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JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY OF SRI LANKA

New Series, Volume XLI, Special Number

Sesquicentennial Memorial Lectures 1995 - 1996

The object of the Society is to institute and promote inquiries into the History, Religions, Language, Literature, Arts, Sciences and Social Conditions of the present and former peoples of the Island of Sri Lanka and connected cultures

PUBLISHED BY THE

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Honorary Editor
G. P. S. H. de Silva

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Editor's Note

This Special Number contains the texts of ten Memorial lectures presented during 1995/ 1996, the sesquicentennial of the Society.

Of the published texts that of Prof J G de Casparis, was not deliverd, as he he was unable to be present in Colombo for the occasion.

Out of the fourteen lectures delivered at public meetings of the Society, the texts on H C P Bell, Ananda Coomaraswamy, and the second lecture on H W Codrington were not recieved for publication. The text on R L Brohier has been withheld from publication by its author.

The Proceedings of the Symposium on Wilhelm Geiger, conducted jointly by the RASSL and the Goethe Institut in Colombo, will be published shortly by that Institute.

The Memorial Lectures were delivered by invited persons, on a subject chosen by them, having relevance to a field of interest of the person memorialized. The persons memorialized - of whom the texts of lectures are published in this volume - had served the Society in various capacities:

Rhys Davids: Life Member: 1867
Emerson Tennent: President, 1846-1850; Vice President, 1845
H W Codrington: Jt Hony Secretary, 1916-1917, 1920
Henry Trimen: Member, 1880-1896
D B Jayatilaka: President, 1935-1941; Vice President, 1934
Edmund Peiries: President, 1959-1961; Vice President, 1949-1951, 1955-1958; Awarded Society's Medal, 1973
Hugh Nevill: Hony Jt. Secretary, 1868-1869
W A de Silva: Vice President, 1932-1935
Senarat Paranavitana: President, 1956-1958, Vice President, 1945-1948, 1953-1956, Awarded Society' s Medal, 1950*

At the inaugural meeting of the lecture series, the President of the Society, in the course of his introductory remarks, quoted J R Miller to the effect:

> " We are not responsible for finishing everything we begin. It may be our part only to begin it; the carrying on and finishing of it may be the work of others. They may be those we know or do not know and perhaps others not yet born.
>
> We all enter into the work of those who went before us, and others who come after us shall in turn enter into our work. Our task simply is to do well and faithfully our own little part. Why fret over what we cannot do, when what we can do will occupy all our time.
>
> What we cannot do is not our responsibility. It belongs to some other worker, waiting now, in some obscure place, who at the right moment, will come forth with a new zeal and dedicated skill anointed for his or her task."

That quote sums up the process of the accumulation and progress of knowledge. In that spirit, we believe, this Special Number too will add to the fund of knowledge that continues to grow.

---

* Instituted in 1946

Schedule of the Memorial Lectures : 1995-1996

20 / 3 / 1995

Rhys Davids Memorial Lecture

Lorna S Dewaraja : Contributions of Prof and Mrs Rhys Davids to Pali and Buddhist studies

24 / 4 / 1995

H C P Bell Memorial Lecture

Siran Deraniyagala : The Prehistory and protohistory of Sri Lanka

29 / 5 / 1995

Ananda Coomaraswamy Memorial Lecture

Gill Juleff: In the footsteps of Ananda Coomaraswamy: investigating traditions of iron and steel making at Samanalaweva

26 / 6 / 1995

Emerson Tennent Memorial Lecture

K M de Silva: Sir Emerson Tennent :Administrator historian of 19th century Sri Lanka

21 - 23 / 7 / 1995

Wilhelm Geiger Symposium

RASSL and Goethe Institut, Colombo: Wilhelm Geiger and study of culture in Sri Lanka

31 / 7 / 1995

H W Codrington Memorial Lecture

1) O Bopearachchi: Codrington' s studies on Sri Lankan numismatics: past and present
2) F Medis: Paper currency in the colonial period

28 / 8 / 1995

Henry Trimen Memorial Lecture

B A Abeywickrema : Dr Henry Trimen and floristic studies

25 / 9 / 1995

D B Jayatilaka Memorial Lecture

A V Suraweera : Sir D B Jayatilaka's contribution to Sri Lankan studies

30 / 10 / 1995

Edmund Peries Memorial Lecture

X N F Kurukulasuriya : 'Sielediva' in Topographia Christiana by Cosmas Indicopleustes

27 / 11 / 1995

R L Brohier Memorial Lecture

A Denis N Fernando: Ancient settlements, paddy cultivation and irrigation in Sri Lanka.

18 / 12 / 1995

Hugh Nevill Memorial Lecture

1) S G Samarasinghe: A structural analysis of the Sinhala Buddhist pantheon
2) D G B de Silva: New light on Vanni chiefs, based on historical tradition, palm-leaf manuscripts and official records

29 / 1 / 1996

W A de Silva Memorial Lecture

M B Ariyapala: Some aspects of the cultural traditions in Sri Lanka of the late mediaeval period

Senarat Paranavitana Memorial Lecture

J G de Casparis : Sri Lanka and maritime South East Asia in ancient times

T W RHYS DAVIDS (1843-1922) : "haunted and pursued by the spiritual legacy bequeathed to him from Ceylon"

by

Lorna S Dewaraja

Having had to face several challenges due to intense Christian missionary activity and the withdrawal of state patronage, the indigenous religions in Sri Lanka suffered a severe set back by the mid nineteenth century. Buddhism in particular had lost its pristine vitality, its cohesiveness and its self-respect, but not to the point of becoming moribund. Hence there arose a strong Buddhist response to the missionary challenge. The revivalist movement manifested itself in many ways, one of which was a spectacular reawakening in Buddhist and Pali studies spearheaded by the Sri Lankan scholar monks. This intellectual upheaval was contemporaneous with a similar interest in Pali and Buddhist studies in Europe and the two movements fuelled and inspired one another. At this juncture three British Civil Servants who were posted to Sri Lanka, George Turnour, RD Childers (1838-1876) and T W Rhys Davids (1843-1922) took an abiding interest in the language, religion and culture of the island and by their indefatigable efforts introduced to the English speaking world the wealth of Buddhist scholarship hitherto unknown to the West. This monograph will deal with the activities of TW Rhys Davids who spent his entire life labouring for this cause.

It was an administrative requirement that all Civil Servants should be familiar with the language, literature and culture of the land in which they were posted. Thus in order to acquire this knowledge within a short time and pass their efficiency bar examinations both Childers and Rhys Davids sought the guidance of eminent scholar monks such as Yātramulle Dhammārāma, Hikkaduve Sri Sumangala and Waskaduve Sri Subhūti. Under their tutelage the young British officers not only grasped the intricacies of Sinhala, Pali and Buddhism but it became with them not an administrative requirement but a life long obsession which resulted in significant developments in oriental scholarship both here and in Europe. It has to be mentioned that British Christian clergymen such as Rev DJ Gogerly (1792-1862) and Rev Spence Hardy (who resided in Sri Lanka as a Wesleyan missionary (1825-1845) had made an intensive study of Sinhala, Pali and Buddhism and wrote extensively on their areas of study. However, their missionary zeal prevailed and the sole objective of their studies was to further their evangelical purpose. Rhys Davids on the other hand was essentially a scholar and the aim of his intellectual exercise was to make the Western world aware of Buddhism and its civilising influence.

Caroline Rhys Davids named her husband the "Max Muller of Buddhism," but though Muller is well known, his friend and contemporary Rhys Davids is less famous even among scholars. The explanation to this lies in the fact that India was the jewel in the British Crown and hence Sanskrit and Hinduism were the star attractions; while Buddhism confined to the periphery of the Raj - to Sri Lanka and Burma received less attention. Hence as the exponent of Buddhism Rhys Davids was little known even in England, the country of his birth. In Sri Lanka he is known specially by Westernised Buddhists whose knowledge of Buddhism was derived from English writings on the subject. Since of late, however, one of his works, *Buddhist India* 'has been translated into Sinhala as *Bauddha Bhārataya* and the *Rhys Davids Memorial* Volume (1965)' was brought out in Sinhala with a few articles in English. As a result, he is known to a certain extent among Sinhala educated Buddhists of Sri Lanka specially the Buddhist clergy.

Like R C Childers, T W Rhys Davids was the son of a clergyman. He was born in Colchester in Essex in 1843 as the eldest son of Reverend Thomas William David, a Welshman who had settled in Colchester.[3] He was a popular minister who had a flair for preaching. In addition he was a scholar of ecclesiastical history and Rhys Davids inherited from his father, his eloquence, indefatigable energy and patience. His mother Louisa Winter a devout Christian was the daughter of a London solicitor. A Sunday School attached to her husband's church was so efficiently managed by her that it was regarded as a model school. So competent was she in her task that the treatise she wrote on the management of Sunday schools was published and ran into several editions. She died in 1854 when Rhys Davids was barely ten years old. This was the first of a series of tragedies that he had to face throughout his life.

Rhys David's early education was at the Brighton School which was situated close to his home and run by his uncle Robert Winter. At the age of seventeen he went to London and attended the school now called New College in Finchley Road. Here he studied Latin under the famous scholar, Sir William Smith. Rhys Davids undoubtedly inherited the academic inclinations of his parents, yet motherless at a tender age and lacking in family fortunes he realised that he had to rely on his own sweat and toil. While at New College he decided to join the Indian Civil Service. With his devoutly Christian background and sound knowledge of Latin what attracted him to the Indian Civil Service is difficult to say. In the heyday of the British Raj the Indian Civil Service must have been an exotic dream for the educated young Englishman with no financial resources, or was it a *Karmic* call which led him to aspire for a career in India ?

Rhys Davids realised that to achieve his ambition he had to have an University education which his father could not afford. Therefore he left for Germany where he could earn his expenses by giving tuition in English. He soon realised that there were many English students who paid for their

education in this way. He selected Breslau where there were not many English students. He became a very popular English teacher and earned sufficient money to pay his university fees. He moved easily with all strata of German society and made friends very easily. In Breslau he had the opportunity of studying Sanskrit under A F Stenzler, a distinguished scholar and Professor of Sanskrit at Breslau from 1833 till 1868. The philological training that Rhys Davids received under Stenzler could be regarded as a landmark on the road to Pali scholarship.

He returned to England in 1863 and appeared for the examination of the Civil Service Commissioners offering Sanskrit, German, French and English. Although his ambition was a posting in India he was appointed to Ceylon and this became the turning point of his life. He was attached to the Colonial Secretary's Office in Colombo and was expected to learn the local languages. "With his philological training he was able to learn Sinhala and Tamil very quickly and a certain incident directed his interest to Pali and Buddhism. As Magistrate of Galle a case was brought before Rhys Davids involving questions of ecclesiastical law. A document written in a language that no one could read was tabled in court. Inquiries revealed that the language was Pali in which the sacred books of Buddhism was written. Accomplished linguist that he was, he immediately resolved to make himself acquainted with it. He was put in touch with Yatramulle Unnanse under whose tutelage he made rapid progress. Later in life Rhys Davids paid a striking tribute to his teacher. "When he first came to me the hand of death was already upon him. He was sinking into the grave from the effects of a painful and incurable malady. I had heard of his learning as a Pali scholar, and of his illness, and was grateful to him for leaving his home under such tragic circumstances, to teach a stranger. There was a strange light in his sunken eyes, and he was constantly turning away from questions of Pali to questions of Buddhism."[4]

Having worked for short periods in Colomb, Kandy, Awissāwella and Mātale, Rhys Davids was transferred to Galle as Police Magistrate. In 1871 he was posted as Assistant Government Agent of Nuwarakalāviya of which Anuradhapura was the administrative centre. The Governor Sir Hercules Robinson aware of the young civil servant's special talents wanted to make use of him in archaeological work for which Anuradhapura presented innumerable opportunities. The Governor's aspirations were realised for Rhys Davids loved Anuradhapura and its ruins and spent much of his time among them. Unlike his predecessor, who was overcome by melancholia and depression by the dead city and its silent stones, Rhys Davids found them eloquent monuments which sang the saga of the once glorious city and inspired him to unravel the religion and culture which these stones mysteriously represented. He loved to move with the peasants of Nuwarakalāviya, learnt their language and did away with interpreters. In the field of archaeology his superiors gave him encouragement and

freedom of action. His stay in Ceylon coincided with the setting up of an Archaeological Commission in 1868 by the Governor, Sir Hercules Robinson.

This was only a modest beginning and the work was confined to clearing and taking photographs. Further progress was hampered by the lack of funds and a permanent labour force. To the young Rhys Davids this kind of work was a labour of love unlike the routine duties of administration. A number of notable sites were cleared namely, Ruwanveli sāya, Jētavana, Abhayagiri and Isurumuniya. These excavations provided him with the material to write his future research papers to the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society.*

In the course of his travel Rhys Davids had discovered a number of inscriptions in places such as Galle, Mātara, Dambulla, Mātale, Tamankaduwa, Anuradhapura and Padawiya. He realised that Ceylon was exceedingly rich in inscriptions and these if deciphered would unveil the drama of the island's past. For the successful deciphering of the inscriptions as many should be collected. In an article to the *Ceylon Branch of the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* .[5] He appealed to all readers for copies of inscriptions, even eye copies and suggested methods of sending facsimiles of inscriptions. He wrote a series of articles for the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society Journal from 1870-72, relating to several inscriptions found in Sri Lanka. These prove how well he was acquainted with the traditional literature of the island as well as with the philological works of the Ceylonese contemporaries like James de Alwis and Louis de Zoysa. The Governor, who had taken a keen interest in oriental research was very imperssed. The Governor had decided to collect books and ancient manuscripts lying in temple libraries with a view to establishing an oriental library in Colombo. Rhys Davids wished to enhance the scope of the work by adding them to his collection the island's epigraphical resources. He had seen how valuable epigraphs were destroyed by the ravages of man and nature. He noticed that inscriptions were destroyed by chena cultivation, while at Dondra, writings were going under water due to sea erosion.

Meanwhile Sir Hercules Robinson had been succeeded as governor by Sir William Gregory who like his predecessor was an admirer of the island's ancient heritage. Soon after his appointment Gregory made and extensive tour of the Anuradapura district in the company of Rhys Davids.

Rhys Davids' interest was not confined only to antiquities. As Assistant Government Agent of Anuradhapura he tried to improve the economic conditions of the people by fostering paddy cultivation, improving irrigation, introducing new crops like tobacco and cotton and also introducing cattle rearing. Rhys Davids' diaries which are in the Sri Lanka National Archives give an idea of the various administrative

functions which the Assistant Government Agent had to perform. However, everything did not go smoothly for the young civil servant for he was constantly pulled-up by his superior, the Government Agent, C W Twynham who kept a watchful eye on his subordinates.

The machinations of Twynham and a series of unfortunate events resulted in arousing the displeasure of the Governor and Rhys Davids stay in Ceylon and his career in the Civil Service was brought to an abrupt end. The details of the circumstances that led to his dismissal which does not fall within the scope of this paper are given in Ananda Wickremaratne's work, *The Genesis of an Orientalist.*

Rhys Davids returned to England frustrated and humiliated. The Civil Service at the time was prestigious with considerable pecuniary advantages. This was lost to him for no fault of his own and apart from the sense of embitterment that he must certainly have felt he had no family resources to fall back on. He then studied law and was called to the bar in 1877. But his heart was elsewhere. A legal career, though lucrative did not interest him. His interests centred round Buddhism and the vast field of Pali canonical literature. His wife Caroline Rhys Davids left on record that during this phase of his life, "Rhys Davids was haunted and pursued by the spiritual legacy bequeathed to him from Ceylon." He embarked on his career of Oriental scholarship, knowing fully well, its poor prospects and lack of proper remuneration.

The papers in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (GB & I)* in 1875 on " Inscriptions of Parakramabahu," "Sigiri, the lion rock," and " Two old Sinhalese Inscriptions" ushered the well equipped scholar to the field of research.[6] These articles which were written for the Ceylon Branch of the JRAS were printed in London. In 1877 he published in the *International Numismata Orientala,* an essay on "The Ancient Coins and Measures of Ceylon." His first book on Buddhism which he wrote for the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, in its series on non Christian religions, was a noteworthy one. It gives in compact form, the life of the Buddha, the essence of his teaching and the formation of the order monks. Rhys Davids' works should be viewed against the background of the prevailing English books on Buddhism written by missionaries like Spence Hardy and officials like Emerson Tennent which were based on comparatively recent Sinhala manuscripts and not on the Pali Canon and were also given to theological prejudices. Rhys Davids was the first to interpret and present to the Western world the Buddhism of the Pali Canon.

At the beginning of the twentieth century when Western Europe dominated the world, it was thought that supremacy would last for ever. Therefore only that which contributed to the rise of the Western Europe was considered as history and not the totality of human experience. The other great cultures of the world which pre-dated Europe such as India,

China and Central America were not even supporting actors in the spectacular European drama. It was at such a time that Rhys Davids wrote *Buddhist India* with an insignificant corner of north eastern India as his focus. He visited the ancient Buddhist shrines of India and felt that a survey of the social and political conditions in which Buddhism arose was greatly needed as a setting for the Buddha's activities and the labours of his disciples.

Of all his innovative acts Rhys Davids is best known for the founding of the Pali Text Society in 1882 on the model of the English Text Society. He had the support of many distinguished scholars from England, France, Holland, Germany and the U S who were interested in Oriental Studies. There were large collections of Buddhist manuscripts scattered in many libraries in Europe and plentiful in Sri Lanka. It was proposed to publish them in the Roman script with English translations. In a report of the PTS, Rhys Davids' comments on the value of these manuscripts are given:- "They are our best authorities for the early history of that interesting system of religion so nearly allied to some of the latest speculations among ourselves, and which has influenced so powerfully, and for so long a time, so great a proportion of the human race - the system of religion which we now call Buddhism."[7] Despite their value Pali literature was not a popular field of study for reasons which Rhys Davids was painfully aware. It was not financially rewarding. Rhys Davids undertook the work of editing and publishing the Pali texts as a labour of love and in this he had the unstinted support of the scholar monks of Sri Lanka. In the PTS report of 1882 he wrote as follows:- "In the spring of 1882 there came the welcome intelligence that more than seventy of the most important of the members of the Buddhist Order in Ceylon had shown their appreciation of the work, and their trust in its promoters, by subscribing in advance to the cost of the printing. It is no slight thing that an established clergy should have come forward so readily to support the publication of the sacred books of their religion in an alien alphabet by scholars of an alien faith. We need not perhaps be surprised that so liberal minded a body as the Buddhist Bhikkhus should have acted so."[8] Unlike many other Englishmen of his day Rhys Davids had great regard for the Buddhist *Sangha,* won their confidence and they in turn gave them every form of support and guidance.

Under Rhys Davids and his equally eminent wife and helpmate, Caroline, the PTS grew in strength; its finances were stabilised and its output was prolific. At the time of his death the Society had issued 64 separate texts in ninety four volumes extending over 26,000 pages besides many important articles and notes by European and Oriental scholars. [9] The service rendered by the PTS to the cause of Buddhism in the West is inestimable and the Buddhist World owes a deep debt of gratitude to Rhys Davids for his untiring efforts towards preserving the Pali Canon for posterity.

While engaged in the work of the PTS he was active in the Royal Asiatic Society as well. He was first an office bearer and in 1887 was unanimously elected by the Royal Asiatic Society Council to be the Secretary. As such he had many responsibilities to shoulder. In addition to printing and publishing the journal, he had to manage the Society's finances, keep accounts and also function as Librarian for which he was paid pounds 200 and residential facilities. During this period (1882-1904) he was Professor of Pali in the University of London, a post which carried no fixed salary, other then lecture fees. Rhys Davids was appalled at the dismal state of Oriental learning in England due to the fact that higher education was often funded by private benefactors according to whose wishes the funds had to be administered. Therefore the traditional disciplines like theology, classics and mathematics were heavily endowed while new studies had to struggle on under great financial stress. In his introduction to *Buddhist India* he complains, "There is no chair of Assyriology, for instance, in England and whereas in Paris, Berlin, in St. Petersberg, in Vienna, there are great seminaries of Oriental learning, we see in London the amazing absurdity of unpaid professors obliged to devote to earning otherwise of their living, the time they ought to give to teaching or research. And throughout England, for instance, the state of things is as bad. In all England for instance, there are two chairs of Sanskrit. In Germany the government provides for more than twenty - just as if Germany's interest in India were more than than ten times as ours.[10] "The keen interest in Oriental learning that prevailed in the continent was not evident in Great Britain. Perhaps the British were more keen on exploiting the wealth of the colonies, rather than their culture. Pali and Buddhist Studies is not a marketable commodity even in Sri Lanka today and the situation was not very different in Britain in Rhys Davids' time.

The realisation prompted the Royal Asiatic Society and Rhys Davids to take up the cause of Oriental learning and urge the government to establish an Oriental School in the London University. It was pointed out that a knowledge of Eastern language, literature and history would be helpful for the better administration of the Raj. There was already a widening gap in India between the rulers and the ruled and it was indicated that a familiarity with Eastern cultures would help officials to view certain issues with sympathy. As a result of the vigorous agitation of the Royal Asiatic Society and Rhys Davids, the government accepted the proposal for an independent oriental school in 1908.[11] Considering the dozens of Sri Lankan scholars who have entered the portals of the London School of Oriental (and later) African studies during the last 100 years and benefited from its concentration of academic resources, it is clear that Rhys Davids' labour has paid rich dividends in Sri Lanka. His contribution to this cause is now forgotten but even today there is a Senior Fellowship in Pali, Sinhalese and Thēravāda Buddhism reserved for a Sri Lankan in the School of Oriental and African studies.

While being the energetic secretary of the Royal Asiatic Society, the President of the PTS, Professor of Pali in the University of London, Rhys Davids continued with his translations and research work. His intuitive knowledge of Pali and Buddhism is reflected in his remarkable translations in which each *Sutta* is preceded by an introduction containing material of sociological, literary and philological interest. In 1905 he resigned from the Royal Asiatic Society to accept the Chair of Comparative Religion in the University of Manchester of which he was the first distinguished incumbent. Besides his new position provided him with a reasonable income. Rhys Davids had expressed bitterness over the fact that scholars are shabbily treated by society; they are poor and on that account despised. Manchester however gave Rhys Davids academic status and monetary rewards but it was the opinion of many that the University gained more by Rhys Davids' presence than vice versa. In 1905 when Rhys Davids left London to reside near Manchester the President of the Royal Asiatic Society made a presentation on behalf of a large number of members. His reply shows Rhys Davids' scholarly humility and his concern regarding the continuation of the work he had initiated. "Whatever work I have been able to accomplish on the history of thought in India, or towards the publication and elucidation of the historically important literature of the early Buddhists, will I hope soon be superseded by better work, done partly on the basis of those labours. And the greater my success in inducing other scholars to devote their attention to those matters, the sooner will that desirable end be reached."[12] Continuing his speech Rhys Davids made a strong case for the study of humanities specially, Oriental studies which is of relevance to this day, when even in the universities of Sri Lanka, Pali and Sanskrit have become endangered disciplines. "The study of nature looms so much more largely in the public eye than the study of man, that our own pursuits and specially the history of philosophy, literature and religion, of economic and social institutions in the East - seem to be left out in the cold. We have no quarrel with science - quite the contrary. But we have a reasonable hope that the contempt in which Orientalism is now regarded is but a passing phase and that our work is really helpful in a modest way, to that increase of knowledge, broadening of ideas, which is the very basis of the welfare and progress of mankind."[13]

At Manchester, while teaching the history of religions Rhys Davids found the time to put out a book, *Early Buddhism* (1908) and a chapter for *The Cambridge History of India* on the Early History of Buddhism. In the meantime he was concentrating on the preparation of the Pali Dictionary for which the PTS had provided so much of fresh material. There were many European scholars who were interested in the same project and it was hoped at the Oriental Congress at Copenhagen, in 1908 that a scheme of international cooperation could be organised. Certain letters were entrusted to fellow workers. The work did not progress according to schedule and finally with the outbreak of the war all academic links with Germany

were severed and the execution of the plan devolved on the shoulders of Rhys Davids alone. His greatest achievement was the *Pali English Dictionary* on which he laboured for 40 years with the collaboration of other renowned scholars. Unfortunately he died before he could finish his work but the task was completed by his pupil W Stede.[14]

In 1915 at the age of 72 Rhys Davids left Manchester. Many years before the University of Edinburgh conferred on him a LLD and Manchester made him a Doctor of Letters. Copenhagen and Sheffield enrolled him as a Doctor of Science. In 1902 he had been one of the original founders of the British Academy.

The service that Rhys Davids rendered to the Buddhists of Sri Lanka cannot be over estimated. The late nineteenth century was the time that Sri Lanka was facing the full onslaught of Christian missionary activity. The Buddhists did not have the organisational strength or the political and economic clout to face this challenge, though they deeply resented the attacks which missionary organisations made on Buddhism in their publications and on public platforms. In this situation western scholars of the calibre of Rhys Davids was a great source of intellectual strength to the Buddhists of Sri Lanka and also infused them with a sense of dignity and self respect at a time when they were weighed down by their own inferiority. He completely lacked racial prejudice and in his Hibbert lectures given in the USA, he refers to his teacher Yatramulle, "Go and talk to the yellow robed and tonsured recluse - not of course through an interpreter, or out of a book of phrases: you must know not only his language but something of Buddhist ideas; and you must speak to him as man to man, not as the wise to the barbarian. You will certainly be courteous; for whatever else a Buddhist Bhikkhu may be, he will be sure to give proof of courtesy and a dignified demeanour. And it will be strange if you do not find a new world of thought and of feeling opening out before you."[15]

In spite of his academic distinctions Rhys Davids was a modest and humane person. He shared the fruits of his research very generously with his colleagues; he was particularly generous to young scholars and pupils and was forgiving in the face of misunderstandings. Rhys Davids was convinced of the Buddhist truth of *Dukkha* or Sorrow, having experienced the early demise of his mother, the unexpected and humiliating dismissal at the beginning of his career, frequent bouts of ill health, the result of contacting malaria in Ceylon and the final devastating blow when his brilliant and only son left Eton to join the Air Service and was killed in a crash. He refers to the concept of *Anicca* Impermanence frequently, and even the rise and fall of nations seemed to him a manifestation of that idea.

It is said that Rhys Davids was only excelled by his wife Caroline, an eminent Orientalist in her own right, who gradually shared more and

more of his responsibilities ever since she married him in 1894 and after his death in 1922 became the Professor of Buddhist Philosophy at the University of London and also President of the P T S. Her vast contribution to Pali Studies which is the crowning golry of her husband's work deserve a separate study.

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4. Quoted in the *Rhys Davids Memorial Volume,* pp. 173-174.
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6. See attached bibliography.
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SIR JAMES EMERSON TENNENT : COLONIAL ADMINISTRATOR AND HISTORIAN*

by

K M De Silva

Part I

Introduction

Sir James Emerson Tennent arrived in the island as the new Colonial Secretary of the Ceylon government in 1845. He came in the expectation that he would succeed Sir Colin Campbell as Governor of the island on the latter's retirement. That was not to be, and Tennent remained as Colonial Secretary till 1850. His appointment to this post in 1845 was controversial, and his departure - or removal - from this post in 1850, in the aftermath of the Parliamentary Inquiry that followed the riots of 1848 in the island, was even more controversial. The publication of his book *Christianity in Ceylon* in London, in 1850, did go some little way to console him for the recall to England, where soon enough with a change in fortune of the Tories - the party to which he belonged - he had yet another opportunity as an administrator, this time in England itself. On this occasion his record as an administrator was dismal. But while his political mentors were fretful about his patent shortcomings as an administrator, his book on *Ceylon* published (in 1859) was an immediate success. It redeemed his reputation by bringing him fame as a scholar, as the foremost British historian of Sri Lanka.

This essay is divided into three parts: first, the controversies relating to his appointment to the island, and the salient features of his career as an administrator in the island; second, his return to England; and thirdly, an analysis of his historical works and an assessment of their worth

Part II

Tennent the Administrator

At the time he arrived in the island in 1845 Sir James Emerson Tennent appeared to possess all the qualities that went to make an able colonial administrator - a wide and liberal education, experience both as a parliamentarian and administrator, and a sharp intelligence. An intellectual, he had been a friend of Byron and an acquaintance of Jeremy Bentham. He had entered Lincon's Inn on the latter's advice. He shared

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* This essay is a revised and expanded version of a lecture under the same title given at the Royal Asiatic Society of Sri Lanka, Colombo on 26 June 1995

Byron's zeal for Greek independence and his love for the culture and civilization of ancient Greece. His parliamentary career began in 1832 when he was elected MP for Belfast as a supporter of the Whig administration that introduced the great Reform Bill, but he afterwards followed Sir Robert Peel and was grouped among the 'Liberal' Conservatives.[1] At the end of 1845 his promising parliamentary career came, temporarily at least, to an end, when realising that his strong support for Catholic Emancipation in Ireland had made it impossible for him to contest Belfast again, he accepted the post of Colonial Secretary of Ceylon.[2] For a brief period - 8 September 1841 to 5 August 1843 - he had been Secretary to the Board of Control for India. When he arrived in Ceylon he was still strongly Liberal in his outlook, but without any lingering trace of Benthamite thinking. It is worth remem bering that Tennent was a founder member of the Royal Asiatic Society, Ceylon Branch, and served as its President from 1846 to 1848.

The third Earl Grey, who became Secretary of State for the Colonies in 1846, distrusted Tennent and treated him with indifference and coldness. It was a distrust which the new Governor, Viscount Torrington, shared and never quite overcame even after a long association had shown Tennent to be a loyal subordinate whose support was unstintingly given at times of crisis.

In striking contrast, C J MacCarthy whom Grey appointed to the post of Auditor General of Ceylon in 1847 and who travelled to the island to take up his appointment along with the new Governor himself, enjoyed the confidence of both Grey and Torrington. MacCarthy had the advantage of the powerful influence and favour of his school fellow and lifelong friend Monckton Milnes (afterwards Lord Houghton)[4] in addition to that of Benjamin Hawes (Grey's Parliamentary Under-Secretary at the Colonial Office) whose daughter he married shortly after his appointment to the Ceylon Civil Service.

Tennent and Mac Carthy were appointed to their posts in an attempt to infuse new blood into a colonial higher bureaucracy then in the throes of a painful process of reform. Naturally there was hostility to the appointment of outsiders to these two coveted posts from local aspirants to them, but the resentment was directed more at Tennent than at MacCarthy. Partly this was because Tennent's post was the plum of the colonial service but there were also his shortcomings - tactlessness, disingenuousness and an indecision that bordered on timidity - which contributed to his unpopularity, while the more forthright and straight forward MacCarthy came to earn the respect and trust of his colleagues.

The appointment of Tennent and MacCarthy to the Ceylon Civil Service focussed attention on the most vital component of the administrative machinery of the day. In the 1840's the shadow of the

Colebrookc reforms lay across the Ceylon Civil Service. No aspect of the Colebrooke-Cameron reforms has attracted more criticism - with greater justification - than Colebrooke's civil service reforms. "Drastic and ill-considered" they no doubt were, and Mills's comment:

> "...that for fifteen years the history of the civil srevice was the recital of successive attempts to repair the damage which (Colebrooke) had wrought"[6]

is to a great extent fair and accurate.

At the end of December 1845 James Stephen, the Permanent Under-Secretary at the Colonial Office, wrote a minute for the benefit of Lord Stanley's successor as Secretary of State for the Colonies, W E Gladstone, in which he explained the rationale behind the civil service reforms of 1844-45 . "The Ceylon Civil Service," Stephen declared

> "was greatly reduced about eleven years ago - in its emolument - so reduced as to render it a bare maintenance and as to disappoint every hope of saving money with a view to retiring, in the evening of life, to this country. Much about the same time there occurred other changes the effect of which was to stimulate the commerce and agriculture of the Island. Hence a great increase of all the prices of all the usual articles of internal consumption; and hence, also, it followed that the reduced salaries became less and less effective in sustaining that expenditure. The consequence was that nearly the whole body of Public Officers, including the Governor, the Colonial Secretary, the Archdeacon and the Chief Justice, betook themselves to coffee and [sic] cotton planting. Public spirit was almost extinct in that service; and it rapidly degenerated into a most inefficient corps."[7]

Indeed the decline had reached a point where it seemed impossible to expect senior civil servants in the island to provide the vigorous leadership and zeal to break away from the patterns of the immediate past. Both the Colonial Office and Governor Sir Colin Campbell were agreed upon this. Thus on Philip Anstruther's retirement from the key post of Colonial Secretary, the claims of the most senior and eligible civil servants in the island were overlooked, and Tennent was appointed to the post; he took it up with the hope, it would appear, of the reversion to the governor-ship on the retirement of Campbell, though Stanley would not give him a firm assurance on that.[8]

Tennent's appointment was unpopular with the senior civil servants in the colony. In Colombo it was expected that P E Wodehouse would and should succeed Anstruther. Wodehouse had the support of an influential section of the press the *Colombo Observer* in particular. Besides Wodehouse had the support of the so-called "Family Compact." He was indeed their candidate. But it was precisely this reason which was urged against him by

Anstruther in a letter to the Colonial Office early in 1845.

> "I believe the Governor's communicationwill already have prevented Lord Stanley from appointing Mr Wodehouse to succeed me as Colonial Secretary." Anstruther declared, "but I think I would be wanting in my duty to the colony if I did not point out the impossibility of appointments (which are in future to depend upon merit) being impartially given if the whole power and influence of the Government is thrown into the hands of one of the family"

The head of the family concerned was F J Templer, who was the Colonial Treasurer: his sons-in-law were Arthur Buller, the Queen's Advocate, and P E Wodehouse, Government Agent of the Western Province. C R Buller, a brother of the Queen's Advocate, was the Government Agent of the Central Province. A relative, P A Dyke, held the post of Government Agent of the Northern Province. A Templar, the Deputy Queen's Advocate, was a near relative of P E Wodehouse. Templer's son, F B, had been recently appointed to the civil service, while two nephews, H Templer and F Templer, also held posts of importance, the former as AGA Galle, and the latter as Secretary to one of the Puisne Judges. [10] One section of the family compact not mentioned by Anstruther were the Layards, led - if that is the correct word - by C P Layard, who had been Government Agent, Western Province.[11]

Tennent, who had no reason to be particularly friendly to the family compact, was later to point out that while these families practically (though not designedly on the part of the government) controlled the bulk of the key positions in the administration, with the single exception of the Colonial Secretaryship, a great many of these relationships arose out of the accident of officers who had been appointed to official positions in the island having inter-married with these families. Their children had grown up in the island and from time to time they had been appointed to office.[12] Whatever gloss may have been placed on this development, it would certainly not have weakened the anxiety of the Secretary of State to maintain his hold on the patronage at his disposal.

Anstruther was powerful enough to resist the pressures and influence of the Family Compact. But Tennent was not in quite so strong a position. And in the first year or so of his tenure of office he was confronted with what amounted almost to a policy of studied indifference and non-co-operation,[13] which stopped just short of obstruction. To some extent Tennent's own personal defects must have contributed to this, since C J MacCarthy [14] who like Tennent had been appointed from outside the island to a key position - that of Auditor General - secured the co-operation of senior officials here without much difficulty.[15]

The appointment of MacCarthy marks the end of the reforms brought about by Stanley and Campbell. They were designed with one end

in view - to undo the damage that had been done to the Ceylon Civil Service between 1833 and 1845. But there was one other issue to which it provided a merely partial answer - to revitalise the civil service and to equip it for the needs of a colony which had long since passed the stage of a military station. Its economy was now buoyant and expanding. Even if the expansion was to come to a temporary halt within a few years, there was nevertheless the fact that the basis of a buoyant economy existed. The basis was the coffee industry.

Tennent began with the handicap of opposition from theFamily Compact. It did not take him long to gain other critics and opponents. During his early months in office the government began a program of demolition of what it called encroachments, on the public roads of the city of Colombo, especially in the Pettah, then a very fashionable residential area. The encroachments, in fact, were verandahs of houses. As is often the case in these matters the needs of road-widening in the public interest came into conflict with the property rights of individuals who claimed that their verandahs were long standing and should not be demolished. Since some of the wealthier and more affluent elements of the urban population were involved there was vocal opposition to this policy.[16] Tennent had inherited the problem, but his own handling of it served to aggravate the situation and, more to the point, provoked stronger opposition from those affected than under his predecessor. Soon his opponents hit back, claiming that his zeal for taking over and demolishing these encroachments had much to do with the fees which he enjoyed for regularising these claims. The fees were his legitimate due, but his opponents exaggerated the amount of money he was expected to get. More significantly, he attracted the opposition of some of the most dynamic newspaper proprietors and editors of the day, especially of Dr Christopher Elliott of the *Colombo Observer*. Very soon the new governor, Viscount Torrington, was himself embroiled in this matter in support of his officials while his boorish attitude to the newspapers who supported the cause of these affected by the government plans to acquire and demolish encroaching verandahs gave great offence to Elliott and his associates.[17] Tennent and Torrington won the day over the verandahs question, only to find themselves confronted by the same set of critics over a much more significant issue, the taxes which the government sought to introduce in 1847, and the riots that broke out in 1848.[18]

It is not intended to deal with those taxes and the riots here, except to make the point that Tennent was very much involved in the planning of the taxes, and the futile exercises in damage control that were taken when it became evident that there was strong opposition to them. Once the riots broke out he was closely associated with the hard measures taken to stamp out the disturbances.

In Colombo the opposition to the taxes was led by Dr Christopher Elliott and some of the lawyers associated with him in the opposition to

Tennent and Torrington over the verandahs question. In the Kandyan areas, where there was more widespread opposition to the taxes especially among the peasants, he had much less of an impact when he sought to influence that agitation too. The Kandyan movement took a violent form unlike in Colombo, and Elliott would not approve of it because the violence was so self-defeating.

Despite the ease with which the "rebels" were defeated, the government panicked and took harsh measures against them in the belief that it was fighting the battles of 1817-18 the great Kandyan rebellion -- all over again. The policy of ruthless repression may be attributed to Torrington's lack of administrative experience. Tennent could have served as a restraining influence, but did not do so. This severity on the part of the government attracted the attention of critics in Sri Lanka, especially of Elliott. The *Colombo Observer* which had initially observed the clashes at Matale and Kurunegala with a mixture of fear and regret, once again became critical of the government. It was at this stage that the organization and contacts designed to agitate against the Verandahs tax came to serve a different purpose. Elliott succeeded in interesting the Radical MP Joseph Hume in the situation in Sri Lanka. The "rebellion" of 1848 in Sri Lanka served to intensify the mounting opposition to Earl Grey's colonial policy in Parliament.[19] In 1849 Grey's critics succeeded in securing the appointment of a Parliamentary Committee on British Guiana and Sri Lanka, which soon came to concentrate on the affairs of this country along.[20] Almost from the outset of the inquiry, Tennent was caught up in the charges and counter charges levelled by officials from the island in the course of their evidence before the committee and in the processes of cross-examination.[21]

Torrington attracted the attention of his critics in England to the more notorious aspects of the suppression of the riots of 1848. The Parliamentary Committee which began its sittings in 1849 summoned a number of witnesses to give evidence before it. One of the most convincing critics of Torrington's administration at the sittings of the Committee was Philip Anstruther, Tennent's predecessor as Colonial Secretary, whose forthright evidence made a deep impression on those who heard it. The evidence of P E Wodehouse, more restrained than Anstruther's, helped redress the balance in favour of the administration. However,Torrington was angered by what he mistakenly took to be a deliberate attempt on Wodehouse's part to conceal his own share in the evolution of taxation policy, in the imposition of martial law, and in the conduct of the campaign against the rebels. Tennent, perhaps the most notable of the witnesses, stood up well under cross-examination and defended the administration with professional competence. Meanwhile back in Sri Lanka Elliott and a few associates travelled around the Kandyan areas gathering evidence to set before the committee, and more than once, Torrington was inclined to have him arrested but Grey dissuaded him from doing so.

The investigations of the Committee had a most unsettling effect on the Colonial government in the island. Many of the senior officials went to England to appear before the Committee and their long absence hampered the island's administration: there was an understandable tendency to postpone decisions till the Committee had issued its report. But the most regrettable consequence of the Committee's deliberations lay in the worsening of personal relations between Torrington and some of his senior officials. He developed an almost pathological hatred for Wodehouse who became the victim of an unscrupulous campaign of slander and intrigue directed by Torrington himself.

Tennent's skilful exposition of the case for the Ceylon government led Grey to a slightly more friendly, if still somewhat cautious, attitude towards him. "...I believe he means no mischief, quite the reverse and then he has given his evidence exceedingly well in the Committee; his fault is that he is truly *Irish* in his notion of carrying on business by management and manoeuvre instead of by an open and straight-forward course - But in spite of this fault he has talent to make himself very useful if properly looked after...."[22]

Grey was making a generous acknowledgement of the debt which the Colonial Office (and Torrington too) owed Tennent for his masterly performance in standing up to the ruthless cross-examination to which he was subjected by Grey's critics on the Committee.

This was at the end of April 1850. But Tennent's triumph was shortlived. Within two months of the end of April the vendetta against Wodehouse which Tennent (unlike Torrington) had, so far, kept within the bounds of discretion and reason, erupted to the surface and got out of control. Tennent, in his anxiety to cause the discomfiture of Wodehouse before the Committee, over-reached himself, and unwittingly precipitated a crisis which culminated in disaster for himself, as well as for Wodehouse and above all for Torrington.

The Committee's sessions had continued well into 1850 and gave every impression that it would end its sittings with no tangible result achieved. Indeed it looked as though the Colonial Reformers had been foiled in their attempt to secure a censure of Torrington's administration. So well had Benjamin Hawes, Grey's Parliamentary Under-Secretary, performed his task that as late as 20 May 1850 Grey could tell Torrington that "nothing has occured here for a long time which is likely to occasion any fresh difficulty to you. Ceylon has been in a great measure forgotten and the inquiry of the Committee is proceeding very tediously but in a manner highly satisfactory to us."[23]

At this stage the situation changed dramatically when Wodehouse in desperation produced some private letters written to him by Torrington at an earlier date in which he had made some indiscreet and unfounded

accusations against Tennent. In turn Tennent sought to soften the impact of this revelation by the production of other letters written to him by Torrington and also private letters to him from the Archdeacon of Colombo. The production of these private letters before the Committee created a most unfavourable impression in the minds of all the members of the committee as regards Torrington. Grey told Torrington that these letters "fatally damaged him in the opinion of the committee." Still Hawes succeeded in preventing the Committee from adopting[24] "the very hostile resolutions moved by Hume, "and averted with much difficulty" the carrying of any resolutions condemning Torrington's conduct."[25] However, Grey could no longer keep Torrington as Governor; he was recalled along with Tennent and Wodehouse. In a letter to Torrington Grey explained that "after the disclosure of the private letters and what passed between yourself, Wodehouse and Tennent, it is impossible that you should with advantage continue to hold the government of the Colony."[2]

Part III

Tennent's return to England

Torrington's recall was announced in an official despatch of 15 August 1850. Governor Sir George Anderson, Torrington's successor, was informed on 20 January 1851 of the decision that Tennent and Wodehouse would not be allowed to resume their official duties in the island.

Grey's immediate reaction to the disclosure in June 1850, during the Parliamentary Committee's deliberations, of Torrington's private letter to Wodehouse refering to Tennent in disparaging terms, had been favourable to Tennent. He informed Torrington, that,

"Tennent has acted most like a gentleman in the manner in which he has received the utterly unexpected disclosure that you have been writing to his bitterest enemy in the way you have done. His evidence on the subject makes apparently the best case for you possible."[27]

But by 3rd December 1850 the decision had been taken not to permit Tennent and Wodehouse to return to Ceylon. The official reasons for this decision given to Tennent were :

> "that feelings of personal hostility have been allowed to rise to such a pitch between yourself and [Wodehouse], that accusations of a very offensive description have been mutually preferred by you against each other, and that each, in his eagerness to discredit his adversary, has thought himself justified in producing private letters of the most confidential character, without the permission of the writers and to their manifest injury.
>
> "It does not appear to Lord Grey to be necessary that he should express any opinion as to whether in the first instance, this

> unseemly controversy arose chiefly from your fault, or from that of Mr Wodehouse; it is sufficient to state that in its progress both have, in his Lordship's judgement, been greatly to blame, and that so public an exhibition of extreme animosity against each other, by two gentlemen occupying the respective positions in the Colonial Government of yourself and Mr Wodehouse, renders it impossible that you should hereafter co-operate with each other in carrying on the public business as you ought; while Lord Grey conceives that an example of such dissensions between two officers of high rank cannot fail to have a most injurious effect on the whole body of the civil servants in Ceylon."

But while it was decided that Tennent should cease to hold his post in the island, he was at the same time informed that Grey:

> "does not take so unfavourable a view of your conduct as to regard it as disqualifying you from being employed again in some other colony; he will accordingly take an early opportunity of offering you employment." [28]

In a letter of 21 December 1850 Herman Merivale on Grey's behalf,[29] and in a reply to a long letter from Tennent in mitigation of his conduct,[30] made special mention of Tennent's production of the letters of the Archdeacon of Colombo.

> "The production of those letters Lord Grey continues to regard as so unjustifiable, that he is at a loss to understand how you can regard the circumstances upon which you now dwell, as affording the slightest excuse for such a proceeding... The production of those letters to the Committee was obviously calculated to be injurious to the Archdeacon, and certainly neither was, nor would have been, authorized by him. You did not indeed state that you had any authority to make such a use of the letters but only 'to produce them in Downing Street.' In point of fact you did not attempt to use them in this Office, nor would Lord Grey have permitted you to do so, as he invariably refuses to read or listen to private letters containing imputations upon absent individuals which may be tendered to him, unless the writers of such letters are prepared to take upon the selves publicly the responsibility for the statements they contain. But to produce those letters before the Committee was a totally different thing from laying them before the Secretary of State; and Lord Grey is in possession of a letter from the Archdeacon himself, expressing in the strongest terms his surprise and displeasure at your having done so."

Tennent was gazetted Governor of St Helena on 31 December 1850, but he never took up the appointment.[31] Instead he returned to Parliament in the Tory interest for the constituency of Lisburne early in January 1852 and remained there till the end of that year.[32]

When Lord Derby formed a government in February 1852 on the defeat of the Russell Ministry, he was anxious to accommodate Tennent at the India Board. ".... We have left out Emerson Tennent," he informed Disraeli.

> "This will never do. I must offer him the Secretaryship of the India Board... Tennent will be invaluable on the Charter Committee & may be dangerous if left [out][33]

But Disraeli would not agree, Henry Baillie who had been the Chairman of the Ceylon Committee and who had cross-examined Tennent, purposefully and ruthlessly, was also a member of the Board of Control. Disraeli replied that:

> Tennent and Baillie who has treated him as a *criminal* will never do. But I trust everything to your brighter brain."[34]

Tennent was appointed Secretary to the Poor Law Board, but this was not what he wanted.

When the Aberdeen coalition was formed after the general election of July 1852, Disraeil was in charge of patronage. Though Derby's position had improved with this election, he was very much dependent on the Peelites whose support in the House of Representatives gave him a bare majority. Tennent's earlier Peelite connections stood him in good stead in this situation.

In November that year, Tennent was appointed one of the secretaries of the Board of Trade. The Board of Trade was regarded as a Whig stronghold "filled with our enemies," and the sudden death of the distinguished statistician G R Porter who was one of the secretaries, provided Disraeli with the opportunity of getting Tennent appointed to the post. The office, Disraeli stated:

> "was one of real administration & must not be filled by a scarecrow? Why not offer it to *Tennent*, who wanted a permanent position, and whose seat was a safe Tory one?"

Tennent accepted the appointment.[35]

He had by this time published his treatise on *Christianity in Ceylon,* but his reputation was to be made late in 1859 with the publication of his two volume work on *Ceylon.*

The reputation earned by this time, no doubt, contributed greatly to his election to a Fellowship of the Royal Society in 1862, and to the conferment of a baronetcy in 1869 after his retirement from the Board of Trade in 1867. It was an honour he had yearned for, for many years, and for which Grey had refused to recommend him during his years in Sri Lanka.

Tennent had not been a success as an administrator in the island. At the Board of Trade he was looked upon as a failure. Perhaps the contrast with Porter was too greatly to his disadvantage. At the end of December 1866 Disraeli wrote to Derby:

> "[Tennent] has turned out to be the most inefficient & useless of our public servants: no business in him; no sound information; his de[partmen]t in a disgraceful state & himself a mere club gossip & office lounger."[36]

IV

Tennent the Scholar

The third part of this article seeks to place Tennent's writings on Sri Lanka in the context of the historical works on the island in first half of the 19th century. The historiography of the island from the early 19th century to the 1830's was profoundly affected by the British conquest of the littoral districts in 1795-6, and the absorption, shortly afterwards in 1815-8, of the Kandyan kingdom in the interior. The British had achieved something that the Portuguese and the Dutch had so signally failed to do - to become effectively the rulers of the whole of Sri Lanka. The early studies of the island attempted by British civil servants, soldiers and others involved in the conquest sought to provide some understanding of the significance of these events and of the history and the culture of the island, as well as to explain the value of this recently acquainted colonial territory to the metropolitan country.

The first history of the island published in British times came as early as 1817, i.e. shortly after the absorption of the Kandyan kingdom, but before the rebellion of 1817-18 had been crushed. The author, the Revd. Robert Fellowes, resorted to a pseudonym "Philalethes." He attempted a history of the island from the earliest times to 1815- *The History of Ceylon from the earliest period to the year MDCCCXV.* A distinctive feature of the book was that it incorporated the text of the 17th century study of the island, Robert Knox's *Historical Relation of the Island Ceylon.* The inclusion of Knox's study did little enhance the value of the Philalethes' own book as a study of the history of the island.

The "rediscovery" of the interior of the island in the early years of British rule, the heartland of the ancient irrigation civilization of the island and what remained of its architectural splendours, led to a greater awareness of the historical heritage of Sri Lanka. This awareness was immeasurably enhance with the publication of an English translation of the *Mahāvaṃsa*, the sixth century Pali chronicle on the history of ancient Sri Lanka, by a British civil servant, George Turnour[37] in 1837. That chronicle and its translation into English became indispensable keys to the understanding of the island's past.

The influence of these contemporary historical writings was seen at once with the publication in 1845 of William Knighton's *The History of Ceylon from the Earliest Period to the Present Time.* Based on more reliable source material than the work by Philalethes referred to earlier, it also demonstrated a surer grasp of its chronology and greater understanding of the historical forces that were at work in the evolution of Sri Lanka. Just as important was his sympathetic understanding of the richness of the island's culture, and the importance of Buddhism as the core of that culture and civilization. He had, in fact, a greater understanding of Buddhism than many of his contemporaries, and his book appeared at a time when the west "discovered" or to be more accurate, "rediscovered" Buddhism.[38]

In less than 10 years of its publication Knighton's history was superseded by the historical studies on Sri Lanka by Sir James Emerson Tennent. His two volume study on *Ceylon,*[39] a richly documented, superbly written, work went through five editions, and lasted well into the 20th century as a standard book on the island.

Despite the comment in the introduction to his book on Ceylon that he has been "reluctantly compelled to devote a considerable space to a narrative deduced from the ancient Singhales chronicles; into which I found it most difficult to infuse any popular interest," the book nevertheless synthesised the essence of these sources, and assessed their value with a sophistication of technique and facility of style that left Knighton far behind and set a standard in historical writing on Sri Lanka that few equalled thereafter for many decades. Like Knighton he paid a generous tribute to George Turnour, but in this instance,

"for access to his unpublished manuscripts; and to those portions of correspondence with Prinsep, which related to the researches of these two distinguished scholars regarding the Pali annals of Ceylon."

The reference to James Prinsep is an appropriate point of departure for a brief reference to the regional and not merely Sri Lankan importance of the translation of the *Mahāvaṃsa.*[40] In time it became the source for determining the identity of Devanampiya Piyadassi mentioned in a series of inscriptions on pillars and rocks in many parts of India, an identification, eventually confirmed in the early 20th century, as the great Emperor Asoka. Tennent's own appraisal of the significance of Turnour's translation of the *Mahāvaṃsa* is worth quoting.

> "...[Philalethes] and every other author unacquainted with the native language, who wrote on Ceylon previous to 1833, assumed without inquiry the non-existence of historical data.
>
> "It was not till the year 1826 that the discovery was made and communicated to Europe, that whilst the history of India was only to be conjectured from myths and elaborated from the dates on copper grants, or from fading inscriptions on rocks and columns,

> Ceylon was in possession of continuous written chronicles, rich in authentic facts, and not only presenting a connected history of the island itself, but also yielding valuable materials for elucidating that of India."

For many years Tennent's *Ceylon* was valued for its section on the history of the island from ancient times and deservedly so. Today its value lies in the magnificent picture of the Sri Lanka of his day, a study on a lavish scale, comprehensive and vastly interesting. Just as he understood the importance of the mastery of irrigation technology as the basis of the prosperity of ancient Sri Lanka, he drew the attention of his contemporaries to the revolution in the economy of the island that followed upon the successful cultivation of coffee in the 1830's. He was in the island for little less than 5 years, during which his administrative duties absorbed a great deal of his time, yet he found the time also to collect and absorb the essence of a vast amount of scientific and technical data on Sri Lanka which later went into the making of his classic study. Looking back from the vantage point of 1995, at a book written 135 years ago, one is amazed at the scale of his monumental achievement. His book on *Ceylon* became a classic virtually from the moment it was published.

Tennent's *Christianity* in *Ceylon* published in 1850 is less well known than his book on *Ceylon* published nearly 10 years later,[41] but in many ways it was a more valuable historical work; it still stands as the most sensitive and perceptive study of the problems that confronted the Christian minority in Sri Lanka of his day, and the difficulties that missionary organisations faced in their efforts to undermine the indigenous religions, Buddhism and Hinduism.

When we compare Tennent to his contemporaries we can understand why he towered above them as a historian: his perception was more sensitive; his understanding deeper; his style more polished. He was a scholar among amateurs and pedants. In a brief paragraph in his introduction he explains how he came to write his book on *Ceylon*:

> "There is no island in the world, Great Britain itself not excepted, that has attracted the attention of authors in so many distant ages and so many different countries as Ceylon... But amidst this wealth of materials as to the island and its vicissitudes in early times, there is an absolute dearth of information regarding its state and progress during more recent periods and its actual condition at the present day"[42]

He was struck by the beauty of the island. "Ceylon", he wrote "from whatever direction it is approached, unfolds a scene of loveliness and grandeur unsurpassed, if it be rivalled, by any land in the universe". But much more than the physical beauty of the island he was impressed by the ancient irrigation system of the island, then in a state of sad disrepair. He

believed that,

> "no similar constructions formed by any race whether ancient or modern exceeded in colossal magnitude the stupendous tanks of Ceylon"...[43] "[Their] reservoirs,"

he added,

> "despite their ruined state in his day, were nevertheless the proudest monuments which remain of the former greatness of their country, when the opulence they engendered enabled the kings to lavish untold wealth upon edifices of religion; to subsidize mercenary armies, and to fit out expeditions for foreign conquest."

Some of the most interesting sections of his book are devoted to a description of the ruined cities in or near which these reservoirs or tanks were located - Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa. At the time Tennent visited these places - 1848 - their ancient monuments were still covered, indeed smothered, for the most part by a dense tropical forest. Small patches of this dark dank arboreal canopy had been cleared to reveal glimpses of the architectural splendour of these ruined cities, adequate evidence to impress a sympathetic observer like Tennent of the flourishing civilization that had produced these monuments in ancient times and the sophisticated technology displayed in the architecture and sculpture of those times no less than in the irrigation systems that lay neglected and served as breeding grounds for the malaria mosquito.

Part X of the second volume of Tennent's *Ceylon* is the most elegantly written account we have of the desolation to the north-central regions of the island before the jungle tide began to recede. He was among the first British administrators to urge the regeneration of the region by the repair of some of these tanks and canals. By sheer coincidence Tennent's *Ceylon* was published just at the time Governor Sir Henry Ward had initiated the restoration of some of the tanks. The attention that Ward focussed on this region was the first phase of a process that led eventually to the creation of the North Central Province under Governor Sir William Gregory a decade later. Through his chapters on this region Tennent contributed not a little to awakening the consciousness of colonial administrators to its architectural and sculptural heritage no less than its agricultural potential.

Just as he understood the basis of the prosperity of ancient Sri Lanka, he was witness to the rapid transformation of the economy of the island that had followed upon the successful cultivation of coffee as a plantation crop. He wrote that coffee cultivation "within less than a quarter of a century has effected an industrial revolution in the island, converting Ceylon from a sluggish military cantonment into an enterprising British Colony". Then in a few paragraphs he summarized the history of coffee cultivation in his day. In a short sequence of brilliant passages, well worth

quoting, he wrote that

> "the coffee mania was at its climax in 1845. The Governor and the Council, the Military, the Judges, the clergy and one half of the Civil Servants penetrated the hills and became purchasers of crown lands. The East India Company's officers crowded to Ceylon to invest their savings, and capitalists from England arrived by every packet. As a class the body of emigrants was more than ordinarily aristocratic, and if not already opulent, were in haste to be rich. So dazzling was the prospect that expenditure was unlimited; and its profusion was only equalled by the ignorance and inexperience of those to whom it was entrusted... The rush for land was only paralleled by the movement towards the mines of California and Australia but with this painful difference that the enthusiasts in Ceylon instead of thronging to disinter were hurrying to bury their gold".[45]

> "In the midst of these visions of riches, a crash suddenly came which awoke victims to the reality of ruin. The financial explosion of 1845 in Great Britain speedily extended its destructive influence to Ceylon; remittances ceased, prices fell, credit failed, and the first announcement on the subsidence of turmoil was the doom of protection and the withdrawal of the distinctive duty which had so long screened British plantations from competition with the coffee of Java and Brazil."[46]

> The consternation thus produced in Ceylon was proportionate to the "extravagance of the hopes that were blasted; estates were forced into the market and madly sold off for a twentieth part of the outlay incurred in forming them... For nearly three years the enterprise appeared paralysed; the ruined disappeared, and the timid retreated; but those who combining judgement with capital perse vered, succeeded eventually, not alone in restoring energy to the enterprise, but in imparting to it the prudence and experience gleaned from former disasters".[47]

It was over a hundred years ago that these passages were written, and even today they stand as a remarkably incisive and perceptive analysis of the fundamental changes being made in the island's economy and its links with the rapidly changing world economy.

To the general reader the charm of Tennent's book would probably be in its description of Sri Lanka in his day, and there is hardly a region of the island that escapes description in graphic detail. Tennent has created for posterity a lively and comprehensive picture of mid 19th century Sri Lanka. He would comment on Colombo with cool disdain that as a town it "presents little to attract a stranger. It possesses neither the romance of antiquity nor the interest of novelty".[48] But Kandy won his praises.

> "Nothing can be more picturesque than the situation and respect of Kandy, on the banks of a miniature lake, overhung on all sides by

> hills which command charming views of the city with its temples and monuments ... A road which bears the name of 'Lady Horton's Walk', winds round one of these hills, and on the eastern side which is steep and almost precipitous it looks down in to the valley of Dumbara through which the Mahaveli Ganga rolls over a channel of rocks, presenting a scene which nothing in the tropics can exceed in majestic beauty".[49]

To add to the interest of his book, in these passages of description there are interspersed comments on the customs of the people - such things as caste and polyandry, and rather condescending remarks on the national character. Here Tennent, the scientific observer gives way to Tennent the Victorian moralist. But the racial pride and moral superiority displayed in such passages do not detract from the value of the book; they add to its charm in the sense that they show up the weaknesses and bias of an otherwise coolly detached observer. There is yet another Tennent - the humanitarian. This quality is most obvious in his description of the *roḍi* and the *väddas*. And for those interested in natural history Tennent has a great deal of information and as for wild life he devotes one section of his book - the whole of Part VIII - to a study of the elephant. His chapter on the kraaling of elephants is of absorbing interest.

Perhaps the most disappointing thing about Tennent's work is his silence on some of the most controversial issues of his day; he has little on the riots of 1848 - 2 pages out of nearly 1300,[50] and these tucked away, by design, as it were, in the section dealing with Sigiriya and Polonnaruva. It was by far the most notable event during his stay in Sri Lanka, and his treatment of it is totally inadequate. In addition, he has nothing to say about his colleagues in the Ceylon Civil Service, especially on the Family Compact - the Layards and the Templars - who controlled all the major offices, and made life very difficult for Tennent. Tennent was distinctly generous when he refrains from commenting on them, on their nepotism and their inefficiency. Finally, he has nothing on the major religious controversies of his day, particularly on the missionary campaign against the connection of the British Government of Ceylon and Buddhism. Tennent played a role of considerable significance in this controversy in his principled opposition to it, but neither in this book nor in his *Christianity in Ceylon* does he refer to it. In a book that sets out to deal with the history of the island from the very earliest of times to Tennent's own day, these are conspicuous shortcomings. But they are only to be expected in a work of this nature - and one so expansively conceived. Perhaps the best comment on the book is Tennent's own last paragraph in his introduction.

> "To whatever extent the preparation of this work may have fallen short of its conception, and whatever its demerits in execution and style, I am not without hope that it will still exhibit evidence that by

perseverance and research I have laboured to render it worthy of the subject".

In turning to Tennent's *Christianity in Ceylon* we need to understand Tennent's religious views and to stress three facts in regard to them. Tennent was a great believer in missionary enterprise in the East; he considered it to be the "disseminator of immortal truth; and the most powerful agent for the diffusion of intellectual and moral enlightenment".[52] He was deeply interested in Evangelical Christianity, and was a regular visitor at the annual conference of missionary organizations at Exeter Hall in London. Second, his own deep religious convictions were, on the whole, free of sectarianism. He had, in the 1840's jeopardized his Parliamentary career by his ardent advocacy of Catholic Emancipation. In Sri Lanka he antagonized the Anglican Establishment, and particularly the first Bishop of Colombo by his friendship with and support of Wesleyans, Baptists and Roman Catholics. Thirdly, his great interest in ancient cultures and civilizations helped him to appreciate the value of Buddhism, although he persisted in calling it the Buddhist superstition or Buddhist idolatry. But compared to his contemporaries he was most generous in his assessments of its worth.

His book begins with a survey of Christianity in Portuguese and Dutch times; it is a brief and stimulating survey even if, at times, he is distinctly more generous to the Portuguese than he need have been. He states that he has discovered "nothing in the proceedings of the Portuguese in Ceylon to justify the imputation of violence and constraint; but as regards the Dutch Presbyterians, their own records are conclusive as to the severity of their measures and the ill success by which they were followed". The fact, however, is that if the charge of intolerance and repression could be levelled against the Dutch Presbyterians, it could also be levelled with even greater accuracy against the Portuguese Catholics.

Whatever doubts we may have on this matter, there can be none at all about the validity of Tennent's contentions about the relative success and failure of the policies of the Portuguese and the Dutch. He states that

> "Whatever may have been the instrumentality resorted to by the Portuguese priesthood and however objectionable the means adopted by them for the extension of their own form of Christianity, one fact is unquestionable, that the natives became speedlily attached to their ceremonies and modes of worship and have adhered to them with remarkable tenacity of purpose for upwards of three hundred years; while even in the midst of their own ministrations, the clergy and missionaries of the Reformed Church of Holland were over taken by discouragement; and it is a remarkable fact notwithstand ing the multitudinous baptisms and the hundreds of thousands of Sinhalese who were enrolled by them as converts, the religion and discipline of the Dutch Presbyterians is now almost extinct among

the natives of Ceylon".[53]

Tennent was greatly impressed by the remarkable power of survival of the Roman Catholic Church in the island - its survival in spite of the persecution of the Dutch. He suggests - and there is a great deal to be said for this argument - that the survival of Catholicism was due partly at least to the remarkable similarities between that form of Christianity and some of the salient features of Buddhism.[54] He declares that,

> "Buddhism like the ceremonial of the Church of Rome, has to some extent its pageantry and decorations, its festivals and its fireworks, its processions, its perfumes, its images, its exhibitions of relics, its sacred vestments, and its treasures of "barbaric pearl and gold". It has its holy places and its pilgrimages in prosperity and health, and its votive offerings in calamity and disease. The priests of both are devoted to celibacy and poverty, its mortification and prevention. Each worship has its prostrations and genuflexions, its repetitions and invocations, in an ancient and to the multitude an unintelligible tongue; ... Both have their legends and their miracles; their confidence in charms and in the assistance of guardian saints and protectors: and in the general aspect of theirs toward observances, not less than in the concurrence of many of their leading beliefs,..."[55]

There is much in this line of argument and it does explain to some extent why the Roman Catholics still form the bulk of the Christian population of Sri Lanka. Tennent points out that in contrast to the Roman Catholics, the Dutch Reformed Church, "at no time ... attained any ascendancy over the Sinhalese; it exhibited by none of the poetry of Popery"; and "whilst the imagination of the natives were unattracted by the stern simplicity of its exterior their minds were unprepared to be influenced by the truths and abstract principles of its doctrine".

