THE CEYLON JOURNAL OF HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL STUDIES

Vol. I July 1958 No. 2

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Annual Subscription Rs. 5-00. Single Copy Rs. 2-50

THE
CEYLON JOURNAL OF HISTORICAL AND SOCIAL STUDIES

UNIVERSITY OF CEYLON,
PERADENIYA.

The Ceylon Journal of Historical and Social Studies will be issued twice a year. Copies will be sent post-free to subscribers in January and July.

The Journal is intended to cover the entire range of the social sciences —economics, political science, law, archaeology and history, geography, sociology, social psychology and anthropology. The articles will relate mainly, but not exclusively to Ceylon.

Articles, editorial communications, and books for review should be addressed to Dr. Ralph Pieris, Department of Sociology, University of Ceylon, Peradeniya, Ceylon.

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Single copies. Rupees Two fifty ; Five shillings ; U.S. one dollar.

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THE STUDY OF INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTIONS

ASA BRIGGS

I

THE term " industrial revolution " has passed from the history books into popular arguments and even into the popular press. Not only is there much contemporary discussion about " industrial revolutions " in the economically under-developed countries of the world, but European and American headlines frequently proclaim " the second industrial revolution " of our century, a revolution founded on automation and atomic power.

Writers of the nineteenth century were the first to use the term. They compared the political revolution which had taken place in France in 1789 and continued to dominate French history in the nineteenth century with the economic and social revolution which had taken place in Britain at the time of Richard Arkwright, Matthew Boulton and James Watt and which continued to reshape British society and ways of life in the Victorian period. The first Englishman to make the term popular was Arnold Toynbee, the namesake and uncle of the historian Toynbee of our own generation. In 1881 and 1882 Toynbee gave a course of lectures to working men on *The Industrial Revolution of the Eighteenth Century in England*. They were lectures which emphasised not so much the economic gains of large-scale industrialisation in Britian as the social losses. Writing at a time when Englishmen were living through a decade of intense social and intellectual ferment, Toynbee naturally selected for the attention of his hearers those topics in British industrial history which were associated with strain and conflict. One of his Oxford contemporaries was even more forthright than he and maintained that " the English people, never by any plague, or famine or war, suffered such a deadly blow at its vitality as by the establishment of the factory system without proper safeguards." It was the absence of " proper safeguards " which shocked both liberal and socialist critics of the British industrial revolution and dominated most of the popular writing about the subject until very recently. Powerful and inspiring books like the Hammonds' *The Village Labourer* (1911), *The Town Labourer* (1917), and *The Rise of Modern Industry* (1925), followed essentially the same approach as Toynbee.

A parallel group of writers, however, took up a different point of view, concentrating not on social dislocation but on technical progress. As early as 1835 Andrew Ure had published his *The Philosophy of Manufactures*, a panegyric of the new machines, which had made it possible enormously to increase the output of raw materials and finished products. His praise of the steam engine, the spinning jenny and the loom was somewhat naive, but other writers late in the century were as happy as he to explore in detail the complicated but often exciting histories of the development and use of particular inventions. Learned societies, like the Newcomen Society, produced invaluable research papers on the making of the new technical environment associated with coal, iron and steam. Much research still needs to be carried out on the detailed history of technology (on the reasons for the delay in the improvement of the loom, for example, and on the slow development of theories of heat in the nineteenth century), but the Oxford *History of Technology*, three volumes of which have already appeared, is providing a useful general survey.

Social disorganisation and technical advance were not the only themes in the industrial revolution. The latest writing on the subject, particularly Professor T. S. Ashton's stimulating little book *The Industrial Revolution* (1948), has returned to the question of economic gains. However great the miseries and discontents of the new factory system, without factories there could never have been that sustained rise in the standard of living which has been a feature of British history during the last 150 years. Britain could never have taken its place as "the workshop of the world" in the middle years of the nineteenth century, or lost it later in the century as other countries went through industrial revolutions of their own. Furthermore, there could never have been that growing awareness of social problems, which is the first precondition of their soultion. Traditionalist societies, based on the land, and held together by ties of deference and authority, tend to accept their ways of life as part of the order of Nature. By enabling men to tame Nature and by reshaping society both in the towns and the country, industrial revolutions cleared men's minds and enabled them to see the potentialities of human control. Some of the abuses of the early industrial revolution only appeared to be abuses because industry sharpened people's consciousness of them. Even when new abuses appeared, many of them were remediable. To examine industrial revolutions through the narrow window either of the technical historian or the economic historian is inadequate : the implications of the industrial revolutions stretch beyond techniques or production indices to shifts in ideas and values.

There is a strong case for restricting the use of the term " industrial revolutions "—to apply it only to over-all and once-and-for-all transformations in the whole life of a society. The British industrial revolution of the eighteenth century, the American and Japanese industrial revolutions of the nineteenth century, and the Russian industrial revolution of the twentieth century all fall into this category, and in each case, despite differences of political and social setting, there were significant uniformities. A fruitful competitive study of industrial revolutions can be embarked upon only if there is an initial limitation of enquiry to this field.

The increasingly familiar expression " the second industrial revolution " should be assessed against this background. However great the changes of our own time, (not only automation but the rise of synthetic products and the rise of electricity) they only make sense when they are conceived of as the latest phase of a story which began in the eighteenth century. It was then that Britain made the first " take off " into an industrial way of life, with all that that way of life signifies. It is true, of course, that the great changes in the eighteenth century did not come out of the blue and that scientific and industrial developments in the seventeenth century, and even earlier, had pointed the way to the future. The significance of these earlier changes and the proneness of historians to use the term " industrial revolution " to describe even earlier periods—economic changes in the woollen industry in the thirteenth century, for example, or even technical improvements in the Bronze Age—should not blind us to the uniqueness of what happened in the eighteenth century. It was then, in Britain's classic industrial revolution, the first of a world series, that the economic, technical, social and intellectual problems of the world that we know began to dominate the horizon.

II

The central feature of the British industrial revolution, as of all subsequent industrial revolutions, was a new relationship between men, machines and resources. A full study of this developing relationship demands an investigation of six factors :—

(1) *Initial and newly available resources*, including manpower. Geographic resources, human or material, only become economic resources when they are recognised to be such. The concept of resources is relative therefore to the economic and technical framework of their exploitation. In eighteenth-century Britain hitherto little-utilised resources of coal and iron were given new

significance by changes in technology, but some of the basic resources on which the industrial revolution depended—in particular cotton—were imported from overseas. The resources of a small island were augmented by foreign resources, British industrial specialisation thus depending on other forms of geographical specialisation abroad. In the twentieth-century continental economies, with mixed resources, many of them present in large quantities, have a growing advantage in industrial development, although a small country with strategic resources internationally demanded, may be able to base a wider industrial revolution on the wealth accruing from a single source.

(2) *Techniques.* Industrial revolutions are often but not always associated with the development of new techniques and the capacity to utilise them quickly. The British industrial revolution of the eighteen century followed this pattern : the Japanese industrial revalution of the nineteenth century, by contrast, was a revolution by imitation. The rapid rate of growth during the British industrial revolution depended on steam power, even though there was a water power phase before steam was applied to many industries. The Soviet industrial revolution of the twentieth century has been associated with electrification—Lenin gave it the highest priority in the strategy of growth—and it is not difficult to look ahead to industrial revolutions which will be dependent on atomic energy.

The more a country relies on borrowed techniques, the more important will be the problem of technical education. In eighteenth-century Britain educational facilities were completely inadequate and were for the most part unrelated to economic needs. A hundred years later Japan followed an entirely different course. Individual students and group missions were sent abroad to study Western science, administration and the industrial arts, while experts were hired in all branches of technical skill from silkworm breeding to central banking. A Department of Education was set up in 1871 : this was only one year after the passing of the first national Education Act in Britian. The scientific basis of many twentieth-century techniques further complicates the problem of rapid economic development. In eighteenth-century Britain many of the key inventions were simple and manipulative, and Britain led the way because it diverted the impulse to contrive and to invent into productive channels, and set men to work on

looms and steam engines rather than on complicated gadgets like mechanical clocks or musical instruments. Twentieth-century industrial revolutions can achieve quick and immediate gains from simple technical application, but they cannot advance far without following in the paths of modern science. A study of the time lags in the process of invention and of the influence of such legal and institutional factors as the patent system is a necessary part of the investigation of this subject.

(3) *Capital formation and accumulation.* Both the exploitation of resources and the application of techniques demand capital—initial capital, working capital, and capital for development. The experience of different industrial revolutions diverges, but in all of them the community has set aside either through individuals ploughing back capital or through the implementation of collective planning decisions a substantial part of the national income. This process has social causes and consequences. Capital investment depends on the willingness to invest in capital rather than to hoard or to enjoy. It directly influences levels of consumption, offering gains in the long run rather than in the short run. In the eighteenth-century industrial revolutions in Britain it was associated with low wages (though higher wages were offered in industry than in the traditional agricultural sector of the economy, and there were large differentials in wages paid to different grades of industrial workers), with very low taxation, and with an almost complete absence of social investment. The first industrialists were often frugal and austere men content to pay themselves " wages " rather than to dip into current profits. It is not surprising that the classical economists associated capital directly with " abstinence " and that the virtues of thrift and self-help were given central importance in business philosophy. In twentieth-century Russia the same emphasis on future gains has been implicit in Soviet economic growth, although capital has been accumulated collectively rather than in individual hands. In 1931, for instance, in order not to curtail imports of materials for construction, imports were pruned and rationed and a considerable volume of goods which were in short supply in the home market were exported overseas. The element of sacrifice cannot be eliminated : all that can be done is to cut social costs to a minimum and to spread the burden of sacrifice fairly. Disputes about what is " fair " will arise in any but a completely authoritarian society : even in such a society there will be differences of opinion about priorities.

In twentieth-century conditions the role of foreign capital in industrial revolutions is a major political question as well as an economic one, for if foreign sources are tapped the problem immediately arises of the necessary conditions. Foreign trade has undoubtedly played a big part in most industrial revolutions, but not all revolutions have been dependent on a large amount of direct foreign investment or borrowing. In eighteenth-century Britain the growing industries depended on foreign or colonial countries not for capital but for resources and markets : there was little direct transfer of capital, and Britain's overseas indebtedness (particularly to Holland) actually diminished during the critical years of growth. In the nineteenth century capital moved overseas rather than was attracted into the country. In nineteenth-century Japan, although an increasing share of the earnings of exports was used to buy imported materials and equipment for their manufature, direct foreign investment in Japan was never significant in the aggregate in relation either to business capital or to the balance of payments. In the twentieth-century Soviet Union, with its large-scale continential resources, foreign investment (as distinct from foreign know-how) has played no part in the process of industrialisation.

(4) *Enterprise and organisation.* Neither of these qualities is complete without the other either in a capitalist or in a communist economy, and both demand a framework of law and order for their effective existence. In Britain during the eighteenth century the qualities were combined in the new business community : in a communist society they must be found among the political and economic leaders who take key decisions, and among the managers who execute them. Eighteenth-century British businessmen, being pioneers of industrialisation, had to display an unusual combination of qualities if they wished to be successful.

First, they had to have the ability to see an opening and the drive to exploit it. This was perhaps Arkwright's greatest gift. It is doubtful whether he invented anything—all his patents were the cause of much contentious litigation—but there is no doubt that he realised the great potentialities of the cotton industry of a time when many of his contemporaries did not. A twentieth-century economist, Schumpeter, has distinguished between businessmen who are genuine innovators of businesses and those who are " routinisers " following in the path of the pioneers.

Men like Arkwright fell into the first category and they received monopoly profits for their efforts : second generations followed in the ways they had made familiar. Second, they had to be careful and persevering in their forecasting and planning. Having started off by raising initial capital—usually either their own or that supplied by relatives, friends or merchants interested in the trade—they had to organize the factors of production—site machines, labour—in an efficient way. Since there was no highly organised local or national capital market which they could fall back upon for funds, and no limited liability organisation they had to be prepared to plough back a large proportion of their own profits for the acquisition of new machines. Third, they had to be able to supervise and manage the daily routine of their enterprises, or, more difficult still, to turn new ways of working into routines. The problem of management was far more complicated in the eighteenth than in the twentieth century, for it involved the disciplining and "taming" of a labour force, which previously might have had no experience of regular disciplined industrial employment. The perseverance required for this task defeated many men who possessed other requisite business qualities. Fourth, they had to have a flair for selling. In many industries, there were men whose flair amounted to genius. Josiah Wedgwood, for example, who built up a flourishing potteries with worldwide connections, was a master of publicity. So too was the great ironfounder, John Wilkinson, who helped to make Britain "iron-conscious." His iron boat, which cynics remarked would be sure to sink, was as well-known as his iron coffin. His life became so much of a legend that the story spread that he would rise from his famous iron coffin and visit his blast furnaces again seven years after his death. Indeed, a large crowd gathered for the resurrection.

There was no single formula for combining these ingredients of business success, at least in the pioneer phase of industry. One of the most effective businessmen was Matthew Boulton who combined his talents with those of the inventor James Watt. Between them they created a business partnership which became known throughout the world. Some businessmen were paternalistic in their relations with workers and other local inhabitants : others were ruthlessly competitive, relying upon fierce industrial discipline—including comprehensive systems of fines for offences against discipline in the mills. Many were surprisingly un-

competitive even from the start, putting their trust in combinations and price fixing. All, however, were anxious to make Britain a more highly industrialised country and most of them felt increasingly as the eighteenth century came to an end that their future lay in their own individual or co-operative efforts and not in the support of a government, which still represented the landed rather than the industrial interest.

