the late 18th century and completed in the early decades of the 19th. Similar structures built subsequently include the “Headmen’s Lodge” at Kandy, a rest hall for witnesses at the Matale law courts, a memorial dispensary at Kegalle and the old market at Nupe, Matara.

The most ambitious architectural conceptions of the Kandy Period are the multi-storied Buddhist shrines and towering superstructures of the devales. These are all timber frame constructions, but with substantial sections enclosed by wattle-and-daub or masonry walls. The best known example is the Temple of the Tooth in Kandy, which has been studied

9. *Administration Report of the Archaeological Commissioner for 1948*, pp. 7 - 8.

10. Lewis, J. P., op. cit., p. 326.

Coomaraswamy, A. K., op. cit., p. 132

and described in some detail in a monograph¹¹. Basically, it consists of a two-storied central shrine, erected on a stone plinth. The groundplan is oblong, with a division on each floor into vestibules and inner chambers. The wooden elements such as the pillars, brackets, doorways, beams, etc. are all intricately carved. Many of them are also brightly painted with decorative designs and motifs, as are the panels of the walls. A balustraded, elevated walk runs around the upper storey, which contains the innermost shrine chamber of the Tooth Relic. The tiled roof is double-pitched and hipped and has ornamental tasselled drip-tiles along its outer edges. The shrine stands in a rectangular, open courtyard and is surrounded on all four sides by a continuous range of buildings in a similar architectural style. In its present form, this outer range represents a modified reconstruction of recent date, but photographs taken before the 1940s show the ancient structures.

Other examples are the shrines at Budumuttava,¹² Dambadeniya,¹³ and Attanagalla. The devales with towered structures above their shrine rooms are the Samandevale at Ratnapura and the Kataragama devale at Badulla.

Some of the most impressive architectural monuments of the Kandy Period and earlier are wholly masonry buildings which have subsequently had timbered and tiled roofs added to them. These include the Lankatilaka¹⁴ and Galaladeniya¹⁵ temples near Kandy, and the Adahanamaluva Gedige in Kandy itself.¹⁶ A study of timber architecture must take into account the elaborately constructed roofs of these buildings. The addition of these roofs in the indigenous timber style are an expression of the unsuitability of wholly masonry construction to local climatic conditions. At the same time, they also demonstrate the tendency in Sri Lankan architecture to combine masonry construction and timber methods, with the timbered roof as the dominant stylistic feature.

Finally, a rare survival of timber architectural engineering is the wooden bridge at Bogoda.¹⁷ Whole untrimmed tree trunks form the

-
11. Hocart, A. M., *The Temple of the Tooth in Kandy*, (Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of Ceylon, Vol. IV), London, 1931, (see esp. plans facing p. 10).
 12. Hocart, A. M. (ed.), *ibid.* plans facing p. 40
 13. *Idem.*
 14. Hocart, A. M. (ed.), *Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of Ceylon*, Vol. II, Colombo, 1926, pp. 18 - 20
 15. *Report of the Archaeological Survey of Ceylon for 1953*, Colombo, 1954, pp. 19-20,
 16. Mudiyanse, N., *The Art and Architecture of the Gampola Period (1341 - 1415 A.D.)*. Colombo, (n.d.), pp. 60 - 61.
 17. *Administration Report of the Archaeological Commissioner for 1963 - 64*, Colombo, 1965, p. 75, pl. XIII.

basis of this structure. On these are laid a timber deck, posts and balustrade and a tiled roof. This gives this bridge the same character that one sees in all the timber buildings of the period.

The buildings described above and illustrated in the accompanying figures are only a few selected examples of the surviving architecture of the Kandy Period. This account can be supplemented by reference to the articles by Coomaraswamy and Lewis mentioned earlier. A study of these buildings shows that timber construction provides the dominant style and character of this architecture. The major constructional methods, the elaborate detailing of the woodwork and the absence or secondary role of the masonry sections of a building reveals the carpenter rather than the mason as the master builder in a tradition which has been developed and perfected over long generations. This pre-eminence of carpenter's work may not have been the case in all the earlier historical periods, although, as we shall discuss later, the evidence of wooden construction is available through the centuries. In certain epochs of Sri Lankan history—such as Sigiriya in the 5th century, the last few centuries at Anuradhapura and the Polonnaruwa Period, the mason and the carpenter, the sculptor and the woodcarver must have enjoyed positions of equal importance. However, as Bandaranayake has argued, the *style* must have remained a dominantly timber one in all epochs.¹⁸ In the Kandy Period, economic factors and the dependence on local rather than central patronage must have contributed substantially to the return to the basic architectural style of the country in its "purest" form. Stone-carving, however, is not absent in this period, as witnessed by a number of examples of excellent workmanship in this medium. An interesting example of stone pillars reproducing exactly the decorative elements characteristic of contemporary wood work can be seen in the resting hall at Ambakka¹⁹.

The most important structural aspect of this architecture is its timber framework, which has three constituent elements: columns and brackets; beams and posts; rafters. The columns were set in a raised masonry platform or in simple stone column bases placed in an earthen platform with masonry revetments. They were arranged systematically through the entire building, in rows and in symmetrical clusters, forming both large open spaces or naves and narrower aisles and corridors. The internal organisation of space and the location of screen walls was co-ordinated with the arrangement of the columniation. Where the columns

18. Ban Iaranayake, S., op. cit. (forthcoming).

19. *Administration Report of the Archaeological Commissioner for 1948*, pp. 7 - 8.

were free-standing they were used for spatial demarcation and for dramatic decorative effects. Thus, the interruption of the spatial area of a hall, room or shrine-chamber by rows of columns was a positive, not a negative factor.

This "free-ranging" location of the columns had important structural implications. In the first instance, it eliminated the necessity for spanning large spaces. It distributed the load of a fairly heavy superstructure over the entire area of the building and over a large number of units. Thus, these units—i.e. the columns—could themselves be fairly small and light, and being carved and/or painted, they would create an effect which was not only highly decorative but which allowed for a play of light and shade, ventilation and complex effects of visual space. The weakness or decay of one unit had very little effect on the structure as a whole and it could easily be removed and replaced. Any degree of horizontal and, to a certain extent, vertical extension of a building was possible by a simple process of addition. The outward thrust of the roof and especially its changing pitch was well supported by the columniation. The point of angular intersection where the change of pitch took place was always located over a row of columns. In general, we may describe the column system as the creation of a complex and sophisticated structural entity by the combination of a large number of small and simple units—a theoretical lesson of great relevance to modern Sri Lankan architecture.

The columns were tied together by a cross-beam framework of similar character. This beam frame consisted of a fairly large number of horizontal members and upright posts firmly connected to and coordinated with the basic columniation. Once again, this permitted any degree of horizontal extension and a certain amount of vertical extension. The vertical extension was achieved by fixing horizontal beams and uprights on several levels above that of the basic tie beams. This created, in effect, one or more box-like skeletal frameworks, the one superimposed above or articulated with the other. The weight of this strong wooden skeleton and of the roofs, ceilings, walls and floors it supported were distributed over the rows and clusters of columns below. The strength of the box-like framework absorbed lateral stresses and thrust and translated it into vertical load.

The ridge beam was supported by a king post. This post was erected on a collar beam, or on the lower cross beam and supported midway by a collar beam. The sharply inclined pitch of the uppermost roof obviated the necessity for the triangulated truss construction which

forms the basis of many European timber structural methods. The sharp pitch of the upper roof had a multiple effect. Externally, it brought about dramatic increase in height and gave the architecture a distinctive stylistic character. Internally, it created a dark, insulating air trap.

The columns have elaborate brackets or capitals which allow the beams to rest on them. These are usually formed of two crossing pieces of wood, often elaborately carved and decorated. These brackets protrude a foot or so outside the pillar, while the wall plates above the outer rows of pillars also extend another foot or so. This permits a wide eaves overhang. Where a much wider overhang is required or where there is the necessity for a projecting balcony, a series of cantilevered projecting beams are placed one above the other, achieving thereby a fairly wide projection beyond the line of columns.

The skeletal framework of columns, beams and posts, was further consolidated by the rafters which were fairly closely spaced and which knitted posts and beams together. The rafters were deeply notched and elegantly carved. This had the dual effect of reducing their weight without decreasing their strength and of producing highly decorative effects below the roof, particularly under the projecting eaves. Radiating rafters were used in hipped or circular roofs, as described earlier. Above and across the rafters were laid narrow wooden struts. It was from these that the tiles were hung or pinned.

The surfaces of these wooden members, together with doorways, windows, ceiling boards and wall panels, provided ample scope for carved and painted decoration. As Coomaraswamy has observed, "It is.....natural that much of the best Kandyan woodwork should be architectural, and that it should derive a special charm from its architectural adaptation..... The constant richness and variety of carving, and its close relation to the nature of the material are always pleasing; and we never find it so disposed as to interfere with the utility of beams or frames; it appears almost as if it were an essential and necessary part of the constructional work".²⁰

The wooden columns are undoubtedly the most ornamented elements and Coomaraswamy's description of them is comprehensive; "The wooden pillar is the constructional element most in evidence. In the simplest form the pillar is slightly chamfered, except at the two ends, which remain rectangular in section; it may taper slightly, or remain of one diameter throughout. In the majority of cases, however,

20. Coomaraswamy, A. K., op. cit., p. 129.

the elementary form is more greatly modified, becoming an octagonal shaft with rectangular base and capital, the continuity of the octagonal part being broken by a brief return to the plain section, forming a central cube. The latter especially is carved with a great variety of design, lions, *gaja-simbayo*, *hamsayo*, dancers, etc.; the octagonal facets may also be carved, with *bo*-leaf forms or their derivatives; the capital with garlands of pearls; and the base with horizontal stepped incisions, a most characteristic feature. The points of transition from rectangular or octagonal section are softened by knops in the form of a conventional cobra's hood or scroll of *liya pata* ornament. A considerable variety of turned wooden pillars is also met with, but less often than the thirmed; or very rarely a pillar is part turned, part square".²¹

Much of the timber used in the buildings was not sawn but adze-hewn out of large tree trunks also finished with the adze. Many of the timber members used were large and heavy. The joinery was varied. The simplest joint was the tenon and mortise for posts and pillar capitals. Crossing beams or brackets were halved by deep notches and fitted smoothly together. When heavy beams had to be joined together a staggered or scarf joint was used, fixed firmly with a single wooden pin. Wooden pins were what was normally used in all forms of fixing or joining, metal being very rarely used. The most elaborate of these pins was the wooden rod which passed through the rafters just beneath the eaves, giving added firmness to the heavy rafters.

The foregoing description outlines the main features of timber construction in the architecture of the Kandy Period. There can be little doubt that these structures represent the latest developments of a building tradition that goes back to Anuradhapura and Polonnaruva times. The archaeological evidence for tiled and pitched roofs during the Anuradhapura Period has been summarised.²² There is no doubt that wooden superstructures stood above the stone pillars and masonry walls of Anuradhapura and Polonnaruva. Ample evidence for the combination of brick and stone masonry with timber construction is available in the monuments of the Kandy Period. More specifically, the use of timber beams and brackets over stone columns is met with in several instances, the most eloquent being, perhaps, the remains of the *ambalama* at Mangalagama. This has now been restored by the Archaeological Department, but when it was first noticed only the stone pillars and vestigial remains of wooden beams and brackets remained.

21. Coomaraswamy, A. K., op. cit. p. 129.

22. Bandaranayake S. op. cit, 1974, pp. 362-378.

There are several instances from much earlier periods in which timber construction is imitated in brick and stone. The Bodhi-Tree temple at Nillakgama, which has been firmly dated in the 8th/9th century, has clear evidence of simulated rafter ends under the coping of its inner sanctum. These rafters show very much the same cut-away scroll ends as the rafters of the Kandy Period. At royal baths in the pleasure gardens at Anuradhapura we see a timber ceiling and cross beams imitated in the stone ceiling of the bath house. The narrow ceiling planks are placed in alternative overlaps. At Polonnaruva, the windows of an image-house at the Rankotvehera, clearly reproduce bars and crossbars of wooden construction, while the tenon and mortise joints of most stone pillar capitals in the ancient cities preserve wooden jointing methods still used in Kandy Period structures. At the Kalavava there are still massive stone pillars near the spill, which are joined by means of a halved tenon and mortise joint so typical of woodwork. It is held together by a stone collar. A somewhat different type of tenon and mortise jointing is found extensively at the Kuttampokuna in Anuradhapura, particularly in the arrangement of the coping stones. Brick masonry as well as stonework often display a type of projecting dentil decoration which resembles the chamfered ends of wooden beams. This is found as early as Sigiriya. All these are examples of timber structural features reproduced in masonry. Elsewhere one finds evidence for the direct use of timber elements. At sites which involve building on or against boulders and rock-faces—such as Sigiriya, Aukana, Buduruvagala, Sasseruva, the Galvihara in Polonnaruva, etc.—we still find square holes cut in the rock-face for the wooden beams and posts of timber frame structures. Elsewhere, spurstones and column bases with mortise holes cut in them are quite common. Quite a few buildings which are important in the history of ancient Sri Lankan architecture—such as the ‘asanaghara’ and the elliptical refectory at Pulukunavi—are only known from the outlines formed by their spurstones, the structures themselves being entirely of wooden construction. In three major 12th century monuments—the palaces at Panduvasnuvara and Polonnaruva and the Lanka-tilaka temple, Polonnaruva—we have clear indications of the use of wooden columns and beams in structures which are substantially of brick masonry. In the two palaces, and especially at Panduvasnuvara, the deep, square cavities in the masonry where very large wooden columns once stood are still very clear, while at other points stone columns, bases and spurstones are placed in rows in columniated halls and courtyards and set in brick masonry parapets. The shadows of a once rich timber constructional tradition are present at all these ancient sites.

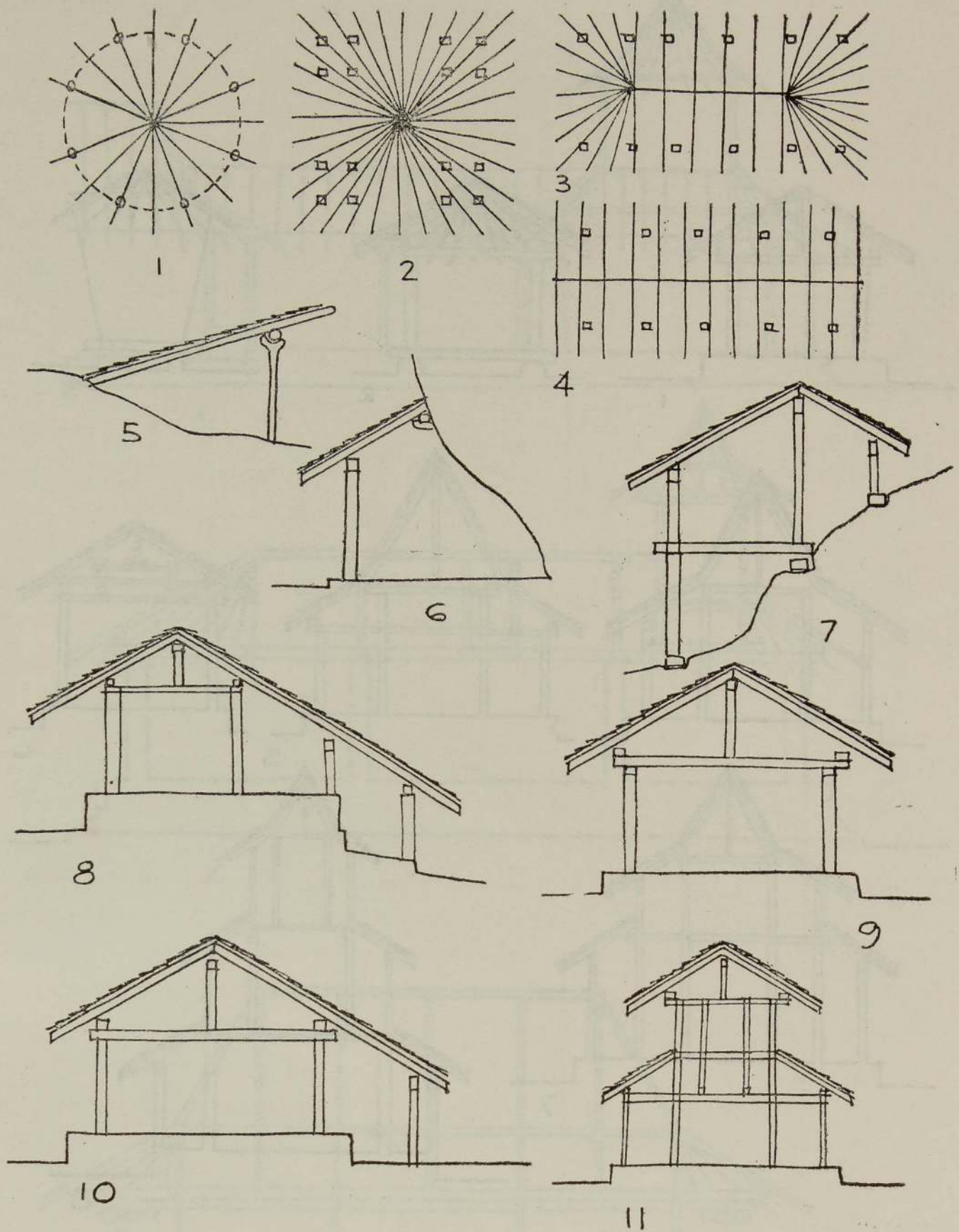


PLATE 1

1. Roof plan of circular bissa
2. Roof plan of square ambalama
3. Roof plan of rectangular hall
4. Roof plan of rectangular hipped roof
5. Lean-to roof over threshing floor
6. Lean-to roof of cave temple
7. Building on steep hillside
8. Padeniya Vihara library
9. Ambalama
10. Temple roof with verandah
11. Two storeyed devale

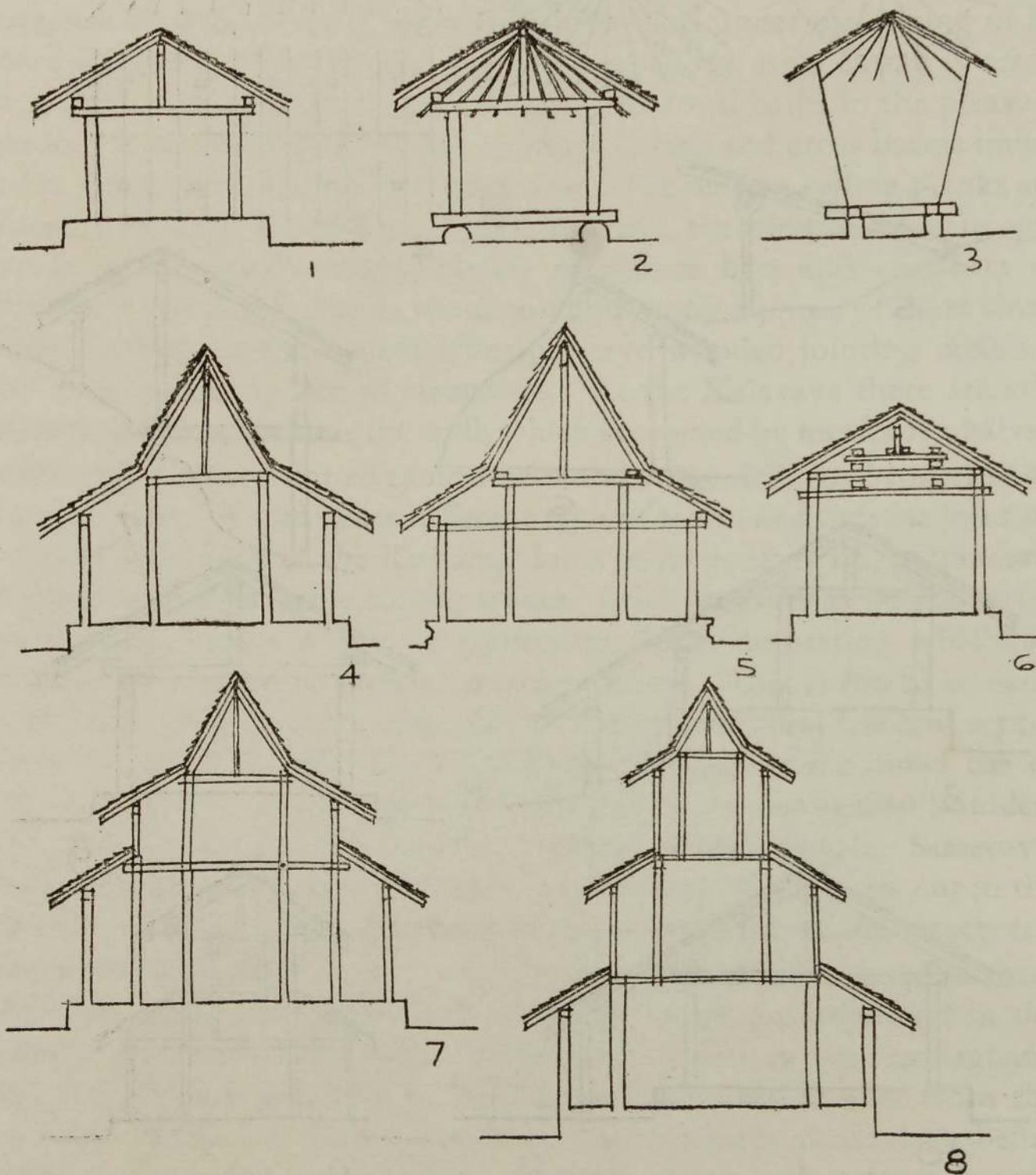
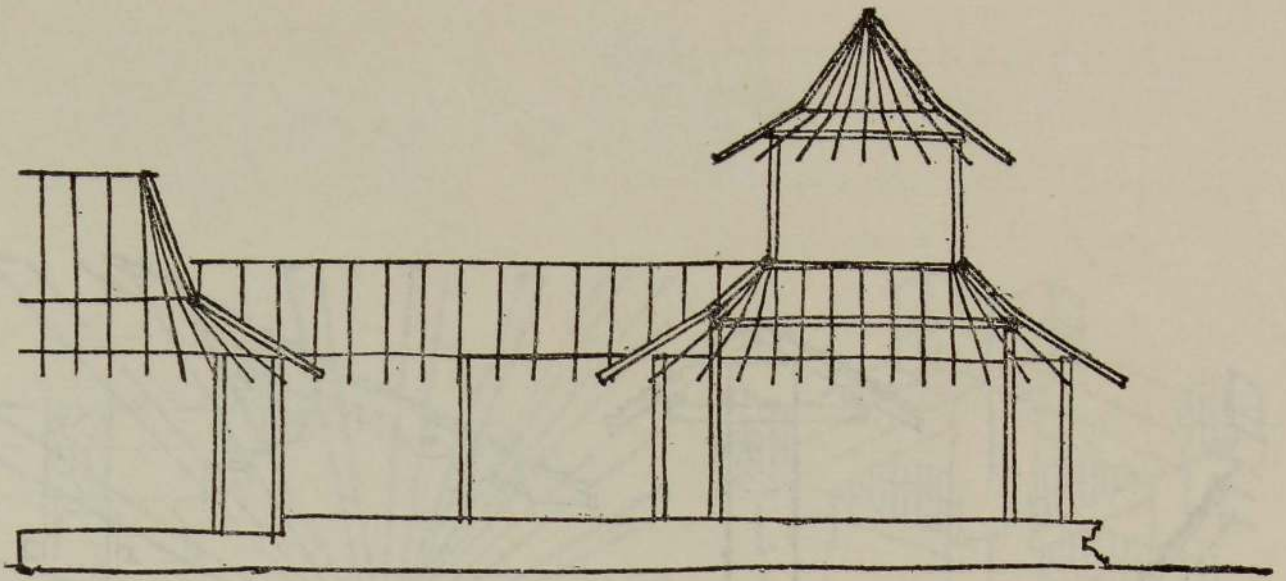
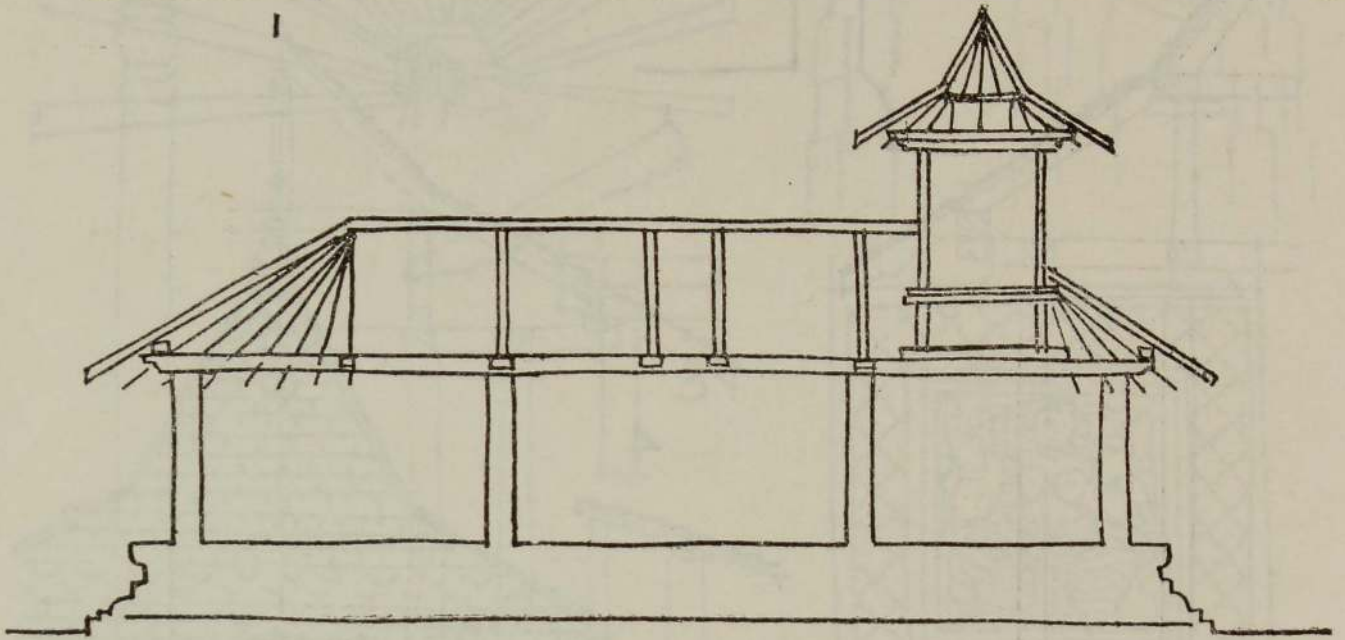


PLATE 2

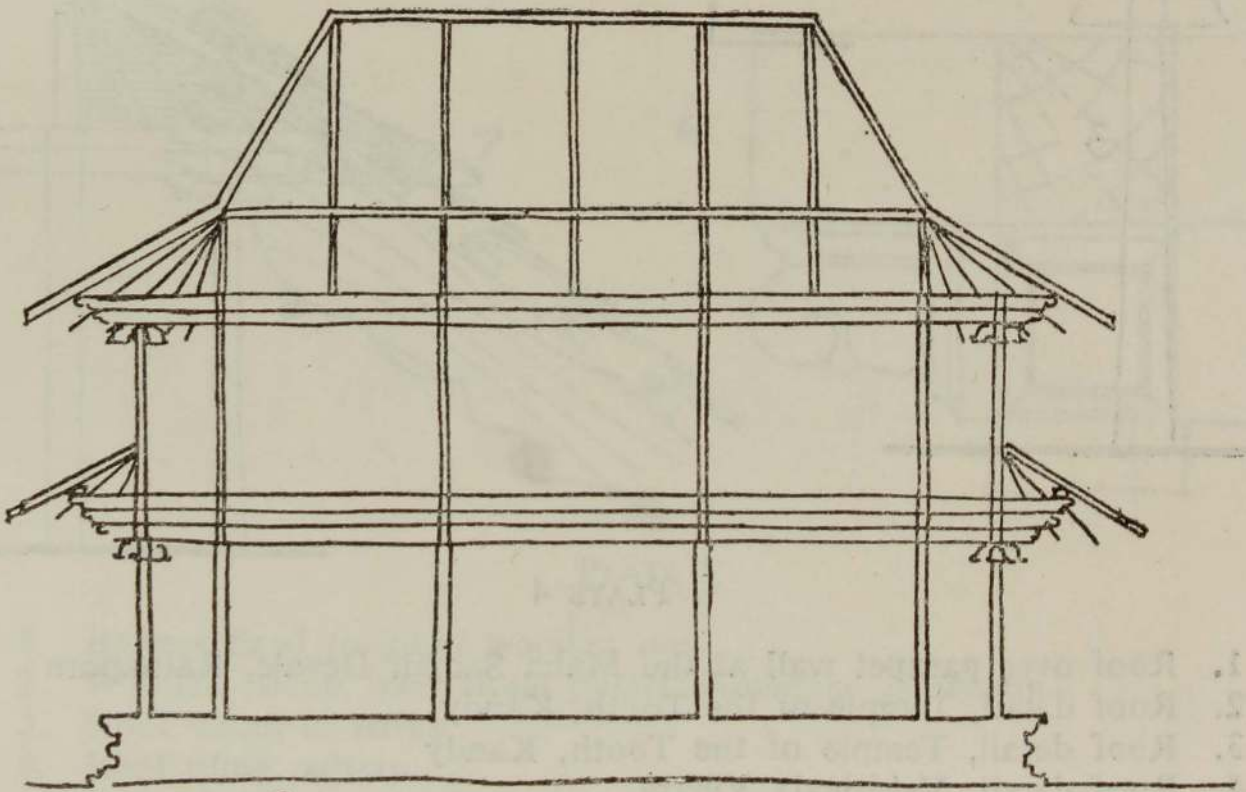
1. 2. Ambalama
3. Bissa
4. Building with "two-slope" roof
5. Building with "two-slope" roof
6. Roof section with beams, Maha Saman Devale, Ratnapura
7. Two-storeyed shrine
8. Three-storeyed shrine



1



2



3

PLATE 3

1. Kataragama Devale, Badulla
2. Dodanvala Devale
3. Temple of the Tooth, Kandy

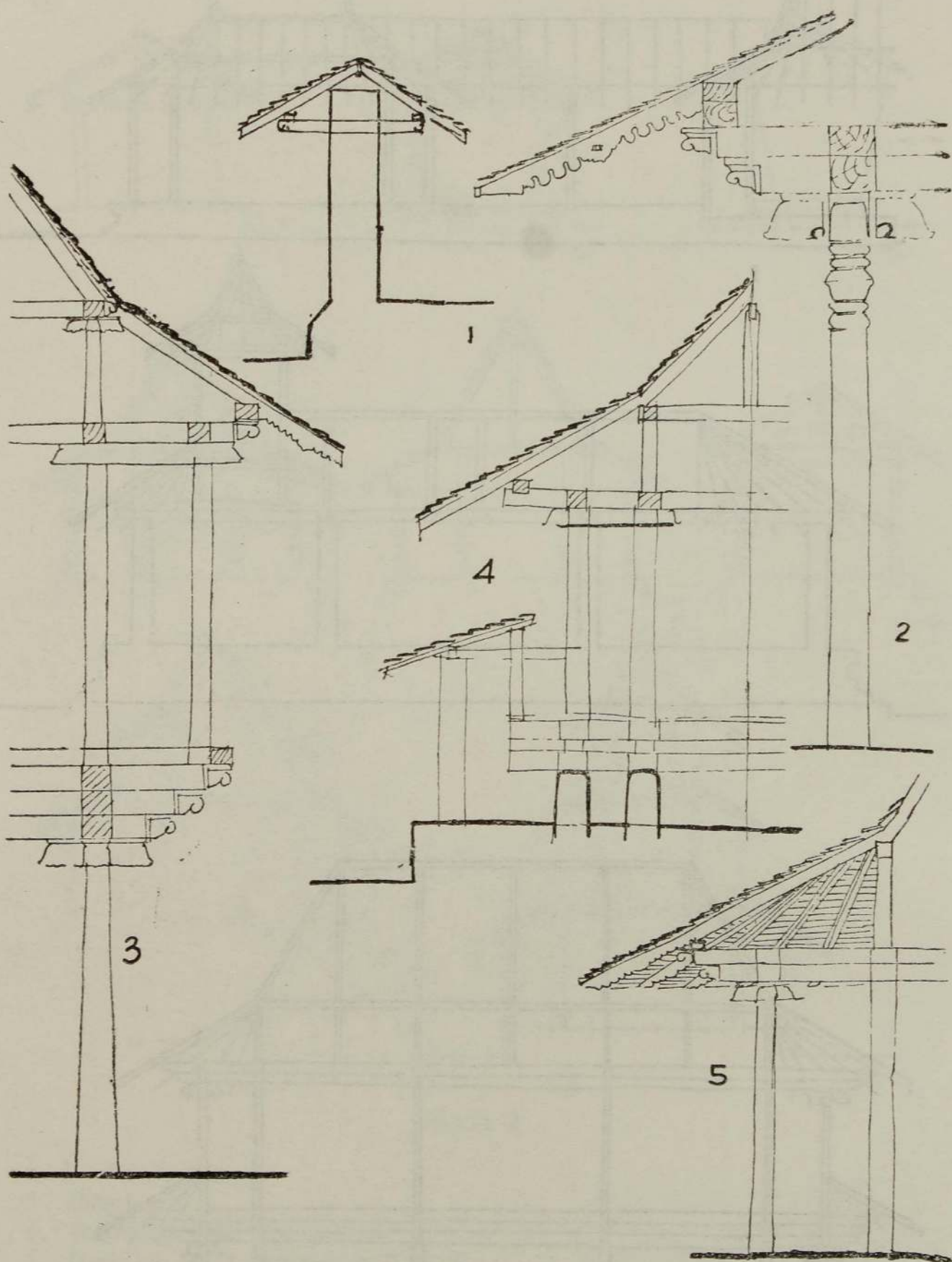


PLATE 4

1. Roof over parapet wall at the Maha Saman Devale, Ratnapura
2. Roof detail, Temple of the Tooth, Kandy
3. Roof detail, Temple of the Tooth, Kandy
4. Roof detail, Vakirigala Vihara
5. Roof detail, Temple of the Tooth, Kandy

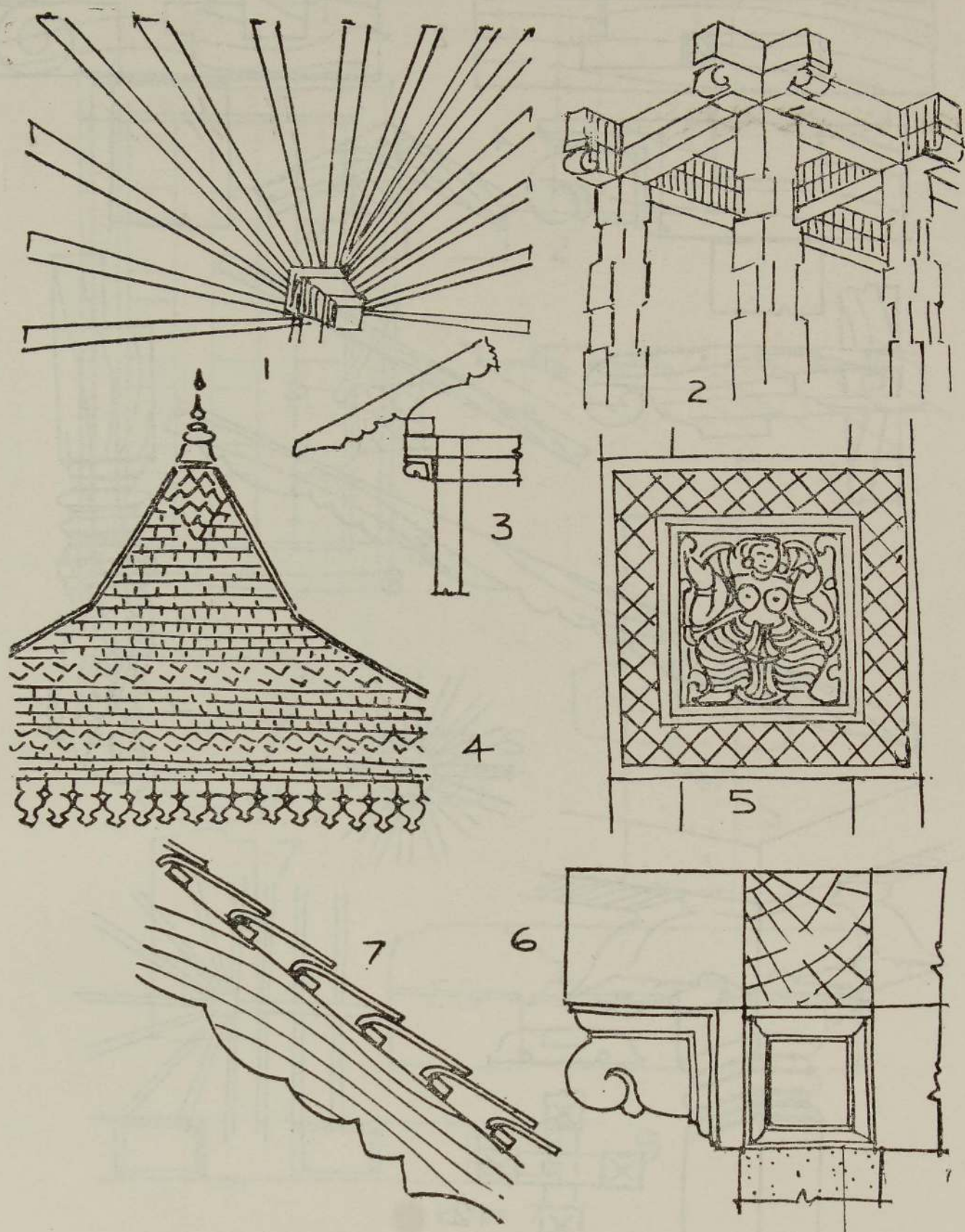


PLATE 5

1. Rafters fixed to giant wooden pin
2. Wooden beams over stone pillars, Ambakke Ambalama
3. Roof detail at eaves
4. Roof tiling pattern
5. Pillar detail, intermediate panel
6. Beam end (Sulipatkada)
7. Tiles and battens