There is another reason for the survival of Roman Catholicism during the Dutch persecution and that is the fact that the Kandyan kingdom, true to its ancient tradition of religious toleration, afforded a haven for Roman Catholic priests who used the border region as a base for the infiltration of the Dutch territories; besides there were Roman Catholic settlements in the Kandyan Kingdom, the most notable of which was that of Vahakotte.

Tennent's treatment of Christianity during the British occupation is much fuller. He contrasted the Portuguese and Dutch phases of evangelization with the British phase, calling the first two phases "that of artifice and corrupt inducement practised by the ... priesthood of Portugal, and that of alternate bribery and persecution by the clergy of the Church of Holland".[56] For him the significance of the British occupation for the propagation of Christianity was that "for the first time a legitimate field

was offered for the unadorned influence of the Gospel, and a fair and unbiased trail ...[was] given to the efficacy of truth and simplicity, for its inculcation unaided by the favour and uninfluenced by the frowns of authority..." Now this is not exactly correct. Though the British did not follow the crude techniques of the Portuguese and the Dutch in the propagation of Christianity, they had their own more subtle methods. From 1837 onwards when Glenelg, as Secretary of State for the Colonies, instructed Governor Stewart Mackenzie to make the propagation of Christianity an aspect of state policy, the British government actively supported missionary enterprise in Sri Lanka. Tennent's book is, in a sense, an assessment of the success of this policy.[57] He looked back on over a decade of active state support of missionary enterprise, and over a half a century of missionary work.

In Sri Lanka the expansion of Christianity could only be at the expense of Hinduism[58] and Buddhism. And Tennent has two chapters of remarkable acuity on these two religions. He stood in awe before Hinduism, more than a little frightened by its philosophy and its institutions. "The Brahmanical system ... has something so stupendous in its dim and undiscovered dimensions, so appalling in the boundless profundity of its dismal dominion, that, viewed from a distance, the boldest may halt in apprehension and the most farseeing pause in dismay ..." He believed that "the difficulty of effectually assailing the Brahmanical system arises from this mysterious immensity, from the vastness and indistinctness of its huge propositions". In his opinion, the crucial weakness of Hinduism was that it was vulnerable to the assault of modern science. He argued that scince "all the knowledge of the Brahmans professes to be directly communicated by heaven, all their sciences and arts to be dictated by the Creator, it follows unavoidably that the detection of falsehood in the revelation must be utterly destructive of all confidence in the oracle and its priests".

In the passage reminiscent of Macaulay, he poured scorn on popular Hinduism.

> "As regards their science, the anomalous alliance of sublimity and absurdity has never been exhibited in such colossal proportions as in the strange combination in which they are presented in the Brahmanical philosophy. Creations which, in their theory of the universe, extend throughout the immendsity of space, when described in their details degenerate into oceans of syrup and seas of clarified butter. Their sacred chronology is rolled back wards into the dimmest distance of time. But the movements of monarchs who lived millions of ages ago, are related with all the solemn minuteness of the Court Calendar of yesterday. They have a system of geography in which the earth is expanded into dimen sions that occupy an area whose diameter is equal to the distance between our planet and the sun; and within this the Hindoo World rests upon

animated elephants, whose movements are the origin and explanation of earthquakes..."

He goes on in this style for pages and then concludes that modern science, and modern education could erode its foundations.

He believed that in the long run Buddhism offered a more serious obstacle[59] to the advancement of Christianity, in what he called "the habitual apathy and listless indifference of the Buddhists". For Buddhism itself, he had very profound respect . He wrote that "to mankind in general the injunctions of Buddhism present a code of morality second only to that of Christianity itself, and superior to every heathen system that the world had ever seen...[60] This was the highest tribute a Victorian Christian could pay to another faith. He added. "On comparing this system with other prevailing religions which divide with it the worship of the east, Buddhism at once vindicates it own superiority, not only by the purity of its code of morals, but by its freedom from the fanatical intolerance of the Mahomedans and its abhorrent rejection of the revolting rites of the Brahmanical faith".

The missionaries seeking to undermine Buddhism had - according to Tennent - to follow a different policy from those who sought to subvert Hinduism.

> "The difference consists mainly in the relative positions assigned to preaching and education as the basis of the operations relied on in each ...[With] Buddhists, whose belief rests less on physical than on metaphy sical fallacies, whilst a prominent place has been given to education and to secular teaching, a still more advanced position has been assigned to argument and expostulation; to preaching throughout the scattered villages; and to the universal diffusion of publications designed to expose the delusions of idolatry and exhibit the principles and divine origin of Christianity".

Tennent was too intelligent, too realistic, to assume that missionary enterprise had made any rapid or considerable gains in his own day. He realized the great difficulties in the way of any such progress; realized too, that state support of missionary enterprise was not in itself a guarantee of success. He pointed out that the most successful missions - the Wesleyans, Baptist and American - were precisely those that had the least to offer in the way of material benefits. "They can hold out no pecuniary inducements as a lure to conformity; they have no appointments as a lure to conformity".

One of the problems the missionaries were faced with was the existence of large numbers of nominal Christians - "Christian Buddhists" or "Government Christians" as they were called. "There are large districts in which it would be difficult to discover an unbaptised Sinhalese, and yet in the midst of these the religion of Buddha flourishes, and priests and temple abound..."

Tennent explained that this class of nominal Christian was "Highly prejudicial to the extension of genuine Christianity; and every individual who has had personal experience of its effects had borne his testimony to the fact that nothing has so effectually deterred the Sinhalese in their first approaches to the truth as the apprehension of being identified by their conversion with a class whose reputation and whose practice are alike an outrage on the religion in which they were born and an insult to that which they profess to have adopted."

He deplored the great divisions among the missionaries working in Sri Lanka and showed that in Jaffna where the missionaries achieved greater success than elsewhere in the island, their success was largely due to the fact that, the missionaries were united; and there were no unseemly sectarian squabbles there.

Moreover, the missionaries had made little progress in the Kandyan Provinces. Tennent commented that,

> "In no part in Ceylon has the progress of Christian instruction been so slow, or the obtuseness and indifference of the people been so disheartening as amongst the peasantry of the Kandyan hills ... The Kandyans to the present hour are exclusively Buddhist in belief, and amongst them there exists little of that laxity of profession which enables the low-country Sinhalese to avow themselves the disciples of two creeds, and to rejoice in the anomalous title of "Christian Buddhists".

It was, all told, a tale of disappointment and slow progress. Tennent's intelligence grasped this fact; but he refused to admit defeat. Victory was inevitable in the future. As we look back, we see that this was a false hope. But in Victorian times the inevitability of the triumph of Christianity was accepted by most people. Tennent writing of his own times states that if the missionaries have gained nothing else, they had gained valuable experience; and that above all, the influence of the ancient religions of Sri Lanka had been undermined. It was on the whole a fair assessment.

Part V

Retrospect

The reputation of his two volume study of *Ceylon* and its enormous success seem to have had an overpowering, indeed intimidating effect on all potential competitions. Perhaps for that reason there were fewer books on Sri Lanka in the last quarter of the 19th century than in the first half of that century - and no solid histories at all. One could even speak of the decline of a tradition, if not school of historical scholarship, which had thrived in the early 19th century and reached its peak of creative achievement in the works of Sir James Emerson Tennent.

If Tennent's potential rivals of the latter half of the nineteenth century - and they were remarkably few - seemed too overawed by his reputation even when they produced histories of the island bringing the story down to their own days, there was less reason for the scholars of the early 20th century to be so intimidated by Tennent's success. However the few books that appeared, the school text books written by L E Blaze,[61] the extended essay produced by Ponnambalam Arunachalam[62] or the book produced by Donald Obeysekera which was at once a text book for schools and an introduction to the island's history for the layman, were all too dependent on Tennent's classic history.[63] The first history of the island that could be described as a departure from Tennent's work came in 1926 from a British civil servant in the island, H W Codrington. More scholarly than any of these others mentioned above, it was based on the new research material that was just being published, but his survey stopped in 1833.

Indeed when Lennox Mills published his *Ceylon under British Rule, 1795-1932,* the preface to his book captured the failures of historical scholarship in and on the island with remarkable accuracy. He pointed out that:

> "No comprehensive account of the British regime in Ceylon has appeared since the publication of Sir Emerson Tennent's work sixty years ago. A few valuable articles and books have been written; but these dealt either with the Portuguese and Dutch or with the early British periods..."

He described his own book as "an attempt to trace the development of the Colony, particularly during the first ninety years of its history."

This book published in 1932 was the first systematic study of British rule in Sri Lanka to appear in the 20th century. Unfortunately despite his access to material not available to Tennent he had neither Tennent's elegance of style nor his acute understanding of the forces of change generated by the establishment and consolidation of British rule in Sri Lanka. It was to take another twenty five years before the school of history at the University of Ceylon at Peradeniya was able to take Sri Lankan historical writing to a level of competence and professionalism which matched or was way above the works of Sir James Emerson Tennent.

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1. *Dictionary of National Biography,* (hereafter *DNB*), XIX, p.545
2. *Grey Mss.*, Tennent's confidential letter to Grey, 10 September 1846
3. *DNB* XIX, p.545

4. There are a number of references to MacCarthy in James Pope-Hennessy's two volume Life of Lord Houghton: *Richard Monckton-Milnes, The Years of Promise* (London, 1949) and *The Flight of Youth* (London, 1953). It would appear that it was Houghton who was chiefly responsible for getting MacCarthy into the Colonial Service.

5. Mills, *Ceylon Under British Rule,* 1795-1932 (Oup, 1932), pp.65-66.

6. *ibid*

7. CO (Colonial office) 54/219, Stephen's minute of 26 December 1845 on Campbell's despatch to Stanley, 208 of 15 October 1845.

8. *Grey Mss*, Tennent's confidential letter to the 3rd Earl Grey, 10 September 1846.

9. Co 54/221, Anstruther's letter to the Colonial Office, 14 February 1845.

10. *ibid.*, it might be mentioned that Tennent in his evidence before the Parliamentary Committee on Ceylon 1849-50 described C R Buller and P A Dyke as nephews of F J Templer. *British Parliamentary Papers* (hereafter BPP), 1851 36(VIII) Part 1 p.801 evidence of J E Tennet. Tennent showed that F Templer (District Judge, Colombo in 1849) was married to a cousin of P E Wodehouse.

11. Evidence of J E Tennent in *BPP* 1851, 36(VIII) Part I, p.801, 822. The Layard branch of the Family Compact, according to Tennent, included Layard's brother-in-law, F Gibson, formerly Assistant Colonial Secretary; T Gibson, District Judge, Badulla, Pole, Police Magistrate Jaffna and Moyart, Commissioner of Requests and Police Magistrate Mallakam were relatives, and F Layard, Police Magistrate, Matara was a nephew.

12. *ibid.*,

13. *ibid,* p.822. See also Tennent's letter to Benjamin Hawes, 3 December 1850, enclosed in Grey's despatch to Anderson, 27 of 20 January 1851, printed in *BPP*, 1851 (99)XXIII, 51 pp.4-12, especially pp.5-9.

14. MacCarthy was appointed to the post by the Third Earl Grey and assumed duties on 26 March 1847. But the appointment of an Auditor-General from outside the Ceylon Civil Service had been requested by Campbell from 1844; the request was repeated in 1846.

15. Grey *Mss*. [ed. de Silva, K M (1966) *Grey-MacCarthy correspondence,* pp.64, 73, 74] MacCarthy's confidential letters to Grey, 13 December 1849, 10 June 1850.

16. On the Verandahs question, see T Digby, *Forty Years of Official and Unofficial Life in an Oriental Crown Colony, the Life of Sir Richard Morgan,* (London and Madras, 1879) 2 vols, particularly vol 1, p 135 and 171.

17. See the *Colombo Observer*, 27 April 1846, and the editorial entitled "Sir Emerson Tennent and the Verandahs"; See also the issues of the same newspaper of 26 February, 21 May, 10 August and 21 September 1846.

18. On the riots of 1848, K M de Silva, "The Rebellion of 1848 in Ceylon" in *The Ceylon Journal of Historical Social Studies* 7(2) 1964, pp.144-170.

19. "The 1848 "Rebellion" in Ceylon: The British Parliamentary Post Mortem: Part 1," *Modern Ceylon Studies,* Vol V(1) 1974, pp.40-76.

20. The Chairman of this Committee was Henry Baillie the Radical MP for Inverness. Its members included Sir Robert Peel, W E Gladstone and Benjamin Disraeli, Joseph Hume

and Sir William Molesworth, noteworthy critics of Grey's colonial policy, Benjamin Hawes, Grey's deputy at the Colonial Office, organised a very competent defence of Torrington administration on Grey's behalf.

21. "The 1848 "Rebellion" in Ceylon: The British Parliamentary Post-Mortem: Part II, *Modern Ceylon Studies,* Vol. V(II) 1974, pp.117-137.

22. Grey *Mss*, Grey's private letter to Torrington, 24 April, 1850

23. *ibid.*, Grey's Private letter to Torrington, 20 May, 1850

24. *ibid.*, Grey's Private letter to Torrington, 19 June, 1850

25. *ibid.*, Grey's private letter to Torrington, 24 July 1850

26. *ibid.*,

27. *ibid.*, Grey's private letter to Torrington, 19 June 1850

28. B Hawes to Tennent, letter to 3 December 1850, enclosed in Grey's despatch to Anderson, 27 of 20 January 1851, printed in *Papers Relating to the Affairs of Ceylon,* 1851 (HMSO), p.4

29. *ibid.*, pp.13-14

30. *ibid.*, pp.4-12

31. In his letters to Grey he pleaded illness. See Grey *Mss*, Tennent's letters to Grey, 19 December 1850, 27 December 1850 and 27 June 1851.

32. see *DNB* XIX, p.545

33. *Hughenden Papers,* Box 109 B/XX/S/49, 25 February 1852, quoted in Robert Blake, *Disraeli* (London, 1968), p.314

34. *Derby Papers*, Box 145/2, 25 February 1852 quoted in Blake *op.cit.* p.314

35. *ibid.*, Box 145/2, 27 September 1852, quoted in Blake *op.cit,* p.323

36. *ibid.*, Box 146/2, 3 December 1866, quoted in Blake, *op.cit.*, p.323.

37. George Turnour, "Epitome of the history of Ceylon, with explanatory notes" in *The Ceylon Almanac,* 1833, pp.224-285; subsequently he published *The Mahavanso* [sic] in Roman characters, with the translation subjoined. (Colombo, Cotta Church Mission Press, 1837), Party I.

38. Philip C Almond, *The British Discovery of Buddhism* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1988).

39. The full title was Ceylon: *An Account of the Island, Physical, Historical and Topographical* with Notices of its Natural History, Antiquities and Productions (London, Longmans, Green, Longmans and Roberts, 1859) 2 vols. The second and third editions were both published in 1859. They were, in essence, reprints of the first edition.The fourth edition published in 1860 contained many revisions; the fifth edition was a reprint of the fourth. (Hereafter, Tennent, *Ceylon*).

40. For this aspect of Prinsep's work, see A Guruge, *Asoka*: A Definitive Biography, (Colombo, Ministry of Cultural Affairs and Information, 1992), p.318.

41. *Christianity in Ceylon*, its introduction and progress under the Portuguese, the Dutch and British and the American Missions; with an historical sketch of the Brahminical and Buddhist superstitions (London, John Murray, 1850). He published two other works both based substantially on the researches that went into the production of his classic study on *Ceylon*. They were: *Sketches of the Natural History of Ceylon* ...(London, Longmans, Green, Longman and Roberts,1861) *and The Wild Elephant and the method of capturing it and taming it in Ceylon* (London, Longmans, Green and Co, 1867).

42. Tennent, *Ceylon*, 4th ed, 1860 introduction p.xxiii.

43. *ibid.*, I, p.3

44. *ibid.*, I, p.432

45. *ibid.*, II, p.231

46. *ibid.*,

47. *ibid.*, II, p.232

48. *ibid.*, II, p.151

49. *ibid.*, II, p.203

50. *ibid.*, II, p.569-571

51. These sections of the book were subsequently expanded and published as separate volumes. See footnote 41 above.

52. Tennent, *Christianity in Ceylon,* introduction, page xv.

53. *ibid.*, p.67

54. *ibid.*, p.95

55. *ibid.*, pp.94-95

56. *ibid.*, p.77

57. K M de Silva, *Social Policy and Missionary Organizations in Ceylon, 1840-1855,* (London, Longmans Green and Company, for The Royal Commonwealth Society, 1965) pp.102-137.

58. Tennent, *Christianity in Ceylon,* pp.120-1.

59. *ibid.*, p.137

60. *ibid.*, p.219

61. A *History of Ceylon for Schools* (Colombo, 1900).

62. P Arunachalam, *Sketches of Ceylon History* (Colombo, 1906).

63. Donald Obeysekera, *Outlines of Ceylon History* (Colombo, 1911).

64. H W Codrington, *A History of Ceylon* (London, MacMillan, 1920).

CODRINGTON'S STUDIES ON SRI LANKAN NUMISMATICS: PAST AND PRESENT

by

Osmund Bopearachchi

In the introduction to his remarkable book on *Ceylon Coins and Currency* published in 1924, H W Codrington wrote : " The only work dealing with Ceylon numismatics as a whole is Professor Rhys Davids' *Ancient Coins and Measures of Ceylon*" , published in 1877. This is now out of date, and, though papers on particular epochs have been published, notably by Messrs J Still and P E Pieris, in the *Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society,* the need of a work embracing the whole history of coinage and currency in the island has long been felt. The present book is intended to supply this deficiency."

More than seventy years after the publication of Codrington's monumental work, we are here to examine the question anew: "is Codrington's book out of date today?" A satisfactory answer to this question can be given only by analysing the contribution made by Codrington himself on the one hand and on the other by placing his work in the light of developments made in the field of Sri Lankan numismatics since 1924.

It should be also underlined, without any ambiguity, that H W Codrington belongs to the school of European scholars, like H C P Bell, T W Rhys Davids, Wilhelm Geiger and J Still, who made inestimable contributions to the field of social sciences of Sri Lanka at the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries. Their names will be remembered forever. It is for this reason that I feel extremely privileged to deliver this Memorial Lecture in honour of H W Codrington, and I am most grateful to the Royal Asiatic Society of Sri Lanka for giving me this oppurtunity.

Codrington wrote a considerable number of articles on coins and currency before the completion of his major work in 1921.[1] However the contents of these papers were integrated in his book, I shall therefore, in this talk, refer to his book alone. Since my good friend Frederick Medis, one of the best authorities on Sri Lankan colonial currencies, will discuss in detail the question of paper money issued during the Colonial Period, I wll not dwell upon Codrington's studies on this period.

As Codrington himself admits in the introduction, before him, Rhys Davids (1877), W Ferguson (1905), J Still (1907, 1908) and P E Pieris

(1912) had engaged in preliminary studies in Sri Lankan numismatics. These scholars, according to their specialities, gave preference to different types of coins found in Sri Lanka. For example J Still devoted much of his time to studying Roman and Indo-Roman coins reported in the island. Codrington should be given credit for making a work "embracing the whole history of coinage and currency" of Sri Lanka. The task he had to face was immense.

Codrington's book can be divided into two major parts, one is the detailed catalogue of coins attested in the island and the second part is the appendix which deals with the ancient references to coins in Pali and Sinhalese literary and epigraphic sources. He also made an inventory of documents relating to the Portuguese, Dutch and British periods. H W Codrington had assembled most important references, known up to his time, to monetary transactions in the *Vinaya*, the *Mahāvaṃsa* the *Ṭīkā*, and other relevant sources. A large number of inscriptions, written either in early Brahmi or in Sinhalese scripts, dealing with economic aspects, have been brought to light in recent years by Senarath Paranavitana and some other scholars. So it is also necessary to update Codrington's work with new epigraphic evidence.

Codrington catalogued all the local and foreign coins found in Sri Lanka, known to him. In order to accomplish this huge task, he wisely sought the assistance of the best numismatists and archaeologists of his time, especially J Allan, E J Rapson, Alexander Cunninham and Sir John Marshall. One of the reasons for his book being devoid of major errors of identifications or attributions is the guidance that he received from those outstanding scholars. Their guidance and his scholarly qualities have made this book for the last seven decades the Bible of Sri Lankan numismatics.

Codrington's book thus remains the only reference work which covers the whole history of Sri Lankan numismatics. Some additions have been made, since then, to update some categories of coins found in the island. Gita Amarasinghe and the late M H Sirisoma (1986) published a comprehensive work in Sinhalese on Punch-Marked Coins (*Hasebu Kahapana)* found in the island. Compared to Codrington's work, they made a step forward by giving a satisfactory list of symbols depicted on them. It is unfortunate that Gita Amarasinghe did not make further attempts to continue her research in this direction. Reinhold Walburg (1985), a German numismatist, assembled all the Roman coins at his disposal found in the island. He was guided, in this research, by Peter Berghaus, an eminent numismatist who dedicated most of his time to the study of Roman coins from India. Though Walburg, a novice to Sri Lankan history, committed a number of mistakes in his commentary, his work deserves much recognition because it was a major contribution in the field of Sri Lankan numismatics since Codrington's work. Walburg also wrote a series of articles on the same subject.[2] Michael Mitchiner (1978 & 1979) in his

well illustrated voluminous work, *Oriental Coins and Their Values The Ancient & Classical World,* devoted three sections to cataloguing major coin types found in the island. Though these books, as a whole, lack scientific profoundness, amateurs can use them easily to identify some of the coins found in the island. Mitchiner's recent publication, *Coin Circulation in Southernmost India,* published in 1995 by the Indian Institute of Research in Numismatic Studies, Nasik (India) is a welcome addition to Indian numismatics. Although, this volume is on South Indian numismatics, it is of much use to readers interested in the South Indian coins circulated in Sri Lanka. Other than the short contributions of S Paranavitane (1950 & 1952), a number of special papers on ancient coins have been written, in recent years, by a number of numismatists: e.g. Joe Cribb (1995), Damayanthi Gunasekara (1990), T G Kulatunge (1995), Francois Thierry (1995) and the present author. [3]

While paying due respect to this outstanding scholar, I may now explain why the time has come to update Codrington's work. Like any other science, numismatics has developed by leaps and bounds. It has evolved from the simple discipline of making catalogues to a means of interpreting history. It is by identifying the marks applied on the coin designating the issuing authority, mint place and period of issue that modern scholars are able to provide the information necessary for archaeologists to interpret the full significance of coins found in archaeological excavations.

When Codrington wrote his book, Sri Lankan archaeology was still in its infancy. Many discoveries have been made since then. Since the 1940's the Archaeological Department of Ceylon has been involved in major excavations. New data have been obtained by Sri Lankan and British archaeologists from the excavations conducted during the last twenty years at the citadel of Anuradhapura.[4] The Sri Lanka UNESCO Central Cultural Fund launched massive excavations at the Buddhist monasteries of Abhayagiriya and Jētavanārāma, at Anuradhapura, the pleasure gardens at Sīgiriya and Ālāhana Pirivena at Polonnaruwa. As we know, Anuradhapura was the longest-lived capital of Sri Lanka, and the citadel was the central area where the palace and the administrative quarters were located. Abhayagiriya was a monastic complex built by King Vaṭṭagāmini Abhaya in the first century BC. The Jētavanā rāma monastery, with its stupa known under the same name - the largest of all the Buddhist monuments of this type in the world - was built by king Mahasen at the close of the third century or the beginning of the fourth century AD. The fortified royal residence of Sigiriya, as is well known, was built by king Kāsyapa (AD 477 - 495), who having killed his father, took refuge on this natural rocky peak, converting it into the most sensational site in Sri Lanka. Polonnaruwa, first mentioned in the reign of Aggabōdhi III (624 - 640), became the capital of the Sinhalese kings in the eleventh century. [5] Even minor excavations conducted by the Archaeological Department at Yāpahuwa, Dambadeniya,

Kandy and Kōṭṭe brought to light new numismatic evidence which enabled us to understand the currency pattern of Sri Lanka during the period immediately before or after the colonial occupations. Most of the observations that I make in this talk are based on the one hand on the already published material, and on the other, on unpublished coins entrusted to me by Dr. Robin Conningham from the ASW 2 excavations at the citadel of Anuradhapura, by Dr. Hema Ratnayake, from the Jētavanārāma excavations, and by private collectors, especially Messrs Siri Munasinghe, Dilip Samarasinghe and Mr. Raja Wickramasinghe. I am most grateful to all of them for kindly allowing me to examine their collections.

Apart from the ones attested in an archaeological context, a large number of coins were found accidentally in hoards. The hoards from Trincomalee and Minuwangoda containing hundreds of punch-marked coins and one with thousands of Roman and Indo-Roman coins from Lunama (3 000), Hungama (20 000) and Goḍawāya (75 000) are only a few of them. In order to show the importance of these discoveries, I may point out for example, that Codrington catalogued only about 30 000 Roman and Indo-Roman coins. Since then more than 200 000 coins of this class have been found in the island. The number itself changes completely the idea that one may have about the circulation of Roman and Indo-Roman coins in the island.

In my recent studies,[6] particularly in the article published in the Sesquicentennial Commemorative Volume of the Royal Asiatic Society of Sri Lanka (1995 A), I made an inventory of coins of foreign origin, hitherto unknown in Sri Lanka, and discussed their importance in the context of the economic history of the island. The true significance of the coins already published by Codrington and the ones discovered in recent years could be understood only by placing them in an historical context. The extreme richness of different types of coins circulated in the island can only be explained by the role played by Sri Lanka as a cultural, religious, political and above all commercial centre throughout history for 2500 years. Historical sources and archaeological evidence account for the important role that Sri Lanka has played as a great trade centre of long distance of maritime trade. Its central position in the Indian Ocean linking the sea routes of the Red Sea, Persian Gulf, Western India with Eastern India, Southeast Asia and the Far East; its physical features, namely numerous bays, natural harbours, estuaries and navigable rivers facilitating both sea-borne and inland trade; and finally its products of high export value such as precious stones, pearls, ivory, tortoise shell, elephants, valuable woods, textiles and especially spices (cloves, pepper and cinnamon), largely determined the origin and the development of both Sri Lanka's maritime and inland trade. As a result of this phenomenon, a large number of foreign coins of different horizons entered the circulations. Among these different coinage, the following types were already known: punch-marked coins, Kushan and Gupta from North India; Pandya, Chola,

Pallava and Chera from South India ; Sassanian from Persia ; Roman Republic, early and late Imperial coins, and Byzantine coins from the West; and Chinese coins from the East. I have added to this list not only new types of the already attested series, but also coinages so far unknown in the Sri Lankan context. These are Indo-Greek, Indo-Parthian, Western Ksatrapas, Satavahana and Parthian coins.

Apart from texts extracted from Pali chronicles and Sinhalese literature discussed by Codrington, foreign notices, especially Indian, Greek, Persian, Arabic and Chinese, are more valuable as sources of evidence on the flourishing trade and economic prosperity of ancient Sri Lanka. It should be underlined that over forty Greek and Latin authors mention Sri Lanka, known to them as Taprobane and at least ten of them give important evidence about its maritime trade activities. The most recent and complete study of all the classical texts on Sri Lanka, by D P M Weerakkody (1996), is now in print. Concerning the Chinese texts, very little can be added to the remarkable study made by Sylvain Levi (1900), completed by Paul Pelliot, (1903,1904). The Indian and Sinhalese texts concerning political and economic aspects, are analysed to a certain extent by N D Wijesekara (1952). For a summary of Arabic sources in connection with Sri Lanka, one may refer to the article by Sirima Kiribamune (1990). But the need for a comprehensive updated work assembling all the Sanskrit, Sinhalese, Pali and Arabic texts having a direct or indirect relationship with Sri Lankan numismatics has long been felt.

One of the major flaws of Codrington's methodology regarding the interpretation of numismatic evidence was to isolate coins from the rest of the archaeological data, I mean ceramics, beads, seals, ivory , glass, and all the other relevant materials discovered either sporadically or in archaeological context. I shall show, below, how one cannot come to correct conclusions about the economic and commercial activities of the island by relying on numismatic evidence alone.

I am in a position to broach the subject afresh, in the light of a new archaeological and epigraphical evidence obtained from the exploratory program on the organization of maritime trade connected with the ancient ports on the western and southern coasts of Sri Lanka, launched in collaboration with the Archaeological Department of Sri Lanka and the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Although our research in this respect is still in its infancy, I wish to make a few remarks deduced from our first explorations of 1993 and 1994.[7] Our recent explorations at the estuaries and the lower parts of all the navigable rivers around the western and southern coasts of the island from the Däduru Oya to the Valave, have enabled us to ascertain the existence of early settlements on the banks of the rivers. We collected, in the ancient sites of Kelaniya, Ambalantota and Ridiyagama, large quantities of early historic Black and Red Ware, hundreds of beads made of crystal, glass, stone, ivory, bone, shell, clay and

above all of precious and semiprecious stones. The discovery of unperforated beads together with fragments of semiprecious stones confirms beyond doubt the existence of a bead making industry in Ridiyagama. It should also be emphasised that Ridiyagama is one of the gem-mining sectors located away from the major gem-bearing area of Sabaragamuwa Province. The beads that Peter Francis Jr (1987: 8-9) classifies as round beads of India, red glass and small glass beads of different colours made at Arikamedu were also attested in hundreds at Ridiyagama. The bead making industry at Arikamedu was large and productive. Of all the finds at Ridiyagama, carnelian beads are of the greatest significance. It is well known that the reddish colour of carnelian is artificially produced by heating dull brown stones which contain enough iron. These stones, belonging to chalcedony group, are not found in Sri Lanka and were certainly imported from Gujarat, where according to the archaeological evidence, they were produced without interruption from the fifth century BC to the eighteenth century AD. The perforated beads from Ridiyagama are similar to the ones found at Ibbankaṭuwa megalithic cemetery (c. 770 - 395 BC).[8] The presence of early historic Black and Red Ware and North Indian carnelian beads both at Ridiyagama and at the megalithic cemetery of Ibbankaṭuwa is not accidental. The excavations conducted by Sri Lankan and German archaeologists under H J Weisshaar and W Wijepala (1993) at Akurugoḍa (Tissamaharāma) on the southern coast of the island, yielded not only early historic Black and Red Ware and North Indian carnelian beads both at Ridiyagama and at the megalithic cemetery of Ibbankaṭuwa is not accidental. The excavations conducted by Sri Lankan and German archaeologists under H.-J. Weisshaar and W. Wijepala (1993) at Akurugoḍa (Tissamahārāma) on the southern coast of the island, yielded not only early historic Black and Red Ware but also several fragments of imported Indian-Roman Rouletted Ware and imported Indian Red Polished Ware. All these ceramic types can be dated with certainty between the first and fourth centuries of our era, if not earlier.

The results we have obtained from our first explorations enable us to make two important observations. Firstly, the discovery of hinterland trading centres, associated with the rivers which have easy access to the sea, reflects one of the aspects of this maritime and inland trade. The concentration of both imports and exports, such as ceramics, beads and coins, occurs at points of trans-shipment or distribution. Secondly, archaeological material denoting clear commercial transactions, found at the river mouths and along the rivers, must have reached the western and southern coasts as a result of the maritime trade. So one cannot ignore the fact that the mariners as early as the third century BC had some notions about circumnavigations. The epigraphical evidence from Diyagama and Goḍavāya,[9] referring to direct trade links, and the archaeological evidence revealing the homogeneous north-south and east-west pattern of distribution thus put seriously into question the hypothesis of C W Nicholas (1961,

1990), J Deloche (1985 : 167- 176); R Silva (1990: 3-5) and C Rasanayagam (1984: 85) according to which circumnavigation began only after the fifteenth century.

These observations now lead us to re-examine the trade pattern of Sri Lanka in the proto-historic and early historic periods. Sri Lanka, because of its geographical situation, naturally established its first trade relations with the Indian sub-continent. Proto-historic Sri Lanka was more closely linked with South India. In the excavations conducted at Gedige (Anuradhapura), Pomparippu, Kantarodai and Ibbankatuwa, substantial quantities of pot-sherds were found which parallel the Iron Age and early historical wares of South India, such as Megalithic Black and Red Ware and the Rouletted Ware of the Arikamedu types.[10] According to V. Begley (1970: 94), the chronological position of these sites parallel Arikamedu.

The first part of the Early Historic Period begins with the legendary story of the arrival on the island of settlers who came from North India. The *Divyāvadāna* (p.523) refers to the tradition that the original inhabitants were themselves merchants. Chinese records, known to us through the testimony of Fa-Xian (cf.J Legge, 1886: 101), support the legend that the island used to lure foreign traders and merchants:

> "The country originally had no human habitants but was occupied only by spirits and nagas with which merchants of various countries carried on a trade, When the trafficking was taking place, the spirits did not show themselves. They simply set forth their precious commodities, with labels of the price attached to them ; while the merchants made their purchase according to the price and took the thing away".

The second part of the early historic period of Sri Lanka begins with the introduction of Buddhism to the island by *Thera* Mahinda, the envoy of the Mauryan King Asoka during the reign of Dēvānampiyatissa (c.250-210 BC). It was from this period onwards that close political, cultural and commercial relations were first established with North India. It is interesting to note that in the citadel of Anuradhapura, as in India, Grey Ware (GW) and Northern Black Polished Ware (NBPW) were found in successive strata. Likewise, most of the finest imported ceramics of this period found in Sri Lanka were North Indian imports.

Mariners from South India and Sri Lanka were also engaged in the western parts of India as early as the fourth century BC. The testimony of Onesicritus is vital in this respect. This commander of the fleet of Alexander the Great knew that ships came to India from Sri Lanka, which according to him was twenty days' voyage from the mainland (in Strabo, *Geography*, XV, 1, 15).

Numismatics confirms further the observations made on the basis of ceramics. The earliest coins found in Sri Lanka are the punch-marked

coins, and they were found in hundreds, either in hoards on archaeological sites or as stray finds. These coins were known in ancient India as *'karshāpana'*. Panini (V, 1, 29) was the first to use this word for the monetary unit. In Buddhist *Jāaka* stories they are called *'kahapana'* and in the *'Arthasāstra* , *'pana'* . As we know, numismatists divide Indian punch-marked coins into two major groups. The first is composed of locally minted coins that circulated in a limited area, known as *Janapada* series. The second, which was minted over a vast area of India under the protection of a unifying authority, is known as Imperial series. The Imperial series first appeared during the formation of the Magadha empire and developed fully during the Mauryan empire. Coins published by H W Codrington (1924), or recently by M H Sirisoma and Gita Amarasinghe (1986), as well as the specimens that I have examined personally in public and private collections of Sri Lanka and in the British Museum, belong to the second group. These imperial coins can also be divided into two important classes according to the workmanship: on the one hand there are some fairly large, thin coins, attributed to the pre-Mauryan and early Mauryan periods, on the other, some smaller and thicker coins, attributed to the middle and late Mauryan periods. With a few exceptions, all the coins found in the island belong to the second category. A large number of *karshāpana* found in Sri Lanka may have first entered the circulation during the reign of Mauryan king Asoka under whose initiative Buddhism was introduced to the island. Codrington has assembled most of the epigraphical and literary references to payments done by kings in thousands of *karshāpana* on different occasions, such as construction of religious monuments and donations to monastic communities. Indian and classical literary sources refer to Sri Lankan exports, especially pearls, precious stones and textiles for which there was a good Indian market. I really wonder whether there is any truth in the assertion of J Still (1907: 155), explaining the reasons for the rarity of Roman precious metal finds in Sri Lanka that " as the natives were not used to seeing large quantities of coined money" the trade may have been carried on by barter.

As Codrington (1924:16) correctly suggested, the absence on these coins of any symbol which can be attributed to Sri Lanka alone, leads us to assume that all the genuine punch-marked coins found in the island were imported from India. He also correctly observed that they were in circulation until the end of the 3rd century AD. It is now proved by the discovery of many terracotta moulds with *Karshāpana* imprints in the excavations at Geḍigē (Anuradhapura) and many other places.[11] They show that some of these coins were cast in Sri Lanka. The moulds we were able to examine are identical to the ones found in Haryana in North India. Like in India, Sri Lankan mint masters may have made these coins by casting methods, completely different from the original punching technique, during a period when no more *kahapana* were issued. The Carbon 14 dating obtained from the excavation conducted by Robin Conningham at A.S.W. 2 of the

Anuradhapura citadel shows that all the punch-marked coins found in the site fall in the archaeological context dated from 275 BC to 250 AD.

In addition to the contribution made by M H Sirisoma and Gita Amarasiṅghe, further research should be oriented towards the study of punch-marked symbols. Codrington correctly noticed that some of the punch-marked coins from Sri Lanka have a copper core with silver coating. This phenomenon can be noticed in most of the coins found in the excavations of the Anuradhapura citadel and at Jētavanārāma. The technical aspects of cast and silver coated or silver-washed punch-marked coins should also be studied with the help of modern technology. I am under the impression that most of the punch-marked coins found in Sri Lanka were made according to a method known as "silver amalgam". This technique consists of dipping the copper flans into an amalgam of silver dissolved in mercury, which clings to its surface. It is then gently heated, to just above the boiling point of mercury, 357 degrees C, when the mercury is driven away and the silver is left behind as a plating.[12]

Punch-marked coins were no longer issued in India after the decline of the Mauryan empire, and India's earliest coins were then replaced by the issues of the Indo-Greeks followed by the Indo-Scythians, the Indo-Parthians and the Kushans who occupied the north-western provinces of the Mauryan empire. A certain number of coins belonging to these dynasties of different political and cultural origins are found in Sri Lanka. No doubt, as far as Sri Lanka is concerned, compared to the thousands of *karshāpana,* the coins issued by the successors of the Mauryas are quite rare. Yet one cannot deny their economic implications. The most ancient coin, next to *kahapana* found in the Sri Lankan soil, is an Indian-standard drachm of the Indo-Greek Menander.[13] I have seen in private collections, about ten coins of Soter Megas, which were hitherto unknown in the Sri Lankan context.[14] They were all supposed to be stray finds from different places in the island. Soter Megas had been considered an anonymous ruler calling himself "the king of kings, the Great saviour". Thanks to recent discoveries we know today that Soter Megas dynastic name was Vima Taktu and that he was the grand-father of Kushan king Kanishka I.[15] The coin of Kanishka II of the Kushan dynasty found in the excavations conducted at Jētavanārāma is significant in this context.[16] I have seen at least ten more coins of the same kings in two private collections, and all of them were found on the southern coast of the island. Kanishka II was one of the successors of Kanishka I and his reign can be placed around 200-215 of our era. It should be noted that although H W Codrington (1924:49) mentions four specimens of king Vasudeva bought in Colombo, these are the first coins of Kushan kings ever found in Sri Lanka in an archaeological context. A silver coin of Viradaman of the Western Ksatrapas (c.234-239) was found buried at the foot of one of the frontispieces of the Stupa along with the coin of the Kanishka II.[17] A coin of Nahapana restruck by

Gautamiputra of the Satavahanas should be added to the list of coins of the Andhra Dynasties found in Sri Lanka. The silver drachms of the Andhras and the gold coins of Samudra Gupta, Chandra Gupta and Skanda Gupta (from c.325-480 AD) of the Gupta dynasty catalogued by Codrington were the last issues of the ancient North Indian dynasties so far attested in the island.

The diminution of coins struck in Northern India found in Sri Lanka during the period starting from the first century onwards, corresponds to one of the periodical domination of the South Indian dynasties over the island. Apart from the coins already published by Codrington, a number of new series of Pandya coins have been attested in recent years. The most remarkable one was found in the ASW 2 excavations at ⛧ citadel of Anuradhapura. The reverse has the normal stylised fish and on the obverse: elephant to r., temple of Vesta and unidentified symbol. The most fascinating one on this coin is the three arch symbo⛢ dentified by some as a mountain. The Chatra on the top of three arches so far unreported on any coin type both in Sri Lanka and India now confirms Codrington's (1924: 20) identification of this symbol as Chaitya. According to C 14 analysis the context in which this coin was found falls between *cā.* 275 BC to 250 AD. This coin, most probably struck in Sri Lanka, falls into the period of Pandya domination over the island which started from c.177 BC.

As Michael Mitchiner (1978: 623) correctly pointed out, the next indigenous coinage of the island dates from the resumption of independence in 28 BC from the Pandya occupation. The new series of multi-type copper coins bears a prominent elephant symbol. The coins labelled as elephant and swastika, horse and swastika, lion and swastika,tree and swastika·and especially *Lakshmi* plaques depicting the goddess *Lakshmi* seated or standing, belong to the category of local issues. A good number of *Lakshmi* plaques found in recent years, overstruck on the elephant and swastika type confirm further that they were all contemporary issues. Most of the symbols depicted on these series were either directly copied or imitated from the Indian coinage. The coins of Eran, Ujjain, Satvahana, Yaudheya and Mahasatrapas issued in India bear similar symbols. Further investigations should be conducted to make comparative research of these symbols in an historical context.

However Codrington was correct to assume that the commonest coin series found in Anuradhapura, known as maneless lion type is almost unknown in India. He further argued that they may well be Sinhalese, the dynastic emblem being a lion. A terra cotta seal found last year by the Sri Lanka-German Archaeological Project at Akurugoḍa (Tissamahārāma) bears exactly the same maneless lion. This seal would have been used in the past for administrative purposes.

It is also interesting to examine whether the South Indian coins attested in the island, along with the local issues, resulted from the

intermediary role played by the South Indians between Roman traders and Sri Lankan merchants or not. The presence of a good number of Pandya coins at the excavated sites of Anuradhapura and many other places in the northern part of the island, shows that Sri Lanka's trade activities with South India were important to a certain extent, albeit the political implications were quite different. However, the most disputed question in this regard is whether or not the commercial relationship that the island had with South India resulted from the intermediary role played by the South Indians between the Roman traders and Sri Lankan merchants.

The flourishing trade in luxury goods between India and the Western world in the days of the Roman Empire is known to us through literary and epigraphical sources, on the one hand, and on the other, from archaeological evidence. Apart from the accounts of classical writers, particularly, Strabo, Pliny, Ptolemy and the author of *Periplus of the Erythrean Sea*, who refer to West-East trade connections, a handful of epigraphical remains of Indian merchants that show East-West connections came to light in recent years.[18] The numismatic, ceramic and other relevant data have been extensively studied by various scholars, especially during the last fifty years.[19] Both literary and archaeological data are conclusive evidence for Roman trade with India from the close of the first century BC onwards. Why then did the Romans, who dared to endure the perils of a long voyage to India, not enter into direct relations with Sri Lanka?

I have explained elsewhere that there is no valid reason for believing that in the first three centuries of our era, Roman traders had direct contact with Sri Lanka. I have argued that it may be a question of distance combined with the limited time gap between the two monsoon winds used for sailing.[20] Lionel Casson (1991) has shown convincingly that, at the time of the *Periplus*, ships leaving Egypt for India, started from Myos Hormos and Berenice. It is now believed that the goods to be exported were brought along the Nile to Coptos and from there by camel or donkey across the desert to the corresponding ports. The correct time to leave Egypt for India was July. Making use of the south-west monsoon winds, the ships sailed through the Gulf of Aden and reached the Indian west coast ports in September or October. The return journey had to be scheduled for November to take advantage of north-east monsoon winds. Merchants hardly had a month to sell their goods and load their ships with new merchandise. So I believe that sailors did not continue their voyage on to Sri Lanka, to avoid the risk of missing the north-east winds which assured their returnd journey. It was certainly more profitable for the merchants to buy Sri Lankan products from the Indian markets than to spend a year on the island waiting for the next north-east monsoon. It certainly rings true when Strabo (II. 1. 14) tells us that from Taprobane ivory, tortoise-shell and other merchandise were brought in abundance to the markets of Indians. It seems that there was no need for the Romans to go all the way

to Sri Lanka, as long as its products could be easily and abundantly obtained at Indian ports.

During this period, the South Indian traders may have played an intermediary role between the Roman traders and the Sri Lankans. In contrast to the opinion held by Onesicritus (fourth century BC) that the Sri Lankan "vessels employed for the voyage sailed badly owing to the wretched quality of their sails and to the peculiarity of their structure", Pliny (VI, 79-91) says: "ships are built with prows at each end to obviate the necessity of their turning about in channels of extreme narrowness. The tonnage of these vessels is 3000 *amphorae*". Pliny also adds that the sea between India and Sri Lanka is shallow, not more than six fathoms deep, but in certain channels so deep that anchors do not reach the bottom. These ships are described as having a capacity of 3,000 amphorae, *i.e.* about 75 tons. On the other hand, the author of the *Periplus* (sec 60) says quite explicitly that the commodities imported along the Malabar coast were transported in local vessels, coasting along the shore to the important market towns on the eastern coast of India, such as Camara, Poduca and Sopatma.

The finds of fragmentary amphorae and Arretine ware in stratified contexts led the excavator Mortimer Wheeler (1946) to consider Arikamedu as an Indo-Roman trading centre. He also believed that it was founded during the time of Augustus and lasted for about two centuries. Vimala Begley (1983 & 1991), re-assessing M Wheeler's and J M Casal's material, suggested that the date of the founding of Arikamedu should be pushed back to the middle of the third century BC. Arguing that the 'rouletting' technique must have been introduced from the West in the course of the second century BC, Begley pointed out that the first trade contacts with the Mediterranean world were established at the same time. Himanshu Prabha Ray (1993 A) correctly questioned how dangerous it is to assume, on the basis of a few fragments of imported ware, that Arikamedu was a foreign colony.[21] In fact Lionel Casson (1989: 24), in his commentary on *The Periplus Maris Erythraei* assumes: "Western ships went no further than the waters between India and Ceylon". H P Ray (1993 B: 489), in the context of east coast trade in peninsular India, convincingly argues: "The emergence of Arikamedu on the Tamil coast as an important centre in the early historical period is then linked to the dynamics of the earlier Megalithic exchange network". In a more elaborate and recent work H P Ray (1994) shows that there was a complex indigenous maritime network existing in South Asia which involved both coastal and transoceanic sailing.

It is now clear that Sri Lanka cannot be isolated from the general regional exchange pattern connected with India and dating back to the megalithic period. No doubt, the traditional sea routes through the Mannar Straits and Adam's Bridge remained popular for a long period. However,

as we have seen, commercial transactions were taking place between the sea ports and inland emporia connected with the western and southern coast of the island as early as the historical period.

However a drastic change in the trade pattern took place in the fourth and fifth centuries of our era. It has been suggested that the large quantities of late Imperial Roman coins found on the island coincide with the rise in eastern trade with Sri Lanka in the fourth and fifth centuries. The great abundance of the Roman "third brass" in the ancient ports of the western sea coast of Sri Lanka may be a result of the revival of western powers through Axumite, Himyarite and Persian middleman. As mentioned earlier, according to my estimation, the number of published and unpublished Roman "third brass" and their so-called "Indo-Roman" imitations found in the island totals more than 200 000. [22]

Coin hoards containing a large number of Roman and Indo-Roman coins were found in the following ancient sea-ports and emporia of the western and southern coast of the island: Salavattoṭa (Chilaw) at Deduru Oya, Wattala at Kelani Ganga, Kālatittha (Kalutara) at Kalu Ganga, Bhīmatittha (Bentota) at Bentota Ganga, Gimhatittha (Gintota) at Gin Ganga, Mahāvālukagāma (Weligama) at Polwatta Ganga, Nilvalātittha (Matara) at Nilwalā Ganga, and Gōthapabbata (Goḍavāya) at Valave Ganga. Besides all the hoards published by Codrington[23] and R Walburg,[24] hoards of Roman "third brass" were reported from Godavāya (about 30,000), Lunama (3000) and Hungama (20,000). I was able to examine several hundreds of unpublished Roman and Indo-Roman coins from Bentota, Kalutara and Negombo.

The excavations conducted at Abhayagiriya and Jētavanārāma at Anuradhapura produced a good number of both genuine Roman coins and their imitations. Among the most fascinating imported objects found in the excavations at Jētavanārāma, published by H Ratnayaka (1984, 1990), we may mention: intaglios depicting Roman figure which evokes the monetary type, emperor standing holding globe or helmet; an imitation of a Roman bust probably inspired by an Indo-Roman prototype; a seal showing three lions; a broken piece of a glass lens depicting a female figure with spread legs; a glass mosaic fragment recalling the glass from Heis, inlays, plaques and tiles assembled from slices of composite mosaic bars and fused.

Coins found at Sīgiriya significantly contribute to the study on Roman coins found in Sri Lanka. Sīgiriya remained the royal residence of Kāsyapa (AD 477-495) for 18 years until he was finally defeated in battle by his brother Moggallāna, the legitimate heir to the throne. H W Codrington (1924: 33) was correct to emphasise that the coin finds from Sīgiriya are extremely important for the understanding of the monetary system of that period, because this place remained royal residence only during the reign

of Kāsyapa; after his death it was handed over to monks. Sīgiriya, the short-lived residence of Kāsyapa, produced nearly 3,000 Roman and Indo-Roman coins. We have also pointed out elsewhere that the genuine Roman coins represent more than 40% of the identified coins from Sīgiriya excavations (1982-83).[25] Among the Roman coins found in the excavations of Sīgiriya conducted under the Cultural Triangle Project, during 1982 and 1983 campaigns, there were three folles of Constantine I from the mint of Rome, dated AD 317, from Antioch, dated AD 330/3, and from Constantinople, AD 337-340. It is also noteworthy that out of 1687 coins from Sīgiriya published by H W Codrington (1924:32-3), and the ones from the same site published by R Walburg (1985:116-132), a large majority are genuine Roman coins, All the coins were found in the occupational layers and the large majority of them were found in the Kāsyapan layers. The most abundant issues range from Constantine the Great to Arcadius and Honorius. The most recent genuine Roman coin found in the excavations belong to Marcian (AD 450-457): so now even at the earliest reckoning, Sīgiriya did not become the capital until well over twenty years after the death of Marcian, The earliest issue found in the site dates back to AD 317, that means 160 years before the foundation of the city. H W Codrington thought that Roman copper coins were in circulation for 150 years before they came to the capital of Kāsyapa. According to Dr. D P M Weerakkody (1996), both Roman and Indo-Roman coins may have been circulated in South India for a considerable time before reaching Sri Lanka in the latter half of the fifth century. His hypothesis is based on the theory that since in the mid-fifth century, Sri Lanka was under foreign rule, having been invaded by a certain Pandu from south India who set up a dynasty at Anuradhapura which, according to the *Mahāvaṃsa* ruled 27 years (AD 433-460) until it was uprooted by Dhātusēna. The Roman and Indo-Roman coins may have been introduced to Sri Lanka from south India by these invaders.

A vivid picture of the trade activities during this period emerges from the account by Cosmas Indicopleustes, an Egyptian Greek of the sixth century AD. According to a description in his *Christian Topography*,[26] Sri Lanka performed an important role in transmitting merchandise between East and West, a role once played by Western India. Introducing the island he says, "This is the great island in the Ocean, lying in the Indian sea. By the Indians it is called Sielediba, but by the Greeks Taprobane" (Cosmas, XI, 13).

Demonstrating the central position that the island held in international commerce Cosmas (XI, 15.) says:

> "the island is a great resort of ships from all parts of India and from Persia and Ethiopia, and in like manner it dispatches many of its own to foreign ports. And from the inner countries, I mean China and other marts in that direction, it receives silk, aloes, clove-wood, sandalwood, and their

products, and these it again passes on to the outer ports, I mean to Male, where pepper grows, and to Kalliana, where copper is produced, and sesame-wood, and material for dress; for it is also a great mart of trade; and to Sindu also, where musk or coster is got, as well as Androstanchus, and to Persia and the Homerite country, and to Adole. Receiving in return the traffic of these marts and transmit ting to the inner ports, the island exports to each of these at the same time its own products".[27] Further Cosmas confirms, "Silediba being thus in a central position with her reference to the Indies, and possessing the hyacinth, receives wares from all trading marts and again distributes them over the world and thus becomes a great emporium."

Likewise in the fifth century Sri Lanka became the main centre of trade in the Indian ocean. From this period onwards, the ports on the southern coast of Arabia that were connected with the Axumite, Himyarite and Persian traders, played a vital role. The shifting of the starting points of the sea voyage, form the Red Sea to the Arabian Sea, and the evolution in the speed of ships, made the journey to Sri Lanka and beyond easy.[28]

It has been suggested by many numismatists that Roman coins disappeared from circulation all over the country by the middle of the seventh century. The fall of Alexandria in Egypt in 638 may have put an end to the direct trade with Rome and the western world.

Apart from Roman "third brass" found in thousands belonging to the late Imperial period, a certain number of Sassanian coins are now attested in the Island. Cosmas (XI, 15.) bears witness to the presence of Persian traders by the sixth century in Sri Lanka. Cosmas further attests that there were Persian settlements in the island. According to him, it seems that there was a Persian Church and that the Presbyter was appointed from Persia. Among the material in the excavations which can be attributed to a Persian origin there were: a Partho-Sassanian pitcher from Jētavanārāma, Partho-Sassanian handles from the citadel (Anuradhapura), a large quantity of Sassanian-Islamic ceramics and a baked-clay bulla with three impressions of the Sassanian period from Manthai.[29] I have also shown elsewhere, when defining the function of the interior city, the royal pleasure gardens and the palace, that the ancient site of Sīgiriya was, to a certain extent, influenced by the Persian tradition.[30]

By publishing three coins of Yezdigerd I (AD 397-417), Codrington (1924: 30) put forward the hypothesis according to which occasional finds of small copper coins among the "third brass" show the dealing of Persians in the island. I have added three more Sassanian coins hitherto unknown in Sri Lankan context: Xusro I (AD 531-579), Hormizd IV (AD 579-590) and Xusro II (AD 591-628).[31] I have seen since then more than ten coins of this class in private collections.

It would seem that with the decline of the Sassanian empire, the

Muhammadan Arabs began to reach the Malabar coasts and Sri Lanka. Besides a great number of literary sources and inscriptions, archaeological evidence, such as ceramics and especially coins, bear witness to the presence of Muslims in the island as early as the seventh century. Gold and silver coins of almost every Muslim dynasty of Baghdad, Alexandria, North Africa and Northern India belonging to various periods between the eighth century and the fifteenth century have been found in the island.

In spite of the fact that Codrington, in his Catalogue, paid special attention to the mediaeval coins of the island, this section also needs to be updated. The first task will be to include all the new variations found in recent years, specially in the Polonnaruwa excavations, which still remain unpublished. The second task is to solve, if possible, the problem involved with the chronology of these coins. Many coins belonging to the Lakshmi and *Sri Lanka Vibhu* series were unearthed in the Abhayagiriya excavations. Mint work-shops, furnaces and gold ingots were found in various places. These very important documents are still unpublished, I sincerely wish that the responsible authorities would take the initiative to make these new data available to other scholars. Michael Mitchiner attributed the *Sri Lanka Vibhu* coins to the tenth and eleventh centuries. I firmly believe that they were issued by Sinhalese kings as early as the 7th or 8th century AD. The data obtained from the Abhayagiriya excavations seem to confirm this hypothesis. I entirely agree with Joe Cribb who believes that the coin design for these coins derived from the west Bengal Gupta prototypes of the sixth century.

From about the seventh century Chinese traders, along with the Arabs and South Indians, developed their commercial activities with Sri Lanka. Codrington discussed briefly some Chinese coins found in the island. Francois Thierry, one of the best specialists of Chinese coins, who visited the island last year, informed me that most of Codrington's identifications were incorrect.[32]

It seems that the Sri Lankan contacts with China as early as the second century were purely religious. By the eighth century the first trade links to take shape. It was with the sudden burst of trading activities between China and Middle East from the seventh century onwards that Sri Lanka began to play a decisive role in the maritime trade between east and west. The main reasons for these active trade relations between east and west were the unification of Arabian countries under Islam putting an end to the Sassanian power in AD 650, on the one hand, and, on the other, the establishment of power by the Tang dynasty in China,. As Axelle Rougeulle (1994: 1) correctly observed, during this period, silk lost its role as a major export and was replaced by pottery, such as the famous porcelain and stoneware. Likewise, from the 8th century, Chinese ceramics were exported in fairly large quantities to overseas countries. As P Y Manguin (1993) clearly shows, these ceramics appear in archaeological sites vary-

ing from Southeast Asia to East Africa, along most shores of South China sea and the Indian Ocean. After the unification of China in AD 960 under the Song dynasty, ceramics became the major export product of China. This is one of the very clear occasions where trading activities cannot be studied on numismatic evidence alone.

The imported Chinese ceramics constitute the most characteristic sign of the trade contacts that Sri Lanka had established with China from the eighth century. The first transactions are revealed by the presence of three heavy Chinese storage-jar fragments found in archaeological context. The earliest wares from Mantai are products of the Tang dynasty (618-907). It was only from the eleventh century that China developed extensively its commercial activities with Sri Lanka. The South Indian conquests of the island, which brought the existence of Anuradhapura as the capital of the island to a conclusion, diverted the trade centres. At this time Gōkanna in the eastern coast and all the ports in the western wet zone became more important. With the decline of the hydraulic civilisation, when the capitals of the Sinhalese kings began to shift from the northern Dry Zone to the western Wet Zone and to the hill country, the authors of the Sinhalese literary sources began to pay some attention to market towns on the south-west coast. Dondora (Devinuwara), Nilvalātittha (Matara), Mahāvālukagāma (Weligama), Bhīmatittha (Bentota), Kālatittha (Kalutara), Wattala, and Salavattoṭa (Chilaw) are some of the ports attested in different literary sources of the medieval period. It is quite well known that after the decline of the Chola Empire, the Pandyans made several attempts to control the trade along the western coast line of Sri Lanka, during the reign of the Sinhalese king Bhuvenaka Bahu I (1284-1291 AD), by conquering the ports of Chilaw, Negombo, Wattala and Colombo.[33] The main purpose of this occupation, as B J Perera has pointed out, was "to prevent Sinhalese traders from dealing directly with the Arabs and Chinese". Similarly, literary works of medieval times refer to a revival of commercial activities connected with the south-western coast of the island.

Hundreds of coins belonging to the Song and Southern Song dynasties found at Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa, and especially in the short-lived capitals of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries, such as Yāpahuwa, Kurunāgala and Dambadeniya and many other places in the country, proclaim commercial exchanges of China with ancient Sri Lanka.[34] It should be underlined that the number of Chinese coins found in the island, since Codrington's publication, has increased to hundreds. Francois Thierry recorded some of the following Chinese coins found at Yāpahuwa. Song Dynasty of the North: Taizong (976-997), Zhenzong (998-1022), Renzong (1023-1063), Shenzong (1068-1086), Zhezong (1086-1100), Huizong (1101-1125), and Song Dynasty of the South: Gaozong (1127-1162), Xiaozong (1163-1189) Guanzong (1190-1194), Ningzong (1195-1224), Lizong (1225-1264).[35]

The absence of Chinese coins for the period prior to the tenth century and the abundance of coins dating from the Zhenzong period in the island, can be explained by two factors. Firstly in 1075, the prohibition on making payments for imports with cash was cancelled, and secondly from the time of emperor Shenzong (1078-1086) the annual production of coins was raised to six million strings, each containing a thousand cash. The discovery and exploitation of mines in the centre and south of China, made possible the production of such enormous quantities of coins. These Chinese coins were found everywhere in Asia and Africa along the maritime route, especially in Japan, Vietnam, Java, Sumatra, India, Sri Lanka, Zanzibar, Mozambique and the Middle East. The exploitation of copper mines was so intensive that the Southern Song dynasty began to feel a real shortage. In 1219, it was ordered to pay imports only with silk and porcelain. Only very few coins are attested in the island belonging to the period that follows. A number of questions should be raised in order to understand the role of these bronze Chinese coins in an island like Sri Lanka, far away from the issuing country. We know that these coins were normally used, in China, in bulk, tied together by strings through their square holes, often in bundles of a thousand coins each. As Joe Cribb (1995) correctly points out:

> "China's bronze coins probably entered the trade as a source of copper bullion, useful as ballast on the sea-going ships, universally acceptable as a trade commodity, but its role as money was never far from the minds of the people trading them. It seems that wherever the coins were exported to, from East Africa to Japan, the monetary function of these coins was rapidly recognised and this recognition brought them into local circulation as money. The Chinese coins reaching South India and Sri Lanka were no exception and appear to have met the same welcome and entered the local monetary system as small change."

The first voyages of the Portuguese and Spaniards in the Indian Ocean and the diminution of trade activities of China with Sri Lanka take place almost at the same period. The last delegation from Sri Lanka was sent to China in 1459.

In conclusion, I admit that, I have only attempted to touch the tip of an iceberg. Nevertheless, I may have convinced you, I hope, to accept that there is much to be done in order to update Sri Lankan numismatics since Codrington's work. During recent years, more scholars and researchers have become interested in Sri Lankan numismatics. As a result of the international seminars organised by the Sri Lanka Society for Numismatic Studies during last three years many positive steps have been taken to publish more books on this subject.[36] The acts of the workshop held in 1994 will be published both in English and Sinhalese by the Archaeological Department. The coins found in the excavations of the citadel of

Anuradhapura by Dr. Robin Conningham and at Jētavanārāma by Dr Hema Ratnayake will soon be published. I sincerely hope that all the coins unearthed from Polonnaruwa, Abhayagiriya and Sīgiriya by the UNESCO Sri Lanka Central Cultural Fund will be put at the disposal of scholars who wish to study them. Private collectors should be helped to publish their collections. More students should be encouraged to undertake exhaustive research on the different types of coinages circulated in the island. Once these targets are attained, one may then update Codrington's work, and I think, this would be one of the most fruitful ways to pay tribute to the excellent service rendered to Sri Lankan numismatics by this outstanding scholar.

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3. See O Bopearachchi, 1985, 1990,1992, 1993 A, 1995 A F Thompson, P Mcquilkin, & R Shelton, (1958) wrote a research paper on the metallurgy of the Medieva copper coins of Ceylon.
4. S U Deraniyagala, 1992.
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7. For a preliminary report on this program, see O Bopearachchi, 1995 B.
8. H -J Weisshaar, 1992.
9. For a detailed discussion on epigraphical evidence, see O Bopearachchi, 1995 B.
10. See S Deraniyagala, 1986, 1992 for excavation at Gedige, Anuradhapura; V Begley 1970 for Pomparippu, V Begley, 1967 for Kantarodai: and H -J Weisshaar, 1992, for Ibbankatuwa.
11. See S U Deraniyagala, 1972: 56; M H Sirisoma & G Amarasinghe, 1986: 7 & 146.
12. For further details about this method, see O Bopearachchi & Aman ur Rahman, 1995: 65-71.
13. *Cf.* O Bopearachchi, 1995 A: 128.
14. *Ibid.* 129.
15. See N Sims-Williams & J Cribb, (1996); Fr Grenet & O Bopearachchi (1996).
16. *Cf.* O Bopearachchi, 1995 A: 129.

17. *Ibid.*

18. For an updated version of these documents see the excellent article by Richard Salomon, 1994.

19. For recent discoveries of archaeological material from India, see *Rome and India*, and for numismatic evidence, see P J Turner, 1989 and P Berghaus 1989, 1991.

20. *Cf.* O Bopearachchi, 1994.

21. One may read H P Ray, 1993 A, 1993 B, for further convincing arguments.

22. *Cf.* O Bopearachchi, 1990,1992, 1993 A, 1995 A. Since the publication of Codrington's Catalogue in 1924, a good number of Early Roman coins have been found, and I have recently published some of them. Among them, the most remarkable ones were a bronze coin struck under Augustus, probably in Caesarea, by a Roman procurator of the Roman Judea in the year 36(= AD 5/6), and a bronze coin struck under Trajan in the city of Dora in 111/2 AD, found in the excavations at Jetavanarama (*Cf.* O Bopearachchi, 1995 A).

23. According to Codrington (1924:32-3), the Roman hoard from Balapitiya weighed 13lbs.

24. We list here the most significant hoards published by R Walburg, 1985: 77, 91, 106, 111-116; the number of coins are given in brackets: Hambantota (1600, 519,2828), Matara (300, 3000), Colombo (122,300).