The origins of the new business group were very mixed : as Professor Ashton has said, " it was from no single zone of thrift and enterprise that the trade winds blew." Some, like the Peels and the Wedgwoods, were of yeomen stock, some were small men of property. Few rose completely from nothing. Many of them were merchants by background, like some of the Yorkshire cloth merchants who turned manufacturers in the late eighteenth century. They were often Nonconformists, whose opportunities of social and political advancement were limited in traditional rural England, whose values were set by the chapel or the meeting house, and whose sectarian religion sometimes provided them with financial and moral support from their co-religionists. Christian names like Abraham (Darby), the ironfounder, Benjamin (Huntsman), who improved the processes of steel making, Aaron and Jonathan (Walker), also ironfounders, and Jedediah (Strutt), the textile manufacturer, are clues to the world from which they sprang. It is impossible to understand the economic changes of eighteenth-century Britain without taking into account the social structure and the psychology of the critical pioneering groups. As a French observer put it in 1788, " with us a man rich enough to set up and own a factory would not care to remain in a position which he would deem unworthy of his wealth." Some English businessmen soon showed that they too sought the prestige of landholding at least for their heirs and successors, but these were sufficient exceptions to this quest for approved social status to make the new industrial system work. As a Manchester poet who had caught the new business enthusiasm asked the Lancashire landowners in 1777 :—

> " *What worth to yourself from high birth can accrue ?*
> *Are your ancestors' glories entailed upon you ?*
> *And is your lazy pomp of much use to the nation ?*
> *Are not parks and wide lawns a refined devastation ?*

It is impossible to collect similar kinds of evidence about the qualities of other key groups in the industrial revolution of the communist world, but a certain minimum degree of ruthlessness, coupled with great drive and determination, is equally important within a completely different social setting. The Soviet literature of " work " indeed has many affinities with the Victorian literature on the same subject, and the same emphasis on the need for industrial growth is apparent. Government, however, is naturally envisaged not as a hostile force to be cast on one side or radically transformed, but as a necessary agency in the determination of a general policy. There are difficult problems relating to the *locus* of decisions of course, which have been discussed in Yugoslavia and Poland as well as in the U.S.S.R. " The success of any system of economic planning," as Maurice Dobb has written, " will depend on the character of the personnel near the periphery of economic decision, and on the capacity of the system to provide an adequate motivation for those peripheral decisions to be efficiently taken and implemented. It is from lack of capable lieutenants and sergeants rather than from poor generalship that economic planning runs the danger of failing." The balance between centralisation and decentralisation has shifted in the U.S.S.R, and in the communist countries has been a major theme in the evolution of economic policy.

The difference in the attitude towards government shown by British and Russian exponents of industrial growth illuminates the basic issue of the social conditions necessary for large-scale industrialisation. Some writers, arguing from British and American experience, have postulated the need for a " middle-class " group with " middle-class " attitudes as a necessary condition of industrial change. Russian experience challenges this view, as does the experience of non-communist Japan in the nineteenth century and non-communist Mexico in the twentieth. In Japan, as Professor J. J. Spengler has remarked, the Japanese government " offset the lack of an adequate enterpreneurial class by performing many of the functions of this class and facilitating the accomplishment of others through the use of appropriate monetary, fiscal, and related policies." In Mexico, where the physical volume of industrial production increased by 40% between 1939 and 1946, a " new group " of entrepreneurs actively encouraged co-operation with labour " pointing out that labour

will share the fruits of industrialism in higher standards of living" and looked to government as a "necessary ally for the growing industries of Mexico."

In all cases, however, enterprise must be shown by a relatively small group of people if industrial growth is to take place.

(5) *The development of ancillary economic services, strengthening the economy as a whole.* Before an industrial society can operate efficiently, not only inventors (or educators) and businessmen (or planners) are necessary but also over-all improvements in the transport and banking systems.

The word "system" is misleading in relation to eighteenth-century British experience. In neither of these two essential sectors of economic life was any national plan drawn up. It was the interest and pressures of businessmen themselves, usually local and provincial pressures, which determined what services were made available. Only in the nineteenth century did it become possible to organise the fragments of possible systems or to try to tidy them up.

In the case of subsequent industrial revolutions different patterns can be traced in power development as much as in banking or transport. Whatever the pattern, however, banking and transport facilities available before rapid industrialisation prove inadequate as industrialisation continues. There are serious "bottlenecks" and deficiencies which may hold back progress. When a country "takes off" into industrialisation, its geography is transformed just as much as its volume of production or its way of life.

III

It is possible to learn "lessons" from some of the industrial revolutions of the past and the present, provided that there is no parrot-like reliance on them. Just as no two political revolutions ever duplicate each other—although there may be significant elements of uniformity—so no two industrial revolutions are compounded of exactly the same ingredients or follow exactly the same course. There tend to be similar problems—the accumulation and utilisation of adequate capital, the harnessing of a

" labour force," the re-alignment of agriculture in an increasingly industrialised society (a problem few economies have satisfactorily handled) and the maintenance of flexibility and enterprise once the pioneer stage is passed—but the problems take shape in different contexts.

Three important issues loom large, however, when countries which have not undergone industrial revolutions tremble on the brink. First, is there vigorous and self-confident leadership ? Do the businessmen or the planners really believe in what they are doing ? Second, is there a proper legal and institutional framework, which permits them to make and execute relevant decisions ? No study of industrial revolutions can leave politics out. Third, can the new values upon which an industrial society depends secure acceptance among the masses of the population ? Industrial growth requires a new attitude towards time, towards work, towards discipline, towards sacrifice. It implies a disturbance in accepted ways—as all revolutions do—and hope in the future rather than reliance upon the past. A study of the statistics of economic growth in countries which have undergone or are undergoing industrial revolution is an important part of economic history, which gains in precision the more quantitative a subject it becomes, but it is no substitute for an exploration of what Max Weber called " economic sociology " or of the value systems of different kinds of society. Different kinds of specialist in social studies can contribute to this approach. It would be fascinating to have more studies by Asians of industrial revolutions in other parts of the world as well as practical research investigations of the conditions necessary for industrialisation in their own countries. Indeed, the two lines of enquiry would not diverge but would converge in central territory, which needs to be more carefully mapped than it has been in the past.

ECLIPSE OF THE VILLAGE COURT

R. K. W. GOONESEKERE

In 1945 the Village Tribunals established under the Village Communities Ordinances 1871—1924 and the Village Tribunals Ordinance No. 12 of 1945 (hereafter referred to as the Rural Courts Ordinance) were changed to Rural Courts[1]. This change was not without significance for as the Legal Secretary (Mr. J. H. B. Nihill) explained it was intended to " emphasise the changed character of the Courts.... and it should go a long way to remove any lingering doubts or uncertainties which linger in the minds of persons who may still consider that in some way or other these Courts have something to do with the internal Government of the village[2]." The Chief Secretary (Mr. R. H. Drayton) also emphasised the realistic approach of the proposed legislation as contrasted with what he termed the " idyllic " approach of certain critics who saw the Village Tribunal as " somebody sitting under a palm tree and acting in a paternal manner, and, by agreement between the parties concerned, settling the dispute not in relation to any known law or procedure[3]." This " land of simplicity," he claimed, we had long since left.

The purpose of this article is to look back on the different phases of this indigenous institution which began as the gansabhava or village court, later became officially known as the Village Tribunal and finally as the Rural Court. Secondly, to see how far the change of name reflects the culmination of a series of steps by which the machinery of a simple village court was transformed to almost that of a regular court.

Part I

The little evidence of early village organization shows that villages enjoyed a degree of independence in their internal administration guaranteed by ' pillars of immunity.' Codrington[4] speaks of the Badulla pillar inscription as the " only clear reference to the administration of village affairs by committees such as are found in South India." The committee has

1. Village Tribunals (Amendment) Ordinance No. 13 of 1945.
2. Hansard 1943, Vol. 2 p. 2579.
3. Hansard 1943, Vol. 2 p. 2629.
4. *Ancient Land Tenure and Revenue in Ceylon*, p. 3. For further information see Paranavitana, *Village Communities of Ceylon*, Ceylon Literary Register (Third Series) 1931 Vol. 1 p. 49.

been variously described as consisting of the 'elders' or 'leaders' of the village, or, according to Codrington, of the heads of families. The parallel of the Indian panchayat has suggested that these committees discharged both administrative and judicial functions. The former would have been confined to a few important details of village life as apportioning customary services, e.g. duties in connexion with irrigation which had to be performed by the different cultivators. The settling of disputes however was the main preoccupation of the gansabhava, but its usefulness in village administration was remembered many years later when the restoration of irrigation facilities became a prime concern of the government. How ancient the institution is, it is difficult to say[5]. Knox[6] gives this account of the gansabhava in the second half of the 17th century : "In the hearing Complaints and doing Justice among Neighbours, here are Countrey-Courts of Judicature, consisting of these Officers, together with the Head-Men of the Places and Towns, where the Courts are kept : and these are called Gom Sabbi, as much as to say, Town Consultations."

In the maritime districts the history of the gansabhava was affected by the consequences of foreign occupations. The Portuguese who were not inclined to interfere with the local laws made use of the indigenous institutions in the administration of justice[7], but with the Dutch it was a different story. They not only imposed their laws on the inhabitants of the Maritime Provinces but further set up an efficient judicial system. Their influence on our legal system was profound and probably led to the abrogation of many laws and institutions in the areas under them. Even so it is unlikely that the gansabhava fell into disuse during the Dutch period[8]. Undoubtedly it is in the Kandyan Provinces that the gansabhawa flourished unaffected by the parallel existence of the modern types of courts. D'Oyly[9] gives a clear picture of the Kandyan gansabhava soon after the British occupation: "Gansabe or Village Court. This Court is frequently held both in the Disavonies and the Upper Districts, and consists of an assembly of the Principal and experienced Men of a Village, who met at an Ambalam or a Shady or other Central Place upon the occurrence of any Civil or Criminal matter as Disputes regarding Limits, Debts, Petty Thefts, Quarrels etc., and after Enquiring into the Case, if possible settle it amicably, declaring a Party which is in Fault, adjudge Restitution or Compensation and dis-

5. It has been suggested that gansabhava existed from 425 B.C. or the date at which Pandukahbaya established village boundaries over the whole Island. See *Civil Courts Commission Report*, Part 1 p. 107.
6. *An Historical Relation*, p. 84.
7. P. Pieris, *Ceylon, the Portuguese Era*, Vol. 2, p. 85.
8. A gansabhava is reported by the Govenment Agent (W.P) in 1848 to have functioned successfully in Panadura for over 30 years.
9. *Sketch of the Constitution of the Kandyan Kingdom*, p. 28.

missing with Reproof and Admonition, their Endeavours being directed to Compromise and not to Punishment." This is the first clear account we have of the *modus operandi* of the gansabhava and it brings out the essential features of the local institution which distinguish it from the courts we know today. The informality of the proceedings is conveyed by the place of meeting and by the fact that the court was held not by an official but by a number of local inhabitants who by occupation, training and social standing differed in no way from the litigants. There were no regular sittings but the gansabhava was convened whenever disputes as may be expected in a village community arose. Perhaps the most striking feature was that the court's efforts were " directed to Compromise and not to Punishment." Rules of evidence and procedure, technicalities and chicanery found no place in these courts. The " judges " who generally had first-hand knowledge of the true facts could be relied upon to bring about an equitable settlement or, failing that, to give an equitable decision.

Clause 8 of the Kandyan Convention indirectly gave recognition to the gansabhava by enacting that " the administration of civil and criminal justice and police over Kandyan inhabitants .... is to be exercised according to established forms and by the ordinary authorities." Gansabha continued to function and the early British administrators were favourably impressed by the useful work they performed but the official attitude was one of tolerance only. There was a ready assumption that local institutions were of inferior quality, and the educated Ceylonese were also persuaded to this opinion without difficulty. This lends point to Digby's ironic comment : " The Tamil and Sinhalese law students talk far more glibly of Magna Charta than they do of the ancient laws of their own people." The Proclamation of November 21st, 1818 established a new judicial system in the Kandyan Provinces whereby the administration of justice was entrusted to the Resident, a Judicial Commissioner and the Government Agents, assisted by Chiefs and Assessors. Technically gansabha were superseded by the courts of the Judicial Commissioner and Government Agents but the practice of bringing village disputes before the gansabhava must have continued because we are told that even the Judicial Commissioner and the Government Agents occasionally referred cases to the gansabhava and gave judgments in accordance with their decisions[10]. The gansabhava had what Berwick later called a " dormant vitality " during the early years of official neglect. There is also the evidence of Colebrooke[11] that a dispute regarding the boundary of lands which had been decided by the Judicial Commissioner's Court was referred by the Governor in appeal to the gansabhava in which the lands were situated. The policy of the British

10. See Hayley, *A Treatise on the Laws and Customs of the Sinhalese*, p. 60.
11. Mendis, *Colebrooke-Cameron Papers*, Vol. 1, p. 28, f.n.a.

in providing machinery for the enforcement of judgments of their regular courts only meant however, that there was nothing to prevent a party dissatisfied with the gansabhava decision from taking the matter to a regular court.

Colebrooke was among the foremost to press for the revival of the gansabhava. He saw in it a means of preserving the ancient usages of the people and in a letter to the Colonial Secretary he pointed out that the regular courts were inconvenient for hearing petty cases and urged that " the ancient mode of referring such cases to a Gansabe or Village Council would be advantageously preserved where it is established and restored where it has been superseded[12]." In a further letter[13] he gave good reasons in support of his proposal. First, there were reasons of economy in that it would reduce the burden involved in " the employment of a vast body of European functionaries who expect high remuneration—and a vast number of petty native officers who receive allowances inadequate to their support." Secondly, " the management of their own affairs in conformity to their customs would also be of some source of general satisfaction." Thirdly, " The Village Council or Gansabe.... requires but very little regulation to render it an efficient means of providing for the police of the country and the adjustment of petty disputes and cases."

All that came of Colebrooke's recommendation was that the Charter of Justice, 1833 which reorganized the judicial system made express mention of the gansabhava by declaring that its provisions did not extend " to prevent any persons from submitting their differences to the arbitration of certain assemblies of the inhabitants of villages known in our said island by the name of Gansabes[14]." This merely continued the policy of leaving things alone and gave legislative sanction to a practice which was semi-officially recognised. It was not what Colebrooke had asked for and it is doubtful whether it had the immediate effect of enhancing the status of the gansabhava. The relationship between the newly-created District Courts and the gansabhava was left in an uncertain state and had to be clarified by the Supreme Court. At this time there were two ways in which a gansabhava decision could be obtained. The parties could come direct before the gansabhava as in olden days or the District Court in which an action has been instituted could with consent of the parties refer the matter to the gansabhava. The former method had the disadvantage that an unsuccessful party could set the award at nought by refusing to comply with it since the gansabhava lacked the power to enforce its awards.

12. Mendis, *op. cit.*, Intro. lvii.
13. See Colvin R. de Silva, *Ceylon under the British Occupation*, Vol. 2, p. 578.
14. *Charter of Justice*, 1833, s. 4.

In the other case the award of the gansabhava was binding on the parties. and was held conclusive by the District Court in the absence of fraud, partiality or other vitiating circumstance[15].