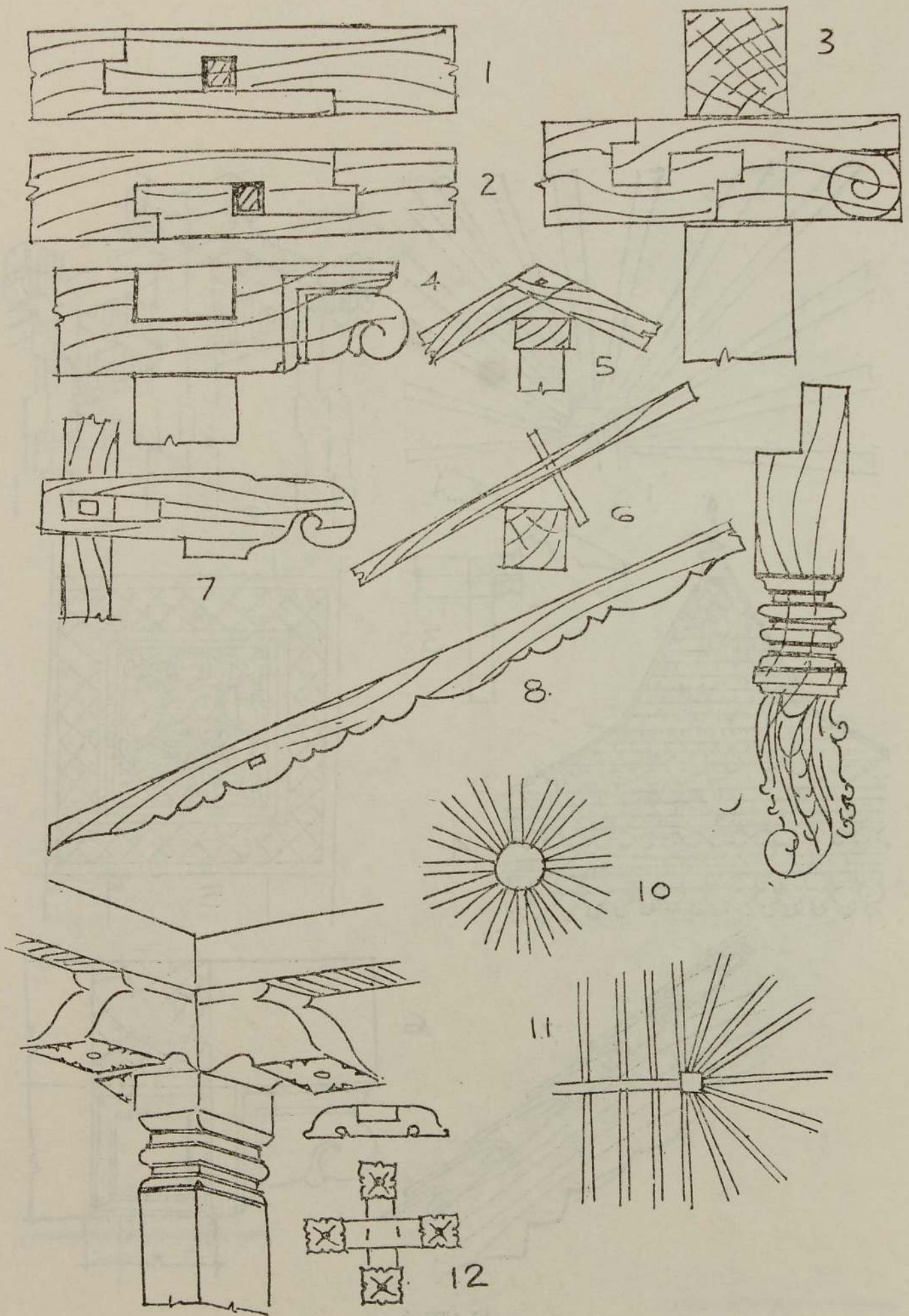


PLATE 6

1. 2. Beam joints, Mangalagama Ambalama
3. Beam end joint, Dorabavila Vihara
4. Beam end
5. Ridge detail, Padeniya Vihara
6. Rafter and wooden pin, Padeniya Vihara
7. Wooden door bolt, Padeniya Vihara
8. Rafter detail, Panavitiya Ambalama
9. Giant wooden king-post, Ambakke Devale
10. Roof detail, rafters fixed to centre pin
11. Roof detail, rafter fixed to end pin
12. Detail of wooden pillar capital (Pa-kada)

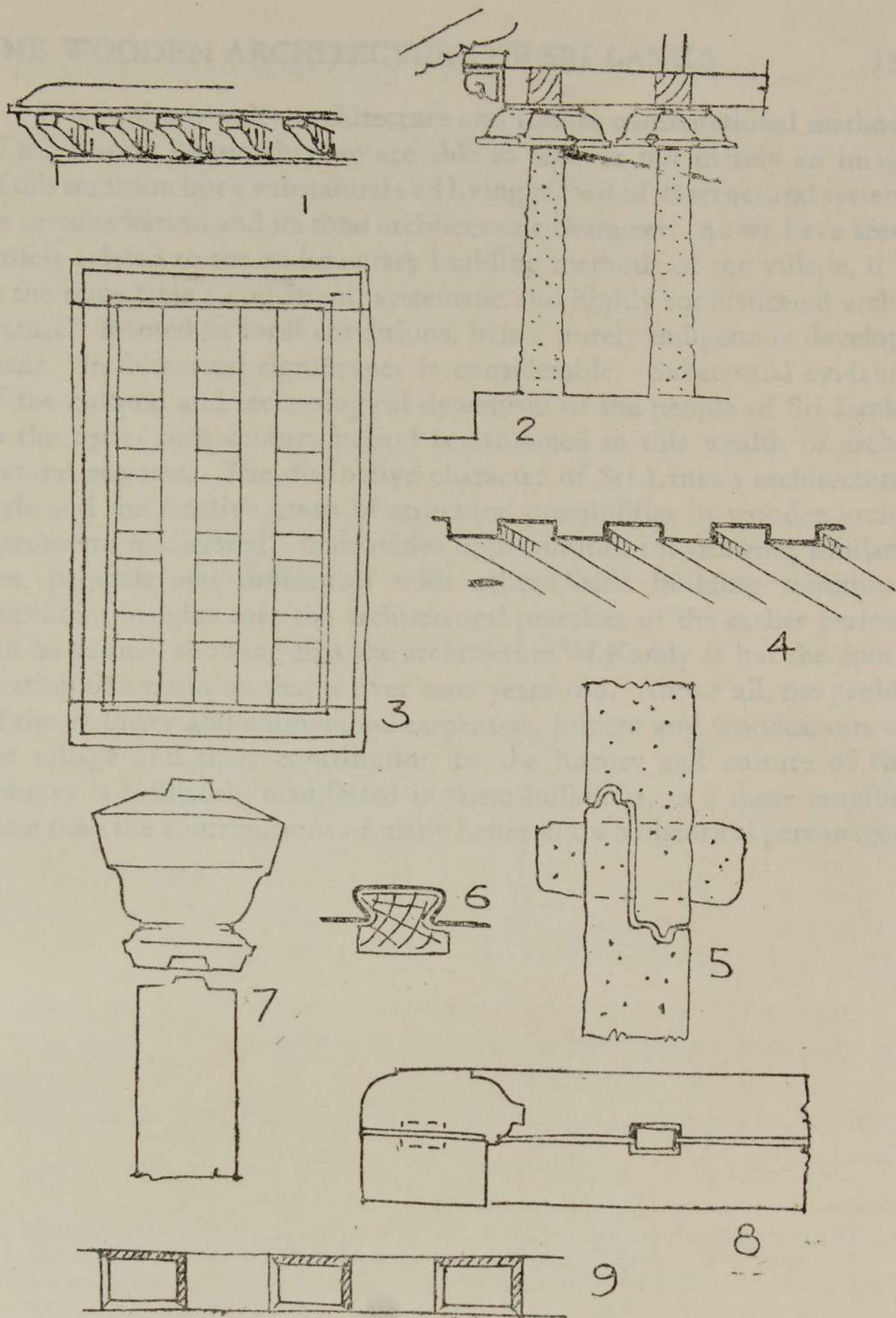
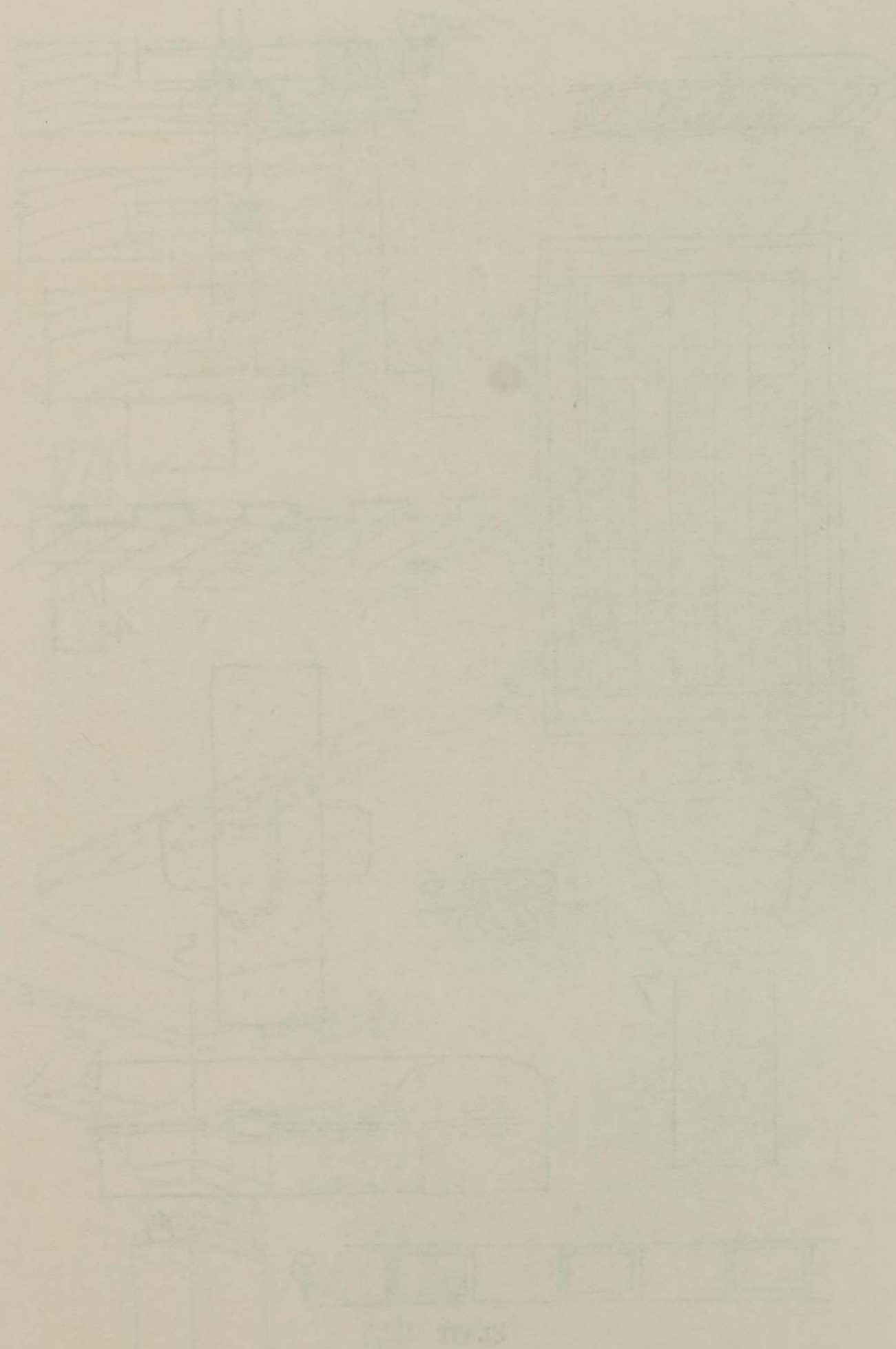


PLATE 7

1. Stone "beam end" decoration, Nillakgama Bodhighara
2. Stone pillars and wooden capitals, Mangalagama Ambalama
3. Stone window showing cross-bars, Rankot Vehera, Polonnaruva
4. Stone ceiling simulating wooden beams, Magul Uyana, Anuradhapura
5. Stone pillar with joint and collar, Kalavava
6. Dove-tail detail, Sigiriya
7. Stone pillar capital, Anuradhapura
8. Stone coping, Kuttam Pokuna, Anuradhapura
9. Beam ends simulated in brick-work decoration, Sigiriya



1. Gear frame and housing
2. Gear shaft and wheel
3. Gear wheel
4. Gear shaft
5. Gear wheel
6. Gear shaft
7. Gear wheel
8. Gear shaft
9. Gear wheel
10. Gear shaft

It is in the wooden architecture and timber constructional methods of the Kandy Period that we are able to recover not merely an image of this tradition but a substantial and living record of its structural system, its ornamentation and its total architectonic character. As we have seen, closely related to the rudimentary building methods of the village, it is at the same time a consistent, systematic and highly sophisticated architecture. Rooted in local conditions, it is a purely indigenous development. Its historical significance is considerable. Substantial evidence of the cultural and technological dynamism of the people of Sri Lanka in the 17th - 19th century period is contained in this wealth of architectural remains. The distinctive character of Sri Lankan architectural style and the creative grasp of structural possibilities in wooden architecture are manifested. It provides opportunities for drawing similarities, parallels and differences with other Asian building traditions. Important insights into the architectural practices of the earlier periods can be gained, showing that the architecture of Kandy is but the continuation of a tradition that is over 2000 years old. Above all, the genius of the ordinary and anonymous carpenters, joiners and woodcarvers of the village and their contribution to the history and culture of the country is brilliantly manifested in these buildings, in a more tangible form than the contributions of many better known historical personages.

It is in the wooden architecture and timber constructional methods of the Kandy Period that we are able to recover not merely an image of this tradition but a substantial and living record of its structural system, its ornamentation and its total architectural character. As we have seen, closely related to the rudimentary building methods of the village, it is at the same time a consistent, systematic and highly sophisticated architecture. Rooted in local conditions, it is a purely indigenous development. Its historical significance is considerable. Substantial evidence of the cultural and technological dynamism of the people of Sri Lanka in the 15th-16th century period is contained in the wealth of architectural technical remains. The distinctive character of Sri Lankan architectural

TWO SINHALA PRINCES AT THE COURT OF LISBON IN PORTUGAL

M. H. GOONATILLEKA

Although the advent of the Portuguese to Sri Lanka is made much of by historians, there are certain areas of historical interest which are relatively unexplored. Very little, for instance, is said by the local historians about the activities of the Sinhala princes who were unable to endure the political fireball at the Sinhala court and found easy relief by beseeching asylum either at the monasteries of the Franciscan Friars in Goa or at the Court of El-Reys in Portugal.

At a time when the Portuguese invaders of the Island were managing to mix up with the Sinhala population and when a process of aculturation was slowly taking place it appears to be an irony of fate that members of the ruling families of the Island were looking for asylum elsewhere.¹

1. The Portuguese historian Paulo de Trindade refers to several Portuguese militiamen who became domiciled in distant places down South. One such was Senhor Joao Cardoso de Pina, the Capitao-Mor (Captain Major) and Dissawa of the Portuguese territories in Matara. He occupied the position of the First Citizen (Senhor da aldeia) of Kotawata. (Kottewatte) Cotavata, according to Trindade is a village situated eastwards of Matara, one and a half leagues up the stream. (*Conquista Espiritual do Oriente*. Centro de Estudos Historicos Ultramarinos Lisboa, Portugal. MCMLXVII. Tomo III. Capitulo 27. Folio 812). This particular village came under the ecclesiastical jurisdiction of the parish of Mahature headed by a popular Franciscan Friar Antonio Peixoto. This priest had been staying there for almost 20 years and had studied the language of the people so well (mui douto na lingua indigena) that he composed Sinhala plays based on Christian themes and staged them as all-night performances. (ibid. Capitulo 28. Folio 821).

The attention of the reader is focussed here on two of them—Don Joao (pronounced Don Juvan) and Don Filipe, believed to be two cousins who were escorted out of the Island by the Franciscan missionaries in the seventeenth century. Firstly, their identities and the political circumstances which prompted them to leave the Island are dealt with in this paper. Secondly, their activities in Portugal are discussed.

D. Joao and D. Filipe happen to be the names these two princes adopted at their baptism. The appellations, according to the style of the day, were those of the Kings of Portugal.

D. Joao is identified as the son of D. Filipe Yamasinghe Bandara.² There appears to be some confusion in the minds of certain Portuguese historians regarding the identity of D. Joao's mother. Says Sousa Viterbo: "(D. Joao) took refuge along with his mother, D. Catarina".³ If one is disposed to believe this statement, D. Filipe Yamasinghe Bandara becomes Dona Catarina's husband. But on the evidence of Paul E. Pieris Dona Catarina was an infant princess "only one year old", in 1582, the year when Karalliyadde Bandara met with his death.⁴ And D. Joao's baptism dates prior to 1587.⁵ One cannot however, agree with Prof. Tikiri Abeyasinghe when he says that, during the Battle of Danture which took place on October 6th, 1594, Dona Catarina was "10 or 12 years old",⁶ for we have on his own evidence that Dona Catarina was alive in 1582.⁷ Obviously she could not have been 10 years old in 1594.

We have on the evidence of Pe. Paulo de Trindade⁸ that D. Joao was only 13 years old when he ascended the throne on the death of his father Yamasinghe Bandara in 1591.⁹ In the circumstances Viterbo's statement appears to be a biological impossibility. It has however to be noted that names of dynasties and the dates of ascension to the throne during this period seem confused. Trindade records that Vimaladharmasuriya married Dona Catarina in 1594.¹⁰ Other historians like Fernando

-
2. Trindade, Frei Paulo de—*Conquista Espiritual de Oriente*. III. pp. 70-72.
 3. Viterbo, Sousa—*Relacoes de Portugal com alguns potentados Africanose Asiaticos* in *Archivo Historicos Portugues*. II. Lisboa. 1904. p. 458.
 4. Pieris, P. E.—*Ceylon, The Portuguese Era*. Colombo. 1913. I. Ch. V. p. 213.
 5. Trindade, Paulo—*Conquista Espiritual do Oriente*. III. p. 70.
 6. Abeyasinghe, Tikiri—*Portuguese Rule in Ceylon*. Colombo. 1966. p. 12.
 7. *Ibid.*, p. 15.
 8. *Conquista Espiritual do Oriente*. p. 73. f.n. 1.
 9. *Ibid.*
 10. *Ibid.* p. 63. f.n. 1.

Soledade and those nearer home such as Paul E. Pieris, are of the opinion that D. Filipe Yamasinghe Bandara was the nephew of Karalliyadde Bandara and that D. Catarina was Karalliyadde Bandara's daughter. The term for 'nephew' in Portuguese language is 'sobrinho' and it is thus that Trindade refers to D. Filipe Yamasinghe Bandara.¹¹

D. Joao took refuge with the Franciscan Friars, not along with Dona Catarina as Viterbo states, but along with his grandmother as pointed out by Trindade.¹² Trindade's work "Conquista Espiritual do Oriente" belongs to the period 1630-1636. It seems therefore very likely that his memory did not fail him. Further investigation is however necessary to establish the truth of the statement that D. Filipe Yamasinghe Bandara was the husband of Dona Catarina. This is beyond the scope of this paper.

Yamasinghe appears to have been persuaded by the Franciscans of the Island, to proceed to Goa and receive holy baptism and declare himself the vassal of the king of Portugal. He was accompanied by D. Joao and both were baptised in Goa by the Franciscan Archbishop, D. Fr. Vicente de Fonseca, with the Viceroy D. Duarte de Menezes as their 'padrinho' (Godfather.)¹³

The ceremony over, they returned to Mannar where they were received by the Capitao General, Joao de Melo de Sampaio. By this time a certain D. Francisco Visugo, modeliar and grandson of Gampola Bandara had with the assistance of an 'aio' (Governor/Preceptor) incited the people to revolt against Rajasinghe and managed to instal himself the king of Kandy.¹⁴ He offered the kingdom to D. Filipe Yamasinghe Bandara in 1590 or thereabouts.¹⁴ Yamasinghe's reign was actually very short.¹⁵

With his death the kingdom fell into the hands of Vimaladharm Suriya and D. Joao was left to the mercy of the Franciscans. He was accordingly escorted to Vahakotte by Frei Francisco do Oriente.¹⁶ As the place was open to attack by the king of Kandy, the prince was finally removed to Colombo where he was admitted to the Colegio S. Francisco.¹⁷ After the massacre of the Portuguese at the battle of

11. Idem.

12. 'com sua avo a rainha velha'. *ibid.* p. 63.

13. *Ibid.* pp. 70-71.

14. *Ibid.* pp. 69-70.

15. *Ibid.* p. 72.

16. *Ibid.* III. p. 72.

17. *Ibid.* pp. 74-75.

Danture in 1594, D. Joao was removed to Goa for strategic reasons.¹⁸ This event is recorded in full in the "Grande Enciclopedia Portuguesa e Brasileira".¹⁹

Fernando Soledade identifies D. Filipe as the cousin (primo) of D. Joao and the grandson (neto) of "Ceitavaca Raju".²⁰ Trindade concurs.²¹ Queyroz and Ribeiro refer to him as 'Nicapety P(B)andar' and 'Nicapita Adacin'.²² Codrington, in analysing the endless palace intrigues of the period, relates the removal of Nikapitiye from the Island to Coimbra in Portugal.²³

Both princes—D. Joao and D. Filipe, appear to have first stayed at the Colegio dos Tres Reis Magos (College of the Three Kings) in Bardes and were subsequently removed to Portugal perhaps in 1610 or thereabouts.²⁴ Livro das Moncoes²⁵ records that the princes were removed at their own request which was acceded to by the Council in Portugal.²⁶

Since the President of the Council of Portugal—Vidigueira D. Francisco—had personally known them while in Goa, they were received with all diplomatic protocol in Lisbon. The fact that D. Joao was the heir-apparent to the throne of Kandy might have prompted the Portuguese to treat the princes with great courtesy and the appropriate protocol.

The princes stayed first at the Convento de S. Francisco in Lisbon. They were then taken to the palace of the Viceroy D. Cristovao de Moura who personally led them to the inner chambers. When this

18. Idem.

19. *Grande Enciclopedia Portuguesa e Brasileira*. Vol. 5. p. 713.

20. Soledade, Fernando de—*Historia Serafica Cronologica da Ordem de S. Francisco na provincia do Portugal*. Lisboa. 1705-1721. Tomo. III. pp. 609-613.

21. *Conquista Espiritual do Oriente*. III. pp. 74-75.

22. Queiros, Pe. Fernao de—*Conquista Temporal e Espiritual de Ceyao*. Rio de Janeiro. 1884. pp. 381 ff.

23. Coimbra is a University city. It is one of the oldest existing Universities in Europe where the old traditions are still preserved. It is here that the Jesuit and the Franciscan Colleges were started to train missionaries who later came to India, Sri Lanka and the Far-East. Codrington, H. W.—*A Short History of Ceylon*. London. 1926. pp. 105-106.

24. Viterbo, Sousa—*Relacoes de Portugal*..... II. pp. 354-364; Trindade—*Conquista Espiritua* III. p. 75; *Ribeiro's History of Ceylon with notes from De Barros, De Couto, and Antonio Bocarro*. Translated from the original by P. E. Pieris Deraniyagala. Pt. I. p. 155.

25. Books dealing with the records sent out from the East.

26. *Livros das Moncoes*. I. p. 106.

guided tour was over, the princes were sent back to the Convent with the promise of a substantial stipend to pursue their studies. Each of them thus received a stipend of 2,000 cruzados per annum to follow a course of higher studies at the Royal College of S. Paulo and S. Pedro in Coimbra.²⁷ D. Filipe is reported to have accepted the offer but D. Joao's intentions were different. He accompanied D. Filipe to Coimbra but he did not opt to follow the course of studies. He seems to have preferred to stay in Lisbon to enjoy the luxury of court life denied to him in Sri Lanka! He made a request to the king of Portugal for better living quarters befitting a prince, nay, a king.²⁸ He finally managed to obtain a bigger stipend of 4,000 cruzados per annum out of the 'fazenda real' (King's revenue) to be collected at the Casa da India (Indian House) since the authorities in Portugal considered India and Lanka as one, for purposes of administration.

Even so this agreement doesn't appear to have satisfied the prince and he sought a personal interview with the King.²⁹ The interview had been so well manoeuvred that it ended with the prince relinquishing his right to the kingdoms of Kandy, Wellassa and the Seven Korales! He appears to have been content with this decision because he was made a Grandee of Spain and was promoted to the Bench of Bishops with a further increase of 4,000 cruzados. Viterbo describes the ensuing events as follows: "The Spanish court treated him with esteemed consideration and further granted him a maintenance allowance of 8,000 cruzados. In the chancery of D. Filipe III of Portugal is to be found information relating to the benefits received by the prince when he was in Madrid during the period 1625 A.D.—1626 A.D."³⁰ He further adds: "D. Joao was a king in exile and was not in a position to regain his lost throne. Apart from his ecclesiastical career he was a man of society and in his easy living in the house he drowned his cares within the society of the clergy. "*Many a lady adored him!*"³⁰

It is not possible to trace his residence in Lisbon or even its whereabouts. Although the present writer attempted to do so with the assistance of Professor Doutor Arnaut, Professor Cathedratico of the Coimbra University, he failed in the attempt because the documents relating to its location were missing from the archives. Thus

27. These Colleges were situated within the main compound of the present Coimbra University, near the Arts block.

28. Trindade—*Conquista Espiritual*..... III. pp. 75-76.

29. Idem. p. 76.

30. Viterbo, Sousa—*Relacoes de Portugal*..... Vol. II.

we are left with the account as given by Sousa Viterbo. He too appears to have consulted a Franciscan chronicler regarding the details. Says Viterbo: "It is a pity we do not know where his house in Lisbon was situated—a house richly upholstered and laid with costly carpets, tafetas and other valuable objects. He was a man of exemplary character. He had only one defect—a defect which he later corrected". The chronicler does not specifically state what the defect was but later records, quite revealingly, that *he had a daughter by the name of Dona Mariada Candia*, who after the death of the father became a nun in the monastery of Vila Longa in 1649 and died there in 1708, at the age of 74".³¹ It was perhaps this 'gallant' nature of the prince which prompted Viterbo to characterise him as "corresponding to the gallant legendary hero D. Joao of Europe".³²

Even so, the prince appears to have devoted his later years to missionary and religious activities. Adverting to him, the 'Grande Enciclopedia Portuguesa e Brasileira' says that he constructed in Telheiras near Lisboa, a church in memory of Nossa Senhora das Portas do Ceu (Our Lady of the Doors of Heaven),³² J. M. Carneiro de Sousa in his study on the Oratory at Telheiras corroborates this fact.³³

D. Joao died in 1642. At the place where he was buried appears a tombstone with the Latin inscription:

"QUI SACRAM HANC MARIAE AEDEM FUNDAUIT
HIC
CANDIAE PRINCIPIS OSSA SEPELIUNTUR"

D. Filipe on the other hand studied at Coimbra. He took up residence at the Mosteiro de S. Francisco overlooking the present Coimbra University. Although the monastery was completely washed away by the floods of the river Montego, the site can be located near the Monastery of Santa Clara on a printed design of the city of Conimbriga (old Colmbra).³⁴ Only a commercial factory stands there now as a lone sentinel.

31. Soledade, Fernando de—*Historia Serafica*..... II. pp. 458 ff.

32. Idem.

33. Sousa, Carneiro de—cf. his *Study on the oratory at Telheiras, Lisboa. Separata de Estra-madura, Boletim da Junta da Provincia*, I serie. Nos. 32-34. Lisboa 1955.

34. *Estampas Coimbras*. Coimbra. Portugal. pp. 14-15. Cf. also Goonatilleka, M. H. *Um Principe Cingales em Coimbra* in: *Panorama*. Revista. Lisboa.

The University of Coimbra originally consisted of several colleges maintained by the Jesuit and Franciscan missionaries. One such was the Colegio S. Pedro where D. Filipe had his education. This College according to Virgilio Correia and Nogueira Goncalves, was situated to the left of the present Porta Ferrea do Paco das Escolas.³⁵ By 1834 the College ceased to exist.

D. Filipe appears to have been the first Sinhalese to follow a course in higher education at a European University. He died in 1609. Soledade refers to his death in the following manner: "D. Filipe, the prince of the Kingdom of Sitavaka in the Island of Ceylon, on whom our Fathers administered holy baptism lies buried in the new Franciscan convent constructed in 1609".³⁶

35. Academia Nacional de Belas Artes. *Inventario Asiatico de Portugal*. Cidade de Coimbra. II. 1947. p. 113.

36. Soledade—*Historia Serafica*...III. (Translation is by the author of this paper).

SIMON KAT, TRANSLATOR 1624-1704

KATHARINE SMITH DIEHL

Not everybody who writes a book finds his publisher quickly. Simon Kat (or Zimon Cat, or any combination of the S-Z and K-C) had a work which waited more than eighty years plus a revision before it appeared in print.

Kat was born about six and a half miles from 17th century Amsterdam, in the year 1624 in the paper-making and ship-building town of Zaandam. He had the usual education, on top of which he took theological studies. After completing preliminary chaplain service in the Dutch East India Company, he requested permanent service in Ceylon. Arriving sometime December/January of 1670/1671, he was there until he died in 1704—most of the time in Colombo.¹ It is mentioned that he visited Kandy with a fellow clergyman, Joannes de Voogd, who had arrived in 1667.² Soon after his arrival, Predikant Kat married Miss Gertuida van de Kouter. Their children, Eva and Simon, were baptised in 1676 and 1679 according to the Baptismal Registers in the Wolvendaal Church Archives.

Reverend Kat's intention was to be a *predikant*, or priest, to the people of the Island who lived within the combined jurisdiction of the Dutch Reformed Church and the Dutch East India Company. He mastered both Tamil and Sinhala (possibly Portuguese, though I've found no mention), besides having known Latin, Greek, Hebrew, his own Dutch and probably French before arriving.

1. Francois Valentyn. *Oud en Nieuw Oost-Indien*. (Dordrecht & Amsterdam, 1724-1726). Vol. V (Part 1), p. 462.
2. J. D. Palm. "An Account of the Dutch Church in Ceylon". *Journal of the Ceylon Branch Royal Asiatic Society*, No. 3, p. 25 (1848). Further verification of this has not been found. Rev. Palm does not give the citation from the books in the Wolvendaal Church Archives where he had been reading.

Learning a language so different as are European tongues from those derived from the old Sanskrit is difficult for almost everybody except children. The difficulties are multiplied when grammars and dictionaries are not available. During Predikant Kat's thirty years of teaching, preaching, and translating, a very specialised vocabulary was necessary. None had ever been prepared and the only reasonable solution was to make it in both directions: Dutch into Sinhala, and Sinhala into Dutch. This he did but traces of the lists seem to be lost. Never printed under his name, we have no way of knowing—except the slight chance of finding some note in the Wolvendaal manuscripts—whether they might have been used without acknowledgement by some other early author. I have found no mention anywhere.

The Company did not intend to furnish free text books to its schools. Accustomed as these Europe-educated clergy were to printed books, their substitute while with this organisation was to translate texts which they believed would be useful, and have these translations copied many times over on *olas* (palm leaves). They could also prepare quite new books in that same way.

In the 1680s our predikant was hard at this literary work. He was able to complete translations of fairly large portions of the *New Testament* into both vernaculars, Sinhala and Tamil. Though about sixty years old and physically tired, he was excited about the prospect of a seminary for higher education at Colombo. Classical western languages, philosophy, theology and related subjects would be taught to older boys and young men intending to enter the Dutch Reformed ministry. The Colombo Seminary opened on 23 February 1693³ and continued for a full century, with occasional changes in both curriculum and policy. The planning had been by Simon Kat and, though the colonial authorities decided he was not to be the first rector, he was certainly the only person available on the Island with both formal university training and language competence equal to the occasion.

There had come to Ceylon in 1692 one Joannes Ruel (or Ruell) who in 1695 was learning Sinhala, just at the time the Colombo Seminary was off to a good start.⁴ The two men, Kat and Ruel, seemed not happy with each other. While the older and seasoned resident of the land was completing his diglot dictionary, the newcomer was studying Sinhala; though Kat had completed a *Grammatica* by 1695, it was Ruel's *Grammatica* which the East India Company printed at their cost in Amsterdam seven years after its author's death.⁵ The closeness of these dates, the

3. Valentyn, *op. cit.*, pp. 454-455.

4. Valentyn, *op. cit.*, p. 92.

5. Joannes Ruell, *Grammatica of Singaleesche Taal-Kunst*. (Amsterdam, 1708).

few Europeans in Colombo interested in the combination of education, linguistics and theology, leave one wondering about the small world of the Dutch Church and Castle Colombo at the end of the 17th century. Be that as it may, Ruel submitted a manuscript and it was published. He died in 1701, and never saw the first printed book to utilise proper letters and numbers for the Sinhala language. The types are wooden.

The portions of the *New Testament* to which Predikant Kat had devoted his translation energy were the *Gospel, according to St. Matthew* (the first book in the *New Testament*) and the *Acts of the Apostles*, Chapters I—XIV (half of the 28 chapters of the fifth book). His Tamil translation was carefully read and revised by Predikant Adriaan de Mey, a Ceylon-born man who earned very high praise both for his language ability and his professional concern. He was posted both to Ceylon and to the Tuticorin region of the Indian mainland—always in Tamil country.

Not until Predikant Kat's papers were examined after his death, in 1704, were the fourteen chapters of *Acts* found. A note somewhere on the pages mentions that he had two assistants—unnamed! It is with this manuscript that we will concern ourselves.

The official Dutch East India Company press seems to have begun actual printing in Ceylon in 1737. Portions of the *New Testament* were to appear over the years in several languages. Eventually in 1771 the version which had been translated to mid-point of the volume by Simon Kat was completed by later Ceylon-born predikants and printed. Its title page (with line endings, but without pretense at upper and lower case letters) reads:

De / Handelingen der Apostelen / beschreven / door den / Evan-
 gelist Lucas / wel eer / in de Singaleesche Tale / overgezet / door / twee
 Singaleesche Taalkundige Tolken / onder opzigt / van den wel eer-
 waarden / Simon Cat / Nu / met gunstige toestemminge / van de / Hoge
 Overheid / deezes Eilands / ter / bevordering van het E: Welzyn / der /
 Singaleezen / behoorlyk / gerevideert, gecorrigeert / en / in het ligt
 gegeven / door de / Predikanten / Johan Joachim Fybrands / en /
 Henricus Philipsz / [two rules across page] / Te Colombo / in 's Com-
 pagnies Drukkery, door Johan Fredrik Christoph Dornheim. / Anno
 1771./

The transliterated Sinhala title page would be:

evuangalitha lukas visin liyavunu / apostuluvarunne kriyaval yana
 pothaya / me potha / simon kath yana devagethiyanange pravesambare /
 sihalabasakara dennek visin meeta palamu pitapath keru / dandi / me
 lankadipaye uthum nayaka thanage / sonda kamatha satiyata / sihala
 ayage sadakulavu suba siddhavima vadidivunu kirima ta venuwa
 sudusu satiye / varadi bala greeksha inul bashava lesata harigassamin

achchugassava elidaravu kole / yohan yoachim luibransa / thavada /
 henrikus pellips yana deva gathiyanan varu visina. / [two rules] /
 achchugasanda yedune mahathvu compaigne niyamavu idamedi /
 yohan pedrik kristoper donheim yana aya visinya. /

My assistant, Miss Janakie Gunawardena, suggested this free translation :

The works of Apostles, written by the evangelist Lucas. The book was formerly translated into the Sinhalese language by two Sinhalese people under the supervision of Rev. Simon Cat. Now it is corrected according to the original Greek version, and printed under the directions of the Governor of Ceylon, by Yohan Yachim Luibransa and Henricus Phillips. Printed at the Government Press by Johan Pedrick Christopher Donheim.

I have made no changes in either punctuation or spelling, however they may seem essential to 20th century readers! The date is given only on the Dutch text.

Despite two title pages with variant information, we are not told the portion which Predikant Kat completed, nor the basis for the translation—whether using the Greek texts (as in the 1771 print) or the approved *Dutch Bible* accepted at Dordrecht in 1618-1619. Without knowing who the two local men were who assisted, nor anything about their language abilities, we can make no suppositions.

We do know very certainly that through the efforts of Fybrands and Philipsz—both of whom had received early education at the Colombo Seminary before going to Netherlands for university studies⁶ (Philipsz to Utrecht, and Fybrands to Leiden)—it was possible for the Colombo Press to produce the whole *New Testament* in the Sinhala language in six separate volumes, between the years 1771 and 1780 inclusive.

The final volume in the series *to be printed* has these usual two title pages :

Het Heylige Evangelium / onses Heeren en Zaligmakers / Jesu Christi, / na de beschreyvinge / van de mannen Gods en H. Evangelisten / Mattheus, Marcus, Lucas / en Joannes, / uyf het oirspronkelyke Grieks / in de / Singaleesche Tale / overgebracht, / en nu weder / op ordre de Hooge Overheid deses Eylands / nader gerevideert en van fouten verbeeterd / door de Predikanten / Johan Joachim Fybrants, / en / Henricus Philipsz. / [large fleur, bearing latin text from *St. Matt.* iv 16] / Gedrukt te Colombo, in 's Compagnies Boekdrukkery, / door Johan Fredrik Christoph Dornheim. / Anno 1780. /

6. C. A. L. van Troostenburg de Bruyn. *De Hervormde Kerk in Nederlandsch Oost-Indie.* (Arnhem, 1884), p. 438.

This is the second title page, in transliterated Sinhala :

apage nayakavu gelavumkara / yesus kristus wahansege / suddhavu
 evu angaliye / matevus makkus lukas yohannes / yana deviyawahan-
 segen evavadaranda yedunu ayaval namathi suddhavu / evuangelistha
 varun gen loyavunu hetiya. / greeksha yana mul bashaven sinhala
 bashavata pitapath kara / dan devanu / me lankadipaye utum nayaka
 thange / utum panivuda panatha lesata veradi harigassanda yedune /
 yohan yoahcham aberanya. / thavada / henricus pilleppsa. / evuengali
 desana karayan visinya. / [decorated rule across page] / colomba comp-
 agngne poth achchugasava sthanayedi achchugasanda yedune / yohan
 pedrik cristoper donheim : yana aya visinya. / varsha ekdahas sathsiya
 asuvediya /.

The free translation by J. Gunawardena :

The New Testament of our lord and saviour Jesus Christ, written according to the evangelists Mathew, Mark, Lukas and John. Translated into Sinhalese from Greek by Yohan Yachim Abaranya and Henricus Philips. Printed at the Government Press by Johan Pedrick Christopher Donheim in 1780 A.D.

Punctuation in the Sinhala is increasing. One semi-colon and five full stops are printed—but none at the end!

Following those title pages, the editors have reprinted “An introduction for those who will read this book gladly”—in the Dutch written for the 1739 edition of the *Gospels* by the active predikant of that era, Philip Wetzelius. It is brief, but mentions that the translation is by the predikant who came to Ceylon in 1717, Willem Konijn; and that Governor Gustav Willem van Imhoff’s wish was to print this quickly, and in two years it was completed. The closing thought is a prayer “for more learned people who can give you the other sections of the holy writings in Sinhala. 30th November 1739”.

Now we have the immediate source of this translation, but it is not stated in the titles. No indication is made as to whether or not Konijn had been influenced by Kat’s version of the single *Gospel according to St. Matthew*.

Much confusion has arisen because of the discrepancy between the literary order of the books within the *New Testament*, and the chronological order in which they were printed at Colombo. Comparison of the two sequences shows immediately that the last part to be printed would be placed at the beginning of the volume.

<i>Literary Order</i>	<i>Published</i>
Gospels—Konijn : Fybrands and Philipsz	1780
<i>Acts</i> —Kat : Fybrands and Philipsz	1771
<i>Romans</i> —Philipsz	1772
<i>Corinthians to Galatians</i> —Philipsz	1773
<i>Ephesians to Hebrews</i> —Philipsz	1776
<i>James to Revelation</i> —Philipsz	1776

The 1776 *James to Revelation* volume contains what may be unique in early Asia—printed Bibles, a Summary of the entire *New Testament*. This feature is of interest to persons trying to find both the literary and historical sources of the various individual books. Apparently, judging by a leading word at the end of one of the pages, a Summary was intended for inclusion at the end of the printing of the *Old Testament*: However, this did not happen under the Dutch regime. Such a volume was not to appear until the English had been rulers of Ceylon for twenty-five years. By that time there were quite other plans as to what should be included as *extras* in sections of the Bible to be printed and published in the Island.