25. O Bopearachchi, 1990.

26. J W McCrindle, 1897. Also see D P M Weerakkody, 1981.

27. J W McCrindle, 1901: 160-1.

28. Regarding the changing patterns of international trade relations between ancient Sri Lanka and Arabia, Southeast Asia and China, from this period onwards until the first voyages of Portuguese, see O Bopearachchi, 1994.

29. J Carswell, 1990 & 1991.

30. O Bopearachchi, 1993 B.

31. O Bopearachchi, 1995 A: 135.

32. See Fr Thierry, 1995.

33. *Nikāya Sangrahaya,* p. 26.

34. For a list of these coins, see J Cribb, 1995.

35. *Cf.* Francois Thierry, 1995.

36. Short reports of these seminars were published in several international journals: see for example,C Grandjean, 1994, J -F. Salles, 1995 and "Numismatic Workshop & Exhibition on Ancient Coins in Sri Lanka", *News Letter, Indian Coin Society*, 22, 1993,p.4.

ABBREVIATIONS

BEFEO Bulletin de l'Ecole Francaise d'Extreme Orient.

CHJ The Ceylon Historical Journal.

Cūlavaṃsa, vol, I , II, tarns. into English by W Geiger, Oxford 1925, 1927.

Divyāvadāna, ed. E.B. Cowell and B. A. Neill, 1986.

JA Journal Asiatique.

JRAS (CB) Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (Ceylon Branch) .

JRAS (SLB) Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (Sri Lanka Branch).

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Dr HENRY TRIMEN

by

B A Abeywickrama

Dr. Henry Trimen richly deserves our gratitude for the invaluable services he rendered to this country. He also deserves our respect and honour for his exemplary personal qualities and his conscientious devotion to duty. Whatever activity he undertook, he did to near perfection, and his works were considered by the scientific community as models for others to emulate.

Henry Trimen was born on 26th October 1843, at 3, Park Place Villas, Paddington, London. His father, Richard Trimen, was a great lover of nature and an excellent observer. He often took Henry and his elder brother: Roland to the country side near London or to the seashore, pointed out interesting features in plants and animals, and encouraged them to make collections. This made the two brothers take a delight in natural history at a very early stage in their life and in due course they began to make collections by themselves with Roland concentrating on insects and Henry on plants.[1,2,3]

Henry entered King's College School in 1855. There, a common interest in plant collection made him strike up a life-long friendship with a classmate, William Dyer. From that time onwards Henry and William spent most of their half-holidays in excursions round London collecting plants, making identifications at the British Museum and keeping careful notes of these activities. One year later, as material accumulated, they decided, with the ambition of schoolboys, to make a detailed botanical survey of the county and to prepare a *Flora of Middlesex.* That made them make collections very regularly and systematically. In one of Trimen's collecting trips, he discovered for the first time in the United Kingdom, *Wolffia arrhiza*, the smallest known flowering plant which is only 1.5mm in length.

Henry entered the Medical School of King's College, London in 1860. Four years later he went to Edinburgh for his clinical training. Whilst following these classes he acted as Clinical Assistant to his teacher, Professor Bennet, He also became closely associated with the Edinburgh Botanical Societ y. When he completed the clinical training he came back to London and passed the M.B. with Honours in 1865, His medical career was however a very short one. During a cholera epidemic in London he acted for a time as Medical Officer in the Strand District and later he had many tales to tell about his early experiences among the very poor.[4] From 1866 to 1867 he served as curator of the Medical Museum at King's

College, and from 1867 to 1872 was Lecturer in Botany at St. Mary's Hospital Medical school, London. There "he led his class in the field no less ably and enthusiastically than he did in the lecture-room".[5]

Lecturing at the Hospital was a part-time activity and Trimen's primary interests were in botany rather than in medicine. This made him join the Botanical Department of the British Museum in 1869. That same year he and William Dyer published their *Flora of Middlesex.*

Trimen prepared the final manuscript for this work. He condensed a large mass of observations into a lucid and concise but accurate summary. The Flora was hailed as an epoch making book in the history of British botany and became a model for compilers of local floras.

At the British Museum he enlarged the plant collection by adding his own specimens. He edited the *Journal of Botany* from 1870 to 1879. His most noteworthy work was an encyclopaedic work on *"Medicinal Plants."* He was engaged in this work from 1875 to 1879 and it was carried out in collaboration with his old teacher, Professor Robert Bentley. It was published in four volumes with over 300 coloured plates and it was generally regarded as the standard authoritative work on pharmacology in England.[6]

Trimen was now a very popular figure at the British Museum and he had established a reputation as an eminent botanist throughout Europe. He was however, becoming dissatisfied with being confined within walls of museums and lecture halls. He was once again on the look out for open-air work. Just then the Directorship of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Peradeniya fell vacant and Trimen was offered the post. The British Museum tried to retain him on more favourable terms but, to the great regret of his colleagues, Trimen opted to come over to Sri Lanka. We were fortunate to secure the services of an outstanding scientist and dedicated worker.

In 1880, at the age of 37, Trimen assumed duties as Director of the Royal Botanic Gardens at Peradeniya. As Director he also had to be adviser to the Government and the planting community on all agricultural matters. Much of this work was new to him. His task was not an easy one, but for the next sixteen years he performed it with remarkable success.

The Gardens were then in a rather neglelcted condition. Most plants were not labelled. They were not arranged in any methodical manner. Trimen realised that this greatly reduced the scientific and educational value of the rich collection. He took early steps to rearrange all plants in a systematic order and to, 1abel them as far as was possible. He earmarked special areas for arboreta, medicinal plants, spice plants etc. A few areas were left in a forest-like condition with lianas and epiphytes. Special sections were established for palms, bamboos conifers, cycads, etc. and for

a Student 's Garden. To include all these he had to enlarge the garden by adding the "South Garden". He also laid out wide lawns and added some tree-lined avenues to those that were already present. The Gardens at Peradeniya we see today are basically the same as what was designed and laid out by Trimen, thanks to the work of his successors, who not only maintained them but also made improvements. To the branch Gardens at Gampaha and Hakgala he added new ones at Anuradhapura, for dry zone plant trials, and at Badulla, especially for rubber trials in that region. Trimen made the Peradeniya Garden a world renowned one.[7]

Providing advisory services to planters was a much more difficult activity. Then there was no Agriculture Department. Trimen had to do alone by himself the duties which are now carried out by a multitude of Departments, Authorities and Corporations with many hundreds of officials. Trlmen's predecessor Dr G H K Thwaites had had severe problems with the planters. For almost a decade his advice had been totally ignored. In 1870 Sri Lanka was the world's largest coffee producer. The economy of the country was booming.Then, Dr Thwaites observed some yellow - brown pustules on a few coffee leaves. He realised that it was a very destructive disease for the coffee in monoculture over many thousands of acres. But his was only a voice in the wilderness.[8]

Sir William Gregory, Governor of Ceylon from 1872 to 1877, records as follows regarding his great and intimate friend: 'year after year Dr. Thwaites foretold its downfall, year after year he was subjected to obloquy and ridicule for his disloyalty to the great King Coffee.' "[9]

In the late 1870's "King Coffee" completely collapsed. Dr Marshall Ward was brought down from Cambridge to study the disease. He made a full study of the causal agent and showed how the spread of the disease could be checked by having forest shelter belts between plantations. "This was a brilliant piece of scientific detection but it came too late," [10] and the industry could not be saved. Perhaps the crash of coffee had sobered down the planters, or it may be that Trimen's imperturbable good humour and wide knowledge made it impossible for anyone even to enter into a quarrel with him. Whatever it may have been, Trimen had no serious problems with the planting community.

With coffee gone, alternative crops had to be found. Dr Thwaites had already done much of the pioneering work on cacao, cinchona, tea, and rubber. Trimen continued the good work done by his predecessor and promoted these crops. In 1880 he secured a consignment of the best Forestero types of cacao from Trinidad.

They are the base of most of the hardy varieties of cacao we now have in the island. Trimen was a specialist in quinology. Under his guidance the cultivation of cinchona expanded. Between 1884 and 1888 the Island's total output each year was about half the world production. Then,

severe competition from Java and India made its cultivation unremunerative. Tea cultivation made remarkable progress. As against 927 acres in 1880, the total area in 1896 at the time of Trimen's retirement was 330,000 acres. He also promoted the cultivation of spices and other crops.

Trimen, in his annual reports, gave in full the practical details on new economic products and never failed to give prompt replies to all enquiries on plant problems or experimental culture.

Trimen was not satisfied with just executing the set duties of a colonial official. He came to Sri Lanka with the idea of making a lasting contribution to prepare a full Flora of the islands. For this purpose, Dr Thwaites, Trimen's predecessor, had already done much of the background work with his *Enumeratio Plantarum Zeylaniae* (1864)" and subsequent publications. Trimen realised that a Flora was an essential prerequisite for making use of the country's plant resources. He reorganised the office, the herbarium and the library. To these he added a Museum of Economic Botany. With his collectors he went on excursions to all parts of the island to collect plants, observe their natural habitats and find out their uses. This he did with a thoroughness that has seldom been equalled. Trimen did not have the collecting facilities we have today. According to his collector's son, Mr Wallie Silva, bullock carts brought the collecting materials (paper, presses etc.) to a place as near to the collection area as possible. When the specimens were arranged and placed in the presses they were loaded into the carts and sent back to Peradeniya for further attention. In the field Trimen was as much a worker as any other with him and his collectors had always had the feeling that they were working with him and not under him. In 1885 he went over to Kew Gardens and the British Museum to study the Hermann Herbarium, on which Linneus' *Flora Zeylanica* was based, and also other collections to determine what exactly the old records referred to, and to elucidate obscure points in our botanical history. It is rare to find any botanical details on the above which Trimen has missed.

Peradeniya gained a reputation as a centre for tropical studies and many famous scientists such as Marshall Ward, H N Ridley, F O Bower, B H Farmer and Ernst Haeckel came over to Sri Lanka for visits or short periods of study. Haeckel in his *Visit to Ceylon* speaks "warmly of Trimen's genial hospitality and valuable instruction..... the seven days I spent in his delightful bungalow were indeed to me seven days of creation."[12] very often these visitors accompanied Trimen on his excursions and on most occasions they discovered some interesting novelties.

Trimen published numerous papers on his scientific findings in both local and foreign journals. Up to 1883 the *Royal Society Catalogue* had 50 publications against his name.[13] Petch's *Bibliography on Ceylon*

Agriculture and Botany lists aobut 180 papers under Trimen.[14] His publications would therefore have been well over 200. Among the more important botanical papers after his coming to Sri Lanka are:

1885: *A Systematic Catalogue of the Flowering plants and Ferns of Ceylon.* [15]

1885: *Remarks on the Composition, Geographical Affinities,and origin of the Ceylon Flora.*

(Up to that time our Flora was considered to be just a part of the Indian Flora. In this study Trimen highlighted the uniqueness of the Sri Lankan flora with a very high endemicity and many non-peninsular species.)[16]

1889: *Note on the Botany of Ritigala.*[17]

The three papers were published in the *Journal of the RAS(CB).* Others include:

1888: *Hortus Zeylanicus.* This is a list of the Plants, then present in the Peradeniya Gardens.[18]

1889: *A Catalogue of the Peradeniya Library.*[19]

1890: *Handguide to Gardens.* It ran into 4 editions by 1894.[20]

Next came the first part of his monumental work-1893: *Handbook to the Flora of Ceylon.* Vol.I.[21] This was characterised by the "critical insight and terse lucidity which always distinguished the author and was "acknowledged to be a model" of what a tropical Flora should be.[22] He completed the second volume in 1894 and the third in 1895.[23]

Trimen had "enjoyed unusually good health" upto about 1894.[24] Then he gradually developed an increasing deafness. This continued till he was totally deaf. It was followed by the loss of power in the lower limbs and he went to England in 1895 for medical advice. "His general health was, however, little affected, and though the nature of his malady completely baffled his physicians, they were not without hope of his recovery. His cheerfulness of mind remained as unabated as his anxiety to complete the Handbook".[25] Even though his friends had hoped he would stay back, he returned to Sri Lanka early in 1896.[26] The *Tropical Agriculturist* of 1st April 1996 had an item: "We desire to welcome back to Ceylon Dr. Trimen, the respected Director of the Botanical Gardens, and to express the hope that he will enjoy a measure of good health, not only for his own sake, but for the sake of the great work on which he is engaged."[27]

His failing health forced him to retire when 52 years old on 1st July

1896, but the Legislative Council gave him, in addition to his pension, the exceptional privilege of a special allowance, to enable him to complete his work.[28]

On the eve of his retirement the *Ceylon Observer* of 30th June '96 paid a very high tribute to him and his work. About the Flora it said "It is impossible to overestimate the value of this work for practical, educational,and scientific purposes in the colony". It then went on to say "Dr. Trimen while taking care to serve the purposes of science, and to be as full and correct as any reasonable botanist could desire, has added a series of most useful economic notes which simply makes his work a treasure house to the ordinary intelligent reader,..... to all in fact who wish to know what can be said about each of our plants, (useful and ornamental) and especially about the timber trees and economic products of the Island. That the highly accomplished and worthy Director should have persisted in this important undertaking to the sacrifice of his health, if not of all that makes life worth living, speaks highly for his conscientious devotion to duty and deserves the grateful acknowledgment, not only of the Government, but of every right thinking man in the community..... we are equally clear that never before in the history of the island has more attention been given in our Botanic Garden to every question bearing on the economic as well as the scientific side of planting and tropical agriculture generally, than during the past fifteen years."[29]

After his retirement he continued to go to his office and work on the flora. In August he lost all power in his left leg, but still he worked on, but was confined almost entirely to his room. Then on Wednesday, 14th October 1896 he became seriouly ill. The next day he rallied a little and had then attempted to resume work making few notes which were hardly decipherable. On Friday he was in a coma. Occasionally, however, he had looked up and smiled when anything was done for him. That night he passed away painlessly and peacefully.[30]

The following day large crowds, over 200 Europeans and many hundreds of Sri Lankans, came to pay their respects. Among them had been over 400 former employees, village headmen and others who had known him. They had come to see the "old Master." A largely attended funeral was held on Sunday 18th October 1896 and Henry Trimen was laid to rest at Mahaiyawa, not far from the grave of his predecessor Dr G H K Thwaites. With his untimely death Sri Lanka lost "One of its most distinguished, accomplished and useful public officers."[31]

His scientific work had received recognition earlier by his being elected a Fellow of the Linnean Society in 1866, and as a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1888.[32] Dr King of the Calcutta Botanic Gardens named a magnificient local banyan as *Ficus trimenii* to perpetuate his name.[33]

After he passed away glowing tributes were paid to him in many

important publications. Among them were the *Biographical Memoirs of the Royal Society, The Proceedings of the Linnean Society, Nature, Journal of Botany, Kew Bulletin* and the *Gardener's Chronicle* in the U.K., and the *Tropical Agriculturist* and *Ceylon Observer* in Sri Lanka. They reviewed his scientific work and acclaimed his personal qualities. One referred to "his modesty, his gentleness, his sympathy, his rightmindedness, his sweetness of disposition and readiness to help were as extensive as his botanical achievements".[34] His brother, Roland Trimen, who was by then also a Fellow of the Royal Society, said he had the happy gift of winning affection and respect of all those who had anything to do with him.[35] One who had worked under him in Sri Lanka said "I know nothing about Dr Trimen but what is good, and I never had a single angry word from him. He was an excellent chief and a good and true friend, and I always felt as though I could do anything for him." Similar tributes came from all sides.[36]

The personal qualities which Trimen had, sound almost like those which our ancient books say should be present in a leader of men - "A King". They refer to these as *Dasa Raja Dharma*, viz. *Dāna* - generosity; *Sīla* - righteousness; *Pariccāga* - Unselfishness; *Ajjava* - honesty; *Maddava* - gentility; *Tāpa* - simplicity; *Akkōdha* - self restraint; - *Avihimsā* -non-violence; *Khānthi* - patience; and *Avirōdha* - friendliness.

The Flora, volumes IV and V were completed by Sir Joseph Hooker and published in 1898,[38] and 1900.[39]

Trimen never considered the *"Flora"* as a final product. He invited comments on errors and omissions to improve it and had wanted to produce a shorter *Manual* especially for field use. Trimen ended his Introduction to the flora saying,

"I am well aware of the imperfections in the following pages. Many gaps remain to be filled up and doubtful points elucidated, to investigate which I have not had time or opportunity. Much remains to be done by others, and indeed it is only by the co-operation of many observers that anything like completeness in the account of a large tropical flora can be obtained. I hope that one result of this publication may be to, stimulate such observation and inquiry by those who have the opportunity to make them. These cannot fail to add numerous facts and correct many errors; and I may add that any help, however small of this kind, if communicated to me, will be gratefully received and utilised ."[40]

However, the sheer excellence of the work made officials feel that there was little or nothing more to be done on floristic studies in the island.

Except for a Supplementary Volume by Alston in 1931[41] and a *Revision of the Grasses* by Senaratna in 1956,[42] little or no work was done for many years. Orders for books and journals to the library on floristic studies were severely curtailed and it became impossible for anyone to do

any study locally on the subject. In 1959, after an year's study at the British Museum and Kew Gardens, an updated Check List was produced by Abeywickrama. [43]

About a decade later we were fortunate to get the kind assistance of Dr Raymond Fosberg to start a project for the complete revision of the *Flora.* Fosberg agreed to arrange the funding. The Project was sponsored jointly by the University of Ceylon, the Agriculture Department and the Smithsonian Institution. Specialists on various fields were comnissioned to work on various families. Early in 1973 we had enough material for a fascicule and that was published,[44] a second came a few years later[45] but then serious problems arose with printing, locally. Arrangements were then made to print it in India. When about half the work was completed the funds recevied from the Smithsonian Institution exhausted and Dr Fosberg requested me to get the Natural Resources, Energy and Science Authority to take over the completion. Now, with funding from the British Overseas Development Administration (ODA) it is being continued. The Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew has replaced the Smithsonian as a co-sponsor. Under Prof M D Dassanayaka's editorship eight volumes of *The Revised Flora* have been published.[46] It is expected that all revisions will be completed by the end of this year. Up to now about 60 scientists have been working on this revision. The publications will, hopefully be completed next years after Trimen passed away. That would be the greatest tribute we can pay to Dr Henry Tirmen. The greatest honour we can do him is to endeavour to emulate his noble qualities.

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Note : This paper is largely based on references 1,2,3 and 7 below. Unless any other reference is given events up to 1869 are from ref. 1, those from 1870 to 1879 are from ref. 2, and events from 1880 to 1896 are from refs. 3 and 7.

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SIR D B JAYATILAKA'S CONTRIBUTION TO SRI LANKAN STUDIES: A CRITICAL EVALUATION

by

A V Suraweera

Throughout the early period of British rule in Sri Lanka, English education remained the special concern of the Government, and was conducted by missionaries. From the point of view of the British, education through missionary schools was motivated not only by religious considerations but by political considerations as well. English educated native converts to Christianity were ensured of government employment. Occupying a privileged position in society, with an inclination towards Western life styles, they remained faithful to the administration, as a means for personal advancement.

On the other hand British civil servants and other administrative officials, and also some of the missionaries who came to this country took a genuine interest in our religious as well as other cultural treasures. With the assistance of learned Buddhist monks and lay scholars, the Europeans began to learn the native languages, mainly Sinhala and Pali and they compiled dictionaries, word books, lesson books etc. Subsequently they also translated Sinhala and Pali works into English. Turnour's translation of the Pali *Mahāvaṃsa* into English, published in 1837, may be mentioned as a major contribution and an eye opener to the Europeans about our history and culture. The translation of the *Sidat Sangarāwa* published in 1851 and its introduction, being a comprehensive survey of Sinhala Literature published in 1852 was another landmark.[1]

James de Alwis was inspired by two motives, namely (i) to encourage and inspire Europeans to study the language of the natives, and (ii) to awaken the spirit of inquiry in the minds of his countrymen.

> "To encourage therefore the study of Singhalese amongst at least the European portion of the inhabitants of Ceylon ....."[2] ".... if the investigations contained in the pages now presented to the public, be the means of awakening a spirit of inquiry in the minds of my countrymen - of inviting the attention of the settler in Ceylon to the language of the Singhalese, of prompting him to a critical study of, and a philosophic research into the native literature - and of giving him a stimulus to the study of a language, little understood, less cultivated, much neglected, and to a great extent slighted - the writer's chief aim will have been attained".[3]

The last few lines of this statement testify to the plight of the Sinhala language and literature about the middle of the 19th century. James de Alwis born into a privileged class among the Sinhalese, exposed to Western influences and a devoted Christian was an exception among that class, for he took an unusual interest in Sinhala language and literature. Nevertheless, it is interesting to note that he wrote this book mainly for the use of the Europeans, the administrators.

Sir D B Jayatilaka's mission had been completely different. His intention had been to create a cultural, historical and literary consciousness among the local literati mainly by making available to the reading public valuable Sinhala texts hitherto confined to palm leaves hidden in library shelves.

The nineteenth century also saw agitation for constitutional reforms firstly by the Englishmen themselves and subsequently by the English educated natives. It was in this background that we see the national and religious revivalist movements coming to the forefront. In 1839 the *Paramadhammacētiya Pirivena* was established at Ratmalana followed by the *Vidyōdaya Pirivena* (1873) and the *Vidyālankāra Pirivena* (1875). As a result of the interest generated in Buddhism and the study of oriental languages, there set in a growing regeneration of nationalism. With the availability of printing facilities not only to Christian missionaries but also to the Buddhist organizations as well, religious tracts, and books came to be published. The publication of certain Sinhala classical texts hitherto not available to the reading public, limited as it were, also contributed to the national reawakening. Moreover, the controversies that took place between Buddhists and Christians verbally and through journals and newspapers gave an impetus to the Buddhist revival . The famous *Pānadurā Vādaya* between protestant Christians and the Buddhists conducted in the midst of a large gathering was a landmark. This controversy had another far-reaching result; it led to the arrival of H S Olcott and the beginning of the Buddhist Theosophical movement .

The need to start Buddhist schools as against the Missionary schools was badly felt. The Pettah Buddhist School which later became Ananda College was started in 1886. Buddhist schools came to be opened in other towns as well. It was felt that a good knowledge of English had to be imparted to Buddhist children in order to counter the missionary activities and to obtain employment as well.

D B Jayntilaka was born into this background. He was born in 1868 at Warāgoda , Kelaniya, in the vicinity of Colombo at a time when there was a growing regeneration of national activity coupled with a revival of Buddhism. He would have been witnessing all this activity as a child. He attended the local Baptist school at Warāgoda and at the age of 12 was

admitted to Wesley College then situated in Pettah. He passed the Cambridge Junior Examination in 1890 and later Cambridge Senior. Jayatilaka's parents were devoted Buddhists and *Dāyakas* of the *Vidyālankāra Pirivena*. Thus from his village school days and while attending Wesley College, he went to the Vidyālankāra Pirivena for his oriental studies and religious instructions. Venerable Ratmalāne Dhammālōka, the founder of the *Pirivena*, was his Chief *Guru.*

Jayatilaka's association with the Vidyālankāra Pirivena and his studies of Buddhism, Sinhala, Pali and Sanskrit, even while he was studying at Wesley, certainly had a lasting impact on his future life. The way he spent his time in the prison cell in 1915 amply illustrates this point.

> "I had to spend 18 hours in the cell. I whiled away the time by reciting from memory endless verses which I had learnt in the Pirivena. So did D S Senanayake who sang carter's songs, miner's songs and other folk songs".[4]

Incidentally, it is worth our while to note that D B Jayatilaka had no formal education in Buddhism nor in oriental subjects like Sinhala, Pali and Sanskrit. What he had learnt under the feet of learned *Thēras* as a casual student at the Vidyālankāra Pirivena was sufficient to make him a great oriental scholar.

II

Henry Olcott was able to provide leadership to the Buddhist movement that was thriving at the time. Many influential members of the *Sangha* and laymen joined Olcott and The Buddhist Theosophical Society was founded. Young Jayatilaka soon came to be associated with the movement. When the Buddhist school in Kandy was started (later called Dharmaraja in 1890 he was made principal. This was a turning point in his life. The fact that he dedicated his future for the cause of Buddhist education shows his interests. Meanwhile, he was successful at the B A examination and joined Ananda College, Colombo to succeed A E Buultjens as its principal in 1890. Jayatilaka would have gained much from Buultjens who was a Cambridge scholar, historian and an orientalist.

Energetic, dedicated and untiring as he was, Jayatilaka devoted all the time at his disposal for educational, literary, religious and social activities. Apart from his responsibility of making Ananda the leading school in Colombo, he founded the Y M B A and was its president for many years. He started the journal *The Buddhist* which gave expression to the Buddhist point of view. That was a period of inter-religious controversies. He had to take responsibilities of the Buddhist Theosophical Society as its General Manager and later as Secretary as well. The scholarly

articles he contributed to *The Buddhist* and other English and Sinhala journals during that period were inspiring and educative. He was also invited to deliver lectures at various organisations.

Jayatilaka's marriage with the daughter of Devarakshita Batuvantudave, social worker and oriental pundit would have certainly given added momentum to his activities.

After nearly two decades of active service, Jayatilaka decided in 1910 to leave for England for further studies. On his way to England he attended the World Congress of Religions held in Berlin where he made an inspiring speech. He joined Oxford to do a degree in Law.

Until his return in 1913 with an LLB degree, he engaged himself in other activities as well, namely, temperance work, Buddhist activities in particular, in addition to making representations to the Colonial office in respect of local interests. While abroad, Jayatilaka was a regular contributor to the *Dinamina*. Under the title *Videsa Gaman Vistarayak* (An account of Foreign Travels) he wrote simple but thought-provoking and instructive articles on diverse subjects.

"එකද පෞරාණික උත්තමයෙකුගේ වත් ප්‍රතිබිම්බයක් තබා සිතුයම් රුවක්වත් දක්නට නොමැතියි. රුවන්වැලි සෑ මලුවෙහි තිබෙන එක්තරා ප්‍රතිමා රූපයක් දුටුගැමුණු මහරජතුමාගේ රූපයයි සමහරු සලකති. නමුත් මෙය වැරදි කල්පනාවකි. එය මෛත්‍රිය බෝධිසත්වයන්ගේ රූපයයි. ඊළඟම සතර බුදුවරයන්ගේ පිළිම තිබේ. මිහින්තලා දාගැබ් මලුවෙහි තිබෙන ප්‍රතිමාවක් භාතිය රජතුමාගේ රූපයයි පෙන්වති. මෙය කොතරම් දුරට පිළිගත හැකිදැයි නොදනිමි. පොළොන්නරුවේ තිබෙන ගල් පිළිමය පරාක්‍රමබාහු රූපයයි කියති. නමුත් එය කොයි පරාක්‍රමබාහු රජතුමාගේ දැයි නිශ්චය කළ නොහැකියි. මහනුවර පත්තිරිප්පුවේ එල්වා තිබෙන ශ්‍රී වික්‍රම රාජසිංහ රජතුමාගේ චිත්‍ර රූපය පමණක් සැකයක් නැතිව පිළිගත හැකියි.

පුරාණ සිංහලයෝ උතුමන්ගේ ප්‍රතිමා රූපාදිය නිර්මාණය නොකළෝ යයි නොසිතමි. නමුත් කලින් කල ඇති වූ සතුරු උවදුරුවලින් ඒ සියල්ලක්ම විනාශවී ගිය බැව් සිතිය යුතුයි. ඇතිවී තිබෙන තවත් පාඩුවක් නම් පෞරාණික උත්තමයන්ගේ චරිත ප්‍රකාශ වන පොත් පත් අප අතර දුර්ලභ වීමයි. මහාවංශාදී ඉතිහාස ග්‍රන්ථවලින් ලබාගතහැකි ශේෂ මාත්‍ර ප්‍රවෘත්තියක් විනා පෙර කාලයෙහි ඇති වූ ශ්‍රේෂඨ සිංහලයන් සම්බන්ධ විස්තර කථා ප්‍රවෘත්ති ලියවී නොමැතියි. අත්තනගලූ වංශයෙන් සිරිසඟබෝ රජතුමාගේ චරිතය බොහෝ දුරට දැනගත හැකියි. සරණංකර සංඝරාජ ස්වාමිපාදයන්ගේ චරිතයත් විස්තර වශයෙන් ලියවී තිබේ. මේ හැර චරිතාත්මක ග්‍රන්ථ අප අතර ඇති බවක් නොදනිමු. මෙය පිරිමැසිය නොහැකි බලවත් පාඩුවකි."

This extract from an article published in the *Dinamina* on September 23, 1910 speaks for its simplicity, and the author's scholarship and foresightedness.

During his stay in England he found time to make visits to the library of the British Museum and go through the printed texts and Palm-leaf manuscripts deposited in the shelves, searching for useful material hitherto unknown to any reader. He did the same thing during his subsequent visits to England.

Perhaps it may not be wrong to assume that it was the British Museum that inspired Jayatilaka to have so much attachment to classical Sinhala texts. The Pirivenas had equipped him with mastery in oriental languages, Wesley, the knowledge of English and Latin, and Oxford,the critical approach. The British Museum had provided him with most of the source material.

Presenting a paper to the YMBA in 1922 titled the 'Daily Routine of Parakramabahu', D B Jayatilaka wrote:

> "The subject matter of this paper is a Sinhalese booklet entitled *Kandavuru Sirita* two copies of which I found among the ola - manuscripts preserved in the British Museum Library... It is a matter for sincere satisfaction that these valuable manuscripts cannot hereafter be lost or disappearcd. At the same time one must feel some regret that they are removed so far from those who can make the best use of them. During my last visit to England I spent a good part of my leisure in examining these manuscripts. In the course of my examination I was fortunate enough to come across a few volumes of unique interest either exceedingly rare or unknown in Ceylon ..."[6]

D B Jayatilaka did not participate in active politics until the 1915 riots after which he was arrested and detained in prison along with D S Senanayake and W A de Silva. This was a turning point in his life. He was elected to the Legislative Council in 1924. Nevertheless his involvement in literary pursuits never vained. In fact he emerged as a writer and scholar after 1915. Apart from his major works, the editorials to *The Buddhist*, numerous articles he contributed to that journal and other English and Sinhala journals, lectures he delivered at the YMBA, the Royal Asiatic Society (CB) and other learned organizations, and his speeches in the Legislative Council - all these testify to his scholarship. If one were to consider the diversity of topics he wrote on, ranging from language and literature, history, culture, religion, education, social behaviour, temporalities to politics, it is perhaps not incorrect to conclude that no other scholar or writer would perhaps equal D B Jayatilaka.

III

My attempt here has been not to give a biographical sketch, but to provide some useful background information to discuss the contribution of

Sir D B Jayatilaka to Sri Lankan Studies. I emphasize the term *Sri Lankan Studies* because his work is not confined to language and literary studies alone. For convenience of discussion I would like to divide his work in relation to our subject into three broad sections :

A. Religious, historical and cultural studies.

B. Studies in Sinhalese language and literature: i.e.

(a) Introductions to classical text editions,

(b) Editions of texts.

C. Lexicographical work.

However, it mast be pointed out that lifelong contribution of a scholar cannot be considercd in water-tight compartments.

A. Religious, historical and cultural studies

As mentioned earlier, Sir D B has contributed hundreds of articles to the newspapers and journals both popular and academic in Sinhala and English and delivered lectures at scholarly assemblies. We are able to discuss only a few of them.

The lecture delivered before the YMBA, titled 'Christian methods of conversion', published in *The Buddhist,* May 1899, may be mentioned as one of his initial pieces of research. A fairly comprehensive account of the missionary activities of the Portuguese and the Dutch, also covering the early British period, is given. It has to be noted that the writer had adopted a very impartial attitude, worthy of a scholar. The following are some of his articles selected at random.

(1) The Daily Routine of Parākramabāhu II [7]

The author has based his material on a palm-leaf mnuscript titled *Kandavuru Sirita* which he had discovered at the British Museum. The Sinhala translation has been published in *Svadēsa Mitrayā*, March 11, 1939. The full text of *Kandavuru Sirita* was also published later.

(2) A Royal Pilgrimage to the Sripāda [8]

A full account of the history of *Srīpāda* is given as a background to the pilgrimage under discussion, namely that of Vimaladharma II. This pilgrimage has been briefly mentioned in the *Cūlavaṃsa*, but this article gives a full account as found in an unpublished palm-leaf manuscript.

(3) Saranankara, thc last Sangha-rāja of Ceylon[9]

This is an exhaustive account of the life and times of Saranankara divided into seven sections namely (i) Introduction (ii) Birth and Education, (iii) First Reforming Efforts, (iv) First Embassy to Siam, (v) The Second and Third Embassies to Siam, (vi) Sangharāja (vii) The End.

There is also an Appendix titled 'A note on the Levuke Family', which says that there had been three chiefs bearing the same name who lived in the 18th century. (a) Levuke *Rālahāmi*, a state prisoner at the time from whom Saranankara learnt the rudiments of Pali Grammar (b) Levuke *Disāva*, also known as *Maha Rālahāmi*, son of (a), and (c) Lcvuke *Disāva*, son of (b) who was commander of Sri Vikrama Rājasinha's army that attacked Hanvella in 1803.

(4) Sinhalese Embassies to Arakan[10]

Here again Sir D B bases his information on a palm-leaf manuscript that he had discovered locally. This article gives an account of two embassies sent by Vimaladharma II in Dutch vessels. A brief history of the Kandyan kingdom from Vimlaladharmasuriya I is given as background information. P E E Fernando, in his article on the same subject titled 'The Rakkhanga Sannas Curnikava and the date of the arrval of Arakaneese Monks in Ceylon' refers to the contribution of Jayatilaka as follows:

> "A more detailed account of this mission together with a brief account of the subsequent mission that ultimately accompained the monks from Arakan to Ceylon had been found by D B Jayatilaka who published a summary of this account some years ago, leaving the task of editing the document with notes and explanations to a later occasion. Judging from this summary already published, this document would have been of great interest to those engaged in studying the cultural and social history of the kingdom of Kandy, if it had been published in its entirety.[11]

(5) The History of the Sangha in Ceylon [12]

This is a lengthy essay serialized in *The Buddhist* from October 1, 1921 to November 18, 1922 in 57 parts. When put together, it turns out to be a large volume running into about 150 printed pages. The series ends abruptly with Parākramabāhu the Great. That the writer had intended to continue the history is evident from the notation 'to be continued'. Perhaps other engagements had prevented him from completing the series. The history is divided into 12 sections with such titles as 'Introductory', 'Pre-Buddhist Ceylon', 'The founding of the Sangha and its early history', 'Mahinda's Mission', 'Gamini, the National Hero', 'Buddhaghosa , the Commentator', 'Tamil Invasions and the Decline of Anuradhapura', 'The

restoration of the National Independence'. The author has taken much of the material from the *Mahāvaṃsa* but also made use of other sources and certain unpublished palm-leaf manuscripts. It is interesting to note that the writer had employed a well balanced critical approach without being sentimental, not inclining to be extra faithful to the Chronicle nor to discard them as fables as some others have done. For instance he does not want to rely on the *Mahāvaṃsa* which records that Vijaya landed in Tambapanni on the day of the *Parinibbāna.*

> "We now come to another important question: where was the original home of Vijaya and his followers? On this point available evidence is meagre. We have, of course, the ancient tradition, preserved in the Chronicles which in their turn derived their mterial from the *Sīhalaṭṭha kathā.* According to this tradition Vijaya's great-grandfather was the king of Vanga (Eastern Bengal). His consort was a Kalinga princess. Their daughter ran away from home and joined "a caravan travelling to the Magadha Country". On the way the caravan was attacked in the forest of Lāla by a wild robber, named (perhaps on account of his prowess and ferocity) Sīha, the Lion, who carried away the princess. From that union there were born two children, Sinhabahu and Sivali, the father and mother of Vijaya. It is not difficult to conceive how out of the love adventures of this royal maiden the moulders of the tradition wove the romance in which, true to the spirit of the times which took delight in the marvellous and the impossible, make a real lion play the part of the hero. Sinhabahu slays his father and is thereafter known as Sinhala-the slayer of Sinha. The title descends to his sons and grandsons and in time it becomes the national designation for the descendants of Vijaya's followers in their Island-home." [13]

As far as the writer was concerned the Lion (Sinha) was "A wild Robber named (perhaps on account of his prowess and ferocity) Sīha, the lion who carried away the princess".

Again the Chapter titled 'Gamini, the National Hero'. the author's presentation has been impartial. He has highlighted the fact that Duṭugämuṇu's mission was a war of liberation', "to expel the invader".

To make a general observation about the whole series, D B Jayatilaka had intended to write a comprehensive history of the country, including its political history although the title was 'The History of the Sangha in Ceylon'. Unfortunately he had not been able to complete the history. If this series of essays were to be published, it would be an unbiased history quite useful to present readers.

(6) බ්‍රිතාන්‍ය කෞතුකාගාරයෙන් සොයා ගත් සිංහල ලේඛනයක්[14]

(A document discovered at the British Museum)

This is a palm-leaf manuscript belonging to the Hugh Nevill Collection, which is a copy of an inscription. The original inscription does not seem to be available. The text is given in full. It is an important document giving useful information about the founding of the city of Sri Jayavardhanapura Kotte by Alagakkōnāra. Among other details it mentions that Alagakkōnāra belonged to the *Vanci Vaṃsa* also called *Vaisyavaṃsika* of *Kērala Desa*. This docament had recorded the year in which it had been set up as follows:

"ශ්‍රී ගෞතමබුරුපාබ්දෙ ශකවර්ෂයෙන් එකවාදහස් දෙසිය අනු පස් අවුරුද්දක්...

ශ්‍රී ගෞතම සුගතරාජ වර්ෂයෙන් එකවාදහස් නවසිය සොළොස් අවුරුද්දක් වූ කල්හි...

කලියුග වර්ෂයෙන් සාරදහස් සාරසිය සැත්තෑසතර අවුරුද්දක් පැමිණි තැන..."

Jayatilaka has pointed out that, this was the only document which recorded an event simultaneously in *Buddha Varsa, Kaliyuga Varsa* and *Sakarāja Varsa.*

Among his other contributions worthy of attention may be mentioned two essays titled *'Pandita Parākramabāhu Maharajāno'* and *'Mānāvuḷu Sandesya'*[16] and also a paper read before the Sahitya Festival held at Vīdāgama titled *'Vīdāgama Maitreya Mahāsthavira'*[17] The essay on Pandita Parākramabāhu (Parākramabhu II of Dambadeniya) is an exhaustive study of the political and cultural history of Sri Lanka from Parākramabāhu I to the end of Parākramabāhu II. It also includes another section called, *Kandavuru Siritc* being an acccount of the daily routine of Parākramabāhu II. Jayatilaka had discovered this rare and valuable document which had been hidden among the palm-leaves at the British Museum.

B. Sinhala Language and Literature

Sir D B is better known as a scholar in classical Sinhala language and literature because it is in this area that he has outshone all his predecessors and contemporaries. He had the courage and ingenuity to explore areas where many others feared to tread. Hence he was able to make an outstanding contribution.

The following extract from the *Preface* to the first edition of the Sinhalese Dictionary written in 1934 explains the background of which he was led to undertake editing these texts:

"It is a well-known fact that the Sinhalese texts now in print, with a few exceptions handled by really able scholars, are in a state of hopeless corruption. Many of the classical works of first rate importance have been most carelessly edited, so much so that it was found impossible to proceed with our work without first bringing out standard critical editions of at least a few of the most important of these books. I was therefore obliged to undertake the revision and publication of three extensive works, namely, (1) Dhampiyā - Aṭuvā - Gāṭapadaya . (2) Saddharma-Ratanāvaliya, and (5) Pansiyapanas-Jātaka- Pota, which belong respectively to the 10th, 13th and 14th centuries".[18]

I would like to discuss Sir D B 's contribution to the study of language and classical Sinhala literature under two sections:

(a) Introductions to Classical Text Editions,

(b) Editions of Texts.

The Sinhala Classical Texts edited by Sir D B are as follows:

(1) සිඛවළඳ හා සිඛවළඳ විනිස - 1924
(Sikhavaḷanda hā Sikhavaḷanda Vinisa)

(2) සද්ධම්රත්නාවලිය : (ප්‍රථම භාගය) - 1928
(Saddharmaratnāvaliya)

(3) බුදුගුණ අලංකාරය - 1928
(Buduguṇa Alankāraya)

(4) පන්සියපනස් ජාතක පොත (ප්‍රථම භාගය) - 1932
(Pansiyapanas Jātaka Pota)

(5) ධම්පියා අටුවා ගැටපදය - 1933
(Dhampiyā Aṭuvā Gāṭapadaya)

(6) තිසර සන්දේශය (1985)
(Tisara Sandēsaya)

(7) ජාතක අටුවා ගැටපදය - 1943
(Jātaka Aṭuvā Gāṭapadaya)

To this list has to be added the කතිකාවත් සඟරාව *(Katikāvat Sangarāva)* published in 1922 being a collection of all the Codes of Discipline for the Sangha formulated from time to time. This work, with its introduction is a worthwhile contribution to the study of Buddhsm and Sri Lankan Culture.

(a) Introductions to Classical Text Editions

The title used in all the introductions to the texts edited by him was *prastāvanā* or *prastāvanāva*. the general arrangement of the contents seems to be as follows although subtitles have not been given :

(i) Historical background and authorship of the text,

(ii) Word formations, peculiarities of language etc.,

(iii) Usefulnesss of the text,

(iv) Description of the manuscripts used.

What prompted Jayatilaka to labour in bringing out scholarly editions of these classical texts was pointed out earlier. As chief editor of the Sinhalese Dictionary, obviously, he could not perform his task without reliable texts. Moreover, he had realized the need to make available to the Sinhala scholar and reader the valuable texts so far preserved in palm-leaves available in temple libraries and museums. It was with this aim that he wote lengthy introductions, and wherever possible, added explanatory notes by way of *Granthipada Vivarana.*

Even in the introductions, the author had not failed to discuss the historical background of the texts. His identification of the author of *Dhampiyā Aṭuvā Gāṭapadaya* as Kāsyapa V has not been disputed. Coming over a to *Tisara Sandēsaya,* in his introduction published 1935, Jayatilaka had come to the conclusion that it was composed during the reign of Parakramabahu V of Dätigampura as against the theory held by Munidasa Kumaratunga, that it belonged to a reign of an unknown ruler by the name of Parakramabahu who lived after Parākramabāhu V and before Parākramabāhu VI[19]. Jayatilaka's identification has gained acceptance by most scholars.

In the introduction to the *Sikhavaḷanda hā Sikhavaḷanda Vinisa* which was his first work edited in 1924, apart from discussing the work as a code of discilpline for the *Bhikkhus*, he has devoted much space for a study of its language. He has argued convincingly that its language was even somewhat older than that of the *Dhampiyā Aṭuvā Gāṭapadaya* though it belonged to the same period.

It is well known that his favourite text was the *Dhampiyā Aṭuvā Gāṭapadaya.* Apart from a lengthy discussion regarding its author, he has dwelt on his pet subject, namely its language. The discussion on the language of thc text is very comprehensive. He has rightly pointed out that this work contained a variety of language forms, old forms side by side with those of the contemporary period. The intermediate form *hät*, modern *ät* derived from Pali *hatthi* was preserved. First person singular *ava* and

av, plural *äp*, second pronoun masculine forms *tup, tupa, tupaṭa* and feminine *tip* have received his attention. Again about the first person feminine forms like *jenuyum, nätiyum, ukäṭiyum*, etc. recorded, Jayatilaka had pointed out that such froms were peculiar to only the *Dhampiyā Aṭuvā Gäṭapadaya* and not recorded in any other text or lithic record. Also with regard to the - *ha* ending genetive forms (Pali - *ssa*) like *tumaha* etc. he has rightly pointed out that such forms were in vogue in old inscriptions but not during the 10th century. In all the introductions to his texts Jayatilaka was preoccupied with the discussion of the linguistic, historical and social aspects and less attention was paid to the literary aspect even when he was dealing with works like *Saddharmaratnāvaliya* and *Tisara Sandēsa.* This was perhaps due to the fact that he was nurtured in the *pirivena* tradition which he much valued.

(b) Critical Editions of Texts

In my lecture before the Royal Asiatic Society and published in its Journal[20] I divided the Sinhala Texts edited so far into 4 categories:

(a) Texts based on oral tradition,

(b) Texts based on a single manuscript,

(c) Texts based on more than one manuscript, recording selected variant readings without identifying the mss.,

(d) Texts based on mss. with all variant readings recorded and mss. identified.

It is now accepted that the standard methodology adopted is the last of the above categories. D B Jayatilaka's editions belong to the third group implying that he falls short of a standard text editor in the modern sense. It is interesting to note that he has aptly used the word *Sansōdhanaya* and not *sanskaraṇaya,* the equivalent for the term 'Critical Edition'. In spite of his not recording all the variant readings, due credit must be given as a faithful editor not prepared to take undue liberty to make interpolations and revise the text as was done by certain other scholars, implying that he was well aware of the responsibilities of a text editor.

The following observation made about D B Jayatilaka's edition of the *Saddharmaratnāvaliya* by the editors of the same text published by the *Sri Lankā Prācīna Bhāshōpakāra Samāgama* in 1985 holds good of all Jayatilaka editions:

"මුද්‍රිත සංස්කරණ අතුරින් සර් ඩී.බී.ජයතිලක සංස්කරණ ප්‍රාමාණිකත්වය හා විශ්වාසදායකත්වය අතින් අන් සංස්කරණවලට වඩා බෙහෙවින් සතුටුදායක බව පැහැදිලිය. ශාස්ත්‍රීය විධිනියමයන් අනුව පුස්කොළ පිටපත්වලට මුල්තැන දී සංස්කාරකවරයාගේ සිතැඟි අනුව පාඨ වෙනස් නොකොට පෙළ

තෝරාගැනීම මෙහි දක්නට ලැබේ. වැදගත් සේ හැඟෙන පාඨාන්තර අධෝ ලිපි මගින් දක්වා ඇත. එසේද වුවත් පාඨාන්තර අන්තර්ගත පුස්කොළ පිටපත් දක්වා නොතිබීම, අවශ්‍ය හැම තැනකම අධෝ ලිපි මගින් පාඨාන්තර නොදැක්වීම වැනි අඩුපාඩුකම් මෙහි ද දක්නට ලැබේ. එමෙන්ම තවදුරටත් විමසිය යුතු තැන් ද ඇත."[21]

Let me take his major work *Dhampiyā Aṭuvā Gāṭapadaya* published in 1933 . The introduction has recorded that a part of the work containing 129 pages was published in 1929, but that he could not complete the work due to other engagements. What is available today is the 1933 edition. It also speaks of an incomplete edition of this text prepared by Rev. Dodampahala Sumangala. The date of publication of that work is not given but from a different source[22] it is possible to assume that it was printed in 1891. D B has made use of 8 mss. collected from different parts of the country. He has carefully examined the genealogy of the mss. as expected of a knowledgeable editor and has concluded that a single ms. belonged to one tradition while all the remaining 7 belonged to another. Reasons for coming to this conclusion have been given convincingly.

Considering the peculiarities of language employed, belonging to different periods of evolution, the currupt state of the mss. available and also the complexities involved in selecting the appropriate word or phrase, it would be an unachievable task to bring out a perfect text even closer to the original. In this context we have to appreciate the fact that Jayatilaka had undertaken this impossible task fully aware of the responsibility of a good editor.

However, Jayatilaka's edition of the *Dhampiyā Aṭuvā Gāṭapadaya* is not devoid of errors. Its deficiencies will be evident when one examines the edition of D E Hettiaratchi published fortyone years later in 1974. Writing a review of Prof. Hettiaratchi's edition, P B Meegaskumbura says:

> ".....Athough the J. edition was a remarkable achievement at the time it appeared, it is full of errors apart from the 286 instances the editor himself includes in the *erratum*. These involve improper reconstruction, wrong word division, errors of orthography and those of interpretation. Its salient feature is the closeness to the mss. and comparative absence of whimsical restorations."[23]

These remarks appear to be rather scathing. Nevertheless, it has to be noted that since it was a pioneering effort, Jayatilaka's achievement was certainly remarkable. Hettiaratchi undoubtedly had improved on the text prepared by Jayatilaka and at times adopted the same reading with due acknowledgement to his *Guru*.

The following examples speak for Jayatilaka's ingenuity:

(a) Hettiaratchi accepting the same reading adopted by Jayatilaka as against different recordings in many other mss.

(i) *Lumubav -yaṭatbav sēy*

Variant readings : *lamuvav yatatbav* - y;

mukhaviyaṭabav - N; *mukhaviyaṭatbav - P.D*;

mukhaviyavatbav - J[24]

(ii) *haṭavanuvat*

Variant readings : *haravanuvav - P.J.D*; *harahanuvau* -N[25]

(iii) *gorok koṭa*

Variant readings: *korok - P.J.D.N.*[26]

(iv) *budukäli*

Variant readings: *budukäṭi* - J; *budukämi - P.D.N*[27]

(b)Hettiaratchi accepting the same form as corrected by Jayatilaka without regard to ms. recordings.

(i) Correction : *ayuyehi*

Mss. recordings: *äsuyehi -P.J.D.N.Y*[28]

(ii) Correction: *ehi pāṭa*

Mss. recordings: *ehi pāvā - P.J.D.H.Y* [29]

(iii) Correction : *piḷiseva*

Mss. recordings: *piḷirevā - P.J.D.N; piḷareva* - Y[30]

Jayatilaka has very humbly accepted the fact that it would be an impossible task to bring out a perfect edition of such a work as the *Dhampiyā Aṭuvā Gäṭapadaya* which had been out of reach for centuries.

"ශතවෂී ගණනක් මුළුල්ලෙහි නෂ්ටප්‍රායව පැවතුණු මෙවැනි ග්‍රන්ථයක් එකවරම ශුඩකොට යථාස්ථානයට පැමිණවීම අතිශයින්ම දුෂ්කර කටයුත්තක් බැව් කවුරුත් දනිති."[31]

It was left for Hettiaratchi to improve on it, which task he had performed four decades later. The deficiencies of the Jayatilaka text and the improvements made on it have been dealt with in detail by Hettiaratchi, in his introduction, and in the Review by Meegaskumbura. One such textual error seems to be Jayatilaka's partiality to certain particular types of linguistic forms even when the mss. have diffarent forms. For example the past partlciple ending in - y in *karay, balay, heḷay* etc. Deficiencies apart, the fact that Sir D B Jayatilaka was able to reconstruct the oldest

Sinhala work available compiled in the 10th century which was in " a state of curruption" in his own words, was a remrkable achievement.

Jātaka Aṭuvā Gāṭapadaya was the other text belonging to this category edited by Jayatilaka.

In the article titled 'The Sinhalese Etymological Dictionary', published in the *Indian Historical Quarterly* (1929) Jayatilaka observed:

> " A great obstacle to the progress of this part of our work has been the lack of standard critical editions of some of the most important classical works. I have been obliged therefore to undertake the revision of two books of first rate importance. One of these the *Dhampiyā Aṭuvā Gāṭapadaya* .... The other is the *Saddharmaratnāvaliya*, an extensive work belonging to the thirteenth century. It is a veritable mine of words relating to almost all aspects of life and of idiomatic phrases and proverbial sayings that cannot be found in any other Sinhalese book .... I hope to complete the publication of both these texts in the course of next year, It is my intention, if circumstances permit, to bring out uniform editions of similar important classical works."[32]

Unfortunately, circumstances had permitted him to fulfil this task only partially.

C. Lexicographical work

Under this category, we have to discuss Sir D B's contribution to Sri Lankan studies as the first Editor-in- Chief of two Dictionaries, namely the Sinhala - English Dictionary and the Sinhala - Sinhala Dictionary.

I do not propose to go into the background of this project but it is on record that the need for the compilation of a 'Sinhala Dictionary on Scientific lines' was felt and proposals were made as far back as the eighteen eighties. However, no substantial progress had been made until the RAS(CB) appointed a committee in 1923 to make recommendations. The committee consisted of 5 members, including D B Jayatilaka. Upon the recommendations of this committee, a Board of Editors was appointed in 1925 with D B as Editor-in-Chief. It had taken some time for the preliminary organization work and the Office of the Dictionary was opened in March 1927.[32]

According to an interview given by D B Jayatilaka published in the paper *Svadēsa Mitrayā* on 2nd January 1927, two projects had been planned, namely, A Sinhala - English Dictionary and A Sinhala - Sinhala Dictionary, It had been the intention to give the etymology, derivation,

different meanings, and occurences in respect of each word. Machinery had been set up to collect words and phrases from literary sources and also "words used in common speech or in connection with various arts, crafts, games ceremonies, customs, manners, popular beliefs etc. which have not found their way into literature in addition to words occuring in Christian literature".[34]

Thus, we see that the Editorial Board led by the Chief Editor had launched this project with correct imagination and foresightedness.

It is of interest to record that in that interview to *Svadēsa Mitrayā* referred to above D B was asked as to how long would he take to complete the work?. 'Six years' was his reply.

"ඉතින් ඔය වැඩේ සම්පූර්ණ කිරීමට කොපමණ කාලයක් ගතවේද ?

"අපේ උත්සාහය අවුරුදු හයකින් නිම කිරීමටයි. මදුරාසියේ දවිඩ අකාරාදිය දහනුන් අවුරුද්දක් ඇවැමෙනුත් තවම නිම කරගන්ට බැරිවී තිබේ. ඔක්ස්ෆර්ඩ් ඩික්ෂනරි නම් ඉංග්‍රීසි මහා අකාරාදිය තැනීමට තිස් අවුරුද්දක් ගත වුණා... ඒ ඒ භාෂාවල විශාලකම් අනුවයි වියදමත් කාලයත් යන්නේ. සිංහල භාෂාව ඉංග්‍රීසි දවිඩ යන භාෂා මෙන් විශාල නුවූවත් සම්පාදනය කරනු ලබන්නේ ශබ්දකෝෂ එකක් නොව දෙකක් බැවින් එක අතකට ඔය ගණන් බලා තිබෙන කාලයත් මුදලත් ඇතැයි කියා හිතන්නවත් අමාරු තරමයි. "[35]

We do not know if D B had been over ambitious or his successors had been too lethargic. However, according to a progress report, also published in *Svadēsa Mitrayā,*[36] signed by D B Jayatilaka, collecting words from 42 books had been completed while work on 22 other books were in progress. This is ample proof of his dedication and untiring effort.

Regular progress reports were published in the Royal Asiatic Society (C B) journals.[37] By a letter dated 21st April 1931, Sir D B had expressed his desire to vacate the post of Editor-in-Chief in view of the forthcoming elections of the State Council offering to serve in an honorary capacity.[38] While Dictionary work was in progress, D B had attended two international conferences. One was the 4th All-India Oriental Conference held in Alahabad, 1927.[39] The other was the 17th International Conference of Orientalists held at Oxford in 1928, where he read a paper on the Sinhalese Dictionary.[40] It is of interest to note that the title of the paper was 'The Sinhalese Etymological Dictionary'. The history of this venture, plan, progress etc. has been discussed.

"As regard the plan of the Dictionary, our aim is to give as far as possible an adequate account of the meaning, origin and history of Sinhalese words, old and new, found either in inscriptions or in books or in common speech. It is also proposed to give wherever possible words

occuring in the kindred languages of India".[41]

It was after what transpired at this conference that the Managing Committee decided to invite Professor Wilhelm Geiger of Munich to serve as the Director of the Managing Committee.

Geiger arrived in 1931. The first part of the Sinhalese - English Dictionary consisting of 100 pages was published in 1935. The historic work had been named *'A Dictionary of the Sinhalese Language'*, and not as *'The Sinhalese Etymological Dictionary'*, dropping the word *'Etymological'* in spite of the fact that all progress reports and other documents refer to this project as *'The Sinhalese Etymological Dictionary'*.[42]

Going back to *A Dictionary of the Sinhalese Languages,* special mention must be made of the essay titled 'Sinhalese Language and Literature' in three sections running to 20 pages written jointly by Geiger and Jayatilaka. Section one deals with the origin of the Sinhala Language and its place among the Indian Languages. Section two deals with the evolution and development of Sinhalese. Its history had been divided into four periods; namely Sinhalese Prakrit, Proto-Sinhalese, Mediaeval Sinhalese and Modern Sinhalese. Section three of this essay is a comprehensive, though brief, account of the entire history of Sinhala Literature. It is of interest to note that the authors have treated the history of language and that of literarure quite separately with good reasons of their own. For instance, in their study of language. the period from the middle of the 15th century had bean called *'Modern Sinhalese'* while the "Modern Period" of literature was from the beginning of the 19th century leaving room for confusion to a student of literature. However, to the credit of the writers, it must be said that the same divisions are followed up to date separately by language scholars on the one hand and by those of literature on the other.

Six parts of the *Sinhalese-English Dictionary* had been published up to 1941 during Sir D B 's tenure of office as Editor-in-Chief. The two dictionaries are not identical. In other words the *Sinhala-Sinhala Dictionary* is not a direct translation of the Sinhala-English text. This is understandable, for the Sinhala-English work would have been intended for English readers. It is not fair to expect perfection in these works. Even the revised edition started publishing in 1977 was not devoid of faults. further revision is being prepared at present.

One other problem that the editors of the Dictionary faced, was the confusion with regard to orthography, i.e. spelling, particularly with regard to the use of dental and cerebral *n* and *l*. One of the editors, Julius

de Lanerolle, after a thorough study had submitted the principles that were accepted and adopted in the Dictionary.[43] Lanerolle, in a prefatory note to his essay had stated that the study was made at the request of Sir D B in view of the compilation of the Sinhalese Dictionary. He has paid a glowing tribute to Sir D B in the prefatory note thus: "The publication of this essay in its present form is also due mainly to Sir D B Jayatilaka to whom I cannot be too thankful for numerous facilities he has provided for my studies, besides ungrudgingly giving me the benefit of his unrivalled knowledge of old Sinhalese Literature".

Sir D B was satisfied with the findings of Lanerolle and the principles put forward were adopted in the Dictionary. With regard to the spelling of the word *Sinhala*, Lanerolle had come to the conclusion that it should be spelt with cerebral *ḷ* relying on some epigraphical records. However, it has to be pointed out that the use of cerebral *ḷ* in the word *Sinhala* has caused much confusion. Sir D B and Lanerolle both have spelt *Sinhala* with a cerebral *ḷ* in the word in all their writings. The very title of the Dictionary was සිංහල ශබ්දකෝෂය which spelling had been changed in the revised second edition by subsequent scholars. With due respect to Sir D B 's scholarship, it must be said that he should not have come to that hasty conclusion to alter the spelling of Sinhala deviating from other respected scholars as Abraham Mendis Gunasekara, W F Gunawardana. Ratmalāne Dharmālōka, Hikkaduwe Sumangala and Madugalle Siddhārtha.

However, the fact that Sir D B had gained recognition as a scholar as far back as the beginning of this century is evident from the numerous references made by no less a person than D M de Z Wickremasinghe. In his three volumes of the Epigraphia Zeylanica, Dr Wickremasinghe had acknowledged his indebtedness to D B Jayatilaka in editing certain lithic records.[41]

I must confess that I have been able to discuss the contribution of our great Scholar only partially. I have taken just a handful of water from the *Mahāsāgara, 'mahasayuren diya dōtak'* as the traditional saying goes.

Sir D B Jayatilaka's contribution is characterized with diversity and erudition. He was the undisputed authority in many areas of Sri Lankan Studies. I have not even touched on his speeches in the State Assembly, which have to be studied separately. These speeches would testify not only to his statesmanship but to his scholarship as well.

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'SIELEDIVA ' IN TOPOGRAPHIA CHRISTIANA

by

Rev. Fr. X N F Kurukulasuriya

Introduction:

Much has been written about the Greco - Roman contacts with Sri Lanka. In written history the contacts go back to Alexander the Great. He established the kingdom of Bactria extending up to river Indus. Similarly, the Hellenisation process which started from Alexandria in Egypt went up to the to river Indus. Alexander's followers, though from Macedonia, were known as IONIANS.

Latin author Pliny the Elder stands out among the early western writers. In his book *Historia Naturalis* he speaks of Taprobane which is identified as Sri Lanka. He also speaks of earlier Greek authors mentioning Taprobane.

Cosmas Indicopleustes is an Alexandrian monk from Egypt of the 6th century AD. Being a Christian monk, he sees spread of Christianity through-out the world.

Cosmas being a Nestorian monk, his informations are about Nestorian Christian settlements. Our discussion is not on the cosmic theology of Cosmas nor on the spread of Nestorian Christianity.

Topographia Christiana is the first Greek document to identify Taprobane as 'SIELEDIVA'. The author is said to be Cosmas, is it a pen-name? Indicopleustes means the Indian voyager. Did the author travel to India? These questions have been examined by earlier authors casting doubt on the reliability of the documents.

By examining, the manusucript *Topographia Christiana* now in the Vatican library, our position is that the internal evidence proves that the content on Taprobane is reliable and that Taprobane indentified as 'SIELEDIVA' is now Sri Lanka. The Vatican MS. belongs to the 9th century but could be traced to the 6th century AD.

The Sources

The work *TOPOGRAPHIA CHRISTIANA* is a transcript in three manuscripts: Vaticanus Graecus 699 (V), Sinaiticus Graecus 1186 (S), Laurentianus Plut.IX.28 (L).

I. *Vaticanus Graecus* 699 (V)[1]

It is a manuscript in Onciale made in Constantinople belonging to the IXth century. It consists of 123 leaves, written in double columns. Each column generally contains 32 lines, other than those that contain miniatures. The manuscript contains many grammatical inexactitudes confirming what Cosmas himself has said that he lacked formal education.[2]

II. *Sinaiticus Graecus* 1186 (S)

It is a manuscript from the convent of Saint Catherine on Mount Sinai. It contains small characters belonging to the XIth century. It seems to have been written in Cappadocia.[3] The manuscript contains 209 leaves of 30 lines.

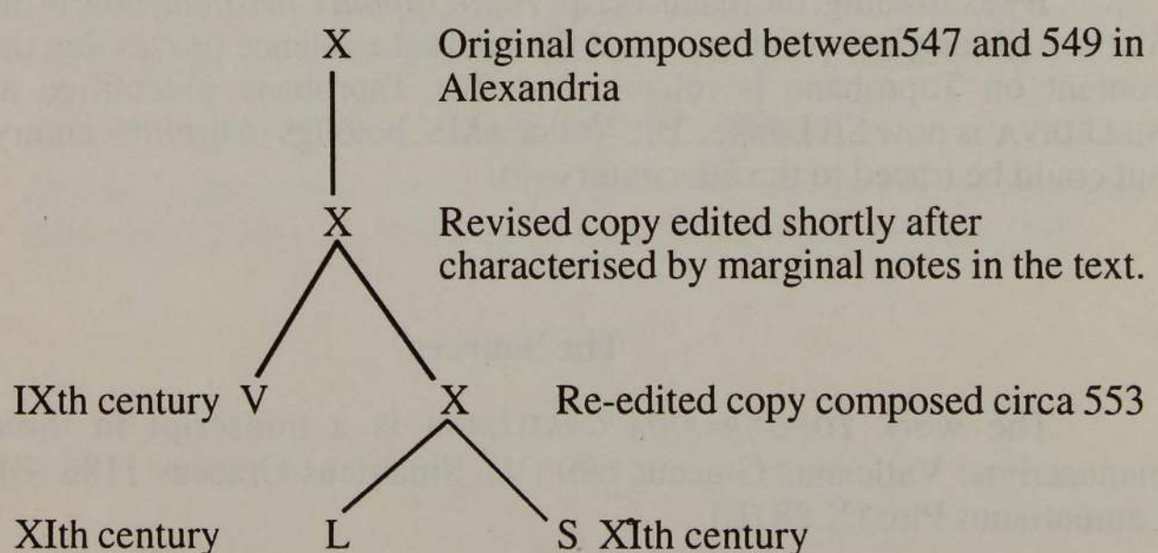
III. Laurentianus Plut. IX. 28[4]

It is a manuscript belonging to the XIth century, probably to the convent of Iviron on Mount Athos . It contains 279 leaves of 22 1ines. This seems to be the work of an educated author because it contains many corrections while it was being transcibed .