The authority of the gansabhava suffered again in 1859 when it was held in *Kiria v. Poola*[16] that the decision of the gansabhava did not operate to prevent a party from raising the matter in the District Court. This case is also interesting in that it gives an account of the proceedings of a gansabhava presided over by the Chief Priest of the Asgiriya Establishment : " About eight years ago, a dispute between the plaintiff and the defendant's father, came before me, into which I made investigation ; on which a gansabe was formed,—was convened. I ordered the Vidhane, who is our temple-officer, and also Government Arachy, to convene a gansabe. I verbally ordered him. It accordingly met at Korosa-temple.... The President of the gansabe was myself. The other members were 10 or 15 in number, and consisted of Headmen and late Headmen of that village, such as durayas. The only vellala was Udatapola Arachy. Both parties were present. We made investigation according to custom, and heard evidence on both sides. The decision was that the plaintiff was the owner of the land. A written decision was made which was given to the plaintiff. The evidence was taken in writing ; and the decision, in the form of a Sittu, was handed to the plaintiff. I did not sign that Sittu, as I was not the incumbent of the temple ; but Owitipana Unnanse, the incumbent, signed it after I had written the body of the sittu. I have been president of many gansabes, and this was conducted according to due form of Kandyan custom.... Making a written record of gansabe proceedings is not an old custom, but an improvement which I always observe. The lowest number of a gansabe could be four or five persons.... The gansabe sat in a circle on mats[17]." We see from this that the village Elders have already been replaced by government minions and the procedure in the regular courts was followed as being an improvement.

Perhaps a more serious blow to the gansabhava was the creation of Courts of Requests and Police Courts in 1843. This had the effect of driving away more people from the gansabhava which in consequence diminished in importance[18]. The same period also saw an alarming

15. Marshall, *Judgments*, p. 37.

16. 3 Lor. 143.

17. From the evidence recorded in the District Court.

18. The decline of the gansabhava further marked a rise in the authority of the Headmen who were often sought after to settle disputes. Skinner mentions a headman whose " wallawa (palace) is usually thronged with people from the neighbouring districts, who, having a wholesome dread of the consequences of being drawn within the vortex of our law courts, agree to submit their cases to this good man." (*Forty Years of Citizen Life in Ceylon*, p. 235).

increase in litigation and attention was more than once drawn to the ' Sinhalese passion for litigation[19]. False claims were reduced to a minimum in the gansabhava but in the regular courts it was found that " Owing to the inordinate love of litigation charges were laid on the most slender pretexts, to gratify spite or often merely to enjoy the excitement of having the case in Court."[20] Further, the proceedings were dilatory and expensive. The Inspector-General of Police in his Administration Report for 1869 pointed out that nearly a thirteenth of the population was brought before the Magistrates as accused persons. If the numbers of those who attended the civil courts were added it was estimated by Berwick that " there is an annual attendance at the Courts approaching and perhaps equal to, the whole population ; certainly largely exceeding the adult population."[21] The administration was faced with the serious problem of checking what Skinner described as " the ruinous and demoralizing tendency of the indulgence of the natives in their love of litigation."[22]

The possibility of the gansabhava being of use in this situation appears to have struck many minds. Official interest was awakened by a letter of Berwick (then D.J. Colombo) to the Colonial Secretary, a copy of which was sent to the Governor, Sir Hercules Robinson. Berwick explained that the establishment of gansabha to settle trivial disputes would be of great benefit to people. To the Governor the suggestion seemed " a fitting capital to a goodly column of native measures, such as education, irrigation and service tenures "[23] and an opportunity to perpetuate his memory in the country by introducing a popular meassure[24]. There were already the encouraging results from the Village Councils set up by Sir Henry Ward to settle disputes relating to irrigation and to bring about the restoration of irrigation works[25]. It was generally felt that a like measure would meet with the same degree of success.

Richard Morgan, Queen's Advocate and later the first Ceylonese Acting Chief Justice, was given the task of preparing legislation. Morgan had some misgivings on reviving the ancient gansabhava on the same lines but

19. Mills, *Ceylon under British Rule*, p. 137.
20. Mills, *loc. cit.* As there was no trace of this unusual national trait previously it must be considered a legacy of British administration !
21. This figure is based on the number of cases into the approximate number of persons involved in each case. So also Skinner, *op. cit.* p. 234 : " One individual for a trifling suit may, in instances, if he chooses, withdraw from their village and necessary occupations one-half of its population as witnesses."
22. *Op. cit.*, p. 233.
23. An excellent account of the circumstances attending the first Village Communities Ordinance is given in Digby, *Forty Years of Citizen Life in Ceylon*, Vol. 2.
24. His successor Gregory suggested that his epitaph should contain the words " He restored Village Councils to Ceylon."
25. See the Paddy Lands Irrigation Ordinance No. 9 of 1856 discussed more fully in the *Appendix*.

his Ordinance contained only a few simple provisions and on the whole attempted to accommodate the gansabhava to the changed circumstances. A curious feature must be noted here. The immediate objective of the legislation was the establishment of simple village courts with power to enforce their awards but this aim got entangled in a grander vision of reorganizing the village life on the old basis of the Village Community or 'village republic.' The ideal of the independent village community with the villages enjoying 'Home-rule' or the right to regulate their lives became as important an object. This explains the misleading title of Morgan's Ordinance—Village Communities. It is possible that Morgan was inspired by the researches of Maine[26]. The Bill was first published in the Government Gazette to ascertain the opinion of the people. There was considerable opposition from the proctors who under the proposed legislation could not appear in Village Tribunals and a more general dissatisfaction was expressed at the provisions which enhanced the power of headmen. On the whole the Government were satisfied that the measure was favoured by the mass of the people and it was passed as the Village Communities Ordinances No. 26 of 1871. The Bill was keenly supported by the official members of the Council but unofficial support was lukewarm.

The Ordinance of 1871 consisted of two parts, administrative and judicial, and the Government contemplated the working of these two parts together just as in the old gansabhava there was no clear line separating the administrative and judicial functions. The local name gansabhava was dropped in favour of 'Village Tribunal' and 'Village Committee' but the old name has persisted to this day by common usage so much so that it is not always clear whether by the term gansabhava reference is made to the Village Committee which is essentially an administrative body or to the village court—the Village Tribunal. The administrative part of the

26. Maine published his *Ancient Law* in 1861 and his first course of lectures as Professor of Jurisprudence at Oxford was published in 1871 (same year as Morgan's Ordinance) as "Village Communities. This aspect of the Ordinance came in for severe criticism during the debate on the Village Communities Ordinance No. 9 of 1924. Mr. C. E. Corea (Member for N.W.P.) charged Morgan with not having possessed an "intimate acquaintance with local conditions. Self-centred and self-sufficient, he was incapable of any sympathetic understanding of the genius of the people, whom he viewed from afaras natives. As for knowledge of national history, he was the prototype of the ColonelWrights of today. Thus it happened that his Village Communities Ordinance was not based even on simple misconception of local conditions, but was conceived in utter ignorance of everything that the term 'Village Community' connotes. This Ordinance was simply a case of Hamlet without the Prince of Denmark!" (Hansard,) 1923, p. 475. The Prince of Denmark in this case being the communal ownership of land which Mr. Corea claimed to be fundamental to a Village Community. It is worth mentioning that although this may have been true of the past it did not appear to be so in 1923 or even in 1871. Maine (*Village Communities*, p. 107) says of the minute rules governing cultivation that they had the same object—"to reconcile a common plan and order of cultivation on the part of the whole brotherhood with the holding of the distinct lots in the arable land by separate families. The common life of the group or community has been so far broken up as to admit of private property in cultivated land, but not so far as to allow a departure from a joint system of cultivating that land."

Ordinance made provision for the regulation and management of village affairs by the inhabitants themselves. A brief account of this aspect will first be given. The Ordinance provided that a Government Agent shall at the request of at least ten inhabitants of a village convene a public meeting of the inhabitants for the purpose of making rules for the regulation of purely village affairs which might range from castration of cattle to education of children. Rules could be made governing village works, schools[27], fisheries, nuisances, cattle, gambling, village tanks and generally for the " enforcement of ancient customs as regards cultivation, and for any other purpose connected with or relating to purely village affairs." In short, on matters which were important for village welfare and could not be reached by general legislation. The inhabitants could delegate the power to make rules to a committee elected by them and this is what usually happened[28]. Rules when approved by the Governor and published in the Government Gazette became binding at law for the breach of which a fine not exceeding Rs. 20/- could be imposed. The grant of limited self-government to the village was only illusory for in practice the Government Agent or his representative came armed with rules carefully framed in English and reflecting the Englishman's idea of what was good for the village. But we may fairly assume that some sort of discussion took place before these rules were accepted because we are told that the people of a certain village insisted on a rule preventing the shooting of bats in Crown forests for the reason that bats are useful in providing manure and in propagating seed. The Village Communities Ordinance No. 24 of 1889 was an amending and consolidating Ordinance but in the main it was a replica of Morgan's Ordinance. Officialdom intruded directly in village affairs with the appointment of the chief headman as ex-officio Chairman of every village committee in his division. This was an unpopular provision and largely responsible for the unsatisfactory working of the Ordinance. At the insistence of the Ceylonese members in the Legislative Council the Village Communities Ordinance No. 9 of 1924 empowered a Village Community by resolution at a public meeting to declare itself in favour of an elected Chairman. With the progressive introduction of local government principles the character of the Village Councils or Committees changed considerably and today they resemble more the modern type of local government institution of English parentage than the ancient organization suitable to an agricultural community. The present law is

27. This was the idea of the Director of Public Instruction who thought that free village schools and compulsory attendance could be achieved through the medium of village councils.

28. The principle of election was a farce since the minor headmen who were the Government Agent's nominees were returned unopposed with the result that village committees were composed largely of village headmen.

contained in the Ordinance last mentioned as amended[29]. The power to make rules (now by-laws) is vested in the Committee and the matters on which by-laws could be made is indicative of the magnitude of the change in the structure of our village organization-capitation tax, taxation of land, loans, land and property, roads and paths, buildings, building operation and works, public health and amenities, animals, markets and fairs, water supply.

Part II

In this part we shall analyse the different aspects of the court set up in place of the gansabhava but modelled on it. For convenience the Village Communities Ordinances of 1871, 1889 and 1924 shall be referred to as Ordinance No. 1, 2, and 3 respectively and the object will be to show the nature of the changes introduced by these Ordinances and the Rural Courts Ordinance.

General. As stated above Ordinance No. 1 consisted of two parts, the administrative which was inspired by the idea of self-government for the village, and the judicial. The purpose of the latter was to put an end to the expensive litigious habit of the people by establishing Village Tribunals with jurisdiction to try minor offences and disputes in places convenient to the village. This part though treated separately was seen as a necessary adjunct to the reorganized village community and therefore the two parts were meant to work together. This idea had to be abandoned as soon as it became evident that although the Village Committee system was generally acceptable Village Tribunals were looked on with suspicion. Morgan himself introduced an amendment which enabled the Ordinance to be proclaimed in areas without at the same time establishing Village Tribunals. Thus Village Committees were founded in areas without corresponding Tribunals being established. Provisions regarding Village Tribunals continued however to be included in the same Ordinance the Government no doubt hoping that in course of time the people would recognise the superior virtues of these simple courts and demand their establishment. When the character of both the Village Committee and the Village Tribunal changed fundamentally it no longer became possible to contain the respective provisions in the same statute. The Rural Courts Ordinance took the judicial provisions out of Ordinance No. 3 thereby signifying that these courts have now nothing to do with the internal affairs of the village. Where a Village Tribunal was not established in a

29. The amendments have been many and their effect has been completely to alter the Ordinance as first passed. A consolidated reprint is found in the Legislative Enactments Supplement 1941, Vol. 2, p. 122.

Village Committee area alternative provisions were made for the exercise of limited judicial functions by the Village Committees themselves[30].

Purpose. It has been observed that the purpose of the gansabhava was conciliation and not punishment. Ordinance No. 1 following this enacted that " It will be the duty of the president and councillors, when any case shall be brought before them, to endeavour by all lawful means to bring the litigant parties to an amicable settlement, and to abate, prevent or remove, with their consent, the real cause of quarrel between them[31]."

Personnel of Court. The Tribunal consisted originally of a President appointed by the Governor and remunerated by the general revenue. The Government Agent (C.P.) in 1872 recommended that only " native gentlemen of the highest social rank " be appointed as Presidents as a safeguard against corruption[32]. The President was assisted by five councillors (later reduced to three) having property qualification and chosen by lot from the inhabitants of the village area. The procedure was for the councillors to express their opinion first but where their opinion differed from that of the President it was the latter's opinion that prevailed. No special qualifications legal or otherwise were required of Presidents who except for a few proctors were recruited from the Kachcheri. As late as 1941 only 14 of 59 Presidents were lawyers when following a general outcry against the unsatisfactory quality of Presidents the State Council by resolution decided that in future only lawyers be appointed. The Rural Courts Ordinance dropped out the association of councillors with the President as it had proved to be another unsatisfactory feature. The Rural Court is presided over by a President, this term being retained in preference to ' Judge ' because as the Legal Secretary explained by adopting the latter " you confer a little too much status and privilege on these worthy gentlemen who preside over these very minor courts[33]."

Jurisdiction. From the beginning Village Tribunals were given jurisdiction not only to try breaches of rules or by-laws made under the Village Communities Ordinances but in addition a limited civil and criminal

30. See Ordinance No. 1, s. 10 ; Ordinance No. 2, s. 46 ; Ordinance No. 3, ss. 63, 71, 85. After the Rural Courts Ordinance the policy was to establish Rural Courts in all village areas where judicial functions were being exercised by Village Committees, and ss. 71 and 85 were among the repealed sections but s. 63 which makes breaches of by-laws punishable by the Village Committee was not repealed. The number of courts as a matter of fact has decreased from 59 in 1943 to 48.
31. Ordinance No. 1, s. 23. Repeated in Ordinance No. 2, s. 30 and Ordinance No. 3, s. 79. The Rural Courts Ordinance s. 24, also retains it.
32. See Sessional Paper 6 of 1872-73.
33. Hansard, 1943, Vol. 2. p. 2580.

jurisdiction. From 1889 it was possible to limit the jurisdiction of any Tribunal to the exercise of civil *or* criminal jurisdiction *or* trial of breaches of rules *or* any such jurisdiction in combination.

A. *Civil.* The following factors gave a Village Tribunal jurisdiction (*a*) residence of defendant in the village area or (*b*) cause of action having arisen in village area or (*c*) land in respect of which action is brought being situate in village area[34]. Ordinance No. 1 imposed a pecuniary limit of Rs. 20/- on the value of actions which could be tried by the Village Tribunal whether for debt, damage or demand or involving title to land. But parties were allowed by their written consent to give a Tribunal jurisdiction up to Rs. 100/- value. In 1924 jurisdiction was extended to Rs. 100/- in case of actions between a Co-operative Society and a member. This low pecuniary limit continued until 1945 chiefly through the efforts of lawyers in the legislature who were against any raise even though by 1923 it had become clear that the limit was unreal in view of the depreciation in the value of money. The Rural Courts Ordinance has now raised the limit to Rs. 100/- both in cases of actions for debt, damage or demand and in actions involving title to immovable property[35]. The Rural Courts Ordinance expressly forbids a Rural Court from entertaining certain classes of actions specified in the First Schedule, irrespective of the value of the subject matter. Some of the actions excluded are partition, mortgage, specific performance, rectification and cancellation of contracts, breach of trust, defamation, seduction.