An interesting series of events took place when the English planned their first Ceylon biblical printing. According to an undated circular announcement, a group of the highest officers in the new government, together with a few friends, were

At a meeting held on the 1st of August 1812 at the King's House in Colombo for the purpose of considering the propriety of instituting a Bible Society as auxiliary to the British and Foreign Bible Society established in London, His Excellency the Governor in the Chair.

The Ceylon Bible Society, which is descended from the 1812 organisation, is still very much alive, with offices in Colombo. The objective then, and now, is to make the *Bible*, or parts of it available in local languages at low cost. Colombo's problem in 1812 was that there were no copies for distribution in either Sinhala or Tamil—or Portuguese. Tamil could be (and for some years would be) bought from Tranquebar in South India; but Sinhala books had to be manufactured, and Portuguese books secured from London. Funds for types, printing charges, paper, and —above all—a press willing to undertake the manufacture of a book for Sinhala-speaking persons (after finding a version to use as model) were considered essential.

By correspondence with the recently organised Calcutta Auxiliary of the British and Foreign Bible Society, assistance in the form of 5000 printed copies of the *New Testament* was promised. The Colombo Auxiliary decided to use the full text as printed at those intervals 1771 to 1780 (as mentioned earlier)—incorrect though they openly admitted the translation to be. They would send a printer from Colombo who knew the language and who could superintend the work.

Gregory de Zoysa was selected to go to the Serampore Mission Press, fourteen miles north of Calcutta, on the opposite side of the River Hughli. This press was the only one in the world competent to do the job from type-founding, through printing, to binding. De Zoysa was a compositor. He was to work with William Ward, superintendent of the Serampore Mission Press, for whom this was not the first strange language in which to print. Some would say that he had printed several dozen languages: I'm able to count twenty-five, so the addition of Sinhala was not a problem.

In the original negotiations for the printing made between the Press and the Calcutta Auxiliary, William Ward sent some estimates to the Calcutta representative, Thomas Thomason.

Dated 9 Oct. 1812, Calcutta.

To Rev. G. Bisset [Colombo]

Our people have been some time employed in preparing to commence with spirit the printing of the Cingalese New Testament and about seventeen pages of letterpress are composed; but till I received your letter with the orders from Ceylon, the numerical figures could not be prepared, and after I had hoped all the letters were cut, the Ceylon Compositor brought twenty more combined letters to be cut, so that forty or more letters have yet to be cut before we can start for good. They are in hand, and I hope by the beginning of November we shall make a commencement, and from that time till the work is finished print two half sheets of 5000 copies weekly. I hope too that the whole will be printed off in twelve months from the time we begin, or at farthest in the whole of 1813.

The punches or matrices and 12 mounds [maunds] of types, I hope to send packed up to you by the 31st of December.

The Rev. Mr. Thomason added his comments to the Serampore message.

From the above you will see what may be expected. I shall not fail to hasten forward the work, and perhaps it may be [expedient].....

to print the Book in such a way that the Gospels may be sent separately. The Gospel of St. Matthew might be obtained, for the use of schools, in three or four months, if your Society approves of this plan.

Under Colombo date of 27 November 1812, it was requested that the "Gospel according to St. Matthew" be sent as soon as completed⁷, and the other Gospels as they may become available. Actually only the *St. Matthew* was sent with its proper title page in English, dated 1813. The other parts arrived in successive shipments, the last of which were received in Colombo by 18th November 1814.⁸

The book contained 1183 pages octavo, plus two title pages (English and Sinhala): a total of 594 leaves. The text was arranged in logical paragraphs rather than verse-by-verse as in the 1771-1780 volumes. Omitted were footnotes, and such things as a preface and summary. This was in keeping with the policy of the British and Foreign Bible Society to print the *Bible* without commentary.

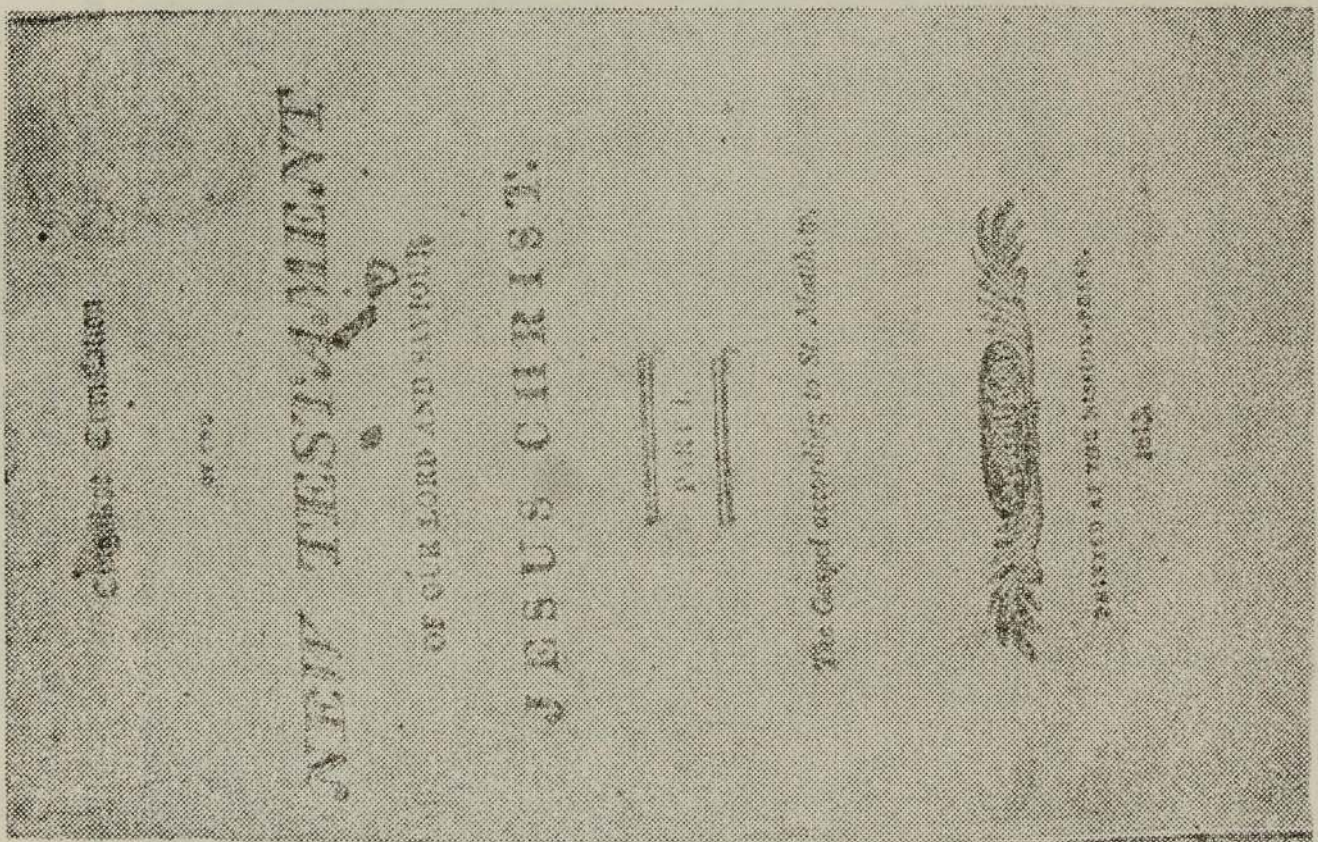
It must soon have been very evident that the physical size of the book would make for prohibitive cost. The book was half again as big as the earliest (1801) *Bengali New Testament* from the same Press! The types were too big: something which had happened at an earlier time in India. Tranquebar had learned to its dismay as early as 1713 the price of large letters. The result was to force those Danish Missionaries to construct a paper mill immediately, and to found a small Tamil font. Serampore had the paper mill and the type foundry; but this was their first experience in Sinhala printing and they did not attempt to reduce the letter size for a printing job ordered by an outside party. For themselves, they would have quickly made a new font—and possibly discarded the already-printed sheets or half-sheets.

There was no active type-foundry in Colombo when the order was placed in 1812. The British authorities were using what remained of the old Dutch Government Press. The facilities were very limited—else why should they have been satisfied to have printing done in a city 1300 miles away?

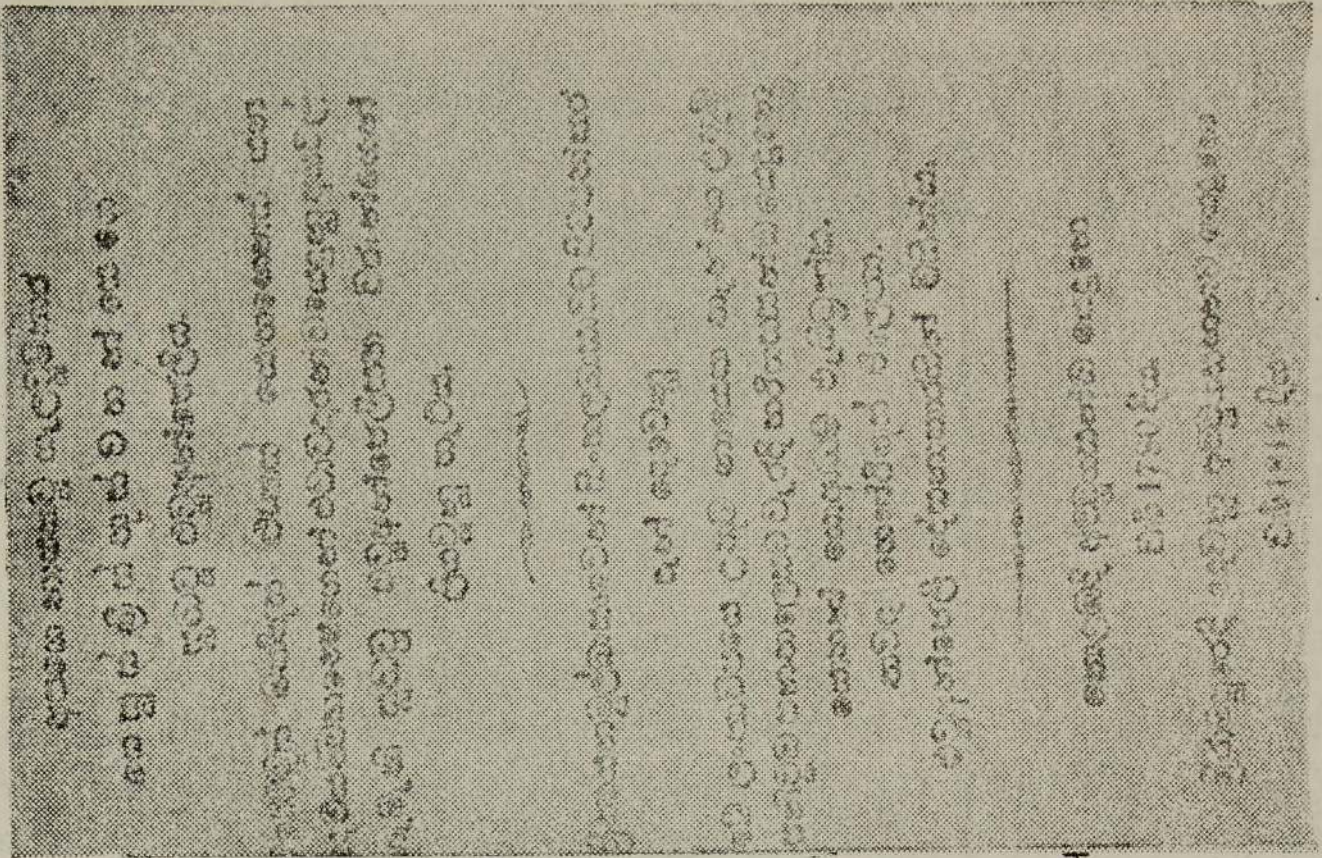
Even so, while printing was proceeding in Bengal an active committee was working in Colombo towards a completely new Sinhala version of the entire *New Testament* which they intended to print in Colombo. It was in preparation for this that types were to be sent from Serampore: "The punches or matrices and 12 mounds of types, I hope

7. Colombo Auxiliary Bible Society. *First Report*. (Colombo, 1813), pp.33:37.

8. *Ibid.*, *Third Report*, (Colombo 1815) as edited and found in the British & Foreign Bible Society. *Twelfth Report, for 1816*. (London, 1816?), pp. 227-232.



English title page of "The Gospel according to St. Matthew" dated 1813. Serampore re - publication.



Sinhala title page to be used for the entire New Testament but using only eth Gospels as the title. Serampore re - publication 1814.

සා. පවුල් 1771

අපොස්තලිකයන්ගේ කෘතිය

ප්‍රධාන

1771

1771 වසරේදී ලන්දන්හි ප්‍රකාශයට පත්වූ සා. පවුල් 1771 ග්‍රන්ථයේ ප්‍රථම පිටුවෙහි සිටින අපොස්තලිකයන්ගේ කෘතිය පිළිබඳව විස්තරයක් සඳහන් කර ඇත. එහි මෙහෙයුම් පිළිබඳව විස්තරයක් සඳහන් කර ඇත. එහි මෙහෙයුම් පිළිබඳව විස්තරයක් සඳහන් කර ඇත. එහි මෙහෙයුම් පිළිබඳව විස්තරයක් සඳහන් කර ඇත.

Opening page of text of 'De Handelingen der Apostelen' or 'The Acts of the Apostles' in Sinhala. Serampore 1814 re - publication.



සා. පවුල් 1771 ග්‍රන්ථයේ ප්‍රථම පිටුව

1771

1771 වසරේදී ලන්දන්හි ප්‍රකාශයට පත්වූ සා. පවුල් 1771 ග්‍රන්ථයේ ප්‍රථම පිටුවෙහි සිටින අපොස්තලිකයන්ගේ කෘතිය පිළිබඳව විස්තරයක් සඳහන් කර ඇත. එහි මෙහෙයුම් පිළිබඳව විස්තරයක් සඳහන් කර ඇත. එහි මෙහෙයුම් පිළිබඳව විස්තරයක් සඳහන් කර ඇත.

Opening page of text 'De Handelingen der Apostelen' or 'The Acts of the Apostles' in Sinhala. Colombo 1771 publication.

1771 වසරේදී ලන්දන්හි ප්‍රකාශයට පත්වූ සා. පවුල් 1771 ග්‍රන්ථයේ ප්‍රථම පිටුවෙහි සිටින අපොස්තලිකයන්ගේ කෘතිය පිළිබඳව විස්තරයක් සඳහන් කර ඇත. එහි මෙහෙයුම් පිළිබඳව විස්තරයක් සඳහන් කර ඇත.

1771 වසරේදී ලන්දන්හි ප්‍රකාශයට පත්වූ සා. පවුල් 1771 ග්‍රන්ථයේ ප්‍රථම පිටුවෙහි සිටින අපොස්තලිකයන්ගේ කෘතිය පිළිබඳව විස්තරයක් සඳහන් කර ඇත. එහි මෙහෙයුම් පිළිබඳව විස්තරයක් සඳහන් කර ඇත.

to send packed up to you by the 31st of December [1812]". William Ward's cost estimate for the 12 maunds of types was Rs. 1220, and for the additional 206 punches and 206 matrices an added one rupee and eight annas each, or Rs. 618. This was a total of Rs. 1838 (using the sicca rupee of North India, and not the pagoda which was the common legal tender of South India and Ceylon).

Still another fount was to be ordered later, according to the Colombo Auxiliary's *Fifth Report* (Colombo, 1817, p. 19) at a cost of £1500, this to be paid by the British and Foreign Bible Society (London). Thus the Serampore Mission had prepared three distinctly different, successively smaller, founts of Sinhala types within five years time for Colombo-published books.

Compositor Gregory de Zoysa's literary acumen added to William Ward's knowledge of Sinhala yielded little that was editorially useful. As a result the Serampore 1814 reprint of the 1771-1780 Dutch Government Press edition of the *Sinhala New Testament* lacks a proper title page. The trouble resulted from the order in which the books had been printed originally: separate title pages for each portion, no comprehensive page for the volume from *St. Matthew to Revelations*.⁹ Comparison of copies found both in India and in Ceylon indicates the same discrepancy.

There is an English title page which was obviously prepared for the *St. Matthew* portion which would be distributed separately. It reads:

The / Cingalese Translation / of the / New Testament / of Our
Lord and Saviour / Jesus Christ. / Part I / The Gospel according to
St. Matthew. / Serampore / Printed at the Mission Press. / 1813. /

Then there is a Sinhala title page intended for the entire volume, which *copies exactly* the text of the 1780 *Gospels* title page, except modern Arabic numerals are used for the date rather than the old-style Sinhala complex numerals. The last lines of this transliterated become—

.....Colombadi achchugasanda yeduna / warsha 1780 deeya. / sri
rampuredi dewanu achchugasannata yeduna / warsha 1814 deeya.

When freely translated it would mean—

.....Printed in Colombo in 1780 and printed again in Sri Rampura
in 1814.

9. Actually to have carried the full 1771-1780 *New Testament* would have been akin to carrying the bulk of several volumes of the 4 to *Encyclopaedia Britannica*: paper was thick, and there were at least 350 quarto leaves, or 700 pages. Smaller units were far better at that time.

It is important to notice the two forms of the local name: both the spelling as used by the Bengali and the English community are found.

The multiplicity of literary conflict and factual inaccuracy is enormous. Personal names are consistently misspelled; no attempt had been made for the 1814 edition to correct earlier errors; application of a title page representing part of a book to an entirely complete text requires some adroit editing. There is not the slightest evidence of any attempt to create such a full-volume title by simply consolidating the information found on the six separate sectional title pages issued from 1771 to 1780. Serampore and Calcutta had plenty of Dutch-speaking people available: the Serampore Mission was deeply involved in both Asiatic Society and College of Fort William studies, and translators could have been found for the asking.

The only possible logic for the *carelessness in Bengal* may have arisen from William Ward's intense concentration on recovery from the financial loss caused by the 11 March 1812 Printing Press fire.¹⁰ The Colombo Auxiliary Bible Society was organised on 1 August 1812, four and a half months after the fire. Correspondence with Calcutta in early October that same year reported "seventeen pages of letterpress are composed" but that additional types were needed before the work could continue. That was moving rapidly!

The corresponding *carelessness in Colombo* must be laid directly on the doorsteps of the high-ranking colonial officers who were the civilian members of the Colombo Auxiliary Bible Society. They (1) permitted what they considered to be a weak text sent for reprinting and (2) made no efforts to have adequate editorial supervision either before the departure of Gregory de Zoysa with the books, or at the point of production in Bengal. But they required something quickly or thought they did! *Let it be done.*

This bit of literary history illustrates the long time between the late decades of the 17th century when Predikant Simon Kat was hurrying to complete his translations so they might be useful for Colombo Seminary students, and eventual publication almost a century later—with republication after another forty years.¹¹ It further clearly shows what happens when editorial assistance is lacking, and when the reader of the proof is incompetent to make editorial judgements.

10. Serampore Mission. *Monthly Circular Letter*, for March 1812. (Serampore). Vol. V, pp. 41-46. This has been reprinted in Katharine S. Diehl. *Early Indian Imprints*. (New York, 1964), pp. 48-59.

11. See F/N P. 203.

As a result of these confusions, only where persons are a bit curious to examine books which are added to a library or to an inventory will it be found that what they have in the Serampore-printed 1814 book in the Sinhala language is a full and complete *New Testament* and neither a *Gospel according to St. Matthew* (1813), nor the *Four Gospels, Matthew, Mark, Luke and John*.

An additional sidelight into early printing in South Asia may be appropriate here. The Serampore Missionaries (William Carey, Joshua Marshman, and William Ward) had been, and were to continue, printing various versions of the Bible. I've catalogued all the books at the Carey Library at Serampore College in Bengal. All portions of the Bible which were printed at this Serampore Mission Press have double, and usually triple, signatures. The first series is regular: A to Z using all letters; the second and third are spotty, using a few letters only, and these in very irregular sequence.

Constantly I've wondered the purpose of the second and third series. It became clear when the letter G was noticed regularly from pp. 475-682 in the Sinhala New Testament: G for Gregory! This could not be determined earlier, for all printing office records had been burned: lists of names which might have been of great interest in reconstructing the history of both the Mission and the Press are lost.

11. This is reminiscent of the large body of writing done by Father Jacome Goncalvez, an Oratorian Missionary who lived at Chilaw during the years just following Pre likant Kat's death. Publication of his many original and translated works in Tamil, Sinhala and Portuguese did not begin until 1844; some were still unprinted when *Life of Father Jacome Goncalvez*, by Father S. G. Perera, S. J., was published at the De Nobili Press in Madura (India) in 1942.

NINETEENTH CENTURY ELITES AND THEIR ANTECEDENTS

Some Comments on 'Facets of Modern Ceylon History'¹

D. A. KOTELAWELE

The greater part of Robert's study of Jeronis Pieris' letters is devoted to a discussion of an elite group that arose in the mid-nineteenth century in the low country of Sri Lanka. This group came into being through certain structural features of low country social organisation, some opportunities opened during the Dutch colonialist rule in Sri Lanka, and most important of all, through economic and educational opportunities of British colonialist rule in Sri Lanka in the nineteenth century. It is necessary to note at the outset that Roberts is concerned primarily with a new elite group. The earlier elites who retained their status through the period of British rule under review is not treated at length. In fact, Roberts makes no clear distinction between the new and the old elites.

The study begins with an Introduction to the sources available for a more comprehensive study of the nineteenth and twentieth century history of Sri Lanka. Chapter Two, which follows, is concerned with the kith, kin and career of Jeronis Pieris with the aid of whose surviving letters Roberts seeks to illustrate facets of the history of nineteenth century Sri Lanka, the most important of which is the rise of an elite group.

Chapter Three begins with an example of non-scholarship where Ralph Pieris' conclusion that in pre-1815 Kandyan society the *radala* top crust of the Goyigama caste, monopolised positions of power and

1. Michael Roberts, *Facets of Modern Ceylon History Through the Letters of Jeronis Pieris*, Colombo, 1975.

influence, is questioned without adequate evidence to the contrary.¹ Officers such as *adigars*, *disaves*, *basnayaka nilames*, and *korale vidanes* according to Pieris were drawn invariably from the *radala* sub-caste of the Goyigamas. Roberts' dissatisfaction is with regard to this 'recruitment pattern'. The principle of ascription involved here is doubted. G. V. P. Somaratna's work, too, as Roberts himself grants, tends to support Ralph Pieris. But Roberts wants more evidence. This is readily available from the mid-eighteenth century onwards for the Kandyan Kingdom.

Dutch records of the eighteenth century contain many a list of court officials of the Kandyan Kingdom. Suffice it to note here some information relevant to office-holding provided by Governor Schreuder (1752-1761). According to Schreuder the powerful Kandyan Disave, Galagoda, had two brothers, one of whom was the Disave of Uva and the other the Raterala of Harispattu. Thus the Galagoda family held three important positions in the Kandyan Kingdom in the 1760s. Galagoda's contemporary, the Disave of the Three and Four Korales, Dumbara, had one brother holding the important Disaveship of the Seven Korales.² This kind of evidence tends to support Ralph Pieris' conclusion rather than strengthen Roberts' doubts.

The *radala* sub-caste monopolised not only high offices of state, but high ecclesiastical positions too, according to the available evidence. The richly-endowed temples and monasteries of the Kingdom of Kandy were in their charge. The first Adigar Samanakkodi who was beheaded for his part in the conspiracy to overthrow King Kirthi Sri Rajasinghe in 1760 had powerful connections in the Kandyan ecclesiastical establishment. He is said to have been a close relative of Tibbotuvave³ who later came as head of the Malvatta chapter and who is the celebrated author of the latter part of the *Culavamsa*. Tibbotuvave in turn had the headship of three important Kandyan monasteries including the Ridi-vihara. Furthermore the Kadadora Grant which concerns the succession and royal endowments of the Kadadora Vihara which was affiliated to the Asgiriya chapter proves beyond doubt that succession to the headship of such temples was regulated within the family.⁴ The development

1. See *Facets*, pp. 12-18 replete with 36 footnotes.

2. Schreuder Jan, *Memoir of Jan Schreuder 1762*, (Colombo 1946), tr. and ed. E. Reimers, pp. 31-32. Also see, Pieris, P. E., *Sinhale and the Patriots* (Colombo 1950) *passim*.

3. Paulusz, J. H. O., (tr. and ed.) *Secret Minutes of the Dutch Political Council 1762*, (Colombo 1954) p. 90.

4. Godakumbura, C. E., "Kadadora Grant, An Ola Leaf Manuscript of the Kadadora Vihara in the Central Province". *JRAS (CB) N.S.* 1952. pp. 141-158.

of the concept of kin-pupillary succession in the devolution of the headship of Kandyan temples and monasteries is the clearest evidence regarding the pattern of recruitment to these institutions. The successor to a headship had to be a relative as well as a pupil of the previous head. No doubt this was contrived in order to retain the property of the monasteries within family groups. A contemporary Sinhalese poet described this system rather critically thus :

Teruvan diyunu vana
 Lesa pinattan pera dina
 Pidu gamvala vasana
 Ayata mayi paraveniya kiyamina

Ungen pavata ena
 Daruvan pavidī kara gena
 Baharin pavidī vana
 Ayata avasara nodi indagena

Saying that *paraveni* (i.e. hereditary tenure) belongs exclusively to those living on lands offered by meritorious (ones) in the past, for the enhancement of the Triple Gem (i.e. the Buddha, the Doctrine and the Monastic Order), they enter their own descendants into the Order and sit tight on (these lands), while at the same time they disallow (this privilege) to those who enter the Order from outside (their ranks).⁵

There is no doubt that this pattern of recruitment in the Buddhist ecclesiastical establishment was absorbed from the practice obtaining in lay society. Furthermore, in a society where every occupation and status was determined by birth (i.e. caste) it is hard to believe that the elite of that society was recruited on some other basis.

It must be granted that there was the occasional outsider in the ranks of the elite. And it is this fact that seems to have created the confusion in the mind of the author of *Facets*. Roberts has failed to see the great difference between the occasional exception (to which historians normally pay great attention) and the structural principle. He ought to have taken note of this difference especially as he is dealing with the concept in sociology.

The same comment needs to be made with regard to the portrayal of elites during the Dutch period in the lowlands of Sri Lanka. Roberts' account tends to show a degree of flux and mobility in the higher ranking officialdom—the elite—of the southwest lowlands. His main support for this position is the assumption that during the troubled Governorship of Schreuder and afterwards certain changes took place in the

5.	තෙරුවන් දියුණු	වන	උන්ගෙන් පැවත	එන
	ලෙස පිනැත්තන් පෙර	දින	දරුවන් පැවිදි කර	ගෙන
	පිදු ගම්වල	වසන	බැහැරින් පැවිදි	වන
	අයට මැයි පරවෙනිය	කියමින	අයට අවසර නොදී ඉඳ	ගෙන*

* Munkotuva Rala, *Sangarajavata* (ed. S. C. De Silva) (Colombo 1955) p. 77, verses 56 and 57.

pattern of recruitment to the higher officialdom. No doubt Schreuder banished a whole crop of Sinhalese nobility of Colombo, Galle and Matara for complicity with the rebels as well as for secret liaison with the King of Kandy. But Batavia ordered their immediate recall and reinstatement as a means of quelling the rebellions and pacifying the lowlanders. Indeed Schreuder's own contemplation on the wisdom of changing the pattern of recruitment is revealing and worth quoting in extenso.

"I have often considered the desirability of conferring the chief posts among the natives, in respect of those headmen who had conducted themselves honourably and loyally, as hereditary appointments on their children and other descendants, and on the other hand, of depriving all those who were found guilty of any serious offence or crime, according to the practice of the Kandyans of all posts of honour both as regards themselves and their families, but as that would take away from a large section of Sinhalese gentry, at present, all hopes of ever attaining to any post of honour and great discontent might arise therefrom, I cannot advise Your Honour to adopt this course however expedient it might otherwise be".⁶

Thus Schreuder being wiser after the event advised his successor not to change the pattern of recruitment. There is little evidence to show that his successors went against this advice. The old headman families continued to flourish under them.

In contemporary Sinhalese terminology this particular upper segment of the Goyigama was known as Appuhamys, Nambukara Appuhamys or Nanayakkaras, and the Dutch defined them as descendants of Mudaliyars, Muhandirams and Korales. According to the Memoirs of two Disaves at the tail-end of Dutch rule in Sri Lanka, they were "considered noblemen".⁷ That this sub-caste of the Goyigamas monopolised the highest positions in the native headman hierarchy even during the time of the second British Governor Maitland is evident from the various reports of the Collectors and Government Agents found among the papers of the Colebrooke-Cameron Commission. The most pointed of these reports is from Thomas Eden of Matara who termed the power and influence of these headmen, who were often connected to each other

6. Schreuder, *op. cit.*, p.49.

7. CO/54, pp. 99-100, Memoir of Gogfried Leonard de Coste, Disawe of Colombo, 1770; Ceylon National Archives Photostat No. 1/2759, pp. 6-10; Pieter Sluysken, Memoir on the Country Services in Ceylon, 1784.

by ties of blood, "an imperium in imperio".⁸ The same impression is conveyed in a petition of the Duravas presented to the Colebrooke-Cameron Commission. The petitioners complained against the weight of another subordinate government formed of the Vellales (Goyigamas) in addition to that of Great Britain.⁹

Thus with regard to the Dutch-ruled low country areas too Roberts has failed to grasp the essential fact regarding "recruitment patterns" to high office. In addition, he has missed an important change in the composition of the low country Sinhalese elite that occurred during the course of the eighteenth century; namely, the rise into elite status of certain new groups. The most notable example of this phenomenon is the rise of the Salagama elite. The dynamics of this development was provided by one of the main aims of the Dutch in Sri Lanka—the production of cinnamon for the European market. The Salagama caste that provided the labour organisation required for this process, gained for its headmen, status and wealth hitherto denied to it. For instance, while at the beginning of Dutch rule and the entirety of the seventeenth century, there were no holders of the title of 'Mudaliyar' in this caste, a number of Mudaliyarships were created from among the leading families from the beginning of the eighteenth century. The first Mudaliyarship in the caste appears to have been created in 1708.¹⁰ By the beginning of the nineteenth century there were a number of Mudaliyarships including a Mahamudaliyarship. This meant not merely titles hitherto denied to the caste but also opportunities for acquiring landed wealth and a "following" for the favoured families. Greater wealth and leisure created among the headman families led to further acquirement of status symbols. The Salagama chiefs acquired the makings and outlook of the traditional Sinhalese elite-scholastic learning in Sinhalese and Pali as well as patronage of Buddhism which was later to culminate in the establishment of the Amarapura sect.¹¹

Another example of an award of a title hitherto reserved ordinarily to the Goyigama may be cited here. This award is connected with another item of trade that the Dutch monopolised—elephants. The capture and transport of elephants involved the services of several castes,

8. CO 416/26, Report of Thomas Eden May 1, 1809.

9. CO 416/32, pp. 282-302, Petition of Chiandos to Colebrooke-Cameron Commission, November 5, 1830.

10. For more detailed treatment of this subject see D. A. Kotelawe, "Caste and Class in the Southwest of Sri Lanka, c. 1700-1883: a review of long term changes" in K. A. Ballhatchet's forthcoming *Leadership and Social Change in South Asia*.

11. Ibid; also K. Malalgoda, *Sociological Aspects of Revival and Change in Buddhism in Nineteenth Century Ceylon* (D.Phil. Thesis, Oxford University 1970) pp. 141-144.

the most important being the Goyigama and the Duravas (Chiandos). In 1746 a person of the Durava caste was appointed to the position of Kuruve Mudaliyar (chief of the elephant department). This appointment was resented by others in the organisation responsible for the capture and delivery of elephants, notably the Goyigamas. They refused to serve under a Durava Mudaliyar. The Governor was thus induced to dismiss the Durava Mudaliyar and appoint a Goyigama in his place. This in turn displeased the Duravas who refused to serve under a Goyigama Mudaliyar. As a compromise solution the Governor appointed the dismissed Durave chief as the Muhandiram over the Durave caste. It is reported that this solution was effective.¹² This example shows how important caste personalities came to obtain titles carrying prestige and wealth through the exigencies of the Dutch Company's service.

A significant fact to be borne in mind with regard to low country social mobility under Dutch rule is that it is only a handful of non-Goyigama castes particularly the Salagamas, who attained elite status. It must be emphasised that this was by no means the upward mobility of entire castes *en masse*. No doubt the elite segment of castes that 'arrived' made large claims for the entire caste. For instance, just as the Karave claims to Khsatriya descent (noted by Roberts) the Salagama claimed descent from Brahmin ancestors by the beginning of the nineteenth century.¹³ Thus such phraseology as the 'rise of the Karavas' can be misleading.

What were the eighteenth century antecedents of the 'rising' Karavas? One would have expected more on this theme in the *Facets*. Roberts has noted the freedom from enmeshment in the structure of services, ritual and otherwise, of the Karave caste in the lowlands of Sri Lanka. Some other likely factors that gave the Karave families a headstart in the nineteenth century may be gleaned from Dutch sources even though these are not as prolific on the Karavas as on the Salagamas.

Most memoirs of Dutch Governors of the eighteenth century give accounts of the castes in the southwest of Sri Lanka mainly from the point of view of the services due to the administration from them. However, of particular interest are the accounts of the two Disavas, De Coste and Sluysken, which give more details. These accounts show that the Karavas were engaged in transport services for the Company,

12. K. A. 2556 fos. 1085-87, Extract—Secret Resolutions of the Governor's Council, Sept. 29, 1746 and October 9, 1746.

13. Joseph Jonville, Abridgement of the History of Chalias, by Adrian Ragia Pakse, *Asiatic Researches*, Vol. 7 (1803) pp. 440-446.

coastwise as well as along the internal waterways, especially rivers. In addition, the Karavas of Moratuwa and Panadura were engaged in the Company's carpentry shop as well as at the cartwright shop and the repair of the Company's small vessels (thonies). They had also to repair the churches, schools and resthouses in addition to performing a number of other miscellaneous services. The group of services involving transport and skills in woodwork assume significance in the light of nineteenth century developments.

Furthermore, the Karavas were organised for Company services under their own headmen directly under the supervision of Dutch officers. This meant that in general the caste did not come under the purview of Goyigama headmen. Such relations with the ruling power enabled greater opportunities for upward mobility for leading Karava families in the manner of the Salagamas. In fact, a frequent request made by petitioners to the Colebrooke-Cameron Commission from castes lower in the hierarchy was for headmen from their own caste and freedom from the authority of Goyigama headmen.

The carpentry works of the Dutch were under the supervision of an European master craftsman. The skills that a section of the Karavas learnt and mastered were relatively new in the island and stood them in good stead in the nineteenth century.¹⁴ Skills in cart building and boat-making were of significance in this respect. With the freeing and expansion of commercial activity under the British a greater need for transportation arose with which greater opportunities were opened for the skilled and enterprising Karava families. The easily available supplies of timber in the low country as well as the easy transportation down the rivers from the interior of the country would certainly have been an added incentive to those who learnt the skills. The oral traditions regarding the ancestry of Jeronis Pieris contain allusions to ownership of "ships" and "shipyards". It is possible that by the early nineteenth century some Karava families succeeded in building, repairing as well as owning boats used for coastwise and inland navigation.

Roberts seeks to portray Jeronis Pieris as typical of the new elite arising in the nineteenth century. Entrepreneurship, English education, great landed wealth acquired through entrepreneurship, and a certain western style of life are pointed out as the characteristic features of this elite. Though Roberts briefly refers to the nature of the older elites,

14. The extreme scarcity of carpenters in the contemporary Kandyan Kingdom and the rudimentary level of development of the craft of carpentry there have been noted by Pieris, P.E. *op.cit.*, p.p. 191-192.

a fuller account and greater understanding of them would have helped to establish the differences between the old and the new which would in turn help to understand the nature of social change in the nineteenth century. The elite status of the 17th and 18th centuries was primarily dependent on office-holding. Office holders enjoyed great landed wealth in lieu of service and also acquired private lands. They enforced the labour services (*rajakariya*) of the inhabitants and their recommendation was essential for minor office-holders for promotion to higher positions in the official hierarchy. They were judges in minor disputes among villagers and the highest of them were members of the *Landraaden*. The compilation of *Tombos* begun in the 2nd quarter of the 18th century and the maintenance of the *Tombos* once they were completed added to the influence of the headmen. These factors helped to integrate the upper crust of Sinhalese Society in the Southwest of Sri Lanka with the lower levels of society in many-stranded patron-client relations. And this upper crust formed a fairly well-knit group of blood relations.¹⁵ Their world view was traditional though most of them embraced Dutch Reformed Church Christianity for purposes of office-holding. They were generally well versed in the classical languages of Sinhalese culture and knew something of traditional medicine and astrology. Perhaps the best representative of the traditional Sinhalese elite of the 17th and 18th centuries was De Saram Mudaliyar of Gangaboda Pattu. The description given by Thomas Eden, Collector of Matara, of this stalwart speaks for itself and is well worth quoting: "The next in rank is De Saram, brother of the Colombo Maha Modliar, Modliar of Gangabodapattu and of Bathgama, had been and is one of the most learned natives of the island and possesses incredible knowledge of every transaction taken place in it from the most ancient periods: he is an astrologer, learned in languages, a lawyer and priest, a virtuoso and a physician and is in consequence looked up to as a prodigy by the natives... he was certainly more attached to the old Dutch government than ours, but at all times more attentive to his own interests and ambitious prospects than either, and the inhabitants all stand in extreme subjection and awe of him....."¹⁶

The nature of official duties of a Sinhalese headman needs some elaboration in order to bring out his role as a leader of the community. Among a headman's duties was the supervision and proper regulation of

15. Kotelawele, *op. cit.*

16. CO 416/26, Report of Thomas Eden, May 1, 1809; for another example see, Pieris, P. E., *Notes on Some Sinhalese Families, Part I*, (Albion Press, Galle 1902) p. 26.

agricultural activity including maintenance of vital irrigation systems. Among his judicial duties was the task of arbitrating in disputes among villagers as well as presiding over various kinds of trial by ordeal resorted to by villagers in settling disputes. The headmen also formed the literate segment of society learned in the arts respected in that society and their leadership in this respect is well exemplified by the case of Mudaliyar De Saram.

The leadership exercised by the new elites, as represented by Jeronis Pieris and his likes, seems to be of a much limited scale. In fact Roberts does not make an effort to come to grips with this question at all. In his account the latter day elites seem to live in a world of planters, businessmen, missionaries and officials, in short the world of traditional colonial history. In the *Facets* there is nothing on the wider social milieu of the elites; more particularly nothing is said of the manner in which the elites were related to the rest of the social structure. Some of the letters of Jeronis Pieris tend to show how the new elite came to be alienated from traditional society as a result of the thin veneer of western values they seem to have acquired through a missionary-dominated English education. (Note here particularly Jeronis Pieris' Robert Knox-like pronouncement on Kandyan marriage which he refers to as a "brutal practice".)¹⁷ How were the traditional social relations changing in the nineteenth century? What was the nature of leadership exercised by the new elite represented by Jeronis Pieris? Did their philanthropy have anything to do with the esteem they were seeking in society? Was their leadership limited to the older social groups, the castes? These questions remain to be answered despite Roberts' exercise. The new emerging elite of the nineteenth century appears to be a composite one. There was in this group the peers of Jeronis Pieris, the descendants of the old aristocracy who had changed with the times like James de Alwis, De Saram, the Ilangakoons etc. In addition there was the emergence of a professional elite—no doubt related to the other—of lawyers, doctors and English-educated government officials. Of these groups Roberts does not reveal anything at all.