Given the fact that these three manuscripts have heen copied and re-edited from the original, it is difficult to give priority to one of them as being the exact copy of the original and they seem to follow rather a copy edited shortly after. Studying the contents of the work, together with those that have been consciously re-edited, they seem to modify the spirit of the work itself. These manuscripts could be said to belong to two families.

i. *Vaticanus* = V, edited in the IXth. century.

ii. *Laurentianus* = L, and Sinaiticus = S, take their source from an XIth century copy and could be tabulated as follows:[5]



The re-edited copy composed around 553 is contemporaneous with the great Christological disputes as seen by the adoption of the Hebrew text instead of the Septuagint, for the list of the Prophets and by an addition at the end of the Book X and of the Books XI and XII. The Books X1, XII are absent from V. The Book XI seems to be from the Geographical work of Cosmas, while it is difficult to determine the definite character of Book XII.

The Title: *"Topographia Christiana"*

Only the L gives the title of the work as *Topographia Christiana* and continues with a prayer in the Prologue and then adds a second Prologue but lacks "The Table of Contents". The V. begins abruptly with " The Table of Contents". The S. begins with the Prologue followed by "The Table of Contents" and the exposition of the subject.

Both the title *"TOPOGRAPHIA CHRISTIANA"* and the name of the author,"COSMAS" seems to be of a later addition in the XIth and XIIth centuries, for in the original the anonymous title "CHRISTIAN" had been kept. To quote the Byzantine writer Photius, the Patriarch of Constantinople of the ninth century " Read the book entitled, BOOK OF A CHRISTIAN.....". He dedicates six of his books to a certain Pamphilius and of the six others, for there are twelve in all, he dedicates the seventh to Anastasius in which he treats about the indestructability of the heavens, The eighth deals with the Canticle of Ezechias and the setting of the sun. Four others have not been dedicated to any special person"[6]

Cosmas Indicopleustes

The earliest authority to speak about the *"Topographia Christiana"* is the ninth century writer Photius. He speaks of the the authorship under the anonymous title of the Book of a CHRISTIAN. It is only the Laurentian manuscript that contains the name COSMAS. Why the author of *"Topographia Christiana"* wished to remain anonymous is not certain. Some critics are of the opinion that the name COSMAS is in itself a pen-name and to support their theory they quote on John who wrote "*Climax*" being given the name Climacus. Since the work "*Topographia Christiana*" deal with the cosmos, the author seems to have derived the name COSMAS. This need not be true, since Cosmas had been common in Egypt, the writer's native land.[7] As the name of Cosmas has been traditionally identified with "*The Topographia Christiana*" in this present work, the same name would continue to be used.

As for the biography of Cosmas, one is entirely dependant on the details given by the author himself in his book. Cosmas comes from the great town of Alexandria in Egypt.[8] The Laurentian manuscript entitles him as a monk but the book itself does not mention anything about him being a monk. It is probable that he was a monk, seeing his mentality towards secular life, as of his friend Menas, a merchant and a fellow

traveller who became a monk at Raithu, may have left a precedent. One thing is clear that he is an uncompromising orthodox Christian. What type of Christianity did Cosmas profess?. He had been taught the Sacred Scriptures under Patrikios, identified as Mar Aba, Catholicos of the church of Persia and he has also been influenced by Thomas of Edessa. His glowing tribute to the Persian church in the East makes him a suspect of Nestorianism. Whether, it was his loyalty to his master Mar Aba or his adherence to Nestorianism that made him write in like manner, is not clear. He confesses bodily ailments, especially of constipation of the stomach. About his education he states that he had no formal education with regard to the study of grammar and rhetorics. This lack of education is used as an argument to support the opinion that he was not a monk. He is a merchant by profession and has a good knowledge of the spice trade routes at that time. During the regin of King Justinian, when the Axoumites were preparing for war against the Himyarites (522-525 AD), he undertakes a journey towards the East. He was twenty flve years of age when he began his journy at Adoulis. In book V, N° 3, he speaks of two solar eclipses which have been dated as 6th February and 17th August of 547 AD from this it could be deduced that the book had been written during the first half of the sixth century around 547 and 549 AD.[9] All the authors are of the opnion that Cosmas wrote his book in Alexandria of Egypt, except H Gezler, who in 1883 put forwards the theory that Cosmas settled down in a monastery at Raithu on the Sinai Peninsula and there devoted his life to literary labors of which the "*Topographia Christiana*" is the only surviving monument.[10] To support his argument Gezler points out to the intimate knowledge of Cosmas about the region of Sinai. But this is equally true about his knowledge of the regions surrounding Alexandria and the description of his voyage down the river Nile. A similar argument is put forward with regard to the surname of Cosmas as INDICOPLEUSTES or the Indian traveller. Those who say that Cosmas had never travelled to India, argue that, Cosmas, while stating that he has had personal experience of the places visited, fails to mention the same with regard to his knowledge about the Indian region. They accept that Cosmas would have got his information through intermediary merchants like Sopatros of book XI, who may have had personal experience of visiting countries during their trade travels. Book XI is a part of the book on Geography of Cosmas which is unfortunately lost to the present generation. It is with this shortcoming that the present author is considering the book XI of Cosmas, while seeking for clues from the other books of "*Topographia Christiana*".

Analysis of Topographia Christiana

In analysing the work of Cosmas, the editions of the three volumes of *Topographie Chretienne* by Wanda Wolska-Conus is being utilised by the author. These three volumes contain all the manuscripts of *Topographia Christiana,* arranged according to the author's opinion (Wanda Wolksa)

and when at variance with other translators, those sections are mentioned in the footnote. The Greek text with French translations are given in the volumes. The present author while quoting Cosmas, leans on the French translations to provide himself with the English translation,

Prologue

This Prologue is different from the Laurentian Prologue which introduces the book "*Topographia Christiana*". The Prologue speaks of the earlier works of Cosmas, especially the book of Geography, dedicated to Constantius, part of which is found in Book XI. The prologue 2, recalls the work on Astronmy dedicated to a deacon named Homologos. It details that the aim of the work is to disprove the theory of the pagans and those Christians who state that heaven is spherial.

Table of Contents

In this the twelve books are tabulated in order.

The Exposition of the Subject

In this the plan of the first five books under two main themes is put forward. i. The Cosmographique theme presents the Jewish Tabernacle as the model of the universe consisting of two stages. ii. The prophetic theme gives the successive stages of the human race based on the two space conditions.

Book I

Against those who wish to be Christians, but believe and profess as the Pagans, that heaven is spherical.

Book II

The Christian theories of the forms and the dispositions on places in the entire universe, giving proofs from the divine Scriptures. This book is dedicated to Pamphilius. Besides the polemics on theology, the geography of the world of inhabitants gives the route for silk merchandise. "In the countries producing silk, to the most interior of the Indian sea, beyond the Persian Gulf one finds in the Indian sea, the Island named by the Indians Selediva and by the Greeks Taprobane" N^{O} 45. Then it speaks of the voyages undertaken by Cosmas down the river Nile.

Book III

This book proposes that the Sacred Scriptures could be taken with certitude and worthy of faith. Those that are exposed are in concordance with it and in its entirety, both in the Old Testament and the New. It

demonstrates the utility of forms in the entire universe. Having spoken about the veracity of the Scriptures, Cosmas in this book tries to see the fulfilment of the scriptures by the diffusion of Christianity. What is said of the Christian Communities of the entire world shows a parallel with Book XI. In N° 65, " In Taprabane, an Island in the interior of India which one finds in the Indian Ocean, there is a church of the Christians a Clergy and a community of faithful, I ignore if there be any beyond it". Then he goes further to speak of the Indian Ports and the Island of Socotra.

Book IV

This book gives a concise recapitulation with illustrations on the image of the universe according to the Divine Scriptures and refuting the ideas of a sphere.

Book V

In this one finds the description of the Tabernacle and the acceptance, of the Prophets and the Apostles.

Only in the above five books, one finds coherance and unity with regard to the spherical theory proposed by the Pagans and those who would wish to be Christians but follow the same opinion of the pagans. This consists of: i) The image ofthe universe according to the scriptures, ii) The summary of the cosmographic designs, iii) The confirmation of the foundation of the universe in the Old and New Testament.

Book VI

This book describes the grandeur of the Sun. This could be a part of the book on Geography or contains a summary of it.

Book VII

This book speaks on the permanence of the heavens and the work of a CHRISTIAN. In answering the question of a certain Anastasius, this book, attacks a Christian pretender. N° 4 summarises the above six books and then presents the arguments.

Book VIII

This book deals with the Canticle of Ezechias, king of Juda and on the regression of the Sun.

Book IX

This book deals on the course of stars.

Book X

This book contains the citations from the Fathers. The above five books seems to have been written around 553 AD, contemporary to the great Christological controversies and then the manuscripts have been re-edited.

Books XI and XII

The opinions on book XII have been expressed In this book earlier. Book XI is specifically dedicated to Taprobane (Sri Lanka). It is said to be a part of the book of Geography of Cosmas that is lost and had been dedicated to Constantine the friend of Christ. Book XI is not found in the manuscripts V. Book XI contains 24 paragraphs of which N° 1 to 12 contain the description of Indian animals. Some of these animals belong to Ethiopia and other belong to the Indian region. The rest of the twelve paragraphs give the topography of the Indian region in which the description of Taprobane is predominant along with the story of Sopatros. Seeing how the fauna and flora of the region are being portrayed with unrealistic imagination both in words and pictorial illustrations, one could tend to reject the whole book as belonging to the level of fairy tales that have no historical value. Winstedt in commenting on the story of Sopatros, after showing that this passage had parallel with other authors states: "So far as the Story is concerned, Sopatros need not have been to Ceylon (Sri Lanka, at all, for it is probably an old travellers tale, at least as old as the time of Pliny, who relates a tale (N.H. VI.24) which looks the original, from which this is derived by a natural process of exaggeration".[11] This is to throw away the baby along with the water after washing. According to McCrindle, Cosmas was the first who laid down China's correct boundaries on the East by the Ocean.[12]

In writing his books, Cosmas has used information from the authors known at his time. He seems to have written his books with a Geographical map in front of him. He is not aware of the Geographical work of Ptolemy who gives a detailed description of Taprobane. Pliny's description of Taprobane as quoted earlier along with the story of Annius Plocamus the merchant, who discusses about the Roman coins with the King of Taprobane could be a coincidental parallel but need not be a source for the story of Sopatros, as would be seen later. There are other parallels to be found in Ambrosius (Pseudo-Palladius), *De Moribus Brachmanorum:* " Shipping himself with certain merchants in the Red Sea, first came to the town of the Adulites, or the bay of Adulicus, after that to the promontory of Aromota, and a mart of the Troglodytes, hence to the places of Assumites and many days after to Muziris, the mart of all India on this side of Ganges, and having stayed a while there, he passed over to the Isle of Taprobane".[13] This information is given by one Scholasticus.

It seems very likely that Cosmas had been influenced by Paulus Orosius who wrote "*The seven Books of History against the Pagans*".[14] Paulus Orosius was born probably at Bracara (Braga, in Portugal) between 380 and 390 AD. He went to live with St. Augustine of Hippo at the age of 30. He went to Palestine and met St. Jerome. In 415 he attended the council at Diospolis=Lydda presenting the views of St. Augustine and St. Jerome on Pelagius. After his return to Hippo, on the request of St. Augustine he wrote his " *Seven Books of History against the Pagans*". The date of his death is unknown.

Cosmas in Book II states " The earth is divided into three parts, Asia, Libya and Europe" and then continues to describe the various regions. A parallel is found in " *The seven Books of History against the Pagans*", Book I. " Our ancestors fixed a threefold division of the whole world surrounded by the periphery of the Ocean and its three parts they call Asia, Europe and Africa". Continuing to describe the three continents, on Asia he describes "Asia has the center of its eastern boundary on the eastern ocean, the mouth of the Ganges river, on the left of the Promontory of Caligardamana, to the south-east of which lies the Island of Taprobane, at which point the Ocean begins to be called the Indian Ocean. To the right of the Imavian mountains where the Caucasian mountains end, is the Promontory of Samara, at the base of which lies the mouth of the Ottorgorra River, at which point the Ocean is called the Serian Ocean.

In this territory is India, with the Indus river on the West which empties into the Red sea and the Caucasian range on the North; the rest of India as I have said, is bounded by the Eastern and the Indian Oceans. This country has fortyfour peoples, apart from the Island Taprobane with its TEN CITIES and the numerous other Islands".[15]

It must be noted however that the geographical description of Cosmas differs from that of Orosius, showing that Cosmas has had personal information about the Indian region. The description of the Indian region by Orosius is more exact than that of Cosmas.

SIELEDIVA (Sinhala Dvīpaya)

Sri Lanka has a very ancient history. Archaeology has still a long way to go in the discovery of the early inhabitants of the Island. Stone tools as far as 120,000 years have been discovered recently.[16] A five thousand year old pre-historic settlement, one of Asia's oldest sites has been excavated by the Department of Archaeology in the Ratnapura area.[17]

The earliest known inhabitants now living in Sri Lanka are the Veddhas. They are akin to the tribes of Nilgiri Hills (India) and Andaman Islands, These people could be defined as Australoids. Although they have a dialect of their own, they are now mixed with Sinhala or Tamil languages, according to the regions where they now dwell. Originally they were cave

dwellers *(Gal-Veddhas)* and hunters (bows and arrows) by profession. Today all of them have settled down in small jungle villages. Their religion is animism. *Mahāvaṃsa* tries to identify them as a group of people descending from Vijaya, the founder of the Sinhala race through the Yaksa Princess Kuveni.

Two other tribes known as *Yakkas* and *Nāgas* have been inhabiting Sri Lanka when Vijaya arrived in the Island (483 BC). Archaeological sites similar to the necropolis of Pomparippu, found in different parts of Sri Lanka show that they were culturally advanced tribes. *Mahāvaṃsa* speaks of *Yaksa* and *Nāga* princes taking part in marriage ceremonies and ceremonies of the consecration of the city of Anuradhapura in the third century BC Their beliefs and customs seem to have been absorbed by the popular traditions of today.

The earliest written record to mention of the name of "Lankā" is found in the Indian Epic of *Rāmāyana*, a Sanskrit epic (*ca.* 1.AD). Later this epic was adapted to Tamil by a poet named Kamban and thus gets the name of *Kambaramayanam*. The Tamil epic seems to have been written in favour of the Vaishanavaites (followers of Vishnu) who over come the Saivaite (followers of Siva) Ravana. *Dasakrīta,* is another name given to Rāvanā which means ten crowns. The poet tries to show him as a giant with ten heads. Orosius (Vth. century) describes Taprobane as an Island with ten cities.[18] His source of information is not known. The chief city of Rāvanā is known to be Lankāpura (city of Lankā) and Rāvanā is given the title of Lankēsvara (Lord of Lanka). This name of the city has later been extended to the whole Island. The historical figure of Rāvanā is not certain but there are many localities identified with the story of Rāvanā: Rāvanella, Sītāeliya and Gōkanne. *Mahāvaṃsa* tells that Vijaya landed in the Island of Lanka.[19] The name Lanka continued to be used by the Slnhalese even during the colonial period. (In Tamil it was known as Ilankai). In 1972, May 22 , the Island known to the West as CEYLON, bccame the Re public of Srī Lankā. The word "Sri" means august.

SIELEDIVA

Cosmos introduces this Island as " A big Island situated in the Indian Ocean called by the Indians, Sielediva and by the Greeks Taprobane".[20] Altogether Cosmas has used the name of Sielediva five times in *Topographia Christiana*, of which four are Found in Bk. XI and once in Bk. II, where there is a spelling error. It is written as "SELEDIVA" instead of Sielediva. The citations are as follows.

i. "Going beyound about five full days find in the Indian ocean Sielediva that is to say Taprobane" BK.XI. N° 16

ii. "Then this Sieledíva situated in some way in the heart of India". BK.XI, N° 16

iii. "However the King of Sieledíva gives a good price for the elephants he has ..." BK.XI, N° 22

iv. "These countries of Silk, one finds in India, to the left one enters into the Indian sea, well beyond the Persian Gulf and the Island named by the Indians SELEDIVA and by the Greeks Taprobane" BK.II,N°4

Cosmas is the only auther of West until the sixth century to use the name of Sieledíva very clearly.

Origin of the name SIELEDIVA

Siṃha in Sanskrit, Sinha in Pāli and Sinha in Sinhala means the lion. Laya or *la,* means the breast or the heart. Thus Sinhalaya (Sinhala) means Coeur de Lion. Sinhalese is the western adaptation for the Sinhala people. *Dvīpa* in Sanskrit, *Dīpa* in Pali means Island. Both the Sanskrit and Pāli terms including other adaptations are found to denote *Dvīpa* or Island.[21] Thus Siṃhala *Dvīpa* , Sinhala *Dīpa* or Sinhala *Dvīpa* or Sinhala *Dīpa* would all mean, the Island of the Sinhalese.

The Mahāvaṃsa Tradition

The name Sinhala is connected with a legend. The location is North India, showing a movement of the Aryan population from Bengal to Gujarat. The Sinhalaese are considered to be of the Aryan race and thus the legend connects their origin with North India. This legend is of totemistic origin and bases itself on the Solar cult of which Lion is a symbol. According to the legend, it is said that a lion mated with a princess through which alliance were born a son named Sīhabāhu and a daughter named Sīhavalli. When Sīhabāhu came of age he carried away his mother and sister from the cave of his father, the Lion. The Lion that came in search of his wife and children was marauding the area. Sīhabāhu was called to kill his father the Lion. He also married his sister, Sīhavalli and to them were born many sons. Vijaya the founder of Sīnhala nation was the eldest. "But the king Sīhabāhu since he had slain the lion was called Sīhala, by the reason of the ties between him and all the followers of Vijaya were also called Sinhala."[22]

The author of Mahāvaṃsa tries to synchronise the arrival of Vijaya to Sri Lanka with the *Parinibbāna* (death) of Buddha, 483 B.C. The date of *Parinibbāna* of Buddha outside of the Island, among the other Buddhist traditions is 544 BC which is considered the begining of the Buddhist era.[23]

Dvīpa - Dīpa - Diba

The name *Dvīpa* means Island in Sanskrit and it is *Dīpa* in Pali. In Hindi it is *Dib.* In Sinhala this term has been used in various ways as derivatives and dimunitives. While one finds in Sinhala litereature the same terms as in Sanskrit or Pali, one finds the word *Divayina* or its dimunitve *Diva* or *Dūva* which signifies the Island.

The term *Dīpa* or *Diba* had been made use of by Greek and Indian authors to indicate islands in general. In Indian litereature sometimes it would connote a whole land mass. In indicating the Island of Sri Lanka, the term *Dīpa* is added to another attribute. *Lankā-Dīpa, Rāvanā-Dīpa, Ratne-Dīpa* (The Island of Gems) and in like manner the *Sinhala-Dīpa.* The derivatives from *Sinhala Dīpa* are *Sihala Dīpa* and *Sihala Diva* Cosmas has taken this last term as Sieledіva. Abbreviations used from this term are *Hela-Diva* and *Ela -Diva* . In Tamil, it was named as *Sinhalm* from with the abbreviation *Eelam* has been derived. The word *Dvīpa in* Tamil has become *Tivu.*

When the name of the Island is not given, then one must look for the location by referring to the geographical context. Diu is a Peninsula in the North of India. A peninsula in Sanskrit means *Ardha - Dvīpa* (half- island) The said Diu has retained only the term of Diu, According to Sinhalese tradition and Indian litereature, India is called Jambu-Dipa (Damba-Diva is a derivative form Jambu-Dipa). It is said that the North of India where Buddha was born, abounded with *Jambu* fruits and thus it came to be konwn as Jambu- Dipa. Another reason given for the name of Jambu-Dipa is that India has the form of a Jambu fruit. Looking at the cartography of India form the earliest times, one cannot with a stretch of imagination compare the form of India with a Jambu fruit . However the Peninsula of Diu has the from of a *Jambu* fruit. It is form this region of Diu (Gujarat) that the Sinhala people have had their cultural origin. It could be proposed them that Diu would probably have been known as Jambu-Dipa and later this name would have been extended to the whole region and then to the whole of India. Just as from the river Indus and the valley of Indus, India derived its name. Some hold that it is from Diu that Theophilus the Indian originated.

Theophilus the Indian

Photius, the Patriarch of Constantinople (853 AD) in summarising *"Historia Ecclesiastica"* of Philostorgius,[24] narrates how Constantius, the Arian emperor (337-361 AD.)sent an embassy to the Sabeans to spread Arianism. This embssy was headed by Theophilus the Indian . Theophilus in his youth was sent as hostage to emperor Constantine from the Divous; in this region Divu is an Island. The inhabitants are called Indians. He was ordained by Eusebius of Nicomedia.

Various opinions are presented regarding the origin of Theophilus: Lucas Holstenius says that it should be read "DIVENON KALUMENON" which would point out to Mailapuram , Madras. It could also be taken to mean "Theophilus the Islander from the Island in the Indian Ocean" (*Theophilus Divaeus ex Diva insula maris indici*) wich recalls Ammianus Marcellinus in his Bk. XXII,p.211. *"Hinc nationibus indicis certatum cum donis optimales mettentibus ante tempus absque Dibis et Serendibis"*. It is a direct pointer to Sri Lanka. The author holds to this point of view. [25] Some critics point it out as the Peninsula near the river the mouth of River Indus , which opinion could hardly be accepted as there are no islands close by. Cardinal Tisserant consider the Divus as the Maldive Islands. Divu is also identified with Socotra or one of the islands near Ethiopia. H C Bell on his research on Maldives, states that the language of the Maldivians is akin to the Sinhala language.

Among the Arabs, the word SERENDIB (Sarandib) has been uesd to indicate Sri Lanka. It has been translated to mean " Resplendant Island or Island of Paradise". It could also be a derivative from Seres, which would mean the Island of Silk . The Island was known for its silk market and the same name could be attributed to Sumatra, the Island in the Serian Ocean.Sumatra is also known as Svaran-Dīpa, which means the island of Gold. and S.S.Sumatra is known as Svarnnapura (the golden city). The term Serendib could also be a corruption form the Tamil name Sinhalam - tivu which would have been abbreviated to Selen. The Portuguese however began to identify the Island as Seilan or CEILAO, the Dutch adapted it to Zeylan and the British to Ceylon, by which name Sri Lanka was known to the West until 1972.[26]

In the Chinese tradition from the third century AD the Island of Sri Lanka was known as Ssu-Tiao.[27] This name according to Kalgren was pronounced as 'Sie-d'ieu' in the VIth and VIIth century in China.[28]

Taprobane

Cosmas has identified the Island of Sielediva as being Taprobane in three clear statements, as cited earlier. This leaves no doubt as to the identity of Sri Lanka in the narratives of Cosmas.

Cosmas mentions the name of Taprobane, eight times in his *Topographia Christiana.* Three passages have been already cited in the discussion on or Sielediva.

1. The Island of Taprobane as the title of Book XI, is found in the Table of Contents in Book 1 and at the begining of Book XI. Since the Fauna and the Flora mentioned in Bk, XI, comprises of Ethiopian and Indian types, Winstedt doubts the authenticity of the title,[29] while Wolska-Conus would prefer it to be of later addition of the XIth

century manuscript. [30] The same title "About the Island of a Taprobane" is repeated at the begining of N° 13 of Bk. XI, from which point onwards the Book predominantly speaks of Taprobane.[31]

2. A passage explaining the distance of China states that Taprobane is in the middle from the Persian Gulf to China. "For as much the Persian Gulf thrusts itself to Persia, as much distance to set sail from Taprobane which lies to the East of Tzinista... the whole Indian Ocean until Taprobane and beyond..." Bk.II, N° 45.

3. The passage stating the precence of Christianity in Taprobane: In Taprobane, Island to the interior of India..." Bk. III, N° 65

4. Taprobane as a Silk emporium:" I speak of Tzinista and other markets, Taprobane imports Silk, Aloes-Wood, Cloves, Sandalwood and all indigenous produces". Bk. XI, N° 15.

5. The arrival of Sopatros to Taprobane:"Sopatros .... came for his business to the island of Taprobane". Bk. XI. N° 17.

Taprobane is not of Greek or Western origin. Then how did this word enter the literature of the Greek authors and later the Latin literature. It has to be accepted that it was the trade and political contacts that made known the Island of Taprobane to the Western world and especially the ancient Greek authors.

The only source to give an explanation regarding the term Taprobane is the *Mahāvaṃsa.* Taprobane is a derivative the Sanskrit name *Tāmraparni* which in Pali is *Tambapanni.* "When he had stayed some days at that spot, he went to Tambapanni.There Vijaya founded the city of Tambapani and dwelt there, together with the Yakkini, surrounded by his ministers".

When those who were commanded by Vijaya landed from their ships they sat down wearied, resting their hands upon the ground, since their hands were reddened by touching the dust of the red earth that region and also the Island were named Tambapanni".[32] This passage explains as to how the copper coloured soil (*Tamra* in Sanskrit, *Tamba* in Pali means copper) that soiled the hands (In Pāli, *Panni* could mean hands or leaves, in Sanskrit, *Parnni*) became the source to designate the name of the place, then to the city and futher extended to the whole Island.

The Mauryan emperor Asoka (268-232 BC) contemporary of King Dēvānampiya Tissa of Sri Lanka, in his edicts mentions Tambapanni along with the South Indian kingdoms of Chera, Pāndya as being outside the boundaries of his dominion.

The precious information about the knowledge of Taprobane among the Greeks come from the Latin author Pliny (24-79 AD)[33] He states that the island is called Antichthonum and Megasthenes calls the inhabitants Paleogonos. Ptolemy in his map of Taprobane indicates a place named " Igona Civitas" which according to Denis Fernando is identified as Pomparippu, where the ancient necropolis is found. In Pliny, Palisimoundou is a city in Taprobane. Ptolemy's map also indicates Anarisimundu Promotorium which is identied as Kalpitiya Promontory. Periplus, *ca.*60 AD extends this name to the whole Island. [34] "About the folllowing region, the course trending towards the east, lying out to the sea towards the west is the Island Palaesimundu called by the ancients (natives) Taprobane".[35] Both Strabo and Eratosthenes have drawn their Oikoumene and place the Island of Taprobane at the extreme point near Coniaci (India).

In a navigational chart of the 17th century, by an anonymous author (Venice Museum), Taprobane has been identified with the Island of Sumatra. [36] This is because the measurements of the Island given by the Greek cartographers do not tally with Sri Lanka but with Sumatra. Pliny gives the measuements given by Eratosthenes." 7000 stadia in length and 5000 stadia in breadth, (stadion is around 607 feet), no cities but only villages are found. This made the cartographers of the middle ages to believe that according to the measurements given, Taprobane ought to be Sumatra.

Cosmas himself gives a wrong calculation when he states: "This great Island measure 300 GAUDIA long and of equal breadth that is to say 900 mile ".[37] According to Tennent this word Gaudia originates from the Sinhala word *'Gaua'*. It is the word *"GAVYUTI"* which is phonetically closer to the word *Gaudia*, having the same meaning as *Gaua* which is an indefinite distance which a man could walk in an hour. It is usually considered to be around three miles. Here, although Cosmas is wrong in his measurements, he is exact about his local terminology. The term *Gavyuti* could have a commonly used term during the fifth and sixth century AD

The actual length of Sri Lanka is around 280 miles and 140 miles in breadth. (The coastline of Sri Lanka has been receding for hundreds of years). The measurements of Cosmas are closer to that of Ptolemy. In the research work done on Ptolemy's map Taprobane, Denis Fernando states: "A map of Taprobane based on the corrected coordinates of Ptolemy was compiled by me. What is extraordinary is that Ptolemy's places were 100% correct in their relative position. In addition to Ptolemy giving the coordinates of 49 points, he also has a description of ancient settlements, its rough location and its people".[38] It could be thus concluded that although Cosmas had given wrong measurements of the Island, it is in fact the Island called by the Indians Sieledіva and by the Greeks, Taprobane, which is modern Sri Lanka.

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ABBREVIATIONS

Hist Nat = *Historia Naturalis* C. Plinius Secundus, BK. VI.

PG = J P Migne, *Patroligiae Cursus Completus,* series Graeca, Parisiis, 1857 s.

PL = J P Migne, *Patroligiae Cursus Completus,* Series latina, Parisiis, 1844 s.

TC = *Topographia Christiana,* Cosmas Indicopleustes.

Top Chretienne = *Topographie Chretienne,* (Cosmas Indicopleustes.), WandaWolskaconus, Paris, 1968.t.I 1970,t. II.1973, t. III. Sources Chretinnes Paris, N°s. 141, 159, 197.

Mhv. = *Mahāvamsa,* trans Engl. W. Geiger, Colombo, 1950.

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21. see further in this chapter *on Dipa.*

22. *Mhv, opus cit.* ch. VII, 42.

23. *Mhv, opus cit,* Introduction, various opinions on chronology

24. P G 65. Philostorgii Ecclesiastica Historicae, *Lib III,* p. 482. Tisserant D T C vol. XIV col. 3092.

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31. In the first twelve paragraphs beside the animals of Ethiopia, the other names show afinity to the Indian Ocean. N° 6, Kastour (Musk) is known in Sri Lanka. It is supposed to be from a deer and used as a medical formula. The real identity is not certain. N° 12 'The flesh of the Dolphin is like Pork'. This fish is kown as sea-Hog in English and *Muhudu-Ura* in sinhala and *Kadat-Panri* in Tamil. It is a dying speices. It is a favourite dish among the fishemen of Sri Lanka. The present author himself has eaten this dish. N° 10, NARGELLION is from the Sanskrit. Nali-Kera for Coconut. *SURA* in Sanskrit means any fermented liquor. RHONCHOSURA, would be from Keram-Sura meaning Cocunut toddy, beverage from the coconut flower. It is milk-white in colour and turns into vinegar when overfermented.

32. *Mhv*. VII.39.

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A STRUCTURAL ANALYSIS OF THE SINHALA BUDDHIST PANTHEON

by

S G Samarasinghe

Our direct knowledge of the Aryan Gods comes from Vedic hymns which seem to have been completed by about the tenth century BC Vedic cosmology is a rational synthesis continuously developed through the ages keeping pace with the progress of thought and adapting itself to different stages of philosophical context and different conditions of life.

There are four Vedas, the *Ṛg Vēda, Yajur Vēda, Sāma Vēda* and the *Atharva Vēda.* The Vedic hymns, the impassioned utterances of primitive but poetic souls name and worship many gods. Some of them range from primitive polytheism to systematic philosophy. The idea of god as conceived and understood in the Ṛg Vēda has its own historical background. *Dēva* (god) is one who gives to man. In the phrase *vidvaṃso hi dēvaḥ* the learned man who imparts knowledge is a *dēva* god. Amongst the Sinhala people a popular appellation for the teacher is *Gurudēva* (lit, teacher-god).

The word *dēva* is etymologically connected to the Latin *deus* meaning shine, brightness etc. The Sun, Moon, Sky, Stars and Dawn combine both these meanings "giver of light brightness".

Varuṇa - He is the guardian of sacred law and cosmic order. The term Varuṇa is derived from the Skt. root *Vā to* cover or encompass. He is identified with Greek Ouranos and Ahuramazada of the Avesta. He is the Prime Mover of the universe and covers the whole expanse of the heaven as with a robe with all the creatures and their dwelling (RV.VIII 41). He surveys the universe continuously with the Sun as his eye, Sky as the garment and Storm as his breadth (RV.VII 87.2) Later he is transformed and idealized as the most moral god in the Vedic pantheon, and conforms to the eternal law of the moral world. He punishes people who transgresses the Laws, the *Ṛta* of which Varuṇa is the custodian. According to Radhakrishnan "this conception must have been originally suggested by the regularity of Sun, Moon and Stars, the alternations of day and night, and of the seasons. *Ṛta* denotes the order of the world. Everything that is ordered in the universe has *Ṛta* for its principle. It corresponds to the universal of Plato" (1948 pp 78-79). Varuṇa carries a rope above his shoulders to punish the people, to tie them up. The rope is symbolic of the sins with which man is fettered by his ignorance. He forgives the sinners

who implore his pardon. We find such prayers in almost all the hymns addressed to Varuṇa.

Varuṇa however kept his supreme position only for a short time. His attributes gradually passed on to the other gods. Firstly, his realm of jurisdiction is split where Mitra and Aryaman come as companions to him. Mitra becomes the guardian of the day with the morning light and Varuṇa's guardianship is confined to the night. The third in the triad Aryaman has no clearly defined functions. All are known as Ādityas, the sons of Aditi, or the celestial deities. Aditi literally means 'unbound or unlimited' and therefore the infinite, the expanse beyond the earth, the clouds and the sky. Secondly, Varuṇa the triad is joined by other gods of whom Indra was to become the leader.

Prthivi and Dyaus - As Varuna diminishes in his jurisdiction his own characteristics are defied. His garment, the sky becomes Dyaus - an important god in the Indo- European mythology (Zeus). Sky and earth is expressed in a single noun in the dual. Pṛthivi the earth and Dyaus - the sky are symbolized as cow and bull. They are the early fertility gods who gave birth to Uṣas-the dawn, Agni-fire, and the most powerful god Indra.

Indra- Indra, the king of gods, is the most popular god in the Vedic pantheon. He is the god of thunderstorms born of the waters and the cloud. He wields the thunderbolt. He is the Aryan warrior king vanquishing Vṛtra - the demon, typifying the harsh aspect of drought in a country like India. Indra, therefore virtually becomes the rain god, the national god of the Indo - Aryans, the ruler of the whole world. (RV.VIII. 36:3). His defeat of Vṛtra not only symbolizes the release of waters by piercing the clouds, but also the control of Vṛtra's retinue the Danavas. These are the demons who disorder the eternal equipoise established between the gods with demons, Dēvas and Asuras, namely good with evil and bright with darkness. He rules over the sky, the earth, the waters and the mountains. (RV.X.89:10). These are the very attributes Varuṇa held, now taken over by Indra thus displacing gradually Varuṇa's position in the Vedic pantheon. In this process Indra is also portrayed as a rival to Varuṇa.

Indra's birth as in that of many other gods and heroes is unnatural. His father was jealous of the great powers he was destined to possess, (RV.V.5). Indra was still inside the womb of his mother and as she attempts to dissuade him from been born he wishes to break out through her side. This aspect of birth is very often referred to in the Sinhala ritual. Ṛg Vēda hymns are quite clear about his unnatural birth.

"Indra's mother- This is the ancient, proven path by which the gods are born and moved upward. By this very path he should be born when he has grown great. He should not make his mother perish that way.

Indra- I cannot come out of that path: these are bad places to go

through. I will come out cross-wise through the side. Many things undone must I do; one I will fight and I will question" (RV.IV.18:1.2).

Indra kills his father (what god helped you when you grabbed your father by the foot and crushed him. (RV.IV.18:11) and Indra in turn is chastised by his own son (RV.X:28). The conflict between Indra and his father is understood to symbolize the rivalry between the Brahmin hierarchy and the emerging Kṣatriya warrior castes. In this context Varuṇa is sometimes identified as his father. Simultaneously Dyaus is also recognised as his father whom he kills in order to be free and gain full stature as a god.

Indra derives his strength from the peoples' sacrifices and as the rain god, becomes the god of fertility. In his constant struggle with the demons, the latter decided to poison the plants by magic spells so that sacrifices could be defiled and perhaps stopped. People ceased to eat and animals stopped grazing resulting in famine and death. However, the gods met the challenge and offered sacrifices by which they succeeded in freeing the plants from poison. This event was celebrated by a great ceremony at which offerings were made up of the first plants grown after the poison was removed. This ritual has a great semblance to the Sinhala ritual of offering the first paddy harvest or the first crop of food yielding plants.

Indra as creator did not create the universe from void as Varuṇa did but rather rearranged it like a house, measuring out the space with the sun with four corner posts between which were the walls of the world with the sky as the roof. This exactly is the form which the Sinhala exorcist priests follow in constructing the halls for their community rituals (Obeysekere 1984 pp. 38-39). In the Indra's construction there were two large doors one in the east to accommodate the Sun and the other in the west to make room for the exit of the Sun. The doors are absent in the Sinhala ritual.

In the latter Vedic period Indra is transferred into a dignified sovereign, less active as a warrior and reigning in the *Svarga* heaven in the Mahā Mēru Mountain, flanked by his consort Indrāni and his advisors, the Vāsus (A group of eight gods with indra himself as the chief who later becomes Viṣṇu. They are the deities of day, water, the moon, the pole star, wind, fire, dawn and light. Later we observe that the Asvins, Ādityas, Rudra, Viṣṇu, Siva and Kubēra are also regarded as Vāsus). By this time he has given up his hunting dog and the horses and has as his mount Airāvata the great white elephant.

Maruts- Maruts (lit. wind) are the deifications of the stormy winds and are considered to be the Sons of Dyaus forming the entourage of Indra. There are seven of them Vāyuvēga (Wind-speed) Vāyubala (Wind-force) Vāyuna (Wind-destroyer), Vāyumaṇḍala (Wind-circle), Vāyuvāta (Wind-

flame), Vāyureta (Wind-seed) and Vāyucakra (Wind disc). The number sometimes varies upto twenty seven or to one hundred and eighty. Since they are flashing and fierce storm gods they are also deemed to be the sons of Rudra - the militant god. "The team of horses on the course, the Maruts, the sons of Rudra, workers of marvels, adorned themselves like omen and made the two world halves grow strong. Trembling the heroes drink to ecstasy in the rites" (RV.1.85:1). They are normally malevolent but sometimes kind and beneficent.

Vāyu- Vāta or Vāyu is an Indo-Iranian god. He is the god of wind or air and a member of the first triad together with Agni and Sūrya. It is his breath that gives life to the humans and the gods. He is deemed to be the son-in-law of Tavaṣṭr- the divine carpenter.

Tavaṣṭr- Tavaṣṭr, the divine artisan, is like Indra, son of Dyaus. It is from Tavaṣṭr that Indra obtains Soma which fortifies him with strength. He is responsible for making the weapons for Indra: the thunderbolt Vajra is one of his creations. He is the divine architect who assumes a very significant role as Viśvakarman in later periods. He has a definite role in the Sinhala ritual.

He also has a biological role in generating power in men making them virile to have children. He is responsible in creating husbands and wives for each other. Tavaṣṭr has a daughter known as Saraṇyu.

Ṛbhus- Ṛbhus are the minor craftsmen of the gods. They claim to be the sons of Indra by Saraṇyu. These craftsmen often act as rivals to their grandfather - Tavaṣṭr. The miraculous cow of plenty bestowing booms was created by the Ṛbhus.

Agni- Agni is only second in importance to Indra. Agni, the fire god, can be traced to the Indo-European concept of the fiery liquid, the elixir of immortality. Agni and Soma are invoked in many Ṛg Vedic hymms as the embodiments of the sacrificial fire and the sacrificial drink.

Agni is invoked to invite the gods to the sacrifice (RV1.1) and also to mediate between gods and men (RV. 1.26) The first hymn of the Ṛg Veda is for Agni.

"I pray to Agni, the house hold priest, who is the god of the sacrifice, the one who chants and invokes and brings most treasures (RV1.1).

He becomes a supreme god having his jurisdiction form earth to heaven. He is like Indra a son of Pṛthivi and Dyaus. He is known as the thrice born one. Firstly, he is born in heaven as the Sun and secondly he is born in the atmosphere in the guise of Lightning. His third birth is on the earth as the Sacrificial Fire.

Soma- Soma is analogous to Haoma of the Avesṭa and Dionysus of Greece the God of wine. In the Ṛg Veda, Soma plant is considered a god

and as intoxicating liquid, which is an inspiration to humans and gods. It ultimately becomes the ambrosial offering to the gods by which they sustain their immortality.

Soma becomes an integral part of the Vedic sacrifice. It is drunk by the priest, invited by the priests to drink it and Soma itself is invoked.

1. Let Indra the killer of Vṛtra drink Soma in Saryanavat (mountains where the Soma plant is found) gathering his strength with himself to do a great heroic deed. O drop of Soma, flow for Indra.

2. Purify yourself, generous Soma from Arhika (another mountain where Soma is grown), master of the quarters of the sky. pressed with sacred woods with truth and faith and ardour, O drop of Soma, flow for Indra (RV.IX.113:1.2).

Candra- Candra is the moon god, discovered during the churning of the milky ocean. Moon god is very often found in the Sinhala ritual.

Ādityas- Aditi (lit. boundless, infinite) represents the boundless heaven and therefore the mother of the gods known as the Ādityas to whom belong Mitra, Āryaman, Bhaga, Varuṇa, Aṃsu, Indra, Daksạ, and Vivaśvat. It is said that only the first seven were loved by Aditi, the mother and the last son Vivasvat (also known as Mārttānanda) was only a shapeless lump and therefore was thrown away. The divine architect took him over and moulded him into Vivasvat leaving the unused parts which became elephants. Elephants are supposed to be possessing divine nature consequent to their birth from Vivasvat.

A later addition to the Ādityas was Pusan (nourisher) a solar deity, keeper of cattle and bringer of prosperity.

Vivasvat- Vivasvat symbolizes the rising Sun. He married Saraṇyū daughter to Tavastṛ to whom were born Yama and Yami. Saraṇyū created a woman identical to herself, entrusted the care of the two twins (Yama and Yamī) to her and disappeared. Vivasvat was unaware that his true wife had gone but had a son through the new woman. This son is Manu who later becomes a royal sage.

Sāvitri- Sāvitri is the God of the rising and the setting Sun. She ushers in the nights for the people and the animals to rest. She dispels diseases and brings longevity to men and immortality to gods.

Sūrya- Sūrya is the Chief Sun god. Many of the Vedic Gods have some connection or other with the Sun. Viṣṇu is a solar god. Agni and Soma have solar characteristics. He has golden hair and arms. He drives a chariot drawn by seven mares or by a mare with seven heads. He is the son of Pṛthivi and Dyaus.

Sūrya along with the other two sons Indra and Agni formed the early

concept of the triad. Although they held equal stature in the early Vedic period it is only Sūrya who retained his place through to the modern times. *Mangara* ritual for instance has a special Sūrya invocation.

Uṣas- Uṣas, the goddess of the dawn, is a daughter of Dyaus and a sister of Agni. She is also said to be a wife of Sūrya. This brilliant maid of the morning vanishes before the Sun rises to embrace her with his golden rays. She rides in a shining chariot drawn by seven cows.

Rātri- Rātri is the goddess of night and sister of Uṣas. She has a dark robe with hiding stars. She, like Sāvitri invites people and animals to rest at night. She is invoked for protection against perils that can occur in the nights.

Aśvins- Aśvins are the gods of the twilight-the dawn and the dusk. They later become the physicians of gods and men. They are the twin sons of Sūrya or Vivasvat born from a nymph.

Rudra- Rudra is the embodiment of wildness and unpredictable danger. He is relatively an unimportant god in the *Ṛg Veda* but was the antecedent of the powerful Hindu God Siva, and a malevolent god associated with danger. Rudra is demonic in character bringing diseases and destruction to people. He is also identified as a robber god and lord of thieves.

He is at times benevolent and acts as a physician. He is also lord of cattle and represented as a bull. He is the son of Uṣas and Prajāpati.

Viṣṇu- Viṣṇu is a minor god in the Ṛg Veda. He is the god of the three strides - the Sun's rising, its zenith and the point of sun set. He along with Indra measured the universe and associated himself with its creation. He is also deemed as an attribute of Agni as an intermediary between gods and men. He supports the heaven and the earth.

"His three footprints, inexhaustibly full of honey, rejoice in the sacrificial drink. Alone he supports threefold the earth and the sky-all creatures (RV 1.154:4).

Viṣṇu is a very popular god in the Sinhala ritual often propitiated in many ceremonies.

BRAHMANIC AGE (circa 900-550 BC)-

Towards the end of the Vedic Age, the Gods began to diminish in their role of nature representation and acquired mythologies which personalised them. This early period of Hinduism or the Brahmanic Age is marked by a search for the hierarchy to ascertain the supreme God or the Universal spirit. It was in this struggle that the three great deities - the triad - Brahma (Creater) Viṣṇu (Preserver) and Siva (Destroyer) were established.

Brahma- He is the creator and therefore the first of the Gods. He is the Pitāmaha or the father of all men. He is the frame and the guardian of the world. He is also the god of wisdom and the four *Vedas* are supposed to have sprung from his four heads. Brahma is dressed in white and rides a goose. The heaven of Brahma is eight hundred miles by four hundred and forty miles high. The main temple dedicated to him today is the Pushkar in Ajmir.

Viṣṇu- Viṣṇu is the preserver. He measured the earth and the heaven with three steps and during this period he is elevated to a high position. As the preserver he is the embodiment of mercy, forgiveness, goodness and generosity. Viṣṇu, we have observed earlier, is historically the embodiment of *Ṛta* (law and justice). Vaisnavism which became very popular in the later period had Viṣṇu as the basis and law and justice as its main teaching.

Viṣṇu becomes very important in the *Yajurveda.* In the *Upanisa ds,* half of the gods of the *Veda* die and there is an attempt for the rise of one true God.

"How many Gods are there really, O - Yājnavālkya? "One", he said. Now answer to a further question; Agni, Āditya, Kāla (time) Anna (food), Brahma, Rudra, Viṣṇu, thus do some mediate on him, someone or another. Say which of these is, the best for us? And he said to them. "These are but the chief manifestations of the highest, the immortal the incorporeal Brahman" (Brh.III.9:1).

"If a logical account is permitted, then we may say that the Brahman of the Upaniṣads is no metaphysical abstraction, no indeterminate identity, no void of silence. It is the fullest and the most real being. It is a living dynamic spirit, the source and container of the infinitely varied forms of reality. The distinctions, instead of being dissolved away as illusory, are transfigured in the highest reality. The syllable "AUM", generally employed to represent the nature of Brahman, brings out its concrete character. It is the symbol of the supreme spirit, the "emblem of the most high". "AUM" is the symbol of concreteness as well as completeness. It stands for the three principal quantities of the supreme spirit personified as Brahma, Viṣṇu and Siva in later literature. "A"is Brahma the creator, "U" is Visnu the preserver, and "M" is Siva the destroyer (Radhakrishan : 1948 p.172).

Aum in its corrupted form Om is mostly the first salutory word coupled with Hrīm which begins the invocations in the Sinhala ritual.

In this triad Viṣṇu is given a prominent place and he is equated to the creator-Prajāpati encompassing Brahma, Viṣṇu himself as preserver and Siva-destroyer. He and his wife Lakṣmī are objects of devotion and affection rather than fear. He is represented reclining on the coils of Sesa -the serpent with Lakṣmī seated at his feet. He is handsome and blue in

colour. He has four hands, one holding a conch shell or Sankha known as Panchajanya, another holding a discus called Sudarsana or Vajrnābha, the third hand holding a club or mace calle Kannodaki and the fourth hand holding a Lotus or Padma. His "Vāhana", vehicle, is Garudā-half man and half bird. His abode Vaikuṇṭha with a circumference of 80,000 miles is situated in the slopes of Mount Meru. The buildings in the heaven of Vaikuṇṭha are made entirely of gold and precious stones. The celestial Ganges flows through the Vaikuṇṭha and it is said that the river in fact originates from the foot of Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu's role as the preserver is one of the main reasons why the Vaisnavas become a very powerful set in the post Vedic period. The concept of preservation can be traced back to the principle of *Ṛta* in the Vedic period. Law and justice (Ṛta) is embodied in the theory of Saṃsāra a concept very often referred to in the Sinhala ritual. The maintenance of *Ṛta* demands the intervention of Viṣṇu who leaves his celestial abode and assumes various forms, incarnations *(Avatār)* in order to destroy evil and establish righteousness. Krsṇa one of the Avatāras addresses Arjuṇa in the *Bhagavad Gitā* in the following words "Whenever the Law fails and lawlessness uprises O those of Bharata race then do I bring myself of bodied birth. To guard the righteous to destroy evil doers, to establish the Law, I come into birth age after age'.

The gods and the demons are continuously active in the world, thus making the two forces good and the evil constantly struggling in the human world. It is the duty of Viṣṇu to maintain a balance between these two forces. This is made effective by the theory of incarnation or Avatār the most important duty cast on Viṣṇu. There are such numerous Avatārs but ten are considered to be the most important very often mentioned in the Sinhala ritual as well.

(1) **Matsya (fish)-** The first incarnation as fish was to save Vaivasvata sage, the progenitor of the human race. The small golden fish with one horn grew until it was forty million miles long. It towed Vaivasata's ship to safety.

(2) **Kurma (tortoise) -** This is the second incarnation assuming the form of a tortoise whose curved back was used as a pivot on which Mount Meru was placed when churning the milky ocean to obtain Amṛta (ambrosia). In this exercise the ocean gave forth not only the ambrosia but the following (i) Dhanvantari-divine physician who carries the god's cup of ambrosia. (ii) Lakṣmī or Sri Goddess (a goddess prayed for in the Sinhala-ritual) the goddess of fortune and beauty and Viṣṇu's wife. (iii) Sura, goddess of weal (iv) Candra-the moon, (v) Rambha-nymph (vi) Ucchaisravas-a beautiful white horse (vii) Kaustubha-a jewel (viii) Parijāta-divine wishing tree. This tree was later planted in Indra's heaven and is known as the Kalpavṛkṣa in the Sinhala ritual (ix) Surabhi-the cow of plenty (x) Airāvata-the miraculous white elephant (xi) Sankha-the conch shell of victory (xii) Dhanus - the Mighty bow and (xiii) Viṣa-posion.

(3) **Varāha** - the third incarnation was a boar. The boar observed a lotus leaf and swam down in search of the origin of the stem and found the earth. He brought a piece of this earth to the surface.

In another version the boar killed Hiraṇyakṣa and saved the Vedas which were stolen by the demon when Brahma was fast asleep. The boar is ten 'yojanas' in breadth and a thousand 'yojanas' in height.

(4) **Narasiṃha** is the man lion who killed Hiraṇyakasipu, the brother of Hiraṇyakṣa. Hiraṇyaksipu had a boon from Brahma that he would not be killed by man or beast and neither in day or night not inside or outside his house. He challenged the omnipresence of Viṣṇu and was told by his son that Viṣṇu resided everywhere and pointed out a doorway pillar. Hiraṇyakasipu kicked the pillar from which Viṣṇu stepped out and killed him. The Brahma boon was kept because he was slayed in the doorway (neither inside or outside the house) by a man lion (neither beast or man) at twilight (neither day nor night).

(5) Vāmana - The fifth incarnation during the second age as dwarf avatār was to recapture the lost territories of the gods. Bali, the ambitious King through sacrifices was gaining the celestial kingdoms. Vāmana managed to obtain a promise that he would be given three paces of land. He soon grew into inconceivale proportions and covered all the earth and the heavens in two phases thus winning for the gods, the lost kingdoms. However, recognising Bali's austerities and sacrifice Vāmana relinquished his right for a third pace and Bali was granted dominion over the remaining area of the universe the nether regions called the Pātāla. Bali according to legend visits his much devoted subjects once a year. This visit is regularly celebrated in Malabar by holding the festival of Onam once a year. It is believed that Bali was probably a Dravidian king later over-powered by the Aryans.

(6) **Parasurāma-** (Rama with the axe) the sixth incarnation like the fifth took place during the Tretayuga - the second age in order to restore the power of the priestly caste over the Kṣatriyas. Parasurāma was the youngest son of the sage Jamadagni. Jamadagni's wife observes a young couple sporting in the pond and she herself was filled with impure thoughts. Jamadagni realised her amorous thought and decided to kill her. All the older four sons refused to kill her but Parasurāma and the youngest killed her and Jamadagni was greatly pleased and granted him any boon wished. Parasurāma wished that the mother be restored to life with foregetfullness of the previous experiences and himself become invincible in single combat with enemies.

A Kṣatriya king by the name of Kārtavīrya with thousand arms called at the Jamadagni hermitage while hunting in the forest. He, by chance sighted the Kamadhenu, the boon cow, and thought that the wonderful cow should be the possession of a king and not a hermit. He,

therefore, despite the protests of Jamadagni's wife, drove away the cow. When Parasurāma heard of the incident, followed the king, overtook him and killed him in single combat and returned with the cow. Kārtavīrya's sons in turn came marching with all their troops to the hermitage and killed the aged Jamadagni who was the only occupant in the hermitage at that time. When Parasurāma returned he found that the father was dead, and then and there vowed vengeance on the whole of Kṣatriya caste. He led twenty one campaigns against the Kṣatriyas and exterminated all the menfolk. It is therefore said that all the so called Kṣatriyas who exist today, are sons of Brahmins born to Kṣatriya ladies.

(7) **Rāmachandra (Rāma)-** The seventh incarnation was to kill the most dangerous and powerful Rāvanā the ten headed Rākṣasa king of Lankā. Rāvanā like Hiraṇyakṣa and Hiranyaksipu propitiated Brahma and Siva by his austerities and received certain boons by which he could not be killed by Gods, Gandharvas and demons. He was however too proud, to ask for immunity from human beings. As Rāvanā went on prosecuting gods and men the obvious choice was that Viṣṇu in the form of a human being should kill Rāvanā.

Rāma was born to Dasaratha through Kauśalya after being childless for many years. Three other sons were born to him Bharata to Kaikeyi, Lakṣmaṇa and Satrughṇa to Sumitra the third wife. Rama partook half of Viṣṇu, Bharata, quarter Lakṣmaṇa and Satrughṇa one eighth each. All these combined were destined to demolish Rāvanā, when the latter seized Sitā and ran off to Lankā in his aerial chariot. There is a great deal of mythology attached to the Rāma Rāvanā episode.

(8). **Kriṣṇa** - the eighth incarnation was to kill Kaṅśa, son of a demon and tyrannical king of Mathura. Though the purpose of the incarnation is simple there is even a greater body of mythology than the Rāma Rāvanā attached to his incarnation.

As a child he was brought up among a pastoral people and was a pet of the milkmaids. In this youth he attracted the married cowgirls *(gopis)* with his amorous adventrues which formed the theme for many love poems and love stories. Once when he saw the *gopis* were bathing in a stream he stole their clothes and hid himself in a tree and made the gopis come to him naked. He is very often described as playing the flute so well that the *gopis* are enchanted by that music.

In his middle age he distinguished himself as a great ruler and a diplomat. He in fact served as the envoy for Pāṇḍavas in their deliberations with the Kauravas. It is in this context he sang the *Bhagavadgitā* which later became the fountain of Hindu philosophy.

(9) **Buddha-** the ninth incarnation as Buddha is clearly an attempt to subordinate Buddhism to Hindu system of philosophy. The Buddhists

in fact incorporated Hindu belief, though it was contradictory to the hedonistic teachings of the Buddha. The mythology and the cosmology attached to Buddhism were also rooted in the Hindu belief system.

(10) **Kalki-** The last incarnation is yet to come which will eventually usher in the demise of the present age. The general features of this period will be the degeneration of social and spiritual life.

This period is marked with falsehood, hypocrisy and sensuality. Truth and love will disappear and finally civilization will vanish and the people will lead an animal existence. It is at this point of generation that Viṣṇu will appear in the incarnation of Kalki riding through the world on a white horse. Kalki will destroy the wicked and prepare the world for the renewal and resurgence of virtue for the ensuing age, the *Mahayuga.*

New Gods- This is a period during which the functions of the great Vedic gods were transferred to the triad-Brahma, Viṣṇu and Siva. However the most important Vedic gods such as Indra, Yama, Varuṇa, Agni, Sūrya, Vāyu and Soma retained certain functions and remained as objects of veneration. This trend extends up to the period of the Sinhala ritual as in the case of Indra, Yama, Agni and Sūrya.

We observe certain new gods coming into the scene who play an important role in the Sinhala ritual.

Kubera- An important God who assumes a new role completely different from what is assigned to him in the Vedic period is Kubera. In the Vedic period he was the chief of evil beings living in the abodes of shadow and darkness. In the Hindu period he is elevated to the rank of God becoming the guardian of the North while retaining his position as the King of Yakṣas.

Kubera is the God of wealth occupying the City of Ālaka which is considered to be the wealthiest in the celestial regions. He is ugly and deformed having three legs and eight teeth. He was endowed with the chariot Puṣpaka built specially for him by Brahma. This is the magic chariot which was stolen by Rāvanā (Kubera's half brother) to abduct Sītā. Rama later used the same chariot to transport himself, Sītā, Lakṣmaṇa and the entire army of monkeys back to Ayodhyā.

Kārtikeya- Kārtikeya also known as Skandha is the eminent battle god in the Hindu pantheon. The functions of Indra and Agni in the Vedas are almost totally transferred to Kārtikeya who eventually becomes the defender of the gods. He is mentioned as god not interested in women while other accounts speak of him having a wife called Devasenā or Kaumāri. He rides a peacock carrying a bow and arrow. He has six heads and six pairs of arms and legs. He is widely worshipped particularly in South India and Sri Lanka. In South India he is known as Subramaṇya and in Sri Lanka as Kataragama *Deviyo.* It is interesting to note that in Mahāraṣtra he is

completely divorced from women where the latter are not even allowed to worship him. However, in Sri Lanka he is fondly appreciated by women and has an illegal wife known as Valli Ammā. Kataragama *Deviyo* holds an important role in the Sinhala pantheon.

Viśvakarma- Viśvakarma is the traditional divine artificer. He is charged with the responsibility of building the heaven for all the gods. Some of his best known creations are Indra's Vaijayanta and Kubera's and later Rāvanā's Lanka. The individual items of creations include Kubera, Puṣpaka, and the various chariots for the gods. Indra's thunderbolt, Kartikeya's lance, Siva's trident are some other creations attributed to Viśvakarman. His daughter Sanjnā was married to Sūrya.

Kāma- Kāma is not entirely a new god. In the Vedic period he was born from the cosmic waters whose immediate manifestation was desired and the ambition was to achieve that desire. In the Hindu pantheon he becomes identified with sexual desire. He as the god of love is considered to be the son of Viṣṇu and Lakṣmī goddess of beauty. He is very handsome and ever youthful having a parrot as his chariot. He always carries a bow made of sugar cane strung with a line of humming bees. He is accompanied by his wife Rati (passion) and Vasanta (spring) his friend. He aims his shafts to innocent girls, married women and even to ascetics.

Kāma one day interrupted Siva who was deeply engrossed in deep mediation. Siva, enraged at this moment burnt Kāma into ashes as a punishment. Henceforth he was known as Ananga-the bodiless person.

GODDESSES

There are three important goddesses who become more and more popular during this period. As was in the case of the Gods of the *Vedic* period, the functions and the characteristics of the Goddesses change as they acquire prominence during the Hindu period.

Sarasvati- Sarasvati was originally the goddess of the river Sarasvati, a water deity who was revered for fertilizing the country thus affording well planned agriculture. Later, holy ritual was performed on its banks which exercise required the composition and the singing of hymns. She was eventually, identified with ***vāch*** and became the goddess of speech. She is the Goddess of knowledge, music and fine arts. She is said to have invented the Sanskrit language and the Devanāgari script.

She is depicted as a very beautiful woman, wearing a crescent moon on her brow and rides a swan or a peacock. It is said that she was originally one of the wives of Viṣṇu along with Lakṣmi and Gangā. Viṣṇu could not tolerate them quarrelling and decided to give Sarasvati to Brahma and Ganga to Siva. On another occasion she was late for a sacrifice which Brahma had to perform accompanied by her as his wedded wife. Brahma

sent word for her who retorted that Brahma could very well wait for her as she was busy in the toilet. Brahma was enraged and asked the Gods to find him another wife. Gāyatri the daughter of a sage was therefore brought in and married to Brahma who then performed the sacrifice with Gayatri. When Sarasvati ultimately turned up she had to accept Gāyatri as the second wife to Brahma.

The Sinhala ritual has many references to Sarasvati and in some there is a special offering in the name of Sarasvati. As the goddess of learning and the creative arts she is very much implored by the artists prior to their performances.

Lakṣmī- Lakṣmī who was originally the wife of Varuṇa or Sūrya becomes the wife of Viṣṇu in the Hindu pantheon and the goddess of wealth and material prosperity. She is said to have sprung as one of the fourteen precious things from the milky ocean when it was churned for ambrosia. She is renowned for her fidelity. When Viṣṇu appeared in the various incarnations Lakṣmi accompanied him. In the incarnation of Rāma she was the faithful Sītā and in the Kriṣṇa incarnation she was both the cow girl and wife Rukmini.

She is represented as a beautiful golden coloured woman sitting or standing on a lotus. She is also portrayed massaging the feet of Viṣṇu as he lies on the coils of the Serpent Ananta or Seṣa or riding with him on Garuḍa.

Lakṣmī very often forms a part of the Sinhala ritual pantheon.

Devi- Devi is also known as Mahādevi (Great Goddess) and depending on the various roles assumed by her, she bears a different name Sati, Pārvati, Durga, Kāli and Umā.

She is the most complex and the most powerful of the goddesses inheriting some characteristics from pre-Aryan times. She is eventually Śiva's consort-his Śakti-female energy. This female energy manifests itself as Sati.

Sati- Sati is the daughter of Dakṣa married to Śiva who was despised by not being invited to the sacrifice. Sati therefore protested and in order to vindicate Śiva's superiority jumped into the sacrificial fire and burnt herself to death. Śiva, on hearing this proceeded immediately and danced round the world seven times with the body of his spouse. Sati's body was cut and each of the places where the fifty pieces fell became sacred. This is considered as the origin of the Tantric worship of the Yoni the female organ. In this role she is the ideal Hindu wife, an example of self-immolation which later led to the practice of suttee among Hindu wives.

Sati, was reborn as Pārvati and sister to Gangā, goddess of the

Ganges. Siva by this time was meditating and had no interest in marriage. Pārvati too was awaiting him by practicing austerities. She was becoming beautiful and infact changed her black colour to golden. She was therefore known as Umā-light of Beauty. At last a Brahmin came to her and despised Siva claiming it was futile to await for such an ugly, homeless mendicant of dirty habits. Pārvati could no longer bear such blasphemy and closed her eyes with her hands and shouted at the Brahmin. On this the Brahmin revealed himself as Siva smiling. Umā fell down and worshipped him. In due course Siva married her. Their son was known as Kārtikeya.

The ferocious dreadful and terror aspect personified is found in Durga. She is said to have been born from the radiant flames which issued from the mouths of Brahma, Viṣṇu and Siva. Her mission was specifically to kill demons and in particular the buffalo demon Mahiṣa, an Asura who had conquered the heavens and driven away gods. She has ten arms which, are blessed with the weapons of the gods namely the discus from Viṣṇu, the trident from Siva, the conch or shell from Varuṇa, the flaming dart from Agni, bow from Vāyu, a quiver and arrow from Sūrya, iron rod from Yama, lead roll from Brahama, thunderbolt from Indra, club from Kubera, a battle axe from Viśvakarma, precious stones and offensive weapons from Samudra, a necklace of pearls from the milky ocean, a lion from the Himālayās, and milky ocean, and a garland of snakes from Ananta. Armed with these weapons she killed Mahiṣa the buffalo demon.

The destruction of Durga the demon was her next mission by which act she received the name Durga. It is said that Durga conquered the three worlds and dethroned Indra, Vāyu, Candra, Yama, Varuṇa, Agni, Kubera and Rudra. He abolished all religious ceremonies and the reading of Vedas. The rivers changed their courses and the stars diminished their light and retired from sight. It was in these circumstances that Devi demolished the demon Durga.

Devi also appears in a more terrifying form in the goddess Kāli the black earth mother. She receives her name Kāli as she destroyed Kāla time itself. Devil dance, black magic and obscene ceremonies practised today in India can be traced back to Kāli. As the goddess of epidemics and cataclysms she evidently originated from the Non-Aryans and continued to symbolize the concept of destruction.

She had a black skin and a tusked face smeared with blood and bearing a third eye. She wears a garland of skulls with her tongue hanging out from the mouth with dripping blood. She had four arms, one holding a weapon, another the head of a giant. The other two hands are free and raised to bless the worshippers.

ANIMAL DEITIES

Apart from the gods and goddesses, in the Hindu pantheon mentioned above there is yet another category of deities, who can be classed as animal deities bearing prominent animal characteristics. The chief deities among this are Gaṇeṣa, Garuḍa and Hanuma.

All these three deities feature very prominently in the Sinhala ritual.

Gaṇeṣa- Gaṇeṣa is the most popular deity barring Viṣṇu, Siva and their consorts. He has an elephant's head on a human body using the rat as his vehicle (vāhana). He is pot bellied with a yellow skin having four arms holding a club, a shell, a discus, and a water illy.

He is the god of prudence and sagacity and as the remover of all obstacles, he is propitiated at the beginning of any undertaking such as commencing a business, going on a journey or building a house. His image is found not only in the Hindu temples but on road sides and business houses etc. destined to protect his believers. He is also the god of wisdom who is said to have composed the *Mahābhārata* at the instance of the sage Vyāsa.