B. *Criminal.* Originally confined to petty assaults, petty thefts, malicious injury to property (damage not exceeding Rs. 20/-) and cattle trespass (damage not exceeding Rs. 20/-). In 1924 the list of offences triable by Village Tribunals was considerably extended and set out in Fourth Schedule to Ordinance No. 3. Further additions were made in the Rural Courts Ordinance[36].

C. *Punishment.* Maximum fine of Rs. 20/- provided for in Ordinance No. 1 was raised to Rs. 50/- by the Rural Courts Ordinance. Ordinance No. 2, s. 31 authorised a sentence of 14 days' imprisonment in default of payment[37]. Also made any false, frivolous, malicious or vexatious action

34. Ordinance No. 1, s. 21 ; Ordinance No. 2, s. 28 ; Ordinance No. 3, s. 83 ; Rural Courts Ordinance s. 9.
35. S.9(1). The Minister of Justice may enlarge the civil jurisdiction by raising the pecuniary limit of a Court.
36. See the Second Schedule which gives a Rural Court jurisdiction to try offences punishable under the following Ordinances—Penal Code (ss. 157, 287, 270, 314, 332, 343, 349, 367, 394, 409, 433 484, 488) Vagrants, Prevention of Juvenile Smoking. Police, Firearms, Thoroughfares, Quarantine and Prevention of Diseases, Vaccination, Nuisances, Wells and Pits, etc.
37. Amended by Ordinance No. 50 of 1938 to bring in line with the Payment of Fines (Courts of Summary Jurisdiction) Ordinance of 1938.

punishable with a fine of Rs. 5/- which may be awarded to injured party[38]. Ordinance No. 3 made whipping an alternative punishment for males under sixteen[39], and also authorised the Tribunal to take account of the offender's character, antecedents, age, health etc. with a view not to inflict punishment on him but merely to warn him[40].

D. *Exclusiveness of Jurisdiction.* It was essential that the Court should have exclusive jurisdiction and suitable provision was made to prevent an evasion of this jurisdiction[41]. Certain qualifications were recognized from the beginning e.g. Tribunals were empowered to refer parties in any civil or criminal case to the Court of Requests or Police Court if it appeared that the case might more properly be tried before a higher tribunal[42]. Further inroads on this exclusive jurisdiction were made by Ordinance No. 3[43]. Today the exclusive jurisdiction of the Rural Court is subject to the following qualifications[44] : (1) A public officer may prosecute before a Magistrate's Court any offence which but for the provisions of this Ordinance would be cognizable by such Magistrate's Court. (2) The Attorney General or District Judge having appellate jurisdiction may in offences cognizable by a Magistrate's Court or offences against by-laws which are also offences under any other Ordinance direct such offence to be tried before the Magistrate's Court. (3) A District Judge having appellate jurisdiction may confer jurisdiction on a Court of Requests in civil actions instituted in a Rural Court where this course seems to him the more appropriate. (4) A Rural Court may in certain offences which cannot adequately be punished by any penalty within its powers (or in a civil action which it feels can more appropriately be tried in a Court of Requests) suspend further hearing and report to the District Judge having appellate jurisdiction with a view to a transfer to the Magistrate's Court (or Court of Requests).

E. *Conclusiveness of Order.* In Ordinance No. 1 and 2 no mention is made as to the effect of an order of the Tribunal. But the doctrine of *res adjudicata* seems to have applied even in land cases provided the actual value of the land and not the value placed by the plaintiff (even if not traversed by defendant) did not exceed the pecuniary limit[45]. Under

38. S. 32. See also Ordinance No. 3, ss. 98, 101. Maximum of fine was raised to Rs. 20/- by the Rural Courts Ordinance s. 28.
39. S. 86(4). Followed in Rural Courts Ordinance s. 27(4).
40. S. 86(3). Followed in Rural Courts Ordinance s. 27(3).
41. Ordinance No. 1, s. 25 ; Ordinance No. 2, s. 34 ; Ordinance 3, No. 3, s. 91 ; R. C. Ordinance s. 13.
42. Ordinance No. 1, s. 21 provisions (2) and (3) ; Ordinance No. 2, s. 28.
43. See ss. 93, 94 and 95.
44. See R. C. Ordinance ss. 12, 15, 16 and *William Singho v. Edwin Singho*, 59 N.L.R. 18.
45. *Puncha v. Sethuhamy* 19 N.L.R. 217 ; *Pusamba v. Sendeliya* 2 L. Rec. 85.

Ordinance No. 3 orders in actions for debt, damage or demand were made final and conclusive but in the case of actions relating to land it was expressly provided that "such determination shall not operate as *res adjudicata* in any civil court other than a Village Tribunal[46]." An attempt was made to render Rural Court decisions in land cases subject to principles of *res adjudicata* if the defendant did not object to the jurisdiction of the court but this failed owing to the objection that there was danger in admitting this doctrine. The present position is anomalous but the Civil Courts Commission did not consider it necessary to disturb the existing law for the reason that there was no evidence that it had caused hardships[47].

F. *Excepted Persons.* Since an important objective of the first Ordinance was to revive the community spirit of the village it was thought desirable to exclude from the ambit of legislation those who had no part in village life. Morgan's Ordinance therefore limited the civil and criminal jurisdiction of the Village Tribunals to cases where both parties were "natives" who were defined as "those residents in the country other than persons commonly known as Europeans, or persons commonly known as Burghers[48]." The "non-natives" however were subject to the Tribunal's jurisdiction for breaches of rules and they could by written consent give jurisdiction to the Tribunal in civil and criminal causes. The same provision is found in Ordinance No. 2. During the debate on Ordinance No. 3 strong exception was taken to the use of the word "native"[49] in this connexion and the term "excepted persons" substituted in its place. "Excepted persons" was defined as "persons resident in the Island and being (*a*) persons commonly known as Europeans, (*b*) persons commonly known as Burghers, and (*c*) labourers as defined in the Estate Labour (Indian) Ordinance including any woman or child related to any such labourer or aged or incapacitated relative of any such labourer[50]." Indian Estate labour were excluded for the reason given by the Attorney General that there was the "manifest danger of these Village Committees and Councils becoming rather Indian

46. S. 83.
47. What is not clear is whether an unsuccessful party can disregard the decision and re-litigate on the same matter before a higher court, or whether the decision will operate *res adjudicata* but only in regard to the subject matter of the suit in which it is given, and no further (A parallel case would be the application of the principles of *res adjudicata* to an erroneous decision on a pure question of law - see *Katiratamby v. Parupathipillai* 23 N.L.R. 209; *Subramaniam v. Kumaaaswamy* 57 N.L.R. 130).
48. Ss. 3 and 21.
49. "a term which in these more enlightened days of grace is only applied to oysters!" (Hansard, 1943, Vol. 2, p. 2598). In *De Lile v. Sedoris* 6 S.C.C. 95 the term "native" was interpreted as not including an Eurasian.
50. Ss. 89 and 129.

Village Councils than Ceylon Village Councils[51]." The general idea of excluding foreigners from village organization was on the whole approved but a certain regret was expressed that Burghers should agree to be looked on as an external force in their country. When the matter was being debated in 1923 the Member for Eastern Province referred to the large Burgher community in the Batticaloa district who were so intimately connected with the other inhabitants of the district by language, custom and occupation that it was desirable to afford them the same facilities for settlement of petty disputes[52]. Whereupon a Burgher Unofficial Nominated Member replied that " there are Burghers, and people who are not Burghers, but who call themselves Burghers " and that as far as the former were concerned they did not wish to come under the Ordinance[53]. The idea that by excluding certain classes of persons from the jurisdiction of Village Tribunals a privileged class was being created was felt only in the 1940's when with the changing character of Tribunals the provisions relating to excepted persons took a different colour. The Rural Courts Ordinance proposed that there should be only one category of excepted persons, viz., non-domiciled Europeans. This aroused a controversy with the Indian Government on the issue of discrimination and after further consideration it was decided that no persons should be excepted[54]. As the Legal Secretary observed " with the changed character of these tribunals, there is no logical argument which can be adduced in favour of exempting any class of persons from the criminal (and civil) jurisdiction of these Courts[55]." Surprisingly enough there was some opposition to this change on the ground that Presidents would be overawed by Europeans and that the inclusion of Indians and Europeans would lead to English supplanting Sinhalese as the language of the proceedings.

Enforcement of Decisions. The chief defect of the gansabhava was that there was no machinery to compel a party to obey its order. This was put right by enacting that judgements of the Village Tribunal shall be enforced by the Fiscal[56].

51. Hansard, 1923, p. 216. In *Peter Simon v. Dorasamy* 17 N.L.R. 234 it had been held that Indian Tamils, resident but not domiciled in Ceylon were " natives " within the meaning of Ordinance No. 2, s. 28 and in *Nadar v. Leon* 30 N.L.R. 123 an Indian trader living temporarily in Ceylon was not considered an " excepted person."
52. Hansard, 1923, p. 494.
53. Hansard, 1923, p. 495. Earlier the Burgher Member had rhetorically asked " by what stretch of imagination can it be held that the Burghers could in any way be brought within communal property and be classed as villagers."
54. Ordinance No. 13 of 1945, s. 7 deleting R. C. Ordinance s. 11.
55. Hansard, 1943, Vol. 2, p. 2579.
56. Ordinance No. 1, s. 29 ; Ordinance No. 2, s. 38 ; Ordinance No. 3, s. 107 ; R. C. Ordinance s. 26.

Form of Proceedings. In the sphere of procedure Village Tribunals showed a marked departure from the practice in regular courts. As befitting a simple village court it was shorn of all the formalities and trappings associated with a court. Proceedings were in the native language and in summary form. It was further made the duty of these Tribunals to do substantial justice in all questions coming before them without regard to matters of form[57]. A most important provision was that prohibiting representation of parties to litigation by advocates and proctors. This was a definite step to stamp out the blight of the professional lawyer in the village economy and one which has been rigorously followed[58]. The language policy underwent a subtle change when Ordinance No. 3, s. 73 enacted that the record may be kept in English or the vernacular. The Rural Courts Ordinance s. 21 went further in stating that the language of proceedings shall be determined by the District Judge having appellate jurisdiction but that the record must in every case be kept in English. This was explained as a temporary expedient until such time as bilingual judges were available. The Rural Courts Ordinance retained the provision excluding lawyers from proceedings but left out the provision dealing with the summary form of the proceedings. Instead s. 26 now provides that all actions shall be "instituted, conducted, heard, determined and completed in accordance with the rules of civil procedure or of criminal procedure, as the case may be, made, or declared for the time being to be in force under this Ordinance."

Appeals.—At first a party aggrieved by the decision of a Tribunal had a right of appeal to the Government Agent in the first instance and then to the Governor[59]. An order of acquittal was not appealable[60]. The appellate jurisdiction of the Government Agent and Governor were taken away by the Rural Courts Ordinance and vested in the District Judge having local jurisdiction over the area[61]. The former practice of deciding the appeal on the written petition of appeal alone without permitting the parties or lawyers to make an appearance was reported to have worked satisfactorily and therefore retained[62].

Executive Control. In the early experimental years the Government Agents not only exercised an appellate jurisdiction but to a large extent controlled and supervised proceedings in Tribunals. The President was required

57. Ordinance No. 1, s. 30 ; Ordinance No. 2, s. 50 ; Ordinance No. 3, s. 74.
58. See R. C. Ordinance s. 22.
59. Ordinance No. 1, s. 32 ; Ordinance No. 2, s. 52 ; Ordinance No. 3, s. 113, 116.
60. Ordinance No. 22, s. 52 ; Ordinance No. 3, s. 117.
61. R. C. Ordinance s. 42.
62. R. C. Ordinance s. 42(4).

to send weekly reports to the Government Agent (a practice which continued until the Rural Courts Ordinance did away with it) who also had the right to sit with the President and observe the proceedings[63]. He could even intervene of his own motion and call for and examine the record of any case pending or tried[64]. This power has now been transferred to the District Judge. This control formerly exercised by the Government Agent together with the fact that until recently the majority of Presidents were products of Kachcheri training had the effect of turning these courts into 'subsidiary departments of the Kachcheri'[65].

Conclusion. The gansabhava court was re-established in 1871 because it was felt that a number of desirable results would follow, viz. a decrease in litigation which was having an altogether disastrous effect on the rural population, harmony in the village through the amicable settlement of disputes, and the promotion of a greater sense of responsibility by entrusting important functions to the people themselves. To begin with there was general agreement especially on the official side that the experiment was a success. Later on open criticisms of the system were made which could not be ignored and it became necessary to re-assess the position in the 1940's. It was found that a large volume of work was being done by Village Tribunals and that from the point of the number of persons affected by its judgements it was the most important part of the machinery of the administration of justice in the country. In 1938 the total number of cases entered in Village Tribunals[66] was Civil 40,146[67] and Criminal 200,894[68]. The number of cases actually decided were 36,624 and 187,765 respectively. Putting a low figure of 3 as the number of persons who are parties to proceedings we get 6 lakhs or 10 per cent of the population affected by the judgments. A more important fact emerging from the statistics is that less than one-third the civil cases were amicably settled while the figures for criminal cases show that less than 10 per cent were settled[69]. Another disappointing feature was that bribery and corruption had taken a hold on the Tribunals. The Minister of Local Administration was compelled to say that the "'justice' meted out by these Village Tribunals was an absolute travesty of justice," and that "they were simply sinks of bribery, corruption, ignorance and incompetence[70]." All this indicated that the time was ripe for a revaluation and the Government finally turned its back

63. Ordinance No. 1, s. 32 ; Ordinance No. 2, s. 52 ; Ordinance No. 3, s. 111 and 112.
64. R. C. Ordinance s. 42(6).
65. See *Civil Court Commission Report*, Part 1, p. 108.
66. The figures are taken from the Ceylon *Blue Book* for 1938.
67. 29,920 money, 1684 land.
68. 83,059 breach of V.C. rules, 54,419 Schools(?).
69. A point well worth remembering by those who set great store by Conciliation Boards.
70. Hansard, 1943, Vol. 2, p. 2631.

on village courts which were outside the system of regular courts in favour of " ordinary Courts of law—the most rudimentary form of Court, but quite definitely a Court of law—the first rung in a ladder."[71] But in one respect the Government was determined to distinguish Rural Courts from other courts—parties to a Rural Court case could not be represented by counsel either at the trial or in appeal. This provision needs explanation as it conflicts with the idea of a regular court of law (to that extent, it must be admitted, Rural Courts have suffered in ' status '). It was urged ineffectively by many that the only safeguard to the proper exercise of the enhanced powers of Presidents lay in counsel being permitted to appear for parties. The explanation may be that the Government was unable entirely to shake off the idea of the old Village Tribunal and this provision was retained to conceal the fact that the experiment had been totally abandoned as a failure. A more rational explanation may be that the Government rightly felt that any dangers inherent in the provision were nothing compared to the dangers lurking for poor village folk if advocates and proctors were allowed to attach themselves to Rural Courts. Experience has so far not confirmed the misgivings of the lawyer-members in the State Council but at the same time the exclusion of counsel makes a Rural Court fall short of a court of law as we understand it.