7. *Facets*, p. 81.

'DECORATION BEFORE DRESS':

A STUDY OF SIR PONNAMBALAM ARUNACHALAM'S ATTITUDES TO COLONIAL ENGLISH EDUCATION IN SRI LANKA¹

SARATHCHANDRA WICKRAMASURIYA

The purpose of the present study is to examine in some detail the attitudes towards colonial English education in Sri Lanka expressed in his speeches and writings by Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam,² scholar, statesman, administrator, pioneer in the Ceylon University Movement, and one of the front-rank agitators in the struggle for self-government of Sri Lanka. A careful examination of Arunachalam's speeches and writings on education demonstrates clearly that his was a stand of impassioned and unequivocal opposition to the *status quo* in education in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Following in the footsteps of

1. The present essay is the fourth in a series of papers dealing with the tradition of radical protest against the system of colonial English education in Sri Lanka. The first paper in the series gives an outline of this tradition of radical protest; the second and the third deal, respectively, with the attitudes towards colonial English education of James Alwis and Ananda K. Coomaraswamy. I am grateful to Dr. Senake Bandaranayake for his comments on this paper.
2. Arunachalam's principal writings on education comprise the following: *Speeches and Writings of Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam*, Volume I, H. W. Cave & Co. Ltd., n.d.; Ponnambalam Arunachalam, *The Census of Ceylon*, 1901, Volume I, Colombo, 1902; 'Eastern Ideals in Education and Their Bearing on Modern Problems', in *Studies and Translations by Ponnambalam Arunachalam*, Colombo, 1937.

his two great contemporaries James Alwis³ and Ananda K. Coomaraswamy⁴ in opposing almost *in toto* a system of education which ignored the indigenous languages (Sinhalese and Tamil) as well as national history and culture in the curriculum, Arunachalam went on to make concrete proposals for educational reform which, had they been implemented at the correct time and in the spirit in which they had been made, would have led to revolutionary changes in Sri Lanka's education. Arunachalam thus occupies a dominant place, besides James Alwis and Ananda Coomaraswamy, in a century-long tradition of radical protest⁵ against the lop-sided and ill-suited system of English education that was in force throughout the period of colonial supremacy in Sri Lanka (1815 - 1948).

Ponnambalam Arunachalam was one of a trinity of distinguished brothers, all of whom entered the Legislative Council of Sri Lanka, comprising Ponnambalam Coomaraswamy, Ponnambalam Ramanathan and himself; he was also a cousin of the great savant, philosopher, art critic and geologist, Ananda Coomaraswamy. Col. Josiah Wedgwood gives the following pen-portrait of Arunachalam in his introduction to the latter's *Studies and Translations: Philosophical and Religious*: "Born on the 14th of September, 1853, Arunachalam was the scion of an ancient family. Coomaraswamy Mudaliyar, Sir Arunachalam's maternal grandfather, was the first Tamil member of the Legislative Council. His mother's brother was Sir Mutu Coomaraswamy.....Arunachalam with his brothers before him attended the Colombo Academy, the present Royal College. Suffice it to say that he was the most brilliant student of his time".⁶ Sir William Rothenstein, in his *Men and Memories* also gives a short but vivid and intimate account of the impression created on him by Arunachalam at their first meeting :

-
3. For a detailed study of James Alwis' ideas on and attitudes towards colonial English education in Sri Lanka, see the present writer's paper, "English Education and the Estranged Intellectual in Colonial Sri Lanka: the Case of James Alwis (1823-1878)", to appear in *The Sri Lanka Journal of the Humanities*.
 4. For a detailed study of Ananda Coomaraswamy's attitudes to colonial English education in Sri Lanka, see the present writer's papers, "A Generation of Spiritual Bastards and Intellectual Pariahs: A Study of Ananda Coomaraswamy's Attitudes to Colonial English Education in India and Ceylon", to appear in *Modern Ceylon Studies*.
 5. For a brief outline of the tradition of radical protest against colonial English education in Sri Lanka, see the present writer's paper, "Strangers in Their Own Land: An Outline of the Tradition of Radical Protest Against English Education in Colonial Sri Lanka", to appear in *The Journal of the Sri Lanka English Association* No. 1.
 6. P. Arunachalam, *Studies and Translations: Philosophical and Religious*, Colombo 1937, Introduction,

One day I was greeted by a grave-looking figure, in *chaddar* and *dhoti*, who spoke my name. It was Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam, a cousin of Coomaraswamy—he had been told I was painting at Benares, whither he had come as a pilgrim. A Tamil, and a practising Hindu, he was an old Cambridge graduate, a friend of Edward Carpenter, of Lowes Dickinson. I found him to be a man of wide culture and of quiet charm; and though he was at first surprised at meeting some of my *sanyasi* friends, he quickly approved of my choice of acquaintances. He joined me in my visits to Narasingh Sharma and together we learnt something of the tenets and practices of the Hatha Yoga.⁷

Arunachalam was not only a leading legislator and national leader, but also played a prominent part in the national reform movement, was also a leading member of the Ceylon Social Reform Society founded by Ananda Coomaraswamy, and campaigned against the indiscriminate imitation of the superficial aspects of Western culture among the Sri Lankan people. As a civil servant, Arunachalam functioned as the Registrar-General of the Island, and conducted the Census of Ceylon in 1901.

Part I

Arunachalam's attitude to the system of English education in colonial Sri Lanka, of which he himself was one of the most distinguished products, was uncompromisingly critical; moreover, his criticism (downright bitter at times, and at others teasingly satirical or sardonic) was always impassioned, serious and well-grounded on a detailed knowledge of and insight into the past as well as the present state of education in Sri Lanka, her history, culture and civilisation. Having examined the contemporary system of colonial English education in the late 19th century, for example, Arunachalam declared: "To apply the term education to this treadmill is an abuse of the term".⁸ In 1918, Arunachalam denounced the state of education in Sri Lanka thus: "In Ceylon, primary education, inefficient, ill-organised, advances slowly and languidly. Secondary education is in a worse state and higher education is non-existent".⁹ He also described education in Sri Lanka as "weak

7. Quoted in S. Durai Raja Singham, *Ananda Coomaraswamy—A New Planet in My Ken*, Kuala Lumpur, n.d., pp. 10-11.

8. P. Arunachalam, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. 1, H. W. Cave & Co. Ltd., n.d., p. 275.

9. *Ibid.*, p. 76.

on the intellectual side, and . . . weaker on the moral".¹⁰ Elsewhere, referring to the "new" (i.e. British colonial) methods of education, Arunachalam said: "While for the training of character there is no provision in the new methods, they have not quite succeeded even in training the intellect." Moreover Arunachalam, unlike most of his Westernised contemporaries, was aware of the serious but true standards of educational attainment of the English colleges in the contemporary period, describing them as follows: "The high-sounding name of colleges assumed by our secondary schools hides the poverty of their equipment".¹¹

It is interesting to go into Arunachalam's arguments for his severe and unequivocal indictment of the system of English education that had prevailed in Sri Lanka for nearly a century. To put it briefly, Arunachalam's main contention was that the then-prevalent system of education did not "draw out and develop the natural powers of the mind and the moral nature", that it failed to "provide the instruction and discipline which alone (could) enlighten the understanding, correct the temper, cultivate the taste and form the manners and habits of youth and fit them for usefulness in their future stations".¹² Thus Arunachalam in his writings on education reaffirms the arguments and attitudes advanced also by James Alwis and Ananda Coomaraswamy, but in many respects goes even beyond them, especially with regard to the need for the establishment of a University for Sri Lanka and the main functions and ideals of such a higher seat of learning.

A satisfactory system of elementary education, to Arunachalam, was a *sine qua non* for the development of a useful system of education in Sri Lanka (or in any country). It was indispensable in the sense that only on an efficient system of elementary education could be raised a superstructure of continuing education, i.e. secondary and higher education, which latter in turn was requisite for national progress: "Elementary education is an indispensable factor of national progress, but its full benefits cannot be reaped unless on its foundations is raised a noble superstructure of secondary and higher education".¹³

One of the most serious drawbacks of colonial education in Sri Lanka (again, one that had been noticed by earlier radical critics in the tradition in which Arunachalam wrote) was the scant respect paid to the mother-

10. Arunachalam, *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, p. 320.

11. P. Arunachalam, *The Census of Ceylon*, Vol. I, Colombo, 1902, p. 133; *Speeches and Writings*, p. 323.

12. *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, p. 275.

13. *Ibid.*, p. 279.

tongue of the pupils. To Arunachalam, (as it was to James Alwis and to Ananda Coomaraswamy) the use of English as the medium of instruction in schools led to serious debilitating psychological consequences on the learners as well as to social, cultural, and economic consequences on the nation as a whole. The neglect of the vernacular Arunachalam described as lying at the root of the evil of education in Sri Lanka: "The policy of ignoring the pupils' mother-tongue is . . . educationally vicious, and impedes the due development of his mind . . . The root of the evil in Ceylon is that the vernacular was neglected. School education was attempted through the medium of English, a language not spoken in the homes of pupils, never as a language formally or effectively taught, but tacitly or wrongfully assumed to be known."¹⁴ The results were mentally and psychologically damaging: "Consequently school work to the great majority of the pupils had become a process, not of mental development, nor of upbuilding in knowledge of things, but of acquiring mere words and phrases instead of ideas".¹⁵ Moreover, as a direct result of an undue concentration of attention on English, the Ceylonese nation as a whole would ultimately suffer, because "Having passed through a curriculum in which their mother-tongue is proscribed, (the students) have grown up in deplorable ignorance of it, and there is no prospect of the greatest need of the country being supplied—viz., a good Sinhalese and Tamil literature".¹⁶ Thus, Arunachalam clearly was no chauvinist, for he opposed the use of English as the medium of instruction not for purely nationalistic reasons, but because he grasped quite clearly that the best features of Western culture and civilisation could only be imbibed by those who had already acquired proficiency in their mother tongue. Arunachalam's highly reasonable and appreciative attitude to Western culture and languages emerges clearly in the following comment: "Only by the creation and spread of such literature (i.e., a developed Sinhalese and Tamil literature 'instinct with the best spirit of modern Europe') can what is good in European civilisation be brought within the reach of the people and become . . . part of their life and character and contribute to the vigorous growth of national life".¹⁷ The serious consequences of the pupils growing up with a smattering of English but without an adequate proficiency in their mother tongue

14. *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, pp. 291-92.

15. *Ibid.*, p. 292.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 262.

17. *Ibid.* Cf. also Arunachalam's ideal of ".....the diffusion of the best Western culture mingled with all that is best in our own....." *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I pp. 283-84.

were pointed out clearly by Arunachalam; speaking specifically of the Tamils, Arunachalam described how, "Thousands of Tamil children are turned out of our English schools as educated, who have lost all sense of the value of their mother tongue, and are unable even to speak it correctly . . .", and recommended forthrightly the compulsory acquisition of a good command of the mother tongue by them in school: "It is, therefore, right that our youth should be compelled to give some time to the systematic study of their mother tongue, in order that they may be able to speak and write it with some degree of accuracy and facility, to keep in touch with the currents and ideals of the national life and civilisation, and as they grow to manhood, may be fitted to rescue the vernacular literature of the day from its pedantry and triviality and make it a worthy vehicle for the dissemination of all that is best in Eastern and Western culture".¹⁸ Behind this quotation are felt, as before, Arunachalam's belief in the beneficial effects of a synthesis of all that was best in the cultures of the East and the West, and his passionate concern for the use of the mother tongue in education.

The position, according to Arunachalam, was aggravated by the fact that the standards of English at the time too were rather low. Citing cases in which the Oxford and Cambridge Board of Examiners who examined for the English University Scholarship awarded by the Ceylon government complained of the 'lack of originality and of their (i.e. of the students') inability to write English correctly', Arunachalam went on to declare that this position was the inevitable result of the use of an alien language as the medium of instruction: "They are taught from early childhood not things, but words, and in the town schools the words of a foreign language. In these schools, which attract the best pupils in the Island, English is the medium of instruction to children imperfectly acquainted with the language. In the lower forms the pupils scarcely understand what is taught, or understand only at the cost of great mental strain".¹⁹

Arunachalam demonstrates convincingly the foolhardiness and sheer absurdity of the imposition of English on Sri Lankan children, by using a vivid analogue, as follows: "Think what it would be in England if, say, German was made the medium of instruction in the elementary schools and English was entirely excluded. Yet German is more akin to English and easier to an English child than English to a Sinhalese or Tamil child".²⁰ The most serious outcome of the use of English as the medium

18. *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, p. 294.

19. *The Census of Ceylon*, Vol. I, p. 133.

20. *Ibid*,

of instruction, according to Arunachalam, was that it prevented students from learning to think, by making them parrot-like memorisers of English words and grammatical constructions :²¹ “A parrot-like repetition of words, with little understanding of their meaning, is necessarily encouraged. The pupils of the English schools are, in fact, worse off from an educational point of view than pupils of the vernacular schools who at least are taught to think”.²² Indeed, Arunachalam is here repeating forcibly the view advanced by Coomaraswamy as well—the idea that as long as the English language remained the medium of instruction, the time and the energies of the pupils would be dissipated in grappling with the vocabulary and grammatical intricacies of English, with a resultant mental and psychological retardation in the personality development of pupils.

All these drawbacks could have been overlooked, implies Arunachalam, if at least a sound knowledge of English had been ensured to the pupils in the English schools. Tragically, however, even in this respect there was no ground for complacency, for the pupils were not proficient even in English; Arunachalam faced the hard and bitter truth of the situation (one which was rarely admitted by those who themselves were products of the vicious system) in the following words : “English itself is so imperfectly taught that, after spending over a dozen years in its study, many are found unable to express themselves in it without committing gross blunders of grammar and idiom, though sometimes they acquire a certain volubility of English speech which they mistake for education”.²³ Here Arunachalam, unlike the majority of his contemporaries (to whom the ‘volubility of English speech’ was the Ultima Thule of their life-endeavours and the sole pathway to preferment and material success) recognises the fact that ‘real education’ is much more than the acquisition of a mere smattering of a foreign language.

Elsewhere, Arunachalam described (again the parallel with James Alwis and Ananda Coomaraswamy is striking) the tragedy of the Sinhalese or Tamil pupil whose heroic but futile efforts in childhood to master an alien tongue not only made him frustrated in life through lack of job opportunities but also alienated him from his own Sinhalese or Tamil-speaking community, neighbours, friends, brothers and sisters, even his

21. James Alwis, in his *Memoirs*, describes how he was compelled to resort to such expedients as the memorisation of word lists and even complete speeches. See J. Alwis, *Memoirs and Desultory Writings*, Ed. A. C. Seneviratne, Colombo, 1939, pp. 73-78.

22. *The Census of Ceylon*, Vol. I, p. 133.

23. *Ibid.*

parents: English itself, in spite of the time and labour spent on it, is so imperfectly taught . . . that many pupils are unable to write, or speak it correctly, and the Director of Public Instruction complained not long ago that, out of over 200 candidates at the examination for the Government Clerical Service, only 17 had a rudimentary knowledge of reading, writing and arithmetic".²⁴

Not the least of the consequences of an exclusive preoccupation with English education was the creation of an unbridgeable gulf between the English-educated and the vernacular-educated according to Arunachalam. Once more, this was a socio-cultural development in colonial Sri Lanka that had been noticed earlier by James Alwis, and during Arunachalam's own generation by Ananda Coomaraswamy. The alienation of the English-educated, the ever-widening gulf that was even then cleaving the Ceylonese social fabric in two, is described by Arunachalam as follows: "A gulf is growing between this class (i.e., the English-educated)—ignorant of the vernacular and classical languages of Ceylon, of its history, antiquities and traditions—and the masses of the people to whom English is and will remain a sealed book".²⁵

Not only did colonial English education ignore the pupils' mother tongue almost completely; equally vicious was the fact that the so-called English-educated pupil received a training after which he knew almost nothing of his local surroundings, history or traditions. To Arunachalam, "the most important learning of all" was "a thorough knowledge of his (the pupil's) own country, its people, its history, and its language".²⁶ The pupils, moreover, should be taught "to *understand* their own history, not merely the names and dates and incidents, but the philosophy of all the happenings of all those many hundreds of years of their history during which their race has been in formation; they should learn to glory in the high achievements of their race, to be proud of its traditions, and of its history and vernacular, as becomes those who are born in the country, and *they should know, above all, the people of the country.*"²⁷ Here, Arunachalam's views are surprisingly modern, and compare favourably with the systems of education practised at the present day in many countries in which maximum stress is laid upon a knowledge of the pupils' environment and their own history and culture, and upon learning through first-hand experience rather than through

24. *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. 1, p. 292.

25. *Ibid.*, p. 293.

26. *Ibid.*

27. *Ibid.*

books. In arguing that real teaching and learning could not be artificially divorced from the day-to-day life and surroundings of the pupils, once again, Arunachalam stated his case with great conviction, citing specific examples of the absurdity of the long-established practices in Ceylonese education. Debunking the prevalent system, Arunachalam said: "The teaching in the schools has little relation to the actual facts of the pupils' life and surroundings. If geography or history has to be taught, the teacher will begin with England and pass on to the continent of Europe and traverse the whole world, ignoring Ceylon, and make the child learn off a string of names and figures."²⁸ In place of this monstrously ludicrous system, Arunachalam suggested how a 'real' education could be imparted by anchoring instruction to the local physical background and indigenous culture by following a practical, common sense procedure in which "the lessons should begin with the nearest street or river, and nearest historical monument, like Wolfendahl Church or Kelaniya or Kotte temple, and (in which) school excursions should play.....an important part in school life, and should be utilised for teaching geography, history, botany, natural history, etc."²⁹ Arunachalam also condemned wholeheartedly the existing educational system for its other shortcomings, e.g., its not affording the child some understanding of the elementary laws of life and health, "the infraction of which often tells on his whole future existence, in stunted powers, in pain and disease, misery and premature death"³⁰ Colonial English education in Sri Lanka, in short, was a pitiful caricature, in which the pupil's own mother tongue was "proscribed from the schools and English (was) indifferently taught, a good deal of his time (was) devoted to Latin, French and Greek, Trigonometry, etc. '**Decoration before dress**' would almost appear to be the motto,"³¹ added Arunachalam sarcastically.

The methods of teaching in force at the time, too, especially the favourite system of rote-learning, were looked upon with disfavour by Arunachalam. Not only did rote-learning hinder the acquisition of knowledge; it had far-reaching physical and psychological consequences on the pupil. Arunachalam pointed out that such consequences could be so serious as to cripple a pupil for life. In support of his contention, he cited expert medical evidence too: "Pupils who respond to the calls made on them (by the contemporary colonial educational

28. *The Census of Ceylon*, Vol. 1, p. 133.

29. *Ibid.*

30. *Ibid.*

31. *Ibid.*

system) not infrequently end in a wrecked constitution of body and mind, as an eminent authority, Dr. Van Dort, testifies. Others acquire a disgust for knowledge. In all, this vicious system of rote-learning dulls the faculties, makes the pupil a passive recipient of others' ideas, is fatal to active inquiry or self-instruction, and is responsible for the lack of originality of which the Oxford and Cambridge examiners complain".³²

Arunachalam was perhaps one of the earliest critics of education in Sri Lanka to view with distaste and alarm the absence of any practical bias to contemporary education. Much more perceptive than the majority of his contemporaries, he decried the neglect of the manual arts and stated a strong case for the indispensable necessity of vocational training and technical and scientific education in any satisfactory and worthwhile scheme of national education. At the time he wrote, Arunachalam found that "Instruction in science and manual arts (was) generally crude and feeble, and vocational training wholly absent";³³ the greatest need of the moment for Sri Lanka was "the development of her industrial resources (which were) a great store of wealth to her people and an imperial asset. Such development is impossible without scientific and technical education".³⁴ Education for Arunachalam went hand in hand with national development; it was an instrument to be wielded for rapid national progress: "Even from a purely material point of view, education, especially scientific and technical education, is of vital importance to us".³⁵ In Sri Lanka, scientific and technical education was a vital necessity, especially since in this country "new industries have to be created, decaying industries revived, the value of labour-saving machinery taught and the dearth of skilled workmen supplied".³⁶ Any such technical and scientific training, moreover, should not be confined to the minor and supervisory grades but should extend to the managers of industrial enterprises as well, and should be a responsibility of the state.

Nor did Arunachalam scorn or devalue the local arts and crafts and a training in aesthetic education and appreciation. At the time he wrote, Arunachalam found that "Neglected and wasted, too, is that industrial and artistic skill which is conspicuous in the few arts and crafts that have survived, and which little more than a hundred years ago extorted the admiration of European nations by the production of 'the best and

32. *The Census of Ceylon*, Vol. I p. 134.

33. *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, p. 77.

34. *Ibid.*

35. *Ibid.*

36. *Ibid.*, p. 325.

handsomest artillery in the world' and 'the finest firelocks'.³⁷ Here Arunachalam is moved by the same lingering and nostalgic feeling for the traditional arts and crafts of mediaeval Sri Lanka that produced Ananda Coomaraswamy's monumental *Mediaeval Sinhalese Art* (1908).

Thus, Arunachalam's frontal attack on contemporary colonial education in Sri Lanka was so comprehensive as to embrace almost all the diverse criticisms of the system by Arunachalam's contemporaries and pre-contemporaries like George Turnour, James Alwis, D. J. Gogerley, Ananda Coomaraswamy, and Ponnambalam Ramanathan. This was made possible partly because Arunachalam wrote so late in time as to benefit from the publicised views of his distinguished contemporaries above mentioned. However, Arunachalam did not rest content with his headon onslaught upon contemporary education of the Western type; he also offered many important constructive suggestions for the change of the prevalent system and for its replacement by a truly 'national' system of education. Arunachalam's specific and constructive proposals for the establishment of such a system will form the subject of Part II of the present paper.

Part II

It has been pointed out in Part I that Arunachalam was opposed almost *in toto* to the colonial English system of education prevalent in Sri Lanka during the late 19th and early 20th centuries, and that his indictment comprehends almost all the features and aspects of that lop-sided and ill-suited system. Although many of the views and opinions expressed by Arunachalam had indeed been expressed earlier by other critics in the tradition (especially Alwis and Coomaraswamy), Arunachalam's writings and speeches also contain important insights, suggestions and proposals that are original. One striking feature of Arunachalam's thinking on education is the systematic manner in which he sets out to provide a firm foundation for his national system of education.

Most important of all, Arunachalam cherished a definite philosophy of education which is always implicit in his writings and speeches and which occasionally emerges to the surface. To Arunachalam, the function of education was to "draw out and develop the natural powers of the mind and the moral nature . . . , (to) provide the instruction and discipline which alone can enlighten the understanding, correct the

37. *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, p. 323.

temper, cultivate the taste, and form the manners and habits of youth and fit them for usefulness in their future stations".³⁸ He considered education as a 'means of life', not as a 'means of livelihood'; it was equally important that through education "the natural resources of our Island will be developed and its prosperity increased and made secure".³⁹ Moreover, education was a means which could be utilised "to breed good citizens, manly, self-reliant, upright, well-informed, public-spirited";⁴⁰ it would be "a powerful instrument for forming character, for breeding good citizens, for developing the natural resources of our Island and increasing her prosperity and welfare".⁴¹ It is important to note, however, that Arunachalam was constantly moved by the possibility and necessity of making a well-planned educational system an instrument of rapid national progress. Proper planning and organization in advance was essential, however, for this to be made possible, as practised in advanced countries like Denmark and Switzerland. "By a properly organised system of education our resources could be immensely developed", Arunachalam pointed out. "This has been done in agriculture by a small country like Denmark, and in industry as well as agriculture by another small country, Switzerland."⁴² Next he goes on to show, citing the cases of Denmark and Switzerland, how with the help of a well-planned educational system these countries were able to make up for the poverty of their natural resources and even to compete with a great power like Great Britain in trade.⁴³

Well-organised education was nothing, if it were not also widespread and free: here, too, Arunachalam was treading on dangerous ground, for the imperial policy of restricting the much-desired 'English' education to those who could afford to pay for it was being practised in Sri Lanka too at the time. Not even James Alwis or Ananda Coomaraswamy had dared to suggest the implementation of a national system of *free* education, and Arunachalam should perhaps be recognised as the 'Father of Free Education' in Sri Lanka, for it was long before the Free Education scheme of 1944 was implemented (in fact as early as 1918) that Arunachalam proposed such a scheme. Arunachalam told the imperial powers: "The chief concern of the local administration should be the spread, far and wide, of education, for it is the root of national life

38. *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, p. 275.

39. *Ibid.*, pp. 275, 277.

40. *Ibid.*, p. 320.

41. *Ibid.*, p. 322.

42. *Ibid.*, p. 325.

43. *Ibid.*

and progress. *Education should be free, both elementary and secondary, vernacular and English, industrial and scientific*".⁴⁴ Of course, this proposal would necessitate the setting apart of a larger slice of the national revenue than before for education, at least 30 per cent instead of the 4 or 5 per cent that the British authorities had then set apart for education : "Instead of a paltry four or five per cent of our revenue we must spend at least thirty per cent".⁴⁵ "Let us organise a system of education that shall, from the primary school to the University, be within the reach of every child", proposed Arunachalam. Regarding these revolutionary proposals that he advanced, however, Arunachalam harboured no illusions; he understood fully well that proposals of such a radical nature as the ones he put forward could only be implemented after the attainment of *swaraj* or complete political independence for Sri Lanka, for he added: "This vital question will, I am convinced, never be solved until the administration is in our hands".⁴⁶

In Arunachalam's 'national' system of education for Sri Lanka, top priority would, naturally, have been given to a study of the indigenous languages, Sinhalese and Tamil, and of local history and geography. One of the most urgent reforms needed in the contemporary educational context, said Arunachalam, was "to make the child's mother tongue the medium of instruction upto a certain point..."⁴⁷ Moreover, "Every Sinhalese or Tamil should", he asserted, "be compelled to devote some time to the systematic study of his mother tongue, so as to be able to speak and write it correctly".⁴⁸

Apart from this crucial and radical departure in the medium of instruction, the system of education contemplated by Arunachalam would, unlike the then-prevalent colonial system (which accorded pride of place to literary and philological study of English, Greek, Latin and French), give an important place to scientific and technical education. Aesthetic education (especially the fine arts, music and folk arts and crafts) would not be neglected, for Arunachalam had himself deeply imbibed native Tamil culture, and never in fact in his lifetime succumbed to the type of westernisation that a majority of Sri Lankans (especially the Sinhalese) showed themselves to be prone to.

Arunachalam saw, perhaps more acutely than anyone else of his generation, the serious lopsidedness of Sri Lankan education resulting

44. *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. 1, p. 28.

45. *Ibid.*

46. *Ibid.*, p. 29.

47. *The Census of Ceylon*, Vol. 1, p. 133.

48. *Ibid.*

from the lack of opportunity to acquire a scientific education. It was more than an individual disaster to the Sinhalese or the Tamil pupil; it was really a national calamity, for its outcome was that the resources of the Island remained unutilised and unexploited economically, for lack of suitably trained and qualified scientists. The consequences of neglecting the practical, scientific and technical sides of education brought in their wake not only individual frustration but also the draining away of the country's riches to foreign countries in several ways: "Our enforced ignorance" (of scientific knowledge), Arunachalam pointed out,

"closes the scientific departments of Government to us in large measure. Far worse, it makes us useless to our country for the development of her industrial and agricultural resources. We are exploited by European nations, and now also by Japan and America. We have become their milch-cow. Much of our wealth goes abroad. What is left imparts an air of prosperity, to the professional and commercial classes. The real makers of the country's wealth—the peasant and the labourer are steeped in poverty. The big capitalist and landowner are growing bigger. The small farmer, the *gryya*, who was the glory of Ceylon, is fast becoming a landless vagabond and hireling."⁴⁹

Here, rumination on education has led Arunachalam even farther afield, to an analysis of his contemporary socio-economic ethos, an analysis which assumes a considerably socialistic, anti-capitalistic and anti-imperialistic aspect in content as well as attitude. The passage just quoted, it is well to remember, was written as early as 1917, during the heyday of British imperialism in Sri Lanka, and nearly two decades before radical socialist and anti-capitalist ideas began to be disseminated in the Island.⁵⁰ Arunachalam in this passage displays a rare insight (for his time) into the socio-economic and political forces at work in his time in Sri Lanka, especially the capitalist exploitation of the Island's resources and economy by foreign capitalist and imperialist powers (Britain, America and Japan) on the one hand, and the local, internal exploitation of the poor peasant and labourer by the professional and commercial classes on the other, as well as the incipient class conflict generated by such developments. Arunachalam is clearly

49. *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. 1, p. 13.

50. It is worth noting that Arunachalam expressed these ideas in an address before the Ceylon National Association on 2nd April, 1917, i.e., several months before the Russian Revolution of October, 1917.

socialistic in his approach to the socio-economic problems of his time;⁵¹ he points unequivocally to the growing poverty of the peasant, the labourer and the *goiya*, whom he describes in near-Marxist terminology as “the real makers of the country’s wealth”. He also notices with consternation and a deep feeling of pathos and sympathy the growth of Sri Lankan capitalism, with “the big capitalist and landowner growing bigger” at the expense of the peasant and the small farmer, the ‘glory’ of the Island in the past who was fast becoming ‘a landless vagabond and hireling’. Thus Arunachalam here takes a firm and unequivocal stand as a radical political thinker (though of the Utopian variety, being influenced by Carlyle, Ruskin and William Morris, like Ananda Coomaraswamy) at a time when even the October Revolution in the Soviet Union had not yet taken place.

One of the basic tenets of Arunachalam’s philosophy of education, perhaps its most important feature, and on which all its other aspects depended, was the idea that all worthwhile education had to be anchored to the culture and civilisation of the would-be learner. For this, the most important pre-requisite was a basic knowledge of the indigenous languages, literatures, history, and traditions of the pupils themselves. Arunachalam’s insistence on the need for the adoption of Sinhalese and Tamil as the principal media of instruction has already been noticed. A grounding in the basic linguistic skills, though absolutely necessary, was, however, not sufficient, in Arunachalam’s view: Quoting Walt Whitman,⁵² Arunachalam demonstrated convincingly that the future progress and destiny of a nation was inextricably bound up with its past history and achievements not only in the battlefield but also in the field of literature.

51. Cf. also in this connection, the following passage, in which Arunachalam’s anti-capitalist and anti-imperialist ideas, as well as his concern for the under-dog are clearly set forth, ideas which indicate the influence of William Morris, John Ruskin, Thomas Carlyle and other English writers with a socialistic bent (though of a Utopian nature): “The labourer has exchanged the thralldom of the old Feudal system for the more terrible thralldom of capitalism..... We hanker for fat dividends in rubber and tea out of the sweat of the brow of coolies kept to their trade by cruel and oppressive laws. We are not squeamish as to making profits out of the degradation and misery of our countrymen plied with drink. The small farmer, the *gyyyz*, who was the glory of Ceylon, is fast becoming a landless vagabond and hireling. The real makers of the country’s wealth, the peasant and the labourer, are pinched with poverty and hunger, while the capitalist and the middleman divide the spoil”. *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. 1, pp. 4-5.

52. The quotation, from Walt Whitman’s *Democratic Vistas*, runs partly as follows: “At all times, perhaps, the central point in any nation, and that whence it is, itself, really swayed the most, and whence it sways others, is its national literature especially its archetypal poems—the great literature penetrates all, gives hue to all, shapes aggregates and individuals, and after subtle ways, with irresistible power constructs, sustains, demolishes at will”.

Arunachalam also rebelled against the emphasis on European (mainly British) history and geography in Sri Lankan schools, on the ground that the practice helped to produce a nation of unpatriotic and disgruntled youth. Would it be possible to breed a nation of patriots, Arunachalam queried, "with the mother tongue and the national history neglected in our schools, and our boys and girls growing up ignorant of the ideals, traditions and achievements of their race and, by dwelling exclusively on the achievements of others, hypnotised into self-depreciation and a sense of inferiority? No greater disaster can overtake a people".⁵³ Fed upon a pabulum of British and European history, the Sri Lankan school child of the late 19th and early 20th centuries grew up to be a *pariah*, an alienated and rootless individual with an inferiority complex, aping slavishly the superficial, external paraphernalia of westernisation; "Decoration before Dress" would almost appear to have been the motto here, on the part of the Sri Lankans, as Arunachalam had remarked in another connection. Ananda Coomaraswamy, in an article entitled 'Anglicisation of the East'⁵⁴ quoted approvingly the following passage from Arunachalam in which the latter had described vividly and eloquently the pathetic and ludicrous plight of the typical English-educated Sri Lankan child, whose curriculum had been burdened with the dead lumber of British and Western history and geography, and who was "in blissful ignorance" of the past glory and achievements of his forefathers :

"Our children can tell us all about the Norman Conquest, the Peloponnesian War, the capitals of English and Scottish counties, the capes and rivers of South America, the manufactories of Chicago. But of the elements of Ceylon Geography and History they are in blissful ignorance . . . Kotte and Sitawaka, in comparatively recent times, witnessed the heroic resistance of our people and kings to foreign invaders, from generation to generation. The names of these places waken no emotion in our hearts. We think of Kotte, mainly as a suburb which supplies the children of Colombo with nurses. Sitawaka, rich not only in the memories of this struggle but in the romance of Queen Sita's captivity and rescue in a bygone millenium, is lost in the unromantic tea district of Avissawella . . . It is scarcely creditable to us to remain in such profound ignorance of the history of our motherland and to be so indifferent to our past

53. *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. 1, p. 320.

54. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, "Anglicisation of the East", *The Ceylon National Review*, No. 2, July 1906, pp. 183-84.

and surroundings. It is a great loss, for not only is the history of Ceylon among the oldest most interesting and fascinating in the world, but no people can break up its past as we are trying to do".⁵⁵

Behind the passage can be unmistakably felt Arunachalam's nationalist fervour and his nostalgic feeling for his own land, its past glory and traditions, and an unmitigated contempt for an educational system which helped to perpetuate ignorance. Behind the thoughts expressed here are implicit some of the important *raisons d'etre* for Arunachalam's agitation for swaraj, for constitutional, social and administrative reform, and for his plea for the immediate establishment of a University in Sri Lanka. Also, this passage, as well as his comments on the development of capitalism in Sri Lanka reveal clearly that Arunachalam was one of the central consciousnesses of the age in which he lived (with James Alwis, Ananda Coomaraswamy and Ramanathan) to have grasped clearly the deleterious consequences of British administration in Sri Lanka, and especially the detrimental effects (social as well as psychological) of the alien colonial system of English education then prevalent in the Island.

Arunachalam's comments on the ill-effects of the use of English as the medium of instruction, however, should not be misconstrued to mean that he was an extremist or chauvinist, motivated by political opportunism or self-aggrandisement, who wished to banish English from the Island's shores altogether. Regarding the problem of the value and need for English language and literature in Sri Lankan education, Arunachalam once again stands firmly in the tradition set up by James Alwis and Ananda Coomaraswamy in pointing out the absolute need for a knowledge of English in Sri Lanka. As pointed out earlier, Arunachalam (like Alwis and Coomaraswamy) advocated a fluent bilingualism in language; Sri Lankan pupils should, he asserted, aim ideally at an equally facile command of both their mother tongue (Sinhalese or Tamil) and English (an international language). Arunachalam also believed that a good grounding in English (and other Western) literature could help to produce, in the course of time, a 'modern' literature in Sinhalese and Tamil. Most important of all, English would provide a key to the most valuable modern Western culture, a treasure which it would be suicidal for the people of Sri Lanka to spurn. Describing the study of English as "a subject of essential importance to us", Arunachalam declared that "a knowledge (of English) is necessary for the

55. Coomaraswamy does not give the source of this quotation from Arunachalam.

earning of a living—but more important still—it is our only avenue to Western culture. If we are not to stagnate, we must keep in touch with the great currents and ideals of this civilisation and try to assimilate it as far as we can”.⁵⁶

Arunachalam’s plea for the retention of English as a utilitarian language, an instrument essential for cultural and scientific enrichment, however, did not mean that he supported or endorsed the methods of teaching English then current in Sri Lanka, or that he apotheosised the Cambridge and Oxford examinations to which all school children in Sri Lanka aspired at the time. Most important of all, Arunachalam quite rightly (and here his thinking once again is surprisingly modern and in line with the latest research in the field of second language learning) said that the initial stages of a child’s education should invariably be in his mother tongue, and that a foreign language (English) should be introduced only gradually, in stages. Nor did Arunachalam favour the so-called “Direct Method” as a technique of teaching English as a second language in Sri Lanka;⁵⁷ he advocated instead (once again nearly a half-century before other Sri Lankan educationalists and teachers of English even began to ponder on the problem) the “Bilingual Method” of teaching English. It should be remembered that Arunachalam adopted this highly revolutionary attitude at a time when even local languages like Sinhalese, Tamil, Pali and Sanskrit were being taught in Sri Lanka through the English medium. Arunachalam maintained that if English was to be taught at all, “it should be taught bilingually, and everything explained in the mother-tongue”,⁵⁸ a method which is now almost universally practised in Sri Lanka (especially in the University). Again, Arunachalam was perceptive enough to understand, perhaps by intuition, what Sri Lanka has now come to realise through experience—the futility of attempting to teach a foreign and alien language as if it were the mother tongue of the learner.

The school curriculum in English literature then adopted in Sri Lanka (modelled slavishly on the syllabuses of Cambridge, Oxford and London universities) also came under heavy fire from Arunachalam, on the ground that it did not meet the needs of the Sri Lankan people. Here, too, he pointed out how the grandiose keeping-up of appearances (of teaching Shakespeare, Milton, and other great English writers) was

56. *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. 1, pp. 260-61.

57. Again, Arunachalam is in line with the latest thinking on the subject in Sri Lanka, where the ‘Direct Method’ is now definitely considered to have been a failure as a method of teaching English as a second language.

58. *The Census of Ceylon*, Vol. 1, p. 134.

a mere facade; how the teaching of literature had degenerated into a pitiful lack of appreciation and even to lack of understanding of the English text, how it was more a humdrum exercise in memory power—in brief, another case of “Decoration before Dress”. In an eloquent passage, again in his characteristic fashion, Arunachalam analysed the true situation regarding the teaching of English literature in Sri Lankan schools, laying bare the self-contradictoriness and hypocrisy of the pretentious exercise :

How does the Cambridge or London curriculum meet our wants? The Cambridge English is mainly restricted to Shakespeare’s plays. These are all very well for English boys or others who have a sound knowledge of English and are able to appreciate the beauties of Shakespeare! But nothing can be more unsuited than Elizabethan drama to Ceylonese youths who are still struggling with the idiom and grammar of the English tongue. What they need is a good working knowledge of modern English. For this they must study modern English literature and especially prose. Prose is conspicuous by its absence from the Cambridge curriculum. To the Ceylon youth the study of Shakespeare too often means little study or understanding of the text, still scantier appreciation of the charms of Shakespeare’s thought or style, but a voracious cramming of the notes plentifully supplied in modern school editions. I have known boys and girls even gain distinctions in English at the Cambridge Senior Local Examination without being able to spell correctly. The London University English course is still less suited to our children: it is far too philological and antiquarian.⁵⁹

It is apparent that here Arunachalam is arguing not against the study of Shakespeare in Sri Lankan schools but against the hypocrisy and the futility of teaching Shakespeare to students before they have gained a sufficient command of English to write and to speak it—in short, he takes the incontrovertible stand that acquisition of the requisite practical linguistic skills should precede the study of sophisticated literary works, especially Shakespearean drama: an argument which even the greatest admirers of Shakespeare would have perforce to concede. Instead of engaging in another type of ‘Decoration before Dress’, therefore, according to Arunachalam, the teaching of English as a utilitarian language should be given precedence, which, *ipso facto*, would direct greater attention to *prose* than to poetry or drama. Again, Arunachalam’s contention was grounded firmly on experience, for he described vividly, and explained with great intuitive understanding, the

59. *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. 1, p. 261.

insensitivity towards literature of the so-called English-educated in colonial Sri Lanka, nurtured as they had been on the London-Cambridge curricula: "The majority of our youth are unable, after a dozen years' study, to write or speak English correctly or to feel any interest in good English literature, and restrict their reading to the gossip of the daily paper and to trashy novels and magazines. They remain strangers to western culture, however much they may strive, by adopting the externals of Western life, dress, food, drink, games, etc.—to be 'civilised' in the Western fashion".⁶⁰ Again, it is the same *malaise* that has afflicted the Ceylonese, says Arunachalam: 'Decoration before Dress'; with a pitiful lack of discrimination, they had chosen the spurious for the genuine, the superficialities for the true essence, with regard to Western culture. The notions regarding Westernisation expressed here are central to the thoughts on anglicisation and alienation expressed time and again not only by Arunachalam, but *inter alia* also by Ananda Coomaraswamy, Ponnambalam Ramanathan, Anagarika Dharmapala, John de Silva, and Piyadasa Sirisena.