Three *Puraṇas-Matsya, Varāha* and the *Skandha,* give three versions of his birth. According to the *Matsya Purāṇa,* Siva had a habit of surprising Pārvati when she is in her bath which action was disliked by her. In order to dissuade Siva from coming near the bath Pārvati one day took the oil and ointments used at the bath and together with the other impurities that came from her body formed them into the figure of a man to which she gave life by sprinkling it with the water of the Ganges. She set this figure at the door of the bathing apartment to guard her. Siva in his usual habit came over to be confronted with this figure Gaṇeṣa, the guard and with the ensuing combat Gaṇeṣa's head was cut off. Pārvati was so enraged to see her son dead and immediately sent messengers to obtain another head for him. The first creature to be found was an elephant whose head was brought and planted on Gaṇeṣa's shoulders.

In the *Varāha Purāṇa* the birth of Gaṇeṣa is ascribed to Siva alone. When the gods and sages wanted some one to oppose the commission of sins, they approached Siva and pleaded that some authority be created for this purpose. Siva pondered for some time and looked at Pārvati by which countenance there sprang up a radiant youth of great beauty, which captivated the hearts of all the heavenly females. Pārvati was angered with jealousy and cursed him to be ugly with an elephants' head and a pot belly. Siva countered this curse by declaring that his son should be called Gaṇeṣa, the chief of Vinayākas and Gaṇas and that success and disappointment should spring from him which will bring enormous influence over the gods and the humans.

The *Skanda Purāṇa* gives yet another version of his birth in which during the twilight that intervened the Dvāpara and the Kali Yugas all unworthy people such as women, barbarians and Sudras gained entrance to the heavens by worshipping at the Somnath temple thus making, the heaven overcrowded. The divine beings headed by Indra appealed to Siva to rectify this situation. Pārvati was requested to solve this problem who then by rubbing her body created a being with four arms and an elephant's head who would make the human beings avaricious for riches that they would have no time for religious activities promoting entry to the heavens.

Gaṇeṣa has only one tusk the reason being that the other was destroyed by Parasurāma. It is said that once Parasurāma paid a visit to Siva who happened to be sleeping at the time Gaṇesa told him that Siva would not be disturbed, but Parasurāma was in such á hurry he wanted an audience with Siva. Gaṇeṣa, held that Parasurāma was not such an important visitor to disturb his father. They started an argument which ended in a fight which destroyed one of Gaṇeṣas' tusks.

Gaṇeṣa has two wives Siddhi and Buddhi who were won by his intelligence and logical talent. Kārtikeya and he were rivals to take the hands of these and as a possible solution both agreed that they would run a race round the world and the winner should get the two ladies as the prize. Kārtikeya set off and after a weary journey returned home. He found Gaṇeṣa by that time already married to the two ladies claiming that his deep studies in the scriptures and gifted learning were infact nothing but a complete tour round the world.

Geṇeṣa is one of the important gods propitiated in the Sinhala ritual.

Garuḍa- Garuḍa is a mythical combination of man and bird and holds the position of king of the birds. He is an object of great veneration as the charger of Visṇu.

Garuḍa's mission is to destroy evil. He hates serpents because his mother Vinātā was an enemy of her husband's (Kāsyapa's) principal wife Kadru, the mother of serpents. Garuḍa or Guruḷa in Sinhala appears in many Sinhala ritual presentations.

Hanumān- Hanumān born of an Apsarā was transformed into a monkey due to a certain curse. He is renowned for his obedience and faithfulness to Rāma. He has the ability to fly fast because his father was the wind god (Vāyu). He could change his size at will and become invisible if necessary and had enormous strength to uproot trees and shift mountains. It is this strength that helped him to support Rāma in recapturing Sītā from the bonds of Rāvanā. He is vast as the size of a mountain and tall as a tower having a yellow skin, shining in molten gold. His face is red and has a tail of enormous length. In the battle field as his enemies advance he destroyed them by a fierce roar.

Hanuman's role in the Rāma episode is recounted very often in the Sinhala ritual. Many astounding tales of Hanumān's adventures are told which have very few parallels in the realm of Hindu mythology. It is said that when the battle of Lankā was over and Rāma along with Sīta returned to Ayodhyā, Hanumān was requested to ask for any boon that he wished for. His only request was to live as long as men spoke of Rāma and Sīta episode and their heroic deeds. This boon was given to him which in effect would mean that Hanumān would live for ever because the episodes of Rāma too would live for ever.

Nāgas- The nāgas (snakes, serpents) are the guardians of the magnificent world known as Pātāla in the nether regions. The capital of this world is Bhogavati - City of wealth having the best precious stones in the three worlds.

The chief of the Nāgas is said to be Ananta (endless) who features very often in most of the Sinhala rituals. He has thousand hoods. He is the constant companion of Viṣṇu who has made him the raft on which he sleeps when floating on the cosmic waters on the eve of creation. Ananta is also known as Sesa along with Vasuki (Śiva wears this serpent as the girdle) who are considered as deities whereas most other serpents are still in the state of demons personifying evil.

The Nāgas are sons of Kadru, the principal wife of the Sage, Kāsyapa. Apart from Ananta some other important Nāgas mentioned are:

Vasuki, Sankha, Kulika, Mahāsankha, Sveta Dhananjaya, Dhṛtarāṣtra, Sankhacaruna, Kambala Aswatara, and Devadatta some of whom have five, seven, ten and even thousand hoods graced with lustrous and excellent gems.

Sugrīva- Sugrīva was yet another monkey king born as the son of Sūrya. It is said that in the battle between Rāma and Rāvanā, Sugrīva knocked Rāvanā's crown off his head. After Rāma's victory, Sugrīva, his wife along with Hanuman and many other monkeys accompanied the hero to Ayodhyā and after Rāma's coronation they returned to their native land.

Jambavan- Jambavan was king of bears who also along with an army of bears aided Rāma in his battle against Rāvanā. He was born of Viṣṇu and as a reward for his services he was conferred the boon that he would be vulnerable to his own father. He was therefore killed by Viṣṇu's incarnation Kriṣṇa.

MOUNTAINS AND RIVERS

There are certain mountains rivers and ponds/pools considered as dieties as they have assumed a significant role in Hindu mythology. The deification of this physical phenomena has come down and retained to a great extent in the Sinhala ritual as well.

Himalayan range is obviously the most prominent of these mountains on whose summit all the heavens are situated. Mount Meru the greatest mountain in the Himalayan range is the abode of Brahma extending 14,000 leagues. Indra's abode and other cities are situated around the Brahma city. In the foothills of Mount Meru are the abodes of Gāndharvas, Kinnaras and Siddhas.

Mount Meru is mentioned in many Sinhala rituals as the greatest and most sacred mountain.

Mount Kandara is another mountain in the Himalayan range which served as the pole in churning the milk ocean.

The Himalayan range is personified as Himavan married to Menā. Gangā and Pārvati are their daughters.

Gangā- The elder daughter of Himavan is the holy river Gangā which runs three times round the city of Brahma situated on the summit of Mt. Meru. Gangā is personified as a goddess. The Hindus believe that a dip in the holy waters of Gangā washes away all their sins.

Asuras- The Hindu pantheon included both the ethical conceptions of good and evil. Asuras, representing evil are the enemies of gods but they are also the relations of gods. Asuras are born of Diti and the gods-the Suras are born of Aditi, the sons of Kāśyapa, thus making good and evil half brothers.

Asura also means 'non-drinking' in contrast to Suras the drinking ones. It is probable that the ancient Aryans drank very hard and Asuras were probably the aboriginal non-Aryans who were not aware of the techniques of distilling and therefore non-drinkers. Asura is again interpreted to be the Hindu term for Assyrians, who were the enemies of Aryans before they migrated into India. The aborigines were apparently designated by the Aryans as the demons who were driven away. The word Asura is therefore used to describe the non-Aryan races of barbarous habits and thus indicate evil persons.

Sura-asura conflict physically and ethically continue in Hindu mythology - physically the gods are not always able to keep control of heaven and ethically there is always the conflict between good and evil. The physical conflict has its own mythology. The Asuras were originally gods and included such mighty Vedic gods such as Varuṇa. They were subsequently driven away from the heavens and demoted to become demons except in the case of Varuṇa. When the world is destroyed periodically the valuable items such as Amṛta- ambrosia get lost. Both the gods Suras and the Asuras jointly commenced the churning of the milky ocean in order to recover the precious items. Asuras in fact helped the gods to tear up the Mount Mandara for use as a churning stick, and arranged the serpent Vasuki to be the churning rope. Viṣṇu suggested that the gods

should take the head end of Vasuki and Asuras the tail end. Both gods and the Asuras were eagerly awaiting to grab Amṛta-Ambrosia. Asuras mistrusted Viṣṇu and wanted the head end. This is exactly what Viṣṇu too wanted in order to allow the gods to gain Amṛta. As the churning progressed Vasuki's breath blew hot and the Asuras were suffocated where as the gods were refreshed at the tail end. When at last the Amṛta appeared the Asuras however made off with the Amṛta and immediately an argument arose as to who would be the first to drink it. At this crucial moment an extremely beautiful girl-Mohini appeared on the scence and both the gods and Asuras forgot the Amṛta and ran towards her. She looked at them most provocatively and reminded them about the Amṛta. Both the Suras and the Asuras agreed to abide by her decisions who started apportioning the Amṛta to the gods and Asuras who were arranged in two long rows. She started with the gods first and by the time she came to the end of the gods row, she suddenly vanished. She was none other than Viṣṇu who cheated the Asuras. Immediately a fight broke out and the gods naturally won the war as they were already strengthened by drinking the Amṛta. Asuras hence forth became the enemies of the Gods and were also branded demons.

Asuras now resort to defeat the gods mainly by acquiring power through austerities. The Sura-Asura war thus continues age after age.

Two Asuras who feature often in the Sinhala ritual are Rāhu and Ketu. When Mohini was apportioning the Amṛta to the gods one of the Asuras slipped between Sūrya and Candra and received a portion of Amṛta. Viṣṇu who discovered the fraud immediately cut the Asura into two. By this time he had drunk the Amṛta and therefore both parts lived, the head becoming Rāhu and the trunk becoming Ketu. Rāhu has never forgotten his hatred of the sun and moon and even today pursues them and manages to swallow them thus causing the eclipses.

Rākṣasas- Rākṣasas are the descendants of the sage Kāsyapa by his wife Khāsa. According to another tradition they sprang from the foot of Brahma. A further belief is that they like their leader, Rāvanā descend from the sage Pulastya.

Although their origin is traced to a sage or Brahma their physical appearance and behavior are contrary to those of such noble ancestors. They are of grotesque appearance, some being dwarfs and emaciated and some others deformed. There are Rākṣasas with one eye, one ear, monstrous bellies crooked legs or with heads of donkeys, elephants and horses. They haunt cemeteries and depend on the dead bodies for their normal food. They resort to various activities harming the human beings. They are sometimes identified as the Dravidians who were driven away by the Aryans. The physical characteristics and the behaviour pattern of the Rākṣasas correspond very closely to the description of demons *(Yakku)*

and the Rākṣasas mentioned in the various plaints in the Sinhala ritual.

Rāvanā- Rāvanā is the leader to Rākṣasas. He was the grand son of Pulastya the sage. The mighty giant has ten faces, twenty arms, copper coloured eyes, an enormous chest and white teeth. He has the royal insignia. However his body shows all the wounds inflicted by the gods, particularly by the thunderbolt of Indra and by the discus of Viṣṇu. He has a weakness for other people's wives. His strength is so great that he could stop the sun and the moon in their normal courses and split the tops of mountains as he did in the case of Kailāsa. He has an army of 14,000 demons with whose assistance he conquered the celestial kingdom and is said to have brought all the gods to Lankā to serve him. It was on this occasion that he made even Brahma, Siva and Viṣṇu to perform menial tasks in his palace. This was one of the crimes for which he was finally punished by Viṣṇu in his Rāma incarnation.

Kumbhakarṇa- Kumbhakarṇa is Rāvanā's brother and he is so named because his ears are like earthen pots. He is eighty four leagues in height and the body is as vast as a mountain. His breath is like a whirlwind and speech like thunder. He could not be accommodated in any palace in Lankā and therefore he chose as his abode a large mountain cave.

He performed austerities in order to get a boon from the gods for him to be immortal. Every time gods gave a boon to the Rākṣasa and Asuras they saw to it that there was some loop hole. In the case of Kumbhakarṇa, Sarasvati was manoeuvred to enter in Kumbhakaraṇa's mouth and twist the tongue so that when he asked for eternal life he actually asked for 'eternal sleep'. This was readily granted and later modified by Brahma so that Kumbhakarṇa woke up one day every six months.

When Rāvanā wanted to enlist his support to fight Rāma, he piled up food (rice and animals) as high as Mt. Meru. Rocks and trees were hurled at him but would not be awakened. Finally thousands of elephants were made to walk over him which resulted in his awaking and consuming all the food set before him. However he was only half fed and therefore satisfied his appetite after coming into the battle field and devouring hundreds of animals at a time. He was successful in capturing Sugrīva but however met with his death in the combat with Rāma who with his divine weapons cut off all his limbs and fell like a great hill crashing down into the sea.

Yakṣas- Kubera has his own attendants living in the Himālayās. They protect the treasures and are disposed towards the human beings. Their role in the Sinhala ritual however is quite the contrary. *Yakku* (the demons) are not at all disposed towards human beings; instead at every possible opportunity they harm the human beings (see Kapferor 1983).

Kinnaras- They live in the valleys of the mythical mountains.

They are the male dancers of the divine world having human bodies with horses' heads.

Gāndharvas- They are half-man and half-bird and friendly towards the humans. They are the descendants of Brahma or Kāsyapa-the sage.

They are supposed to be very knowledgeable of the divine truths and medicines. They are usually found in Indra's heaven but have their own splendid cities. They haunt the human world during twilight hours and are very fond of women.

Apsarās- Apsarās are the female partners of the Gāndharvas. They are the dancing girls in Indra's court. They are one of the most valuable which came up consequent to the churning of the milk ocean. However since they were not purified they were not destined to be the wives of either the gods or the Asuras. Ultimately they became the wives of all with easy virtue. There are about six hundred million of them and some important Apsarās often mentioned by name are Urvasī, Menakā, Raubhā and Tilottamā.

Siddhas- Siddhas are beings of great occult powers. There are 88,000 of them inhabiting the middle regions between earth and heaven. They are of subdued senses and undesirous of progeny and abstain from procreation. They are therefore supposed to be victorious over death. They are said to be the manifestations of Viṣṇu.

BUDDHIST COSMOLOGY

The Vedic deities with their developments during the Brahmanic age and the transformation taking place in the Hindu pantheon in no small measure moulded the Buddhist cosmology. Since the exorcist and, the lay Sinhala conceptions of the cosmic order are partly a direct evolution of the Buddhist cosmology, I now propose to deal with it briefly particularly as it is reflected in the Buddhist *Nikāyas* and the traditional Buddhist thought.

The historical conceptions of the cosmic order can be traced back to the early Buddhist *Nikāyas,* later Buddhist works and the commentaries.

" For a proper appreciation of the early Buddhist evidence in this connection, a distinction has to be made between a historical cosmography and an analytical cosmology. Of these, a historical cosmography can best be described as one that takes into serious consideration such problems as concerning the origin of the world, the origin of man in particular and the rest of the living beings in general, the continuity of the world through time and its end (if any) etc. An analytical cosmology on the other hand, is not directly concerned with such problems as the origin of the world, its passage through time, the origin of man, etc. It's main concern being the individual and the world in relation to him it can best be described as a

relational study of man and his place in the universe. Yet the two approaches are not mutually exclusive, while Jainism offers an excellent example of the first, the second describes the world view of early Buddhism". (Marasinghe 1974 p.43).

The world system according to the Buddhist cosmology has its sun, moon and the earth with its continents and the oceans. Mount Mahameru is situated in the centre of the earth over which are the heavens and hells down under. It is surrounded by seven rocks formed in seven concentric circles and are known as the Satkulupavva.

Even during the life time of the Buddha the doctrinal and the philosophical tenets were made popular and understandable to the ordinary people by his deciples Moggallāna and Kumārakassapa by drawing attention to a picturesque Buddhist cosmology of an extremely attractive heaven and contrasted with a despicable hell *(Avīchi Niraya)*. In Sri Lanka too on the other hand Mahāthera Mahinda who introduced Buddhism to the island during the reign of King Devanampiyatissa (250-210 BC) discussed at length in his second sermon to the royal house hold, the travails of the spirits of the dead who are in heaven and hell in accordance with their past actions.

The Buddhist sermon (*Dharma Dēsanā* or the *Bana Kīma*) continues to be the most effective media by which doctrinal and ethical concepts are explained to the laymen. The Buddhist Canonical Texts *(Tripiṭaka)*, its commentaries *(Aṭṭhakathā)* and the collection of five hundred and fifty birth stories of the Buddha *(Pansiya Panas Jātakaya)* continue to be the main source material for the sermons. A host of Sinhala literary works in fact grew out of this material which crystallized the laymens0 Buddhist view of life in relation of his normal behaviour.

Among these works mention should be made in particular of a Sinhalese commentary to the *Saptasūryodgamana Sutta* of the *Anguttara Nikāya* (one of the texts in the *Sutta Piṭaka*) which includes an elaborate description of the Buddhist cosmology. The Sinhala Literary works of the Polonnaruwa period (1055-1236 c.AD) such as *Dharmapradīpikāva, Butsarana, Saddharmālankāraya* utilised freely the subject matter of this commentary. The Jātaka literature along with these literary prose works and the cosmological accounts such as the *Irahanda Gaman Vistaraya*, the *Loka Vistaraya* of a later period (Kandy period - 18th c.AD) seem to have built up the boundless field of the Sinhala Buddhist cosmology with its fantastic cycles of ages, multitude of universes, concentric circles of oceans, and the cataclysmic cosmic changes appearing to be a mere fantasy.

The exorcistic conceptions of the cosmology as depicted in the plaints *(Kannalavva)*, verses *(Kavi)* etc. closely follow this historical literary tradition. Infact these plaints etc. in the oral tradition show a

remarkable similarity to the information found in the literary works. The exorcist and the lay conceptions of the cosmic order therefore is essentially a reduction of the literary and the oral exorcistic traditions. Accordingly the contemporary Sinhala Buddhist cosmic order is a happy combination of the historical cosmography and the analytical cosmology referred to earlier. Our world system has its sun, moon and the earth with its continents and the oceans. Mount Mahāmeru is situated in the centre of the earth over which are the heavens and hells down under. It is surrounded by seven rocks formed in seven circles and are known as the *Satkulupavva.* They are Yugandara, Isadhara, Karavīka, Sudassana, Nemindara, Vināṭaka and Assakanna. To the South of Mahāmeru is the Jambudvīpa with Viruḍha as the monarch of the Kumbhāṇḍas and the Prētas. To the west is the Aparāgoyana with Virūpākṣa reigning over the Nāgas. Pūrvavideha is in the East with Dhṛtarāṣṭra in charge of the Gāndharvas and to the North is the main empire of the Yakkhas-the Uturukurudivayina ruled by Vaiśravaṇa (Vesamunirajjuruvo).

Of all these four continents Jambudvīpa occupies a significant place being the birth place of Buddha. Himalayan forest - the abode of the gods and holy men and the famous Anotapta lake with six other lakes are situated in the Jambudvīpa. Anotapta lake occupies a prominent place in the Sinhala Buddhist mythology. Virūḍha who reigns over Jambudvīpa in the south is also the lord of the Kumbhāṇḍas. The canonical texts refer to the people of Jambudvīpa as being clever *(sura)* mindful *(satimato)* and leading a higher life *(brahmacariyāvāsa)* (A.IV.396).

In the Aparagoyāna, Virūpakṣa rules over the Nāgas which name is constantly referred to in the ritual texts. The word *Nāga* in Pali generally refers to the cobra, serpent or the elephant. It is also very probable that certain tribes in India were known as Nāgas; however according to the Sinhala lay tradition Nāgaloka is situated under the earth. It is famous for having a *cetiya* enshrined with the bowl relic of the Buddha.

Pūrvavideha with its Gāndharvas is in the charge of Dhṛtarāṣṭra. Gāndharvas are regarded as a lower class of celestial gods. The Saṃyutta Nikāya references classify them with other nature gods such as Rukkhadevatās. The Sinhala lay conception ascribes them to be conversant with music.

Vaiśravaṇa (Vesamuni, Kuvera) in charge of the Uturukurudivayina is very often mentioned in the *Nikāya* texts particularly in the *Āṭānāṭiya* Sutta as the author of *Aṭanāṭiyarakkham* (DB III - 186). He is also known as Kuvera/Kubera the ruler of Alakāpura/ Alakamandā, the territory of enormous treasures.

In Sinhala exorcist conception Vesamuṇi is the lord of the entire demon empire. It is from him that the demons have to obtain the warrant (varam) to inflict pain and misery to human beings. The beginnings of this

notion is already found in the *Aṭanāṭiyasutta* where he is invoked to frighten away the malevolent spirits.

In doctrinal Buddhism, the four gods Dhṛtarāṣtra, Virūdha, Virūpākṣa and Vaiśravaṇa were the four guardian deities of the universe. Their significance has since changed giving way to the four gods Viṣṇu. Vibhīsaṇa, Kataragama and Saman alternating with Vibhīṣaṇa and Pattini who specifically function more as guardians of Sri lanka than that of the Universe.

The canonical texts and the ritual texts constantly refer to three worlds, namely the Kāmaloka (world of sense desires) Rūpa loka (world of material form) and the Arūpa loka (world of no form).

Kāma loka- There are eleven kāma lokas including the six divine realms (Sadivya loka), the Manussa loka (realm of human beings) Tirisan loka (animal habitat) Asura loka (world of Asuras) Preta loka (world of Pretas) and the Niraya, Apāya or the Narakādiya (hell).

Sadivya loka - The six divine worlds are situated just above the rock Sakvalagala in an ascending order beginning with the Cāturmahārajika followed by the Tāvatiṃsa, Yama, Tusita, Niramāṇarati and Paranirmita Vasavarti respectively. Sakra resides in the Tāvatiṃsaya presiding over the four guardian deities Dhṛtarāṣtra, Virūdha, Virupākṣa and Vaiśravaṇa mentioned above and the rest of the heavens.

Manussa loka can roughly be divided into two as those men of good-luck and those of ill-luck. Tirisan lokaya is the world of animals described as a place of suffering where beings are born because of their immoral actions. The *Anguttara Nikāya* (II. 34, II.35) has a classification which describes the animal world as follows: *sattā apāda vā dipāda vā catuppāda vā, bahuppāda vā* (whatever beings there are, whether footless, two footed, four footed, or many footed.) Asura loka is the world of Asura who in the *Ṛg Veda* are classed along with the Nāgas and the Rākṣasas who were the enemies of the Aryans. "It must be remembered that the Asuras were ruling families: and not the common people. In civilization they were far in advance of the Aryans. It would seem indeed as if the Asuras had reached a higher degree of civilization than their Aryan rivals. Some of their cities were places of considerable importance. And, in addition to this, wealth and luxury, the use of magic, superior architectural skill, and ability to restore the dead to life, were ascribed to the Asuras by Brahmanical writers' (Perry, 1923pp. 132 +). Asuras however are described in the Nikāyas as persons who commit immoral deeds in contrast to the Devas who are morally good (A II-91). In the Sinhala lay conceptions Asuras enjoy the status of demi-gods.

The Pretas in the Preta loka usually lead a miserable existence as a result of the *Kammaphala* (traits of action). They are the departed ancestors

and hence certain rites have to be performed *(pubbapetānan pubbapetakariyam kutabbam* (M.II-86). They are evil ancestor spirits having ugly features such as distended stomachs. A further category known as Mala Yakku (dead demons) - ancestors recently dead can also be classed under the pretas.

The Niraya-purgatory or hell is the world of punishment and torture where sin is atoned. Several Nikāya passages refer to ten Nirayas (SN 126, 51.152) as Abbuda, Nirabbuda, Ababa, Ahaha, Atata, Kumuda, Sogandhika, Uppalaka, Puṇḍarika and Paduma. They are places of severe and sharp continued suffering - Ekānta-dukkha tippa. kaṭuka,vedanā (M 1.73, M.I. 390). However in popular parlance there are only eight Nirayas-namely Sanjīva, Katasutra, Sunghata, Raurava, Mahāraurava, Tāpa, Pratāpa and Avīci.

Rūpa loka- Rūpa loka with form but devoid of sense pleasures constitute of sixteen lokas namely Brahmapārisajja, Brahma Purchitta, Mahābrahma, Parittabha, Appamanabha, Ābhassara, Parittasubha, Appamānasubba, Subhakinnaka, Vehappala, Asannalatta, Assissha, Atappa, Sudassa, Sudassi and Akaniṭṭha. They too are situated in an ascending order beginning with Brahmapārisajja located just above the last divine world Paranirmita-Vasavarti.

Those born in the Rūpa lokas are engaged in meditation. No physical action is possible as they are void of sensual pleasures and obviously the female sex is non existent in the Rūpa lokas. Rūpa lokas are presided over by the Mahābrahma or Brahma Sahampati. The concept of Brahma goes back to the Vedic period where he is considered as the Supreme God. In the canonical texts it is Brahma who through great sympathy for all mankind invites the Buddha to propagate the newly found doctrine (MV. 1.5). The Gods of the Brahma loka subsist on trance (S.234). The concept of the creator is sustained in the Sinhala ritual texts where the birth of many gods are ascribed to Mahā Brahma.

Arūpa loka- Arūpa loka has neither form nor sensual pleasures. They are four in number, namely Ākāsannāyatana, (sphere of unbounded space) Vinnānancāyatana (infinitude of life force or mind-matter) Akincannāyatana (sphere of nothingness) and Nevasannānāsannāyatana (neither perception or non perception). The Ārūpa lokas do not come up frequently in the ritual text cosmology.

Now, the six Divyalokas, the Rūpaloka and partly the Manussa loka (Men of good luck) belong to the realms of happiness and the Men of ill luck in the Manussa loka, together with the Tirisan loka, Preta loka and the Niraya belong to the realms of misery.

According to the *Mahāsīhanāda Sutta,* the beings in these heavenly realms experience feelings that are exclusively pleasant *(ekāntasukha*

vedanā). Even human kingship is beggarly when compared to the happiness in the heavens. The gods enjoy their fill of the five celestial sense pleasures, there being some gods who even pass from their state due to over-indulgence in these pleasures. The gods of the Tāvatiṃsa heaven, of whom we have more details than regarding the others, enjoy themselves in the Nandana park, accompanied by hosts of nymphs. On special occasions, such as when a Bodhisatta is born in the world of human beings, they make special merriment. The gods have radiant bodies, their radiance depending on the degree of the purity of their deeds in the previous human existence.

The different heavenly spheres are arranged hierarchically, but the Nikāya texts are almost silent as to what constitutes the difference between these different realms. It seems to be that the higher heavenly spheres are preferable to the lower ones, mainly as one goes higher and higher in the scale, the length of the life-spans also increases, the idea apparently being that, while the gods of the Cātummahārājika realm have a life-span of five hundred celestial years, the gods of the Paranimmitavasavatti realm have a life-span of sixteen thousand celestial years - years of similar celestial bliss." (Marasinghe, : 1974 p.51)

Within the framework of the cosmology outlined above Buddhism had to accommodate the traditional gods of the preceding Brahminic age ensuring the demands of its own doctrinal necessities. This process was dictated by the principle that Buddhism had to accept the efficacy of the prevailing divine demon hierarchy as the Buddha did not wish to go against the main-stream of the contemporary belief system, which would have jeopardized the teaching of his new doctrine but simultaneously introduce a new doctrine.

It would therefore appear that to achieve this conflicting dichotomy was in effect to embark on a revolutionary transformation of the nature and the function of the gods. The Buddhist gods were therefore no more the extra terrestrial powerful characters. They were on the contrary mortal beings coming within the modalities of the human world-manussaloka. "There is no immortality in spirithood (Yakṣatva amaratvaṃ) according to Buddhism. Therefore, the gods too, share in the same characteristics as all other beings. They too are finite, having a beginning and an end, although their conditions of birth, living etc. are said to be much better than that of human beings." (Marasinghe, 1974 p.65). Their ultimate goal in life is also brought in line with the Buddhist doctrinal philosophy of the realization of *Nibbāna*. The higher gods in keeping with their hierarchy aspire to be a future Buddha, a tenet found in all the higher gods in the Sinhala Buddhist pantheon. None of them aspire to be anything short of Buddhahood.

Buddha also recognized the importance and the desirability of maintaining good relations with the various forms of tribal religions and ritual as practiced by the indigenous tribal groups. The *Mahāparinibbāna*

Sutta for example refers to the Buddha having said that so long as the Vajjans shall continue to honour, esteem, revere and support the Vajjan shrines in town or country and allow not the proper offerings and rites, as formally given, to fall into desuetude they will not decline but prosper' (*Dīghanikāya* II p. 75).

This was nothing new but the continuity of a process which had begun much earlier during the Brahmanic period. "The Brahmin continued to be tied to ritual though not exclusively the Vedic type. In this his only rivals were the primitive medicine men, each of whom was restricted to his own tribal group. Many, even of these tribal priests, were absorbed with their superstitious lore into Brahmanism. Sometimes the Brahmin would take over and supplement with his own ritual the priestly tasks of a guild caste or even a tribe caste, always excluding or softening the worst features of the primitive rites. Buddhist, Jain and other monks had abandoned all ritual and would not officiate as the Brahmins could and did at the sacraments of birth, death, marriage, pregnancy, and initiation. The mechanism of the assimilation is particularly interesting. Not only Kriṣṇa but the Buddha himself and some totemic deities including the primeval Fish, Tortoise, and Boar were made into incarnations of Viṣṇu, Nārayana. The monkey faced Hanuman, so popular with the cultivators as to be a peculiar god of the peasantry with an independent cult of his own becomes the faithful companion servant of Rāma, another incarnation of Viṣṇu. Viṣṇu Nārayana uses the great earth bearing cobra as his canopied bed to sleep upon the waters; at the same time the same cobra is Siva's garland and a weapon of Gaṇeṣa. Siva's bull Nandi was worshipped in the South Indian neolithnic age without any human or divine master to ride him; he appears independently on innumerable seals of the Indus culture. This conglomeration goes on forever while all the tales put together form a senseless, inconsistent, chaotic mess" (Kosambi 1965pp. 168- 170).

Kosambi's explanation of the inter relation and the assimilation of the popular cults with the major Hindu and the Buddhist belief system is rational and this rationality is upheld by the 'all the tales put together' whereas he, very unfortunately sees it otherwise as inconsistent, senseless and chaotic. The very essence of the tales on the contrary, mythically transmits the living mechanism of this acculturation. Viewed from this point of view we begin to decode the message of this vast oral tradition to a logical conclusion conforming to the human aspirations beginning from the Vedic period upto date. Hanuman's seeking for a boon to live as long as men spoke of Rāma and Sītā is not the 'senseless or the chaotic' but the most sensible and the clear continuity of oral tradition.

This process of acculturation made it easier for Buddhism to restructure the god theory to suit the Buddhist philosophical system. This is clearly evident from the *Mahāsamaya Sutta* of the *Dīgha Nikāya* where all the gods and spirits etc, are made to pay homage to the Buddha and

Arhants. However this restructuring was not destined to be maintained very long. Buddhism itself in accommodating contemporary developments in Hinduism evolved the *Mahayana* form of Buddhism with celestial Buddhas thus opening the door for a system of ritual and worship.

Although the dynamic and the magnetic personality of the Buddha retained this position as a monastic compact religion it soon developed into sectarian groups soon after his demise. An attempt was therefore made by orthodox monks to institutionalize the doctrine by holding the first council at Rājagaha and codifying the three *Piṭakas,* (the Pali canon), thus arresting to great extent the infiltration of the contemporary Brahaminic religion and the ritualism into Buddhism. When the second council was held in Vesali- about a century later the *Mahasangikas* or the progressives, as such wanted to relax the Vinaya rules. This time too the orthodox party, the *Sthaviras,* succeeded in maintaining the founder's teaching as intact as possible. However, the *Mahāsānghikas* held a separate council called the *Mahāsangīti* (the great council) which according to the *Dipavansa* is said to have broken up the old scriptures, distorted the sayings and doctrines of the *Nikāyas* and destroyed the spirit of Buddhist teaching.

The main point of difference is very relevant to the Sinhala Buddhist pantheon. This was the question of attainment of Buddhahood. The orthodox held the view that Buddhahood, is a quality to be achieved by fulfilling the perfections and strictly observing the rules of the Vinaya. The progressives maintained that it is inborn in every human being and what was required is to develop that inborn quality. We in Sri Lanka inherit the earlier orthodox view but have absorbed the progressive point of view as is evident in the case of the Sinhala Buddhist gods all of whom aspire to be a future Buddha.

Buddhism was distintergrating itself so much so that even by the second century of its existence it had been broken up into as much as eighteen sects all of whom claiming to be inheriting the original tradition. Consequently, Buddhism fell into the position of a local sect of Hinduism for nearly three centuries after the death of the Buddha till it was brought back to its pristine glory by Asoka, the Maurayan emperor who made it a world religion. It was his son Mahendra who introduced Buddhism to Sri lanka during the reign of King Dēvanampityatissa (3rd c. BC). The sectarian worship of the Brahmanic gods and the ritualism did not disappear altogether which practices were gradually again creeping into Buddhism. 'Brahmanism was revived giving more and more prominence to the worship of Siva, Viṣṇu and the other Hindu Gods. In this context Buddhism was forced to eke out its own existence falling in line with the more powerful ritualistic religions. Buddhism therefore imitated Brahmanism in making Buddha a God.' It was during this period, during the time of Kaniśka, that Nāgarjuna gave a distinct form to this new development known as the Mahayana Buddhism. In fact its beginnings can

be traced back to the movement led by the *Mahāsanghikas* in holding the *Mahāsangīti* council. A separate canon was drwn by enlarging the original canon and adding a substantial section incorporating contemporary popular rituals.

Hinayana or *Theravada* was traditionally established in Sri lanka while *Mahayana* flourished in Nepal, Tibet, Mongolia, China, Korea and Japan. The rationalistic and the monastic doctrine preserved in the original Pali canon came to be the traditional religion of Sri Lanka preserved by the generations of the Buddhist monasticism. But this did not prevent the Mahayana belief system entering into the main stream of folk religion orally transmitted through the ritual and the other popular practices. I venture to suggest a positive example to this phenomenan. As has been mentioned earlier the great desire of the Sinhala Buddhist gods to aspire to be Buddhas (even the goddess Pattini is not satisfied being a Paccheka Buddha or an Arhant but aims at Buddhahood) is the very principle enunciated in the *Mahayana* Sanskrit works. The *Dasabhūmīsvara* (400 AD) described the stages to be followed in order to attain Buddhahood. The *Saddharma Puṇḍarīka* (250 AD) introduces Buddha as a God above gods who has lived for countless ages and who is still living and who will live forever. All the Sinhala rituals theorotically presume that Buddha is living at present. *The Saddharma Puṇḍarīka* further maintains that every man can attain Buddhahood by listening to his doctrine, adoring his relics and erecting stupas on his behalf. The *Mahāvastu* which is strictly a *Theravada* treatise, but containing *Mahayana* doctrines regard Buddha as a supernatural being, an idea which was discarded in the initial stages of Buddhism.

THE SINHALA TRADITIONAL DIVINE HIERARCHY

The forgoing summary of the historical development of the divine hierarchy through the Vedic period upto the configuration of the Hinayana and Mahayana tenets infusing the Sinhala folk belief system shows how in diverse sectors it has influenced the Sinhala traditional pantheon. It would appear that most of the attributes of the Indian Gods and Goddesses are found in the Sinhala gods either explicitly or implicitly.

The lay conception of the divine hierarchy is summed up in the often uttered statement *tistunkōṭiyak devi devatāvun vahansēlā* (three hundred and thirty three million gods and godlings). The Sinhala people after many a meritorious activity *pinkama* like the simple offering of flowers *mal pūjāva* or the medium type of alms giving to the Sangha *sānghika dāna* or the elaborate offering of the robes *kaṭhiṇa pinkama* transfer merit to the gods and godlings inclusive of the *tistun devi dēvatāvun vahansēlās*. We are now saddled with the problem of identifying these innumerable number of gods. In the first instance the number *tistun kōṭiyak* (three hundred and thirty millions) is a matter of numerology as in many other instances such as the Bodhisattva (Buddha the designate)

aspiring for the Buddhahood for a span of *sārā samkheyya kalpa lakṣayak* (aeons of years that cannot be counted). The numerological position is palpably a symbolic concept which can be resolved into a normal pattern by examining the belief system substantiated by the ritual tradition. The maximum possible status is bestowed to the Buddha by this numerology. So is the position assigned to the hierarchy of gods when their number is spoken of as *tistun kōṭiyak.* Has this number any connection to the thirty three gods of Manu mentioned in the Ṛg Veda Sukta hymn (8.30) which runs as follows?

Not one of you, is small, not a little child

All of you are truly great

Therefore you are worthy of praise and of sacrifice

You thirty three gods of Manu, arrogant and powerful.

The numerology of the thirty three in the Sinhala tradition probably has its relation to the Ṛg Veda.

There are two categories in the *tistun kōtiyak devi devatāvun* referred to by the Buddhist priest, the ritual priest and the layman. They are the *dēvas* (gods) and the *dēvatās* (godlings). The words *devi, deviyo, deviyan vahanse* are singular masculine nouns with the plural *devivaru* or the honorific *deviyan vahansēlā* in the nominative form. It is curious that there is no separate feminine formation and the same term is used for the feminine as well ie. *Pattini Deviyo.* The word *deva māniyan* (mother goddess) is generally used to identify Hindu Goddesses *(kāli dēva māniyan)* or divinities in the Catholic church. *Dēvatāva, dēvatāvo, dēvatāvun vahanse* in the singular masculine and *dēvatāvaru* or *dēvatāvarun vahanselā* in the plural are very common unlike a term such as *devatāviyo* (female godling).

The higher categories of gods have the nomenclature of ***deviyo***, the chief of whom are the combination of the Four Guardian Gods of the following pan-Sinhala deities. Saman, Nātha, Vibhīsaṇa, Pattini and Kataragama. Pattini is the only goddess who has so far assumed the status of a guardian god. Buddha who is the supreme and super-ordinate authority in the divine hierarchy is signified as *dēvati dēva* the god of gods or simply *Buddha* followed by *deviyan.* In some instances the words *dēva* and *dēvatā* are used as synonyms as in the case of *gini-kurumbara.* The definitions given to these two terms by the scholars reveal how the concept differs in a given context. Dandiris de Silva Gooneratne refers to the *dēvatās* as an inferior class; '.... the people worship only a few of the inferior class who do not live in the six *dēval ōkas* but on the top of the large trees and in the air above, not very far however from the earth in magnificent palaces invisible to men. The *dēvā* of this latter kind are called *dēvatā* generally but are divided into *Talatoo* and *Boomatoo Devo*"

(1863pp.66 - 67). According to him each," *Dēva* (god) is an original source of supernatural power : *dēvatā* (godling) is a secondary source of such power and is therefore a mediator between man and god. The normal Sinhalese word for the Hindu deity is *deviyo*: The corresponding Tamil term is *swāmi*, a word which may also be applied to saintly human beings" (1961pp.80-102). In modern Sinhala *dēvatā* generally connotes a rather a lose deity (Gombrich 1971p.158). Sometimes a *dēvatā* is simply a demon on his way up the pantheon's hierarchy (Obeysekere 1984pp.66-70).

Dēvatā is also synonymous with *deviyo* depending on the area of operation. Thus Mangara is reckoned as *deviyo* in his culture area but as a *dēvatā* in areas like Kurunegala where his authority is not of that high stature. However, the pan Sinhala-Gods have always been designated as *Dēvas* and never as *dēvatās*. According to Obeysekere *Dēvas* have special powers or authority *varam* a term which is derived from the idiom of Sinhalese feudalism. The king who is the source of all political power delegates his authority (or gives *varam*) to lesser political personnel of the feudal state. In Sinhalese Buddhism likewise, the Buddha is the ultimate repository of the power and authority possessed by the deities and demons" (1963p.13).

Their power and authority is two fold. Firstly, they are benevolent and help the people when their assistance is sought. Secondly, they punish the people by causing illnesses or bringing misfortune particularly when vows are not fulfilled. They also may grant the requests begged of them through the procedure of evil verse *vas kavi* and punish a person. *Dēvatās* are godlings who do not have such powers but can aspire to be *dēvas* and yield such authority subsequently. However, they are possessed of such abilities as diagnosing diseases and malevolent spirits when they are requested to do so through clairvoyant readings *anjanam bālīma*. It is in this role that Ames listed them as a separate type of spirits interterrestrial between the *dēvas* and the *yakās* (1963 p.43).

The Buddhist Canon and the commentaries have their own definition according to which those who qualify for veneration are *dēvatā yē yēsan dakkiṇeyya tē tēsan dēvatā*. Among the deities the following are frequently mentioned: *rukkha dēvatā*. tree gods (M.1.306 J. 1.221) *vatthu dēvatā* earth gods (the four kings) PV 17-*vana dēvatā*, wood nymphs (M.1.306) and *samudda dēvatā* water spirits (J.II 1.12). They help the disciples of the Buddha who are striving to attain Nibbana. "Normally the *dēvatās* come to see the Buddha on friendly visits to show their reverence to him" (Marasinghe 1974 p. 172). Such a close proximity to the Buddha has a tremendous effect on the Sinhala Buddhist concepts. It is possible that this concept included the stabilization of belief that a man who engages himself in meritorious activities will in the first instance be born as a *dēvatā*.

Dēva is also used to identify the planetary gods. Those are nine in number : *Ravi* or *sūrya* (Sun), *Candra* (Moon), *Kuja* (Mars), *Buda* (Mercury), *Guru* (Jupiter), *Sikuru* (Venus), *Sani* (Saturn), *Rāhu* (Dragon), *Kētu* (Dragon Tail). Unlike the other *dēvas* they do not have any geographical authority but exert their influence on each individual whose life span is determined by the planet under whose auspices he was born. The typical ritual performed to eliminate misfortunes brought about by planetary gods is known as *graha bali* (planetary ritual). They are also influential on certain parts of the anatomy as for example *Ravi* (Sun) controls the head, and *Candra* (moon) the chest. It is curious that they are never addressed by the honorific term *vahansē*.

A delineation of the Sinhala Buddhist pantheon is also made easier after ascertaining the definitions and the significance of the term *dēva* and *dēvatās*. Buddha is the *dēvāti dēva* (god of gods). He is the enlightened one and no longer alive and cannot have any involvement in the mundane affairs of the world. However, he is symbolically involved and viewed as the god of gods. All rituals to the gods must commence with the priest formally seeking permission (*avasara*) from the Buddha, the Dhamma and the Sangha: a formal recognition of the supremacy of the Buddhist scheme vis-a-vis the gods and the worldly interests they represent.

The island of Sri Lanka was put in charge of Upulvan by Sakra at the request of the Buddha (MV). In the Buddhist mythology there were the guardian gods of the four quarters: Dhrtārsṭra (East) Virūḍha (South) Virūpākṣa (West) and Vaisravaṇa (North).

Purattimena dhataraṭṭho dakkhiṇena vīrulhako

Pachchimena vīrupakkho kuzvero uttaraṃdisam

(*Petavatthu* 1928 p.17)

They are propitiated today but do not exert any influence and therefore the entire exercise has become a mere formality. Perhaps due to this reason the term designating these gods has been transferred to the gods of the Four Warrants in Sri Lanka *Hatara varam deviyo*. 'The Four Gods' have always existed in Sri Lanka as guardian deities protecting the secular realm from the four directions. The capital of each kingdom had to have shrines for four guardian gods. The identity of the gods varied through time and place, yet the concept was integrated to Sinhala religion right through history. Thus, in the post eighteenth century Kandyan kingdom the Four Gods were Nātha, Visṇu, Kataragama and Pattini; in the kingdom of Kotte of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the Four Gods were in all probability Vibhīṣaṇa, Viṣṇu, Saman and Kataragama; and in the *gammaḍuva* at

Rabaliya they are Viṣṇu, Saman, Kataragama and Vibhīṣaṇa. Since the fifteenth century, however, the four gods everywhere comprise some combination of the following pan-Sinhala deities: Viṣṇu, Saman, Nātha, Vibhīṣaṇa, Pattini and Kataragama. In general one of the Four Gods had a role with protecting the sovereignty of the kings as did Nātha in Kandy and probably Vibhīṣaṇa in the Kotte-Kelaniya kingdom (Obeysekere: 1984 p. 285-286). The combination implicit in the Mangara ritual is Viṣṇu, Skandha (Kataragama) Nātha and Saman.

The Vedic and the Hindu divinities referred to above have an independent role historically inherited by them but periodically changing their character. They do not strictly come within the traditional hierarchy but individually assert their role in keeping with the changing attributes they have been endowed with. Thus Śakra, Brahma and or Gaṇeśa are brought into the Sinhala pantheon though not inherent members in the local hierarchy. Some of their attributes have been transferred to the local deities as in the case of Mangara or Pattini being born more then once. The norm that a god is born twice or more can be traced back to an attribute prevalent during the Vedic period as in the case of Agni who was firstly born in heaven as Sun and secondly in the atmosphere in the guise of lightning.

Once the position of the Hindu historical gods and the goddesses and the country's traditional hierarchy in the Four Gods are clear the next step is to identify the rest of the gods who form the Sinhala pantheon. They are the members of the Cult of the twelve gods *dolaha deviyan*. It has to be clearly understood that the members of this congregation differ from one region to another. Some of the members even have demonic attributes, some appear to be well known people of the area and some are even godlings *dēvatās*. A close analysis of the function and the attributes of these gods shows that they are but the outcome of the social, economic and even the personal needs of the people such as agriculture, animal husbandry, demonic illnesses and benevolence in personal matters.

As for the Four Gods we have at least a combination of six major gods who at a given time form into a committee of four. The same clarity is not found in the congregation of the twelve. The list differs very substantially from one area to another. I take the field work done by renowned scholars to elucidate my contention. They are the lists provided by Wirz (1954 p.136), Saratchandra (1966 pp.30-31) Gombrich (1971 (a)p.185) and Obeysekere (1984 p.286).

Wirz	Saratchandra	Gombrich	Obeysekere
1.Devol Deviyo	Māṇik Devi	KohombaYakā	Irugal Baṇḍāra
2.Pattini Deviyo	Māvatte Devi	Irugal Baṇḍāra	Piṭiye Devindu
3.KataragamaDeviyo	Kosgama Devi	KandeBaṇḍāra	PallebäddeDevindu
4.Nātha Deviyo	Parakāsa Devi	ViramuṇḍaYakā	Dēvatā Baṇḍāra

5.Saman Deviyo	Kumāra Devi	Meleyi Yakā	Alut Devindu
6.Vibhīṣaṇa Deviyo	Mīriyābadde Devi	Vādi Yakā	KaluKumāraDeviyo
7.Gini Kurumbara Deviyo	Vanni Baṇḍāra	Kaḍavara Yakā	Kiri Baṇḍāra
8.Vāhala Deviyo	Kalu Baṇḍāra	Vali Yakā	Kalu Dēvatā Devindu
9.Dāḍimuṇḍa Deviyo	Bōvala Devi	Kudā Guru	Vāsala Devindu
10.Mahā Viṣṇu	Migahapiṭiya Devi	Ambarāpati	Kaḍavara Devindu
11.Isvara	Miriswatte Alut Devi	Mahā Guru	Vanniya Baṇḍāra Devindu
12.	Kivulegedara Alut Devi	Kalukurumbara (based on Kohomba Kankāriya)	Mangara deviyo

It is clear that the number in the congregation is maintained and the names vary very substantially from region to region and perhaps from time to time. Irugal Baṇḍāra appears in the Mangara ritual. Kosgama, Māvatte, Mirisvatte are names of villages and probably the chief towns of these villages. Kivulēgedara Devi perhaps may be Kivulēgedara Mohottāla, one of the leaders of the 1818 rebellion against the British. However the number does not change; instead as in the Four Gods, the members changed. Numerology permits continuity in tradition within the context of change and cultural and areal variation. It provides an overall sense of cultural unity within large geographical areas (Obeysekere 1984 pp.287-88).

A further classification is obvious in the rituals, particularly the *gam maḍuva* and in the ritual literature. This is the cult of the Tun bāge deviyo - the gods of the Three Divisions. They are Pattini, Devol and Dēvatā Baṇḍāra all of whom are members of the Twelve Gods. Obeysekere seems to think that the Three Deities were part of an earlier cluster of the Twelve Gods and because of their importance they were retained but given another numerological classification as the Three Gods. However, later Pattini rose into a higher category while the other two retained the lower positions. He therefore concludes "the cult of the *Gam maḍuva* at one time contained a collectivity of Twelve Gods, a part of the operative pantheon. Pattini, herself, as well as Dēvatā Baṇḍāra, *Devol, Mangara* was part of this collectivity (1984 p.289). Obeysekere rationalizes the list given by Wirz by arguing that the social and religious conditions in the fifteenth century tended to erode the popularity of the regional and local deities like the Twelve Gods and thereby displaced them by giving prominence to the gods of the court, elite and the masses as well. Thus the major gods-Viṣṇu, Nātha, Vibhīṣaṇa, Kataragama became part of the operative pantheon. He concludes that the proceeding line of argument suggests that after the capital of the Sinhala kings moved to Kotte in the fifteenth century, the cult of the Twelve Gods was displaced by the State cult of the Gods of the Four Warrants (in reality five for this region). Of the Twelve Gods, the more local ones - that is those deified local heros - would more quickly have

eroded, while those with a larger cultural spread (like *Dēvatā Baṇḍāra, Mangara, Kiri Ammā* and *Dala Kumāra* or *Garā*) would remain perhaps with diminished importance" (1984 p. 291).

It is therefore clear that the Sinhala Buddhist Pantheon is reminiscent of the Indo-Aryan Vedic, Brahmanic, Hindu and Buddhist philosophy and the belief system as explicit in the host of plaints and the verses. It is in the realm of ballad literature that Hugh Nevill has made the exemplary contribution in collecting, classifying and annotating them. L D Barnett in his *Alphabetical Guide to Sinhalese Folklore from Ballad Sources* has acknowledged that his research was based mainly on the Hugh Nevill collection.

The Sinhala Buddhist pantheon has as far as possible preserved the cadre of the Vedic-Brahmanic, Hindu and the Buddhist divine hierarchy in the following structural methodology while accommodating the needs and the aspirations of the people throughout the ages and preserving the most powerful local pre-Vijayan gods.

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1. *Tistunkōṭiyak Devi Dēvātavun.* Three hundred and thirty million gods reminiscent of the Ṛg Veda classification.
2. *Tunbāge devi* - a reduction of the Trimūrti.
3. *The Gods of the Four warrants (hatara varam deviyo)* firstly the Buddhist concept and later accommodating the powerful Sinhala Buddhist Gods.
4. *The Vedic and Hindu Divinities* historically inherited and periodically changed their character, the best examples being Śakra, Brahman, Gaṇeśa and the Goddesses Lakṣmī and Kāli etc.
5. *Local pre-Vijayan Gods* - Upulvan, Saman etc.
6. *The Dolaha Deviyo* - Twelve Gods. No direct linkage to the tradition can be traced.
7. *The Sundry Gods* - the Baṇḍāra, and even Nama Näti Deviyo opening a forum for anybody to have his own God but such additions should not exceed the number *Tistunkōṭiyak* and it will certainly not.

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NEW LIGHT ON VANNIYĀS AND THEIR CHIEFTAINCIES BASED ON FOLK HISTORICAL TRADITION AS FOUND IN PALM-LEAF MSS. IN THE HUGHNEVILL COLLECTION.

by

D G B de Silva

Source Material

Research on the origin of Vanniyās and the evolution of their chieftaincies has faced constraints on account of the paucity of source material and the legendary nature of some of the available material.

The main chronicle of the island, *Cūlavaṃsa* and a few Sinhalese works point to the existence of Vanni chieftaincies in the island around the time of Māgha's rule (1215-36) and in the time of the Dambadeniya kingdom.[1] The main chronicle is however, silent thereafter, though some of the Sinhalese works refer to the continued existence of Vanni chieftaincies during the days of the Kotte kings, i.e., around the time of the Āriya Cakravarti rulers.

Tamil legendary accounts make reference to the introduction of Vanniyās to the North-Eastern regions around the fifth century AD. Other Tamil accounts as contained in "Vaiyāpatal" and "Kailayamalai" refer to the establishment of Vanni principalities in the northern parts of the Island later.

As we enter the sixteenth, the seventeenth, and the eighteenth centuries more reliable information is available on some aspects of the Vanni administration and the relations of Vanniyās with foreign powers as well as the Sinhalese kingdom. These are contained in Portuguese and Dutch official records, observations made by foreign writers and a few Sannasas granted to the Vanniyās by the Sinhalese kings. Of these, Portuguese official records show two Vanni cheiftaincies as paying tribute to Jaffna.[2] The Dutch who directly administered some of the lands on the north western littoral brought the other Vanni land under their influence through an arrangement which subjected the Vanniyās to pay tribute annually. They resorted to intermittent use of force to bring the chieftains to honour the agreements. These Vanni territores are shown in their maps as coming under the Dutch Commandment of Jaffnapatam.

The Sinhalese oral tradition supplemented by D'Oyly's accounts has also been made use of to reconstruct some features in the Vanni administration including certain aspects of the judicial administration.[3]

In the absence of information on the origin of Vanniyās and the evolution of their principalities in the Pāli and Sinhalese works, scholars and writers have increasingly turned to the Tamil traditional accounts to fill in the void despite the unsatisfactory nature of that source.

In dealing with all source material on the Vanniyās from the *Cūlavaṃsa* to the Dutch official records and foreign observations, a degree of caution has to be exercised, as much as for the Tamil sources, in order to separate facts from fiction.

The accounts in the Pāli chronicle have given an exalted position to the Vanniyās whom it has referred to as "Vanni Kings" *(Vanni raññe)*". Whether the compiler of the chronicle accorded such high position in order to maintain that Vijayabāhu (IV), one of the heroes of the chronicle led a life with royal dignity as a Vanni king while Māgha was ruling over *Paṭiṭṭha raṭṭha*, or whether he was simply following the traditional poetic exaggeration in references to Vanni chieftains., or he was projecting a situation which existed in the latter day when he complied his work when these chieftains had gained a measure of importance are matters that have to be gone into carefully.

Tamil legendary accounts found in *Yālpaṇa Vaipava Malai*,. Kōṇesar *Kalveṭṭu, Vaiyāpatal,* and *Kaila Malai* which constitute the Jaffna and Trincomalee traditions are steeped in confusing legendary detail. Besides, these are not corroborated by other evidence, and as such cannot be accepted as valid historical accounts at their face value. The chronology found in one of the Tamil traditions which places the introduction of Vanniyās in the fifth century cannot be supported historically. Scholars who attempted to rationalise this legend had to bring the chronology down by eight centuries closer to our time in order to identify the legendary figure of Kulakkoṭṭan with a historical personage by the name Cōdaganga. The existence of several personalities who used the name Cōdaganga has complicated the identification further, each scholar preferring an identification which seems to fall in line with his main thesis.[4]

Indrapala who examined the Jaffna and Trincomalee Tamil traditions in detail came to the conclusion that these Tamil works were "the result of a belated attempt on the part of later Tamil chroniclers to record the different floating traditions in the Tamil regions and to give these a historical sequence". He preferred to ascribe the introduction of Vanniyās to Māgha on the basis of the tradition contained in *Maṭṭakkaḷappu Manmiyam*.[5]

Pathmanathan has tried to establish the historical validity of the tradition relating to "Ukkiracinkan" referred to in *Vaiyāpaṭal,*[6] but as Indrapala observed, Ukkiracinkan "does not appear to be a historical personality". The latter observed further that the story as it appears in the Tamil chronicles is "basically a different version of the Vijaya legend". "Sinhalese tradition as well as some South Indian legendary material having gone into the creation of this story which forms the starting point of the history of the Jaffna kingdom in the chronicles of Jaffna" [7]. The Tamil tradition contained in *Maṭṭakalappu Manmiyam* on the times of Mākon (Māgha) finds some corroboration in the *Cūlavaṃsa* account, and as such earns more credibility as source material. However, Pathmanathan, who observed that *Mattakalappu Manmiyam* was a later work written at the request of a Dutch official, rejected Indrapala's proposition based on this source that Māgha was responsible for introducing the Vanni chieftains. His reasoning was that Māgha was from Kāliṇga, a land not known for a tradition of Vanniyās, and that the Mukkuvās of Batticaloa were not of Vanni caste [8]. In his later work, "The Kingdom of Jaffna", Pathamanthan appears to have done some rethinking but still maintained his original position. [9]

What one could elicit from these Tamil traditions is the bare historical kernel, which points to the immigration into the island around the thirteenth century, of Vanniyās who were later involved with the maintenance of irrigation works, regulation of agriculture and ensuring of services to places of religious worship.

It is against these uncertainties in research as it stands at present that a re-examination of some of the issues are being attempted in this paper using evidence in *Vittipot, Bandāravaliyas and Kaḍaimpot.* A tract found along with the Ms of Rājāvaliya in the Hugh Nevill collection (Or 6606 (112) has also been made use of in the examination of the subject of responsibilities of Vanniyās. [10] For convenience those Mss found in the Hugh Nevill collection were used in this study.

The Sinhalese folk historical tradition contained in these works received the attention of Hugh Nevill in the second half of the last century. He not only added these mss. to his collection but also made observations on the value of these tracts to reconstruct little known facets in the history of the island. However, his notes remained unpublished except for some material he used in the learned journals of his day." [11]

The value of *Vittipot* and *Kaḍaimpot* for the study of history and antiquary was emphasised by Dr WA de Silva in his address to the RASCB in 1927 [12] but for the most part these sources have remained unutilized in the study on Vanniyās except marginally.[13]

The relevance of the traditions in these works to a study of problems of Vanniyās and their chieftaincies is that they contain records, though somewhat fragmentary, of the origins and the fortunes of the members of a number of immigrant families, thereby providing a different version from those contained in Tamil legendary tradition. These accounts though not directly corroborated by other independent sources, relate to a time chronologically more acceptable and their contents are closer to historical realities of the times in the sub-continent and the island.

They record the arrival of several families from South India, notably Malabār, the grant of lands by the Sinhalese kings; the place of origin (in several cases); the place of landing; circumstances in which they left their homeland (in several cases); details of lands given; descendants of the families down to the time of writing down the copies of the Mss, which details lend to these accounts a fair degree of credibility. They confirm the Tamil tradition of the foreign origins of some of the Vanni chieftains, but closely associate these chieftains with the Sinhalese kingdom thereby deviating from the Tamil tradition which associates the Vanniyās with the legendary accounts on Tamil rulers. Their value as a source giving a point of view different from the traditional Tamil explanation on the origin of the Vanniyās has to be recognised. This could then form the point of departure for a re-examination of the issue of the origins of Vanniyās.

Some of these Sinhalese accounts point to the existence of *Vädi* chieftains at the time of the arrival of the immmigrant chieftains which continued down to the Kandyan period. This evidence could provide a clue to resolve the riddle of Vanni chieftaincies which existed in the time of Māgha and thereafter as stated in the *Cūlavamsa.*

The names of Sinhalese kings mentioned in these Mss. are somewhat confusing, the name Bhuvanekabāhu appearing several times; but through a careful reading of the MSS along with the evidence in the *Cūlavamsa* the arrival of the first group of immigrant chieftains from Malavara dēsa referred to in VBVP [14] could be ascribed to the time of Bhuvanekabāhu I of Dambadeniya-Yāpahuva. According to the *Cūlavaṃsa,* Bhuvanekabāhu was charged by his brother, Vijayabāhu (IV) with affairs in the Northern district where prospects of invasion were present.[15] It is possible that Bhuvanekabāhu maintained close relations with influential groups on the opposite coast to gather intelligence and as part of the strategy to contain invasions. The good relations his father had established and maintained with the Pāndya rulers and others in the subcontinent through matrimonial links and diplomacy, and his Pāndyan lineage may have been factors which helped Bhuvanekabāhu to establish links in South India and for his subsequent popularity among those wishing to immigrate to Sri Lanka .[16] His popularity seems to have reached legendary proportions that even later

immigrations are referred to as having taken place in the time of Bhuvanekabāhu. However, it is clear that a number of later waves of immigrations of dignitaries had taken place during the Gampola /Kotte period and the king Buvanekabāhu referred to could be identified with a ruler of that period.[17]

The popular story regarding the arrival of Malalas clearly indicates the role of the mercantile communities, and also that of Buddhist monks resident in South India, as intermediaries in facilitating the immigration of dignitaries from South India, which accords with the historical realities of the time.[18] Active trading enterprises were already in existence by this time specially centering round the north-western parts of the Island and visits by foreign merchants were quite common. There is also evidence of close communications between the Buddhist monks of the Island and those who lived in the Pāndya and Cōla kingdoms.[19]

The early waves of immigration of chieftains referred to in the Sinhalese folk historical tradition also fits into the scenario described in the *Cūlavaṃsa* Parākramabāhu II and his sons had embarked on a massive reconstruction and restoration programme, the magnitude of which was second only to that undertaken by Parakramabāhu I.[20] That it was no empty boast on the part of the chronicler is confirmed by the visible achievements of the Dambadeniya period as reflected in the revival of art, architecture and craft of the land, the height reached in literary activities, and the popular use of coinage, which suggests an expansion of commercial activity.[21] The tract of the *Rājāvaliya* referred to earlier also confirms the evidence in the *Cūlavaṃsa* that the Dambadeniya rulers undertook the restoration of irrigation works. Such massive efforts as described in the chronicle would have demanded a costly outlay of human and material resources, [22] and above all a period of relative peace in the country. The evidence in the *Cūlavaṃsa* does not point to serious invasions after those of Māgha and Candrabhānu, except that by a Codaganga during the time of Bhuvanekabāhu I. However, there are claims made in the South Indian sources of dominance over the Island by South Indian rulers which events have been placed by scholars in the Dambadeniya period but these claims have not been corroborated by Sri Lankan sources.[23] Based on all circumstantial evidence before us it could be presumed that the early part of the Dambadeniya rule - had been relatively peaceful after the two major invasions by Māgha and Candrabānu were repulsed. The internal harmony that existed in the kingdom with Párākramabāhu II maintaining good relations with his brothers and his sons during his long reign also points to an atmosphere conducive to the great undertakings which the king and his sons launched.

The magnitude of the programme of restoration and reconstruction becomes clear from the description given in the

Cūlavaṃsa, that the buildings and irrigation works centred round the former capitals had been neglected or damaged during the protracted internal wars, foreign invasions and plunder by invading troops. One of the first victims of this neglect would have been the intricate irrigation network, the collapse of which would have caused a chain-reaction affecting agriculture, sanitation and human settlements in general.

The vast mobilization of human resources in which Vijayabāhu (IV) involved the chieftains, the soldiery, artisans and craftsmen, as well as the population at large; and the material resources collected as given in the long list of implements and tools also point-to the magnitude of the work projected in order to resurrect the situation.[24]

It is exactly around the time of Dambadeniya rulers that we could chronologically place the arrival of the two groups of dignitaries from South India referred to in the VBVP (Those from Malavara dēsa); and the VP [25] (the dignitaries from Āriyavaṃsa), and their investiture as Vanniyās. The dignitaries of the Āriyavaṃsa came with a vast train of followers which included artisans and craftsmen, whose list is as comprehensive as the one referred to in the *Cūlavaṃsa* as that collected from different parts of the island. Reference to the worship of deities brought by the chieftains of *Āriyavaṃsa* and the dedication of many places in the north-west and the Nuvarakalāviya to them, and to the introduction of small-pox shows a population movement of significant proportion.

From a comparative study of the *Cūlavaṃsa* and the Sinhalese folk historical tradition, one could conclude that the early visits of immigrant chieftains to the island and their investiture as Vanniyās was closely related to the restoration of the irrigation works and re-settlement of people, firstly, in the Nuvara-väva area (Anuradhapura;) and secondly, in the other parts of the Nuvara-kalāviya, north-western parts of the island and in the Jaffna peninsula.

These South Indian immigrations, which were peaceful in nature may also have had the blessings of South Indian ruling families and this could perhaps account for the claims made by some of the South Indian rulers of dominance over Sri Lanka.