71. R. H. Drayton, Hansard 1943, Vol. 2. p. 2629.

APPENDIX

It is interesting to consider the precursor of the Village Tribunal in some detail. The Preamble sets out the reasons which led to legislation, " Whereas the non-observance of many ancient and highly beneficial customs connected with irrigation and cultivation of paddy lands ; as well as the difficulties, delays and expense attending the settlement of differences and disputes among the cultivators relating to water-rights ; and in obtaining redress for the violation of such rights in the ordinary course of law are found to be productive of great injury to the general body of proprietors." On the formation of an irrigation district a committee of proprietors of paddy lands were empowered to draw up the ancient customs of the district relating to irrigation and cultivation of paddy lands and maintenance of water rights. A breach of the rules was investigated into by a village council consisting of proprietors selected by the Government Agent with himself as President. The proceedings were summary and free from formalities, nor were advocates and proctors permitted to appear for parties. The decision was in the hands of the proprietors, the President having only a casting vote. The Council could impose a fine on the guilty party which was made recoverable through the machinery of the Police Court. There was no appeal to any court. This experiment of Governor Ward which was given a trial for a period of five years proved to be a success and legislation on substantially the same lines was reintroduced from time to time. See Paddy Lands Irrigation Ordinance No. 21 of 1861, Paddy Cultivation Ordinance No. 21 of 1867, Irrigation and Paddy Cultivation Ordinance No. 23 of 1889, Irrigation Ordinance No. 16 of 1906, Irrigation Ordinance No. 45 of 1915. One important change which was introduced quite early was the creation of Irrigation Headmen to assist in carrying out the purposes of the legislation. They were given important supervisory duties and also power to take action to prevent damage done by acts contrary to custom. At first it was left to the proprietors to decide whether they should enlist the aid of Irrigation Headmen but later both village councils and Headmen were seen as essential to the purposes in mind. After the first Village Communities Ordinance the need for convening a special village council to try breaches of irrigation rules disappeared and this jurisdiction was given to Village Tribunals. The present Irrigation Ordinance No. 32 of 1946 has retained the right of proprietors to make rules, and the election or appointment of Irrigation Headmen but has done away with village councils. Breaches of rules, regulations or established custom are now triable by the Rural Court or by an Irrigation Tribunal consisting of 3—7 Councillors selected by the Government Agent (as President) from among the proprietors of irrigable land.

THE CONCEPT OF THE IDEAL SELF IN SINHALESE CHILDREN

J. E. JAYASURIYA

"THE Ideal Self" has been defined by social psychologists as "the integrated set of roles and aspirations which direct an individual's life." A comment that should be made about this definition is that, valuable as it is as a theoretical construct, adherence to the letter of the definition would make an experimental study of the development of the ideal self impossible, for one can never be sure what forces do in fact direct an individual's life. Those forces that in fact direct an individual's life can at best only be surmised. One can, however, leave out the element of direction alone as it defies experimental enquiry, and concentrate attention on the roles and aspirations which an individual is prepared to recognise as being of value or significance to him. This is quite a different thing from saying that these same roles and aspirations actually direct the individual's life ; they may or may not, we do not know for certain. But it is important that these are the things which the individual deems significant, at least in responding to a test situation. For the purpose of our study, therefore, we may define "The Ideal Self" simply as "the set of roles and aspirations which the individual voluntarily recognises as being of value or significance to the individual."

Three studies dealing with the ideal self, but none of which, however, attempted to come to grips with the problem of definition have been reported. An early study by Hill (1) in 1930 required responses to the question, "Of all persons whom you have heard, or read about, or seen, whom would you most care to be like or resemble ? Why ?" A later study by Mary Phelan (2) in 1936, gave more latitude by asking merely "Who is your ideal ? Why have you chosen this ideal ?" The most recent study was that by Havighurst and others in the U.S.A. in 1946 (3) and in New Zealand in 1955 (4). They asked children to write an essay on the topic "The Person I would Like to be Like" and gave the following detailed directions: "Describe in a page or less the person you would most like to be like when you grow up. This may be a real person, or an imaginary person. He or she may be a combination of several people. Tell something about this person's age, character, appearance, occupation and recreations. If he is a real person, say so. You need not give his real name if you do not want to." In order to compare our data with the

data collected by Havighurst and his co-workers from American and New Zealand children, the subject and directions were given in the same form. They were also translated into Sinhalese, and children were given the option of writing in English or in Sinhalese.

Although essays are not generally recognised to be such, they can under certain circumstances be included in the category of projective techniques. The media used in projective testing are many and varied. They may consist of unstructured materials such as ink blots. They may also consist of pictures, artistic constructions or personal documents where the testee has to project his personality into his answer. In a monograph on *The Use of Personal Documents in Psychological Science* Allport (5) dwelt at great length on the projective properties of personal documents. In a paper on *The Essay Examination as a Projective Technique* Vernon Sims (6) says, "The essay examination is a relatively free and extended written response to a problematic situation or situations (question or questions) which intentionally or unintentionally reveals information regarding the structure, dynamics and functioning of the student's mental life." The subject "The Person I Would Like to be Like" required the testee to reveal himself, and many are the insights concerning motivations and attitudinal patterns that come out of essays on this subject. Some of the essays reveal a great deal about the psychological make up of the individuals and about parent-child relationships. Here is what a Form II girl (age 12+) writes, "Like Gulliver I wish I could go into a quaint old village where you find small people whom you could rule like a king. I would dress in a peculiar way. Unlike others I will not wear ordinary clothes. I would like to make up a costume which I could wear on my travels. I would like to grow a beard because I think the beard makes you look distinguished and honourable." This piece of writing stands out as being so different from the general trend revealed in essays by children in the same class. The desire to dominate, the desire to be different and to draw attention on herself is clearly a preoccupation in this girl's mind. Here is something which throws light on parent-child relationships. It is by a standard 4 girl (age 9+) who has been out to England and America. "If you wonder why I choose to stay in the quiet English countryside and not in Colombo or New York or London or any such busy town, it is because I like to stay with my children at home or go to the park with them or play games with them rather than go to dinner parties or cocktail parties and places like that where my parents go now. I will also teach my children to obey not by making them frightened and making them do everything like slaves but with kindness." One cannot but be struck by the sincerity of the writing.

These two examples should suffice to convince the sceptical of the justification for regarding essays as projective instruments.

The sample of children whose responses are dealt with in this paper consisted of 100 boys and 100 girls from a rural area about 25 miles distant from Colombo, an equal number from an urban area about 8 miles distant from Colombo and 108 girls in a leading Colombo 7 (7) girls' school. Unfortunately, no group of boys comparable to the last named group of girls has been tested yet. The ages of the children ranged from 8 to 18 years.

Following Havighurst, the ego ideals in the responses may be divided into the following categories.

P = Parents and relatives of the parental or grand parental generation.
T = Teachers.
G = Glamorous adults—people with a romantic or ephemeral fame e.g. movie stars, military figures, athletes, characters in fiction.
H = Heroes—people with a substantial claim to fame, usually tested by time but certain living persons may also be included in this category.
A = Attractive and successful young adults within individual's range of observation.
C = Composite or imaginary characters ; these are abstractions of a number of people.
M = Age mates or youths.
NC = Miscellaneous responses not classifiable among these.

The following table shows the percentage distribution by these categories of persons described as the ideal self by different groups of children.

Category	*American boys*	*American girls*	*Rural boys*	*Rural girls*	*Urban boys*	*Urban girls*	*Colombo girls*
P	11	11	5	1	12	0	1
T	2	4	18	52	14	45	8
G	30	20	15	7	6	8	46
H	6	4	8	10	8	12	16
A	25	25	46	25	55	31	23
C	22	31	3	2	2	1	2
M	1	4	0	0	0	0	0
NC	3	1	5	3	3	3	4

Certain comments may be made on this distribution.

1. Sinhalese children, girls in particular, want to grow up to be like their parents much less than American children. The American trend has indeed a great deal of theoretical support for it, for on most interpretations of behaviour the parent is one of the most important objects of identification. A possible explanation for the somewhat striking difference in the pattern of responses between Sinhalese and American children is that except in the case of urban boys the parent of the same sex as the child is not engaged in an occupation that appeals to the child. The fathers of urban boys pursue in many cases occupations that the boys themselves would not mind pursuing ; the fathers of rural boys pursue occupations perhaps much less appealing to their children. In the case of girls, the great majority of mothers do not pursue any careers, and perhaps that is why many girls do not want to be like their mothers. From the point of the view of the parent as an agent of socialisation, the implications of this state of affairs might be far reaching but this is a matter that must await further investigation.

2. American children do not much care to be like their teachers but in the case of Sinhalese children, with the exception of Colombo girls, the teacher is very popular as an ego ideal. Perhaps here, too, the occupational factor is of importance. Evidence of this comes most clearly from the responses of urban girls and rural girls. About 50% of them want to grow up to be like their teachers. In the case of girls, teaching is one of the most popular occupations they can aspire to and hence their choice of an ego ideal is coloured by this factor. If this be so, how is it that the teacher is not a popular choice with Colombo girls ? For an answer to this question, let us look at the next category.

3. With the exception of Colombo girls, nearly 50% of whom choose to be like glamorous persons, other Sinhalese children do not go in for glamorous persons as much as American children. Possibly, this is to be accounted for in terms of the social environment. The Colombo girls live in an environment in which they are exposed to glamorous persons both by direct contact and by contact through various media of communication such as the newspaper, film and radio. Havighurst himself points out the influence of the social environment on the choice of the ideal self. He says that this is only to be expected, since different social environments expose children to different kinds of people who may serve as objects

of identification and teach different values and aspirations. Havighurst, however, nowhere discusses the influence of the occupational factor which appears so prominent in the case of our data. Is it that in a highly developed economy with jobs for all as is supposed to be found in the United States children there are not concerned with the occupational factor as much as children in Ceylon ? The lack of interest of the Colombo girls, drawn as they were from a Colombo 7 fee-levying school, is not a matter for surprise ; perhaps they do not have to think in terms of employment ; and perhaps in a competitive struggle between glamour and occupation, glamour wins the day in so far as Colombo 7 girls are concerned. A matter for great concern, however, is that if the chosen ego ideal is an object of identification and therefore an agent of socialisation, Colombo 7 girls are socialised not by parents, or by teachers, or even by attractive and successful young adults within the individual's range of experience (a category we have not yet come to), but by glamorous adults. There was a wide variety of such adults mentioned. Many went in for film stars, musicians and ballet dancers but there were others who mentioned authors (including Shakespeare) and Olympic stars. Rather unusual choices were Napoleon by two, the Queen of England by one, Queen Elizabeth I by one, Joan of Arc by one, Rajasinghe I (8) by one and Professor Ludowyke (9) by one. Perhaps some of these choices ought really to be considered under the next catgory (namely, Heroes) but the lack of realism about glamorous choices as a whole is a matter for concern and portends rather badly from a mental health point of view. It will be noticed that the percentage of Colombo girls choosing glamorous adults is one and a half times the percentage of American girls, and is unusually and perhaps dangerously high. Havighurst's conclusion that children from lower rather than higher socio-economic strata tend to choose glamorous adults is not supported by our data.

4. The choice of heroes is a little higher than for American children but not very much so. In any case, the choices had an element of realism. Many girls, for example, wanted to be nurses and serve humanity as Florence Nightingale did. This is at least partly realistic, for any girl might legitimately aspire to be a nurse engaged in selfless service, though not a Nightingale. Similarly for the boys who wanted to be like Anagarika Dharmapala (10), W. A. Silva (11) or Senarat Paranavitana (12).

5. The next category—attractive and successful young adults within individual's range of observation—was very popular with urban and rural boys and a little less so with the other groups. Occupation was undoubtedly a primary consideration in making this choice, for in the vast majority of cases the ego ideal's occupation and the way in which he or she was practising it were described. Though there was an abundance of doctors and engineers mentioned, many chose persons in humbler walks of life, e.g., clerks, soldiers, business men, nurses, policewomen, social workers, and generally speaking there was an air of realism about the writing. Data from rural boys and girls shows that realism does not decrease with socio-economic status as Havighurst implies.

6. Finally, we come to the category described as composite characters. According to Havighurst, "these are abstractions of a number of people. Sometimes thay appear to be wholly imaginary, other times they are clearly a coalescence of qualities of two or three real persons." Although many American boys and girls gave composite characters as their ego ideals, only an insignificant number of Sinhalese children did so. In one place in his writings Havighurst says, "The final and mature stage of the ego ideal is the composite of desirable characteristics, drawn from all of the persons with whom the individual identifies himself during his childhood and adolescence." This seems hardly tenable in the light of our data and the fact that Havighurst was alive to this possibility is clear from a remark he makes elsewhere. He says, "It is not certain whether the stage of greatest maturity is that represented by our category of the attractive visible adult or that represented by our category of the composite, imaginary character." Our data certainly points to the former. It must, however, be stressed that though the Sinhalese child did not recognise or admit the composite character by the front door, the composite character seemed in effect to be admitted by the back door, for the attractive adult was often showered with characteristics that appeared to be composite. For example, a child would name a doctor or a clerk as his ego ideal, and then go on to credit him with more virtues than a single individual possesses. Here was the category of the composite more or less telescoped into the category of the attractive adult. We would therefore re-word Havighurst's first statement and say that the final and mature stage of the ego ideal may be either a composite figure or an attractive adult into whom a composite of desirable characteristics has been telescoped.

7. The remaining two categories, namely age mates and miscellaneous responses do not call for any comment except that no Sinhalese child selected an age mate as an ideal, whereas a few American children had done so in spite of directions which forbade it. It will be recalled that children were asked to describe what they would like to be like when they grow up. This excluded age mates.