From Arunachalam's point of view, English (and in general, western) literature had a more crucial and formative role to play with reference to Sri Lanka, a function which had thus far been ignored and remained latent: it could be utilised to bring about a desirable synthesis of Western and Eastern culture, and to contribute to the production of 'a good Sinhalese and Tamil literature instinct with the best spirit of modern Europe'. "Only by the creation and spread of such literature can what is good in European civilisation be brought within the reach of the people and become, as it has in Japan, part of their life and character and contribute to the vigorous growth of national life".⁶¹

Part III

The culmination of Arunachalam's thinking on Sri Lankan education is found in his proposals for the establishment of the future University of Ceylon. These suggestions, many of them highly original and revolutionary at the time they were first presented seventy years ago, in October 1906⁶² in an article entitled 'A Plea for a Ceylon University, comprise a fairly comprehensive blueprint for a truly 'national' University of Ceylon, an institution that would have represented the acme of higher learning in Sri Lanka, the fitting apex of a genuine scheme of elementary and secondary education. It would not, if it were to be truly

60. *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. 1 pp. 261-62.

61. *Ibid.*, p. 262.

62. In an article in *The Journal of the Ceylon University Association*, Vol. 1, No. 2, October 1906.

'national', be a slavish imitation of Cambridge, London, and other foreign Universities, for these foreign institutions "know nothing and care nothing about our needs and conditions, and no education can be fruitful of good which ignores them".⁶³ From the beginning, Arunachalam is careful to define and describe the Ceylon University and its functions in terms of the strict criteria that he had already set down for a desirable system of higher education. Thus Arunachalam's proposals regarding University education for Sri Lankans define, formulate and epitomise his entire philosophy of education; the stress on the use of the mother tongue as the medium of instruction, the inculcation of the spirit of patriotism through the teaching of indigenous history, geography, languages and literatures, the synthesis of the valuable features of the cultures and civilisations of the East and the West, the stress on the proper teaching of science and technology as a means of national progress, the teaching of practical, utilitarian English to be used as a *lingua franca* and as a key to modern culture, the promotion of a well-balanced education which could lead to the material, cultural and spiritual advancement of the individual as well as to national development, greater attention to agriculture, forestry, industries and commerce as well as literature, the fine arts and music—all these ideals were presented in coherent form at a time when a University was still on paper. Seen with the wisdom gained through hindsight and the enormous problems that have confronted the University in recent years, Arunachalam's proposals may seem mockingly and ironically prophetic in their far-sightedness to the present generation; they were, unfortunately, not treated with the consideration and respect that they deserved (at the time they were made) by Sri Lanka's colonial administrators. Instead, the well-intentioned suggestions of Arunachalam were cast aside, in favour of the London-Oxbridge model that the British not surprisingly believed was the *ne plus ultra* in education.

As Arunachalam conceived it, the main function of the University of Ceylon would be to prevent the production of (in the words of Ananda Coomaraswamy) "a generation of spiritual bastards"⁶⁴ and "nondescript and superficial being(s) deprived of all roots.....intellectual *pariah(s)* who (do) not belong to the East or the West, the past or the future".⁶⁵ :

63. *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, p. 261.

64. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, *The Religious Basis of the Forms of Indian Society*, New York, 1946, p. 32.

65. Ananda K. Coomaraswamy, *The Dance of Shiva*, New York, 1957, pp. 155-56.

It will be the chief aim of the Ceylon University, while making efficient provision for the study of English, and the assimilation of Western culture, to take care that our youth do not grow up strangers to their mother tongue and to their past history and traditions. Here they will learn to use their mother tongue with accuracy and ease, to appreciate the beauties of their classical languages and literatures, to realise that they are inheritors of a great past stretching back twenty four centuries and to make themselves worthy of their inheritance. The vernacular literature of the day will then be rescued from its pedantry and triviality and be made a worthy vehicle for the dissemination of what is best in Western and Eastern culture and of the thoughts, hopes and aspirations of our best men and women. Then at last the masses of our people will be really influenced for the better by Western civilisation, which seems otherwise likely to leave no more enduring mark than the addition of some European words to our vocabulary, and the incorporation of some European customs in our social life".⁶⁶

Here, too, the note that emerges to the surface (especially in the latter part of the passage) is the antithesis between "Decoration" and "Dress", the principal *leit-motiv* of all Arunachalam's writings.

The Ceylon University still-to-be was also to be entrusted with "the proper teaching of science"; at a time when the teaching of science was receiving step-motherly treatment in Sri Lankan schools and colleges Arunachalam again adopted the unconventional stance of designating science as "the most important factor of modern life".⁶⁷ In characteristic fashion, Arunachalam ridiculed his countrymen for their purblindness in ignoring science: "Here we are in Ceylon, after a hundred years of British rule, still almost as ignorant of science as if it did not exist. What more can be expected when our educational authorities are profoundly ignorant and contemptuous of science, and their great aim is to make our youth construe elegantly a bit of Latin or Greek verse?"⁶⁸

Scientific education at the Ceylon University would not, however, be purely (or even primarily) theoretical; the main emphasis would be on "applied science", and provision would have to be made for "a scientific study of agriculture, a subject of vital importance to us".⁶⁹ Not only did Arunachalam propose the setting up of a special Faculty of Agriculture in the University; he even conceived of the spread of "the knowledge of agricultural science among the people".⁷⁰ Even forestry would

66. *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. 1, p. 264.

67. *Ibid.*

68. *Ibid.*, p. 265.

69. *Ibid.*, p. 273.

70. *Ibid.*

be a subject to be studied at University level, for Arunachalam understood the vital importance of the conservation of forests for national development. A prominent place would be accorded in Arunachalam's scheme of University education to commercial and industrial education too. Together with other nationalist leaders like Anagarika Dharmapala and Piyadasa Sirisena, Arunachalam was alarmed by the fact that the majority of the commercial and industrial enterprises in the Island at the time were in the hands of non-nationals, for which the obvious corrective would be the immediate training of the Sinhalese and the Tamils in the commercial and industrial fields. Again, the following passage reveals Arunachalam's acute understanding of the socio-economic developments of the contemporary period, on some of which (like the development of capitalist trends) he had already laid his finger: "This is a very serious want in the Island", said Arunachalam, adverting to commerce and trade, and continued:

"The Sinhalese, with rare exceptions, do not take to commerce. A large share of the commerce of the Island is in the hands of the Tamils, but they are not the indigenous Tamils. The majority of the non-European merchants, bankers and shopkeepers are Nattukottai chetties, and other South Indian Tamils and Parsees, Hindus and Mohammedans from North India, who are birds of passage and, like their European confreres, carry away from the Island the profits that, if our people were trained in commerce, would remain and fructify here. The case of industrial enterprise is worse. It is almost entirely in foreign hands".⁷¹

Yet another feature of the Ceylon University, had it been set up on the model drawn up so lovingly and carefully for it by Arunachalam, would have been a well-balanced training in both the arts and the sciences for all students: "For a good foundation in Arts and Science should, in any well-organised scheme of education, be an indispensable preliminary to admission to the study of Law, Medicine and Engineering".⁷²

Like Ananda Coomaraswamy,⁷³ Arunachalam conceived of the future University of Ceylon as a centre *par excellence* for Oriental learning, a centre which would attract students from all over the world, Sri Lanka being the principal country in which Hinayana Buddhism could be

71. *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. I, p. 275.

72. *Ibid.*, p. 257.

73. Cf. "Our University must be above all a school of Oriental learning, sufficient not only for ourselves, but to attract scholars from all parts of the world to learn the wisdom of the East in the East". Ananda Coomaraswamy, *Art and Swadeshi*, Madras, n.d., p. 190.

studied to the greatest advantage. Buddhism, Pali and Sanskrit, he expected with complete complacency, would naturally have professorial chairs in the Ceylon University, and "the prospect of studying on the spot the sacred languages and books of the Buddhists will draw students in increased numbers to the University. One need not be a prophet to anticipate that Ceylon is destined from its central position and its historical and religious associations to be a focus of Eastern and Western culture throughout the East and to exercise a great influence over the world's thought".⁷⁴

To Arunachalam, writing in 1906, the University of Ceylon to-be was to be a bastion of culture, "the crown of a well-ordered series of elementary and secondary schools and colleges"; it was also expected to be "a powerful instrument for forming character, for giving (the country) men and women armed with reason and self-control, braced by knowledge, clothed with steadfastness and courage and inspired by public spirit and public virtue.....The standard of ability, character and general efficiency will be raised throughout the public service and in every profession, the natural resources of our Island will be developed and its prosperity increased and made secure".⁷⁵ These were ideals that the university has found it difficult in its 55-year-old history to live upto, and had Arunachalam lived to see the frustration of many of his cherished ideals in the actuality, he would, probably with characteristic irony, have characterised the Ceylon University as yet another instance of the Sri Lankan preoccupation with "Decoration before Dress".

The present study of the educational thoughts and ideals of Ponnambalam Arunachalam has revealed that this great nationalist, legislator and one-time civil servant was also a percipient critic and reformer of Sri Lankan education. While on the one hand Arunachalam was an uncompromising critic of the prevalent system of education in colonial Sri Lanka and a champion of the mother-tongue of the pupil as the medium of instruction and, as one writer remarks, "in a sense the real father of the swabhasa", (and, it may be added, of free education), he was also a highly practical, constructive critic. Indeed, his proposals for the reform of education in Sri Lanka were so radical and far-reaching as to be tantamount to a contemplated revolution of the entire system of education in the Island. As the present study indicates quite clearly, Arunachalam anticipated many of the important educational reforms implemented in the mid-1940s and the early 1970s, such as the

74. *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. 1, pp. 259-60.

75. *Ibid.*, pp. 276-77.

use of the swabhasa as the medium of instruction, free education, vocational training as an integral part of school education, scientific and industrial education, and aesthetic education. Finally, as the Founder-President of the Ceylon University Association and the acknowledged leader of the University Movement, Arunachalam presented his nation with a near-complete blueprint for the establishment of a truly 'national' University of Ceylon. The University, when it materialised, did not, unfortunately, conform in many ways to the clearly expressed ideals of its foster-father, Arunachalam. The phrase adopted in the title of the present paper, "Decoration before Dress", epitomises admirably well Arunachalam's consistent satirico-critical attitude to colonial English education in Sri Lanka as well as to most other socio-economic developments in the Island including the indiscriminate aping of the West by the Sri Lankans. By drawing attention to the necessity for the adjustment of the educational system to local conditions and needs, Arunachalam offered a necessary corrective and a much-needed orientation to 'national' education. The 'national' system of education presented by Arunachalam was one which could promote the progress and development not only of individual personality but also of the entire Sri Lankan nation. The essence of Arunachalam's educational thought is perhaps contained in the single sentence, "The vital principle of education (is) that local needs and conditions are the first and most important elements for consideration in framing an educational scheme".⁷⁶ Deep thought on education also inevitably led Arunachalam to an intimate understanding of other major socio-cultural features of the contemporary ethos: the development of capitalist trends, the increasing gap between the rich and the poor, and so on. His socio-economic thought, in turn, was surprisingly modern, humanist and considerably 'socialistic', especially in a pre-revolutionary age, during the first decade of the 20th century.

In conclusion, it is highly apposite to quote below a passage which embodies Arunachalam's most cherished ideals of university education: a passage which illustrates the depth, keenness and modernity of his thoughts on higher education. The passage is a valuable reminder to the present generation (as well as to future generations) of the high (and perhaps too idealistic) expectations that motivated the father of Sri Lanka's university movement in the early 20th century when the University of Sri Lanka was yet a mere brain-child. The passage also contains, in germ, most of the aspects of Arunachalam's philosophy of education :

76. *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. 1, p. 266.

“In the University, as we conceive it, examinations will be in their proper subordinate place. They will be fruitful, because they will be conducted, and the courses of study will be prescribed by officers who know the needs and conditions and idiosyncrasies of our youth and whose duty it will be to consider them alone, undistracted by the requirement of the youth of Great Britain or other countries. But it is the teaching function of the University and its influence on the whole educational life of the Island to which we attach most importance. The University will bring together in one place under the personal influence of Professors of high attainments and culture the best youths in the country.....The clash of opinions caused by association and discussion with teachers and fellow-students stimulate intellectual life and create an atmosphere of culture and loyalty to high ideals. This is the most valuable result of University life, not the learning of books or the passing of examinations. Who can estimate the loss we have suffered for want of such a fountain of intellectual and moral life?”⁷⁷

77. *Speeches and Writings*, Vol. 1, p. 276.

THE COLOMBO-KANDY RAILWAY

INDRANI MUNASINGHE

The Colombo-Kandy railway, the pioneer railway to be constructed in Sri Lanka was primarily intended to serve the interests of the rapidly expanding colonial coffee plantations. The plantations in the central highlands of the island had their basic economic linkages with overseas markets. Their principal produce, coffee, was marketed overseas. Input requirements—machinery, implements, fertilizer, as well as major food requirements for the large labour force were largely met from imports. This generated a heavy demand for transportation of goods. The necessity to recruit the labour force from India and the seasonality in labour use generated a substantial passenger traffic too, by bullock carts along the main Colombo-Kandy road.

The absence of comprehensive data precludes detailed assessment of the increase in the volume of traffic consequent to the rise of plantations. Yet the fact, that the cart tolls revenue increased from £8,786 in 1842 to £15,903 in 1845¹ is an adequate proof of the increasing volume of traffic along the Kandy road. The cart licence figures too provide supporting evidence as to the large volume of traffic. In 1847, the Ceylon Railway Company estimated that the average annual cart trips amounted to 79,000 between Colombo and Kandy.² The increasing volume of traffic demand for transport as a result of the growth of plantations, no doubt, posed a considerable challenge to the existing mode of goods traffic, the bullock cart. However, it was not so much the actual shortage of bullock carts but rather other factors which raised the question of railway construction.

1. A. M. Ferguson, *Ceylon Directory* 1866-68, p. 262.

2. Ceylon Railway Company prospectus, C.O.54.241.

The coffee country was situated mainly in the rugged interior, with an altitude of over 1500 feet. A bullock cart averaged 10 to 12 days to complete the tedious journey of 72 miles from Colombo to Kandy.³ The duration of the journey was primarily determined by the weather conditions. The torrential monsoon rains made the poorly surfaced roads treacherous and at times completely impassable. The constant outbreak of cattle murrain resulted in heavy mortality and subsequent periodic shortage of bullocks and interrupted the transportation. These factors combined to make cart haulage slow, tedious and costly. The normal rate of hire was £ 2.10 sh. per cart for transporting 15 cwts. of coffee to Colombo and for bringing back half a cart load of supplies, i.e. rice, manure and other stores. By 1845, the cost of transportation was adding about 5sh.2d. per cwt. to the F.O.B. price of coffee. This works out to about 14% of the F.O.B. price of quality coffee.⁴ In case of cheaper grades the transport cost component in the F.O.B. price was much higher as the cart hire was determined by the volume of coffee hauled. Hence the planters no doubt believed that the cost of transport by rail would be markedly lower.

However, an examination of the various memoranda by the planters would make one think that it was really the difficulty and the slowness of cart transport which promoted their desire for a railway. The long journey of several days, being continuously exposed to the ravages of the weather, deteriorated the quality of the coffee and deflated the prices fetched in the London market.⁵ The resultant immediate financial loss to the planters was considerable, but what was more serious was losing of their competitiveness in the London market. At times, when the monsoon was at its highest, the traffic along the Colombo-Kandy road ceased completely as the roads were impassable, or so treacherous that it involved heavy risks. There were many instances of shipment delays due to such conditions.⁶

This unreliability of regular road transportation made it necessary to maintain stores in Kandy and Colombo⁷ incurring additional cost to the planters. It was hoped that a railway once constructed would dispense with the necessity of maintaining such stores and hence would reduce total costs. Thus, reduction of transport costs of coffee was one of the prime considerations of the planters in seeking for a railway.

3. C.O.54.233, Despatch 28 of Campbell to Grey on 13 February 1847.

4. These figures are calculated from price data given in the Ceylon Blue Books of Statistics for the year 1845.

5. Despatch 28 of Campbell to Grey on 13 Feb. 1847, C.O.54.233.

6. Ibid.

7. A planter, *Ceylon in the Fifties and the Eighties*, Colombo, 1886, pp. 2-3.

It was hoped that the high price of consumable articles prevailing in Kandy would be reduced by a railway. The cost of rice in Kandy, for example, was twice as much as in Colombo.

These were the main considerations which induced the planters to agitate for the construction of a railway to Kandy. As a railway was likely to be an important asset in the development of plantations, the British colonial administration reacted favourably to the idea.

The first effort to construct a railway in Sri Lanka stemmed from the private sector. A Company called the Ceylon Railway Company with a registered capital of £1 million made up of 20,000 shares of £50 each, was formed in 1845 under the chairmanship of Mr. Philip Anstruther (who was at one time the Colonial Secretary of Ceylon) to build a railway in Sri Lanka.⁸ The Provisional Committee of the Railway Company included a few proprietors of the large coffee estates in Sri Lanka, thereby indicating the connection between the Ceylon Railway Company and the coffee planters. The Company sought from the colonial Government its assistance in their proposed project in the form of the free grants of the land through which the railway was to pass.⁹

Having received the Government's assurance of the free grant of land,¹⁰ the initial survey work of tracing of lines was already underway when railway development in India created a new situation. In India, the East India Railway Company was granted a 4% guarantee of interest on capital to construct a railway in India. The Ceylon Railway Company too requested such a concessionary guarantee to enable the company to raise the necessary capital¹¹ on the depressed London Money Market.¹²

The low prices fetched by Sri Lankan coffee in London and the reduction of coffee exports due to bugs and rats were causing serious financial strains on the colonial government, as the major source of Government revenue was the export taxes.¹³ Under such circumstances the Governor could not accede to the request of the Ceylon Railway Company.¹⁴ The initial attempt to construct a railway in Sri Lanka thus proved abortive.

8. Ceylon Railway Company Prospectus, C.O.54.241.

9. A letter from the Chairman of the Provisional Committee of Ceylon on 3 Nov. 1845, C.O.54.215.

10. Despatch 241 of Campbell to Stanley on 24 Nov. 1845, C.O.54.219.

11. Memorial from the Local Committee of the Ceylon Railway to the Secretary of State on 13 Feb. 1847, C.O.54.233.

12. Memorial signed by the planters, merchants, landed proprietors, traders and other inhabitants of Ceylon on Feb. 8, 1847, enclosed in Despatch 28 of Campbell, C.O.54.233.

13. *The Economist*, 12 May 1849.

14. Despatch 156 of Torrington to Grey on 8 Sept. 1848, CO..54.251.

The London Provisional Committee offered to construct a part of the line of about 32 miles for a sum of £258,795.¹⁵ The Governor hoped that this new trimmed down proposal would be accepted.¹⁶

But the worsening economic conditions in England in 1847, led to a further tightening of the money market. The coffee prices continued to fall,¹⁷ and this led to a further fall in government revenue. To cap it all, the Kandyan rebellion of 1848 completely sapped the colonial administration's energy and resources and totally engaged its attention,¹⁸ leading to the railway question being shelved temporarily. The Governor Torrington was recalled rather ingloriously for his mismanagement of government authority during the rebellion.

To the new Governor, George Anderson, who succeeded Torrington, the prospect of constructing a railway in Sri Lanka, was nothing more than "a speculative venture".¹⁹ The planters, dismayed at this pessimistic view, first argued that a railway once constructed would tend to increase the volume of both passenger and goods transport.²⁰ If the above argument was weak, as it was based on the hypothetical dictum that supply creates its own demand, their petition in 1853 was tactical enough to stress that a railway would reduce the cost of maintaining army garrisons in Kandy. This argument, made immediately after the rebellion, was no doubt powerful.²¹

In 1854 they pointed out that the existing volume of traffic along the Colombo-Kandy road would yield sufficient revenue to meet both the working expenses of a railway and the safe guarantee of interest. Anderson agreed that the profits of a railway would be generally very large, but qualified that "such must not be calculated upon, and cannot be till the road is fully open to traffic".²² Instead the Governor suggested that, as the finances of the island did not make possible the construction of a railway, the coffee planting interests "for whose benefit in fact, the railway would be chiefly made should at least bear one half the charge of the guarantee by an export duty on coffee".²³

15. Railway Record, 19 June 1847, as printed in the *Examiner* of 28 July 1847 and in the *Colombo Observer* of 2 Aug. 1847.

16. Address to the Legislative Council by Torrington on 30 Oct. 1847.

17. L. A. Mills, *Ceylon Under the British Rule, 1796-1932*, p. 236.

18. For an authoritative account of the rebellion of 1848, see K. M. de Silva, *The Rebellion of 1848 in Ceylon, C.J.H.S.S.*, Vol. VII. No. 2, pp. 144-170.

19. Anderson to Chamber of Commerce, on 6 May 1851.

20. Memorial of the Planters Association presented to the Governor on 24 July 1851, C.O.54.308.

21. Memorial of the Planters, Merchants and the Traders to the Governor on 1 March 1853, enclosed in D.21 of Anderson, C.O.54.298.

22. G.96 of Anderson to Grey on 29 Dec. 1894, C.O.54.311.

23. Ibid.

The planters were in a desperate plight. A cattle murrain disease in 1854 had wiped out more than half the cattle in the Central Province. The cost of transporting 15 cwt. of coffee had increased from £2.20sh. to £4.10sh. Hence they welcomed the governor's suggestion of an export duty on coffee, with a proviso that it would be levied for a limited period only.²⁴

Though the new governor, Henry Ward, was of opinion, that the "export tax should be confined to coffee only".²⁵ The British Government argued that the tax should be extended to all products as a railway once constructed would benefit every section of the community.²⁶

After 10 years of uncertainty it looked as if Sri Lanka would have her first railway. The Ordinance No. 1 of 1856, was first read in the Legislative Council on 30 July 1856, to give validity to the "provisional agreement between the Secretary of State and the Ceylon Railway Company for a construction of a railway between Colombo and Kandy".²⁷ By this agreement the colonial 'Government of Ceylon' pledged to guarantee a 6% interest for 99 years on the £800,000 to be raised for the construction of the railway and to provide the necessary land, or to purchase it without expense to the Company from the people. The Government was to : (a) decide the direction in which the line should run; (b) act as arbitrator in case of a difference of opinion between the Engineer of the Company and the Government Engineer; and, (c) secure the right to transport mails and troops free of charge. The fixing of fares was left at the discretion of the Company, but the Company was to meet the cost of all the running repairs during the 99 years. Finally, the government reserved the right to purchase the railway after an interval of 25 or 50 years, by payment of compensation of a sum equivalent to the total capital value calculated on the basis of the three previous years average value.

Since the first reading of the Railway Ordinance, a public outcry led by the planting interests themselves was voiced against the terms of the agreement. An examination of these petitions and memoranda proves that those who owned estates further away from the rail track were the most ardent opposers. It is true that Kandy was the collecting centre for most of the coffee grown in the Central Province. But to planters in Badulla, and the Southern Province, who sent their coffee to Colombo

24. Report of the Planters' Association held in Kandy on 2 Feb. 1855.

25. Address to L. C. by Ward on 4 July 1855.

26. D.22 of Russell to Ward on 25 June 1855, C.O.55.95 and Minutes by the Under Secretary of State on 20 Aug. 1855, C.O.54.316.

27. Ordinance No. 1 of 1856, C.O.56.7. The Bill was passed on 30 September 1856.

along other routes a railway line to Kandy did not appeal.²⁸ The planters who had their coconut estates in the Eastern and Northern Provinces also fell into this category. Their objections were understandably strong,²⁹ as they too were to contribute by way of increased export taxes.

To the people of Sri Lanka, a railway was not a necessity. The Colombo-Kandy road was sufficient to meet their simple trading needs. In fact a large number of Sri Lankans who earned their livelihood as carters, rest-house keepers, sellers of straw and other merchandise and small coffee shop owners along the Kandy road were bound to suffer considerably by the construction of a railway. The Sri Lankan growers of tobacco and coconut too joined in representations to the governor against the enhanced export duty.³⁰ The Ordinance No. 2 of 1856 was passed to impose a duty on all the major exports with the object of "providing" additional means in aid of the general revenue to pay the interest guaranteed to the Railway Company on capital to be expended on the construction of the railway from Colombo to Kandy.³¹

All these objections resulted in an undertaking by the government to resurvey the line and to ensure a cost ceiling of £1,200,000. If the estimated expenditure were to exceed that limit, it was agreed that the contract would be annulled.³² Following this pledge the Secretary of State sent Captain Moorson to examine the route and to locate, if possible, other traces which would be less expensive.

After considering 6 possible routes in two months,³³ he estimated that the route selected by Mr. Drane in 1846, with slight modifications would cost £856,557, including all necessary accommodation for traffic.³⁴ The government accepted the report and by the Proclamation of May 18, 1857, the agreement with the Ceylon Railway Company was put in force.

Having secured the contract the Ceylon Railway Company sent W. T. Doyne as the Chief Engineer, and a staff to assist him, to prepare the preliminary arrangements at the end of 1857. On 3rd August, 1858 the Governor, Sir Henry Ward, cut the first sod amidst great jubilation and his attitude was summed up in his own words, "As Educators Railways supersede roads in Oriental Lands".³⁵

28. Despatch 59 of Ward to Molesworth on 15 Nov. 1855, C.O.54.318.

29. Confidential Despatch from Ward to Labouchers on 9 June 1856, C.O.54.322.

30. A petition from the native growers of tobacco in the Northern Province on 22 Aug. 1856, enclosed in Despatch 165 of Ward, C.O.54.323.

31. C.O.56.7

32. Minutes of the L.C. on 22 Jan. 1857. C.O.57.24.

33. *The Ceylon Railway One Hundred Years 1864 - 1964*, Colombo, p. 18.

34. Address to the L.C. by the Governor on 30 July 1857. C.O.57.24.

35. *Ceylon Railways, One Hundred Years*, p. 17 and *Ceylon Observer*, 5 Aug. 1858, *Examiner* 4, Aug. 1858.

Doyne found the estimate of £856,557 made by Captain Moorson to be suspiciously low. The line of first 34 miles to Ambepussa was traced and marked out. This proved his suspicion to be true. A new estimate of the proposed line was taken. This worked out to £2,214,000.³⁶

This estimate, not surprisingly, revived the planters' agitation against the construction of the railway by a private company. The planters were supported in their agitation by the land-owning and mercantile interests.³⁷ The Governor was accused of having forced the Railway Ordinance through the Council "with undue haste and by Government influence against the real opinion of the colony".³⁸

A Select Committee of the Legislative Council of Ceylon appointed to inquire and report upon the possibility of continuing with the project, and to make any new suggestions, called several interested bodies and individuals from planting and mercantile sections to give evidence. The consensus of opinion was that a railway was not absolutely essential and definitely not at the enhanced cost.³⁹

The Committee recommended that in view of the alarm at the new and much higher estimate expressed by merchants and planters, who would be called upon to pay guaranteed interest on capital, "it would be a wiser step to abrogate the existing contract with the Railway Company on equitable terms and take the chances of obtaining a railway, at some future date, by some other means or through a fresh survey."⁴⁰

The Legislative Council adopted the above resolutions. The Governor remarked that there was not a single individual who was in favour of the continuance of the existing contract with the Company.⁴¹ All effort by the Ceylon Railway Company to retain the contract proved unsuccessful. The Ceylon Railway Company was dissolved,⁴² and its capital of £297,500 was repaid by the issue of debentures to the extent of £100,000,⁴³ and the balance from the proceeds of the general revenue of Sri Lanka and export duties.⁴⁴

-
36. 'Report on a line of Railway from Colombo to Kandy by W. T. Doyne, enclosed in the Despatch 8 of 22 July 1859, C.O.54.345.
37. Memorial from the planters, merchants and land owners to the Governor on 13 Aug. 1859.
38. Railway Message by Sir Henry Ward. C.O.57.26.
39. For an e.g. see evidence of E. J. Darley, one time Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce, planter and shipper: Minutes of evidence given before the Select Committee of the Legislative Council which was appointed to report upon the Railway Question on 9 Sept. 1859. C.O.57.27.
40. Report of the Select Committee on 9 Sept. 1859. Ibid.
41. D.42 of MacCarthy to Duke of New Castle on 15 Dec. 1860, C.O.54.355.
42. Ordinance 9 of 1860, C.O.56.8
43. Ordinance 10 of 1860, C.O.56.8
44. Ordinance 15 of 1861, C.O.56.8

Thus ended the effort by private capital to construct a railway in Sri Lanka, causing the island a net loss of £243,275 and with no plans for the future.

A Select Committee appointed on 8 June 1861, following this debate concluded that:

- (a) a railway line should be constructed without undue delay,
- (b) it should be owned and operated by the state,
- (c) the construction work is to be contracted out,
- (d) the road identified by Molesworth be selected and
- (e) the total cost should not exceed £1,500,000 including the previous expenditure.⁴⁵

Out of the six tenders received on advertisement in London, Mr. W. F. Faviell's was the lowest and was accepted. The cost of construction was estimated to be £873,039 and the cost of maintenance £155,400 for the first seven years of operation.⁴⁶ The Legislative Council adopted this report of the Select Committee and requested the Secretary of State to take necessary steps for the completion of the contract with Faviell on the basis of his tender. The British Government acceded to this request. A contract was entered into with Faviell on 2 February 1863, by the Agents-General in London. By the terms of the contract (a) the works already carried out by the Ceylon Railway Company were to be handed over to the contractor by the Government, (b) the contractor had to procure the materials and labour required for construction, and (c) the contractor was to maintain the works for the first seven years after completion. It also provided for a Chief Resident Engineer in Sri Lanka and the railway was to be completed by 1st February 1867.⁴⁷

With a view to provide the necessary funds, the Ceylon Government passed the Ordinance No. 19 of 1862 which provided for the raising of £1,000,000 by issue of debentures. In 1863, the estimated liabilities of the Government incurred on behalf of a railway, stood as follows:

45. Report of the Select Committee of the Legislative Council on 8 June 1861, C.O.57.30.

46. The total cost however was estimated as follows:

Faviell's contract	... ..	£ 873,039
Value of survey, works executed, land, materials, stores and interest paid to company shareholders	... ..	283,000
Future expenditure on Rolling Stock, Land etc.	... ..	226,000
For maintenance	... ..	155,400
		<hr/>
		£1,537,439

47. Main terms of the Ceylon Railway contract, C.O.57.33.

Present liabilities for debentures	...	...	£ 100,000
Interest at 6% for 4 years	...	...	24,000
Faviell's contract	...	...	873,039
Future expenses	...	...	226,000
Interest on future debentures	...	...	139,000
			<hr/>
			£1,362,039

In addition to the income expected from the export duty estimated at £40,000 annually it was decided that a sum of £20,000 a year should be appropriated from the general revenue to meet the railway liabilities. The estimated assets in 1863 were as follows:

4 years export duty at £40,000 p.a.	...	...	£ 160,000
1 year export duty in hand	...	...	40,000
4 years contribution, at £20,000 p.a. out of general revenue	...	...	80,000
Rolling stock	...	...	75,000
			<hr/>
			£ 355,000

The difference between the estimated assets and liabilities was £1,007,000 of which £1 million was to be procured by raising a loan by issuing debentures and the balance was to be met from the current revenue.⁴⁸

Faviell arrived in Sri Lanka in March 1863; by mid-April the construction of the railway line was well in progress with a labour force of nearly 3,000. The contractor had to face several obstacles posed by climate and topography in completing the Colombo-Kandy railway. During the rainy seasons, work had to be suspended due to heavy monsoon rains, floods, land slides and surface erosion. During the dry season the climate was extremely unhealthy. The heavy incidence of malarial fever and cholera brought the work on the railway at times to a complete standstill.⁴⁹ In the low country the laying of embankments over muddy fields was very difficult. Forming of embankments on marshy lands, the bridge over the Kelani river and the Ambepussa tunnel posed several difficulties.⁵⁰ Beyond Kelaniya the track had to pass across deep marshes, involving heavy earth filling. It was difficult to fill the deep marshes with the help of manual labour. Hence the track line was first laid on beds made on screw piles and the ballast trains were used to convey heavy stones and earth.

48. Despatch 1 of McCarthy to Duke of New Castle on 2 Jan. 1863, C.O.54.374.

49. Report on the progress of the Railway by Molesworth on 27 July 1864, C.O.57.36.

50. The Ceylon Railways, *One Hundred Years*, p. 19.

From the 28th mile at Gordon's pass to the 58th mile, much difficulty was experienced due to the terrain of the country. Though the real climb upwards began after the 50th mile the intermediate area was ridged with large hills. Furthermore, malarial fever took a heavy toll of human lives. The progress of the work in this section was constantly interrupted.⁵¹ The stretch from the 53rd to 65th mile was the most treacherous. The gradients were as high as 1 in 45 for twelve miles. As it was impossible to conform to the physical layout due to the steep mountains, nine tunnels had to be cut in this stretch, the longest being 365 yards. The Alagalla viaduct was composed of five arches; each arch had a 40 ft. span with a height of 45 ft. and a ten chain curve. The earth works on the Dekanda banks were 30 yards high and 180 yards long and the volume of the earthwork was 220,000 cubic feet. In twelve miles the railway achieved a total height of 1400 feet at an average gradient of 1 in 45 and curves of 10 chain radius. Thus, the sharp inclines, the rugged country, the steep gradients, heavy rock cuttings and tortuous curves coupled with the monsoon rains and the infestation of malaria, cost the contractor heavy losses in labour, time and money.⁵²

Apart from these natural and perhaps unavoidable obstructions, many other problems too caused difficulties. One such major difficulty was the question of labour. Local Sri Lankan labour was not forthcoming in sufficient numbers, thereby causing the necessity of importing labour from South India. The Planters Association especially requested the contractor to import labour from India, so that the demand for labour in railway construction would not cause the workers in plantation estates to leave for work on the railway. Even after importing labour, it was difficult to induce them to settle down as permanent labourers.⁵³ In 1864 and 1865 due to the soaring wage rates in Western India (which nearly doubled) it was difficult to obtain further supplies of labour from Western India.⁵⁴ The wage rates were therefore increased to 15 d. a day.

According to the contract, Faviell was responsible for providing all the material. Almost all the railway material was imported from Britain. The trade union strikes in England and the American war,⁵⁵ raised the prices of their materials considerably. It is estimated that the value of materials increased by 30 - 40%.⁵⁶

51. P. M. Bingham, *History of the Public Works Dept., Ceylon, 1796 - 1896*, Vol. II, p. 142.

52. Letter from Faviell to the Governor on 6 April 1866, enclosed in D.83 of Robinson, C.O.54.412.

53. Report of the Ceylon Railway by Molesworth on 27 July, 1864, S.P. II of 1864, C.O.57.36.

54. Faviell's letter on 6 April, 1866, *op. cit.*

55. *Ibid.*

56. *Ibid.*

Despite all these difficulties 34½ miles of railway was opened for passenger traffic, from Colombo to Ambepussa on 2 Oct. 1865.⁵⁷ In the year 1866, Mahara (Ragama) Henarathgoda (Gampaha) and Veyangoda stations were completed. The bridge over the Maha Oya with its sub-structure causing considerable anxiety, and the 60 feet girder bridge over Yangalla Modera at 43½ miles were completed. The portion of the line between Ambepussa and Polgahawela was opened for both passenger and goods traffic on 1st November 1866. In the meantime, the next stage from Polgahawela to Kandy was well underway. Heavy rock cutting, especially that at Sensation Rock and at Meengalla had progressed sufficiently to enable Faviell to push the line through the top of the incline in December 1866. The bridges over the Mahaveli ganga and Maha Oya were soon completed and the whole line of 74½ miles in length was opened for passenger traffic on 1 August 1867 and for goods traffic on 1 October 1867.⁵⁸

According to the contract Faviell was bound to complete the works by 1 February 1867. In the event of failure, he had to pay a penalty of £2,500 for every delayed month, to the government.⁵⁹ Further he was bound to limit his cost to the sum specified in the contract. Faviell could not meet any of these conditions. The delay was 6 months and the excess of expenditure over estimated contract was £201,044. However, the Government was aware of the various unforeseen difficulties which Faviell had to face.

The Government not only absolved the contractor for failing to fulfil these obligations, but also on the satisfactory completion of the work an extra sum of £58,202 was presented to him.⁶⁰ The public too presented him a gift costing £600, "as a mark of the high appreciation in which they held the successful termination of the contract for his construction of the railway."⁶¹

A railroad from Colombo to Kandy thus became a reality after 22 years. To the British Governor Robinson this achievement was "one of which any country might well be proud and the credit of it appears to be due as well to the professional ability and genius of those who designed the scheme, as to the courage and self-sacrifice of those by whom it was carried out."⁶²

57. Ceylon Railway Sessional Paper, No.2, C.O.57.40.

58. Report of the Ceylon Government Railway Administrative Report for 1870, C.O.57.51.

59. Clause 10 of contract of the Colombo Kandy Railway.

60. D.197 of Robinson to Duke of Buckingham and Chandos on 29 Aug. 1867, C.O.54.427.

61. Ceylon Times on 11 October, 1867, p. 631; also G. F. Perera, *The Ceylon Railway*, 1925, p. 87.

62. Address to the Legislative Council by Robinson on 2 October 1867, C.O.57.43.

RICE AND IRRIGATION IN 19th CENTURY SRI LANKA

A. C. M. AMEER ALI

A preliminary note : The statistical data used in this article were obtained mostly from the official sources, mainly the Ceylon Blue Books. There is much criticism about the reliability of this type of source materials. Yet, all official statistics should not be treated with equal suspicion. In fact the statistics regarding foreign trade are more reliable than those relating to local production. However even the latter can be profitably used with appropriate statistical and mathematical manipulations. After all economic history is interested more in macro-trends than in micro-fluctuations. Unless a critical study of the available statistics pertaining to the economic history of Sri Lanka during the British period is made and until the corrected data are published—the present author has planned to do this—each researcher has to use whatever statistical and mathematical tools are available to him to achieve maximum accuracy of the facts.