These claims could also be seen as their active participation in the reorganization of the island's administration and economic, social and cultural restoration. Whether this suggestion is tenable or not, the investiture of chieftains as Vanniyās in the outlying provinces with independent jurisdiction itself appears to be an administrative innovation introduced by rulers of Damabadeniya to revamp the district administration which had fallen apart during the post - Polonnaruva period, notably after Māgha's assault on the then existing a dministrative hierarchy.

Immigrant Vanni Chieftains

In the extant mss. which embody the Sinhalese folk historical tradition, we have been able to identify seven groups of immigrant families whose members were invested as Vanniyās by Sinhalese kings between the Dambadeniya period and the Kandyan period. In the present state of our knowledge these may be taken as representing seven distinct groups of immigrant chieftains, though it is possible that a few of these groups could be mixed up as seen from the similarity of some of the names, for example, among members of the first two groups - the chieftains from Malavara dēsa and those from Āriya Vaṃsa.

1. Chieftains From Malavara Dēsa

The account in the VBVP,[26] though fragmentary contains a very important ancient tradition. It refers to the dignitaries from Malavara dēsa as the *"first to posses the Vanni kingdom" (Vannirājjē ayitikāra palamuvāṇiyō"*. They are also referred to as *"Valivahasi - kārayo,"* a term which could also be interpreted as original settlers. The reference to the appointment by them of people who *"cleared the jungle when there was no one else"* also signifies that they were the first immigrant chieftains to settle down as Vanni chieftains.

The account does not give the name or the background of the progenitor of this family but the names of the seven chieftains who settled down in the island are given. They are referred to as coming from "princely clan" *(Kumāra-valiyen)*; from the "families of dignitaries" *(Baṇḍāra-valiyen)* and from "Vanni class" of "Vanni land" *(Vanni-Pēruven)*. These references of the folk chronicler are of special significance as they add support to the views held by scholars on the South Indian origin of the Vanniyās, but the comparison seems to end there as the Sinhalese folk tradition emphasises also the presence of *Väddā* chieftains in those parts of the island alienated to the immigrant Vanniyās.

The identity of the Malavara chieftains has to be established with the help of other sources as information is not forthcoming from the extant Sinhalese mss. Pathmanathan has observed that the name Malavara occurs in Pāṇḍyan inscriptions in such titles as "Malavara Manikka Malaya Cakravartti" which title was used by an officer of the Pāndyan ruler Maravarman Kulasekhara. He also pointed out that Malavar officials played a leading role in the war of Pāndyan succession and has listed several other titles of officials like the "Ariya Cakravartti" who served under the Pāṇḍyan administration; and that the title " Malava Cakravartti" was used by dignitaries who belonged to the chiefs of Malavar who held foremost position among traditional ranks in the service of the Pāṇḍyas.[27]

The Tamil tradition of Sri Lanka refers to the presence of Malavar chiefs in the army led by Vanniyā chiefs who came to settle down in the north. Pathmanathan observes that Malavar chiefs were prominent in this host of immigrants, but this tradition does not accord these chiefs the foremost position that the Sinhalese folk tradition has given to them as the "first to arrive", or *"Valivahasi-kārayo."*

The names of the seven dignitaries who arrived from Malavara dēsa, show that the chieftains had been given Sinhalese names on their investiture as Vanniyās. In the Tamil tradition no such details are given on the Malavara chiefs but two of the names in the Sinhalese list, namely Ilangasiṁha and Kadugat Baṇḍāra[28] seem to echo in the names of *Ilankacinka Māppānan* and *sword-girt Vanniyār* found among the list of South Indian immigrants but they are not identified with the Malavaras as such.

In the Sinhalese account the descendants of the original chieftains are traced to several degrees and the family tradition has evidently been brought down to the time of writing down the mss. The memory of this original group is also retained to this day in the *Mutti-nāmima* ceremony observed in the *Kalā-baḷalu* area to offer the first rice of the season to *Ayiyanāyaka.* The tasting of the first-lump of rice offered has to be performed by a *Valivahasi kārayā*, a descendant of the original group of immigrant chieftains.[29]

Taking all these into consideration, the Sinhalese accounts seem to preserve a strong tradition of the arrival of the original group of immigrant chieftains who were appointed as Vanniyās.

To judge from the lands held by descendants, the original members of this family had been granted lands in the Nuvara-Väva area as well as in Hurulu rata and Minneriya. These were the hinterland areas of the old cities of Anurādhapura and Pulatthi Nagara which Vijayabāhu (IV) selected as priority areas for restoration. The reference in the Cūlavaṁsa to the King handing over the restored city of Anuradhapura to the guardianship of Vanni rulers of *Patiṭṭha Raṭṭha* could very well be a an allusion to the settlement of the dignitaries of Malavara desa in this part of the country. [30] That the descendants of the family held the Nuavara-väva fief later also seems to support this suggestion.

One section of the family under Ilangasiṁha appears to have settled down in the Hurulu rata. Other members of the family were settled in Minneriya, Padaviya, Kalāväva, Kalu-vila, Vilacciya which were ancient irrigation settlements.

2. Nobles of the Āriya - Vaṁśa

The arrival of this group of dignitaries in the time of King Bhuvanekabāhu is given in some detail in the VP. The king could be

identified as the first ruler by that name who ruled from Dambadeniya and Yāpahuva, who as noted earlier, was a popular figure in the sub-continent.

The place of origin given in the text as Madurāsi appears to be a copyist's error for Madurā in the Pāṇḍyan kingdom. The reason given for the departure of the group from the homeland is said to be the insecurity in the kingdom. This accords with the developments of the time and is a more acceptable explanation than that found in Tamil legendary accounts.

The details provided concerning this group shows that the visit was as significant, if not more, than that of the first group from Malavara dēsa. These dignitaries from Āriyāvamsa came with a vast retinue consisting of artisans and craftsmen among others. They also brought their own forms of worship. Even the introduction of small-pox which seems to have been alien to the country is mentioned.

The importance attached to this family could be seen from the lands which were granted to them in a wide ranging area which included Puttalama and Munnessara in the north-west; Jaffnapatam in the north and also a number of villages in the Nuvarakalāviya.

The villages where temples were dedicated to the Aiyanā and Kāli deities brought by these dignitaries, namely, Kallatire, Sellandūva, Tabbova, Puttalama, Kaluvila Oya, Maduva, Kandara-väva , Katiyāva, Nuvara-väva, Siyambalagamuva, Kalā-balaḷu väva, and Turuvelliya, also point to the expansion of Vanni territories beyond the Nuvara *väva*-Hurulu Palāta area.

The Tamil traditions which refer to the establishment of Vanni principalities in the east and in the north do not refer to the establishment of Vanni chieftaincies in the peninsula except for the reference in *Vaiyāpaṭal* that Attimāppānan, Maluvarāyan who became the lord of Yālpānam lived with the king [31]. It is also claimed that groups of Vanniyā chiefs had come to Jaffna under the leadership of those who proudly claimed themselves to be of the Āriya Vamsa, and who were from the royal family of Madura. These references cannot be taken as indicating the establishment of Vanni principalities in the Jaffna peninsula proper and it is to the Sinhalese folk sources that we have to turn to find an explanation. The *Yālpana Vaipava Malai* repeatedly refers to the Vanniyās of Jaffnapatam who were hostile to the Āriyacakravarti rulers and who often incited the Sinhalese in Jaffna to revolt. They also sought the intervention of the Sinhalese king against the Āriya Cakravarti ruler inviting the former to invade Jaffnapatam.[32] This estranged relationship between the Āriya Cakravarti rulers and the Vanniyās of Jaffna in contrast to their relative amity with the Sinhalese may perhaps represent an old enmity between two different families of dignitaries from the Pāndya country who

contended for power in the peninsula, or the result of one having its loyalties to the Pāndyas while the other had its obligations to the Sinhalese king who granted them land.

The name Āriya Vamsa shows a close affinity with the name Āriya Cakravarti who were rulers of Jaffna, and to the Āriya nobles led by Thakuraka who was the leader of the body guard of Bhuvanekabāhu I, but as we have seen, (and as the Tamil tradition asserts) the Āriya Cakravartis belonged to a different group. The chronology of the two groups also seem to fall into two separate phases, the Vanniyās of Āriya - Vaṃsa probably having settled down in the Jaffna peninsula before the Āriya Cakravarti conquest.

The Āriya nobles led by Thakuraka seem to have been a North Indian group with Rājput connections as the name of their leader suggests; and as seen from the loyalty they showed to the king and the valour they displayed in assassinating the Sinhalese Commander-in-Chief, in the true spirit of Rājputs. [33]

The Tamil tradition, as we have seen, also seems to retain a faint memory of the arrival of Vanniyās of Āriya Vamsa, but it associates them with the north rather than with the Sinhalese kingdom.

3. Chieftains of Sēdarannähēs Family

The visit of this group is referred to in the VVSNP [34] but no details are given. Sēdarannähē is said to have arrived at Yāpanē and established himself at Pudukkulama. The Vanniyā title given to him is not mentioned. The suffix : - *unnähe* attached to his name and *Hiṭi-Hāmi* attached to his son's name, point to a chronology around the *Kotte Kandyan period when such titles as - unnähē, - rāla* and - *hāmi* were popular. [35] The fact that Hiṭi-hāmi received reconfirmations of the land in the time of the king of Sītāvaka also suggests a late date for the arrival of this family. Their inclusion among the most influential nobles of Pahalos Pattu would however, point to a date when that divisional name was commonly used. [36]

The apparent revolt raised by *Raṭe Ätto* against Kāriyappēru, a descendant of Sēdarannähe and who was murdered could point to a case of oppression by these chieftains. Kāriyapperu's brother Hiṭi-hāmi had to take refuge with a Vanniyā in Tamankaduva from where he proceeded to Sītāvaka with a male elephant and a female elephant as *däkum* and obtained re-confirmation of his fief.

4. Malala Nobles

A tradition which is far more popular than other accounts is the story of the Malalas, several versions of which are available.[37] The popularity of this tradition could be explained by the fact that members

of this family held high office as courtiers (Advisers and Counsellors) retaining such titles as *Rāja-guru*, and as heads of two important seats of learning during the Kotte period. The latter day poet Siselle Alagiyavanna Mohoṭṭāla is claimed to be a descendant of the family while the Moratota intellectual tradition is also linked with it. Evidently, the members of the family had come from a learned circle though they are said to have held a military post, *(hēvākam)* under a ruler in Telengāna whose kingdom had been usurped by Kovitta Tamils.[38] The circumstances of leaving their land are typical of the situation which obtained in the sub-continent around the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, though the identity of the kingdom or the ruler cannot be determined.

The account points to the role played by mercantile communities and Buddhist monks. It is possible that both groups had a stake in the immigration of this family to Sri Lanka. The Heṭṭis from Telengāna who provided the ships and the Demala Heṭṭis who guided the group to the island were rewarded with land grants by the king (of Kotte). They settled down in different parts of the island as honoured guests. Two of the members of the group who obviously had some links with the Buddhist clergy (given as followers of Malala princes in one version) were elevated to the position of High Priests of Vīdāgama and Totagamuva.

The names of places where the three groups - the Malala nobles, the Demala Heṭṭis and the Heṭṭis from Telengāna-arrived are uniform in all mss. except in one where the place names are mixed up. These were in he Kārativu, Kudara Malai, Mutu Pantiya triangle but all three groups converged at Velparappuva (Pomparippuva) and were met by the Väddās who conducted them to the king.

The Malala nobles had accepted office as courtiers *(Mohoṭṭālas)* and two of them, as noted were appointed as prelates of leading centres of learning. One of them, Kumāra Vanniyā *(Kanda Malala Kumārayā)* appears to have been appointed as a Vanniyā with independent jurisdiction over a good part of Pihiṭi raṭa with Kaluvila as his headquarters and the guardianship of the Sacered Bo Tree included among his responsibilities.

The lands granted to these nobles except those given to Kumāra Vanniyā included Uduvēriya (Or 6606 (133) III); gam-hata (Ruanvälla-Katakale); Moratoṭa, Or 6606 (150) III); Kīravälla, Siyanä Kōralē; Dēvamädi Hatara Pattuva and Navakkaduva (Or 6606 (170) V.)

The appointment of Kanda Kumāra Vanniyā over Kaluvila "with Pihiṭi raṭa boundaries" needs an explanaiton as these lands had been alienated earlier to the members of the family from Malavara dēsa. It is possible that the authority of the descendants of the earlier group of

Vanniyās over this area having diminished over the century or more time that elapsed, the territory being sub-divided as a result of inheritance and inter-marriage, Sītāvaka kings may have felt the need to appoint a more dynamic personality as Vanniyā there particularly in view of the pressure from the Portuguese and in order to form close links with the Vanniyās of the North.

That the separate identities of the Kaluvila family and the Nuvara-väva family had been maintained even in Knox's time is quite clear, [39] but what happened to the descendants of the original family of Kalukumāra of the Malavara family who enjoyed *Aḍukku* villages there is not explained.

5. Kaňdure Baṇḍāra Family

KB [40] records the arrival of yet another family of chieftains whose place of origin is somewhat obscure. Three members of the family entered service directly under the king (of Kotte) while the other four who became fugitives forcibly occupied land in Vellassa, Bintenna (and the eastern littoral) had entered into matrimonial relations with *Vädi* families.

The next phase of the story contains the strategy adopted by the King (Bhuvanekabāhu) to regain the land. On the one hand he intrigued with one of the brothers, Kaňdure Baṇḍāra who was offered alternate land in Tamankaduva and Nuvara kalāviya, while on the other hand, he married Kaňdure Baṇḍāra's youngest sister, who thereby became a *"yakaḍa-doli"*. The account tells us that Kaṇdure Baṇḍāra also inherited extensive land in Nuvara-kalāviya from an impoverished family of Vanniyās who having had no issues, could not take care of their extensive land. The family had later developed close relations with families of the Kandyan nobility and also with the Kīravälle *raja-mula* through inter-marriage.

The historical significance of this account is that it refers to the establishment of first Vanniyā settlements in the eastern parts of the island where *Vädi* chieftaincies were already in existence. [41]

Another significant point that emerges from this account is the importance that *Väddā* chieftains had acquired in the later centuries in the islands' history. These chieftains "now on par with the highest of the Sinhalese nobility by reason of their importance". This is illustrated by the Kaňdure Baṇḍāra's account which points to inter-marriage between families of *Vädi* chieftains and immigrant nobles and the record in the MMDK that the Disāva of Matale lodged with the Hulangamuve *Vädda* when he went to recruit troops in the district.

6. The Udayār Family

The MS. of VVSNP [42] contains also a tract which gives some information on the Udayār family whose members later gained much prominence during the Dutch period. According to this account Rāsiha Udāyār, the father of the four dignitaries who came over to Sri Lanka held military office *(hēvākam)* under a ruler from whose service he had fallen. The four sons emigrated to Sri Lanka where they landed at Yāpanē and proceeded to the territory of the Sinhalese king. The immigrants sought land to settle down *("atuhan-kadā genainṭa avasara")* which request was allowed by the king. Of the land granted to the four brothers only those given to two are mentioned in the tract. These are Kayle Pattu given to Kayle Udayār and Nuvaragam Pattu (both in Nurakalāviya) given to Kumārasimha Udayār. The lands given to Vāppaka-Udayār (later called Māppāna) and Kuñci Udayār are not mentioned.

The Tamil traditions which purport to give an account of the arrival of Vanniyās have ommited references to the families of chieftains, Kayle and Māppāna Vanniyās, who dominated the political scene in the northern part of the main land during the Dutch period and it is through the Sinhalese folk tradition their origin and early history could be traced. *Vaiyāpaṭal*, however, lists one Illankacimka Māppānan" as the chieftain who settled down in Mulliyaveli and we have suggested the possibility of his identity with Ilangasimha Vanniyā of the Malavara family who settled down in Hurulla area [42], but the Māppāna referred to in the Sinhalese tradition as being of the Udayār family has to be identified chronologically with a family which immigrated from Malaya dēsa during the Kotte period. Māppāna, however, is a name of a group of chieftains from South India which occurs several times in the early Tamil traditions, and whose members evidently sought fortunes in Sri Lanka from time to time. Though the Sinhalese version of the origin of this family remains unsupported by external evidence, the tradition appears to record a memory which is otherwise lost. Their characteristics presented in Dutch records correspond to the military background *(hēvākam)* ascribed to them in the Sinhalese folk historical tradition. Even though the Kayle and Māppāna Vanniyās may have been separated from the Kandyan territories as a result of Dutch intervention in the north, the tradition about the family may have been preserved among the Sinhalese, specially of the Kayle Pattu, Mel Pattu, Nuvaragam Pattu and Kuncetṭu Korale (or Kunci-kulama) where the members of the family had settled down. It is in some of these areas that the remnants of Vanniyās were found by British administrators of the nineteenth century. [43]

It is perhaps the traditions of this family of Vanniyās, who were of Malabār origin that were noted by those administrators. Sweethenham specifically refers to the customary laws found in

Vanni which were noticeably similar to those of the Malabars and the Mukkuvās.[44] Hugh Nevill observed that the Nayak succession was kept up for many generations in the family of Kaňdure Baṇḍāra in the east of Sri Lanka and in the family of the Hurulle Disāvas[45].

7. Mukkuvās

A number of MSS and more particularly *Mukkara Haṭana* refers to the forcible occupation of land between Kalā Oya and Mā Oya by Mūkkarus led by their chief Naḷa Mudaliyā who had advanced up to Galmuruva (Galgamuva) where he built a fortress by draining a tank and using the embankments as battlements.

The event appears to have been of great consequence as it finds mention more times than the other visits of immigrants. They had been a hostile force which occupied land forcibly in contra-distinction with the immigrant Vanniyās. This challenge had been formidable as the Mukkarus had occupied very productive land located close to the pearl fisheries, which was also well known for its elephants and spices.

The event has been chronologically placed in the time of king Bhātiya, (a ruler of Anurādhapura) but this appears to be a mix up with an older memory of an earlier invasion which had taken place when the land in this area had been dedicated in earlier times to Abayagiri *Vihāraya*. Contents of the story point to this invasion somewhere between the fall of Dambadeniya and rise of Kotte when the Āriya Cakravartis were consolidating their power in the north. They could have even been a part of the troops of the Āriya Cakravartis who are found to have advanced further south from their base in the Jaffna peninsula. The king did not have the resources to expel the Mukkarūs or he did not wish to dissipate his resources for this purpose as he had to face a greater threat from the north. As such, he invited a consortium of foreign mercenaries to expel the invader.

The *Mukkara Haṭana* speaks of the Mukkarūs having been defeated after a heavily contested battle (and some of the mercenaries having received land grants) but there is a contradiction in the account as it states elsewhere that the Mukkarūs left the island after the visitation of a famine. In point of fact, Mukkarū were found to hold Vanni chieftaincies in the Puttalama area even during the latter part of the Kandyan period.

Mukkarūs had moved to other parts of the island and are mentioned in the *Yālpana Vaipava Malai* as being employed in the Jaffna peninsula by the Sinhalese as fishermen. Later during the Kandyan period they had been transferred to the eastern coast. It would seem that the Mukkarū were not totally defeated in battle and an accommodation had been reached whereby they would vacate part of

the sea board on the north-west, and their chieftains would be appointed as Vanniyā chieftains in the Puttalama area to guard the sea frontier. The transfer of some of them to the eastern coast could have been part of this accommodation. Mukkarū or Mukkuva chieftains appointed in the eastern regions, though referred by the Dutch by the general term of Wanniah, had been chieftains each in charge of one or several villages and had been under the direct supervision of Mudaliyās. The Dutch despised the Mukkuvās as unreliable people and had their chieftains confined with their families to the island of Poelian (Puliyantivu). [49]

The grant of the tittle of Vanniyā to Mukkuvās has been an exception considering it had been conferred only on dignitaries from families from higher social status. (In the early centuries the Sinhalese kings had encouraged the Vanniyās to retain their exclusiveness and treated them with a fair amount of respect and accommodation). That the Mukkarū had not enjoyed the same privileges socially as other Vanniyās is clear from D'Oyly's reference that they were a "caste inferior to rate atto`" [50] and that the left-overs after the Rāja Vanniyā and Kumāra Vanniyā had partaken of their food, were cast away by the *Waggaya* people and not by *raṭe ätto*. In the eyes of the Tamils of Jaffna too, the Mukkuvās occupied an inferior status. This is seen from the account in the YVM according to which they complained to the Sinhalese king about the desecration of the holy place of Kiramalai by Mukkuvās who weere fishermen (employed by the Sinhalese) and the king had them transferred out of the peninsula to the eastern coast.

[All details given in these Sinhalese accounts may not stand the scrutiny of scientific investigation but that the traditions contain a historical core cannot be doubted. As individual family records of lands inherited by persons who lived at the time of the final compilation of these records they seem to contain more credible traditions on the origin of the families and their fortunes than those contained in Tamil legendary accounts.

The traditional number of seven dignitaries contained in both Sinhalese and Tamil traditions is suspicious. It is possible that names were added up or deleted to make up the traditional number. At least two traditions, one relating to the Sēdarannāhē's group and the other relating to Kayle Udayāren family do not follow this traditional number, but their accounts are short and fragmentary. More research may be necessary to determine whether corresponding names in the two families from Malavara dēsa and Āriya Vamsa are the result of a later confusion in the two traditions. As the lands granted to the nobles of these two families are in distinctly separate geographical areas we have taken them to represent two separate groups which may have later developed connections through inter-marriage.]

Vädi Chieftaincies

Pāli and Sinhalese chronicles as well as the Tamil tradition have ignored the role of *Väddās* in the society. The Jaffna Tamil tradition refers to the killing of two *Väddā* chieftain by immigrant Vanni chieftains. It is only the *Nādu Kādu Paraveni Kalveṭṭu* that has recorded the names of some *Vädi* chieftains like Puliyan who was, the chief of the seven *wanams* of Akkara Pattu; and Karadiyan, the chief of all the *Väddās;* and the services rendered by the *Väddās*, like erecting temporary building, erecting dams, stacking of crops, threshing of grain, and providing the Mudliyā (Rājapaksa) with forest produce. These *Väddās* had been causing so much trouble so that armed men had to be appointed to guard against them.[51]

The *Cūlavaṃsa* account of the reign of Parakramabāhu I shows that the king had inducted the *Väddās,* who were expert archers into his fighting forces, but thereafter there is no mention of these people in the main chronicle.[52]

It is in the Sinhalese folk historical tradition that we find greater recognition given to these people. VBVP account of the nobles from Malavara dēsa states that this first group to arrive in the island were met by the people *(Vädi samūhaya).* They are referred to as the *Rāja Vädi Vanse,* perhaps named so on account of their occupation of the former lands of Raja raṭa. The VP which makes a differentiation between the genealogies of those chieftains who came from overseas and those of indigenous origin, says those of indigenous origin who were Vanni chieftains "were the descendants of *Vädi* clan or were from *Vädi* lands". *(Mė Sinhala rājjēma hiṭagena Vannikam kala ayaval nam vädi-peruven pavatimayi datayutuy.)* [53]

The account of the Malavara dēsa nobles and the story of Malala nobles show that *Väddās* had been employed in the time of the Dambadeniya kings and later in the Kotte period as guardians of the king's frontiers. Besides this function, it is possible that the *Vädi* chieftains provided the Court with produce of the forest including game but their main contribution had been to provide troops for the Sinhalese army.

It does not appear that all *Vädi* chieftains came from *Vädi* clans. Sinhalese chieftains as well as immigrant chieftains appear to have assumed authority over the *Väddās* as their chieftains. Hugh Nevill speaking of the Malala nobles observes that they were ancestors of the Vanni chiefs of Hurulu-raṭa and the eastern coast who were "undoubtedly Nāyakas, and always recognised as *"rajas"* or princes over the *Väddās* there" [54]. *Väddās* had become so important during warfare that holding chieftainship over them seems to have been a very lucrative proposition. The ms. of VP has a passage which says that

these chiefs collected a great retinue of *Väddās*, and became very wealthy.[55]

The folk tradition points to the existence of *Vädi* chieftaincies spread over a good part of the frontier areas of the country and in the wilderness of the Sinhalese kingdom. VP refers to Ulagalle *Vädi rala*, Tamarakkulama *Vädi rāla*, Galkandegama *Vädi rāla*, and Māminiyavē *Vädi-gama rāla*. It also refers to the *Väddā* chieftain of Dambulu Nuvara (Kalāgama Kōrale) who received the tittle of Vanniya.[56]

Kaňdure Baṇḍāravaliya points to the existence of *Vädi* chieftaincies in the Bintenna - Vellassa area which Hugh Nevill thinks extended to the eastern littoral. The four fugitive members of this family first occupied *Vädi* lands in this area in the time of King Bhuvanekabāhu who has been identified with the king of that name who ruled in Kotte. This, as observed by Hugh Nevill, is the first reference to the establishment of principalities by immigrant Vanniyās in this region. The king who intrigued with one of the members of the family had the fugitives removed from these territories.[57]

In the Tamankaduva area, a number of *Vädi* chieftains had to be moved out in order to make way for Kaňdure Baṇḍāra.[58] These lands transferred from the *Väddās* are found in Table No. II The members of this family had married *Vädi* women perhaps with a view to legitimising the land they seized in the east and to enlist the services of the *Väddās* to take care of the land. Later, Kaňdure took his four *Vädi* wives and his brother in-law Kairappu with him to his extensive territory in Tamankaduva which itself demonstrates the value of services rendered by the *Väddās*.

MMDK [59] provides a list of *Vädi* chieftaincies which existed in the old Matale Disava and within the extended Matale Maha Disāva which incorporated parts of Tamankaduva and Nuvarakalāviya; and in the Vellassa-Maḍakalapuva *Disāva*. The list was provided to prince Rājasiṃha who was waging war against the Portuguese at Batticaloa, from his head quarters at Gal Oya, when the former found that sufficient troops had not been collected for the seige of Batticaloa. (Please see Table III for the list of *Vädi* land mentioned in MMDK.)

There is clear evidence in the MSS. to show that *Vädi* people were treated with due consideration when their lands were transferred to immigrant Vanniyās. KBNPKR states that *Vädi* chieftains who were affected by the alienation of land were given alternate land in Velikeraṭa and Sabaragomuva raṭa. [60] It is possible that when members of Kaňdure family usurped *Vädi* land, royal intervention among other things, was meant to ensure that no injustice was done to the *Vädi* people.

Even in the time of Senarat/Rājasiṃha II when little respect had been paid to *Disāvas* and *Mudaliyās* there is no indication that *Vädi* chieftains had been treated in a like manner. They could not have been

trifled with as they were indispensable in warfare as an important element in the army; besides on account of the annoyance they could have caused in the wilderness both during war and in peaceful times. For example, during the Portuguese and Dutch periods *Väddās* had caused much damage to them during wars with Kandy; their predatory actions seem to have caused loss to the pearl fisheries, and their pacification was a continuous problem The Vanniyās had been made use of by the Dutch to keep the *Väddās* at bay. Dutch official records also points to the care taken to keep these people in the eastern coast contended. [61]

Maps of the Dutch period show that *Väddās* had lived side by side with the Vanniyās. Valentyn's map shows the north eastern sea board extending up to Hurulu-raṭa under *Beḍas* or *Väddās* while the territory of Kayle Vanniyā was to the west of it in the northern mainland. Hugh Nevill had recorded the presence of *Väddās* in the area north of Trincomalee whose presence, he observed other writers on *Väddās* had over-looked.[62]

A point that requires an explanation is why the king intervened to restore the lands of Vellassa, Bintenna and the eastern littoral to the *Väddās*, while he was transferring other *Väddā* held lands in Tamankaduva to the Baṇḍāra family. A careful examination of the history of the eastern region and the MMDK in particular, show that kings of Kotte, Sītāvaka, and later those of Kandy had attached much importance to these lands in the eastern parts of the kingdom. As the latter work reveals these along with Matale lands, constituted the major recruiting grounds for the Sinhalese armies and this could be the reason for the special attention attached by the rulers to these lands.

The same source also points to the service rendered by the *Vädi* people as guardians of boundaries. This region assumed a greater importance during the latter part of the Dutch rule as the coastal area was the major supplier of salt to the Kandyan provinces.

Expansion of Vanni Principalities

The Pāli and Sinhalese chronicles do not shed much light on the geographical distribution of Vanni principalities. *Cūlavamsa* refers to Vanni-rulers in general terms, as occupying places in *Paṭiṭṭha Raṭṭha* and *Rōhana*. A few places are specifically named in a single reference but their identification is difficult. [63]

Pūjāvaliya refers to *"Maha Vannin"* meaning perhaps some of the more influential Vanni chieftains and not to any geographical area in particular; but the term *Maha Vannin*, as it came to be popularly applied later referred to the northern parts of Nuvarakalāviya and the southern part of the Dutch Commandment of Jaffna. [64]

These chronicles are silent on the Vanni chieftains after the Dambadeniya period but references appear in other works of the Kotte period. The latter references are also not specific and seem to point to groups of smaller chieftaincies which are clustered together in the poetic garb as "the eighteen Vannis". [65]

Tamil legendary accounts in *Vaiyapaṭal* gives the name of several chieftains from South India who are alluded to have settled down in the northern most parts of the island, referred to as Aṭankāppārru in later times, and in Kaṭṭukulam Pattu.[66] These accounts as it was observed earlier, seem to represent attempts made at a later time to explain the presence of Vanniyās in these regions.

With the Portuguese period we are on more firm grounds on the Vanni principalities that existed in the north. The Jaffna due-register records two Vanni provinces - Padukudirippu and Karikaṭṭumali as paying tribute to Jaffna.[67] The littoral from Musali to Pooneryn which had been brought under the direct control of the Portuguese could also be assumed to have constituted smaller Vanni chieftaincies. The Vanni land held by the Kayle Vanniyā and his kinsmen in Vilacciya, the Nuvaragam Palāta and Kunchettu *Kōrale* (Hurulu raṭa) or in Kuncikulama in Kalāgam Palāta were outside Portuguese control. The Portuguese had however, attempted to gain influence in the Kalye Vanni chieftaincy and others through the missionaries who had penetrated as far as Panamgama (S. *Pahanagama* from *Pasanagama* tank; T: *Panankāmam*).[67A]

The Dutch who succeeded to the former Portuguese held land in the Jaffna peninsula and in the mainland of the northern Vanni, expanded their influence over the Vanni chieftaincies of the hinterland through a series of arrangements with their chieftains, who were permitted to administer the land on the payment of annual tribute.[68]

The Vanni chieftaincies within the Dutch commandment included six provinces, namely, Pannegammo (Panangama); Garrecattemoele (Karikaṭṭumalai); Camawelpattoe (Carneval Pattu); Moeliawalle (Mulliyaveli); Meelpattoe (Mel Pattu); and Tinnamarawaddy.[69]

The evidence in the Sinhalese folk historical tradition points to several stages in the expansion of the chieftaincies of the immigrant nobles. According to VBVP: RANK [70], these included the settlements of Minneriya under Rāmge Baṇḍāra, Hurulla under Ilangasiṃha Baṇḍāra, Kalā-väva under Kadugat Baṇḍāra, Kaluvila under Vannisiṃha Baṇḍāra, Vilacciya under Kalukumāra Baṇḍāra. These chieftains from Malavara dēsa were the first settlers. *(Me Lankāvaṭa uruma vali-vahasi Vanni-rajjeāyiti-kāra Palamnvaniyonam me hat denāya .... Mema Vanni raṭa elikara golla patkalē mē haddenāya..... Kisivek näti avastāvata (Kapa payava) raṭa elikara golla patkaleya ..... da himiyen - vadā himiyen mē Vanni rajjeṭa uruma*

valivahasi Kārayoya. VBVP:RANK) The reference in the *Cūlavaṃsa* to the appointment by Vijayabāhu IV, of the Vanni rulers of *Patittha Rattha* to be in charge of the restored city of Anurādhapura could be seen in the light of the settlement of this first group of immigrant chieftains. These chieftains were appointed as Vanniyās at a time when these irrigation settlements in Pihiṭi-raṭa had been abandoned and the *Vädi* chieftains and their followers and taken over the land. Evidently, the immigrant chieftains were called upon to mobilise people to clear the jungle and re-settle the areas, a point that finds indirect confirmation in the *Cūlavaṃsa.*

The Pāli chronicle gives more details of the restoration of the city of Pulatthi Nagara and of the irrigation settlements in its neighbourhood.[71] According to the folk historical tradition quoted above, these included the Minneriya and Hurulla areas where irrigation work such as Minneriya, Padī (Padaviya) Kurundi (Tannimaruppu tank) were situated. It could also be assumed that other major irrigation works in the region such as Parākrama Samudra, Gantalāva were also included in this massive restoration programme.

This particular region had been under occupation by the forces led by Māgha and Jayabāhu until Parakramabāhu II expelled them, perhaps with the assistance of his Pāndyan allies. [72] The Pāli chronicle makes out that the buildings were in ruin and the "Water-system-tanks, ponds, dykes, pools and the like had their embankments given way, and deprived of their deep water". It would seem that this decay had taken place between the end of the rule of Nissankamalla (1187-96), and the beginning of the rule of Parakramabāhu II (1236-70 a time span of about half a century. This could have been the result of gradual neglect during weak rule and Māgha's conquest, specially his demolition of the old administrative hierarchy as well as the plunder and pillage notably by his Kerala forces, effecting the final blow. The wars during Candrabhānu's invasions could have also added to the damage, but it is noted that during his second invasion Padī and Kurundi districts had been vibrant Sinhalese settlements that he considered it important to bring them under his influence before proceeding against *Subhagiri* (Yāpahuva).[73] It is possible that he collected both material and human resources from these then flourishing districts to reinforce his forces.

The work involved in the restoration of the city of Polonnaruva and the irrigation work (water-system) in the area had been a more stupendous task than the restoration work in the Anurādhapura area. This is noted from the detailed description in the *Cūlavaṃsa* of the nature of tasks which were involved: the mobilisatoin of chieftains, the soldiery, artisans and the people at large; it called for. The vast array of tools and implements which were collected, points to the technical problems that had to be overcome. The mobilisation of human resources does not appear to have been easy. There is indication in the chronicle

to some resistance or non-cooperation on the part of the dignitaries which called for an appeal to their wives and children, and the old king (Parakramabāhu II) himself having to take to the streets to mobilize people.[74] It was in this context that we have suggested the possibility of the Vanni chieftaincy system having been introduced into the island, firstly, to revamp the administration at the district level; and secondly, to mobilise and organise the population for the enormous task of restoration work and maintenance of irrigation works. However, as the Kalā Oya region has been called upon to support a more concentrated population with the shift to the south-west, it would appear that the momentum of maintenance work on the major irrigation network in the Polonnaruva area could not be maintained for long. According to archaeological evidence, even the northern most point in the Polonnaruva complex, i.e., Kurundi seems to have been abandoned by the Sinhalese as well as the invading Tamils by the thirteenth century. [Brohier: *"Ancient Irrigation works of Ceylon"* Pt. II, P. 17]

The resettlement of the Kalā Oya district which commenced with the first group of immigrant Vanniyās as referred to in VBVPRANK, saw further expansion during the rule of Bhuvanekabāhu I, with the settlement of immigrant chieftains of the Āriya Vaṃsa in the same area as well as in the north-western littoral, and in the Jaffna peninsula.[75]

The lands alienated to the chieftains of this family included Kattamānkulama or Kandakkulama (Ilangasimha); Yāpanē (Divākara-Kumāra-Vanniyā Sūriya-damana); Kalā Väva and Ämane (Rājakarunā); Puttalama raṭa and Munnessarama (Vanavirāja); Eppāvila, Katiyāva and Aṃgamuva (Ilangasiṃha Divākara).[76]

The restoration of the Nuvara-väva area appears to have been largely on account of the importance of the place for religious pilgrimage as well as on security considerations. A genuine attempt seems to have been made to resurrect the image of Polonnaruva as a Capital with the massive restoration work in that area, but that effort does not seem to have yielded the expected results. Parākramabāhu II's coronation was held in Pulatthi Nagara in his advanced age, an act which does not appear to have had more than symbolic significance.

Though the Tamil tradition gives an early date for the expansion of the administration by Vanni chieftains into the eastern parts of the island, according to the Sinhalese folk historical tradition, it was not until the Kotte period that this region came to be under the Vanniyās. The Kaňdure Baṇḍāravaliya which records the fortunes of a family of foreign dignitaries whose descendants came down to the late Kandyan period, traces the first settlements of Vanni chieftains in the Vellassa-Bintenna and the eastern littoral. These lands had been under the *Vädi* chieftains when four fugitive brothers of the *Kaňdure* family, including Kaňdure Baṇḍāra usurped the lands form the *Vädi* chieftains. Perhaps, in order to legitimise the acquisition they had married the daughters of *Vädi* chieftains, Kaňdure Baṇḍāra taking four

of them. What they seem to have done was to impose themselves as chieftains over the *Väddās* as some of the Malalas who according to Hugh Nevill, settled down in Hurulu rata had done. According to the Sinhalese folk tradition this type of overlordship over the *Väddās* had been attractive as the chieftains could become rich by raising *Vädi* troops for the king's army.

The territories in the east of the island had formed part of the Sinhalese kingdom until the Dutch wrested the administrative control of the littoral on claims based on the Treaty of 1766. This has been officially conceded by Governor Rycloff Van Goens (Snr) in his Memoir dated 1663.[77] The special interest shown by the kings of Kotte and Sītāvaka could also be seen from both foreign and Sri Lankan records . It is however, in respect of the Kandyan period that the new sources we have considered in this paper, *Kaňdure Baṇḍāravaliya*, and *Mātalē Maha Disāve Kaḍaimpota* in particular, make special mention of this region.

The lands in Bintenna and Vellassa which the fugitive members of the Kaňdure Baṇḍāra family wrested from the *Väddās* were part of the Vellassa-Maḍakalapuva Disāva, which according to Morahäla - Mällava copper *Sannasa,* was later under the administration of Morahäla Alahakone Disāva. [78] MMDK gives a list of lands in Tamankaduva, Kottiyarama, Matale Disāva and in the Vellassa-Bintenna-Maḍakalapuva region in connection with the raising of troops for the seige of Batticaloa commenced by prince Rājasimha (II) who had established his head quarters at Gal Oya. The sum total of all this evidence is that the Sinhalese kings had considered this region their special preserve, evidently because these were important recruiting grounds for the Sinhalese armies, besides being major suply areas of food grain and salt. The latter is vouched by the MMDK which refers to the conversion of villages and districts of Kottiyārama and others into *Muttetugam,* a tradition that the Dutch followed later on to bring some these areas under the direct administration of the Company.

Against this background we could understand why, as told in the KB, king Bhuvanekabāhu (of Kotte) intrigued with Kaňdure Bandāra and even took a concubine *(yakaḍa dōli)* form this family in order to regain the land occupied by them. They were compensated with extensive lands in Tamaṇkaḍuva, extending to Nuvarakalāviya as a further consideration. Thus, with the advent of the Kaňdure Baṇḍāra family during the Kotte period, the Vanni principalities which once extended to the Minneriya region under the first-rulers of Dambadeniya, are seen extending to Tamaṇkaḍuva (both banks of Mahaväli are included) and for a brief period to Veleassa-Bintenna-Maḍakalapuva region.

In the story of the Malalas one could observe another phase in the expansion of Vanni principalities. These nobles who had connections in both Malabar and Telegu lands, landed along with-two

mercantile groups (Heṭṭis from Telengāna and Heṭṭis from Tamil lands) on the north-western coast but had taken up residence in different parts of the island. They are found settled in the heart of the Sinhalese kingdom and one of these nobles, Kumāra Vanniyā, as we have noted, had been appointed to the important office of Vanniyā with responsibilities over the Sacred Bō Tree. Hugh Nevill has noted their presence in the east and he connects up the chieftains of Hurulu raṭa in the last century with descendants of the Malala family.

The grant of Kaluvila as a fief to Kumāra Malala Vanniyā raises a question as this land had earlier been granted to the chief named Vanni Baṇḍāra from Malavara dēsa (The first group of immigrant chieftains). It could be inferred from the observations of Knox, that the chief at Kaluvila (whom be calls the Chief Governor) was in a superior position to the chief at Nuvara-väva. It is possible that by the time of the Kotte kingdom, the influence of the family of the Vanniyās appointed in the Dambadeniya period had waned as a result of fragmentation of the fiefs and other factors. As such, from a strategic point of view, kings of Sītāvaka felt that new blood had to be infused into the Vanni chieftaincies in this region, where the *Kaḍavat* or the entry points to the Sinhalese kingdom lay. (See also comments on the Udayār family, one of whose members, Kumārasiṃha, was appointed as Vanniyā of Nuvaragam Palāta later on, which points to a further change in this Vanniyāship).

The story of the Mukkarū introduces another problem. These intruders had forcibly occupied the productive lands between Kalā Oya and Mā Oya, which land had been assigned earlier to the nobles of the Āriya Vaṃsa. The king of Kotte, who could not face the threat from the Mukkarū with his own resources had invited a group of mercenaries from South India to expel them and occupy the lands taken over from them as compensation for the expenses. Perhaps, he wished to see more amenable groups settled in this area, which formed the buffer between his kingdom and that of the Āriya Cakravartis in the north.

The battle between the Mukkaru and the mercenary forces seems to have been long drawn out and its results inconclusive despite the claims made in the folk tradition to the contrary. This group of people were still found in the Puttalama and Munnēsara are a during the last days of the Kandyan period as noted by D'Oyly, their chieftains Raja Vanniyā and Kumāra Vanniyā holding *nindagam* and jurisdiction over other villages of *"raṭe ätto"* as well, in the Puttalama area. This state of affairs points to a compromise reached with the Mukkarū whereby they had to yield some of the land in the south specially around Hālavata and Mīgomuva which were re-alienated to the mercenaries; [81] and their chieftains had been raised to the position of Vanniyās.

It is possible that in the end the king found this turbulent race of people, a better choice to guard the coastal areas of Puttalama and the adjacent littoral which were prone to foreign landings, on account the

commercial importance of this area and to check the advance of the Āriya Cakravartis in the north. YVM refers to the presence of Mukkuvās around Kīrimalai who were engaged in fishing as employees of the Sinhalese. It is possible that defeated bands of Mukkarū were employed by some of the mercenary groups who took to fishing as their pre-occupation in times of peace. Another group of these Mukkarū is found later in the Batticaloa area. Though the YVM claims that the Mukkuvās were expelled from Jaffna to the eastern coast by the Sinhalese king to whom the people of Jaffna complained, it is also likely that the Mukkarus were settled there as guardians of this abandoned coast line where the prospects of European and other intrusions were imminent. The chieftains of Mukkarū (Mukkuvās) in the east had later been raised to the status of Vanniyās and they continued to hold these positions under the Dutch administration.

One of the last groups of important chieftains to settle down in the Nuvarakalāviya and districts further north of it was the family from Malaya dēsa, "the sons of Rāsiha Udayār. The members of this family as we have noted already, are known to history through Dutch records and foreign observations. It is stated that the chieftains of Jaffnapatam had immigrated to the territories of "Kaylo" Vanniyā in protest against the introduction of land *Tombos* by the Dutch, but this information too comes from the Dutch sources.[82]

VVSNP states that the four Udayārs who landed at Yāpanē (Yālpanam), proceeded to Hettikulama and then to the *kaḍavat* at Puliyankulama from where they were taken to the presence of king Bhuvanekabāhu. The land received by Kayle Udayār and Kumārasimha Udayār are mentioned as Kayle Pattu and Nuvaragam Pattu respectively. The third member of the family, Kuñci Udayār, appears to have been so named like Kayle Udayār, after the name of the fief he received. [83]

The land received by the fourth brother, Māppāna is also not mentioned, but this name repeatedly occurs in Dutch official records as those of the Vanniyās who held the five "provinces" within the Dutch commandment of Jaffna outside Kayle Vanniyā's territory,[84] and later as that of the Vanniyā who succeeded Kayle Vanniyā at Panangama. It seems to have been a family name common to South Indian immigrant chieftains.

Ievers who pointed out that Kayle Pattu frequently occurred in old deeds and *Sannas* as one of the two ancient divisions, identified it with Kaluvila, which was Nuvara-väva chief's village and consisted of Nuvaragam and Vilacciya Kōrales. It also appears in other British archival records as one of the eight *pattus* of Nuvarakalāviya. The identification; of Kaluvila presents some difficulty as Knox mentions a place named "Coliwilla" (Kalivila or Kaluvila) on his escape route which was six miles due south of Anurādhapura, where the residence of the "High Sheriff" was situated.[86] This does not appear to have been in

Vilacciya but in Kalāgam Palāta or the southern part of Nuvaragam Palāta. The more plausible explanation is that Kayle Pattu was so named after another Kalu-vila which was situated due north of Anurādhapura in the northern part of Nuvaragam Palāta close to Vilacciya or the name has no connection with Kaluvila at all.[87]

Ferguson has identified the "Cailot" Vanniyā mentioned by Knox with the Kayle Vanniyā referred to in the Dutch records whose head quarters was at Panangama. In the contemporary map found in Knox's book, the territories of Kayle (Caylot) Vanniyā are shown as the area to the north of a line from Musali to Trincomalee extending towards the Jaffna lagoon and also including the northern parts of Nuvarakalāviya (and Hurulu Palāta). It would seem that he had included under Kayle Vanniyās's territory even those lands held by other Vanniyās since the former was the most influential Vanniyā at the time.

With this identification of the original Kayle Pattu, we could assume that either the entire northern tier or the western territories of Nuvarakalāviya were parcelled out between the brothers of the Udayār family, Kalyle Vanniyā receiving Kayle Pattu; Kumarasimha Udayār receiving Nuvaragam Palāta; and Kuñci Udayār perhaps receiving Kuncettuva, i.e. northern part of Hurulu Palāta, or Kuñci Kulama in Kalagam Palāta. Since the families of the Kayle Vanniyā and the Māppāna Vanniyā are later seen occupying land north of Nuvarakalāviya during the Dutch period, it would seem that the original territories granted to these families extended further north of Nuvarakalāviya; or these Vanniyās later expanded their territories northwards. At this time the Āriya Cakravarti authority in the mainland appears to have waned. The Sinhalese king was looked upon as the suzerain or the legal authority to whom the immigrant chieftains applied for land to settle down *(atuhan kaḍāgena iṇta avasara).*[88]

The conclusion to be drawn then is that the Sinhalese king at this time had considered it prudent to strengthen the security in the north of his kingdom and appointed a group of Vanniyās to be in charge of the administration of this area. That this family came from a military background in South India is also significant.

Relations with the central authority

The evidence available to reconstruct this aspect in the Vanni administration is rather meagre except in respect of the Dutch period. According to the *Cūlavamsa* the Vanni principalities were located in remote and inaccessible parts of the kingdom where these chieftains enjoyed a degree of independence from the central authority (which varied according to the relative strength of the ruler). The first three kings of Dambadeniya who were relatively strong monarchs had brought the Vanni chieftains under their control; but that each of them in turn

had to bring them into submission shows how difficult the task of keeping them under control had been.

There is no evidence of what happened after the Damabadeniya kingdom until we reach the time of Kotte kings. It is possible that under the relatively weak rulers who followed Bhuvanekabāhu the grip over the chieftaincies relaxed and the Vanniyās asserted more independence. This is the scenario we enter into at the dawn of the Kotte period when a hostile group by the name of Mukkarus had wrested the Vanni lands of the north-west, and another group had wrested *Vädi* lands in the East, later gaining control of other land in the Tamankaduva region. Parakramabāhu VI had to bring a number of these Vanni principalities of the north-western littoral under his control before his troops under Sapumal Kumārayā marched against the Āriya Çakravartīs of Jaffnapatam.

From the earliest times the relationship between the king and the Vanni chieftains had been based on land grants. Lands were alienated to the Vanni chieftains through formal land grants and in return they were expected to take over certain responsibilities with regard to the administration impinging on irrigation, agriculture and maintenance of places of religious worship.[89] Police duties and the administration of justice also appear to have been included among these responsibilities. The last of these included specially the settlement of caste matters *(Kula-vitti)* in which task these foreign dignitaries were assisted by a hierarchy of local officials.

As time went on, when the lands became more productive a system of annual tribute had been insisted upon. The practice was continued by the Dutch in their Jaffna Commandment through arrangements with the Vanniyās whereby the latter were permitted to administer the territories which had been under their families in return for the payment of fixed annual tribute to the company. The arrangement, however, remained a dead letter as the Vanniyās were always in arrears of payment and proffered various excuses for not keeping their part of the bargain. [90]

The *Vädi* chieftains whose followers inhabited the wilderness and the abandoned old settlements seem to have enjoyed a different relationship with the centre. The land where they found their sustenance through hunting and food gathering and perhaps swidden forms of cultivation, were on the periphery and marginal areas of the kingdom, where the traditional royal prerogative was rarely exercised and rights of *Väddās* to carry on their vocations were rarely interfered with. The arrival of immigrant chieftains during the Dambadeniya period necessitated some of the *Vädi* lands to be alienated to the new chieftains but this appears to have been done through amicable arrangement by providing the *Väddās* with alternate land.

The *Väddās* had performed services as guardians of the frontiers and informants who kept a close watch on the movement of

strangers,[91] but their major contribution since they were inducted into the Sinhalese army by Parākramabāhu I, was to serve in the Sinhalese armies during warfare. As people living on a subsistence economy and providing services during the war they could not have been expected to pay regular tribute to the king. However, when there was surplus game or other forest produce it is possible that they supplied some of it to the Court and to its officials.

As we have noted, the relations between the immigrant chieftains and the ruler being based on land grants in return for which these chieftains had to take on certain responsibilities, the payment of tribute on a regular basis had not come into consideration in this relationship. Initially the immigrants brought tribute to the king on their arrival according to their status and means, as it was the custom of the time. For example, the Malala princes offered a golden chair and a golden frog while the head of the mercantile community of Heṭṭis offered a silk shawl, and were rewarded accordingly. The Āriya Vāmsa nobles brought a "white" elephant, while Sēderannähe brought a "white' elephant and a white steed.[92]

In this early phase of re-opening of land and resettlement of people after re-activating the abandoned irrigation works, a surplus of agricultural products could not have been expected. Besides, as in the early nineteenth century, it would have become necessary to provide incentives to the new immigrants and the local inhabitants *(raṭe ättō)* by placing the land at their disposal free of tax burdens.[93] Thus *nindagamas* were separated in their lands and given to the Vanniyās for their own enjoyment and in which lands they would receive the share of produce from the inhabitants which was earlier paid to the king. The work involved in the restoration of these districts was so extensive, time consuming and demanding both human and material resources that the new chieftains and the people could not have been persuaded to undertake these tasks without such attractive incentives.

When the productive phase was reached the Vanni chieftains may have acquired much wealth as well as influence over their subjects which would have led them to assume a greater degree of ostentation and independence from the centre. It was perhaps in these circumstances that all three early Dambadeniya kings were called upon to keep the Vanni rulers under check. The institution of the payment of regular tribute annually and the appearance at the Court may have been demanded later as a recognition of the supremacy of the king rather than a source of revenue.

Another aspect of relations between the centre and the Vanniyās that emerges from a perusal of reference in the *Cūlavamsa* and other sources is the use of diplomacy as against the use of force to bring the Vanni chieftains to heel. The use of force to subjugate the Vanni rulers as well as the troublesome *Väddās* during the first phase of development

of Vanni chieftains may not have been attractive in economic terms; nor a feasible proposition in view of the situation of the terrain they occupied which was covered with forests and swamps, and could have involved the state in protracted war-fare when the resources of the land were required for the restoration projects and to keep more formidable hostile forces from abroad at bay. To make the Vanniyās hostile to the centre under these adverse conditions could have also changed them from the status of allies to collaborators with those seeking to get a foot-hold in the island. As such, winning over the Vanni rulers through diplomacy had been a major strategy of the Dambadeniya rulers. The *Cūlavaṃsa* refers to this disposition of the first three kings of Dambadeniya which seems to have been the guiding spirit of their rule.[94] The reference in the Pāli chronicle and the Sinhalese works to the subjugation of Vanni rulers which point to the use of force to preserve the territorial integrity of the kingdom appears to represent rather poetic assertions than the real state of state craft followed in these times.

According to the Sinhalese folk historical tradition, there are two instances where the king had to contest the immigrant chieftains decisively, but these were instances where these chieftains had occupied the land forcibly transgressing the accepted norms on which foreign dignitaries were admitted to the fold of the Sinhalese polity. These were not only serious challenges to the authority and the supremacy of the Sinhalese king, but the lands concerned, namely, the north-western littoral occupied by the Mukkaru chieftain, and the eastern lands occupied by the fugitive brothers of the Kaňdure family, were far too important to be allowed to fall into hostile hands.[95] The north western littoral had not only proven its economic importance as the hub of commercial activity, where the precious spices grew and where the elephants roamed in more accessible terrain; but also as the gate way to the pearl fishery. Its strategic value was even more important specially with the hostile force of Āriya Cakravartīs occupying the Jaffna peninsula and threatening from time to time, to impose their authority in the south. As such, the presence of hostile chieftains in the close vicinity of the Sinhalese kingdom was a disadvantage and a threat to the security of the kingdom which and to be removed.

The eastern lands too were too important to be left in hostile hands the prospects of new intruders trying to establish a foothold, there and the emphasis placed on the region's human and economic resources.

In both these instances the king had avoided direct confrontation with the hostile chieftains. Against the Mukkarūs, he sought the intervention of a consortium of South Indian mercenaries, without engaging his own resources. In the east, he used the strategy of intrigue and matrimony in order to regain the land. Additionally, the fugitive chieftains were provided with alternate land in the Tamankaduva district.

In the case of the members of the Kaňdure Baṇḍāra family who were appointed as Vanniyās of Tamankaduva and part of Ṇuvarakalāviya, the rewards were of no secondary importance. This family rose to the highest position among the Kandyan nobility, having links also with the Kīra-Välle *raja mula.* [98]

Another aspect to be noted in the relations of Sinhalese king with the Vanniyās was to seek the participation of the latter in religious ceremonies and religious and public enterprises, as a means to control the latter.

Cūlavaṃsa refers to the great *"Upasampadā"* ceremony held at Shāssatittha where the Vanni kings who lived in *Patiṭṭha raṭṭha,* in Rōhana and so forth, participated with great enthusiasm. The restoration work of Ratnāvali Cetiya begun in the time of Parakramabāhu II and completed in the time of Vijayabāhu IV and the restoration work at Pulatti Nagara which included public and religious buildings as well as irrigation works, appear to have been other occasions used by the kings to seek the support of Vanni rulers. It was after the restoration of Ratnāvali-cetiya and instituting a regular alms giving at Senānātha-Pirivena that king Vijayabahu IV presented items of insignia of Vanni kings to the Vanni rulers who sought him out. The pageant of Vanniyās of Pahalos Pattu referred to in ms. (Or 6606) [100] which was held at Yāpahuva on which occasion marriages were arranged for the children of Vanniyās, had also been used by the ruler to assign important responsibilities to these Vanniyās. As we have already observed the restoration of Kalā-balalu väva and a host of other irrigation works were undertaken through these arrangements. The massive programme in the Pulatti Nagara area do not, however, seem to have received the unstinted support of all chieftains. It is possible that these works called for far greater mobilisation of people than the regions could afford and placed heavy burdens on them, besides being less attractive as the region was on the path of decline and settlements were shifting to south-west which had become economically more attractive and the main theater of political activity. The reason for the decline of this region soon after the restoration is not clear but an explanation may be found in factors other than foreign invasions. The devastation of the inter-linked irrigation system not only as a result of natural calamities, as was experienced several times during the cyclones recorded in the last century but also, the failure to effect timely repairs and the consequent spread of disease is more likely to have contributed to its abandonment.

In the use of diplomacy as a means to contain the Vanniyās, it is evident that rulers often played to their vanity, a practice which was also resorted to be the Dutch authorities. The *Cūlavamsa* (Cv.88:87-88) shows how Vijayabāhu IV presented rocking chairs, white umbrellas, fly-whisks and other insignia of Vanni kings *(Vanni-mahīpālo)* who sought him. The pageant of Vanniyās of Pahalos Pattu held at Yāpahuva points to another such use of this weakness of the Vanniyās in order

again advantage from it. On the latter occassion, the children and grand-children of Vanniyās were given in marriage to the off-springs of the royal families on the ground that it would help preserve the purity of the Vanni caste.

The kings of Kandy, however, do not seem to have tolerated any exuberance on the part of Vanniyās. Kaňdure Baṇḍāraviliya records how Sapudähankala who held the fief of Kirinduattegama who married the daughter of Iratamole Mudiyanse of Hurulla, saved his life by fleeing his territory to live with his father-in-law because of the indiscretion of causing a *Bali* ceremony, of such magnificence that exited the King's jealousy.[101] In the time of Rājasimha II who paid scanty respect for his higher courtiers, Disāvas, and Mudaliyās, Vanniyās too do not appear to have escaped his attention.. He had several Disāvas replaced in Matale and Maḍakalapuva-Vellassa and broke the back of district officials (Mudaliyās) who had become too powerful while he was yet a prince during the seige of Batticaloa.[102]

D'Oyly testifies how the king (Rājādhi Rājasimha) had the Raja Vanniyā of Puttalama and Kumāra Vanniyā of Munnēssara fined for non-payment of tribute and how the latter was imprisoned for a long period of nine years. The latter also lost his independent jurisdiction over his *nindagama* when a Kōralē was appointed over his territory under the over all supervision of Mīgastenne Disāva of Dambadeniya.[103] In the time Sri Vikrama Rājasiṃha, Kumārasiṃha Vanniyā of Nuvara-väva had to take refuge with his brother-in- law, Paṇḍāra Vanniyā near Mulliyaveli and later at Pannagama in fear of the king.[104] In the time of the Dutch Governor Hendrick Becker (1707-1716), the king of Kandy had the envoys of Don Gaspar Nitchenadarajan and Don Diegoe Puvinallamapanar, chained and sent to the Dutch together with their written documents after refusing them an audience.[105] These illustrate that under the Kandyan rule the Vanniyās had been brought under the control of the Court and in several regions Vanniyās functioned under other chieftains like Kōralēs, who were in turn responsible to a *Disāva.*

Geographical factors too played a part in the relations between the centre and the Vanniyās. The Vanni chieftaincies which were far removed from the centre had enjoyed a greater degree of independence by virtue of the spatial factor. This tendency is more noticeable in respect of in the Kandyan period for which we have more information than in the earlier period. The Vanniyās in places like the Jaffna peninsulà which were far removed from the centre had gained more independence, a process which had been facilitated by the rise of Āriya Cakravarti power in the Jaffna peninsula and later by the Portuguese and Dutch occupation. Hurulu raṭa which comprised the present day Karikaṭṭumalai as well as the Padi and Kurundi (S:*Padaviya* and *Kurunegama;* T: *Kuruntahn-ur*) and Kaṭṭukulam Pattu areas appear to

have been another region which was remote from the centre where the central authority was slow to reach. Kaṭṭukulam Pattu had been within the area of jurisdiction of Kotte kings but that Sapudähanakala could find refuge with his father-in-law at Iratamole in Hurulu raṭa, shows that this area was relatively safe from the intervention of the king. [106] Dewaraja quoting D'Oyly has pointed out that the appointment of *Disāvas* over several outlying provinces had prevented the growth of local power groups in all the Disāvanies except Nuvarakalāviya and Tamankaduva, and that in these places the Vanniyās had undisputed authority and the Disāvas were virtually powerless.[107] D' Oyly has also observed that the Vanniyās of Nuvarakalāviya had the power to grant *"sīṭṭu"* and *"divi-sīttu"* and of awarding penalties not inferior to those inflicted by the principal Mohoṭṭālas of the Seven Kōralē. [108] As such, it is clear that the geographical factor constrained the efforts of the Kandyan Court to have a greater control over the Vanni chieftaincies.

The Dutch occupation of the North-Western littoral and the Jaffna Peninsula and the extension of their influence over the northern Vanni districts helped to prevent the Kandyan Court from exercising influence over the Vanniyās in their territories, but the king exercised some influence over these northern Vanniyās and he was still able to enlist their support against the Dutch during the incursions of his troops into the Dutch territories as observed by Knox. Even in Dutch official records, the fear of the Vanniyās opening the way for the Sinhalese armies to invade the peninsula has been expressed several times. [109] These fears became a reality in British times when Paṇḍāra Vanniyā, many years after the power of the Vanniyās had been broken by the Dutch, led the Sinhalese troops in a sweep over the Vanni, commencing from Batticaloa and threatening Elephant Pass after he successfully laid siege to Mullaitivu.

Even though the Vanniyās in the northern Dutch territories had been separated from the Kandyan kingdom, the family links between the Vanniyās of the north and those within the Kandyan kingdom appear to have been an important factor in keeping the lines of communication between them and the Sinhalese king active. According to the Sinhalese tradition we have already noted, Kayle and Mappana Vanniyās whose territory came under the Dutch commandment were linked by blood with the Vanniyās of Nuvaragam Palāta and Kuñcettuva, or Kuñciculama, which bordered the territores under the Dutch Commandment. Knox has observed that Kayle Vanniyā maintained regular correspondence with the king of Kandy. YPM refers to the amicable relationship that existed between the Vanniyās of Jaffna, and the Sinhalese in Jaffnapatam, as well as with the Kandyan Court. It records that they sought the intervention of the Sinhalese king in Jaffna during the time of Varotaya, the Āriya Cakravarti ruler of Jaffna. [110] "This echoes the latter day approaches made by Vanniyās to the king of Kandy requesting the invasion of Jaffna and his underlaking to transfer

allegiance to the Kandyan king.

The Dutch resorted to the practice of retaining one Vanniyā at a time as a hostage in the Jaffna fort in order to ensure their obedience and payment of tribute,[111] "but this strategy does not seem to have paid dividends. In the East, they kept the chieftains of the Mukkuvās with their families in a prison in the island of Poelian (Batticaloa) and also threatened to keep Ilangsiṃha Vanniyā of Eravur under surveillance in Jaffna or in Colombo.[112] This practice of keeping hostages to keep the Vanniyās under control appears to have been an ancient practice coming down from the Dambadeniya period. [113]

The conclusions to be drawn from an examination of all sources is that the relations between the centre and the Vanniyās had been a tenuous one from the earliest times. Since the productivity in the lands granted to the latter increased their economic power also multiplied. However, problems of fragmentation, disputes over inheritance, and the grabbing of more land by powerful Vanniyās had acted as constrants from time to time to a heavy concentration of power as seen from the cases where the king's intervention had been sought for the confirmation of the fiefs. Over-taxing and oppression by the Vanniyās probably provided an opportunity for royal intervention whenever people rose against the Vanniyās.

There are two scenarios in the Kandyan-Dutch period where the Vanniyās were subjected to greater control in territories closer to the centre of the Kandyan kingdom, but those on the periphery like Nuvara-väva, Hurulu raṭa and the northern districts within the Kandyan kingdom were less subject to the control of the king. Relieved from direct obligations to the king, the Vanniyās within the Dutch Commandment of Jaffna, developed into more powerful potentates specially under the Kayle Vanniyā that they arrogantly defied the Dutch authority whenever they could.

Decline of the Vanni

The account of the Vanni (1793) recorded by Lieut Nagel gives a very adverse picture of the administration under the Vanni chieftains of the North. "The account which also comments on the religious beliefs, laws of the land, customs and the general disposition of the inhabitants of the Vanni, states that the Vanniyās were ignorant of the manner of governing and the finance; were elated with their chieftainship; assumed unlimited power; ruled despotically oppressing the inhabitants, plundering them as well as the travellers between Mannar and Trincomalee with the help of bands of runaway slaves and other desserters; that the law and order situation in the country was very unsatisfactory, as a result of which many people left for Hurulu (raṭa) and Nuvara (väva); "crimes were expiated with money; and that old customs and usages could be observed only by giving presents to the Vanniyās.

Speaking of the people, their social customs, dwellings and personal habits, Nagel draws a picture of one of the most primitive people. He concludes that *"no Nation is so very dirty and indifferent as the inhabitants of the Wanny"*.

The account given here which is partly confirmed by the contents of other Dutch records, contrasts to a large degree with the account given in the oral tradition of the Northern and North Central Province on the *Raṭa Sabhās* and the role the Vanniyās played in it.[116] According to this oral tradition which finds confirmation to an extent in D'Oyly's accounts, the Vanniyā administered justice according to customary law of the country, assisted by several local officials (like *Mohoṭṭāla, Lēkama, Unḍirāla* and *Gamarāla* in the interpretation of the law and its application). These customay laws which are claimed to have been enunciated by the Dambadeniya rulers, may represent the norms by which justice had to be dispensed with, but it would seem that in the course of time, and specially away from royal surveillance, the Vanniyās in the Dutch Commandment had tended to wield arbitrary powers and oppress the people levying higher fees from the people for the *Vanni maḍippuva,* and collecting more grain from them than permitted by custom. Such situations had not been uncommon even within the Kandyan kingdom where the chieftaincies were situated outside the heart of the kingdom.