Let us now turn to the consideration of the question whether an age sequence is discernible in the development of the ego ideal. Havighurst thought so. He says, " The ideal self commences in childhood as an identification with a parental figure, moves during middle childhood and early adolescence through a stage of romanticism and glamour, and culminates in late adolescence as a composite of desirable characteristics which may be symbolised by an attractive, visible young adult, or may be simply an imaginary figure." How far does this statement agree with our data ? Not appreciably. In the first place, the parent was not a person of much importance. The teacher was, and let us treat him as being at least a parental figure. But the teacher did not decline in importance with advancing years. The teacher was selected by roughly the same percentage of children at different age levels. Secondly, the stage of romanticism and glamour which Havighurst implies is common to all children in the years of middle childhood and early adolescence was very largerly absent in the case of all but the Colombo girls. And in their case, it characterised all age levels from 8 or 9 to 17 or 18 and was not confined to the years of middle childhood or early adolescence. These facts throw great doubts on Havighurst's hypothesis that romanticism and glamour in ego ideals are accompaniments of adolescence. They appear to us to be *accompaniments* of excessive urbanisation and high life. Going back to Havighurst's own data with this hypothesis, it is seen that it explains his data as satisfactorily as his hypothesis of an age sequence. In the circumstances, ours would seem to be the more inclusive and more satisfactory hypothesis. Thirdly, Havighurst has ignored the occupational factor in the choice of an ego ideal. It may be that this factor was not important for the children he dealt with. But it certainly appears to be an all important factor for our children. It in fact helps to explain why the teacher does not decline in importance with advancing years. It also explains why glamour wins over occupation only in the case of the prosperous Colombo groups. This brings us into conflict with another of Havighurst's observations. He points out that the social environment affects the choice of an

ego ideal and argues that children from families of lower socio-economic status name a higher proportion of glamorous persons. Our data goes contrary to the second part of this statement, for children of a lower socio-economic status were more realistic than others in their choices. The social environment is important, however, for our data, too, but in a quite different way from that envisaged by Havighurst. The social environment is important in the choice of an ego ideal in the sense that in a relatively primitive society there is a realism about choices but in an urbanised and high life society there is a glamour and romanticism about choices of ego ideals.

We may conclude by summarising very briefly the more important points that emerged from this study.

a. Occupational factors appear to be significant in the determination of ego ideals.

b. Either because of occupational factors or because of some other reason, parents do not seem to be significant as ego ideals to the same extent as teachers and attractive adults.

c. If ego ideals have a bearing on the strength of agents of socialisation, important implications follow from the scarcity of mention of parents as ego ideals.

d. The hypothesis of an age sequence is not tenable on this data.

e. There is more realism in the choice of an ego ideal in a conservative social environment than in an urbanised high life society.

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7. Colombo 7 is the postal address of the most fashionable residential area in Colombo.
8. King of Ceylon during the period 1582—92.
9. Formerly, Professor of English in the University of Ceylon.
10. A well known religious and social worker of the early years of this century.
11. A well known Sinhalese novelist who died a few years ago.
12. Ceylon's foremost archaeologist. Now Research Professor of Archaeology in the University of Ceylon.

THE PATTERN OF SOCIAL LIFE IN THE VILLAGE OF KOTIKAPOLA

SUBHADRA SIRIWARDENA

THE village of Koṭikāpola (literally, " leopard's eating-place ") is situated on the Kurunāgala-Kandy road between the 8th and 9th mile-posts, to the south-east of Kurunāgala and north-west of Kandy, very close to the small township of Māvatagama.[1] The name of the village is supposed to have been acquired as a result of a fight between two blind men in the locality ; in the course of the fight they had bitten and torn each other in the manner of two leopards. The village is typical of the physical and climatic conditions of the Kurunāgala District and is for the most part situated on flat land. The annual rainfall ranges from 75-100 inches and is just sufficient for the cultivation of paddy during the two seasons of the year, *maha* and *yala*. The village is girded by cocoanut and rubber plantations, Pitakande Estate on one side, and Brenton and Robert Hill estates on the other.

TABLE I. POPULATION AND HOUSING (FEBRUARY 1955).

Families 103	Males 284.	Females 280.	Total 564.
Houses 92.	Rooms 234.	Latrines 83.	Wells 30.

Table I shows that some accommodate more than one family. These are all cases of two or more brothers living with their families in their father's house. This is usually due to poverty and landlessness, which give them no opportunity to build houses of their own. There is only one case—that of the Village Committee Chairman and his brother—of two brothers living with their families in the same house, which is a large one, not because of any economic difficulties, but for convenience in connection with their business concerns. The houses are detached, but there are no walls or fences to separate one house from the other.

In most houses the rooms are very small, narrow, and dark. From the scarcity of windows there is no doubt that the people are happily ignorant of the vital requirements of sunlight and ventilation. The requirements

1. From the main Kurunāgala-Kandy road there is a motorable gravel road of about a mile to the interior of the village. A cart track branches off from this gravel road and extends about 1¼ miles, with footpaths spreading out like a cobweb from it, going up over a hill and dale and across little streams.

are not considered when building houses, as the provisions of the Housing and Town Improvements Ordinance are not applicable in villages. The kitchen is usually separate from the living rooms, but there were a few instances where the fire-place was in the corner of the living room.

The maximum number in a household is 14, the minimum 1. Table II shows that an average of 6 persons live in a household with an average number of 2.5 rooms.

TABLE II. SIZE OF HOUSEHOLD

No. of occupants	*No. of houses*	*No. of occupants*	*No. of houses*
1	2	8	8
2	7	9	7
3	11	10	4
4	11	11	4
5	12	12	2
6	12	13	2
7	7	14	3

Most houses had a bed covered with a mat in the verandah and it is used for sleeping as well as for sitting. Very often one or more of the older males sleep on the verandah and reduce the congestion within, besides protecting the house and garden from robbers. There are very few articles of furniture and hardly any use tables for dining. But the walls are covered with photographs and calendars, although the latter may not be of much practical use to the villager.

More than 90% of the population are Sinhalese Buddhists, with a negligible sprinkling of Hindus and Roman Catholics. Of the Sinhalese 90% are Kandyans. The low country Sinhalese and Indian settlers have been absorbed into the pattern of living in the village.

TABLE III. RACE AND RELIGION

Sinhalese					
Low Country	*Kandyan*	*Indian Tamil*	*Buddhist*	*Hindu*	*Roman Catholic*
55	481	28	533	28	3

It is a noteworthy fact that the Indian Tamils had first come as estate labourers, but are at present landowners of the area, as well as labourers.

TABLE IV. CASTE DISTRIBUTION

Cultivators (Goyigama)	*Jaggery (Vahumpura)*	*Drummer (Nakati)*	*Dhoby (Radā)*	*Goldsmith (Ācari)*	*Indian Tamil*	*Total*
399	90	14	25	8	28	564

As the above table indicates, most of the people in the village belong to the *goyigama* caste and asserted that they are superior to the other castes. Their superiority is recognised by the others who seem to be reconciled to this birth-right of theirs. The names of people indicate each one's caste. For instance, all the Baṇḍas and Mänikes are supposed to be of the so-called high caste (*goyigama*); drummers have names like Suramba, Pasindu, and so forth. The people of the so called high caste do not offer betel and seats to those of lower caste. Seats and bétel are offered to, and accepted by, those of equal caste, and given by the lower to the higher castes.

Connubium and commensality with members of a lower caste are taboo. Violation of these strictures, especially that of connubium by a *goyigama* person, is punished by the offender being ostracised by his or her caste. The offender and his progeny are debarred from participating in ceremonial occasions in the houses of people of his caste. I was informed of and shown individuals who have been thus ostracised for violating caste rules. One concrete instance was that of a *goyigama* woman married to a *vahumpura* man. She is completely cut off from her people but is reconciled to her situation.

The dhobies, drummers and smiths perform their traditional caste occupations, besides paddy cultivation. They are paid in money, not in kind. The *vahumpura* or jaggery caste people do not follow their traditional occupation of tree-tapping, and do not own cocoanut trees for tapping. Instead they eke out a living by labouring in the estates or roads and by cultivating according to the *andē* system. It is interesting to note that these people, both men and women, still observe an obligatory caste-function, that of working as temporary cooks at the wedding houses of the *goyigama* or cultivator caste. For this service they are paid quite handsomely, mostly in kind. The village drummers perform the traditional occupation of his family, that of tom-tom beating at the local Buddhist temple on *pōya* and festival days. For these services thay hold hereditary temple lands (*vihāragam*), perhaps the only vestige of feudalism. The drummer is also the village exorciser, soothsayer, and devil dancer, for which services he is paid in money. As with other caste occupations, his work requires years of training at the feet of a teacher. Home gardening, paddy cultivation and carpentry are supplementary occupations, and enable him to live fairly comfortably.

Members of the dhoby caste, both male and female, perform their traditional caste occupation, that of washing clothes for the higher castes, for which they are paid both in money and in kind. Nowadays there is

a tendency among youths in the village to take to other occupations, such as estate labour or driving motor vehicles. Two reasons may be adduced for this change : most of the people of the village are too poor to pay the dhoby either in money or in kind, and the youths who have gone to school and enjoyed equal rights with children of the so-called higher castes fight shy of taking to the traditional occupation in the same village. It is a noteworthy fact that dhobies do not wash for members of the so-called lower castes, e.g., drummer, smith, and *vahumpura*, who wash their own clothes unless they are rich enough tc be elevated to the social status enjoyed by the so-called higher castes.

All the people in the village know each other and everything about one another—economic status, children, character, and so on. In spite of caste distinctions, there is hardly any difference in the mode of life or outlook among high and low castes. Almost every man is a full-time or part-time cultivator, and either owns the land or works the fields of others according to the *andē* system. There is equality of opportunity where admission to the local school (Delgolla Government School) is concerned.

TABLE V. AGE, SEX AND LITERACY

	Male			*Female*			
Age Group	*Literate*	*Illiterate*	*Total*	*Literate*	*Illiterate*	*Total*	*Grand Total*
Under 5	?	?	48	?	?	32	80
5-14	74	4	78	68	3	71	149
15-18	16	—	16	21	5	26	42
19-50	103	7	110	78	45	123	234
Over 50	29	2	31	6	22	28	59
TOTAL	223	13	284	173	75	280	564

15 to 18 per cent of the general population above the age of 15 is illiterate, and of this number 85 per cent are females. This marked illiteracy of females is particularly evident in the age groups over 14. Of the general age-group over 50, 11.2 per cent of the females can read and write their mother tongue. Questioned as to why they did not learn to read and write, the answer given by all the women was that their parents, unlike present-day parents, did not see the value of female education, especially as the only school for the surrounding villages was a mixed school, and co-education was not favoured. The other reason is that women marry at a very early age, and the over-18 age group married in their early teens. From the time they ceased to be toddlers they were initiated into the various domestic duties such as cooking, drawing water, and looking after siblings. Females found to be illiterate between the ages of 5 and 18 (about 9 per cent of the general illiterate population and 3.7 per cent of the illiterate

female population) are daughters of illiterate mothers. These mothers are convinced that if they were able to manage without being literate, their daughters would miss nothing by their illiterary.

Of the 15 per cent illiterate males of the general population, nearly 85 per cent are in the age group 5-50. Here too they are children of illiterate mothers. Asked why they did not go to school, the reasons given were that the older brothers had to look after the younger siblings while the parents were away in the paddy fields. In some cases the boys refused to attend school because of corporal punishment awarded in the school. Most of the illiterate males admitted that they regretted their misfortune in not being educated, and are doing their best to see that their children are not deprived of this privilege. Of the older men aged over 50 who are literate, the majority had been educated at the feet of the *bhikku* at the local Buddhist temple, that is, *pirivena* education. They claim that education is far superior to that imparted to their grandchildren in present day schools.

TABLE VI. SCHOOLS AND EDUCATION
(Total population, 564)

Age Group	*Male*	*Female*	*Total*
5—14	56	46	102
15—18	10	13	23
Over 18	1	—	1
Total	67	59	126
Delgolle Government School	62	54	
R. C. School, Mawatagama	4	2	
Weuda Junior School	1	—	
Maliyadeva Girls School, Kurunegala	—	3	

Table VI indicates that of the entire population 22.14% attend school, and fall within the age-group 5-18, with the exception of one boy who is 19 and attends Weuda Junior School. The percentage of school-going boys is higher than girls in this age group. Since nearly 81 per cent of the school going population are between the ages 5-14, it is evident that the majority leave school after the age of 14. In the 5-14 age group the boys slightly outnumber the girls, while in the 15-18 age group it is the reverse. A comparison with table 5 shows that of the children in the age group 5-14, the ages between which education is compulsory by law, nearly 32 per cent do not go to school.

The village itself has no school. The older generation had been educated at the Malandeniya Government School and the Roman Catholic School at Māvatagama. 82 per cent of the present generation attend the Dangolle

Government School which was opened 18 years ago and is about 1¼ miles from the village. The present headmaster and his wife have been there for the last nine years and have contributed much to the progress of the school. Three students sat the S.S.C (Sinhalese) examination for the first time in December 1955. Until 1954 classes had been up to the J.S.C. level. There are 11 teachers including the English Assistant, and of these 6 are women, including 3 vernacular trained teachers. There is not a single male trained teacher. The number on the roll was 333, with 173 girls and 160 boys. Of these 116 are from Koṭikäpola. There are three school buildings.

The curriculum in the school consists of Sinhalese, English, Mathematics, Social Studies, Hygiene, Rural Science, Art, Handwork and Needlework. Instruction in handicraft is elementary, and consists only of coir weaving, for which the raw material is available locally, The children also work in the school garden. Physical exercise for boys and girls consists of physical drill and outdoor games like volley ball and netball, which games represent a conscious attempt on the part of both teachers and pupils to keep abreast of the urban English schools. The school encourages extra-curricular activities, including folk dancing, and term-end concerts are arranged. The school also participates in the District Sports Meets and Elocution Tests. According to the headmaster, the girls are keener in all activities than the boys. Tuition is free, but the children have to procure their own books. There is no school library.

On leaving school 90 per cent of the boys take to the hereditary occupation of paddy cultivation. Others take to tailoring, carpentry and small scale business in the neighbouring townships. One past student entered the Nittambuva Teacher's Training College. Two girls are teachers in neighbouring schools. Most of the boys leave school early as they dislike schooling, and loiter in the village until they are absorbed into the work of paddy cultivation. They probably dislike book learning as it has little relation to their agrarian economy and home environment. By " education " the villagers mean book learning and the acquiring of certificates which would enable them mainly to become teachers. The highest vocational ambition is teaching, and this profession is confined to only 5 per cent of the students from the village school.

Nobody seems to be able to conceive of education in the form of improved methods of agriculture, animal husbandry, and cottage industries, which are most likely to promote the economic and social progress of the village. The instruction offered in the schools today is of little practical value.