Rice cultivation in Asia is said to have started somewhere around 2000 B.C.¹ and rice is and had been the staple diet of the Sri Lankan ever since the beginning of recorded history. Similarly, the basic investment in Asian agriculture is that on flood control, irrigation and drainage;² and the history of ancient Asia bears testimony to the fact that this investment had been the primary condition for the prosperity of its

1. F. Braudel *Capitalism and Material Life 1400-1800*, Fontana, 1974, p. 98.

2. S. Ishikawa, *Economic Development in Asian Perspective*, Tokyo, 1967, p. 70.

economy.³ In Sri Lanka literary and archaeological evidence show that her ancient economy flourished because of a prosperous rice industry helped by a sophisticated system of irrigation works.⁴ One of the Tamil literary works of the Sangam Period namely *Pattinappalai*⁵ has a reference to food exports from Sri Lanka to India. Although it does not say as to what type of food that was exported, yet the reference indicates that Sri Lanka must have had an exportable surplus in at least some of the food items. In any case, this prosperity did not last after the 10th century A.D. and by the time the Portuguese arrived in 1505, Sri Lanka had to look to foreign sources of supply for a substantial portion of her rice requirements. The country never achieved self-sufficiency in rice during the Dutch Period and in 1799, Lord North, the first British Governor in Sri Lanka, mentioned in one of his despatches to the Court of Directors of the English East India Company, that only a small quantity of rice "in proportion to the consumption of the inhabitants" was grown within the British territories.⁶ In short, the rice culture of Sri Lanka had declined over a period of centuries to become almost a static component in the undiversified agricultural economy of 1800. This article seeks to analyse the economics and history of rice and irrigation in British occupied Sri Lanka, and attempts to throw some light on the attitude and efforts of the colonial government to make rice cultivation a more profitable component in an evolving export economy.

It is quite rational for a country to look for foreign sources of supply if it cannot satisfy the home demand from its own domestic sources. But in order to do so, first of all the country must have a strong import capacity fed by a stable export sector and secondly the foreign source of supply itself should be one free from any precariousness. With regard to the first aspect, Table I below reveals the import-export position of Ceylon during the first half of the 19th century.

In none of the periods from 1806 and 1850 did the value of total exports exceed that of the total imports. Hence an adverse trade balance had been the order of the day. Secondly, although the import and export indices each dropped once, yet, except for the last seven years the overall increase in imports was proportionately and absolutely greater than that in the exports which again proves that the growth in exports was not keeping pace with the growth in imports. And finally, the imports of rice alone consumed more than 50% of the country's export earnings

3. F. Braudel, *op. cit.*, pp. 100-104; K. A. Wittfogel, *Oriental Despotism: A Comparative Study of Total Power*, Yale University Press, 6th Printing, 1967, ch. II.

4. *University of Ceylon, History of Ceylon*, Vol. I, Part I, Colombo 1959, pp. 353-362.

5. *Pattinappalai*, Line 191.

6. C.O. 51/1, North to the Court of Directors, 26 Feb. 1799.

and sometimes as in 1810-1813 almost the entire amount. So much so that, had the country been self-sufficient in rice she would have enjoyed a favourable balance of trade which in turn would have facilitated further development of the economy.

As to the foreign source of supply, the rice fields of India on which Sri Lanka depended throughout the 19th century were certainly not blessed with an unfailing productive capacity. Indian agriculture at this time was a 'gamble on the rain'. Within a period of ninety years between 1765 and 1858, that country had experienced twelve famines and four 'severe' scarcities at the rate of one famine or scarcity in every five or six years.⁷ What was worse, when such a catastrophe in India coincided with a similar one in Sri Lanka, as it happened in 1812,⁸ besides the starvation and deaths resulted from such a calamity; "the addition made to the price of grain added to the increase in the

TABLE I

Average Annual Volumes of Total Imports, Total Exports and Imports of Paddy/Rice

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Selected Periods	Total Imports	Import Index	Total Exports	Export Index	Imports of Paddy/Rice	% of (6) on (2)	% of (6) on (4)
1806-09 ...	339,800	100	259,400	100	170,900	50	66
1810-13 ...	447,400	132	271,500	105	244,500	55	90
1825-29 ...	322,700	95	275,300	106	125,700	39	46
1830-34 ...	335,500	99	173,100	67	145,400	43	84
1835-40 ...	476,500	140	323,100	125	195,000	41	60
1843-50 ...	926,800	273	884,800	341	189,600	20	21

Sources (a) Figures for 1806-1813 were obtained from Bertolacci, A., *Agricultural Commercial and Financial Interests of Sri Lanka*, London, 1817, pp. 125, 520-549.

His values in Rix Dollars were converted to Sterlings at the rate of 2s.1d. per R.D. For the exchange rates see Gunasekara, H. A. de S., *From Dependent Currency to Independent Banking in Sri Lanka*, London 1962, p. 4.

(b) Figures for 1825-1833 and 1843-50 are from the Blue Books of Ceylon and the rest from 3.O. 54/164 Mackenzies' despatch of 16 Aug. 1838, enclosure and C.O. 54/188, Campbell to Russell, 30 June 1841.

7. B. M. Bhatia, *Famines in India*, Asia Publishing House, 1963, p. 8.

8. C.O. 54/41, Brownrigg to Earl of Liverpool, 22 Aug. 1812; C.O. 54/47, D'oyly's letter to the Colonial Secretary, 12 Apr. 1813.

quantity imported.....(and) occasion(ed) such overwhelming balances against the island that it (could) not recover them for many years".⁹

Such was the nature of the problem confronted by Sri Lanka with regard to her staple diet during the early decades of the 19th century. There were three alternatives open to her in order to overcome the situation. Firstly, to increase domestic rice production to the level of domestic consumption; secondly, to concentrate on subsidiary crops in order to replenish the food stock; and thirdly, to look out for more stable sources of foreign supply while strengthening her own import capacity. With regard to the last one the colonial authorities did not take any step to search for better suppliers until the 20th century. In a sense, the government was helpless in this matter because the Indo-Sri Lanka rice trade was handled mostly by the *Chettiars* who themselves were of Indian origin.¹⁰ Also, the lack of speedy modes of sea transport during the first half of the 19th century was an additional impediment for any importer to seek distant sources of supply. Regarding the strengthening of import capacity, although commercial coffee succeeded cinnamon in the thirties the situation did not improve very much until the fifties. The second alternative, that of producing subsidiary crops, was already a familiar one to the Sri Lanka farmer. The *chena* cultivation which continues even today is one that specialised in crops like kurakkan (elucine coracana), maize, millets, legumes and many kinds of beans. According to the Blue Books, of about 450,000 acres of cultivated land in 1833 nearly 100,000 had been under chena farming.¹¹ And in view of the fact that only about 212,000 acres had been under paddy in that year, one can conclude that there was one acre of chena land for every two acres of paddy. Thus it was a 'complementary and inseparable' element in Sri Lanka's rural economy. Yet, the question in the 19th century was whether this form of cultivation should be encouraged. The rulers were aware of the wastefulness of land and fertility caused by chena farming. One writer called it a "system fraught with greater evil".¹² Yet, Tennent was prepared to allow it since it "tends materially to augment the food of the district specially during periods of drought; to sustain the wages of labour and to prevent an undue increase in the market value of the

9. A. Bertolacci, *A View of Agricultural, Commercial and Financial Interests of Ceylon*, London, 1817, p. 127.

10. J. Capper, *Old Ceylon*, Colombo, 1877, pp. 94-95; G. Skeen, *A Guide to Colombo*, 6th Edition, 1906, o. 95.

11. The title 'Fine Grains' which appears in the *Blue Books* includes all subsidiary food crops except the root crops like manioc and sweet potatoes.

12. C. Pridham, *Ceylon and Its Dependencies*, Vol. II, London, 1849, p. 877.

first necessities of life.”¹³ To him, “the advantages are sufficient to counterbalance the disadvantages of the system”.¹⁴ Therefore chena farming was allowed to continue unhampered until the Crown Land Encroachment Ordinance of 1840. Yet, the contribution made by the chenas to the total food consumption of the population was not enough to supplement the rice shortage.

Therefore, the best solution to the food problem and to the country's adverse trade balance lay in the first alternative, that of increasing the productive capacity of the domestic rice sector. How far did the Government address its mind towards this problem before 1850?

“It has been a matter of surprise”, wrote one of the District Collectors in 1820, “.....that a colony enjoying so many natural advantages of soil and climate should depend on foreign countries for the first necessity of life by not raising a sufficiency of grain for the consumption of its inhabitants”.¹⁵ Although this foreign collector was justified in his view, yet natural advantages alone do not guarantee increased production and productivity. They have to be harnessed with the help of other inputs like labour and capital and that needs planning and collective effort. Ancient Sri Lanka is said to have maintained a larger population than in the 19th century¹⁶ and as mentioned earlier, seems to have even earned at times an export surplus in food because of the collective investment of that society on irrigation schemes. Paddy is a thirsty plant and without an adequate and proper supply of water its profitability is certainly at stake. Hence, any genuine effort to boost up indigenous agriculture in the 19th century called for the restoration of the ancient irrigation system.

During the early decades of the century several attempts were made to restore at least a few of them, but expense proved a great impediment. One of the projects on which work started was that of Muturajawela which was expected to drain 60,000 acres of paddy lands.¹⁷ This scheme was originally started by the Dutch in 1767 and was revived by Governor North in 1802. But after an initial expenditure of 45,484 rix dollars the project was given up partly because of a labour scarcity during the Kandyan war and partly because of a lack of funds in the treasury. Once again Governor Brownrigg wanted to resume the work, but was

13. Sir J. E. Tennent, *Ceylon, An Account of the Island, Physical, Topographical with Notices of Its Natural History, Antiquities and Production*, 2nd ed., London, 1859, Vol. II, pp. 464-465.

14. *Ibid.*

15. C.O. 416/2b/J/2, Deane's report on the Colombo District, 1 May 1820.

16. R. Murphey, 'The Ruin of Ancient Ceylon', *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 16, No. 2, 1957.

17. C.O. 54/6, Hamilton to the Board of Revenue, 4 Mar. 1802, enclosed in North's despatch of 12 Oct. 1802.

advised not to start until the Colebrooke Commissioners had reported.¹⁸ Another attempt was that to repair the Giant's Tank which could irrigate a sowing extent of 50,000 bushels. Once again finance was the problem. Various suggestions were advanced, from private subscription to an irrigation tax, but nothing materialised.¹⁹ Although the larger works were not therefore restored some of the smaller ones like the Puttalam, Negombo and Kirema canals were repaired partly for transport and partly for irrigation purposes.

Besides providing irrigation facilities, the Government also thought of giving protection to the domestic rice grower by imposing a customs duty on imported rice.²⁰ Yet, domestic production did not improve and between 1830 and the end of the first half of the 19th century irrigation works of all sorts came to a halt, the "protective aspect of import duties faded into the background"²¹ and the Government completely ignored the indigenous rice farmer.

One obvious reason for this neglect was the growing dominance of plantation coffee and the increasing influence of the plantocracy in the economic and political fields of Sri Lanka. Coffee exports which were quite insignificant in the country's external trade until the mid-thirties began to gain ground thereafter to become the dominant source of foreign exchange during the next four or five decades of the 19th century. Coffee shared only 30% of the total value of exports in 1837 which percentage increased to 50 by the late forties and exceeded even 60 in the early sixties. Also, until 1840 the bulk of the coffee exported came not from the extensive plantations but from the numerous peasant holdings²². Therefore quite rationally the influential opinion at that time felt that the "more profitable course for Sri Lanka is to grow coffee and import rice."²³ This explains the avowed resistance of the planters to any Government investment on irrigation works. For instance, in 1848 an attempt was made to alter the notorious Road Ordinance of that year in certain respects to extend its operation to the maintenance of public tanks and other means of irrigation. The Legislative Council opposed this measure as it was considered to be "wholly inconsistent with the design of the

18. C.O. 54/86, Barnes to the Secretary of State, 10 June 1824; C.O. 54/89, Barnes to the Secretary of State, 20 Oct. 1825, enclosure.
19. C.O. 54/26, Schneider's report to Maitland, 10 June, 1807; C.O. 54/20, Maitland to Camden, 28 Feb. 1806; C.O. 54/41, Secretary of State to Maitland 30 Sep. 1810; C.O. 54/43, Brownrigg to Earl of Liverpool, 12 June 1812; C.O. 54/131, Cameron to Hay 3 Nov. 1834, enclosed in Horton to Stanley 20 Dec. 1833.
20. Gamani Corea, *The Instability of an Export Economy*, Colombo 1975, pp. 36-41.
21. *Op. cit.*, p. 36.
22. A. C. M. Ameer Ali, 'Peasant Coffee in Ceylon during the 19th Century', *Ceylon Journal of Historical and Social Studies*, Vol. II (New Series), No. 1, Jan.-June 1972.
23. *The Ceylon Directory*, 1865, p. 166.

Road Ordinance, and as involving the general application of the labour of the people for the promotion of the private interests of the landed proprietors”²⁴ Rice import statistics added weightage to this feeling of opposition since it took away only 20% of the export earnings in the forties which was a tremendous improvement from the position in the thirties and before.²⁵ The planters’ economics of rice and coffee on the one hand and of roads and tanks on the other could have received an all round justification had the plantation sector developed a close linkage with the indigenous elements of the economy. But on the contrary the linkage was only peripheral and therefore this attitude was bound to create bitterness.

Another and equally important reason for the stagnation in irrigation works after 1830 stems from the economic reforms of the Colebrooke Commission. “The period most fruitful in disaster to these works within the modern times”, says the report of the Committee on Irrigation appointed in 1866, “was coincident with the abolition of Rajakariya, or about thirty years ago”.²⁶ This point needs some elaboration. It is not correct to correlate the irrigation system with rajakariya because the latter is said to have originated only in the 9th century,²⁷ while the former had developed ever since the time of King Vasabha in the first century A.D.²⁸ From the beginning the state had maintained the larger irrigation works while the smaller ones which required only less sophisticated technology and skill had been looked after by highly autonomous village communities on the basis of collective responsibility.²⁹ Traditions die hard and the sense of collectiveness and co-operation that exists even to this day among the Sinhalese peasantry could not have vanished overnight either with the institutionalization of rajakariya in the 9th century and after or with its abolition in 1832. Rajakariya refers only to that part of labour that was rendered by the people under the state’s command. This system no doubt led to much corruption and by the beginning of the 19th century rajakariya services had become burdensome and a source of harassment to the people. Yet, even the Commissioners admitted the usefulness of rajakariya for irrigation purposes.³⁰

24. C.O. 54/252, Torrington to Grey, 202 of 13 Nov. 1848, enclosure; For a discussion on the ordinance see, K. M. de Silva, *Letters on Ceylon 1846-50: The Administration of Viscount Torrington and the ‘Rebellion’ of 1848*, Colombo 1965, pp. 8-10.

25. See Table I.

26. C.O. 54/432, Report of the Irrigation Committee, 1866, enclosed in Robinson to Buckingham 10 of 14 Jan. 1868.

27. W. I. Siriweera, ‘Land Tenure and Revenue in Medieval Ceylon’, *C.J.H.S.S.* (New Series), No. 1, 1972.

28. *University of Ceylon, History of Ceylon*, Vol. I, Part I, p. 181.

29. *Op. cit.*, p. 359; R. A. L. H. Gunawardena, ‘Irrigation and Hydraulic Society in Early Medieval Ceylon’, *Past and Present*, No. 53, Nov. 1971.

30. G. C. Mendis, *Colebrook Cameron Papers*, Oxford University Press, 1956, Vol. I, p. xxxvii.

However, whatever the motives might have been for the abolition of this institution, that act certainly did not prevent people from uniting voluntarily to repair the damages on their tanks. But such private effort without state aid had only a limited effectiveness. They were able to repair those damages that were of a minor scale. But in the case of major breaches like those in the Urubokka Dam and the Kirema canal in the Southern Province which were caused by the floods of 1837, voluntary effort of the people did not suffice.³¹ Similarly the works connected with the Pattipola Aar in the Eastern Province for which the Dutch had "combined the labour of the district" and required and received a series of half yearly reports to keep those works under constant supervision had been so completely ignored that Governor Henry Ward wrote in 1857 that even its name was forgotten by the English residents at Colombo.³²

While the government and the planter class were showing a negative attitude towards the irrigation works another factor was adding, though indirectly, to their dereliction. Foreign invasions and depopulation had contributed much to the decay of the ancient irrigation works ever since the decline of Polonnaruwa in the 13th century A.D. But after the thirties of the last century a new form of 'invasion' appeared which, though peaceful, also caused depopulation especially in the North and North Central provinces. The newcomers were the South Indian labourers passing peacefully on their way from Talaimannar to the plantations in the Central Highlands. India at that time was notorious for epidemics like cholera, small-pox and malaria. These Indians carried with them the germs of those diseases which not only killed many of them on their way but also spread to the nearby villages and carried away the lives of hundreds of Sri Lankans.³³ Thus in the Vanni area and Mannar District several villages were entirely abandoned while in others their population was greatly reduced.³⁴ Death of people and desertion of villages thus led to the decay of tanks and decline in agriculture. Whereas in other parts of the island decay of tanks preceded depopulation, in the North depopulation had preceded decay.³⁵ Yet the results were the same. The country was becoming more and more dependent

31. C.O. 54/335, Minute on the Southern Province, enclosed in Ward to Labourchere, 17 of 21 July 1858.

32. C.O. 54/328, Ward to Labourchere, 31 of 27 Feb. 1857.

33. R. W. Ievers, *Manual of the North Central Province, Ceylon*, Colombo 1899, pp. 103-106.

34. C.O. 54/438, Loos' report on the 'Depopulation of the Vanni District', enclosed in the separate despatch of Hodgson to Duke of Buckingham, 24 Dec. 1868; also see R. W. Ievers, *op. cit.*

35. Report of the Irrigation Committee, 1866.

on the precarious Indian rice. The average annual rice import had increased from 1,035,000 bushels between 1831 and 1833 to 2,317,000 bushels between 1843 and 1847 and to 2,545,000 between 1848 and 1852. During the last two periods the average annual domestic rice production seems to have declined from 2,877,000 bushels to 2,653,000 bushels.³⁶ At the beginning of the century imported rice was consumed only in the maritime areas and the Kandyan territory was said to be producing a surplus of food.³⁷ But, by the late forties "a large portion of the agricultural population, both in the interior and on the coast, are compelled, not only on occasions of failure of their own crops from drought or inundation, but habitually to subsist on imported rice."³⁸

This trend of neglect and decline in the domestic rice sector would have continued uninterrupted but for the events of 1848 and after. The 'rebellion' of 1848, though it was successfully suppressed, demonstrated to the rulers the growing dissatisfaction of the Sinhalese masses over the intrusion of the plantations and their impact on the economic and social lives of the Sri Lankans. It is a fact that the coffee estates provided employment and income to British capital and Indian labour but failed to create a link with the indigenous elements. Instead, the clearing of forests and the opening of estates had caused loss of lands to the Sri Lankan peasant and pasture to his livestock while the settlement of the Indians and the penetration of the roads into the interior had destroyed rural privacy and public peace. Therefore, continued discrimination against the indigenous elements had to be stopped at least for the sake of political security.³⁹

But, more than this political factor, it was the alarming situation in the food supply of the country that actually led the Government to embark on a policy of repairing irrigation works. The demand for rice had increased with the increase in the Indian immigrants, while its supply had not been steady because of the fluctuations in production. It was already mentioned at the beginning of this article about the frequency of famines and scarcities in India. The early fifties saw one such famine. As a result, the price of rice shot up from 4 s. to 7 s. 6d. per bushel in

36. *Blue Books*.

37. A. Bertolacci, *op. cit.*, p. 71.

38. Sir J. E. Tennent, *Report on the Finance and Commerce of Ceylon*, Parliamentary Papers, Vol. XLII, 1847-48, p. 61.

39. C.O. 54/236, Superintendent of Police to the Colonial Secretary, enclosed in Torrington to Grey, 3 June 1847; J. Steuarts, *Notes on the Monetary System and Cinnamon Revenue of Ceylon*, Colombo 1850; J. Forbes, *Recent Disturbances and Military Executions in Ceylon*, London, 1850, p. 27; T. Skinner, *Fifty Years in Ceylon*, edited by Annie Skinner, London 1891, pp. 219-220; L. A. Mills, *Ceylon Under British Rule 1795-1931*, London 1964, New Impression, pp. 168-203; K. M. de Silva, *op. cit.* pp. 1-31.

Colombo, 10 s. to 12 s. in Kandy and to 13 s. and 14 s. per bushel in Gampola.⁴⁰ The high price of rice in the planting districts led to agitation from planters since their labour costs soared. When scarcity reappeared in the sixties, not only did the planters renew their complaints, but also there was rioting in the towns. In June 1866 the usual monthly import of rice fell from 300,000 to 30,000 bushels.⁴¹ Stocks were exhausted. The price of a bushel of rice therefore went up to 15 s. and in some places even to 17 s. 6d. As a result, the population of Colombo, Kandy and Galle attempted to break open the shops, and thereby forced the Governor to call in the military.⁴²

Thus the unrest shown by the Sri Lankans in 1848 against the Government's policy of neglecting their interests together with the demand from the planters for a cheaper and unfailing supply of rice compelled the Government to act with regard to the rice problem. In other words, it was now becoming increasingly clear as Coomaraswamy said in the Legislative Council, that "coffee could not prosper without rice, and the two must go hand in hand".⁴³

In addition to these factors the difference in the character of governors who succeeded Viscount Torrington after 1848 made it easier for the Government to adopt this new attitude. In contrast to the military-planting governors of the first half of the century there now came a set who were more understanding, enlightened and in closer touch with the indigenous sections of the community.⁴⁴ For example, the governors, administrators and even the writers on Sri Lanka during the early period unanimously found in the innate indolence of the Sri Lankans the irremediable cause for the latter's backwardness.⁴⁵ This view "had a prescriptive existence of about half a century and the members of the Government seem to cling to it as a venerable article of faith in their code of political science", wrote one officer in the late sixties.⁴⁶ In contrast to this, one can note in the views of the later governors a feeling of sympathy, a readiness to understand the indigenous character and an urge to seek possible remedies for improvement. "It is a fashion to accuse the

40. C.O. 54/314, Anderson to Grey, 13 June 1855; C.O. 54/135, Governor's speech at the Legislative Council, enclosed in Ward to Russell, 11 July, 1855.

41. C.O. 54/416, Robinson to Carnarvon, 251 of 30 Oct. 1866, enclosure.

42. *The Examiner*, 13 Oct. 1866, 17 Oct. 1866, 24 Oct. 1866 and 27 Oct. 1866.

43. Legislative Council's discussion on the motion for a committee on irrigation works, enclosure 2 in C.O. 54/416, Robinson to Carnarvon, 267 of 16 Nov. 1866.

44. For a detailed study of the Colonial Governorship in general, see Sir C. Bruce *The Broadstone of Empire*, London 1910, Vol. I, pp. 203-225.

45. Y. Gooneratne, 'Nineteenth Century Historians of Ceylon', *C.J.H.S.S.*, Vol. 8 Jan.-Dec. 1965.

46. L. Ludovici, *Rice Cultivation. Its Past History and Present Conditions with Suggestions for Its Improvement*, Colombo 1867, p. 6.

native population of apathy and sloth", wrote Sir Henry Ward in 1858, "because they are slow to embark in branches of industry foreign to their habits, and distasteful to them, from the restraints imposed. But take them upon their own grounds, encourage them to do what their forefathers did, when Sri Lanka was the granary of the East, consult their ancient customs, many of which are found upon the niceties and appreciation of the duties devolving upon each member of the community, where co-operation is the secret of success.....and you will find, these apathetic men full of intelligence, capable of most persevering efforts and grateful for the smallest assistance".⁴⁷ Ward's assessment of the Sri Lankan character and the success he achieved in extending domestic agriculture in certain districts must have convinced even the Colonial Office in London so that, when one of his successors tried to express the pre-1850 views and fears, the Secretary of State denounced them and encouraged further attempts on Ward's line.⁴⁸ Similarly, Governors William Gregory (1873-1877), Arthur Gordon (1884-1887), and Arthur Havelock (1890-1895) also shared Ward's views and expectations; and in a sense the period from 1850 to 1900 could be called the period of irrigation governors.

Above all the improving financial balances of the treasury enabled the Government's new attitude to bear practical results. During the twenty years from 1830 the treasury enjoyed ten years of surplus and suffered ten years of deficit. But from 1850 onwards, except for a year or two, surplus was a permanent feature.⁴⁹ Thus with a change in attitude, personalities and financial trends, irrigation works began to receive Government attention.

Yet, there was one group that was not convinced of the wisdom of the measure. This was the planter class. Their opposition to Government investment on irrigation has already been mentioned. To them the solution to the rice problem was not irrigation but transport. Cheap and quick transport from the coast to the interior would not only reduce the cost of imported rice, but also that of exporting coffee. In addition it would provide an easy means of travel for the Indian labourers, a majority of whom were now landing at the port of Colombo. After the rice shortage of 1850, the Chamber of Commerce addressed a memorandum to the Colonial Secretary in which it said, that "the high rate of food disgusts the cooly immigrant, tends to increase disease and diminish the influx of labourers..... It is possible that were railway communication opened, steamers could ply between the coast and Colombo for

47. C.O. 54/335, Ward to Lytton, 3 July 1858.

48. C.O. 54/424, Robinson to Carnarvon, 3 of 9 Jan. 1867, enclosure.

49. *Blue Books*.

the transport of coolies and rice, and in which case no further sickness would prevail amongst this class."⁵⁰ This solution of the planters, was selfish—for they were not concerned with the peasant problem as such—and ill-founded. Investment in irrigation leading to an increase in rice production would reduce only the cost of labour not the transport cost of coffee. Railways would reduce both. If the limited resources of the Government were invested in irrigation the chances of getting railways would be very remote. And even if the rice production were to increase, it was still doubtful whether the Indian labourer would consume that rice. The last was a very important factor from the point of view of the planters. Even towards the end of the nineteenth century one finds references to the fact that the Tamil coolies were not eating the Sri Lanka produced rice as long as they could procure their own from India.⁵¹

The eating habits of a people do not change suddenly and cannot be changed overnight. This generally being so, in Sri Lanka the way in which the system operated prevented any chance of such a change taking place among the Indian labourers. During the 19th century they were never left on their own to obtain their food. They were supplied with their necessities by their employers. From the point of view of the planting industry this was done for a very good reason. The Indian workers were already a physically weakened lot. Therefore they had to be fed properly if the employers were to enjoy the maximum productivity of their labour. Cash wages would not solve the problem because the Indians were in the habit of collecting every cent with the hope of returning someday to their motherland.⁵² Therefore it was wiser to remunerate them more in kind and less in cash. But this system made a very important difference in the nature of the demand for rice. If the labourers had been asked to find their own food, they would have had no alternative but to go to the nearest village or to the local shop-keeper to purchase their rice. This would have given a powerful inducement to the villager to produce more for sale than for mere subsistence. But since the employer supplied this article to his entire labour force the demand of the employer was always quantitatively greater and was beyond the normal supply capacity of a local supplier. Therefore, instead of depending on any one risky local source or undergoing the

50. C.O. 54/278, Memorandum of the Chamber of Commerce, enclosed in Anderson to Grey, 29 of 10 Mar. 1851.

51. C.O. 57/95, Administration Report (hereafter AR) of Govt. Agent (G.A.), North Central Province (N.C.P.), 1885; C. O. 882/5, No. 55, Ceylon Grain Taxes, C. P. L. p. 6, 1890.

52. Henry Dickman, 'An Account of the Malabar Coolies in Ceylon', *Ceylon Miscellany*, Vol. I, No. 2, 1853.

inconvenience of drawing on several local sources, the employer made his demand on the merchants in Colombo who in turn made their's on the Indian market. Thus, the Indian labourers never had a chance and they never made any attempt to eat the local rice. Furthermore since they never resided permanently in Sri Lanka at least until the last quarter of the 19th century there was no reason why they should get used to it. This explains why the planters had no interest and opposed every attempt of the Government to engage in irrigation works.

Despite their opposition an estimated total of nearly 13.5 million rupees were spent on irrigation works between 1855 and 1904.⁵³ How this expenditure was financed and what policies were adopted with regard to the actual construction and administration of the irrigation works have all been discussed elsewhere and need no repetition here.⁵⁴ The rest of this article will only discuss the effects of these works.

A map compiled in 1901 by MacBride, the then Surveyor General provides the following details with regard to irrigation works constructed or restored and unrestored between 1850 and 1901.

TABLE 2

**Irrigation Works Constructed or Restored and
Unrestored 1850-1951**

<i>Description</i>	<i>W.P.</i>	<i>C.P.</i>	<i>E.P.</i>	<i>N.P.</i>	<i>N.W.P.</i>	<i>N.C.P.</i>	<i>S.P.</i>	<i>Total</i>
Large tanks restored by								
Government ...	1	2	15	3	5	7	12	45
Large tanks unrestored	2	—	—	1	16	29	6	48
Village tanks sluiced ...	12	40	1	30	179	512	5	779
Channels restored ...	6	19	3	—	1	1	2	32
Anicuts constructed ...	10	12	5	—	—	—	5	32
Minor works unrestored	6	18	17	94	—	—	20	155
Channels unrestored ...	1	6	—	—	—	6	2	15

Note : Abbreviations W.P., C.P. etc. refer to the different provinces namely Western, Southern, Central, Eastern, Northern, North Western and North Central Provinces. Actually there were nine of them by the beginning of 1890 including Uva which was separated from Central province in 1886 and Sabaragamuwa which was removed from Western Province in 1889. For convenience sake they have been included in the table with their original divisions.

53. Michael Roberts, 'Irrigation Policy in British Ceylon during the 19th Century', *South Asia: Journal of South Asian Studies*, No. 2, Aug. 1972.
54. Michael Roberts, *op. cit.*; also see by the same author, 'The Paddy Irrigation Ordinances and the Revival of Traditional Irrigation Customs, 1856-1871', *C.J.H.S.S.*, Vol. X, Jan-Dec. 1967.

The number of unrestored works as shown in the table is not reliable because according to later findings some of the ancient tanks and canals had not been traced at that time since they were buried in the midst of thick jungles and forests.⁵⁵ Yet, the fact that 779 village tanks and 45 larger ones were restored within a period of five decades from 1850 is commendable when compared to the fifty years before that. But what were the results?

Irrigation in general has three important roles to play in the context of Asian agriculture. Firstly, by helping to bring new lands under cultivation it tends to extend the area under tillage. Secondly, by promising an unfailing water supply it helps the arable lands to be in permanent cultivation. In other words it tends to minimise harvest fluctuations due to deficient or untimely rainfall. And thirdly, it makes possible an increased application of fertilizer, the use of better seeds and the introduction of improved farming techniques.⁵⁶ In addition to these functions, irrigation in 19th century Sri Lanka had a hygienic role to play. In some areas like the Vanni tanks provided water not only to irrigate but also to wash and drink. When the tanks dried up and decayed, people dug holes in them and drank the muddy water. This was believed to be one of the main causes for a disease called 'parangi' or 'Spanish Pox' (yaws).⁵⁷ Thus provision of water meant at that time not only increased cultivation but also a healthier population.

To what extent did the irrigation works undertaken so far fulfil these functions? With regard to the extension of cultivated areas, particularly in the case of paddy crop, the Sri Lanka Blue Books are unfortunately the only source of information to any scholar.⁵⁸ Despite their limitations the following table uses that data but with necessary statistical manipulations to obtain at least a rough trend.

-
55. *Sessional Paper (SP) XLV of 1905*, Report on Irrigation in Ceylon, by Capt. Sir John Kean; also see, R. L. Brohier, *Ancient Irrigation Works in Ceylon*, Colombo, 1934, ch. 1.
56. S. Ishikawa, *op. cit.*, pp. 90-91 n.
57. Loos' report, *op. cit.*; *SP XLV of 1905*; Sir W. H. Gregory, *Autobiography*, second edition, London 1894, p. 307; C. S. Salmon, *Crown Colonies—An Inquiry into Their Political Economy, Fiscal Systems and Trade*, A Cobden Club Publication.
58. An attempt to do a separate census of the island's agriculture was undertaken in 1901. But since the results of that census was so inaccurate the Government decided not to publish it. *Census Report for 1901*, Colombo 1901.

TABLE 3

Area Under Paddy Cultivation

(Annual averages in thousands of acres calculated from the 5-year moving averages)

1851 - 55	...	413
1856 - 60	...	472
1861 - 65	...	472
1866 - 70	...	493
1871 - 75	...	548
1876 - 80	...	604
1881 - 85	...	605
1886 - 90	...	569
1891 - 95	...	598

Note : (a) To calculate the interval for 1871-75 an alteration had to be made in the Blue Book data for 1871. The acreage given for the W.P. that year was 379,000. But that for 5 years before and 5 years after 1871 fluctuates between 110,000 and 140,000. Therefore assuming that the 1871 figure was a statistical error (such errors are not uncommon in the official reports) the average was reduced to 179,000.

(b) Owing to the author's inability to obtain data upto 1904, which is necessary to calculate the moving averages for 1896-1900, the table stops with 1895. However the acreage figures upto 1900 in the Blue Books show that by the turn of the century about 650,000 acres had been brought under paddy cultivation .

On the whole paddy acreage had extended from about 400,000 to 600,000 within a period of roughly forty-five years. But the bulk of the expansion had taken place between 1850 and 1880 during the years when emphasis was laid more on the small village tanks than on larger ones. Secondly, much of the lands that were brought under tillage as a result of the irrigation works were not virgin soils but lands formerly cultivated and later abandoned due to the desolation of the old tanks and canals.⁵⁹ A total of 58,000 acres of the former and 85,000 acres of the latter were said to have been brought under cultivation consequent on the irrigation works.⁶⁰ These figures show that the Blue Book data are an exaggeration.

59. *SP XLV of 1905*

60. *Ibid.*

Yet, the fact that expansion slowed down after 1880 especially after the larger works were restored calls for explanation. At least two instances show the nature of the problem. The Tissamaharama Tank in the Southern Province was completed in 1877 at a cost of nearly £13,000. According to the report of the Central Irrigation Board in 1888, "the main object of this tank was colonisation, and not to supply the wants of an existing population".⁶¹ But after completion it was found that there were no people to purchase lands there.⁶² After a lapse of many years, sometime in the mid-eighties the Government managed to sell about 2,000 acres⁶³ to the 'rich landlords'.⁶⁴ Similarly in the Trincomalee District of the Eastern Province the Kantalai Tank was repaired at a cost of £76,000 and was expected to irrigate 23,000 acres of paddy land. But there was hardly any sale.⁶⁵ According to one observer, by 1887 there were nearly 100,000 acres of irrigable land lying waste in the possession of the Government, most of them in the sparsely populated districts.⁶⁶ Table 4 below explains the situation that existed by 1905.

TABLE 4
Irrigated (New) Lands Cultivated and Uncultivated⁶⁷

<i>Province</i>	<i>New lands cultivated (acres)</i>	<i>New lands unsold (acres)</i>	<i>Total acreage</i>	<i>% of unsold lands</i>
W.P. ...	459	205	664	31
S.P. ...	9,823	9,107	18,930	48
N.P. ...	4,676	13,586	18,262	74
C.P. ...	263	1,594	1,857	85
E.P. ...	32,406	14,449	46,855	31
N.W.P. ...	1,286	9,793	11,079	88
N.C.P. ...	6,559	34,368	40,927	84
U.P. ...	1,432	2,046	3,478	60
Sab. P. ...	1,246	3,144	4,390	72
Total ...	58,150	88,292	146,442	60

61. C.O. 57/109, Report of the Central Irrigation Board, 1888.

62. C.O. 54/107, Birch to Carnarvon, 15 of 18 Mar. 1877.

63. C.O. 57/93, AR of G.A., Southern Province (S.P.), 1884.

64. C.O. 57/112, AR of Asst. G.A., Nuwara Eliya, 1890.

65. An attempt was made to sell the entire acreage of 23,000 to a commercial company. But the failure of this company in its initial stages frustrated the attempt. On the dealings between the Government and the company regarding the land sale see C.O. 54/507 73 of 15 Mar. 1877; C.O. 54/508 87 of 28 June 1877; C.O. 54/512 82 of 16 Mar. 1878; C.O. 54/515 355 of 21 Oct. 1878; C.O. 54/517 109 of 21 Mar. 1879; C.O. 54/542 569 of 30 Dec. 1882.

66. JUS *Irrigation and Villagers*, Colombo 1889.

67. SP XLV of 1905.

Although the percentage of lands was high in most provinces, in absolute terms it was the North Central, Eastern and Northern provinces that held the largest share; and it was in these provinces and in parts of the Southern province that the Government spent most on irrigation.⁶⁸ The entire scheme of restoring the large tanks in these areas was undertaken on the assumption that once irrigation was provided the people would migrate to these places.⁶⁹ In fact a few did, like those of Palugaswewa in the Puttlam District.⁷⁰ But many did not. There were hundreds of families living within a distance of just twenty miles from the Tissamaharama tank and along the border of Uva, who had no regular means of earning a livelihood. Yet, they preferred to cling to their squalid homes rather than move.⁷¹ The Kantalai tank in the Trincomalee District had only about 3,500 people living within its vicinity;⁷² and neither the Tamils from Batticaloa nor the Sinhalese from other parts of the island had moved in there. Perhaps it was out of sheer disappointment that the Colonial Office in London asked the Government of Sri Lanka in 1890 to explore the possibilities of encouraging settlers from India.⁷³

Economic opportunities generally attract the enterprising. But in 19th century Sri Lanka such people had better attractions than those provided by the irrigation schemes. Plantations and plumbago mining, urbanisation and allied ventures were opening new avenues of investment for indigenous capital;⁷⁴ and the returns on such investments were more certain and handsome than in the paddy sector. On the other hand, to initiate the unenterprising to settle in the newly opened areas meant absolute state-aided colonisation. This was never attempted by the British in Sri Lanka. In addition, the unreasonably high price of paddy lands after the sixties,⁷⁵ prevalence of killer diseases in the Dry Zone and the hazards of colonial administration⁷⁶ tended to discourage migration. Hence, a large percentage of the irrigated crown lands remained uncultivated.

It was not only the crown lands but even private lands were left unutilized for entirely a different reason. In the Trincomalee District of the Eastern Province and in the Vanni Pattu of the Northern Province it was said that the proprietors were unwilling to invite Government's

68. Michael Roberts 'Irrigation Policy' *op. cit.* Table 3.

69. *SP XLV of 1905.*

70. C.O. 57/45 Report of the Surveyor General 1868.

71. C.O. 57/93, AR of Asst. G.A., Badulla, 1884.

72. C.O. 54/508, Birch to Carnarvon, 87 of 28 June 1877.

73. C.O. 54/586, Secretary of State to Gordon, enclosed in 49 of 8 Feb. 1890.

74. H. A. J. Hulugalle, *The Life and Times of D. R. Wijewardena*, Colombo, 1960, pp. 6-9.

75. *SP XLV of 1905.*

76. L. Ludovici, *op. cit.*, pp. 60-62 and 117-119.

help because of the burden of water rate introduced by Governor Robinson in 1867.⁷⁷

Payment for water was not new in Sri Lanka. It had already been an indigenous custom in some parts of the country.⁷⁸ Yet, the rate introduced by Robinson as a part of the restoration procedure was calculated on a different principle. It was devised, not as a charge on perpetuity, but as a sum sufficient to service and repay the capital invested within a decade. Consequently its aggregate was determined by the cost of the scheme rather than by the amount of water supplied;⁷⁹ and the share of the individual cultivator was determined by the number of participators rather than by the amount of water that he used. The smaller the number of participants the greater would be the financial burden on each. Therefore, any cultivator had to consider at least three factors before asking for Government help. He should know at least approximately the amount that he would have to pay; secondly, he should consider whether that price would give him at least an equal amount of benefit in the form of increased harvests; and thirdly, he should find out the ways and means of getting the money required since the Government accepted only cash payment. Of these, the first could not be known to the cultivator until the Government had actually finished the work. Regarding the second, as will be discussed soon, the works restored in the sixties and after did not lead to increased and regular harvests in all cases. In most cases the situation had been one of good harvests in times of ample and seasonally distributed rainfalls and bad harvests in times of scanty and untimely ones. Thus there was no need for tank water in times of ample rain and in times of drought the tanks themselves were dried up and therefore were of no use. In such a situation the water rate meant just an additional payment to the Government. And about the third, the possibility of getting money depended partly on the second and partly on the availability of marketing facilities for peasant crops.