Nagel does not give reasons for the general decline in the Vanni but observes that the situation could have been arrested as far as agriculture was concerned, had the land been well cultivated under the direction of an active agent. However, this would seem to be an over-assessment as the appointment of a *Disāva* at Ponery with responsibilities over the Vanni as well as the districts bordering it which were directly under the Dutch had not yielded the expected results." Nagel raised the paddy yield of the Vanni to 34,198 *paras* per annum and Governor Van der Graff says in his Memoir it could have been more (40,000 paras). The possibility of Nagel having exaggerated the situation in order to drown criticism over the heavy expenditure incurred in the conquest of the Vanni, cannot be ruled out.[118] Other Dutch records show that far from neglecting agriculture, the richer Vanniyās had even cultivated lands in Karachchi, Perumgaly, Pallavanārayankattu and Musali Pattu under arrangements with the Dutch; and they had virtually monopolised the trade in rice with Jaffna. [119]

Bertolacci who served as a senior civil servant under the British, just a few years after Nagel wrote his account observed that the Vanni districts had been in a flourishing state long before the Dutch had possession of the island but declined from that condition during the first phase of their government. He attributed the decline of the Vanni to frequent movement of European troops from "Vertativo to Molletivo on the way to Trincomalee when the inhabitants were "frequently exposed

to vexation, insult and pillage from the troops marching through their land; and also to the Dutch not paying attention to the Vanni until towards the latter part of their government. He also observed the "deplorable consequence of depopulating the country which was caused by the marching of several detachments of British troops during the early phase of British rule." He himself travelled through the district in 1799, and saw that many villages were "left desolate and without a single inhabitant." [120]

Several British administrators in the latter part of the nineteenth century, while confirming that the ravages by European military expeditions depopulated the Vanni, also drew attention to the effects of diseases such as parangi, small pox, cholera and fever, as well as the fatal cattle disease which affected agriculture as other causes responsible for the general decline of the country. Lewis quoted another reason, the want of labour, and the *Pallas* and *Nalawas* being taken to serve as coolies when their services were required for farming, as an obstacle to cultivation during the British period. [121]

The effects of South Indian invasion has been cited as a general cause of the decadence of the region which came to be known as Vanni but these events took place in far remote times before the Vanni chieftaincy system took root. The administration system under the Vanniyās, as it was suggested earlier, was itself an effort to reclaim the land and settle people in those parts of Pihiṭi raṭa which had been abandoned in the post-Polonnaruwa period.

It would seem that some of the Vanniyās were showing an increasing interest in commercial activities during the Dutch times which led to open conflict with the Dutch,[122] and perhaps to the neglect of agriculture. Looking for such greener pastures would be inevitable in lands where agriculture was very much subject to the vagaries of nature and where the land was generally getting depopulated as a result of the combined actions of a number of forces.

The effects of periodic incursions by the Dutch on the agriculture of the area, as noted by Bertolacci cannot be under played but Nagel has over looked this altogether.

Vanniyās and "Vannivaru" of the Nineteenth Century

In 1784 the Dutch took possession of the Vanni land within the Jaffna Commandment after removing Don Gasper Nalla Mapane from the Panangama chieftaincy and Nall Nachchi and Chine Natchy from their holdings and later suppressing the rebellion at Cheddikulam raised by the two Vaṉniccis and their supporters. In the following years they deposed the chieftains on the eastern litttoral Koṭṭiyārama and the Batticaloa region. The Vaṇniyā of Kaṭṭukulam Pattu alone was allowed to continue in his fief in recognition of the fact that his father Sendere Segera had transferred his allegiance from the king of Kandy to the Company. [123]

When the British took over the Dutch possession in 1796, there were no Vanni cheiftains holding office in the former Dutch territories. The remnants of former Vanni chieftains had settled down as agriculturalists and had been gradually absorbed in to the *Vellāla* caste. Only the name of Pandāra Vanniyā emerges in the early British period but his temporary success against the British garrison in Mullaitivu (He also attacked Batticaloa, Kottiyārama and Elephant Pass) was on account of the backing he received from the Disāva of Nuvarakalāviya who provided him with troops and guns.

After the fall of the Kandyan kingdom, the British continued to make use of the old Sinhalese chieftains in Nuvarakalāviya as the British Agents overlooking this vast region could not devote enough attention to the local administrative details during this transition period.[124] For example, the whole of Nuvarakalāviya was under Galagoda *Disāva* from 1815 to 1818, and under Dulleve Navaratna *Mudiyansē* from 1819 to 1827. In 1828, it was divided into the East and the West Divisions and palced under two *Disāvas*.

The Maha Vanni Unnehē functioned under the Disāva from 1815 to 1833, Nuvaravāva Suriya Kumarasingha Mudiyansē being the first to hold this position under the British. In 1833, when two maha Vanniyās were appointed, one for Nuvarakalāviya East, and the other for the West, Kumarasingha continued as the Maha Vanniyā of the latter Division till 1836. That year, the eastern Division came under the Disāva who had eight Vanniyās (Vanni Mudiyansē) under him. The western Division continued to be under a Maha Vanniyā who had also eight Vanniyās under him each in charge of a Pattu.[125]

The British followed the tradition of appointing the Maha Vanniyās and other Vanniyās from the class of people called *Vannivaru* whose members had more or less hereditarily held these positions under the Sinhalese kings. However, when these positions of Vanniyā in Hurulu Palāta, Nuvaragam Palāta and Kalāgam Palāta were transformed into *Raṭē Mahattayā* Divisions, selections were not confined to the old class of *"Vannivaru"* but were open to other families of the Kandyan aristocracy. the first person from *Govigama* caste to be appointed as *Raṭē Mahattayā* (of Nuvaragam Palāta) in 1849 was Ralapānve Disanāyaka Mudiyansēlage Puncirāla. Others outside the class of *Vannivaru* to hold this new position were Ratvatte N.W.W. Loku Baṇḍā (Kalāgam Palāta-1878) and Dingiri Bandā Ratvatte (1892). The British policy with regard to the appointment of local officials led to the disappearance of the distinction between the *Vannivaru* and the upper class of *Govigama* who were known as *Korale Ätto*. The amalgamation was similar to that which had taken place in the northern most districts where the Vanni caste had merged with the Vellālas, but in Nuvarakalāviya, the process took a longer time as the administrative transformation was gradual.[126]

The British administrators of the nineteenth century found in the villages of Nuvarakalāviya as well as in a few villages of the Northern Province, i.e., in Kurunthankulam and Nochchikulam, a class of people who called themselves *Vanniyās* or *Vannivaru* who unlike those who held official position as Maha Vanniyās or *Vanniyās,* led a life as huntsmen and food gatherers, and claimed themselves to be Sinhalese. Observations on these people have been left behind by such officials as S.Fowler, A Brodie, an anonymous writer and Henry Parker. Later in the early part of this century, Geiger also made observations on these people identifying them as descendants of *Vanni-rājāno* of the post-Polonnaruva period.

Fowler, who noted their use of the primitive bow and arrow; familiarity with the most remote jungles; mode of life as hunters and food gatherers; and the peculiarities of their dialect, saw their affinty with the *Väddās,* [128] but recorded that the idea was repudiated by the *Vannivaru.* Brodie referred to them "as a caste, not general over the Island, and which is superior to that which is elsewhere considered the high test". He also recorded a prevalent tradition that they were descendants of certain Tamils who came over from the continent in the time of *Rāja Sen,* who granted to each extensive tracts of land. [129]

The anonymous writer made observations on the "Sinhalese" of the Vanni and not specifically on the *Vannivaru.* He observed that these *Sinhalese* had adopted the Tamil system of personal names, and not the name from the village or family as was common Sinhalese custom elsewhere; that many of their names too were Tamil in a Sinhalese shape; that these Sinhalese villagers also had much faith in the Hindu god *"Pillair"* as have the Tamil villagers and that they often wore the Jaffna cloth *(Chayaveddi)* and fastened the handkerchief on their heads after the Tamil manner.[130]

Parker observed: "So far as the language is concerned, it may be concluded that the Vanniyās are, as they state, Sinhalese taking into consideration that they are found only in or near the northern borders of the Kandyan kingdom, that they speak Tamil, and that some of them have Tamil names, and also remembering the peculiarities which I have given regarding their religion". He continued that "it may be further inferred that as their name would seem to indicate, they are remnants of the ancient Sinhalese inhabitants of what is now the Northern Province" and concluded that "the Sinhalese in the Northern Province" had almost died out and the inhabitants of the Sinhalese villages in the Southern part of the Province, with a few exceptions were, comparatively recent settlers from the North Central 'districts,." [131]

Geiger writing in the early part of the present century came to the conclusion that the Vanniyās were Sinhalese of noble descent (*Kulīna* referred to in the *Cūlavaṃsa*) who sought refuge in the forest

regions in times of distress and later came to be called Vanniyās, signifying "jungle settlers". This conclusion arrived at by interpreting the information in literary sources, notably, the *Cūlavamsa*, lent further support to the views expressed earlier by Parker and the anonymous authority.

However, Indrapala contested Geiger's views in the prelude to his examination of the "Origin of the Tamil Vannni chieftains of Ceylon". He observed that the German scholar was wrong in calling the modern Vanni caste of the Northern and the North Central Provinces as descendants of the Sinhalese "Vanni-*rājāno*" of the post-Polonnaruva period. He reasoned out that Geiger had based his statement "purley on the *Cūlavamsa*..... not taking into account the evidence of the Tamil sources regarding the Vanniyās of Ceylon".[131] He then quoted the observations of the nineteenth century British administrators in justifications of his argument.[132]

Indrapala has not only used the observations of these authorities rather selectively for example, completely ignoring the views of Parker quoted above, but has also made the serious error of misinterpreting them. As already observed from these observations quoted earlier, none of these authorities have supported a Tamil origin for these nineteenth century Vanniyās. Brodie had on the contrary, pointed out their affinity with the *Väddās*. Fowler only recorded a tradition found among them (provenance of this tradition was not distinctly identified) of immigration from South India. The anonymous authority quoted who saw some Tamil characteristic made his observations in relations to the "*Sinhalese*" in the northern district and not with refer ence to *"Vannivaru"* as such. Indrapala's use of this observation as one relating to *Vannivaru* only leads to confuse issues rather than clarify it.

Indrapala has also ignored the views of Lewis who in summarising the observati ons of earlier writers added his own observations that the Tamilisation of the Sinhalese, as they were living among the Tamils, was a natural process. [133]

Another feature in Indrapala's arguments is that he has tried to impose the evidence of the Tamil tradition on the immigration of Vanni chieftains from South India to counter balance Geiger's dependence on Pāli chronicles. This position is acceptable as far as the origin of some of the Vanni principalities are concerned; but it is not an acceptable explanation of the presence in the nineteenth century of *Vannivaru* in some of the villages in the Northern Province. There is no basis in the evidence presented by him or for that matter by any one else, for the conclusion (as Indrapala has presented) that "the Vanniyār of the nineteenth century were divided into two different communal groups"; and the deduction that "those who lived in the Vavuniyā district were Tamil-speakers while those in the Nuvarakalāviya district were *mainly*

Sinhalese; and to the further surmise that "there is reason to believe that these Sinhalese speaking Vannis were in fact, descended from Tamil Vanniyā who had become assimilated to the Sinhalese population after the Navarakālaviya district was re-colonised by the Sinhalese". In the light of the evidence we have brought out from Sinhalese folk tradition and the examination of Indrapala's arguments, there is certainly no reason, as Indrapala has done, to scoff off at the idea of Sinhalese Vanniyās with the use of such expression as "so called Sinhalese Vanniyās".

The evidence we have brought out from the Sinhalese folk historical tradition supports the view of immigration of several groups of chieftains to the island from South India during the Dambadeniya period and afterwards; but this evidence is also equally strong about the presence of indigenous chieftains at the time of the arrival of the immigrants. The categorical identification of the latter in the Sinhalese folk tradition with *Vädi* chieftains and of the conferment on them the title of *Vanniyā* introduces a new dimension to the subject. A literal reading of the evidence in *Cūlavamsa* would indicate the presence of *Vanni-rañño, Vanni-mahipāla* etc. during the post-Polonnaruva period, eg. during Māgha's rule: but as we have pointed out this could be a case of the terminology which became popular later during the Dambadeniya period being used to desribe a class of chieftaincies which had been in existence already. The title Vanniyā which seems to have been borrowed from South India had been conferred on chieftains of both indigenous and immigrnat origin beginning from the Damabadeniya period.[134] In Sri Lanka, the term came to be used for an administrative office which was invested with assigned responsibilities along with the conferment of the tittle. Our sources also indicate that inter-marriage among indigenous cheiftains and immigrant chieftains from the class of nobles was not uncommon. However, the Mukkuvās who were elevated to the rank of Vanniyās had been excluded by both Sinhalese and Tamils as people of inferior rank.

The Vanniyās as they evolved in the Dambadeniya period had remained and exclusive class or caste carrying the designation *Vannivaru* and had fully assimilated into the Sinhalese polity and the social hierarchy. They retained a position above the highest of castes in the Island, the *Vellālas* or the *Govi* caste, and had maintained matrimonial links with the royal families. (Mukkuvās had been the only exception). Their exclusiveness was encouraged in the early days by the royalty as reflected also in the oral tradition on the *Raṭa Sabhās*.

What language the Vanniyās used; or customs they followed; and private laws they used could have varied according to circumstance; but as Vanni chieftains they had received Sinhalese names on their investiture. They were supported by a hierarchy of local officials in the *Raṭa Sabhās*, when they adjudicated over matters concerning violations of local custom including failure to oblige with duties in respect of maintenance of irrigation work and agriculture.[135]

Some of them like the Malalas had fully assimilated into the local social and cultural milieu as seen from the positions they held at the Court and outside; one of them as the leading Vanniyā at Kaluvila; and two of them as the prelates of important places of learning. However, one also finds the Vanniyās retaining their original language (as Knox found at Nuvara väva); and some of their laws of succession, (as Hugh Nevill found existing among the chieftains of Hurulla which were similar to those of Malabārs and the Mukkuvās).

The separation of the Vanniyās into two seemingly distinct groups - one Malabār speaking and the other Sinhalese speaking - would have been the result of the separation introduced by the Dutch when they brought the northern Vanni chieftaincies within the Dutch Commandments of Jaffna.

As we have noted, the last of the immigrant chieftains to receive land in the north - three of the original members of the Udayār family had their fiefs within the Sinhalese kingdom, i.e., Nuvaragam Palāta including Vilacciya and in either Hurulu Palāta or in Kuñcikulama (Kalagam Palāta). there is no doubt that these chieftains within the king's territory fully assimilated into the Sinhalese social and cultural milieu, but those sections of the family like the Kayle and Māppāna Vanniyās who occupied the northern most parts which fell within the Dutch Commandment had gradually drifted away from Kandyan influence. Nonetheless, they maintained close connections with the Kandyan Court as noted by Knox, Pybus and also as mentioned in the memoirs of Dutch governors. The name of the last Maha Vanniyā under the Kandyan rule, namely, Nuvara väva Suriyakumāra Mudiyansē of Bulankulama (or Suriyakula Kumarasinha Vanniyā of *Nagura* or Nuvara) [137] shows a close resemblance to the name of the member of the Udayār family who received the fief of Nuvaragam Palāta. It has again been noted that the former was closely connected with the Vanniyā family from Mulliyāveli, having married a sister of Paṇḍāra Vanniyā. It was to the latter's land and later to Panngama that he went over with his wife and retainers to avoid the threatened vengeance of Sri Vikrama Rājasiṃha.

The conclusions that could be drawn from the above observations are that Vanniyās formed a single class or caste intermarrying within their families, irrespective of whether they lived in the king's territory or outside, whatever language they spoke; or what laws and customs they followed, the only exception being the Mukkuvās of Puttalama area and on the eastern coast. There is no basis for Indrapala's assertion that those "Vanniyās who lived in the Vavuniya district in the nineteenth century were Tamil speakers". The case presents a fascinating study of a people originating from different immigrant cultures who were compelled by circumstances and the office and responsibilities they accepted, to assimilate into another culture. How far the process had progressed is illustrated by the evidence we have

discussed relating to several immigrant families and the case of the nineteenth century Vanniyās but this particular aspect deserves a more careful study than it has received so far.

The biggest blow the Vanniyās of the north received was when Nagel dispossessed them and sold their land to the people and introduced *Thesavalamai* as the laws of the Vanni. Under the British administration the process was continued and received official sanction when the sitting Magistrate of Mullaitivu acting of the information given by the Headmen of the district, who were no doubt, lately arrived Vellālas from Jaffna, decided that the *Thesavalamai* represented the law of the Vanni districts. However, despite this decision of the Acting Magistrate, Sweethenham, who was a civil administrator, found later (1879) evidence of different customary laws in the Vanni districts in respect of succession which pointed to relations with the customs of Malabārs and the Mukkuvas.[138]

Encouraged and supported by the Dutch and the British administrations, the immigrants from Jaffna became land owners in the Vanni and the laws and customs of the Jaffna submerged what was previously the laws and the customs of the Vanni. Those of the common people in the Vanni also suffered the same fate. Both colonial powers may have had their own reasons for encouraging the immigration of Jaffna enterprenuers to the Vanni. The Dutch favoured and encouraged the immigration through land sales and other incentives. They not only saw the industry of the Jaffna Tamil whose enterprise in tobacco cultivation brought good economic benefits to the Company, but also wished to make Jaffna independent of rice imports by encouraging Jaffna rice farmers to cultivate land in the Vanni. Above all, they found Jaffna over-crowded and facing problems of land for cultivation of all these crops.[139] In contrast, in the Vanni they found the administration under the Vanniyās a hindrance to development of agriculture and industry. In was for the same reasons that they had earlier tried to persuade the Sinhalese to remain in the northern Vanni by offering inducements such as exemption from *Uliyām* and from payment of interest on cash and grain advanced to them, as they found the Sinhalese to be better cultivators than the people of northern Vanni and perhaps showing more energy in withstanding the rigours of the Vanni.[140]

It was also the policy of the British administrators to encourage the setting up of Jaffna settlements in the Vanni and Trincomalee districts. [141] Evidently, there had been competition among colonial officials to induce Jaffna farmers and entrepreneurs to settle in the other districts; those in Tincomalee favouring their settlement in that district specially at Gantalāva Tamaplāgama while the Government Agent at Jaffna, understandably, was more in favour of their settlement in the Northern Province which then included also the Nuvarakalāviya district. The Jaffna district which earlier comprised only the penisnsula was later expanded to include parts of the minland.

The result of these actions by the two colonial powers combined with the readiness of the Jaffna farmers and other entrepreneurs to expand their activities outside the Jaffna peninsula was that within ia matter of a century the Vanniyās in the north disappeared as a class or a caste and became absorbed into the Vellāla caste. It was in these circumstances that in the second half of the nineteenth century British administrators found only the Sinhalese speaking Vanniyās remaining in the Northern Province mainly around Vavuniya.[142]

TABLE I

***Vädi* chieftains mentioned in Vanni Puvata**

1. Ulagalle Vädi-rāla ; (Hulugallē Irugalnāyaka)
2. Tamarakkulama Vädi-rāla ; (Tamabarakāli Väddā)
3. Galkandegama Vädi-rāla ;
4. Maminiyave Vädi-Gama rāla (Māyā Väddā of Māmmiyā Pattuvē rata)
5. (Väddā chief of Dambulu Nuvara who received the little of Vanniyā)
6. Some of these lands were later transferred to members of the Kañdure Baṇḍāra family. See Talle II. (Suggested corresponding names in Kañdure Baṇḍāravaliya are given in parenthesis.)

TABLE II

First alienation of lands according to *Kandure Baṇḍāravaliya.*

Owner	Lands	Transferred to	Lands
1. Māyā vāddā	Māyāgam pattuve Maha-ala-gomuva, Māyāgama Māminiyā-pattuvē rata	Kaṅdure Bandāra (Māminiyāve) Obbēriye Baṇḍāra	Kalāgambada Māyāgampattuvē rata Maminiya pattuvē raṭa
2. Mahasen vāddā	Mahasen-bāge Māṭombuva-pattuva	(Māṭombuva Ulpote) Annēruve Baṇḍāra	Māṭombuvā pattuvē raṭa
3. Kumāra vāddā	Pahala Kumārabāge and Dunumaṅḍala pattuva	(Dunamaṅḍalāvē) Kumrāsingha Maha vāsalageyi Baṇḍāra	Dunimaṅḍalā pattuvē raṭa
4. Tarṁbarakali vāddā	Ihala Muttetṭubāge and Udurovā pattuva	(Udurava) Ēkanāyaka Baṇḍāra	Udurova pattuva
5. Vilava Gajasimha Panikkiyā	Korasagalle Ihalagan bāge and Kiralova pattuva	(Vilava, Kiralava) vālikē Baṇḍāra	Kiralova pattuva
6. Nikapiṭiyagama Liyanavāddā	Korasagallē Pahala bāge and Vāvutulāna	Vāvupalāte Ratatu lāne Kumārasimha Kumāri	Vāvu palāte raṭa
7. Sakā vāddā	Uḍagama Ināmalava pattuva	Uḍagoma Dēvarāja simha Kumāra Bandāra Māmandi of Kaṅḍure Baṇḍāra	Ināmalava pattuva
8. Vanni adhipati Ratnāyaka Unnāhē	Māyāgama Liṅdapiti pantiye gambage and Nāgampaha raṭa	.....	.....
9. Hulugallē Irugalnāyaka unnāhē	Māyāgama Amunuvāṭi pantiya pahalagambāge and Kahaḷupattuve raṭa	.....	.....

Reproduced *from The Catalogue of The Hugh Nevill Collection of Sinhalese Manuscripts in the British Library* prepared by KD Somadasa, p. 223

TABLE III

Vādi Chieftains mentioned in :*Mātale Maha Disāve Kaḍaimpota*

A. MĀTATLE DISĀVA (Original)

1. Hulangamuvē Halupat Vāddā;

B. MĀTALE MAHA DISĀVA (Extended Disāva)

2. Kanangommvē Kannīla Vāddā.
3. Nikakoṭuvē Hērat Vāddā.
4. Maha Tampalā Vāddā.
5. Palāpatvala Maha Bodā Vāddā.
6. Dambavela Valli Vāddā.
7. Vallivela Mahakaduvala Vēddā.
8. Kavudupālālla Nayran Vāddā.
9. Naramgammuva Imbā Vāddā.
10. Nālanda Digampila Mahagē.
11. Makara Vāddā.
12. Kōnduruva Vāddā.
13. Rakā Vāddā.
14. Maha Kandā Vāddā.
15. Galēvela Hēnpita Mahagē.
16. Kanā Vāddā (In some texts)

REFERENCES

1. *Cūlavamsa* 81:11,83:10,87:26-52,88:87,89:51,90:33.

2. See Tikiri Abeyasinghe, *"Jaffna under the Portugese"*, p 16.

3. Kapuruhāmi Rate Mahattaya's Report on Rata Sabhā *(JRAS (CB)Vol. XXXIII,1948 No. 106)* has been used so far but there is another collection in the RASL which does not appear to have been utilised.

   John D'oyly: *A sketch of the constitution of The Kandyan kingdom* (Reprint), 1975 Tisara Prakāsakayo.

4. S. Paranavitana: EZ.V,173; A Fragmentary Sanskrit - inscription K. Indrapala: "The Origin of the Tamil Vanni Chieftaincies of Ceylon", *CJH,1*, (2), July 1970-pp 126-134.

   S.Pathmanathan: "feudal Polity in Medieval Ceylon: An examination of the Chieftaincies of the Vanni", *CJHSS*(NS), 11,(2) July -Dec 1972 - pp 123-124.

5. For a critical evaluation of the Jaffna and the Trincomalee traditions see K. Indrapala: *Ibid*, pp 134-135, 139.

   He observed also that "a number of unreliable traditions have got enmeshed in the story of V anni Chieftaincies as narrated in Tamil chronicles," and that "it

is difficult to extract from these anything more than a sequence of events."

6. S. Pathmanathan: *'The Kingdom of Jaffna'*, (1978) p. 188,192,197.

7. K. Indrapala: *op cit* p. 134.

8. S. Pathmanathan: see fn. 4 *op. cit* p. 122.

9. S. Pathmanathan: *"The Kingdom of Jaffna"*; p. 134-135.

10. MS. No or 6606(112)in the Hugh Nevill Collection (British Library.) bears the title; *"Rājāvaliya* (From Cheng-Ho to Vidiya Bandāra): Alakēsvara Yuddhaya". After describing the despatch of the effigy of prince Dharmapāla through Sallappu Āraaccila to the king of Portugal, there is an account of the *Vannivaru*. This latter tract is unrelated to the subjects covered in the MS. It could be part of another MS. bound togeter with the other.

    The language used in the tract is identical to the language used in other MSS. written down during the post-Dambadeniya period. Hugh Nevill has assigned the entire MS (including this tract) to the Kandyan period. The record contains a very old tradition not recorded anywhere else and could have been first written down after the reign of the Kurunēgala king Vanni Bhuvanekabāhu whose name is mentioned.

    An interesting point is that the name Mahānāma, who was the maternal uncle of king Dhātusēna is suffixed to the king's name'

    In view of its interest the text is reproduced below: *"Tavada ena rajun visin Vannivarun ekinekāṭa ana di ekatukoṭa perarajatuman-kālaya pavā siti pradhāna vansa nāmaval kiluṭu paridu pasuvēya kiyanā vannivarun samanga kathakoṭa pasalos denaku rajakumāra kumārikāvan Vannivarunge darumunubuanṭa mangulkoṭa dena pinisa yāpahu nuvaradi noyek peraharin mangallaya-katayutu-koṭa vanni-pahalos-pattuva yana namin prasidhakara pāvātvūha. E-pariddenma naṭabun vītibuna Kalā Balaluvāva Vanni pahalosdena visin bandina niyāvaṭa panivida kala nisā esēna bandinnnaṭa paṭangena pasbāmi galvāda nimavā kalasēka. Eyin Vanni-Bhuvanekabāhu rajatuman raja-pāmina vanni dasadenakuṭa Kalā vāvat pasdena (kuṭa) Baḷalu vāvat bedādunnahayi datayutuyi. Kalā vāven vatura Anurādhapurēṭa genegiyāha. Tavat Mannārama Mutupantiya Marisakaṭṭiya vatura genagiya pilivela kalōya. Mīṭa prathama Dhātusēna Mahānāma rajatuman visin kalāvu prati(s)thādhārayakota kalā vāvat Anurādhapura-nuvarat vaturen ekatukoṭa Nuvarakalāviyayi namtābuha. Nāvata Balalu vāva vatura genayana niyāva gāna prathama ālavēli balā amunuvāti potāvāti elikara vatura ādhara gattāya. Kalāvāve oya degoda depāttē velbimkota prayōjana viya. Nimi. Siddhirastu".*

11. See K.D. Somadasa. *Catalogue of the Hugh Nevill Collection of Sinhalese MSS in the British Library* - Vols 1-6 ; where he has incorporated Hugh Nevill's notes. vol.7 contains the Index. Published 1987 onwards.

12. JRAS (CB), Vol.XXX (80), 1927.

13. A. Denis N. Fernando has used the information in *Kaḍaimpot* along with those in Dutch maps to prepare the map of Sri Lanka giving the political boundaries,

1635-1766. See JRAS (SL) Vol XXX (NS) pp.93-96 and on 110 L.S.Dewaraja has utilized the information in *Vittipot and Kadaimpot* to reconstruct the Vanni administration during the Kandyan period. See L.S. Dewaraja: *Kandyan kingdom of Sri Lanka*, 1707-1782, R/E 1988 p.234-240.

14. *Vanni Bandāra Vitti Potak: Raṭē Ättange Nīti Kāṇḍaya* (or 6606 (182): Hugh Nevill Collection. British Library, London.

15. CV. 88:23-27,79.

16. CV 87:28-29. see also A. Liyanagamage: "*The Decline of Polonnaruva and the Rise of Dambadeniya*" *1967*, P. 120. He quotes from Pjv. evidence of diplomacy *(mantri-belen)* used by Bhuvanekabāhu 1.

17. *Kañdure Baṇḍāravaliya* (Or 6606 (77) 111); *Mukkaru Hatana* (Or 6606 (53); *Malala Katāva* (Or 6606 (150) 111, *Vanni Vitti Saha Nītiye potak* (Or 6606) (133) 111.

18. *Malala Katāva*. (Or 6606 (150) 111.

19. The author of *Upāsakajanālankāraya*, a Pāli work written by Bhadanta Ānanda, states in the colophon of the work that he was one of the many *theras* who fled from the island to south India in search of protection when the country was sacked by the Tamils. He wrote the work residing in a vihāra in the Pāndya country, constructed by a "Vanno Sāmanto" (interpreted as a Vanni ruler). See also *CV*. 89:69.

20. *CV*. 88:80-89; 92-120.

21. The heights reached in the field of architecture and sculpture may not compare with the achievements of Parākramabāhu I. Except for the building of Yāpahuva and perhaps Dambadeniya and religious places in the south, the rulers of Dambadeniya had undertaken only restoration work in old capitals. Irrigation activities too were confined to restoration work. However, remarkable progress had been made in the field of literature both in volume and quality of work. Arts and crafts also show a remarkable progress.

22. See fn. 10 and fn.20

23. For a discussion of the Prasasti of Sundara Pāndya and the records of Vīra Pāndiya (Kudumiyamalai and others) See A. Liyanagamage: "*The Decline of Polonnaruva and the Rise of Dambadeniya*" *(1967)*, pp 142-144.

24. CV, 92:120

25. *Vanni Puvata*. (Or 6606 (139).

26. *Vanni Bandāra Vitti Potak: Raṭe Ättange Niti kāndaya* (Or 6606 (182).

27. See S. Pathmanathan: "The Kingdom, of Jaffna", p. 189

28. S. Pathmanathan: *Ibid*, p 214.

29. See also, *"Sirith Samgrahaya"*, a Collection of the oral tradition on Vanniyās and Raṭa Sabhās, C.L. Wickramasinghe Collection, RASSL.

30. CV. 88:89, Pathmanathan quotes *Kailayamalai* where the tradition claims that notable among those who came in the train of the Vanniyārs were many *Malavar* chiefs who served under Ceyviran, the first Āriya Cakravarti ruler according to tradition. This is the closet we come in the Tamil tradition to the *Malavara* nobles mentioned in the Sinhalese tradition. S. Pathmanathan, *Ibid*, p. 215

31. S. Pathmanathan: op. cit., p 216

32. *'Yālapana Vaipava Malai* (Brittos' tr.), pp. 19-23.

33. CV. 90:16-30;

34. *'Vanni vitti Saha Nītiye potak'* (or 6606(113),III).

35. According to Valentyn, *Hiṭi-hāmi* was a title of an official under the Sinhalese kingdom. See Valentyn, Description of Ceylon Introduction Tr. by. S. Arsaratnam) (1970), p.66. See also Hugh Nevills notes or 6606(139).

36. The name Pahalos - Pattu appears in the Mss of the Sinhalese folk tradition. It appears to have come into use during or after the Dambadeniya period.

37. The more important Mss. are the *Malala Vittiya*, (or 6606 150) II; *Malala Katāva* (or 6606 150) III); *Vanni Puvata* (or 6606 (139); and *Vanni Vitti Saha Nitiye potak'* (or 6606 (133) III).

38. Kōvitta Tamils figure among the group of mercenaries employed by Parakramabāhu VI to expel the Mukkarūs. See *Vanni Puvata* (Or 6606 (139)).

39. Knox: *An Historical Relation of Ceylon* (Ryan's edition), p.259.

40. *Kañdure Bandāravaliya*, (Or 6606 (77) III); and *Kañdure Bandārage Nitipota*: *Kiravālle Raja-Mula* (or 6606 (132).

41. See page 17 for further examination of this aspect. S. Arasaratnam in his book, *"Dutch power in Ceylon*, (1658-1687), pp.57-58 emphasises the economic importance of this region. See also "Log book" of the Danish Fleet, 31-5-1621, *(JRAS(CB)*, 37, No.102 (1940).

42. *Vanni Vitti Saha Nītiyē Potak* (or 6606 (133) III.

42a. Hurulu raṭa in ancient times extended up to the sea. See Dutch maps.

43. See J.P. Lewis: *Manual of the Vanni Districts:* p 101. Kurunthankulam (S. *Kurungama* or *Kurunāgama* in Kilakkumalai South) and Nochcikulam (Chinna Cheddikulam) have been identified as villages inhabited by *Vannivaru* in the 19th century.

44. See J.P. Lewis:

45. Hugh Nevill's notes on Or 6606 (77); and Or 6606 (139).

46. Or 6606 (53).

47. Or 6606 (139).

48. *Yālapana Vaipava Malai* (Britto) p.5.

49. *Memoir of Rycloff van Goens to his successor*, April 12, 1675. (Reimers tr.) , p 43. Sri Lanka National Archives (SLNA), Colombo. 50. See D'Oyly: *Ibid.*, p.81'

51. *Taprobanian*, Oct., 1887, p 140.

52. *CV.* 69:20.

53. *VBVP.* (Or 6606 (139). "pēruva" could mean clan or class, or an area occupied by such a clan or class.

54. Hugh Nevill's notes on Or 6606 (139)

55. & 56. *VP* (Or 6606 (139).

57. *Kañdure Baṇḍāravaliya.* (Or 6606 (77) III. See Hugh Nevill's notes.

58. Or 6606 (132).

59. *Mātale Maha Disāve Kadaimpota* (Or 6606 (141).

60. *Kañdure Baṇḍārage Nīti Pota: Kīravälle Raja-Mula* (Or 6606 (132).

61. *Memoir of Rycloff van Goens to his Successor, Dated April* 12, 1675, p.43 (Reimers tr.), SLNA.

62. Valentyn: *ibid.* page 13 and also See map.

63. *CV.* 90:33. The chornicle refers to Vanni kings of Kadalīvāta, Āpāna, Tipa, Himayānaka but none of these could be identified with any accuracy. "Kadalīnivāta" and "Kadalisena gāma" were places where forces of Anuradhapura and Rohana met in battle. The place has been one of strategical importance. According to C.W. Nicholas, Kadalīnivāta was on the way from Nikavāratiya to Anuradhapura and it should be closer to the latter, lying, perhaps, in the upper reaches of Kala Oya. He identifies another place called Kelivata (*CV.* 42:19) where king Aggabodhi built the Sumanapabbata Vihāra in the neighourhood of Habarana; but this could be Kehelgamuva near Samantha - Kūta.

    Geiger's rendering of the word Sīhala as another Vanni principality appears to be erroneous. In the Pāli text the word appears to stand as an adjective qualifying the other Vanni principalities. See Sumangala and Batuvantudāve tr. of MV.

64. *Pjv,* Kīrialle Gnānavimala ed. (1951) p.189. See also L.S. Devaraja *Ibid,* p 237

65. *Girā Sandēsaya,* V. 128.

66. For a discussion on the references in *Vaiyāpatal* see S. Pathmanathana: *"The Kingdom of Jaffna"*, pp 211-217.

67. See T.B. Abayasinghe: *Jaffna under the Portugese.* p 16 see also A. Denis N. Fernando: Peninsular Jaffna from ancient to medieval times, *JRAS (SL)* New Series, Vol. XXXII (1987-1988) p.68.

67a. See Marina Ismail : *Early Settlements in Northern Sri Lanka,* 1995, p.48. C.W. Nicholas draws attention to an inscription of Mahinda IV (956 - 972) which grants fields in Pahanagama to Issaramana Vihāra at Anurādhapura. Pāsānagama tank was built by Dhātusena (455 - 473) and restored by Parakramabāhu I. See Ez I, 39; *MV.* 79:36 and *JRAS(CB)* N.S. Vol VI Sp. Number p.81.

68. S.L.N.A. : Dutch Records: 2507;2508.

69. See *Memoir of Commandeur Mooyaart (1765) to his successor,* (tr. by Anthonisz, Oct., 1910) .S.L.N.A.

70. *Vanni Baṇḍāra Vitti Potak: Ratē Ättange Nīti Kāṇḍaya* (or 6606 (182).

71. *CV.* 88:80-120
72. *CV.* 82:26-27; See also A. Liyanagamage: *ibid.*, p.140.
73. *CV.* 88:64-65.
74. *CV.* 88:29-42.
75. Or 6606 (139).
76. op cit
77. *Memoir of Rycloff van Goens dated Dec. 26, 1663,* (Reimers tr), p. 14 SLNA He States: " The country between the river Waluwe and Trinqunemale mostly stretches east and east North-West up to Trinqunemale. I have never been able to visit this district as it is entirely inhabited by the king's people, besides being barren dry land". Kiriälle Gnānavimala: *Sabaragamuvē Pārani Liyakiyavili,* Colombo, 1946.p. 139-140.
79. See Hugh Nevill: notes on or 6606 (77) and or 6606 (139); See also fn.54 and 136
80. Knox: *ibid* p. 251.
81. D'Oyly *ibid* p.76.
82. *JRAS (CB),* XXVIII No.72, 1919: Dag Register of Batavia No.1672, letter from Commandeur Lieut. Pyl dated 14th Sept. 1676 and Rycloff Van Goens (Jnr.) letter dated 15th December 1676.
83. *Vanni Puvata,* Or 6606 (113) III.
84. *Memoir of Commandeur Mooyaart* (fn.71). and others SLNA.\
85. Ievers: *Manual of the NCP.*P. 61.
86. Knox: *Ibid.*, p.257.
87. See Ievers: *ibid.* p.16 Knox was not familiar with the region.
88. This was the scenario after Sapumal Kumārayā conquered Jaffnapatam and the Vanni lands. The expression used in the ms. denotes a request for land. Several froms of demarcation of boundaries have been noted in the texts. *Atuhan-Kāḍima* and *Divibāḍa* were in common use. *Atuhan* simply means hanging twigs or branches of trees along the path to indicate possession and warning against violation of territory. *"Atusan", Kolasan"* and *"Dunusan"* are taken also to denote three groups of *Vāddas* meaning those who used branch or twigs and bows as signs to demarcate boundaries. See P.B. Meegaskumbura: *Sirilak Vāddijanapurānaya*, p.70
89. This is implied in the Tamil tradition. The tract in Or 6606 (112) specifically refers to the Vanniyās of Pahalos Pattu vāva being assigned the responsibility of restoring Kalā baḷalu and other irrigation works in the area; and bringing the land under agriculture. *cv.* refers to the restored city of Anurādhapura being placed in charge of Vanni rulers of Patitta raṭṭha.

Nādu Kādu Paraveni Kalvettu specifically refers to the responsibilities of "Podimar" as maintaining services at Naka Seyil Vihāra. This is evidently a Buddhist Vihara (Nakha Vehera = Dighavapi - Cetiya or Nāga Vihāra). Several Vihāras built by Naka Maha Raja are mentioned in the lithic records in the east. "Naka pavata" (Nāga pabbata Vihāra or Bo-giri) built by Mahā Dāthika Maha Raja situate in Panama Pattu is one such. See Rātravela Vihāra Rock *Inscription.*

Inscriptions of Ceylon Vol.II, part I pp. 36,37 and 41

C.W. Nicholas states that Dīghavāpi Cetiya was popularly known Nakhā-Vehera. It is among the places of religious worship visited by Kirti Sri Rājasimha. See *JRAS (CB)* NS Vol II (1959) (Sp. Issue) p. 27.

This account may be compared with the claim in the Tamil tradition that Kulakkottan appointed Vanniyās to provide services at Konesar temple at Trincomalee.

If would seem that maintainfng services at places of religious worship, both Buddhist and Hindu was a responsibility of the Vanniyās.

See also report of Vanniyā Subreman of Tampalagamuva (Tambalagam) which outlines the responsibilities of Vanniyās in respect of maintenance of irrigation and regulating agriculture. (Sessional Paper,1857) SLNA.

90. See Memoir of Commandeur Mooryart. (fn 70) Portuguese records also show the payment of tribute by Vanniyās in respect of two provinces Pudukudirippu and Karikattumalai.see fn 2.

91. Or 6606 (182) and Or 6606 (150) III.

92. Or 6606 (139); Or 6606 (133) II.

93. The Sinhalese in the Vanni were exempted by the Dutch from payment of *uliyam* tax and interest on grain and cash advances given to them as an incentive for them to remain tn the Vanni. This may be because they were found to be the better cultivators.

See Fowler's Minute quoted by J.P. Lewis (*The Manual of the Vanni Districts*, p.256)., where the former observed: "It is curious that the Sinhalese always select the best tanks, Tamils preferring small tanks, presumably as requiring less labour. It is amusing to read in the local papers of the energy of the Tamils of the Northern Province as compared with the listless Sinhalese. In the Vanni their positions are reversed, and the Vanni Tamil trades on the reputation of the cultivators of the peninsula".

Lewis also observed that "The want of energy distinguishes the Tamils of the Vanni from those of the peninsula and from the Sinhalese neighbours, so that they prefer cultivating under small tanks".

94. *CV* 87:27-30.

95. See *Mukkara Haṭana;* or 6606 (53) and *Kaṅdure Bandāravaliya* (Or 6606 (77) III).

96. See p.17 and also fn.41.

97. See text: section under Expansion of Vanni Principalities.

98. Hugh Nevill's notes on Or 6606 (77) III & Or 6606 (50).

99. *CV* 88:80-89.

100. *CV* op.cit.

101. See Hugh Nevill's notes on Or 6606 (77).

102. *Mātale Maha Disāve Kaḍaimpota.* See fn. 96.

103. John D'Oyly: *ibid.*, p.77.

104. Ievers quotes the Asst. Government of Agent, Mannar. See *Mannal of the North Central Province*, note 'B'.

105. S. Arasaratnam: The Vanniyār of North Ceylon", *CJHSS*, IX, (02) July-Dec. 1996, p.109.

106. Or 6606 (77).

107. L.S. Dewaraja: *op.cit.*,(cf.13).

108. D'Oyly: *ibid.*, p.40.

109. See Memoir of Governor Thomas Van Rhee. (1697), p.7.

110. *Yālpāna Vaipava Malai* (Britto's tr.), p.21.

111. S. Arasaratnam: *ibid.*, p.104.

112. Memoir of Governor Rycloff Van Goens (Snr.) dated, April 12, 1675. (See fn.40).

113. Pūjāvaliya refers to the wives and children of Vanni kings previously captured by the Sinhalese kings, who were returned them by Vijayabāhu IV. Kiriälle Gñānavimala ed. p.802. The practice has been prevalent in ancient India.

114. See *JRAS (CB)*, XXXVIII, Pt. II, No.106, (1948) pp. 69-74.

115. Perhaps it was some of these people who returned to the northern districts later. This shows there had been periodic movement of people in these areas. See H. Parker: p.35, and Nagel's Account of the Vanni, *JRAS (CB)* Vol. XXXVIII, Pt II, No. 106. (1947) pp 69-74.

116. *JRAS (CB)* XXXVIII, part II, No. 106. (1948) pp. 43-68; and C.L. Wickarmasinghe Collection (1932), RASL.

117. Memoir of Governor Van Graff to TG Van Anglebeck, *CLR*. do. p.309 (86).

118. For reference to criticism see Governor Graff;s Memoir, *CLR* p.309 (100-107). Nagel paid 10,000 paras of paddy to the Company which was nearly one fourth of the produce. He offered to take a second contract on the expiry of the first. The arrangentment appears to have been profitable to Nagel. The disparaging account seems to have been written largely for the consumption of the Council in Batavia who may not have viewed favourably the expenses involved in subjugating the Vanni.

119. Dag Register: Governor Van Imhoff's tour of Ceylon, July 3 1738, (Dutch Record 2729)., SLNA. See S. Arasaratnam, *ibid* p.110 for a summary.

120. See instructions to Duflo in Charge of "French Free Company" (1766) SLNA, letter marked 3345 (13/1) *CHMC Bulletin* No.6, p.161. Dulfo was asked to make a short raid into he Vannia of Nogere (Nuwara Vāva) on his march through Bintenna, Batticaloa and Trincomalee.

A. Bertolacci: *A view of the Agricultural, Commercial and Financial Interests of Ceylon* 1817 (Tisara Prakasakayo), p.20.

121. J.P. Lewis; *ibid.*, p.25. Dyke refered to the effects of small- pox brought by immigrant labourers from South India as well as the "terrible disease" of *parangi* prevalent in the Vanni as major causes of depopulation. Nagel's observation on the unhygenic condition of water in the Vanni is also

confirmed by other authorities. The situation exists even today when there is a severe drought. W. Morris in his report (Appendix to Sessional papers. 1867, (p.254). Observed that "at Kandalei (Gantalāva) and Minnery where they have always good water, people are healthy, but the small tanks attached to them are polluted by the people themselves and by the wallowing of cattle and wild animals". The picture is very similar to Nagel's account.

122. S. Arasaratnam: *op.cit.*, p.109.

123. Memoir of Governor Graff to T.G. Van Angelbeck, *CLR* p.309(84).,

124. U. Karunananda: Nuvarakalāviya 1815-1900 (Sinh.), (1990) p.19

125. Letter dated Feb.1,1834 Sent by Colonial Secretary to the Agent of N.P.

126. *U. Kaurnananda: "Nuvarakalāviye Samaja Sambandhatā*: 1815-1900" (Sinh.) (1995) p.33. He observes that though the Vanniyās and *Korale Ätto* now belong to the *Govigama* caste, a distinction is still observed on occasions of marriage and other social events, the Vanniyās seeking a superior status.

127. Wilhelm Geiger: "Die Vannis", *Sitzungsberich der Bayerichen Akadamie der Wissenschaften*, II, Heft.4 (Munchen), Juni 1911, pp.3-11.

128. S. Fowler: Diary 3r May 1887.

129. A.O. Brodie: Topographical and statistical account of the District of Nuvarakalāviya: *JRAS (CB)*Vol II, 9,1856, p.149.

130. Anonymous: The Vanni, *MLR* & NQC, II, No.5, May 1894, pp 98-99. The contents and conclusions in this article are similar to Parker's writing on the Vanniyās published in *Taprobanian*, Feb. 1887, pp.15-21.

131. K. Indrapla *ibid.*, pp. 122-123,125.

132. *ibid.* pp.124-125.

133. J.P. Lewis: Manual of the Vanni Districts, p.102. He Wrote: "Living among Tamils, the Sinhalese of the Vanni had to some extent begun to copy their customs".

134. Indrapala *ibid.* p.119. He concedes that the term Vanni could have been introduced before the immigration Vanni chiefs.

135. *Mohoṭṭāla, Lēkama Bādderāla* and others from *Raṭe Ätto* who were of *Govigama* caste.

136. See *supra* 79.

137. The AGA of Mannar gives the name as Sūriyakula Kumārasinha (See Iever's *Manual of the NCP.*, p.54, Note B, records in Mannar Kachcheri); Lewis refers to him as Kumārasinha Kanem Wannian of Blankollam (Bulankulama). (J.P. Lewis, ibid, p.16)

138. For Sweethenham's Minute of 1879 where he records these observations, see J.P. Lewis, *ibid.*, p.16.

See also H.W. Tambiah: *'The Laws and Customs of the Tamils of Ceylon'* p.66. He observes that the *Thesawalamai* which was only applied to the

Jaffna peninsula was introduced into the Vanni district by Nagel and "Hence it was not surprising that during the early British period there was evidence to show that the Thesawalamai was applied to the Vanni district."

139. In 1746 Governor Van Golleness sold all remaining good paddy land in Karachchi, despite opposition from the Vanniyās. Nagel completed the proccess in the Vanni proper.

Memoir of Rcyloff Van Goens dated 26th .Dec.1663 (Reimer's tr. p.15) states: "In contra-distinction to the Wanni, the little land if Jaffnapatam is so full of inhabitants that they were all in each others way, on which account the country would be too small to feed them all unless the poorer people subsisted on Pannagayen or the fruit of the wild palm or the sugar tree. Although, if they cared to work, they could live in plenty by settling in the lands of Poonery and Mantote which are very fertile. "He then says that Vosch had already induced some of them to go there.....

In the latter half of the 18th century, a large number of Tamils from Jaffna peninsula, specially from Alaveddy, Uduppidy and Navaly settled down in Mullaitivu and Kalikkumalai north districts and many immigrants from Karachchi went to Nuvarakalāviya (See *Yālpāna Vaipava Kamamthy*-p.184) quoted by C.S. Navaratnam in *"Vanni and Vanniyās"*, Jaffna, 1960).

140. Sees *supra* 93.

141. In his Report (Sessional Paper (1887), p.254). W. Morris says "The natives of India will as readily work on low land for wages as on the coffee estates, and we have thousands from over-crowded Jaffna and from all parts of the island, whom the certainty of good returns, will in time induce to immigrate". That the Jaffna peninsula had been ear-marked as a source of immigration on the Vanni is quite clear. For other archival records see reports of GAA of Jaffna and Trincomalee and AGA's reports, SLNA.

The Government Agent of the Eastern Province was so desperate about finding people to colonise the Trincomalee district that the Surveyor Gen eral, A.B. Fyers, in his Administration Report, 1868, observed that the former "did not despair getting families from India to settle at Tampalakam". See part III, Appendix II, p.61., of Brohier's *"Ancient Irrigation works of Ceylon"*.

See also A. Denis N. Fernando: "Peninsular Jaffna from Ancient to Medieval Times" *JRASSL (NS)* Vol. XXXII (1989) p.72.

142. These Vanni villages were in Nochchikulam and Kurunthamakulam see p.35. above and also, from 43.

SOME ASPECTS OF THE CULTURAL TRADITIONS IN SRI LANKA OF THE LATE MEDIAEVAL PERIOD*

by

M B Ariyapala

Dr W A de Silva : a biographical note

Pioneer agriculturist, enlightened educationalist, zealous religious worker and ardent nationalist, Dr W A de Silva was undoubtedly one of the most reputed philanthrophists of his age who gave away a vast fortune not only to established social religious and charitable organisations, but also to all those deserving individuals who came to him for relief.

Dr de Silva was born on 15 3 1869 and was one of the sons of Johannes de Silva of Gandara. His early education was first at Buona Vista School, Unawatuna, then at Richmond College, Galle, and later at the Colombo Acadamy (present Royal College), where he studied for a brief period. He then proceeded to the School of Agriculture, Colombo, from where he won a scholarship to the Bombay Veterinary College at the age of 22. After completing his course of study in 2 years, he returned to the island and joined the staff of the Scool of Agriculture and was responsible for organising the Government Dairy. Soon after, in 1896 he was appointed the first Veterinary Surgeon in the Colombo Municipality, and remained there till he retired in 1912. In the meantime, he had married a daughter of the reputed business tycoon and philanthrophist Mudaliyar Sri Chandrasekera, and thus became free to pursue his self ordained mission of service to his country and religion.

Dr de Silva's public life, however, began when at the age of 17 years at the request of Anagārika Dharmapāla he contributed a series of articles to the *Sarasavi Sandaräsa,* the organ of the Buddhist Theosophical Society. His connection with contemporary religious leaders no doubt influenced his later religious activities which he pursued so zealously. He went with Anagārika Dharmapāla to Siam on an invitation from King Chulalānkom and brought back some relics of Lord Buddha *(sārīrika dhātu)* gifted by the King of Siam who had received them from the Indian Government; on this occasion Dr de Silva had also been honoured with the title of *Rajor Pushi* by the King of Siam.

Dr de Silva's most substantial contribution towards the progress of Buddhism and religious education in the country was connected with his association with the Buddhist Theosophical Society (BTS) and other similar religious organisations. After being elected to the Executive

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* I am most indebted to Mr R C de S Manukulasooriya for all the help given in the preparation of this paper.

Committee of the BTS he was appointed as the Ganeral Manager of Schools in 1905, a post he held for 25 years. At one stage there had been 249 schools scattered in all parts of the island for which he was not only the Manager but also a liberal contributor from his own private funds for their maintenance. He also helped the Society to purchase land for schools like Ānanda College and Nālanda Vidyālaya. When it was found that there was a shortage of teachers for schools, he founded the Teacher Training College at Nittambuwa and another at Walāna to train teachers for schools managed by the Society.

As a Buddhist leader he was one of the most active propagandists of the religion throughout the country and enjoyed a position of great repute in that regard. He was also on the Board of management of the YMBA Colombo, of which he was a founder memeber and its Vice-President for 30 years. He was appointed Chairman of the Colombo District Committee and Provincial Committee under the Buddhist Temporalities ordinance. He also attended the Third International Congress for the History of Religion at Oxford and the International Congress of Orientalists at Copenhagen where he served as a Sectional Secretary. In later years, in 1920, he was appointed the President of the All-Ceylon Congress of Buddhist Associations held in Galle. In 1919 he was appointed the President of the Buddhist Society of Great Britain and Ireland, thus becoming the first non-European to hold that post. His vigorous religious activities naturally led him to play a leading role in the Temperance Movement and he was the first President of the Colombo Total Abstinence Central Union in 1912. It was his association with this movement that led to his incarceration along with a number of other religious and political leaders in 1915 when the country was under Martial Law. There can be no doubt that another principal factor contributing to his arrest was also, his vigorous activities in the Reform Movement. His interest in the political and social reform movement developed quite early during his tenure of office in the Colombo Municipal Council. When the Ceylon Social Reform Society was started in 1905 he was one of its first memebers. He was the Co-Editor, with Ananda Coomaraswamy, of the Society organ, *The Ceylon National Review*, which came out in January 1906. Dr de Silva has contributed several valuable and interesting articles to this Journal.

When the Ceylon Reform League was formed on 17 5 1917 he was its first Secretary, and thus was drawn into the agitation for constitutional reforms. A memorandum on Constitutional Reforms was presented to the Secretary of State for Colonies in 1917. This was followed by a deputation with Dr de Silva as one of its members, which met Lord Milner, Secretary of State for Colonies on 15th October 1919. After this meeting, Dr de Silva remained in England to pursue further action following the interview. He was thus drawn into the field of political reforms and thus played a

prominent role in the inauguration of the Ceylon National Congress of which he was the first General Secretary and Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam its first President, a position which Dr de Silva held on two subsequent occasions.

When the reformed Legislative Council was formed in 1924 Dr de Silva was unanimously elected the member for Central Province and remained in that position till it was replaced by the State Council in 1931. He was then elected the member for Moratuwa and retained that seat till his death on 31 3 1942. During this period he also held the portfolio of Health for 6 years from 1936 to 1942.

Apart from politics he had many other interests which he pursued with equal vigour and enthusiasm. One such pursuit was agriculture. He had no doubt acquired a considerable knowledge in agriculture, from the School of Agriculture. He was a scientific agriculturist in the same class as Sir Marcus Fernando, Sir Henry de Mel and C E A Dias. He was one of the pioneer rubber planters having opened up almost 1,000 acres in rubber at Sirinivasa Estate, Waga in the Avissawella district. In 1929 he took over 1,169 acres of Crown Land under the Nachchaduwa Irrigation Scheme naming it Srāvasti estate and developed it through recruited labour whom he settled on the land. His scheme envisaged an extent of 750 acres in paddy and the balance in highland crops including coconut and vegetables. Under this scheme he provided at his own expense all infrastructure facilities such as roads, canals, bridges and even health care facilities providing an apothecary with a dispensary and drugs on which he spent a considerable amount of his wealth. To him the improvement of agriculture was almost a sacred objective and he firmly believed that the prosperity of the country depended on the development of the Dry Zone and the eradication of the scourge of malaria which annually took a heavy toll.

It is significant that though the government efforts to develop the Dry Zone by allocating extensive acreages to companies and individuals was almost a total failure, Dr de Silva persisted in his efforts and spent a vast amount of money on his project.

An important aspect of his agricultural development programme was to bring the results of scientific research in agriculture to the door step of the rural cultivator. With this purpose in mind he brought out a periodical in Sinhala named *Govikam Sangarāwa* which ultimately became the forerunner to the *Tropical Agriculturist* brought out by the Agricultural Department. Between the years 1889 and1920 he had contributed no less than 10 interesting papers which were published in the *Tropical Agriculturist.* He also wrote authoritatively on coconut cultivation. Later when the Low Country Planters' Association was formed he was elected its first President.

Another equally significant interest for which he ungrudgingly devoted his time and contributed an enormous amount of his wealth, was

for the advancement of education in general and Buddhist education in particular. Officially he served on such Boards and Committees as the Ceylon Board of Education, District Schools Committee and the Committee on the Teaching of Sanitation in Schools. He was a pioneer in the movement to introduce Sinhala as a medium of education to the Sinhalese. He urged that children in Government Schools and Assisted Schools should be taught their respective religions. He also served in the Education Commission in 1929 and the Riddel Commission on the University.

In the midst of all these multifarious activities he found enough time to dovote to literary pursuits, Apart from editing the *Buddhist*, the organ of the Y M B A for a short time and functioning as the co-editor of the *Ceylon National Review,* he contributed extensively to such journals as the Buddhist, the Maha Bodhi Journal, the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (Ceylon Branch), the Daily News Vesak Number* and the *Hibbert's Journal.* However his greatest claim for a place of distinction in the literary world lay in his compilation of the *Catalogue of Palm Leaf Manuscripts* in the Museum Library, Colombo, and in bringing out, with the collaboration of Dr G P Malalasekera, the *Folk Songs of the Sinhalese* in 1935. In the course of these pursuits he had built up what may have been the largest private library of books on Ceylon including no less than 1, 250 Palm Leaf Manuscripts which he donated to the Colombo Museum. It was stated that that he modelled his Library on the same lines as that of Sir Walter Scott and was housed in the far famed 'Srāvasti.'

Srāvasti itself was a unique place built in the style of the City of Gods, as it were, in the heart of the residential quarters of the city of Colombo, and indeed became the hall of culture where many distinguished guests from home and abroad were lavishly entertained. It was also the rendezvous of the national leaders of the day and the centre of political, religious and cultural activities in which many scholarly and reputed personalities of the later years found their feet. In fact both the Reform League and the National Congress had their beginnings at Srāvasti.,

Amidst all these numerous and diverse pursuits Dr de Silva still found time for recreational activities as well. He played practically most games then in vogue -cricket, tennis, billiards and golf in particular. He was at one time Secretary of the Anderson Golf Club in Nuwara Eliya, which he helped to found and the President of the Havelock Golf Club; he was also the first Hony Secretary of the Orient Club.

Dr de Silva lived in an era of rising national consciousness when political agitation, if not for complete independence, at least for having a say in the affairs of the government was gathering momentum; a period of Buddhist Christian controversy and varied literary debates and disputes were indulged in. The revival of Buddhist activities and the demand for the promotion of indigenous learning were giving rise to a deep and abiding national consciousness among the people. Dr de Silva was in the forefront

among those personalities who contributed to these resurgent forces of this dormant nation. As an individual his heart was always with the rural peasant and he made every effort to alleviate their sufferings and expressed liberal and modern ideas advocating legislation regarding minimum wages, housing, regulation of hours of work, facilities for children of workers and workmen's compensation.

In his experiment in his Dry Zone project he made every effort for the eradication of malaria, encouragement of *āyurvēda* and the rehabilitation of the abandoned fields lying fallow in the Dry Zone.

LITERARY CONTRIBUTIONS OF Dr W A DE SILVA

A Literal Translation into English of Loväḍa Sangarāva of Venerable Vidagama Mahānethraprasādamula Maitriya - Colombo	1910
List of Pali Books printed in Ceylon in Sinhala -London	1912
Folk Songs of the Sinhalese (with Dr. G. P. Malalasekera) Royal Asiatic, Society Ceylon Branch - Colombo	1935
Palm Leaf Manuscripts of Ceylon - Memoir of the Colombo Museum-Colombo	1938
Contributions to the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Ceylon Branch*	
Ceremony to Counter Evil Influence Resulting from False Swearing - Ref to Divi Pūnāwa - Notes & Queries Vol. XXIV	1911
A Contribution to Sinhalese Plant Lore - Vol. XII No. 42	1891
Dramatic Poetry & Literature of the Sinhalese - Vol. XVIII, No. 54	1903
Note on Bali Ceremonies of the Sinhalese - Vol. XXII No. 64	1911
Medical Literature of the Sinhalese - Vol. XXXIII No. 66	1913
Buddhist Era - Vol. XXIII No. 67, Notes & Queries	1914
Popular Poetry of the Sinhalese - XXIV No. 68	1915/6
Ancient System of Teaching Sinhalese - Vol. XXVI, No. 71	1918
Probable Origin of Kustarajagala - Vol. XXVIII, No. 72 N & Q	1919
Ceremonial Songs of Sinhalese Guardian Deities - Vol. XXVIII, No. 73	1920
Articles Used in Sinhalese Ceremonial Dances - Vol. XXVIII, No. 74	1921
Palm Leaf Manuscripts in Riḍī vihāra - Vol. XXIX, No. 76	1923
Sinhalese Magic & Spells Vol. XXX, No. 79	1926
Sinhalese *Vittipot & Kaḍaimpot* - Vol. XXX, No. 80	1927
Economic & Social Organisation in Ceylon - Vol. XXXI - No. 81	1928
Contributions to the *Tropical Agriculturist*	
Paddy Cultivation & Transplanting	1889/90
Indigenous Food Products Cultivated Wild	1889/91

Crude Theories regarding the Origin of certain Plants	1890
Developmnet of Village Industries	1903
The Edible Root Crops of Ceylon	1904
Suggestions for the Improvement of Rice Cultivation in Ceylon.	1907
Rural Agriculture in Ceylon and how it might be improved	1908/9
Some Problems connected with Village Cultivation in Ceylon	1913
Some Primitive processes of Agricultural Practice & thier significance	1915
Notes on the Working of Land Development Scheme in the North-Central Province	1929
Rice Growing in Ceylon	1920

Other Contributions

Sinhalese Folk Songs - Story of King Gajabā - *Ceylon National Review*	1907
Sinhalese Black Magic - *Ceylon National Review*	1908
Life & Times of Buddhagōsa - *National Monthly of Ceylon*	1912
Pattini Devi - *Ceylon Antiquarian & Literary Register*	1915
Kuveni Hälla - do do	1915
Buddhist View of Spirits & Spiritistic Phenomemna - *Hibbert Journal*	1920
Some Sources of Ceylon History - *Buddhist* NS7(5)	1921
Art & Sinhalese Folk Ceremonies - *Buddhist Annual of Ceylon*	1922
The Status and Influence of Buddhism in Ceylon, - *Religions of the Empire ed.* William Lofin Hore, London	1925
History of Buddhism in Ceylon - *Buddhist Studies ed.* B C Law	1931
A Social Problem that Awaits a Solution -	1934
The Eternal City of Lanka - Anurādhapura, its Rise & decline, *Ceylon Daily News Vesak Number*	1935
The Buddhist Movement- 50 Years Later. All- Ceylon Exhibition & Carnival	1937
Mahiyangana, City of Yakkas - *Buddhist,* Vol 7 (12) April	1937
Religious Links with Burma: Story of Embassy to Ceylon - *Ceylon Daily News, Vesak Number*	1937
Nāgas of Ceylon - *Buddhist* Vol. 8(1)	1937
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Sri Lankapura, the City of Ravana - *Buddhist* Vol. 8(12) April	1938
The Vehicle of Buddhism	1938
Game of Horns or Sinhales Ankeliya - *Buddhist* Vol. 19(9)	1939
A Cycle of National Progress - *Buddhist Theosophical Soeiety, Diamond Jubilee 1880 - 1940*	1940
Buddhism and the Healing of Disease - *Ceylon Daily News Vesak Number*	1940

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The period 13th to 16th centuries may well be termed the glorious era of Sinhala literary achievement in view of the significant volume of scholarly works, both in prose and verse, produced during that period. In general, these literary works are concerned with royalty, the elite, the glory of their achievements and the grandeur surrounding them. In these works, the common man, his joys and sorrows, his toils and tears, troubles and travails, his faiths and beliefs and practices in his eternal struggle to extract a living from the meagre resources available to him - in short his general way of life find no place. In this background, the life and works of Dr W A de Silva stand out in deep contrast in the portrayal of the life and society of the ordinary man about whom he was most concerned.

In short Dr de Silva's entire contributions have been in the field of folk life and folk culture which find no reflection in the literary works of the preceding centuries. His contributions cover a wide range of themes on folk culture, folk songs, and pastimes, folk beliefs, rituals and ceremonies connected with the worship of gods and deities, and last but not least, practices connected with agricultural pursuits.