The villagers will benefit if more emphasis is laid on vocational education in the existing schools, or by opening vocational schools for instruction in industries which make use of the raw material of the cocoanut tree, weaving, basket-making, pottery, poultry and bee-keeping, But the initial response may be poor as shown by the failure of a doll-making centre established in the village. A weaving school has however been started by the joint efforts of the Village Committee and local societies. The school is adjacent to the community centre hall, and has 25 girls as pupils under one teacher. Students selected are paid seventy five cents per day. The products, chiefly towels and sheets, are sold to the Māvatagama hospital.

There is little variety in the leisure-time activities of the children who play in the fields and gardens as there is no public playground other than the one in the school. Only the boys and the little girls play, and marble playing is the common boy's game. Teenage girls do not play except at school, where it is compulsory. At home these girls have to perform their share of the domestic duties such as washing clothes, cooking, drawing water and so on. They say that they have hardly any time to do their homework and read the textbooks to which their reading is confined. The children do not possess any modern toys, except in the case of the few from well-to-do families. The cinema and radio have not yet penetrated the lives of these children. The only radios are one in the Community Centre and one in the house of the Village Committee Chairman. The only films that adults and children have seen are Health propaganda and commercial advertising films.

This account of education would be incomplete without a word on the education which the grey-haired men of the village have had in the past when there were no schools within a radius of ten miles. These men belonging mainly to the age-group between 60 and 70, were edueated in the Buddhist Temple, where they learnt to read and write Sinhalese from the priests. The curriculum was limited to Sinhalese verse and prose books with Buddhist themes. They were not taught history, geography, or mathematics, except whatever was incorporated in these books. But old folk-tales, ballads, *vannam* songs, incidents connected with the neighbouring villages, genealogies of people, and the history of the plantations in the area, are at their finger tips if one has the time to listen to them. Some of these men can recite very beautifully. According to them the modern school child carries a lot of books on which money has been spent, but lacks knowledge in proportion to their books ! Since education was imparted by the *bhikku* in the temple, the females did not benefit by the

ancient system, and the literacy of women over 50 is confined to what they learnt from older men in their families. The literate read religious books, especially the *jātaka* stories. The older people have never read fiction and they look askance at children who try to read books other than their school texts.

In this village there is one instance of the *antevasika* system of education that prevailed in ancient India and Ceylon, where the pupil is maintained and taught by the teacher, living in the latter's house in the position of a son. The only fee is the rendering of personal service in the teacher's house, garden and fields. This is the case of the village drummer who imparts his knowledge to his thirteen-year old pupil who lives in his house. The boy went to school up to Standard VII and on leaving school began to learn his traditional caste occupation. He learns by active participation, drumming, chanting, and dancing at ceremonies. The curriculum consists of beating the different kinds of drum such as *gäṭa bera*, *davul*, *tammäṭṭam*, according to the various rhythms and tunes. He memorises poems and ballads, and learns the dance-forms, clay-modelling and painting of statues of planetary gods for *bali* ceremonies, and decorative work with tender cocoanut leaves.

TABLE VII. OCCUPATIONAL DISTRIBUTION

Cultivators	53	Tailors	7	Drummer apprentice	1
Labourers (M)	38	Tailors' apprentices	2	Gram seller	1
Labourers (F)	6	Dhobies (M)	5	Lorry cleaner	1
Businessmen :		Dhobies (F)	1	Cloth weaver (F)	1
Studio owner	1	Policemen	3	Teachers (M)	1
Hotel owner	1	Army	2	Teachers (F)	1
Rice mill owner	1	Carpenters	2	Domestic servants :	
Tea Kiosk owners	2	Drivers	2	over 18 (M)	7
Boutique owners	6	Mason	1	under 14 (M)	2
Village headman	1	Blacksmith	1	under 14 (F)	2
Vel vidane	1	Drummer	1		

The majority are cultivators. Although not included among cultivators in Table VII, almost all the females, except the very old women over 75 years of age and infants, perform such tasks in paddy cultivation as weeding, transplanting, and collecting the reaped paddy. Both men and women of all classes consider agricultural tasks as highly respectable. After the morning's work, the villagers sit down in the field itself to a meal of rice and dry fish served on plantain leaves. During the periodical rest-breaks they take plain tea with jaggery.

Despite landlessness, every man is a cultivator, at least as an *andē* tenant According to information supplied by the villagers, 46 acres or 14½ *amunams* are under cultivation according to the *andē* system, while 96 acres

or 32 amunams are cultivated by owners. Fields which have been fragmented through inheritance have on occasion been bought by one of the co-owners or by a complete outsider. Some cultivate inherited land by turns, and may till the land only once in five or six years. This system of rotation is also applied to cocoanut trees, and is known as *taṭṭumāru*. I was told that large tracts of land encircling the village had once belonged to the villagers but had been bought by enterprising capitalists, sometimes for as little as fifty cents per acre, for the purpose of cocoanut plantations. Some villagers are compelled to serve as labourers in these estates.

TABLE VIII. LIVESTOCK

Buffaloes	*Bulls*	*Cows*	*Poultry*
57	24	13	23

Livestock resources are also shared according to the *andē* system, that is, the owner giving the cattle to be tended by those who do not possess any. The latter looking after the animals and employing them for purposes like paddy cultivation, and giving a share of the produce tc the owner. Poultry keeping is a hobby of teenage boys and one girl. Middlemen come to the houses to collect eggs.

TABLE IX. LAND OWNERSHIP PER FAMILY

Landless	*Less than one acre*	1-5 *acres*	6-10 *acres*	*over* 10 *acres*
29	33	26	6	9

Possession of land gives social importance in an agricultural community, and land disputes are frequent causes of village quarrels.

There are two crops of paddy for the year, the *yala* from April to September, and the *maha* from October to March. The small tank covered with lotus and other aquatic plants irrigates an extent of about twenty acres. The rest of the fields depend on rain and water channelled from little streams. The agricultural methods and implements are those used from time immemorial. The plough and mammoty are used to farrow the fields, the hoe for further levelling, and the sickle for reaping. A few people who can afford to, manure their fields. The threshing of the reaped paddy is done by buffaloes. In all these tasks the villagers co-operate with one another, and exchange their buffaloes. Children help in the fields after school hours.

The first meal prepared out of the new paddy is a ceremonial occasion for every family. No one forgets to set apart something for the *bhikkus*

of the local temple and for the Gods. Harvesting time and the period immediately following is the busiest and happiest part of the year for the villager.

TABLE X. EXTENTS OF CROPS IN ACRES

Paddy		*Coconut*	*Rubber*
Ande	*Owned*		
46	96	142	13

About 80 per cent of the villagers cultivate on a home garden scale, just sufficient for domestic consumption. There is hardly a house that has no jak tree, one or more cocoanut trees, and a grove of plantain trees. In ancestral properties in which each inheritor has built a house and settled with his family, the produce of jak and cocoanut trees is shared or taken in turns each year (called *karu andē* by the villagers). Muslim and Tamil middlemen visit the home gardens and buy whatever produce the village could spare at low rates. On occasion they buy the yield in advance, especially in the case of plantains.

TABLE XI. EARNERS

	Male	*Female*
Under 14	2	3
15—18	3	1
Over 18	143	8

Labour in the nearby estates, rice mills, and on the roads, and domestic service, forms the most widely adopted occupations, next to cultivation. Wage labour of this kind is distinguished from labour in the paddy fields and gives one a comparatively lower social and economic status. Most men of the lower castes whose caste occupations have gone into oblivion have taken to paid labour, but men of high caste also become wage labourers, and 31.2 per cent of the male earners are labourers, while females form 14.5 per cent of the total labour force. These female labourers are from the so called low castes, especially the *vahumpura* caste. Women of high caste consider it a disgrace to work for wages even if they are reduced to starvation.

The most a man could earn by labour is three rupees a day and a woman earns two rupees. One old widow who maintains her family by her earnings as a labourer said that when there is no work in the village, she goes to neighbouring villages in search of employment. As domestic servants are also full-time labourers they have been included in this category.

There are male servants in the houses of the two richest families in the village, but having servants is the exception rather than the rule.[2]

Business is almost negligible and the villagers do not have the capital or the initiative to launch into business. There is only one boutique for the whole village which stocks every requirement ranging from betel and arecanut to rice and curry stuffs, tinned foods and soaps, articles of clothing, patent and ayurvedic medicine. A Sunday fair is held in the neighbouring town Māvatagama, half a mile away, and all buying and selling can be done at the weekly fair. A handful of villagers have emigrated to places as distant as Vavūniya to open tea kiosks and boutiques, and they are all young men who received at least an elementary education at the local school.

Tailoring rates high as an occupation. If one is not a farmer it is considered respectable to be a tailor, though it is not a very lucrative occupation in the village itself. Nearly 10.5 per cent of male earners are tailors, but they work in shops at Māvatagama. Two 13-year old boys are apprentices. One young man owns and hires a motor car, and he is proud of the fact. There is only one blacksmith in the village and he seems to eke out a hand to mouth existence, and he does not want his son to follow the hereditary occupation of turning out ploughs, knives, sickles, etc., since they are available at the fair from traders. These craftsmen can continue their occupations only with the aid of supplementary earnings from paddy cultivation. Two youths have joined the army, and three are policemen.[3] The parents of the policemen are proud of their achievement of educating their sons for such a job. One man owns a photographic studio at Māvatagama, and his son develops the photos. One young man is a trainee at the vernacular training college. There is one S.S.C. qualified lady teacher, and one female weaving school teacher.

Although Table XI indicates that there are only a few earners in the sense of earning money, nobody in the village can afford to be idle. They work in their own fields, and home gardens and the women's leisure time occupations are mat, bag and cadjan weaving. Reed bags of all sizes are woven to store paddy, rice, curry stuffs, and other cereals.

2. In the house of a family temporarily settled in the village the writer found a girl under 7 years of age employed as a domestic servant.

3. One policeman is from a Roman Catholic family.

TABLE XII. LEVELS ON MONTHLY INCOME PER FAMILY

Income group	*No. of families*	*Income group*	*No. of families.*
Below Rs. 5	1	Rs. 51—55	9
Rs. 6—10	2	Rs. 56—60	19
Rs. 11—15	—	Rs. 61—65	7
Rs. 16—20	—	Rs. 66—70	2
Rs. 21—25	2	Rs. 71—75	5
Rs. 26—30	1	Rs. 76—80	1
Rs. 31—35	3	Rs. 81—85	2
Rs. 36—40	3	Rs. 86—90	3
Rs. 41—45	4	Rs. 91—95	3
Rs. 46—50	8		

Only 19.41 per cent of the village families have an income of over 100/- per month. Most people get into debt on occasions such as birth, illness, marriage and death. Two or three related families are the richest in the area ; their houses are bigger and better built with walls white-washed; roofs tiled, floors cemented, and better furnished than the others. These houses have plenty of garden space. As they were chiefs of the village anyone would work for them even as domestic servants. Their children are sent by car to school at Kurunāgala. Their diet and dress is superior to the rest of the village. The majority live in very small houses, consisting of one to three rooms, with roofs thatched with cadjan, walls and floor daubed with clay, and their furniture consists of one or two chairs, a small teapoy, and a large wooden box. A few pots and pans, mats and reed bags, and one or two sets of clothing comprise the belongings of the landless peasants and labourers, the only seat in their houses being a raised half-wall (*pila*) covered with a mat.

The compounds in front of the houses are well swept in a pattern, but there are heaps of refuse elsewhere in the gardens. There are wells in a proportion of about one to every four houses. Of these 6 are model wells constructed at central places by the local Rural Development Society and repaired by the Village Committee. The Central Government gives Rs. 30/- and a concrete squatting plate to anyone who desires to build a latrine. Nearly 12 per cent of the houses, including one with 14 occupants, did not have a separate latrine, and did not consider it an essential facility.

The men usually wear a sarong, leaving the upper part of the body bare. Women wear thick printed cottons, Kandyan saree style, with a jacket, but hardly any underwear. The older women do not wear jackets. Two women of lower caste wear cloth and jacket, but not in the same way as the others. Little girls of poor parents wear either a petticoat or a piece of cloth below the waist. Older girls wear a half-saree and jacket. The boys, even teenagers, wear a sarong tucked up at the knees, without a banian or

shirt. Boys of seven and eight continue to play about stark naked, quite insensitive to the presence of strangers. Everyone is of course better and cleaner clad when going out of the village.

The staple food of the village is rice. The curries of the average village do not go beyond a *mällun* of green leaves or jak and other vegetables, and some dry fish. These vegetables are grown at home or bought at the Sunday fair. In one household the day's lunch consisted of *kurakkan piṭṭu* and dry fish curry. Most of the babies are breast fed, and plain tea with sugar is also given. Milk is not drunk, cattle being used for work in the fields. When questioned, some people said that milk causes stomach disorders and has evil influences on pregnant women. Illness or death of children is attributed to planetary influences. Many superstitious beliefs influence children's diet.

TABLE XIII. VITAL STATISTICS, 1955

Births	*Deaths*	*Marriages*
12	4	10

There is a government hospital at Māvatagama in addition to a private (western) dispensary and two ayurvedic dispensaries. The sanitary inspector and midwife of Māvatagama make routine visits to the village. There are 3 cripples, 2 epileptics, 1 partially blind, and 1 person of stunted growth in the age-group 7—20. Most of the children seemed to be afflicted with rickets and were underdeveloped, and most of them had suffered from convulsions in infancy. 95 per cent of cases of infant mortality are attributed to convulsions. The physically disabled are a burden on their families, and have not been to school.

The basic social unit round which the individual's life is centred is the family. There are 103 families with an average of 5-6 persons in each. Seniority of age is respected. The people incline towards the political views of the heads of the village, such as the headman and his brother the Village Committee Chairman, who wield great authority. The rhythm of life is the same day after day. The villager rises with the sun and the men set out to the paddy fields or places of work. The women attend to the morning meal and the children start collecting cadjans to be soaked prior to weaving. The school going children leave early. After work the men gather at the only boutique or at the Community Centre and enjoy a cigar, beedi, or chew of betel, exchange local news, read newspapers, or listen in to the radio.

Women spend their spare time gossiping with one another on the doorsteps and compounds. Not more than 4 per cent of the female population can sew or darn, and this too is limited to the younger set attending school. There is free mixing of the sexes at work in the fields, the Sunday fair, temple, and school. Females are expected to be less forward, shy, and to speak softly, to be obedient to all elders, and modest in dress and movement. Girls are not sent to the boutique even in an emergency. There is no strict discipline for boys or men.