Hence, it is not surprising that the water rate discouraged some and encouraged others. The cultivators of the Vanni and Trincomalee were few in number and therefore could not bear these payments to the Government. Besides, these areas also lacked markets for their produce and therefore had fewer opportunities to earn cash. As opposed to them, those of Sabaragamuwa 'happily accepted' the water rate and so

78. W. I. Siriweera, *op. cit.*; L. S. Perera, 'Proprietary and Tenurial Rights in Ancient Ceylon', *C.J.H.S.S.*, Vol. I, No. 2, 1959.

79. C.O. 54/432, Robinson to Duke of Buckingham, 10 of 14 Jan. 1868; C.O. 56/9, Ordinance 12 of 1867.

were the cultivators in the Batticaloa District and in parts of the Southern and Central provinces.⁸⁰ It was easy for them to find their money because they not only had markets for their produce, but also many of them except in the Batticaloa District, produced coffee which earned enough cash at this time. Thus, whereas the water rate raised no serious barrier to expansion in areas that were already well populated and market-oriented, in the less populated and more remote ones its effects were seriously discouraging. Therefore, the first function of irrigation, that of extending the area under tillage, had only a limited success in the 19th century.

Reducing the harvest fluctuations, by guaranteeing an adequate water supply during times of drought and by preventing floods during times of excessive rainfall is a more important function of irrigation than the first. The colonial officers were aware of this. According to one Government Agent, irrigation works in the North Central Province were provided "not so much to bring waste lands under cultivation as to secure the regular and permanent tillage of existing paddy lands."⁸¹ And in the Matara District outlay on irrigation had been incurred with the full knowledge that no waste lands would be brought under cultivation but with the view to render the food supply of the district less dependent on the fluctuations of the seasons.⁸²

Between 1871 and 1904, of a total irrigation expenditure of nearly 12.5 million rupees, the Government had spent 20.9% in the North Central Province, 15.8% in the Eastern Province and 13.5% in the Southern Province.⁸³ To what extent were harvest fluctuations reduced in these provinces?

The North Central Province was created in 1873. In 1877 there was a harvest disaster because of the "serious drought in 1876".⁸⁴ In this province, fluctuations in the Government's revenue had been an efficient yardstick to measure the fluctuations in production. Low revenue meant a fall in production and vice versa.⁸⁵ Unfortunately land revenue statistics are not available beyond 1886. Therefore, the following table shows the fluctuations between 1875 and 1886 only.

80. C.O. 57/45, AR of A.G.A., Sabaragamuwa and of A.G.A's, Badulla and Nuwara Eliya, 1868; C.O. 57/51, AR of G.A., Eastern Province, 1870.

81. Fisher's account on the progress made in grain cultivation since the partial restoration of the irrigation works in the N.C.P., enclosed in C.O. 54/553, Gordon to Derby, 154 of 26 Apr. 1884.

82. C.O. 54/555, Gordon to Derby, 412 of 11 Nov. 1884, enclosure No. 1.

83. Michael Roberts, 'Irrigation Policy', *op. cit.*

84. C.O. 57/73, AR of G.A., N.C.P., 1877.

85. C.O. 57/79, AR of G.A., N.C.P., 1879.

TABLE 5
Land Revenue in the N.C.P. 1875-1886⁸⁶

<i>Year</i>	<i>Revenue</i>	<i>Mean Deviation</i>
1875	Rs. 31,095	— 939
1876	34,778	+ 2744
1877	19,858	— 12176
1878	46,193	+ 14159
1879	13,834	— 18200
1880	24,883	— 7151
1881	29,515	— 2519
1882	29,265	— 2769
1883	42,427	+ 9393
1884	26,654	— 5380
1885	43,909	+ 11875
1886	41,992	+ 9958
Mean = 32,034		

Of the twelve years, five had yielded more than average revenue to the Government, which implies that only those years had yielded more than the average produce. Of the remaining seven, two had experienced the worst disasters while the others had been adversely affected in one way or another. Things did not improve after 1886. Table 6 shows the per acre yield of paddy in the N.C.P. between the years 1885 and 1899, and the degree of fluctuations in the yield from the mean.

TABLE 6
Paddy Yield and Its Fluctuations in the N.C.P. 1885 - 1899

<i>Year</i>	<i>Yield per acre</i> <i>(bushels)</i>	<i>Mean</i> <i>deviation</i>	<i>Mean deviation in</i> <i>percentages</i>
1885	10.3	— 11.2	— 52
1886	15.2	— 6.3	— 29
1887	13.4	— 8.1	— 38
1888	26.7	+ 5.2	+ 24
1889	32.0	+ 10.5	+ 49
1890	n.a.	n.a.	n.a.
1891	5.1	— 16.4	— 76
1892	25.0	+ 3.5	+ 16
1893	15.7	— 5.8	— 27
1894	25.0	+ 3.5	16
1895	25.0	+ 3.5	+ 16
1896	25.0	+ 3.5	+ 16
1897	15.3	— 6.2	— 29
1898	47.2	+ 25.7	+ 120
1899	20.7	— 0.8	— 4

Mean = 21.5 n.a. = not available Source: *Blue Books*

86. C.O. 57 series, ARs for N.C.P.

In 1885 there was scarcity "induced by the prolonged drought of 1884". Although the Maha harvest was good, 'constant wet weather prevented the threshing of the Yala harvest in proper season, and consequently a great deal of grain remained for months in the stacks, and was seriously damaged, and in many cases rendered unfit for food'.⁸⁷ In 1886 there was a failure of the usual rains in November and December. Although there was a total rainfall of 55 inches for the year, which was only 6 inches less than the average, yet it was "so erratically distributed throughout the year that it was almost useless for tank-filling purposes."⁸⁸ Similarly in 1891 the rainfall was "excessive in quantity", about 75 inches, but unevenly distributed. However it was found "not sufficient both to provide for the absorption arising from a long continued drought, as well as to fill the tanks..... The cultivation in the tank beds almost universally perished."⁸⁹

Unlike in the North Central Province harvest fluctuations were not so erratic in the Southern and Eastern provinces. Tables 6 and 7 and their graphical representation in the appendix clearly demonstrate this point. However even in those provinces the irrigation schemes often let down

TABLE 7
Per Acre Yield of Paddy and Its Fluctuations in the
Southern and Eastern Provinces 1885 - 1899

		Southern Province			Eastern Province		
		<i>Yield in bushels</i>	<i>Mean devi- ation</i>	<i>Mean deviation in %</i>	<i>Yield in bushels</i>	<i>Mean devi- ation</i>	<i>Mean deviation in %</i>
1885	...	10.0	-5.8	-37	9.3	-6.4	-41
1886	...	14.2	-1.6	-10	10.3	-5.4	-34
1887	...	14.9	-0.9	-6	8.9	-6.8	-43
1888	...	17.0	+1.2	+8	7.6	-8.1	-52
1889	...	12.7	-3.1	-20	17.9	+2.2	+14
1890	...	—	—	—	—	—	—
1891	...	15.2	-0.6	-4	13.7	-2.0	-13
1892	...	17.1	+1.3	+8	9.9	-5.8	-37
1893	...	18.3	+2.5	+16	16.5	+0.8	+5
1894	...	20.8	+5.0	+32	15.1	-0.6	-4
1895	...	17.3	+1.5	+9	13.6	-2.1	-13
1896	...	20.7	+4.9	+32	24.5	+8.8	+56
1897	...	15.8	0	0	23.4	+7.7	+49
1898	...	13.8	-2.0	-13	26.0	+10.3	+66
1899	...	14.0	-1.8	-11	22.9	+7.2	+46
		x = 15.8	x = 15.7		Source: <i>Blue Books</i>		

87. C.O. 57/98, AR of G.A., N.C.P., 1885.

88. C.O. 57/99, AR of G.A., N.C.P., 1886.

89. C.O. 57/115 AR of G.A., N.C.P., 1891.

the cultivator. In 1873 for example, the Trincomalee District of the Eastern Province experienced a severe drought and the harvest there was ruined. Droughts recurred in that district in 1874 and 1875 and in 1878 and 1879. Like the droughts in the seventies, floods in the eighties and both of them in the nineties repeatedly ravaged the paddy fields. The Annual Administration Reports of the Assistant Government Agents of Galle, Matara and Hambantota also cite many such occurrences in that part of the country too.

Irrigation in Sri Lanka, especially in the 19th century context, was a very complicated problem. There was hardly any research done at that time on the country's water resources and the difficulties one had to face in planning a comprehensive network of irrigation were very great. There is not much scope in Sri Lanka as there is in India, for a system of irrigation that directly supplies water from perennial rivers and streams because such resources are very few. Except for one or two like the Mahaweli Ganga and the Amban Ganga which rise in the wet zone, others are radial streams that spring within the dry zone itself and therefore suffer the full effects of the rainfall pattern there. And even in the case of the two rivers mentioned, as the experience in the 20th century shows, it would have required an enormous sum of money and a highly specialised technology—both of which were not available at that time—for any effective utilization of those resources for irrigation purposes. However, although great diversions of rivers and streams were not possible, yet the storage tanks constructed in various provinces at least needed links with local streams, firstly to replenish their stock to the full capacity during the wet seasons and secondly to direct the excess water during times of flood back to the rivers instead of allowing it to find its own way, which often damaged the paddy fields. To do the second, the tanks also needed strong and scientifically designed spills. Modern studies show that calculation of the spill required and computation of the irrigable area are fundamental questions that have to be considered even when restoring or constructing a single tank.⁹⁰ The latter demands knowledge not only of the capacity of the tank, but also the acre-feet amount of water required to bring a crop to harvest.⁹¹ To what extent such detailed calculations were made by the Government or the officers concerned is not known. The available records do not throw much light on this problem. However, according to Governor MacCarthy the early works had been “undertaken on somewhat uncertain data.”⁹² And to Robinson “the greater part of these

90. B. H. Farmer, *Pioneer Peasant Colonies in Ceylon*, Oxford University Press, 1957, p. 184.

91. *Ibid.*

92. C.O. 54/361, MacCarthy to Newcastle, 2 July, 1861.

schemes, when tested by the principles which should govern such undertakings" appeared to be "far from encouraging."⁹³ From the available evidence, it is not clear whether the Government had any detailed plan regarding its projects when it embarked on irrigation activities after 1850. A spurt of enthusiasm and a sympathetic feeling towards the 'natives' rather than any economic consideration, except for the hope of making Sri Lanka self-sufficient in rice, seems to have been the driving force behind the entire scheme.

From the beginning irrigation activities of the government were decided more by the wishes of the people than by any centrally planned scheme. "The principle should be", said Governor Anderson, "that where the natives come forward, which they will frequently do, to undertake or repair a work, and bear a moiety of the cost, the Government should bear the cost of the other moiety to be repaid by increased revenue for a term of years until the advance is paid."⁹⁴ Robinson also announced that the Government would undertake repairs only if the majority of the proprietors ask for them.⁹⁵ Since the primary decision was taken by the people they often requested the Government to repair or construct a tank closer to their fields. Thus where there were people tanks appeared, large and small irrespective of whether all of them were necessary or workable. In a sense Christie, the planters' representative in the Legislative Council, was correct when he pointed out that "the fact that large portions of the country are covered with irrigation works, with ellas and tanks, does not itself imply any call upon the Government to restore them."⁹⁶ Also, according to later findings there is no sufficient evidence to show whether all the tanks in ancient Sri Lanka ever functioned simultaneously.⁹⁷ Certain tanks had been built by certain kings not with the idea of increasing the water supply but to cut off the supply to another tank which lay in the enemy's territory.⁹⁸

The ancient kings paid great attention to the construction of canals which carried water from one area to another. For instance, the Elahera canal extended from the Laggala hills near Matale in the Central Province to Trincomalee in the Eastern coast; and the Yoda Ela of Kalawewa was only one link in a connected chain of tanks and canals originating in the Southern part of Sri Lanka and reaching far North into the Mannar

93. C.O. 54/416, Governor's address to the Legislative Council, 3 Oct., 1866, enclosed in Robinson to Carnarvon 227 of 12 Oct. 1866.

94. C.O. 54/314, Anderson to Grey, 13 June, 1855.

95. C.O. 54/432, Robinson to Duke of Buckingham, 10 of 14 Jan. 1868.

96. C.O. 54/579, Gordon to Knutsford, 518 of 31 Dec. 1888.

97. *The Economic Development of Ceylon. Report of the Mission Organised by the IBRD at the Request of the Government of Ceylon*, Colombo, 1952, Part II, p. 191.

98. B. H. Farmer, *op. cit.*, p. 188.

District and westward into Kurunegala.⁹⁹ But when piecemeal restoration began in the 19th century, more attention was paid to restore tanks than to provide the connecting links, firstly among the tanks themselves and secondly between them and paddy fields on the one hand and streams on the other. All the tanks in the Eastern Province had been restored regardless of there being a natural feeder or an intake channel for supplementing the rain supply. This was true in other districts also. The fact that there was only one channel to connect 512 village tanks and 7 large ones in the North Central Province (see Table 2) is a clear proof for this gross negligence of canals and artificial links. Perhaps the British totally misunderstood the importance of canals. As Dutt says, canals were more a means of transport to them than of irrigation and the importance of canals deteriorated in their thinking with the advent of railways.¹⁰⁰

Thus, without sufficient interconnections among the streams and tanks and tanks and fields and with undersized spills regular cultivation and harvests were hampered and wider fluctuations in the seasonal production of paddy remained an outstanding phenomenon of 19th century indigenous agriculture in Sri Lanka. Although the average

TABLE 8
Paddy Yield in Sri Lanka, 1851-1895

<i>Period</i>	<i>Annual Acreage (Thousands)</i>	<i>Annual Production (Thousand Bushels)</i>	<i>per Acre Yield (Bushels)</i>
1851 — 55	413	5,697	14
1856 — 60	472	6,135	13
1861 — 65	472	6,466	14
1866 — 70	493	6,392	13
1871 — 75	548	7,045	13
1876 — 80	604	7,076	12
1881 — 85	605	6,862	11
1886 — 90	569	8,729	15
1891 — 95	598	10,653	18

Source: *Blue Books*

(The average values of acreage and production for each period were calculated from 5-year moving averages)

99. C.O. 57/109, Report of the Central Irrigation Board, 1888.

100. R. C. Dutt, *India in the Victorian Age*, London, 1904, p. 367.

yield per acre had increased after 1885 it was not a significant achievement in the context of forty years of irrigation expenditure. What irrigation really achieved in the 19th century was more an extension in the acreage under paddy than a steady increase in its yield. But even in the former it was only a limited achievement.

Meanwhile the population of the island increased. A fall in the death rate coupled with an unrestricted inflow of immigrant labour from India caused the country's population to more than double between the emergence of the plantations in the 1830s and the end of the century. But Sri Lanka never achieved self-sufficiency in her staple food. Instead she became even more dependent on foreign supplies and notably on the precarious Indian source.

TABLE 9

Annual Rice Production, Imports and Consumption in Sri Lanka

Period	Production (Thousand Bushels)	Imports (Thousand Bushels)	Consumption	% of pro- duction on consumption
1851-55	2,848	3,098	5,946	48
1856-60	3,067	3,946	7,013	44
1861-65	3,233	4,619	7,852	41
1866-70	3,196	5,107	8,303	38
1871-75	3,522	6,170	9,692	36
1876-80	3,538	6,478	10,016	35
1881-85	3,431	6,207	9,638	36
1886-90	4,364	7,294	11,658	37
1891-95	5,326	8,756	14,082	38

Note: The Blue Books provide separate statistics for the import volumes of paddy and rice. For the sake of computation paddy was converted to rice at the rate of 2P = 1R.

Irrigation is only one of the inputs of rice cultivation. Capital, fertilizers, high yielding seed varieties, advanced techniques, economic holdings and a suitable tenancy structure are some others. The Colonial Government rarely legislated or interfered in these aspects. Therefore, its attempts to improve the rice economy of the country through irrigation schemes were a piece-meal affair and not the outcome of a comprehensive plan. Such a plan had to wait until Sri Lanka achieved her political freedom at least.

N.B.—The author is thankful to Prof. K. M. de Silva for his comments and criticisms which were of immense value in completing this article.

THE TAMIL DIGLOSSIA SITUATION IN SRI LANKA

S. THANANJAYARAJASINGHAM

The Various Tamil-speaking Communities

Sinhalese-speakers and Tamil-speakers form the two major linguistic groups in Sri Lanka. The Tamil-speaking population consists of the Sri Lanka Tamils, the Indian Tamils, the Sri Lanka Moors and the Indian Moors. The census of 1971 gives 3,464,632 as the combined strength of the Tamil-speaking groups in Sri Lanka. They thus constitute more than a quarter of the total population of the republic.

The Sri Lanka Tamils, though found all over the island in scattered settlements, predominate in the Northern and Eastern Provinces which are counted as their traditional homelands and also in the greater Colombo area. Outside the Northern and Eastern Provinces, their distribution tends to be markedly urban. The Sri Lanka Tamils constitute 11.1 per cent of the total population of the country.

The Indian Tamils are mostly employed in the plantations in and around the hilly districts in the centre of the island. They who have emerged as a significant element in the island's population during the last few decades form a separate community which is slightly smaller than the Sri Lanka Tamil community, according to the 1971 census. The Indian Tamils have for the most part tended to maintain their ties with their original places of origin in south India and are often regarded as people without permanent interests in Sri Lanka. Though the Tamil

language and the Hindu religion are common to them and the Sri Lanka Tamils other factors such as differences of historical background, economic levels, occupation and caste have helped to keep the two communities apart.¹

Of the Sri Lanka Moors about a third live in the Eastern Province intermingled with the Tamils while another third live on the west coast from Mannar to Kalutara. The rest are found scattered throughout the island. The Indian Moors are recent immigrants to the island and have never lost their ties with India. They are mostly engaged in trade. Apart from other factors, even in their use of the Tamil language² the Indian and Sri Lanka Moors as well as Indian Tamils show marked differences from the Sri Lanka Tamil community.

Centamil versus Kotuntamil

About eighty per cent of the Sri Lanka Tamils can read and write Tamil. These educated speakers use two varieties.³ Each of the two varieties has a definite role to play and the skill of a native speaker rests on using the right variety in the right situation. Following Ferguson⁴ the superimposed variety will be called H and the other variety will be called L. In Tamil H is referred to as *centamil* and L as *kotuntamil* or *koccai-t-tamil*.

The Specialized Functions of H and L

Centamil or H is only appropriate for one set of situations and *kotuntamil* or L is only appropriate for another set of situations and in a few situations they overlap. In terms of phonology, grammar and stylistics, H is more close to classical written Tamil than L. A Tamil child is first exposed to L and it later acquires H at school and in other formal situations. Following Ferguson,⁵ a few possible situations to illustrate the functional distribution of the H and L varieties of Sri Lanka Tamil are listed here.

1. Kearney, R. N., *Communalism and Language in the Politics of Ceylon*. Durham 1967, p. 103.
2. See Sanmugadas, A., "Some Aspects of the Tamil Spoken in Sri Lanka". *Proceedings of the Fourth International Conference—Seminar of Tamil Studies* (Mimeograph) Jaffna, 1974.
3. The term 'variety' is used here without precise linguistic definition. In its place the term 'register' may also be used.
4. Ferguson, C. A., "Diglossia", *Word* (Reprinted in Hymes, 1964, pp. 429 - 37), 1959, p. 430.
5. Ferguson, C. A., *op. cit.*, p. 431.

	H	L
Service ⁶ in temple or church	x	
Instructions to domestic servants and subordinates		x
Personal letter	x	
Conversation within family circle, friends and colleagues		x
Speech in parliament, political speech	x	
University and school classes	x	
Public reception, condolence-meeting, literary and religious festivals and other formal functions ...	x	
News broadcast	x	
Radio programme	x	x
Newspaper editorial, news story, caption on picture and literary article	x	
Jokes and caption on political cartoons in newspapers and periodicals		x
Fiction ⁷	x	
Poetry	x	
Folk literature	x	

The Superiority of H over L

Literary production in H has continued from classical times. H is, to a great degree, free from foreign words and is sometimes referred to by purists as *kanni-t-tamil* 'virgin Tamil'. Any work, if it is to be judged as a mark of great literary capability must be based on the rules prescribed in *Tolkaappiyam* which is supposed to have been written in the 4th or 5th century A.D. To say that a writer or speaker uses the language of *Tolkaappiyam* is the highest complement that can be paid to him. The majority of Tamils consider H as more elegant, more logical and better suited and equipped to convey new thoughts. If a non-speaker of Tamil asks an educated Tamil to teach him Tamil, the educated speaker will be naturally tempted to teach the H forms although he may be a fluent speaker of L.

6. The Hindus say their prayers in the form of devotional hymns which belong to the H variety. The officiating Brahmin priest conducts the religious service in Sanskrit. The devotees, when making personal appeals to god, may use H or L.
7. Most of the so-called short stories and novels written by Sri Lanka Tamils represent the H variety with minor variations depending on the mental linguistic horizon of the writer concerned. In them only a few flat characters are made to converse in L forms. The author's narration and descriptive passages are all in H forms. S. Ponnuthurai is one of the few who has exploited the spoken register in some of his writings. His *vii* 'sear' and *caṭanku* 'ceremony' are two masterpieces in which the L form of the Sri Lanka Tamil dominates. K. Kunarajah (*ceṅkai aaliyaan*) in his *viriṭṭai-k-kaarru* 'north wind' has to some extent exploited the spoken register as could be evidenced from the speeches of characters like Canmukam, Viruttaacalam, Iraamacaami and Mariyataas.

On the other hand, L is looked upon as the language of the uncouth and uneducated. Many people will not hesitate to describe L as "corrupted" and "debased". There are no restrictions regarding the use of foreign words in L. Parts of Sri Lanka were ruled in succession by three European powers, namely, the Portuguese, Dutch and British (the latter ruling over the whole country from 1815 onwards) and so the cultural contacts made with these foreign nations had a direct impact on the language as well.

H, being more akin to classical written Tamil, contains many archaic usages that are absent in L. In phonology, grammar and colligational possibilities of grammatical categories, there are striking differences between H and L. For instance, there are certain verbs which occur only in L in the following contexts.

e.g. naan curuttu kuticcan	'I smoked a cigar'
nii veentu	'you buy'

For these the corresponding structures in H are :

e.g. naan curuttu-p-pukaitteen	'I smoked a cigar'
nii vaanku	'you buy'

Semantically also the use of the verb *veentu* in L differs from that in H. In H the verb *veentu* will always take a noun as object and mean 'request'.

e.g. nii Katavulai veentu	'you request god'
---------------------------	-------------------

In L the verbs *veentu* and *vaanku* are interchangeable and not mutually exclusive as in H.

In L, concord is seldom found between nominals and verbs. The neuter singular and plural pronouns (e.g. *atu* 'that thing' and *atukal* 'those things') can be used to refer to human beings. H does not allow for such recategorization of neuter pronouns. Palatalization is a typical feature of L. The dental plosives after front vowels get palatalized. Compare L forms like *aticcan* 'I beat' and *paticcatu* 'that which was studied' with H forms like *atitteen* 'I beat' and *patittatu* 'that which was studied'.

The verb *iru* 'to be' is not inflected for person, gender and number in L. Both a nominal with the feature (+human) as well as a nominal with the feature (-human) are capable of taking the verb *iru* without person, gender and number terminations in the L variety.

e.g. oru aal irukku	'there is a person'
oru naay irukku	'there is a dog'

But in the H variety, the nominal *aal* will take the verb *iru* with (+human) gender termination and the nominal *naay* will take the same verb with (-human) gender termination.

e.g.	oru aal irukkiraar	'there is a person'
	oru naay irukkiratu	'there is a dog'

In phonology, H is characterized by special syllabic structures, certain vowel and consonant phonemes and heterogeneous consonant clusters not obtained in L. The L on the other hand has less restrictions on the occurrence of long vowels in word-final position on account of its ability to accommodate loan words.

In graphology, the H variety is transcribed by a number of symbols which are not used in depicting the equivalent of the L variety.

The Rise of Nativistic Movements

The use of H for official correspondence, religion, education and other aspects of higher culture and the use of L for everyday pursuits such as those connected with family circle, friends and subordinates has to be viewed in the proper historical perspective. Certain politico-economic factors paved the way for the rise of two nativistic movements in Sri Lanka Tamil society. Kroeber defines nativism as "After two societies have come into sufficiently close contact for one to feel the other as definitely more populous, stronger, or better equipped, so that its own culture is in process of being supplanted by the other, a conscious preservation effort or defence is often produced. Such reactions have been called nativistic endeavours or rivals. They envelope with a sort of halo the culture that is passing away, and attempt to reaffirm or re-establish it or parts of it".⁸

In the Tamil society during the last twenty-six years there has been intense revivalist activities concentrated in certain periods, which are characterized by a conservation and preservation endeavour in branches of Tamil culture, aimed against an expected threat from Sinhalese culture. It could be discerned that the puristic ideologies which affected the choice and nature of H for most purposes of communication are viewed as offshoots of those nativistic movements.

Although political independence was achieved in 1948 the Tamils felt that they were still in the same underprivileged position as they were during the British colonial times. Eight years after the winning of independence, the Mahajana Eksath Peramuna was returned to power

8. Kroeber, A. L., *Anthropology*, New York, 1948.

in parliament with an overwhelming majority in 1956. The new government immediately implemented a bill declaring Sinhalese as the "Only" official language of the country.

The Tamils feared that this overriding wave of Sinhalese nationalism was detrimental to their progress and survival. When English was the official language, they were well represented in all the avenues of profitable employment. Now they viewed with grave concern their future under the pan-Sinhala government. Just as the Sri Lanka Tamils feared political domination by the majority Sinhalese, the Sinhalese believed themselves to be a besieged minority in linguistic, religious and cultural matters. While the Tamils feared the numerical superiority of the Sinhalese, the Sinhalese feared cultural submergence by the thirty million Tamil-speaking people across the narrow Palk Strait in India. The Sinhalese-Only proponents argued that the six million⁹ Sinhalese in Sri Lanka were the world's only speakers of the Sinhalese language and representatives of Sinhalese culture. On the other hand, the Tamil language would exist regardless of its fate in Sri Lanka. They further argued that Sinhalese was the mother-tongue of the overwhelming majority of the people in Sri Lanka and that the size of the Tamil minority does not warrant equal treatment for the Tamil language.¹⁰

The first nativistic movement called the *Ilankai-t-tamil aracu-k-kact* was established in 1949. The advocates of this movement demanded a federal constitution on a linguistic basis for Sri Lanka of which the Tamil-speaking areas will be autonomous states in a federal constitution. Some of the leaders of this movement were elected as members of parliament and they, until recently, represented most of the electorates of the Northern and Eastern Provinces. They appealed for parity of status for the Tamil language and appealed to all sections of the Tamil community to sink their differences and unite to protest vehemently against what they felt was a discriminatory "Sinhalese Only" policy of the government.¹¹ In order to solicit support from both the elite and non-elite of the Tamil population, they through eloquent and well-thought-out speeches often extolled the virtues of the H variety of Tamil which was looked upon as the living index to the past high state of civilization of the Tamils. These speakers contrasted its virtues with those of the Sinhala language. In their evaluation, Sinhala cannot boast of such an ancient and rich literary heritage and pristine purity as Tamil. The superiority of the Tamil race and Tamil language was a favourite theme

9. The Census of 1953 listed 5,616,700 Sinhalese.

10. Kearney, R. N., *op. cit.*, pp. 72 - 73.

11. See, Thirunayagam, X. S., *Nam moliyurimaika!*. Kandy, 1956; Amirthalingam, A *Iilattilina otukkal*. Mallakam, 1972; and *Vankam tanta paadim*. Pannaakam, 1973.

of these national propagandists. The evolution undergone by the Tamil language during foreign rule is regarded as "corruption" and "debasement". It is a favourite theme of these national propagandists that the "corrupted" and "debased" H reveals the servitude the Tamils suffered under foreign yoke. Thus the H variety became a symbol and a cause to be upheld, and it is expected of every Tamil patriot to resist any attempt to replace it by L. To the literate and illiterate alike H is symbolic of the greatness of their race and its glorious past. Thus one can understand why a situation, in which there is an elite—whose class membership is determined by the ability to wield *Tolkaappiyam*, the classical grammar—standing above an illiterate section, does not produce a class cleavage. Moreover this literary elite comprising politicians and Tamil pundits provide leadership to the masses in all walks of life. Thus the illiterate Tamils do not feel themselves alienated.

In these and in many other ways a deep awareness of the cultural heritage of the Tamils was being permeated. The offensive mentality of ethnolinguistic superiority complex was nursed in the minds of the Tamils. Appeals to baser sentiments like these had the desired results and the Tamils were led to believe that they could convince better the Sinhalese who are in a majority in Sri Lanka of the superiority of the Tamil language through the H variety and thereby demand official recognition for the Tamil language.

The second nativistic movement was initiated by the Tamil pundits most of whom were school masters. It was urged by the leaders of this movement that the greatness of the Tamil language should be maintained by preserving the classical forms (i.e. the preservation of the H variety) without any adulteration. The prototype of this movement can be traced to the *Tani-t-tamiliyakkam* sponsored by Maraimalai Adikal of South India during the first quarter of the present century. In India, the aims and the objectives of the "Pure Tamil" movement coincided with the activities of the anti-Brahmin campaign launched by the members of the Progressive Dravidian Society. In Sri Lanka, the *Tamil aracu-k-katci* and *Tani-t-tamil iyakkam* worked hand in hand. In a state of linguistic fanaticism the proponents of this movement argued in favour of changing Sanskritic proper names like Paalacuppiramaniam, Navaniitakirisnaparati and Vittiyaanantan into Ilamurukan, Maavennaik-kannan and Kalaimakilnan respectively. Some of the Tamils were influenced by this movement and named their children with what they considered as "pure Dravidian words".

The Tamil school master, on account of his having received a conservative education was naturally averse to any forward-looking change

In all spheres of cultural activity there was an attempt to seek and resuscitate a lost and bygone tradition. Even newspapers which evinced a liberal attitude towards L forms were boycotted and were accused of using "Indian Tamil" or "Moor Tamil". The morbid concern over grammaticality on the part of the purists may be explained by the predicament of the Tamil-educated elite. Prior to 1956 the best profession available for a person educated in Tamil was usually that of a schoolmaster. There was a painful realization of the inequalities of a system where the English-educated class was better placed socially and economically. The champions of the puristic movement could but find solace in excelling in the knowledge of classics and archaic forms.¹² It is the pride of the Tamil *literati* to display how well versed they are in Tolkaappiyam and the numerous commentaries written for it. Archaicization was becoming the order of the day. Thus one can account for the introversion of the energies of a class of Tamil pundits who found their academic horizons closed within the narrow limits of classical texts, grammar and commentaries.

The motivation to preserve the H variety at the expense of the L variety has both a defensive as well as an offensive aspect. The defensive mechanism arises from the imagined threat of Sinhalese and English. It is felt that a conserved and purified language can better withstand this threat. The offensive mentality arises from the ethnolinguistic superiority complex built up by the *Tamil aracu-k-katci*. The purist school went a step further. They drew a sharp distinction between Sri Lanka Tamils and Indian Tamils on the basis of language, economic status, occupation, caste, etc. The Indian Tamils are mostly uneducated and employed as labourers in the plantation areas. Their language was described as "cooly Tamil". It was maintained that, in aspects of pure Tamil vocabulary and archaic usages, even the south Indian dialects of Tamil cannot vie with Sri Lanka Tamil. This extremist ideology of the ethnolinguistic superiority complex is telescoped to purify and guard the H variety from debasements and vulgarizations.

Any attempt to discredit the H variety was met with disapproval from the advocates of the puristic movement. The leaders of this movement took refuge in the prescriptive rules of Tolkaappiyam and declared that the criterion for standard usage was to be decided only by the learned. Debates and polemic writings arose on account of the strong opposition between the protagonists of "caanroor valakku" 'the usage

12. A somewhat similar attitude borne by Sinhalese school masters is described in Dharmadasa, K. N. O. *Spoken and Written Sinhalese*, (Unpublished M.Phil. dissertation). New York, 1967.

of the educated' and the protagonists of "ilicanar valakku" 'the usage of the uneducated'. As the uneducated masses acquiesced in the decision of the antagonists of ilicanar valakku 'the usage of the uneducated' despite the deplorable socio-cultural outlook of the puristic movement, the opponents of caanroor valakku 'the usage of the educated' always suffered a defeat.

Language Planning

For the H form of the language, there are numerous grammars, dictionaries, learned treatises and commentaries to facilitate its study. The orthography is well established and does not raise any problem. On the other hand, descriptive and prescriptive studies of the L form are just in the offing. There is widespread discrepancy in orthography, pronunciation, grammar and vocabulary in the L variety. A standard L has yet to be recognized and accepted. Myths about the superiority of Jaffna Tamil or Batticaloa Tamil continue to exist. At the moment H supersedes L as it is capable of being used as a unifying factor. The proponents of L who are few in number urge that some acceptable variety of L must be adopted because it is not only close to the real thinking and feeling of the Tamils but also is acquired from childhood. The opponents of L argue that L with its sub-varieties will only support regionalism rather than promoting solidarity of the different sections of the Tamil population.

In 1957 it was decided to teach in all the three languages (Sinhalese, Tamil and English) at the University of Sri Lanka from 1960 onwards. In the following year, the Tamil language (Special Provisions) bill was passed by the House of Representatives. The Tamils were assured that they could continue to educate their children in Tamil and that they could use their language in corresponding with the Government and in local government affairs in the Northern and Eastern Provinces. They could compete in Sinhalese if they were to continue in the service and be promoted.¹³

The Department of Official Language Affairs and the Sahitya Mandalaya (Academy of Literature) are two institutions set up by the Government to plan and develop Sinhala and Tamil. These two institutions, however, have not been free from criticism from various quarters of the Tamil population. The Tamil officials of the Department of Official Language Affairs have been well trained in puristic ideals and they insist on 'pure' Tamil words or fully Tamilised words. They reject forms like *tatli staamp* and *kuk* for proper names Dudley Stamp and Cook. In accordance with the rules of Tolkaappiyam the proper names Dudley Stamp and Cook have been Tamilised as *itattilittaampu* and

13. Kearney, R. N., *op. cit.*, pp. 147-148.

kukku respectively. It is the avowed policy of this Department to avoid the usage of Grantha characters which facilitate the transcribing of certain foreign sounds in Tamilising foreign words.¹⁴ They have thus been increasingly active in coining technical and administrative terms. Interdialectal studies have not been ventured and there is none trained in modern linguistics serving in this vestigial body to handle such an undertaking. A major pastime of the Department has been in translating books written in the English language by foreigners.¹⁵ The question of keeping the Tamil child in contact with the outer world in matters of science and technology is a serious one. There will always be a time-gap between an original publication and its translated version.

Similarly Sahitya Mandalaya Tamil panels only award cash prizes annually to authors who are skilful exponents of the H variety. The opposition between caanroor valakku and ilicanar valakku now and then holds sway at the panel meetings of this academy. So far none trained in advanced modern linguistics has served in it.

Thus it may be noted how the overall policy of these government-sponsored institutions tend more to widen than bridge the gap between H and L. The Tamil diglossia situation in contemporary Sri Lanka is static and so far no satisfactory solution has been formulated either to bridge the existing gap or to recognise a standard form of L. The use of various branches of modern linguistics, exhaustive surveys and analyses of all the existing varieties of Sri Lanka Tamil and the preparation of a dialect atlas are all-important aspects of a more far-reaching language-planning policy. The distinguishing of dialects from the regional sub-varieties, a choice made from the dialects and the fixing of a common standard are important. The lack of sufficient official recognition for the Tamil language in Sri Lanka and the H-oriented conservatism of educated Sri Lankan Tamils makes the problem of achieving these ends a vexed one.

-
14. For an exhaustive and constructive criticism of the Tamil translation techniques employed by the Department, see: Selvanayagam, S., "The Tamil Language and Problems of Translations". *Proceedings of the First International Conference—Seminar of Tamil Studies*, Vol. II, Kuala Lumpur, 1968, pp. 829 - 39.
15. T. P. Meenakshisundaran, a former Head of the Department of Tamil and Linguistics at the Annaalai University, South India, made the following interesting comment on the Tamil text books produced by the Department of Official Language Affairs in Sri Lanka. "Tamil text books in the various subjects are produced in Ceylon for the students through translations and original contributions. This year we feel the justification for this kind of independent development. I have also gone through some of these text books but it is difficult for me to follow them, though I find that they are easy to the Ceylonese and therefore the latter welcome it. At one time I thought that since South India is producing such text books this attempt in Ceylon was an unnecessary duplication. Now I realise that this is a wrong conception. There is no meaning in forcing Ceylon students and children to learn in the dialects and idiom of South India. After all the South Indian idiom is foreign to the Ceylon child and student". This comment clearly shows that there is widespread discrepancy between South Indian and Sri Lanka Tamils with regard to even the use of the H variety of Tamil (See Meenakshisundaran, T. P., *Ceylon and Tamil*. Chunnakam, 1964, p. 27).

JOHN DE SILVA AND THE SINHALA NATIONALIST THEATRE

SARATH AMUNUGAMA

Anagarika Dharmapala (1864-1933) and Piyadasa Sirisena (1875-1946) are rightly recognised as ideologues of the Sinhala Nationalist revival of the early twentieth century. Their success as communicators of a new ideology was due largely to the fluency with which they manipulated traditional symbols for contemporary purposes. They were quick to respond to the new technological and social milieu created by colonialism and capitalism. A similar contribution was made by a third communications innovator of this period, John de Silva (1857-1922), in a different field of cultural activity.¹ De Silva was the founder of the Sinhalese nationalist theatre.² He is of particular relevance for a study of the Sinhala revivalist movement since, unlike other nationalist agitators, he was compelled by the nature of his chosen field of cultural activity, to concentrate his propaganda on an urban audience, particularly that of Colombo. Of these urbanites, he was again compelled to limit his appeal primarily to the working class, which was now emerging from the new industries and ancillary services concentrated in the metropolis. In this essay I shall attempt to examine John de Silva's interpretation of the socio-cultural crisis of his time and the manner in which he communicated his vision to the public.