His main work which embodies many aspects of these themes is his book on folk songs compiled in collaboration with Dr G P Malalasekera and published by the Royal Asiatic Society, Ceylon Branch, in 1935 which contains 2235 verses divided into the following categories: *Lullabies, Games, Saudan, Vannam, Thālakavi*

Dance and Songs, Tahanci Kavi and Kavi. An analysis of these songs reveals the nature and character of the simplicity of life led by the rural folk in contrast to the glamorous splendour of the lives of king and courtier and of those living around them and contains a broad outline of the various aspects of the life of the average Sinhalese peasant as revealed in these works and is also supported by whatever evidence is available from other sources.

Agricultural practices of the peasant farmer. A certain number of Dr.de Silvas' writings relating to agricultural practices have been published in the *Tropical Agriculturist* and deal with such topics as transplanting in paddy cultivation, edible root crops, and other food products. While these essays contain certain technical and scientific aspects of paddy cultivation and food production, another aspect is seen in the various age-old customary practices adopted to achieve productivity.

The beliefs that form the background to their age-old practices are embodied in a wide range of folk songs. Dr de Silva has given in his book, *Folk Songs of the Sinhalese.* a large number of songs involving paddy cultivation, on the mythical origin of paddy, cultivation processes, harvest songs, threshing floor practices, weeding songs etc. They throw considerable light on the beliefs and practices of cultivators. A significant feature that runs through all these songs is that the farmer regarded the cultivation

of paddy as a sacred responsibility, as indeed it is, since life itself depended on it.

Invocations are therefore made almost at the commencement of every stage of the cultivation process which are addressed to the Buddha and various deities they believed in. I quote the first four verses of the *Goyam Māle* as given at page 142 in Dr de Silva's anthology: (VV. 1391 - 1394)

වරන් වරන් මට මහබඹු අතින් වරන්
වරන් වරන් ඉසිවරදෙවි අතින් වරන්
වරන් වරන් සක්දෙවි රජ අතින් වරන්
වරන් වරන් ගොවිකම් පද කරන වරන්

වරන් ගතිම් ඉරසද දෙවි අතින් වරන්
වරන් ගතිම් මිහිකත් දෙවි අතින් වරන්
වරන් ගතිම් සක්වළදෙවි අතින් වරන්
වරන් ගොයම කැපුමට දෙවිදුන්ගෙන් වරන්

උඩින් සිටින ඉරිදෙවියෝ සෙවන ක රා
බිමින් සිටින මිහිකත්දෙවි කලස ද රා
වටින් සිටින සැම දෙවියෝ අරක් ක රා
ඉතින් කපමු අපි එකතුව ගොයම් පු රා

බුදුන් තිලෝකෙට උත්තම ව න්නේ
යොදුන් ගණුන් බුදුරැස් විහිදෙ න්නේ
සඳුන් සුවඳ මල් පුදකර ව න්නේ
බුදුන් සරණ සිහිකර කියමි න්නේ

It would be seen from the first three verses quoted above that the blessings of almots every god or deity known to the average peasant from *Maha Brahma, Iswara, Sakra, Iru devi, Mihikatha* and all the deities around the universe are sought in their endeavour. It is significant that reference to the Buddha is made only in the fourth verse while in other instances such as *Kalaviṭi Pirita* pride of place is given to Buddha himself in the lines;

පළමුව බුදුන් වැඳ - දෙවනුව දෙවියන්ට වැඳ'
තෙවනුව ගුරුන් වැඳ - කියන් කලවිටි පිරිත් පද බැඳ'

So too in *Kamath Kavi* the first invocation is to the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha; in the *Purāna Goyam Kavi* the blessings of the Triple Gem are sought before any reference to any other deity is made. But in the *pälkavi* series the peasant places himself under the protection of *Mangara Deviyo* before seeking the care off the 28 Buddhas whom he invokes. These invocations whether they are to the Buddha or other supernatural beings indicate the mind and attitude of the peasant cultivator. They indicate in no uncertain terms his dependence on certain external

elements which in their intense faith they feel are helpful in the successful production of their most important need, namely their food.

This dependence on supernatural elements is manifest in other spheres of the lives of the Sinhalese peasant. This is seen mostly in their beliefs in the part played by supernatural elements in causing disease and their cure. The traditional belief was that the planetary gods and other spirits referred to as *yakṣa* and *prēta* cause ailments of the body and the cure was through ceremonies for the propitiations of such spirits. Apart from Dr W A de Silva, who has read several papers relating to such practices before the Royal Asiatic Society, Ceylon Branch,[2] there is a large body of palm- leaf manuscripts containing exhaustive details regarding the agencies that cause such diseases and many elaborate methods of effecting cures by propitiatory offerings to these agencies. One of the largest collections of such manuscripts is found in the British Museum amouting to 911 manuscripts, which Hugh Nevill had collected during his stay in Ceylon, and the summaries and particulars of which have been made available to us in three volumes entitled *Sinhala Kavi*[3] edited by P.E.P. Deraniyagala.

In the paper read by Dr de Silva at a meeting of the RAS (C.B.) under the title of *Bali Ceremonies of the Sinhalese* he has analysed these ceremonies as those connected with magic and charms into the following six categories:

1) Curing disease
2) Preventing disease and ill-luck,
3) Promoting health and success,
4) Counteracting evil influences directed by others,
5) Bringing disaster on others,
6) Divination and fortelling events.

He has pointed to the existence of certain practices which have become distinct cults in the process of dealing with these matters. The main processes are the observation of lucky hours, use of charms and amulets, appeals to *yakṣas* and *prēthas,* offerings and appeals to *dēvas* and higher spirits and offerings to planetary and other gods,

One of the commonest forms resorted to in curing illness or counteracting continuing misfortunes frequently relied upon, particularly, by rural folk in mediaeval Ceylon, was a *bali* ceremony. The word *bali* is a generic term used for a variety of ceremonies connected with appeals to planetary gods who are represented by images or pictures made for the occasion. There are several intersesting cultural features connected with a *bali* ceremony which are of considerable significance as they form an imprtant tradition which has even survived up to the present day.

A *bali* ceremony has a distinct connection with astrological phenomena as it is through an astrological reading that a decision is made as to the planetary deity or deities or a *yakṣa* or *prētha* that has to be propitiated. Once this decision is made the figure or figures of those to be propitiated have to be either moulded in clay or drawn or painted. This leads to another aspect of the ceremony as the figures have to comply with certan traditional requiremints. The individual who performs the *bali* ceremony, named the *bali ädura* is proficient in these requirements, is obviously a competent sculptor or accomplished artist. The essential features of the image to be moulded or painted are given in a set of verses called *ämbun kavi* which the perfomer has gathered from his ancestors. The performance itself is accompanied by music which in most instances is of the most elementary kind, being slow rhythmic movements to the accompaniment of a drum or cymbals or both.

It would be seen that the cultural features contained in these ceremonies are undoubtedly significant. The performer himself, belonging to a distinct caste, the *näketi* caste, is a person with cinsiderable accomplishments and skill. He is learned in astrological lore, is a skilful artist, a no mean sculptor and a musician and dancer. He had a distinct place in the society in which he lived and was invariably treated with respect by his fellow beings, for it is not unusual for rural folk to refer to him as *vedarāla.* Unfortunately his artistic creations are not in permanent material, but are mouldings out of clay and erected on a coconut leaf base and painted with appropriate colours and meant only to last the particular ceremony for which it is erected, so that unlke in a stone sculpture or a wall painting they fail to remain long enough for posterity to admire and appreciate.

In the course of conducting the ceremony the dancer recites a long series of verses mostly in quatrains describing mainly the figures of the planetary and other deities involved, detailing their attributes, their origins, and stories connected with them; invariably, incidents from the life of the Buddha including the past Buddhas and *Jātaka* stories or episodes from them are woven into song and intonated to the tune of drum and cymbal. The planetary deities referred to are not the only supernatural beings that the rural folk believe in as affecting their lives. Dr de Silva in another presentation before the RAS(CB) has described in considerable detail a vast array of deities, both male and female who are capable of affecting the day to day lives of the rural folk, The chief among them are the guardian spirits who fall into three classes, those possessing great power and influence, the spirits whose influence is limited and confined to definite localities and the spirits of departed personages who are said to excercise influence over people.

Among the first category are *Vishnu, Nātha, Saman, Skanda and Pattini,* who are recognised as wielding great power and influence over the

people and have temples dedicated to them in various parts of the country. Annual celebrations are held regularly in connection with many of these at the principal places where the temples dedicated to them are located. Thus celebrations regarding *Vishnu* are conducted at Dondra or Devundara, *Nātha* at Kelaniya, *Saman* at Adam's Peak in Ratnapura, *Skandha* at Kataragama and *Pattini* at Nawagamuwa. Apart from these principal places where annual celebrations are held, these deities are worshipped in many other places of worship, mainly Buddhist temples throughout the island. This is particularly so with regard to *Vishnu* and *Kataragama* and their images have been erected within the precincts of the temple along with Buddhist images, which show that the worship of these deities have been closely engrafted to Buddhism. In fact in the invocatory verses regarding deities found in the extant manuscripts reference is invariably made to Buddha himself and to various episodes connected with the life of the Buddha. Thus in the rural mind these deities are colsely associated with their principal religion and have thus brought them into the Buddhist pantheon as an intrinsic part of their religion.

In the case of Pattini the folk mind is most closely associated with her worship. Generally regarded as the protector of the weak, sick and infirm, the harbinger of rain and the deity bestowing bountiful harvests and general prosperity on the community the worship of *Pattini* is almost universal throughout practically erery village and hamlet in the country, not only among the Sinhalese but also among the Tamils. Her association with the life of rural folk penetrates deep into their domestic spheres on such occasions as when building a house or occupying a new one or when a young girl attains age and comes out of her ritual confinement or in case of an infectious disease after which a *kiri ammā's* dane is given; for the general prosperity of the village when celebrations such as *gam-maḍu, pān-maḍu* and *gini-maḍu* are held in which the entire community would participate which form another aspect of the practices relating to the worship of *Pattini.* The games of *ankeḷiya* (horn pulling) and *pol-keiya* (coconut throwing) are also conducted as part of these ceremonies to honour *Pattini.* Lesser known deities propitiated in different districts are of considerable significance in the lives of the people of them are as. The better known among them are *Aiyanāyaka* in the Noth Central Province and the Vanni Districts, *Ganēsha,* also called *Pulliyār* in the forest regions, *Mangara* as the guardian for Bintenna and Ruhuna, *Kambili* in the Kurunegala District and Jaffna district, *Devol,* who is associated with *Pattini* and *Deḍimunḍa,* also known as *Alutnuwara Deviyo,* in the Kegalle district. Of these *Aiyanāyaka* is invoked for sickness, drought and agricultural operations, vehicles, horse and elephant. An interesting ceremony which is now fast dying out is the ceremony called the *muṭṭi mangalya* in the North Central and Vanni districts, which is conducteed in the paddy fields in which all the field owners and cultivators take part. *Ganesha* is regarded as the deity of wisdom and learning and is closely associated with

Kataragama in whose temples his image is often found. *Mangara* deviyo being regarded as the guardian of Bintenna and Ruhuna districts is generally invoked by hunters when they set out on their hunting expeditions. *Kambili devatāvā* is said to have come down from the mainland of India and settled in Kurunegala after being in Jaffna for some time and is generally invoked by people in those districts in their hours of need.

A similar story is related about *Devol* as a person who had come from the Carnatic coast and being shipwrecked had gone to several places along the southern coast, Devundara, Unawatuna and finally Seenigama where his principal *devale* is situated. *Devol deviyo* is closely associated with *Pattini* from whom he had received a boon *(varama)* to be in her abode.

Deḍimunḍa is also called *Alutnuwara Deviyo* as his principal *devāle* is situated in Alutnuwara in the Kegalle district where he is generally propitiated. Apart from these there are also a host of local deities such as *Devatā Baṇḍāra, Kīrti Baṇḍāra, Ganga Baṇḍāra, Mahasen Deviyo, Solīkumāra Deviyo, Ilandāri Deviyo, Nila yōdayā,* and generally kings and chiefs who have been deified after their deaths and to whom offerings are made in the belief that they exercised good and evil influences among the people.

Around these spirits there is a large corpus of literture mostly in palm-leaf manuscripts in which detailed descriptions of their origin, their corporeal form with their attributes, symbols by which they are known, their vehicles *(vāhana)*, the measure of their influence and their methods of propitiation and the particular priestly agent who conducts the ceremonies appropriate to them are given. In general there are many common features which indicate that there is no fundamental differences of note in their conception and in their ceremonies.

Dr de Silva has in one of his essays [5] given an interesting description ot some of the equipment used in Sinhalese ceremonial dancing conducted for the propitiation of planets and planetary spirits, the propitiation of benevolent spirits and the propitiation of demons and evil spirits. In the case of ceremonies relating to the higher Gods like *Vishnu, Saman, Nātha* and *Kataragama* the ceremonies are conducted in their temples or *devāles* established for them. The commencement of these cermonies is with the planting of a *kapa* at an astrologically calculated auspicious time. In the case of the ceremonies connected with other deities such as *Pattini* a special site is selected where different structures are put up comprising a *torana* or gateway and an arena for dancing called the *vīdiya.* The decorations for the *torana* is of plantain stalks, tender coconut leaves and flowers of various hue. The manner in which these constructions have to be made is laid down in the manuscripts relating to them. These are meticulously described, and Dr de Silva gives the following description of

the *torana*:

There are eight entrancs in the *vīdiya* in the eight corners, each being 48 inches; 26 stands are made within the *vīdiya,* at equal distances, for placing offerings and eight trays of flowers are placed on the ground in the eight corners and 24 pots filled with flowers and with lighted lamps are placed around the *vīdiya*

Structurally analysed the performance of the ceremony may be divided into five differents segments, namely:

1) Purification,
2) Illumination,
3) Ritual offerings,
4) Depositing of symbols of the planetary deities, and
5) The dance.

In all ceremonial dances the initial step is the purification of those who are performing the ceremony as well as the persons who benefit from the performance. Included in this process of purification is the purification of the place where the performance is held. The general process is identical in most cases, with a few differences in the details in accordance with the class of ceremony. Abstinence from meat and fish and certain items of food for at least 24 hours before the commencement of the ceremony, bathing and donning fresh white cloth *(piruvaṭa)* and the application of *nānu*, a special preparation from certain specified aromatic leaves and roots - *divul (Feronia elephantus), nuga (Ficus bengalensis)* and roots such as kalañduru *(Cyperus rotundus)* sandalwood and camphor. A simpler substitution is the juice from a boiled lime *bruised* in water. Another form of puification is bathing the face, and sprinkling the body with water, mixed either in boiled cow's milk or in which the juice of the root of turmeric *(Curmica longa)* is mixed. In addition, in areas where *Saivite* influences predominate, ash obtained from the burning of cow-dung are rubbed over the forehead, neck and arms.

Once the *torana* and *vīdiya* are complete they have to be illuminated. This is done by using either clay or brass lamps containing vegetable oils, mostly coconut ekels. In addition slender torches *vilakku* made by wrapping thin cotton rags on bamboo strip or wood splinters, dipped in oil, are also used.

Torches of large sizes are used by the dancers who whirl them round in their gyrations as they dance intermittently throwing handfuls of resin on them thus illuminating all the area around them.

The next stage is the placing of the ritual offerings to the deities involved in the ceremony. An all important part in this process is the drawing of the *aṭamagala*[6] on the ground with the use of ash and rice grains. Along with this the ritual offerings consisting of a pestle, looking

glass, tuft of hair, a coin, a jug of water, a ploughshare, flowers, leaves, grain, cooked food, roasted meat and also a live animal are placed as offerings. Since there are nine planets to be placated nine items of each of the offerings have to be placed. The flowers generally used are *ratmal (Ixora coccinea)*, white jasmin *(Jasminium sambac), idda (Wrightia zeylanica)* and blue gentian *(Gentiana quadrifaria)*; the betel leaf forms an important part while the other important items are *tolambo* leaves *(Crinum asiaticum)* and a stem of *hīressa (vitis quadrangularis)*. With regard to live animals it is either a fowl or a goat that is most often used.

The next stage is the ceremonial placing of the insignia of the deities to be propitiated. Each god or deity has his particular insignia, thus for *Pattini* it is the anklet and the mango, for *Kataragama* it is the sword, for *Vishnu* the golden bow and arrow and for *Deḍimuṇḍa* the club.

The final stage is the dancing. The dancers themselves ritually purified are dressed in various types of dresses according to the different dances. They generally tie a folded red or white cloth round their heads with the ends hanging down. Their nether garment is a long white cloth heavily pleated. Above this a folded waist cloth is worn; on the upper part of the body is worn a short sleeved jacket of varying hue often ornamented with coloured *beads* and sequins. As accompaniments to their dancing are the drums and cymbals. In the South the *yak bere,* also called the *magul* bere, while in the Kandyan districts the *geṭa bere* and the *uḍäkki,* are generally used. In addition a reed flute is used to attract evil spirits while the conch is blown in respect of the planetary deities and higher spirits.

The descriptions so far given apply chiefly to the propitiation of the planetary and benevolent spirits. In regard to the propitiation of demons or evil spirits the general routine followed is almost the same with certain significant variations which give them a more violent and vigorous character. Generally it is believed that illnesses are caused by certain evil spirits named *sanni yakku.* There are 18 *sanni* spirits which cause eighteen different diseases. In the ceremony to propitiate them the particular spirit causing the ailment is represented by a dress considered appropriate to him, the most distinguishing feature being the mask he wears; their dancing is more lively and the drumming also in accordance with the dance more vigorous and louder. Menawhile at intervals a sharp whistle is blown from the reed flute as an indication to the spirit of the ceremony that is being conducted and to invite him to accept the offerings made and relieve the patient of his ailment. Another significant practice similar to what has been described above is the use of magic and spells, a practice often resorted to by village folk to cause injury to man as well as animals and even trees and inanimate objects. Apart from Dr W A de Silva, other writers such as Dandiris de Silva Gunaratne [7] before him and O Pertold[8] in the early 20th century have given considerable details on these practices among the rural folk. Even here astrology plays a significant part as planetary movements

are always taken into account. In addition cabalistic diagrams, effigies and incantations are also used. The belief was strong among rural folk that much harm can be done by *vaskavi* (verses that cause harm) *äsvaha* (evil-eye) *kaṭa vaha* (evil words), *ho vaha* (evil breath) *evil* (imprecations) and such devices such as *devol, angam, pilli, hadi-huniyam.* Often protracted illness and continuing misfortunes are attributed to one or more of these devices done by an enemy and the services of a *kaṭṭaḍi* (exorcist) is sought to perform a ceremony to counteract their evil influences. These counter-charms are not only curative but also intended to cause a harmful reaction on the person responsible for originating them. The practice of curative and counteracting charms are very general and widely distributed and ceremonies are also numerous and varied. However, it must be said that there is a considerable body of literature on palm-leaf manuscripts relating to them. A considerable number of them are listed in the Hugh Nevill collection while there are a many more in several institutions like the National Museum, the National Archives, and in the Universities. However, the vast majority of them are still in the villages with the families of those who performed these ceremonies in the past, and are still continuing to do so.

The association of rural folk with the the other-worldly beings has also permeated into their games and recreational pastimes. This is clearly indicated in the rituals like *Ankeḷiya* and *Polkeḷiya* which are closely associated with ceremonies connected with *Pattini.* In these their recreational import is clearly evident as the entire village would take a day off from their normal daily chores to join in the activities with great enthusiasm. Apart from these the various annual celebrations held in honour of the High Gods have promoted other pastimes of which two of the commonest are *lī - keḷi* and *kalageḍi nätuma,* the former generally for the boys and the latter for the girls.

Among the many verses in the anthology of *'Folk Songs of the Sinhalese'* are a number of poems regarding traditional games, perhaps little known today, such as *yakaḍa thälma, līsellama, mevara sellama, olinda keḷiya and eluwan keḷiya* indulged in by the younger folk particularly during the New Year festivities when everyone would take a holiday. One of the most popular recreations in which not only children but also youths and even adults engage in is *unchili pädīma* and as they swing on the *unchilllāva* they burst into song singing *unchili vāram* loud and clear echoing and re-echoing throughout the four corners of the village as if to proclaim their joy and happiness.

Another interesting and more elaborate recreational pastime in which communal participation is an important factor is *kōlam näṭima*[9] Even though the performance of *kōlam* is confined only to the southern regions its cutural significance is important. Its origin derived from the mythical entity, King Mahāsammata, whose pregnant Queen's *doladuke*

(pregnant craving) had to be satisfied by a unique dance performance by masked dancers bears a significant parallel to many folk tales and *Jātaka* stories involving prenatal cravings of pregnant women which form their themes. There are several cultural aspects arising from a *kōlam* performance and the fact that there are extant, many palm-leaf manuscripts both in the Colombo Museum and in some of the Universities indicate that *kōlam* dances were popular in the past. In the anthology of *Folk Songs of the Sinhalese* there are 223 verses on *kolam nāṭima.* The presentation of mythological and demonaic characters named *rākṣasas, maru, of rāksa, nāga rāksa, gurulu rakṣa* etc. represented in appropriate mask and dress is culturally signigicant. A part of the performance is also the satirical presentation of common vilage officials such as the *mudaliārachchi* and *liyanārala* (scribe) amidst a host of ordinary rustic folk such as the *hewārala, nonchi akka*, and her drunken husband *anaberakāraya, hevāya, polis, peḍi vidāne, lenchina, hettiyā* and a host of others appear and depart indulging in dances appropriate to their parts. They are followed by the King who appears decked in the 64 royal ornaments and golden garments and armed with a golden sword; he is accompanied by the Queen appropriately dressed with jewellery and silken robes. There are also various dances which include *Jātaka* stories such as *Sañdakindurá jātakaya* or the *Maname kathāwa* are enacted. The introduction of the last item seems to be later development in order to impart a Buddhistic colouring to a purely traditional folk art which had little or no roots in Buddhism.

Arising from this purely rustic folk drama is a cultural contribution which can be regarded as of the highest significance in the cultural history of Sri Lanka. This is the art of the *kōlam* masks. As an art form *kōlam* masks are unique. In concept they are either realistic or imaginative or a combination of both, according to the characters to be represented. Executed by traditionally specialised local craftsmen with material locally procured they belong to the same cultural tradition who were accustomed to portray the masks figuring in the curative demon cults referred to earlier. It may also be said that the art of *bali* though moulded out of different material, clay, could also belong to the same cultural tradition, Here the most important fundamental factor behind all these craftsmen is that they belong to a folk tradition, born and engendered with no specialised training except what they have inherited from their forebears and transferred by them to their progeny over the passing generations.

The dramatic element contained in *kōlam nāṭuma* makes it the forerunner of the regular dramatic performances which developed in later years. There is a regular dance arena called the *aile* and a *Pote gurā* with the text in his hand narrating the incidents of the story. Orchestral support is provided by two drummers, a *horanä* player and a few singers seated within the *aile,* who were accustomed to portray the masks figuring in the curative demon cults referred to earlier. It may also be saed that the art of *bali* though moulded out of different material,clay, could also belong to the

same cultural tradition. On this background the various episodes are enacted some evoking much hilarity and laughter by the antics of some of the characters, while a narrative from a *Jātaka* story or a historical event provided the more serious element. As Raghavan states in the *Karavas of Ceylon- Society and Culture,*[10] it is 'an act altogether in pantomime, an act solely of action, dancing and playing, the idea of each scene being conveyed by the singer accompanied by the drummers'.

From *kōlam* to *nāḍagam* as recreational pastimes seems almost a natural development though no direct links between the two can be traced. It is a remarkable fact that there is very little trace of dramatic poetry in the history of Sinhalese literature. Dr W A de Silva has adverted to this shortcoming in his paper on 'Dramatic Poetry and the Literature of the Sinhalese'[11] in which he had tried to trace the origin of *nāḍagam* and appears to think that since learning was confined to Buddhist temples no regular drama was produced because such performances were considered to be incompatible with their religion. In the *Mahāvaṃsa* itself there is no reference to such performances except very remotely in such lines as 'also divers mimic dances and concerts with the playing of all kinds of instruments of music (in honour) of the Great Thupa'.[12]

Nāḍagam was therefore a late development which became popular in mid-nineteenth century and contained as their themes Hindu, Buddhist and Christian stories. The better known of these are *Chalapola nāḍagama, Sinhawalli, Sengappu, Juseappu, Vessantara, Kusa, Helena, Visvakarma, Varthagam, Sannikula, Raja Tunkaṭṭuwa, Sulamayai, Hunukoṭuve, Bälasanta, Porsia* and *Harischandra.* A large proportion of these *nāḍagam* plays were written by uneducated authors. One of them, Phillippu Singho, who was a blacksmith by profession, is said to have scribbled the verses of the *Ehelapola nāḍagama* in charcoal on the wall of his smithy as the lines occurred to him in the course of his work. The actors too were from among the village folk and they differed from village to village as each village put up its own performance. Each performance continued for several days providing much entertainment to practically all the residents of the village who flocked to witness them. According to the themes of the play there were different characters, kings, queens, courtiers, ministers and ordinary village professionals and their parts were acted by villagers. Each one of these actors came on the stage and sang quatrains indicating what they were doing and the common link was the *pote gurā,* who explained the story also in verse. Dr de Silva says ' The language was a mixture of Sanskrit and Sinhalese words selected more for their high sounds and pedantic display than with any view of elegance of style or expression of thought.[13] 'Thus, though somewhat crude both in concept and presentation as a forerunner of regular drama it has considerable cultural significance.

Perhaps the most important recreational pastime for the villager is the folk song which on closer analysis reflects the vicissitudes of village

life. For the villager they provide a source of relaxation which tend to ease the tedium of their daily tasks. Whether it be the cultivator in his field or in his mosquito-infested chena, or his wife or daughter bending over and pulling out the weeds or reaping the rich ears of paddy, the boatman heaving at his oar, the carter jogging his bullock along the uneven path, or the miner plugging away at the hard rock for the precious mineral or the sunburnt fisherman expectantly tugging at his net, they all sing while they laboriously toil at their chosen fields thus relieving themselves of the fatigue and dullnese of their tasks.

Written in the simple language used in rural society their folk songs are not without literary merit. They depict their hopes and fears in their variegated lives, happy in their gains and sorrowful in their losses, but still able to face the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune with philosophic calm, thus:

අහස තනිවේද විදුලිය කෙටුවා ට
පොළොව තනිවේද මම බිම බැලුවා ට
මූද බොර වේද ගොඩ රැළි ගැසුවා ට
සිතේ දුක් යාද දවසක් ඇඬුවා ට[14]

A characteristic feature frequently noted in these folk songs is that they depict the emotional longings of the human heart. The following verse shows the yearning of the lonely miner for his home:

ඉන්නේ දුම්බරයි මහ කළුගලක් ය ට
කන්නේ කරවලයි රට හාලේ බත ට
බොන්නේ බොර දියයි පූරුවෙ කළ පව ට
යන්නෙත් කවදාද මවුපිය දකින්න ට[15]

Still more pathetic are the words of the orphaned child who had also lost his mother and could find no means of appeasing the pangs of hunger:

මල්ලිත් මමත් තනි පාරක යන කල ට
බඩගින්නක් හැදුනා අපි දෙන්නා ට
බඩගිනි නිසා කොයි අම්මගෙ ගෙට යන් ට
යමන් මලේ අම්මා වැලලූ තැන ට[16]

In almost complete contrast the folk lyricist was able to come out with quaint outbutsts as in,

වැල්ලව වෙලේ වේවැල්වල වවුල් ලූ
වැවුවල වේල්වල විල්වල ලූල් ලූ
වැල්ලව වලව්වේ ලී ලෝ ලූ ලැලී ලූ
වැල්ලව වලව්වේ වීලෑවේ වාල් ලූ[17]

The themes dealt with in these folk songs are vast and variegated depicting various aspects of life, society and situations. The folk poet is not

bound by rules of prosody or other conventional demands; their songs are the spontaneous expressions of thoughts, desires and longings of those who composed them. Who these authors are, are not known except that it is a nondescript carter, a lonely miner, a sunbaked boatman, a village potter or even a busy housewife who would sing their quatrains in pleasant melody and tune.

Thus the carter recalling his wearisome journey over hill and dale on uneven paths carrying loads of merchandise sympathises with the bulls tethered to his cart:

තන්ඩලේ දෙන්න දෙපොලේ දක්කන වා
හපුතලේ කන්ද දැකලා බඩ දන වා
කටුකැලේ ගාලෙ නොලිහා වද දෙන වා
පව්කළ ගොනෝ ඇදපන් හපුතල් යන වා

කළුගල් තලාලයි පාරට දමන් නේ
එමගල් පැගිලයි ගොන් කුර ගෙවෙන් නේ
ගොනා නොවෙයි හරකයි බර අදින් නේ
කිරිගල් පොත්ත කන්දයි පසු කරන් නේ

දුප්පත් කමට ගොන් බැඳගෙන දක්කන වා
කන්ට නැතුව දිව රෑ අපි වෙහෙසෙන වා
ගොන්ට නොයෙක් වදදී අපි ගෙන යන වා
දන්වත් අපට දෙවියෝ පිහිටක් වෙන වා[18]

Similarly the sturdy boatman while punting the päḍḍā boat down the stream bursts into song not without a humourous sling at his own menial:

හබල් හතර එක අම්මගෙ දරුවෝ වගේ
ඉස්සර හබල ලොකු අයිය වගේ
පදින අපිත් එක අම්මගෙ දරුවෝ වගේ
උයන කොලුව හරියට මහ සොහොන වගේ

අප්පුහාමි ඔරු පැද පැද කැඩුව පලා
ඩිංගිහාමි ගෙයි ඉදගෙන කැපුව පලා
ගොරක මිටයි ලුණු දෙමිටයි දැමුව පලා
නොදකින් අනේ මේ කබරිගෙ ඇඹුල් පලා[19]

The scope of the themes is unlimited. They cover almost the entire range of human activity in the village as experienced by the inhabitants. Thus cottage crafts such as mat weaving and pottery come within their scope. *Päduru māle,* the mat weaver's song has already been translated and reproduced by Ananda Coomaraswamy in his *Mediaeval Sinhalese Art.* The following verses are quoted from the original Sinhalese version which refers to the competition between a mother-in-law and her daughter-in-law in the art of mat weaving:

හරස් රටාවෙන් පැදුරක් මම වියනා
ගිරා කොබෙයියන් පැදුරේ මැද වියනා
පන්නම් කතුර ඇහැපියවරකින් පුරනා
යේළිට බලන්ට මම පැදුරක් වියනා

පියුම් රටාවෙන් පැදුරක් මම වියනා
ලැසු ඇසු තුඩු ඇති ලේනුන් මැද වියනා
ඉර සඳ ඉසාගේ පාමුල ඉද කෙළිනා
නැන්දට බලන්නට පැදුරක් මම වියනා[20]

A similar set of verses is the Potter's Song, also reproduced in translation by Ananda Coomaraswamy in the same book, in which is described in detail the various technological stages in making an earthen vessel, from the preparation of the clay to the moulding of the pot and putting it into the kiln for firing, is described. These verses are in a different metre of which the following is an example:

එක් එකට මැටි කැට සුරතට ගෙන පොරුව මතු සුරුකිව තබ තෙයි
වමතින් පොරුව දැන පමණට කරකවමින් දකුණෙන් ඉදිකර තෙයි
බදුන් පමණ හැඩ නිල දැනගන විතරට අත තදකර තෙයි
ඉතින් මෙලෙස පමණට ඉදිවෙනකොට පන්නිල බිඳලා හැඩගස තෙයි[21]

These are only a few examples to illustrate the value of the folk songs of the Sinhalese. It is a regretful fact that what has been recorded including Dr W A de Silva and several others after him in various journals and periodicals is a fraction of the folk songs still current in the villages; hence a comprehensive record of all available material before they are lost for ever would be an exercise in the national interest.

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GLOSSARY

aile = dance arena, stage
ämbun = moulding of images
anaberakāraya = drummer, tom-tom beater
aṅgam = charm intended to cause speedy death
ārachchi = a minor administrative officer appointed over a village or a group of villages
äsvaha = evil-eye
devol = cursing, malediction
doladuka = pre-natal longing
edura = performer of *bali* ceremony
eluwan allīma = a folk pastime
hadi huniyam = magical incantations
heṭṭiya = merchant of the Chetty class
hēneya = washerman
hēwārāla = soldier generally of the Portuguese era
horanä = trumpet, horn, bugle
hō-vaha = evil breath or sighing at another's good fortune
kalageḍi = pot
kapa = ritual post erected at commencment of a ceremony
kaṭavaha = evil tongue

kaṭṭaḍi = excorcist
kavi = verses, generally quatrains
mī-vara sellama = a folk pastime
mī - sellama = a folk pastime
mudali = superior administrative officer in charge of a *korale* or *pattu*
nānu = a composition for annointing the heads of participants in folk ceremonies
näkati = social division of astrologers
olinda keḷiya = a folk pastime
onchillāva = swing
onchillā pädīma = going on the swing
pilli = witchcraft, spell to inflict injury
piruvaṭa = cloth supplied by washerman for ritual purposes
pēdi vidāne = dignified term for washerman
poṭē - guru = narrator of story in a dramatic performance; chorus
prēta = goblin, disembodied spirit
rākṣa = demon, evil spirit
sanni yaká = one of 18 evil spirits which cause disease
torana = pandal; structure erected in folk ceremonies for ritual offerings
vāhana = vehicle of deity
vaskavi = verses recited to cause harm
vedarāla = native physician
vīdiya = dance area in folk ceremonies
vilakku = torch used in ceremonial dancing
varan = boon granted by a deity
yakṣa = demon

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SRI LANKA AND MARITIME SOUTHEAST ASIA IN ANCIENT TIMES

by

J G de Casparis

In some of the great achievements, of Professor Senerat Paranavitana. such as important chapters in the *University of Ceylon History of Ceylon,* the *Concise History,* written in conjunction with C W Nicholan the Sīgiri Graffiti, his studies of the *God of Adam's Peak* and that of the *Temple of Devundara,* as well as countless publications on inscriptions and other texts (such as the beautiful edition of the Jānakīharana, edited in conjunction with Godakumbura), he discussed many aspects of early medieval society. Paranavitana has always been keenly aware that the history and culture of this island should be studied in relation to the great Indo-Pakistani subcontinent and the world of maritime Sout East Asia. Here, I shall try to follow in Paranavitana's footsteps in analyzing some difficult problems concerning this important topic. As we all know, Paranavitana devoted some his most penetrating studies to 'Ceylon and Malaysia in ancient times.[1] These studies were in part based on his reading of beautiful Sanskrit verses which he deciphered between the lines of Sinhala inscriptions, such as the great stone inscription of the Lankātilaka temple of the Gampola period. Few scholars have accepted his readings and interpretations. Thus, K A Nilakanta Sastri, R A L H Gunawardana, and K Indrapala have given strong arguments to prove that Paranavitana's conclusions cannot be accepted simply because no-one else has been able to check the correctness of his readings or even the very existence of these interlinear inscriptions.

Yet, although the present author agrees with these criticisms, he feels that Paranavitana had a sharp intuition about the relations between this island and the world of South East Asia, including the Malaysian peninsula. Even while rejecting the details of Paranavitana's arguments he feels that his main conclusions can still be retained.

To the historian of South and Southeast Asia, Sri Lanka is in several respects unique. The limited size of the island enables him, unlike his colleagues studying India, China or Indonesia, to explore its different regions and thus acquire an overall view of historical developments. In addition, Sri Lanka is, again in relation to its size, much better historically documented than any other part of tropical and equatorial Asia. The different types of historical sources are well represented and supplement each other. Ancient texts both in Pāli and in Sinhala, numerous inscriptions

from the third century BC till relatively recent times, mainly in (ancient) Sinhala but also in Sanskrit and Pāli, archaeological data with materials from prehistoric settlements but also astounding monuments of the historical era, supply us with rich concrete foundations of historical development. Coins, both foreign and indigenous, as well as foreign notices by visitors to the Island since early times, provide precious additional information.

Yet, this apparent richness of sources may be somewhat misleading. The sources do not always supply the kind of information that the historian is looking for. Even if they seem to do so, their interpretation may raise serious doubts or ambiguities. The inscriptions in ancient Sinhala, the most authentic, if not the most important, source,[2] reflect this uncertainty most clearly. Although the language is better known than many other ancient languages, yet numerous uncertainties remain, for instance, concerning the precise meaning of technical terms relating to taxation, to the function of many officials, to land and its classification and related legal aspects. Despite such uncertainties I feel that it is possible to utilize the epigraphic data for the study of certain aspects of social conditions in ancient Sri Lanka. On the whole this society cannot have been very different from other contemporary societies in neighbouring areas of South and South East Asia, so that comparison may help us in the interpretation of the Sri Lankan data.

In comparison with mainland South Asia, Sri Lanka is again unique in that it is the only area in which Buddhism has been a dominant force ever since the third century BC. Not only are art and architecture, literature and cultural life in general pervaded by the spirit of Buddhism, the shape of society itself underwent strong influence from Buddhism. In some respects this is obvious: the presence in the Island of considerable numbers of monks dwelling in monastic establishments with their own landed properties, but in close association with lay society, must have provided Sinhalese society with a special identity through the ages. It is true that Buddhism has exerted strong influence on many parts of the Indian mainland and, in particular, in mainland Southeast Asia, but, except for Myanmar, it either lost its influence long ago, as in India, or attained its present predominance at a late stage, as in Thailand and Cambodia.

I am therefore following Professor Paranavitana's example in relating the history of this Island with reference to or in comparison with that of Indonesia and the Malay Peninsula for a better understanding of the society of Sri Lanka before the end of the twelfth century, when the main centres of Sinhala civilization shifted to the rain forests in the southern half of the Island. Most of the existing surveys, including the excellent account by Karunatilaka,[3] are mainly based on the *Cūlavaṃsa* and the Sinhala chronicles and other texts. The analysis of the rich data obtained from these sources is of great importance, but I may today call attention to some aspects of these texts which call for some reservations as to their use for a

study of the social and economic conditions of the society which they describe. It is well known that the authors of the *Mahāvaṃsa,* the *Pūjāvaliya* and most other texts were *bhikkhus* belonging to the *Mahāvihāra* or were, at least, closely associated with the Great Tradition represented by this and other Vihāras. As a consequence, the historical descriptions and developments reflect the monastic tradition and the ideals held by the Saṅgha. In addition, these texts (apart from the religious matters) are mainly concerned with the relations between the princes (and courts) and the clergy. All the other classes, in fact the great majority of the population of farmers, craftsmen, traders, serfs and tribesmen, get into focus in relation to the clergy and the royal court. This population constitutes, as it were, the background against which the courts and the clergy play their games. Finally, the Pāli and Sinhala texts describe political and socio-economic developments from the perspective of the Buddhist clergy always inclined to bestow high praise of the benefactors of the Saṅgha, while pronouncing stern warnings against those who deviate from the Right Path.

The other main sources of the history and civilization of this Island, such as archaeology (including numismatics) and epigraphy, present a different perspective. They cannot, of course, replace the literary sources (which are the only ones supplying us with a continuous story), but are in dispensible to confirm, supplement and, where necessary, correct and modify the story as given in the texts. At the present stage I confine myself to one example. The Badulla Pillar Inscription, probably of the time of king Udaya IV (946-954 AD), supplies us with rich data about market dues and other regulations concerning a market town named Hopiṭigamu, probably in present Badulla, where the inscribed pillar was discovered. The text deals with a complaint by the merchants and householders of Hopiṭigamu, who alleged that the 'bailiffs of the general' *(daṇḍanāyaka)*, who had ' received' the market town *(paḍi-lad),* i. e. had been authorized to receive the income of this town (presumably the fines and other dues which had been transferred to the general by royal favour) took much more than they were entitled to. These bailiffs actually transgressed a law enacted by an earlier king. To avoid further harassments by servants of the general fresh regulations were drafted, defining rights and duties in great detail.[4]

These regulations give us a fair idea of the socio-economic conditions with respect to this market town. We see that the citizens were not afraid to appeal to the highest authority when they felt that their rights were violated; in this case at least (it is, of course, impossible to be sure that this was normal practice) the citizens received satisfaction.

I have discussed this example with some detail because we have a close parallel in an Old Javanese charter of 906 AD the so-called ' Borobudur copper-plate', thus called merely because it was discovered in the vicinity of the great monument, to which, however, it bears no relation.

In this case the village elders *(rāma)* of Palepangan, unidentified but presumably situated in the area where this copper-plate was found, complained at the court of king Balitung (*ca.* 900-910 AD) about the excessive burden of the land tax assessed by an officer designated as *nāyaka,* presumably also a kind of bailiff. The matter was investigated with the result that the land was measured with a different unit of measurement *(tampah haji,* 'royal *tampah'* instead of the ordinary *tampah,* entailing a re-assessment leading to a reduction of the land tax.[5]

These examples are important because they illustrate some important features of Asian societies in the tenth century. 'Oriental Despotism' is a myth due to false interpretations of the data concerning Asian societies. On the contrary, the above-mentioned instances show that abuse and excesses were put right if citizens had the courage to appeal to the highest authority whenever officials made abuse of their powers. These examples are no less striking because they show some similarities between the societies of central Java and north-central Sri Lanka in the tenth century. Both were structured village societies based on agriculture, in particular on rice in irrigated fields.[6] The kings's authority was strictly limited by some kind of unwritten 'contrat social' with the villagers' duty to pay taxes, to perform services of different kinds and the king's duty to protect his subjects against human and natural calamities.

Such (limited) similarities may help us in the interpretation of the still numerous and serious problems facing the historians of ancient Sri Lanka and Indonesia. As to Sri Lanka, Professor Paranavitana was by no means the founder of the study of Sri Lankan epigraphy, but his numerous and always penetrating discussions of inscriptions have been a source of inspiration to the present generation of epigraphists and will no doubt continue to do so for some time to come.

As to the similarities mentioned above a few points may be discussed in detail. Thus, in both Sri Lanka and in Indonesia most longer inscriptions deal with immunities granted to persons and to institutions in respect of land, usually for the benefit of religious institutions, including hospitals, educational establishments *(piriveṇ)* but also for the benefit of individuals who had performed important services. As both the religious establishments and the other donees enjoyed freedom from (some or most) forms of taxation, obligatory services and other duties, measures should be taken to prevent those claiming taxes etc. from exerting pressure to obtain the advantages that they had enjoyed in the past.

Both in ancient Sri Lanka and in Java the inscriptions express such privileges by stipulating that people belonging to certain groups or carrying out certain activities were not permitted to ' enter' *(no-vadnā),* i, e, to have access to, the land associated with the privileges. In Sri Lanka such lists are generally fairly short, mentioning either about a dozen terms or a

few general terms. A few examples may be given.

Thus, the Allai Pillar inscription of about the tenth century AD published by S Ranawella (*Ep. Zeyl.* VI, 1991, No 25, pp. 112 - 119) gives about a dozen terms of the kinds of people not permitted to have access to the land in respect of which the immunities are granted: people including such regularly mentioned designations as *melācci (melātsi* and other variant spellings), *pereṇaṭṭu,* work overseers, bearers of iron clubs and other weapons, also agricultural officials and governors of provinves, are prohibited. Unfortunately, the meaning of many terms is still unknown or uncertain. Thus, *melācci* with its variant spellings has been identified with Sanskrit *mleccha,* usually translated as 'barbarian' but often indicating tribals and foreigner.[7] It is hardly surprising that such people were not welcome. Most others, such as different high officials were not welcome because they were connected with the collection of taxes or with the demand for services of different kinds. Yet, many details remain uncertain.

Similar, but by no means identical, lists are found in most inscriptions of this period (ninth and especially tenth century) such as the Kirigallāva Pillar Inscription (between ca. 950 and 952), published by Wickremasinghe in *Ep. Zeyl.* II, 1928: 1-5: - -

' Dunumandlan, kulī, melāsī, tramps and vagrants shall not enter; servants of the royal family *(rat-kol-kämiya), peraläkkan,* inhabitants holding two kinds of offices *(de-kam-tan)* and *perenāṭṭiyan* shall not enter.'

The precise meaning of some of the terms is still unceratin. Some texts include soldiers and/or policemen carrying different kinds of weapons which could be used to enforce the payment of taxes from which the villagers had been exempted or to arrest offenders who had obtained asylum in the land enjoying important immunities. Some inscriptions also stipulate that such land also obtained jurisdiction in respect of crimes and misdemeanours punishable with fines. This implies not only a considerable measure of autonomy but also the transfer to donee (s) of an apparently lucrative source of income.

A comparison with old Javanese inscriptions may be useful. Most of these are usually defined as landgrants, This sometimes is indeed the case, but most often, as in ancient Sri Lanka, it is not land that is actually granted but definite immunities in respect of taxation, compulsory services, etc, as well as certain privileges, such as permission to wear definite patterns of *baṭik,* to consume certain foods (normally confined to royalty), to use a yellow umbrella. etc. In this respect, as in others, the Old Javanese inscriptions are much more detailed than those of Sri Lanka (as well as those of mainland Southeast Asia) Thus, the Old Javanese inscriptions usually end in a lengthy imprecation against all those who may violate the privileges that have been granted. These curses include, for instance, a list

of gods and other divine powers who will execute the sanctions. There are other long sections describing the rituals taking place at the time of the inauguration of the land in its new status, as well as the names and functions of all those, including witnesses from neighbouring villages, who take part in the ceremonies. All these people are rewarded for their contributions, even if their only service is that of being present at the ceremony. Their rewards consist of a definite sum of money, expressed in coins (gold or silver *māṣas,* as well as a piece or a pair of clothing of a specified design).

One of the longest sections of the Old Javanese inscriptions after the beginning of the tenth century concerns the list of those who are not permitted to 'enter' the area to be exempted from most or all forms of taxation and other burdens (defined as a *sīma* in these documents). Actually, the list consists of two parts, the first comprising a few terms of what appear to be officials, *viz, patih, wahuta, nāyaka, pratyaya* and sometimes a few other terms, the second a lengthy enumeration (sometimes extending to about sixty items) of all those entitled to claim the king's property', as it is usually formulated *(manilala drawya haji).*[8] In this connexion it should be added that the king's officials were able to assess and collect the principal taxes, in the first place the land tax. Officials or clerks, such as the *nāyaka* mentioned earlier probably examined the fields in the season when the crops, notably rice, were ripening and made an assessment, probably to the village *(wanua or thāni)* as a whole.

For some crafts of trades the procedure may have been of a similar kind, but it is obvious that the income of many activities was more difficult to assess. As elsewhere, the collection of such revenue was leased or farmed out to certain categories of people. The long lists of those *manilala* contain many terms of unknown or uncertain meaning, as they rarely or never occur in Old Javanese literary texts, but other terms offer no real problems. Thus, we find goldsmiths, blacksmiths etc., traders *(tuhadagang),* jewellers, village musicians such as *tuha paḍahi* (*gamēlan* players), singers, bosses of gamblers and prostitutes and many others. In all these cases the easiest method to collect tolls, excise duties etc. was by leasing such forms of revenue to tax farmers. The latter were not, of course, the most popular citizens, so that it is understandable that often marginal groups, such as tribals, foreigners etc.[9] took such jobs which, incidentally. may have been profitable.

We already saw that the ancient Sinhala inscriptions of about the tenth century regularly mention among those prohibited from 'entrance' into the land *melātsi,* usually translated as 'barbarian' but also including tribals and foreigners. The Old Javanese inscriptions do not mention *mleccha* or one of its equivalents but specify foreigners (i.e. mainly foreign traders) by their lands of origin.

Thus we find, especially in inscriptions of the eleventh century or

later, names such as *Kmir* (Khmer), *Rēmēn* (Mōn, inhabitants of southern Myanmar called *Rāmañña* in the Pāli chronicles), *Keling* (people from Kaliṅga), Siṅhala etc. In principle there is agreement between the Old Sinhala and Old Javanese texts in this respect but, whereas the Sinhala inscriptions mention only a general term, the Old Javanese charters present a short list of these foreign traders. Incidentally, it is interesting to know about the origin of the traders. It is even more interesting to notice that traders from other Indonesian islands (or from the Malay Peninsula) never appear in those lists, obviously because they were not regarded as foreign. This may indicate that there was some kind of common feeling between Indonesians of all islands with different languages and customs-despite the inevitable conflicts.

To come back to this partial agreement it is important to add that such lists of all those prohibited from 'entering' (*no vadnā* in Sinhala and *tan tama* in Old Javanese) the land concerned are apparently confined to ancient Java and Sri Lanka. In many ancient Indian inscriptions, such as the landgrants from Bengal and Orissa, we meet with terms such as *acāṭa bhaṭa-praveśya,* 'not to be entered by cāṭas and bhaṭas' usually translated as regular and irregular troops, sometimes with the addition 'except for seizing robbers or traitor'.[10] A few other terms are sometimes added, but we do not find any lists as in the Old Javanese or Old Sinhala inscriptions. The same applies, as far as I know, to the inscriptions of Myanmar, Cambodia and Campa. The partial agreement between the inscriptions of Java and Sri Lanka in this respect may therefore be significant. I may therefore suggest that the analysis of the terms in Old Javanese inscriptions may help us interpret some of the terms in the Old Sinhala inscriptions and *vice versa.*

It is not clear how this analogy in the lists of 'undesirables' must be accounted for. In Old Javanese inscriptions such lists are not attested before the beginning of the ninth century AD (the Pēngging copper- plate inscription of 819 AD[11] is the oldest document known to me). The Sri Lankan examples belong apparently to about the same period (ninth and tenth centuries). Actually, the earlier inscriptions in both Sri Lanka and Java are no true landgrants with full definitions of rights and duties of the donees. The earliest inscriptions of this island are rock inscriptions usually on the drip-ledge of caves stipulating that the caves are given to the Buddhist Saṅgha, whereas at a later stage the inscriptions mention various kinds of donations to individual foundations, often sums of money, expressed in *kahāvaṇas* for the construction of tanks, or of *stūpas* or other buildings, for the sculpture of images (Malini Dias 1974: No. 15, 1), for the purchase of oil for the lamps, for the four requisites of the *bhikkhus,* for meal tickets for the *bhikkhus* and, probably, for freeing others from compulsory service *(?vaharala)* [12]

From the ninth century, however, the emphasis is on 'landgrants'[13]

with immunities and privileges both in Java and in Sri Lanka. As far as Sri Lanka is concerned, there can be little doubt that this change was, at least in part, due to changes in the nature of society. The Buddhist Saṅgha in Sri Lanka had gradually developed into a number of property-owning institutions. It was also split into three Nikāyas where each competed for royal favour. Their independence was based on inalienable landed property.[14]

In Java, where Saivism and Buddhism of the *mahāyāna* type developed in peaceful co-existence, we notice the occurrence of numerous landgrants in the ninth and tenth century till 950 AD, in particular during the reigns of the kings Kayuwaṅi (*ca.* 856-904), Balitung (900-910) and Siṇḍok (929-945). They differ in so far as they were much more detailed than those of Sri Lanka. Thus, they supply us with elaborate dates, names and titles of kings and other authorities concerned with these grants, precise (but for us not always clear) definitions of the status of the land before and after the transfer to a donee or donees with long lists of all those to whom access is prohibited, lists of crimes and other offences (excluding only the heaviest crimes) which are being transferred to the jurisdiction of the donee(s), who dispose of the fines, lists of fiscal privileges concerning trades and crafts, a list of presents to all those who contributed to the transfer and, finally, a lengthy imprecation against all persons (including future rulers) who may violate the rights and privileges granted by the royal donor. As a consequence, the Old Javanese landgrants tend to be lengthy documents attaining up to over a hundred lines of about twenty words each.

Despite this striking 'quantitative' difference we notice a considerable measure of general agreement: the same sections which are indicated with general terms in the Sinhala charters, are specified with great details in the Javanese grants. Thus, whereas the Old Javanese inscriptions threaten any future violators with all kinds of calamities (while bathing in the river they will be devoured by crocodiles, while walking through the forest they will be attacked by a tiger, while walking on the roads they will be struck by lightning, while working in their fields they will be bitten by poisonous snakes etc., culminating in a hundred thousand years in the hell *Avici)* the Sinhala texts confine themselves to re-birth as a dog or a crow as a deterrent.

How should we account for this general agreement, which is apparently confined to Sri Lanka and Java? [15] It is difficult to attribute it to mere chance, but it can be argued that it can be explained, at least to a certain extent, by geographic similarity. Both Sri Lanka and Java are medium-sized islands with long coast lines offering excellent facilities for safe harbours. Both combine a mountainous interior with fertile alluvial plains and are subject to the power of the monsoons, which create excellent opportunities for the cultivation of rice on irrigated fields. It is well-known that this necessitates close co-operation between villages situated along the same streams as well as a tight organization within the individual villages.

One may therefore expect a certain measure of similarity in social structure as well. Yet, this analogy, important though it may be, would hardly account for the striking similarities noted above. Thus, most of the features shared by Sri Lanka and Java are not confined to these two islands but appear also on the mainland of southern Asia. A few other points would therefore be necessary before we can conclude to a more special relationship between the two islands.

Long ago (De Casparis 1961) I called attention to a remarkable passage showing direct relations between Buddhist communities in Sri Lanka and Java. The Sanskrit inscription of the Ratuboko plateau in Central Java, dated 792 AD mentions the presence of Sinhala wise monks *(muni)* from the Abhayagiri monastery at the ceremony of the inauguration of an *Avalokiteśvara* image in central Java. The worship of *Avalokiteśvara,* originally confined to *Mahāyāna,* became popular also in Sri Lanka with numerous little temples devoted to the worship of this compassionate *Bodhisattva,* known as *Nātha* in the Island.[16] This may seem an isolated testimony to cultural relations between Buddhist communities but, considering the paucity of direct references to foreign relations in Indonesian written sources, it may be significant. It is indeed quite likely that these Sinhala monks did not come by themselves but had joined others, presumably traders, who went from Sri Lanka to Java for the sale or exchange of their produce. Sinhala *bhikkhus* appear to have been quite active in their relations with far-away Buddhist centres in this very period, as follows, for example, from the 'three delightful Pāli stanzas in the *Vasanta-tilaka metre'*, studied by Mendis Rohanadeera 1987.[17]

The present author discussed some other references to relations between Sri Lanka and Indonesia a few years ago, mentioning a curious, but not yet satisfactorily explained reference to a Sinhala princess Ratnāvalī in a twelfth-century Javanese poetical text, the *Smaradahana* . According to this text this princess, explained as an incarnation of *Rati*, was married to king Vikramabāhu,[18] himself an incarnation of *Kāma.* Both were later re-born as king Kāmeśvara (*ca.* 1185 AD) and his spouse. It is difficult to explain the use of these royal names, well-known from the history of Sri Lanka. It is true that the direct source of this reference may well have been one of the legends centred on the semi-historical king Udayana of Kauśāmbī in the time of Lord Buddha, as told in the *Brhatkathā* (but later used in classical plays, such as the *Ratnāvalī*, attributed to king Harṣa of Kanauj in the first haf of the seventh century AD) Even so, one wonders why the Javanese poet, Mpu Dharmaja by name, should have chosen these names of a Sri Lankan king and queen as the preceding incarnations of the Javanese royal couple. In this context one could think of king Vikramabāhu I (1111-1132 AD) son of Vijayabāhu I.[19] ' The best known Ratnāvalī in this period was the queen married to Mānābharaṇa and mother of Parākramabāhu I.

Finally it should be mentioned that there are also a number of words of apparently or possibly Sinhala origin in Old Javanese and Malay/ Indonesian; or possibly Indonesian terms in Sinhala. Without a detailed linguistic investigation, better left to experts in this field, it is difficult to ascertain the period in which such words were borrowed or even the direction of the borrowing: from Sri Lanka to Indonesia or the other way. Some of these words are also found in Tamil or even in Arabic, which further complicates the problem. A word such as *rambuṭan,* the well-known tree and fruit, in Sinhala clearly seems to be a borrowing from *rambutan* in Indonesian. This is because the word is derived from the Austronesian word *rambut,* 'hair' which is indeed the most striking element of the fruit. But Malay/Javanese *konde,* 'chignon' is found not only in Sinhala but also in Tamil and the same applies to Sinhala *peṭṭiya,* and Indonesian *pēti.* Sinhala *sarama* probably goes back to Indonesian (Javanese etc.) *sarong.* The occurrence of the word in many other Austronesian languages suggests that it originates from the Archipelago. As to two common 'conjunctions' in Malay and Indonesian, *namun,* 'however' and *bahwa,* 'thaṭ' Sinhala origin seems likely, although the latter is related to Sanskrit *bhava,* 'origin' etc. It can, however, be argued that the use of Sinhala *bava* in sentences such as *Tāttā pohosat bava kavurut dannavā* corresponds to its use in Indonesian sentences such as *Siapa pun tahu bahwa ayah adalah seorang kaya,* 'Every-one knows that father is rich' Indonesian *bēlanja,* 'expense, cost' is no doubt derived from Sinhala *blañjā*There are at least about a dozen of such words, but their history has not been seriously studied. One, somewhat uncertain example is the custom, both in Sri Lanka and Indonesia in certain period (eighth and ninth centuries) to express the importance of a ricefield by the quantity of seed required for its cultivation. It is well-known that the small rice plants are planted out at short distances on fertile, well-irrigated land, whereas fewer plants at wider distances are grown in less favourable conditions. By mentioning the volume or weight of the seed one therefore gets a better idea of the value of the land for the purpose of taxation. In Old Javanese inscriptions this is expressed by formulas such as *kwaiḥ ni winiḥnya satu hamat 18,* 'the seed (used for) its ricefields amounts to one *tū* 18 *hamat.* [20] This corresponds to the use of terms such as *yāla or yahala* in some Old Sinhala inscriptions (Cf. e.g. the Lāhugala Slab Inscription, lines 16-17 and the full discussion in *Ep. Zeyl.* III: 18. Although the correspondence between the Old Javanese expressions is quite striking I am not sure whether such expressions also occur in inscriptions from mainland South or Southeast Asia. In quite general terms, however, such data indicate the existence of (commercial or other) bonds between Sri Lanka and Indonesia.

All these data confirm Paranavitana's view about a particular relationship between Sri Lanka and Malaysia/Indonesia. This is not

surprising. After the monastic exchanges at the end of the eighth century we have clear evidence for the thirteenth century when a Malaysian adventurer Candrabhānu with an army of 'Jāvakas' (Malays from the Peninsula and the island of Sumatra, rather than Javanese) raided and occupied parts of this Island. Whatever happened to Candrabhānu himself, there seems little doubt that most of his soldiers would have stayed in Sri Lanka. Again a few centuries later the Netherlands East India Company occupied important parts of this Island during about one and a half century and administered it from their principal colonial base at 'Batavia' present Jakarta. It is known that there was lively exchange between Indonesia/ Malaysia and Sri Lanka during that period. It is well known that the Dutch sometimes used Sri Lanka as a place of exile for princes and others whose presence in Indonesia was considered harmful to their interests. Although it is difficult to pinpoint particular Indonesian words that may have moved between Sri Lanka and maritime Southeast Asia, it is not unlikely that some of the terms held in common in these areas have their origin in this period.

At the end of this brief account I may emphasize that Senerat Paranavitana has pioneered also this important field of studies. I am confident that many of his conclusions will be vindicated in the future.

REFERENCES AND NOTES

01. The arguments used by Paranavitana in favour of his identifications are not as strong as they may have appeared at first. Thus, the main identifications on which the close relations between Sri Lanka and 'Malaysia' are based have been convincingly invalidated by RALH Gunawardana in 'Ceylon and Malaysia: A Study of Professor S. Paranavitana's Research on the Relations Between the Two Regions', *University of Ceylon Review XXV*, 1967: 1-64. Thus, the identification of Kaliṇga in the Sri Lankan sources with a Javanese kingdom Ho-ling, wrongly thought to correspond to Kĕling, i.e. Kaliṅga, has been rightly rejected, and the same applies to the other identifications, such as those of Tambarattha, Tañjanagara, Malaya etc. The matter is somewhat complicated by the occurrence of similar names in India and in South east Asia, but superficial similarity is always a weak basis of fresh theories, however attractive they may seem.

02. Being legal documents defining rights and duties of institutions or of individuals there is no reason to doubt the correctness of the information which they supply. Since nearly all inscriptions are dated or datable within narrow limits, they supply contemporary data in contrast to literature which was nearly always written down long after the events they describe and has come to us through the hands of many successive copyists.

03. Karunatilaka PVB:Caste and Social Change in Ancient Sri Lanka' *Social Science Review* 4, 1988: 1-30.

04. Paranavitana, S : A Revised Edition of the Badulla (Horabora) Pillarinscription', *Ep. Zeyl*, V, Pt. 2, 1963: 177-195.

05. Bosch, FDK :*Oudheidkundig Verslag* 1917: 88-98; Boechari, *Prasasti Koleksi Museum Nasional*, Jilid I: 124-126.

06. There is, however, an important difference in that North Central Sri Lanka relies mainly on tank irrigation, whereas in Central and Eastern Java the rice-fields draw their water supplies from rivers or mountain streams.

07. Sircar, DC : *Studies in the Society and Administration of Ancient and Medieval India,* Calcutta 1967: Chapter IV: 63-73.

08. Much has been written on these lists of *manilala drawya haji,* but little progress has been made since the article by W F Stutterheim in *Tijdschr.* Bat. Gen. 65, 1925.

09. There is an interesting case of a tax-collector who was 'accused' (this is the equivalent of the Old Javanese term) of being a Khmer. He complained to a court of justice arguing that he himself and his ancestors were no Khmers but decent people. After he had called witnesses to confirm his statements he received satisfaction (W F Stutterheim, 'Een Jayapattra uit 922 AD', *Tijdschr. Bat. Gen.* LXXV, 1935: 444-456; Boechari, *op. cit.*: 120-122.

10. Cf. the references given by DC Sircar, *Indian Epigraphical Glossary,* 1966: 67 sq., s.v. *Cāta.*

11. Poerbatjaraka, R Ng *Oudh. Versl.* 1920: 136; H. B. Sarkar, *Corpus of the Inscriptions of Java,* I, Calcutta 1971: No. VIII, pp. 53-55.

12. Cf. the analysis by J Uduwara, 'Rock Inscription at Kotakanda Atkanda Vihāra', *Ep. Zeyl.* VI, Pt 2: 123. A completely different interpretation is given by S Ranawella in the same volume, p. 173, *viz.* 'monastic (meal) tickets', caused to be issued by a brick-layer who donated 100 *kahapanas* for that purpose.

13. As most other scholars in this field I keep to the term 'landgrant' although in many cases the grant did not concern the land itself (which was already owned by the grantee or purchased by him, but the taxes and other burdens associated with the land. The transfer enabled the *vihāra* (or other foundations or individuals) to exact taxes and claim certain services from the villagers, thus ensuring the 'permanence' of the foundation. This is indeed what was intended by the term *pamunu,* dealt with in note 14.

14. *Pamanu or pamunu,* derived from Sanskrit *pramāna.* The Old Javanese inscriptions from the tenth century regularly mention the phrase that the grantee (person or foundation) *atah pramāna i sasukha-duhkhanya kabeh,* 'has complete authority concerning all kinds of advantages and disadvantages', *i. e.* claiming fines for crimes committed on their territory but also accepting responsibility for the consequences of unsolved crimes.

15. Further research is required before this general statement can be confirmed, but it is striking that neither the numerous, often bilingual, inscriptions of Cambodia and Campa, nor those of eastern and southern India seem to provide the kind of stipulations found in the charters of Sri Lanka and Java.

16. See e.g. Nandana Chutiwongs, *The Iconography of Avalokitesvara in Mainland South East Asia,* Ph, D. Thesis, Leiden 1984: 75-94.

17. Rohanadeera, Mendis: Telakatāhagāthā in a Thailand Inscription of 761 A.D.', *Vidyodaya. Journal of Social Science,* 1/1, 1987: 59-73.

18. *Smaradahana, Oud-Javaansche tekst met vertaling,* published by R. Ng. Poerbatjaraka, Bibl. Javanica 3, Bandung 1931, Canto XXXVIII, v. 9-11.

19. Nicholas CW and S Paranavitana : *A Concise History of Ceylon,* Colombo 1961: 199-202.

20. Stutterheim, W F :Een belangrijke oorikonde uit de Kedoe', *Tijdschr. Bat. Gen. 67,* 1927: 17-215 (line A3).

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