John de Silva's career

Though Anagarika Dharmapala's family was clearly richer and socially more prestigious, there is some similarity in the early lives of Dharmapala and John de Silva. Born in 1857 to an affluent *Goyigama* family in the suburbs of Colombo, de Silva also received an excellent English and "traditional" education. To learn English he first joined the Kotte Missionary School, which was Dharmapala's first school

1. D. R. Jayawardene, *John de Silva*, Colombo, 1951.

2. L. D. A. Ratnayake, *History of John de Silva's Plays*, Colombo 1963.

as well.³ Later he joined the Colombo Academy which was the premier government-sponsored English college in Sri Lanka.⁴ His education in traditional languages and religion he received at the Kotte temple and from his maternal cousin Battaramulla Sri Subhuti, a Buddhist monk renowned for his polemical and vitriolic writings. Subhuti's *Durvadi Hrdaya Vidaranaya* (To the heart of our opponent's views) was a vituperative, frequently abusive, attack on Roman Catholic views which enjoyed great popularity among Buddhist readers. De Silva was also assisted by Pandit Don Andiris Batuwantudawe, a leading Sinhalese scholar of this time and a collaborator of Hikkaduwe Suman-gala theru.⁵

In 1887 John de Silva started teaching at St. Joseph's College, Grandpass, and later at Wesley College, the leading English school of the Wesleyan mission.⁶ Unlike Dharmapala, there is no indication that de Silva was particularly interested in Sinhalese-Buddhist affairs as a youth, except for his publication of a work called "A Compendium of History of Ceylon."⁷ Since this publication was sponsored by the Education Department, which was under a British director, it is certain that nothing in it was even vaguely "seditious". While he was earning his living as a teacher, de Silva also entered the Colombo Law College and passed out as a Proctor and Notary of the Supreme Court of Sri Lanka. This was to be his profession though the theatre was, without a doubt, his ruling passion. It was his earnings from his legal work, and financial support from his rich lawyer friends like the Jayewardene brothers, which enabled de Silva to survive the periodic financial crises which became a characteristic of the Sinhala theatre.⁸ It is important to note that the legal profession was a highly prestigious one at this time. It was a passport for entry into the middle class. It also invested John de Silva with a social stature which he could exploit among his working class players and theatregoers.

3. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 3. See also Martin Wickramasinghe, "Hikkaduwe Sumangala and the Beginnings of Modern Sinhalese Literature," *Sri Sumangala Commemoration Volume*, (Colombo, 1962), p. 33.

5. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

6. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

7. *Ibid.*, p. 3.

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 145, 146. For an account of the Jayewardene family, see *Twentieth Century Impressions of Ceylon*, ed. Arnold Wright, London, 1907, pp. 567, 569, 573.

He was also a prolific journalist. Writing as Nagalagamuwe John de Silva, he was a regular contributor to the *Lakmini Pahana*, *Kavata Tilaka* and *Sinhala Samaya*. Indeed he was, from 1901-1903, a sub-editor of the *Sinhala Samaya*. It was at this time that he was inspired by Dharmapala and the temperance workers to write "*Sinhala Parabbava Natakaya*", (The Degradation of the Sinhalese), which was first serialized in the *Sinhala Samaya*. He was drawn into the temperance movement by the then leaders of the national bourgeoisie like F. R. Senanayake, E. W. Perera and H. J. C. Pereira, who were also lawyers.

As we shall see in detail later he made the printing press an important instrument for the propagation of his views. He not only contributed to Sinhalese journals but also printed copies of his plays and sold them throughout the country. These pamphlets which carried a brief introduction by the playwright and all the lyrics of a play helped to popularize his songs, and through them his nationalist vision all over the country. For instance, 16,000 copies of his "*Sri Vickrama Rajasinha*" were sold by 1925. In 1908 an Indian record company began to produce gramophone records of *nurti* songs. The most popular of these recordings were de Silva's songs and he soon had more offers from other record companies such as Odeon, HMV and Parlophone.⁹ All these recordings opened up a new dimension of propaganda and personal prestige for John de Silva, who managed thereby to break through the limitations imposed by the restriction of his plays to urban centres.

But the theatre was his ruling passion. Till the advent of the stage plays of C. Don Bastian and John de Silva, the Sinhalese had only a folk theatre, linked in varying degrees, with ritual. They were essentially peasant, open air performances which took at least a whole night to enact.¹⁰ There were no professional players. Villagers who went about their humdrum duties assumed the "persona" of gods, kings and demons for a night's ritual. The transition from folk play to urban stage in Sri Lanka is largely the work of John de Silva. Inspired by his readings of Shakespeare and the Sanskrit poets, his association with Bastian (another dramatist cum literateur, newspaperman and type-setter), and the plays of itinerant Indian theatre groups, which performed with great success in Colombo, he first wrote several plays based on Sanskrit classics. Among them were *Nala Raja Katava* (1886), a love story based on the Nala-Damayanti legend and *Ramayana* or *Lanka*

9. *Ibid.*, p. 128.

10. Paul Wirz, *Exorcism and the Art of Healing in Ceylon*, Leiden, 1954. See also Ediriweera Sarachchandra, *The Sinhalese Folk Play*, Colombo, 1970.

Dahan, which had a special attraction for Sri Lankans since the legendary Lankapura, the abode of Rama's adversary, Ravana, was believed to be Sri Lanka. However, there is nothing in these plays, and in *Daskon* which he produced soon after, to indicate that the playwright was involved in the Buddhist agitation which was now entering a new phase following the advent of the Theosophists.

A change can be seen from 1902 when de Silva established a new theatre company, *Sinhala Arya Subodha Natya Sabha*, with the assistance of national leaders like Dr. W. A. de Silva and F. R. Senanayake. It is this period that is of special significance to this study because from 1902 he made the theatre a powerful instrument of nationalist propaganda. His plays either illustrated the heroic activity of the Buddha in his previous births or described a high point of Sinhalese civilization, as seen through the eyes of the narrator of the *Mahavamsa*. Of John de Silva's most popular productions, *Vessantara* (1916) and *Kusa Jataka* (1917) are examples of the former while *Siri Sangabo* (1903) and *Dutugamunu* (1910) are good instances of the latter. Another group of his plays such as the *Parabhava Natya* (1902) was morality plays which dealt with the shortcomings of the Sinhalese under western rule, very much akin to the strictures of Dharmapala and Sirisena on the pleasure-loving, westernized Sinhalese. Even when he was adapting Shakespeare or the Sanskrit classics, de Silva would not hesitate to inject some nationalist propaganda into the play. Thus for instance in the prelude to his adaptation of the Sanskrit classic, Sri Harsha's *Ratnavali*, a character proclaims that this play must be enacted because the princess in the play was born in Sri Lanka.

During the period of the Arya Subodha Sabha and Vijaya Ranga Sabha which he set up in 1913, de Silva became a leader of the Sinhalese national movement. His plays created a tremendous impact on Colombo society and even those nationalist leaders who were contemptuous of the "base arts" soon saw the value of this new medium. Some Buddhist monks who attempted to create yet another controversy in the newspapers claiming that it was a sacrilege to dramatize the *Jatakas* were condemned editorially in many Sinhalese newspapers.¹¹ John de Silva did not confine his propagandizing to the stage and newspaper. He also, like Dharmapala and Sirisena, undertook public lectures. It was his custom also to preface performances of his plays with a long, and frequently abusive, speech to the audience, condemning the aping of western manners, attacking Tamils and Muslims and extolling the virtues of the ancient Sinhalese.

11. Ratnayake, *op. cit.*, p. 203.

It is no coincidence that the riots of 1915 in Colombo were concentrated in the areas which were dominated by the working class. As Kumari Jayawardene has demonstrated, it was this class which felt most acutely the economic and social pressures attendant on the demographic shift from the village to the city.¹² Cut off from traditional moorings of kin and caste group, living under pitiful conditions in overpopulated "interstitial" areas, with nothing but their labour to sell, they were exploited both by the national bourgeoisie and by the urban petit-bourgeoisie of small traders (a large element of whom were Tamil or Muslim) and tenement owners. Thus the revivalist movement identified not only Englishmen but also Tamils and Muslims as "foreigners" and as authors of their misfortune. Dharmapala, Sirisena and de Silva furthered the stereotype of the Tamil and Muslim as a rapacious, mercenary exploiter of the Sinhalese. With the declaration of martial law in 1915 the colonial authorities suppressed the Sinhalese theatre. All plays were banned. John de Silva and several members of his troupe were taken into custody. Hendrick Seneviratne, a wealthy sponsor of *Nurti*, and owner of the "Tower Hall", the premier Sinhalese playhouse, was imprisoned. De Silva was soon released and after forming the Sri Lanka Natya Sabha (1916) began new productions. But the impact of the British repression was unmistakable. His plays were no longer so vitriolic. Sponsors were hard to come by and the Colombo elite, who had fraternized with the masses in the heyday of the Vijaya Ranga Sabha, now found it more profitable to keep its distance. Though de Silva continued to write and produce plays till his death in 1922 and now had access to the prestigious Tower Hall, the political initiative moved away from the revivalistic to the leaders of the middle class who were adopting a more conciliatory approach in their demands for national self-determination.

The *Nurti*

There are four aspects to an analysis of the early Sinhalese theatre (of the type pioneered by John de Silva) which has been called the *Nurti* to distinguish it from the folk play and variety entertainments. These aspects are the emergence of an urbanized working class audience in Colombo, the role of the folk tradition, the influence of itinerant Indian dramatic groups and the impact of revivalist ideas. It is as a result of the coming together of all these strands that the dramatic form called the *Nurti* was created.

12. Kumari Jayawardene, "Economic and Political Factors in the 1915 Riots," *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol. 29, No. 2 (February, 1970), pp. 223-234.

Of all the consequences of capitalism and colonialism in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century in Sri Lanka, perhaps the most visible was the growth of the city of Colombo. Though Colombo had been an important port of the Sinhalese kings, it had never been their capital as Sri Lanka was not a naval power. The energies of the Sinhalese administration were naturally turned inwards to the countryside rather than to foreign political and trade activities. In the case of foreign settlers and traders and foreign colonialists, however, it was exactly the reverse. Beginning with the Muslims who first established a trading post there, the Portuguese and the Dutch looked upon Colombo as a prize possession, close to the royal seat of Kotte and allowing a command of the sea. Several times the field armies of Sinhalese kings were able to drive the invader "into the sea" only to find that they could be reinforced by sea. The British therefore inherited from the Dutch a fortified city which had by then, for two centuries, been the principal city of the westerners in Sri Lanka. However, the economic basis for the growth of Colombo as a metropolis was laid only with the opening of plantations. For reasons both of economic development and defence strategy the British undertook the building of a network of road and rail communications which linked Colombo with all the principal points of the island. Along these links, principally along the newly opened Kandy road, supplies went up to the plantations and exports such as coffee, cinchona and tea came down to Colombo for processing, packaging and dispatch to world markets. Thus Colombo became not only the administrative capital of the British in Ceylon, but the centre of its entrepot trade. If the British civil servants appeared to be slow in pushing the development of Colombo, the commercial interests in the island made it their concern to hurry them on. Thus for instance, commercial interests agitated for the establishment of a local authority for the city and the setting up of a Harbour Board for the management of the port of Colombo.¹³

Two developments confirmed Colombo as the major business centre of the island. The first was the expansion of the Colombo harbour and the building of a breakwater which was begun in 1872 and completed in 1884. Till then the port had limited bunkering and wharf facilities. Goods were unloaded offshore and a contemporary account describes "coolies wading into the water and bringing the bags to shore on their heads."¹⁴ All this had changed by the turn of the century. Soondly, steam vessels began to take the place of sailing ships. This

13. *Twentieth Century Impressions of Ceylon*, op. cit., p. 411.

14. *Ibid.*, p. 387.

meant that all eastern bound ships had to stop in Colombo after Port Said, for coaling and victualling. In shipping circles Colombo was known as the "Clapham Junction of the Indian Ocean."¹⁵ The following figures of harbour dues collected by the Colombo Port Authority illustrates the growing importance of Colombo as an international port.¹⁶

1883	...	...	Rs.	379,018
1905	...	...	Rs.	1,186,942

In 1905, two thousand steamers called at Colombo. The head offices of P & O, and Messageries Maritimes, the biggest shipping agents in Asia, shifted from Galle to Colombo in 1882.¹⁷

The rapid expansion of Colombo as the administrative and commercial capital of the island induced a massive demographic change. People migrated from the countryside to the city looking for employment and greater economic opportunities. In 1901 the population of the city was 151,691. By 1911 it had gone up to 213,618. According to Panditaratne,

"From 1901 to 1911 the Colombo rate of (population) increase ... 36.6% was more than double the island's rate, obviously related to the general trade prosperity of the island."¹⁸

The nature of this prosperity can be gauged by a comparison of trade figures for 1840 and 1905:¹⁹

Year			Imports	Exports
1840	...	...	368,380	308,871
1905	...	...	7,221,621	6,812,647

The increase in trade necessitated the growth of a working class in Colombo. Many of them were first generation migrants from the villages and retained many of their traditional links of caste and religion. In the interstitial areas of Kotahena, Dematagoda, Maradana and the Pettah where the new urbanites were concentrated, Buddhist temples sprang up and provincial monks were persuaded to take up residence in them. Migettuvatte Gunananda thero and Hikkaduve Sumangala thero

15. *Ibid.*, p. 369.

16. *Ibid.*, p. 370.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 380.

18. B. L. Panditaratne, "Trends of Urbanization in Ceylon 1901-1953", *The Ceylon Journal of Historical and Social Studies*, Vol. 7, No. 2 (July-December, 1964), p. 206.

19. *Twentieth Century Impressions of Ceylon*, op. cit., p. 365.

were invited to Colombo in this way. This working class provided the first urban audience for Anagarika Dharmapala who publicly proclaimed that he had lost faith in the anglicized middle class and was depending on the working class.²⁰ In fact these working class enclaves provided a sharp contrast to the westernized residential areas of the rich. A contemporary record, *Twentieth Century Impressions of Ceylon*, describes these working class districts in the following way :

The tram lines from the Fort to the northern suburbs pass along the main thoroughfare (of the Pettah) which traverses the centre of the quarter and on either hand branch off into narrow and tortuous cross streets and lanes, which as well as main street, are crowded from earliest morn until far into the night with a teeming mass of coloured humanity, proffering and purchasing wares of all descriptions. . . . Adjoining the Pettah to the northward is the large and populous Kotahena division of the city, with an area of 1,649 acres and over 33,000 inhabitants. Another large ward of the Municipality in an easterly direction from the Fort is Maradana, comprising 1,297 acres and with a population almost equal to that of Kotahena. The north and north eastern spread of the city also includes the wards of St. Sebastian (Area 116 acres, population about 10,000), St. Paul's (Area 143 acres ; population over 20,000) and New Bazaar (Area 289 acres ; population 18,000).²¹

Not only was this urban proletariat subject to all the socio-psychological pressures attendant on mass migration, but they were also subject to economic exploitation, especially by traders and slum owners. The economic environment was strictly "laissez-faire". There were few government sanctions against the exploitation of labour. There was no income tax and few social amelioration measures. Most of the employment available was in the unskilled categories, especially in the harbour, the tea and coffee packing factories and the plumbago refineries. The Ceylon Wharfage Company for instance which handled the loading and unloading of goods at the harbour employed 5,000 hands. The Cargo Boat Despatch Company which shipped plumbago, coconut oil, tea and rubber and imported rice

20. Anagarika Dharmapala, *Return to Righteousness*, ed. Ananda Guruge, Colombo, 1967, (Introduction, p. LXVII.)

21. *Twentieth Century Impressions of Ceylon*, *op. cit.*, p. 396.

employed 700 labourers.²² Many of the European agency houses and processing factories like Whittalls, Carsons, Liptons and Freudenburgs employed large numbers of labourers.²³

A major criticism of British rule made by the revivalists was that they permitted the exploitation of the Sinhalese by minority nationalities such as the Tamils, and Muslims and also by non-nationals, mostly of Indian origin. Colombo, like other rapidly developing commercial centres of Asia and Africa, attracted Indian trading communities such as the Parsees, Sindhis and Chettiars. As Indian subjects of the British Crown they had free access to the colonies where they soon dominated the local trade. Indeed, it was the policy of the British Administration to encourage the investment of Indian capital in Ceylon. This was particularly galling to the national bourgeoisie who found themselves in competition with another "native class" which in addition to its proven business acumen, enjoyed the support of the colonial Administration. A common theme of Dharmapala, Sirisena and de Silva's propaganda was the injustice caused to the Sinhalese by being left to the tender mercies of these "exploiters". Dharmapala summed up this position when he wrote,

"Aliens are taking away the wealth of the country, and the sons of the soil, where are they to go! The immigrants who come here have other places to go: The Sinhalese have no place to go to. Is it just that the sons of the soil should suffer while the alien enjoys?"²⁴

This was a theme which attracted the newly urbanized Sinhalese. Most of their day-to-day economic transactions were with non-Sinhalese, and the complaints of the revivalists appeared to be patently valid. John de Silva openly propagated this doctrine. His statement of the ancient glories of the Sinhalese and the pre-eminent position of Buddhism, his criticism of the debt-ridden, liquor-drinking, unpatriotic Sinhalese and his identification of an easily recognizable scapegoat suited the culturally-disoriented, economically-frustrated urban Sinhalese workers and the urban poor.

These urban workers were the mainstay of de Silva's theatre. Freed by social circumstances from village ritualistic drama, they were captivated by the extravagant decor, the songs and dances, the melodrama, in short the tinsel of the new secular stage.

22. *Ibid.*, p. 387.

23. *Ibid.*, pp. 425-466.

24. Anagarika Dharmapala, *op. cit.*, p. LXXIX.

The main Sinhalese playhouses were located in the Pettah, Maradana and Slave Island, in close proximity to working class districts. Plays were staged on Saturday nights when the workers were enjoying their weekend holiday. Special attention was paid to plays put on after pay days. "Nurti" plays were advertised at workplaces, where itinerant musical bands were paid to play snatches of the songs which had achieved popularity. De Silva's players were also drawn mostly from the working class. Among them were sailors, wine waiters, arrack sellers and harbour workers.²⁵ An interesting structural consequence of the working class impact on the Nurti was the inclusion in all the plays of one or two characters of obviously working class origin who, somewhat like Shakespeare's clowns, provided a critical commentary on the goings-on of the upper classes. These comments and songs were risqué and delivered in a language that was close to the spoken language of the Colombo working class.

What were the origins of this new Sinhalese theatre? What inspired C. Don Bastian and John de Silva to create this new form of urban entertainment? Traditional Sinhalese folk plays were ritualistic in character. Many of them were dramatic enactments of episodes from the original myths of gods and demons.²⁶ These rituals narrated the progression of the life of the deity up to his encounter with the Buddha, and the consequent absorption of the deity into the Buddhist pantheon.²⁷

One of the cultural consequences of the spread of Catholicism in Sri Lanka was the spread of a more sophisticated form of drama which came to be known as the Nadagama. There is evidence that a genre of drama similar to the Nadagama, called Terukuttu, was prevalent among the Tamils of the eastern coast, probably diffused to that area from South India. Catholic clerics who worked in both Tamil and Sinhalese territories seem to have introduced this form to Sinhalese playwrights as suitable for creation of Catholic plays.²⁸ The earlier Sinhala Nadagama was a translation of the Tamil Terukuttu, "Sthakki", which was a Catholic propagandist play. This was followed by original works such as the lives of St. Joseph and St. Nicholas. Nadagama music which was distinctly South Indian was a crucial aspect of this genre of plays.²⁹

25. L. D. A. Ratnayake, *op. cit.*, p. 35.

26. Paul Wirz, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

27. Gananath Obeyesekere, "The Ritual Drama of the Sanni Demons," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, Vol. II, No. 2 (April, 1969), p. 209.

28. Ediriweera Sarachchandra, *Sinhala Navakatha*, Colombo 1968, p. 21.

29. *Ibid.*, p. 21.

The Nadagama retained many aspects of the old folk play but, in play construction, its melodrama and heroic themes and, especially its music, it was much closer to the modern stage than rituals. While the primary intent of enacting a folk play was religious, the Nadagama later came to emphasize entertainment. In fact, John de Silva's mentor C. Don Bastian began his career as a playwright by adapting Nadagamas to the modern stage. He tried to create a new theatrical form which could take the peasant open air performance that was the Nadagama into the proscenium stage of a Colombo playhouse.

Though the influence of the Nadagama conditioned both playwrights and audience to new forms of theatre, the Nurti was more directly a product of an urban environment. With the concentration of a large population in Colombo a demand arose for secular entertainment. This was provided initially by itinerant theatre companies from India. These dramatic companies were owned and managed by Parsees from Bombay, themselves the most enterprising and westernized of Indian communities. They had adopted many features of western stagecraft such as elaborate costuming, lighting, decor and the use of a drop curtain which made their productions a novelty not only in Sri Lanka but also in various parts of India, Singapore and the Straits Settlements. There were about twenty such theatre groups in Bombay. The first of these to play in Colombo was the Elphinstone Dramatic Company, known because of its owner, as the Balliwallah Company. Their plays were staged in Floral Hall in the Pettah, and among their popular productions were *Arabian Nights*, *Aladdin*, *Othello*, *Romeo and Juliet*, and *Harischandra*.³⁰

These plays had an immediate impact on Colombo and inspired Ceylonese like John de Silva to enter the field of play production. The influence of the Bombay theatre is clearly seen in the fact that he was first helped, especially in the composition of music in the Balliwallah tradition, by an ex-employee of the Parsee theatre, the Indian maestro, Viswanath Laujee.³¹

Two aspects stood out in the Parsee theatre. One, as we noted earlier, was their use of elaborate western style decor and stage craft. The other was their use of popular North Indian music. These songs, based on classical *raga* or airs were a contrast to the Dravidian music of the Nadagama. The Nurtiya was not naturalistic in the western sense. It was more operatic in that the progress of the play depended

30. *Ibid.*, p. 25.

31. L. D. A. Ratnayake, *op. cit.*, pp. 46-50.

on song rather than dialogue. Indeed the origins of the Parsee theatre indicate the influence of Grand Opera rather than of the naturalistic western theatre. The earliest of these plays, *Indrasabha*, had been written jointly by an Indian court poet and the French Ambassador to the Court of Washid Ali, Maharaja of Lucknow.³² The Nurti actors sang out their words in operatic style according to carefully selected *ragas* which were supposed to create a specific mood. But unlike in the opera where the music takes precedence over the lyric, in the Nurti lyrics were crucial. They performed the same function as the dialogue in the realistic play. The function of the *raga* was to intensify the impact of the lyric.

John de Silva's specific contribution was to take this dramatic form which had proved its attraction to the newly urbanized mass audience of the metropolis and convert it into a vehicle for revivalist propaganda. In many ways such a development was inevitable. Buddhist legends and historical events which formed the raw material for Sinhalese drama were also the cultural symbols which were crucial to revivalism. One of the main propaganda strategies of Dharmapala and Sirisena, as we have seen, was to activate these legends and myths. Also the pre-empting of the field of historical interpretation by the *Mahavamsa* and the Buddhist clergy had a decisive influence on all Sinhalese intellectuals of this time. Thus to use Sinhalese myth and legend, the stuff of melodrama, was to adopt *ipso facto* the historical vision of the *Mahavamsa*, and therefore of the revivalists. In fact, however, de Silva did not independently arrive at the revivalist intellectual position. He was inducted by the national bourgeoisie into the revivalist movement. His dramatic companies were financed by Colombo businessmen. Specific themes for his plays were suggested by leaders of the nationalist movement as being suitable for propaganda. The *Sinhala Parabhava Natya* was written at the invitation of temperance workers. The theme of *Alakesvara Caritaya* was suggested by E. W. Perera, an ardent nationalist who provided the playwright with the necessary historical information. The *Siri Sangabo Natya* was hailed by Piyadasa Sirisena in his newspaper.

In the manifesto of the *Arya Subodha Sabha*, John de Silva lays down the objectives of his work:

"The major objectives of the Sinhala Arya Subodha Natya Sabha are the popularization of a Sinhalese music which has up to now remained hidden; to show the dress, customs and beliefs of our

32. *Ceylon Observer*, 9th July, 1944.

ancestors; to uncompromisingly criticize the bad habits that have spread among our people and create a love for their mother tongue among the younger generation. It is therefore the obligation of men and women of all ranks to see these plays with their children. I believe they will be of great benefit to the Sinhalese nation.”³³

Again, in the preface to his play *Siri Sangabo*, he says:

“Through this play people will come to know the many facets of Buddhism—the religion of the Sinhalese nation, and its ancient rites and practices.”³⁴

We turn therefore to an examination of two of his popular plays as illustrations of the revivalist propaganda. These plays are the *Sinhala Parabhava Natya* (1902) and *Sri Vikrama Rajasinha* (1906).

Sinhala Parabhava Natya

Of all John de Silva's plays his satire, *Parabhava Natya* comes closest to an analysis of the socio-cultural crisis of Sinhalese Buddhists under colonialism. In this his views were remarkably similar to those of Dharmapala and Sirisena. In fact the *Parabhava Natya* is a theatrical extension of the cultural conflict delineated in *Jayatissa saba Rosalin*.

With the success of his early plays based on Sanskrit classics, de Silva was invited to write a play on a contemporary theme to be serialized in the *Sinhala Samaya*, a newspaper edited by M. C. F. Perera. The first part of this saga entitled *Sura Kandaya (The Alcohol Episode)* was not produced for the stage by him.³⁵ He did however stage the second episode entitled *Sirit Kandaya (The Life Style Episode)* wherein he satirized the westernized life style of the upper class. By this time John de Silva had become a valuable member of the middle class. While they themselves had derived the benefits of capitalism by way of entering the professions and accumulating substantial wealth, they were also anxious to wrest the leadership of the mass of people. As Fernando describes it:

“Alienated from the people themselves by their foreign language and dress the westernized elite needed to dramatize their rejection of at least some western values if they were to be accepted as popular leaders.”³⁶

33. L. D. A. Ratnayake, *op. cit.*, p. 47.

34. *Ibid.*, p. 58.

35. *Ibid.*, pp. 38-44.

36. P. T. M. Fernando, “Arrack, Toddy and Sinhalese Nationalism,” (Ceylon Studies Seminar, 1970, unpublished), p. 24.

The temperance movement and criticism of the apeing of western customs provided this opportunity. De Silva was a leading member of the temperance movement. Speakers at an early public meeting held in Colombo to promote the movement were F. R. Senanayake, Anagarika Dharmapala, C. Batuwantudawe and John de Silva.³⁷

The *Sinhala Parabhava Natya* is a play in seven acts which deals with the decline of the fortunes of a wealthy Sinhalese, Arthur Gordon Wilmot Dheranasekera, who attempts to imitate westerners and finally ends up in prison. John de Silva, in the preface to the printed text of the play, describes it in this way:

“Leonora, the daughter of Dheranasekera, insists on eating, dressing and behaving in accordance with western culture. She is encouraged to do this by her fiance, Harry Colville Jeramiah Amaranayake. Dheranasekera pays for all this and after a wasteful and extravagant wedding ceremony loses his fortune and is in the end imprisoned. The calamity that is now confronting the Sinhalese nation by the blind imitation of foreign customs will be made very clear through the words of Wanasinghe who appears in this play. One of the main reasons for the decline of the Sinhalese nation is its ignorance of the mother tongue. The present day Sinhalese have trampled down their mother tongue and learnt a foreign language which helps them to fill their bellies. So they have no access to the wisdom of their ancestors and are easily misled. For these people, who like the proverbial deer run after chimeras, there will be plenty of useful sayings in this play. Parents should advise their children to study the text of this play.”³⁸

A central character in the play is Wanasinghe who, with his wife Tarakanjani and daughter Lilavati live in a provincial town, in accordance with tradition. He is obviously the author's mouthpiece and carries on a continuous critical commentary on the foibles of the anglicized upper class. Wanasinghe has a sharp tongue. He sings:

Europe will be rich
Ceylon will be poor
White ways for whites
Why not black ways for blacks?³⁹

37. *Ceylon Independent*, 27th May, 1912.

38. L. D. A. Ratnayake, *op. cit.*, p. 39.

39. *Ibid.*, p. 41.

He reserves his choicest barbs for Sinhalese women who forget their traditional role and take to western ways:

“Every cent they earn is frittered away,
Even toothless hags are changing nowadays.
Poor Sinhala lady! She can't eat rice and curry
But she'd die without her whisky and claret.”⁴⁰

Dheranasekera, his wife and daughter are the polar opposites of the Wanasinghes. They are too busy keeping up with the anglicized Jones of the island to notice that their wealth is being squandered. The second act shows them and their Anglo-Ceylonese friends frolicking on the beach. Their behaviour is the repudiation of everything that the revivalists had identified as “Aryan” and national. The songs in this act, based on Portuguese melodies, are supposed to indicate the “laxity of morals” of the westernized class.

Dheranasekera: My rings are made of gold and rubies
I am throwing them at someone who
comes with me.

Regina: Here I come. Give me the ring and a kiss,
I can drink a lot dear; so let's dance.⁴¹

This wealthy Sinhalese over-extends himself to pay for his daughter's extravagant wedding, and resorts to cheating. He is caught and in a final courtroom drama, is sentenced to imprisonment. Too late, he realizes the folly of his ways and repents. The play ends with Dheranasekera addressing the audience in song from his prison cell, asking them to draw the appropriate moral from the tale of his dishonour.

To imitate a foreign life
Is a path full of error,
See its dangers clearly,
And learn from my misfortune.⁴²

Sri Vikrama Rajasinha

In another play, *Sri Vikrama Rajasinha—The last King of Kandy*, John de Silva confronted the consequences of colonialism in terms of his revivalist philosophy. In fact, the last king of Kandy, Sri Vikrama,

40. *Ibid.*, p. 41.

41. *Ibid.*, p. 42.

42. *Ibid.*, p. 43.

though of Indian origin had attempted to preserve Sinhalese sovereignty in the face of the intrigue of Sinhalese chiefs who were being manipulated by the British. Though the ostensible reason given for the treasonable conduct of the chiefs was their desire to place a Sinhalese on the throne, in fact it was a cover for their personal ambitions and overweening vanity. The king, when made aware of the disloyalty of his chiefs, punished them in a manner prescribed by custom—the torture and death of the immediate members of their families, including children. These public displays of barbarity created a great revulsion against the king among his people and was skilfully exploited by the British.

The British were now fully in control of the coastal areas of the island and were anxious to extend their rule to the hill country as well. Finally on the basis of shaky alliances between them and the Kandyan nobles an invasion of the Kandyan kingdom was undertaken. It culminated in the capture of the king and the ceding of his kingdom, by treaty, to the British. Thus the treaty of 1815 marked the extinction of Sinhalese royalty and, with them, of Sinhalese sovereignty.

This episode created a dilemma for the middle class in terms of historical interpretation. The British version had always denigrated the last king of Kandy as a dissolute, barbaric tyrant who persecuted his chiefs and subjects, and had to be finally checked by force of British arms. The British conquest was therefore looked upon as a progressive and humane act. This interpretation tended to glorify Pilimatalava and Ehalapola, the chief conspirators against the king and allies of the British, though they themselves had later been betrayed by the British. The middle class on one hand enjoyed some of the benefits of the British connection. Also, the king was of Tamil descent. But the claims of the nationalists for Sinhalese sovereignty were predicated on the superiority of self rule, irrespective of other limiting factors. If the actions of Sinhalese leaders who allied themselves with the British in 1815 were praiseworthy would not such collaboration be justified in the national interest even in present times? The swiftness and ruthlessness with which the British had completed the political and administrative unification of the island had alarmed even the singatories to the 1815 treaty. In 1818 and 1848 they had attempted to put the clock back by fomenting rebellion but had been repressed brutally by the British administration. Thus faced with the consequences of the decisive act of Sinhalese collaboration, the middle class was compelled to reinterpret that past, conceding a more favourable position to the last king of Kandy. The role of the

British as manipulators of political power was highlighted and the hitherto accepted heroic status of Pilimatalava and Ehalapola was subjected to rescrutiny.

This position was articulated best by the most eminent "nationalist" historian of this period, Paul E. Pieris.⁴³ He characterized Sri Vikrama as "a good man fallen among thieves". John de Silva also adopts this perspective; in the preface to the printed text of his play he says:

"This play depicts the character of our last king who reigned in Kandy from 1798 to 1815. Many later interpretations (of his life) as in the Ehalapola Nadagama do not do justice to this ruler. Also, the younger generation growing up in modern times should study well the story of this last king of ours."⁴⁴

With a *double entendre* which brings the compradors of his time also into the picture, de Silva gets one of his characters, Doolwewa (Dullava) to identify the cause of Sinhalese decline as the disunity of their leaders.

Sire: There are two types of Sinhalese. One is noble like the lion (Sinh: *sinha*). The other is like the jackal (*bingala*) and has no sense of patriotism. They therefore help to destroy the nation.⁴⁵

In the play, thanks to the machinations of the Sinhalese chieftains, the king is captured, humiliated and is deported to the island of Mauritius. In his final appearance he sings a parting song which summarizes the playwright's attitude to foreign rule:

Why did they betray the state?
When the king departs, they will feel the whip
of the British,
This tragedy: it was brought about by our leaders
It was not of my making, the wise ones will soon realize.⁴⁶

In this play the British and their collaborators are clearly the villains. Juxtaposed with contemporary events and social alignments, its message was decidedly clear to the Tower Hall audience. If there were any doubts

43. Paul E. Pieris, *Tri Sinhala*, Colombo, 1939.

44. L. D. A. Ratnayake, *op. cit.*, p. 110.

45. *Ibid.*, p. 112.

46. D. R. Jayawardene, *op. cit.*, p. 25.

as to the unambiguity of this message they were certainly not shared by the police. As Kumari Jayawardene writes in her analysis of the 1915 riots,

“Rousing Sinhalese historical and modern dramas were staged at the Tower Hall where the enthusiastic audiences were not restricted to the middle class. The political content of plays about heroic Sinhalese kings such as John de Silva’s *Sri Wickrema Rajasinghe* and *Dutugemunu* and the provocative anti-British dialogue in de Silva’s modern satire *Sinhala Parabhava Natya*, which portrayed the decadence of the Sinhalese through foreign influences did not escape the hawk-eye of the Inspector General of Police, H. L. Dowbiggin, who was busy collecting evidence of sedition.”⁴⁷

John de Silva’s contribution

To sum up, what was John de Silva’s contribution to the revivalist movement? Both by inclination and class interest he fitted in easily with the more nationalist elements of the Sri Lankan bourgeoisie led by Dharmapala. Though as a proctor he had access to the highest circles, his moderate wealth, early training in the indigenous arts and his connections with the native literati made him a natural leader of the national bourgeoisie. Many of the more affluent and more westernized members of the new rich class used him to gain acceptance for their ideas, and even for their claims to leadership, among a wider group of petit-bourgeoisie and *lumpenproletariat*. He was co-opted for instance into the temperance movement. The patron-client relationships within the different strata of the elite have not been studied systematically.

But his distinctive contribution was that he fashioned a new medium for the communication of the nationalist-revivalist message. Dharmapala, Sirisena and many of their followers used the printed word very effectively among an ever-widening group of literates. The *Sandaresa*, *Sinhala Jatiya*, *Sinhala Buddhaya* and Sirisena’s novels had an unprecedented circulation. But they could only reach the literate. In terms of communications this had many implications. It meant that the bulk of Sinhalese people were not able to benefit from this technological advance, either because they were illiterate or had not satisfactorily made the transition from an oral to written culture. The revivalists were well aware of this limitation, and took several countermeasures. All of them, for instance, undertook extensive speaking tours conveying by speech what they could not in print. The language of their

47. Kumari Jayawardene, *op. cit.*, p. 226.

publications were simplified so that even the barely literate could be reached. They promoted the expansion of a school system so that the numbers of literate people would increase. Literate people in remote areas were encouraged to read the newspaper aloud, at village centres and temples where people gathered. John de Silva's plays too can be looked upon as a way of effectively conveying the revivalist message to those who had not taken the arduous steps to literacy, especially the Colombo working class. They committed to memory songs and snatches of nurti dialogue. The catchy North Indian tunes, and later the phenomenal sale of gramophone records accelerated this process.

In this way the revivalists managed to involve a different segment of Colombo society, the working class, in their movement. The working class, still in a process of transition from the village to their new urban environment, responded to de Silva's manipulation of traditional symbols. The stranglehold that foreign businessmen had over the Colombo economy seemed to bear out the analysis of the national bourgeoisie. The Sinhalese felt threatened by foreign traders whom Dharmapala described as "merchants from Bombay and peddlers from South India."⁴⁸ Their predominance was attributed to the absence of Sinhalese power. This feeling of insecurity which affected the Sinhalese working class was further compounded by the influx of large numbers of Tamil and Malayalam workers to the city. They would often undercut the Sinhalese workers by working more for less pay.⁴⁹ The railway workers, for instance, were constantly agitating for a restriction of this influx as they feared a threat to their bargaining power. It was no coincidence that Maradana, a district of railway workers, was a main centre of the 1915 riots in Colombo.

This state of tension among workers of different communities suited the national bourgeoisie admirably. A divided working class greatly increased their pace of capital accumulation. They also obtained popular backing for their claims to national leadership, a claim that the British Administration was not willing to let go unchallenged. Further, it enabled them to deflect economic demands onto the government or to foreign capitalists. The leaders of the temperance movement organized the carters of Colombo and the railway workers and encouraged them to claim higher wages, even to the point of encouraging them to strike. The strikers were fed by the Sinhalese new rich at their expense.

John de Silva's theatre was an important link in this growing chain of class collaboration. His plays, like the Sinhalese newspapers, presented a clearly identifiable racial scapegoat. Piyadasa Sirisena advised

48. *The Mahabodhi Journal*, October, 1909.

49. Kumari Jayawardene, *op. cit.*, p. 228.

the Sinhalese to "refrain from having transactions with the Coastal Moor, the Cochin and the foreigner."⁵⁰ This racial bogeyman united, as long as it suited them, the leaders of the new rich and the Colombo working class, under the leadership of the middle class. The high point of this collaboration was the riot of 1915. The British not only accused the national bourgeoisie of spearheading this riot, but also cracked down on the working class. Many hundreds of workers were taken into custody. Twenty leaders were banished from Colombo and made to settle down in a remote part of the eastern coast.

Finally, John de Silva's plays were exercises in Sinhalese "self-strengthening." In the heart of the colonial metropolis where economic and social pressures to adopt a new, anglicized life-style were most acute, de Silva satirized those who abandoned their cultural heritage and posited an alternate vision, however historically inaccurate and melodramatic, of a puritanical and powerful Sinhalese culture. In this ideological war, de Silva, like Dharmapala and Sirisena, was successful. If they could not halt the imperialist-missionary juggernaut, they at least created a sense of Sinhalese cultural identity in a hostile colonial environment which attempted to erase traditional loyalties. Many Sinhalese abandoned their imitation of western names, dress and habits. They turned inwards and, perhaps to compensate for their present indignity, resurrected the myth of ancient Sinhalese grandeur. This idyllic, millennial view of Ceylon's past was epitomized for the Sinhalese national bourgeoisie in John de Silva's most famous song, *Danno Budunge*, describing Anuradhapura, the capital city of ancient Ceylon, at the height of its glory. It was in effect the anthem of the revivalists.⁵¹

They who know the Buddha's virtues,
They are holy: they keep the sacred vows
It (Anuradhapura) is the abode of these holy monks
Who have overcome all worldly desires.

It is like heaven on earth,
This city in which our Lord's doctrine flourishes,
Holy monks in levitation
Cast their shadows, shutting off the sun.

In the clear waters of the pools,
Beauteous flowers bloom.
Birds, in formation, swim gracefully on the water
And in the distance, Anuradhapura can be seen.

50. *Ibid.*, p. 224.

51. D. R. Jayawardene, *op. cit.*, p. 13.

Price: Rs. 296/-