This is a monogamous society, but it is not usual to find some elasticity in the marriage tie, and conjugal fidelity is liable to waver. Married daughters return to their parents after a broken marriage. Generally both men and women marry young, most of the women in their teens, and men in their early twenties. There is evidence of the present generation postponing marriages. *Dīga* (virilocal) marriages are commoner than *binna* (uxorilocal).[4]

The husband being the breadwinner and protector of the family is given first place of authority in the household and it is the duty of the wife and children to respect and obey him. If the wife has brought a large dowry she assumes more authority. The women take their meals after husbands and children have eaten, and there is no custom of the family sitting together at meals. In fact few houses have a table for dining. Little thought is given to methodical child-rearing practices. Infants are breast-fed until they can take solid food, and then rice forms a part of the baby's diet. Elder siblings or the grandmother help keep an eye on the little ones.

The local Buddhist temple, the Koṭikāpola Vihāraya, is the oldest institution in the village and is the focal point of most of the unifying forces in the community. Whereas caste tends to disrupt, the temple draws all together. The chief incumbent is looked upon as the spiritual leader of the village. The temple itself is self-supporting, but the villagers consider it a privilege to offer alms to the priests. The *bhikku* attends at funerals and consoles the bereaved, invokes blessings on the sick and on pregnant women by chanting *pirit*, and delivers sermons on *pōya* days at the temple assembly hall. The temple library is a separate building and contains about 100 books including 25 palm-leaf books.

The temple assembly hall is used for all purposes of a congregatory nature. There is a Sunday School and about 100 children and teachers attend it. The chief *bhikku* holds a class for pupil teachers. He has also

4. There was one case of polygyny, a man having two wives under the same roof.

encouraged a children's society known as the Bosat Society, in which, besides imparting religious knowledge, traditional ballads and songs (*vannam*) are taught. On *pōya* and festival days (e.g. Vesak, Poson, Durutu, New Year) the villagers attend the temple clad in white, bearing incense and flowers, and after these offerings are made, touch the feet of their elders according to seniority. The elders in turn bless those that honour them. In the *perahäras* both males and females participate.

The Village Committee has opened a Community Centre Hall situated by the side of the village tank. The hall is provided with a radio and reading matter, including the Sinhalese daily newspapers. Volley ball is played by the men in the adjoining court. The women's society known as the Koṭikāpola Grāmasanvardana Kulangama Samitiya holds fortnightly meetings here. This society works in cooperation with the men's Punnysadhaka Samitiya. Both societies are due to the initiative of the chief *bhikku* and the Village Committee Chairman. The societies conduct paddy transplanting campaigns, run the Sunday School, and the local Savings Movement. Working together in specially organised groups for the common good is a new and democratic idea in the village.

Representative government, the development of means of communication, the opening of schools and the increase of literacy, provision of medical and sanitary facilities, rural development work, the newspaper and radio, have all wrought changes for the folk of Koṭikāpola, but these forces have not penetrated sufficiently to bring about a total transformation of social life. The tendency to imitate patterns of city life, especially the material aspect, is noticeable, but the village remains a homogeneous community centred around the age-old occupation of paddy cultivation either as a full time or supplementary occupation, the people conforming to caste and traditional ways of life.

According to the oldest inhabitants the village was accessible only by narrow footpaths ; it is now reached by a motorable road. Buses are available every hour to Kurunāgala and Kandy, and the villagers make an annual visit to Kandy to the Temple of the Tooth (*daladā māligāva*). Twenty years ago such journeys would have been undertaken on foot or by bullock cart. Cars are hired for emergencies such as illness, or for weddings. The presence of low country people and Indian Tamils has roused the villagers from their lethargy, and produced a spirit of competition which is conducive to their economic progress. They lament the fact that land which they once owned has been converted into plantations by low country people on whom they look with suspicion, considering them wiser and

more cunning than themselves. One owner of a tea kiosk told the writer that the low country man " comes in as a vagabond " and soon becomes a wealthy businessman or planter, and that he too opened a hotel to emulate them in money making.

The Sunday fair at Māvatagama is the centre of trade. Plantains, husked cocoanuts, and arecanuts are bought wholesale by merchants from Colombo, Kandy and Gampola, and transported by lorry. Items such as cabbage, beetroot, and carrots find their way to the villager's menu through these fairs. Ready-made clothing is available, as well as cheap imported ornaments. In regard to dress, there are innovations alongside the traditional forms. The men wear the Western coat over the cloth or sarong when they leave the village, but may or may not wear shoes. On ceremonial occasions, especially weddings, bridegrooms of the *goyigama* caste wear the traditional *tuppoṭṭi*, jacket and headdress, and the conventional shoes, all elaborately decorated with gold and silver thread. There are special dhobies to dress the groom for the occasion. The older men still wear their hair long while the younger males cut their hair short—a symbol of modernisation. There is hardly any change in women's dress or hair styles. Brides wear no veils which are associated with the Muslim purdah on the one hand, and the dress of Roman Catholic women when entering a Church, on the other. Instead the bride wears an ornamental headdress and several chains and bangles. The bridal clothes of both men and women could be hired. The use of amplifiers and cinema records has been adopted from the towns.

The western method of greeting with a handshake is unknown. One should clasp the palms together in the form of worship and say *ayubōvan*, may your life be long. Persons of lower caste when greeting one of higher caste bends slightly as a mark of respect whilst greeting in this fashion. Poor people of lower caste meeting a higher caste individual on the road, move on to a side of the road and bend slightly, and remove the shawl or large handkerchief that may be on their shoulders. This is a recognition of one's subordinate position and a mark of respect. People of lower caste are offered stools in the houses of people of higher caste, while the latter do not sit at all if they happen to visit the houses of the former. But wealth levels down these differences and can bring a person of low birth to the same social position of one of high caste. Not all people of high caste are happy about this change, which deprives them of privileges, or obliges them to share these privileges with others.

The newspaper is considered an infallible authority, and it is common for a villager to allude to the papers to confirm a statement. Most of the

gossip in the community centre relates to news in the dailies, while women's gossip is confined to local happenings. Gossip is an institution, partly informative and partly interpretative, and functions as a means of social control and a medium for the formation of public opinion.

The school is definitely the chief medium of social change and the infiltration of new ideas. People look up to the schoolmaster as an authority on everything they do not know and if, as in the case of the Headmaster of the Delgolle Government School, he has been in the school for a number of years, the villagers consult him on various matters. At the beginning and end of each school term the pupils fall on their knees and worship the teacher as a mark of respect. It is customary also to greet the teacher at the beginning of term or on admission to the school with a bundle of betel leaves (*bulat hurulla*). Pupils dare not retort or behave disrespectfully towards a teacher. These are relics of the teacher(*guru*)-pupil relationship of the past. At school children are instructed in the rudiments of health and the influence of this health education is seen in the cleanliness of houses in which there are girls attending school. The school has made children more self-confident and responsible.[5]

Few officials of state have visited the village. The public health inspector comes over on the rare occasions when an infectious disease is reported. The midwife is rarely summoned, as most of the expectant mothers go to Māvatagama hospital. The Agricultural Instructor and the Food Production Officer could render great service by introducing scientific methods of cultivation. The scorn with which paddy transplanting is viewed by the villagers may be attributed to lack of effective propaganda by the officials concerned.

There have been no grave crimes reported from this village in the past decade, and no cases even of minor offences or petty thefts in the past three years, although acute fragmentation of land is productive of disputes.

5. In fact the writer received a letter from one of the girls in the S.S.C form expressing her joy in the interest taken in the village, and volunteering to disclose any necessary information.

THE STATUE AT POTGUL-VEHERA, POLONNARUVA—CEYLON

SIRI GUNASINGHE

SINCE its discovery the so-called statue of Parākramabāhu the Great at Potgul-Vehera, Polonnaruva, (Fig. 1) has been the subject of a considerable amount of controversy from the point of view of indentification.[1] On the basis of its general appearance and its similarity to well known statues of Agastya found in Cambodia and South India many authorities tend to see in it a representation of this Indian sage. Popular tradition, however, takes it to be the portrait of the greatest ruler of Polonnaruva, Parākramabāhu I (1153—1186 A.D.), the latest authority to support this tradition on iconographical grounds being Dr. S. Paranavitana.[2]

It must be stated at the very outset that much of the misunderstanding is mainly due to the fact that the statue has been considered an unique piece of work iconographically, simply because no prototype has been found in India or elsewhere where Indian artistic traditions have prevailed. The smallest resemblance to a known type, however superficial it is, becomes very striking and students are led to establish an identity based on such similarities alone. This is obviously the case of those who recognize in this sagely figure a representation of Agastya whose cult has had, at no time, any adherents in Ceylon. Nor does this sage ever find any mention in any of the literary works of the Polonnaruva period or those of any other. Although this statue presents an appearance very similar to that of the images of Agastya the most significant iconographical symbols of this sage, *akṣamālā* and *kamaṇḍalu*, are very conspicuously absent from it. Any student of whatever school of religious art would agree that no cult image could ever exist without its iconographical symbolism, more so in the case of Indian religious art. No doubt the image bears the appearance of a sage. Part of the iconography undoubtedly is that usual in the images of Agastya ; for example the high conical head of tangled hair, long moustache drooping at the corners of the mouth, long beard, prominent belly, *upavīta* and over-all look of age and wisdom.[3] Nevertheless it certainly is not an image of Agastya if the *akṣamālā* and the

1. For a summary of the opinions expressed, see S. Paranavitana, " The Statue at the Potgul Vehera in Polonnaruva," *Ceylon Journal of Science* II/6, p. 229 f.
2. S. Paranavitana, " The Statue near Potgul Vehera at Polonnaruva, Ceylon," (*Artibus Asiae*, XV 1952. pp. 209 ff.
3. O. C. Gangoly (Editor, *Rupam*), "The Cult of Agastya: and the Origin of Indian Colonial Art" (*Rupam*, January 1926).

kamaṇḍalu are not present. The most that one could say in this respect therefore is, in the words of Bell, that it is the representation of " some elderly guru or religious teacher."[4]

As for the opinion that the statue is a portrait sculpture of King Parākramabāhu it must be said at the very outset that it is based on nothing more than a popular tradition and the unusual aspect presented by the statue in that it seems to lack all idealisation normal in the predominantly religious art of Ceylon, for which reason authorities have seen a portrait in it. Even if the statue in question were a piece of secular art, or to be precise, even if it were a portrait figure, we need not lay great emphasis on the so-called realism of it, since we know that much of the portrait sculpture of India and Ceylon is more often idealised than not. As for the popular tradition we are not in a position to demonstrate its authenticity. On the contrary it is not impossible to doubt the historicity of this tradition since we know for certainty that much of such popular tradition attaching to historical objects and sites in Ceylon has been proved to be groundless. We know that most of the ancient *vihāras* are attributed to either Devānampiyatissa or Vaṭṭagāmiṇi Abhaya when archaeologically such attribution is found to be untenable. There is the well known case of a Bodhisatva statue popularly called that of Kuṣṭarāja. The Dakkhiṇa-thūpa in Anurādhapura was, until recently, called the tomb of Elāra. The Tivaṅka Pilimagē at Polonnaruva has been popularly regarded as Demalamahasāya. Even the term Potgul-Vehera has been called in question by Bell. We should therefore be very cautious in accepting a too popular identification if no archaeological or historical evidence comes forth in support of it. As for the popular identification of the statue in question we have neither historical nor archaeological support. So far as it is known, kings have never been shown without their crowns and ornaments and other paraphernalia symbolic of kingship. It is not necessary to depend on popular but doubtful identifications as in the case of the statues of Duṭugämuṇu at Ruvanvälisāya and, Nissaṅkamalla and Valagambāhu at Dambulla. We have at least one representation of a king, closer in time to our statue : the outline drawing representing Nissaṅkamalla in the act of worshipping, (Fig. 2) carved besides his inscription at Sirīpāda (Adam's Peak) in which it is stated that it is the manner in which King Nissaṅkamalla stood worshipping the foot-print. In all these instances the king is shown with crown and ornaments, etc. We do not see why an exception should have been made in the case of Parākramabāhu the Great. According to the *Cūlavaṁsa* he is the one king who took immense pride in his warlike nature, and revelled in the fact that he brought all Ceylon under his domi-

4. *Archaeological Survey of Ceylon*, Annual Report (*ASCAR*), 1906, p. 11.

nation. If he (or a successor of his) ever caused his statue to be made, it would undoubtedly have been invested with all his royal majesty.

It has been argued that the most important iconographical motif is the object held in the hands.[5] We must observe that while this is very largely true the other peculiarities are as significant in any identification of the statue, in that they help us to remove the Potgul-Vehera colossus from its austere isolation and place it besides many other similar figures to be met with in the mural paintings of the same period. The affinity between these painted figures and the Potgul-Vehera statue is so marked that one is surprised to find them so consistently ignored by every one attempting to identify the latter. We refer in particular to a large number of figures bearing a striking similarity to the Potgul-Vehera colossus in the Tivaṅka Pilimage at Polonnaruva belonging undoubtedly to the same period as the Potgul-Vehera figure.[6] There have been discovered some remains of mural paintings at the rock-cut shrine of the Gal-Vihāra,[7] also the work of Parākramabāhu the Great, where again we come across the upper portions of three figures which closely resemble our statue. Among the paintings that were discovered in the relic chamber of the Mahiyaṅgana Stūpa and dated in the 12th century, was found a fragment of a painting where we see two figures very similar in appearance to the painted figures at the Gal-Vihāra, standing on either side of the Buddha. That the similarity of these figures to one another from the point of view of iconography cannot be over-emphasised will be clear from the accompanying illustrations (see Figs. 3, 4, 5). All these figures represent persons more or less of the same sagely appearance and age as is portrayed in the Potgul-Vehera statue. While some figures, from the Tivaṅka Pilimage, are shown bald, others are pictured with *jaṭa-makuṭas* very much in the line of our statue. As far as one could see the only point of dissimilarity between our statue and the painted figures is this baldness of a few examples from Tivaṅka Pilimage. For the rest all these figures belong together : they all wear the drooping moustache, long beard, pendant ear-lobes, half-closed eyes, *upavīta*, sumptuous and protuberant belly and *dhoti*-like cloth supported at the waist by a belt with its peculiar central knot tied in an elaborate bow. These are also the main characteristics of the Potgul figure with the exceptions, however, of the objects held in the hands, whenever they do so. The Potgul-Vehera statue is therefore neither unique nor fortuitous. On the contrary it is one example of a type of human figure

5. S. Paranavitana, *op. cit.*
6. *ASCAR*, 1909, Appendix C. For line drawings, see *ibid.*, Plate A. B. C. D. E. F. H. (The Tivaṅka Pilimage is called ' Demalamaha Seya ' in this account).
7. *ASCAR*, 1907, Appendix C.

that had been in vogue during the Polonnaruva period, and what is significant is that this type of figure has a definite iconography which has escaped the students of this statue. What iconographical type does this statue belong to ? The answer is very clear and is to be found in any Indian text of iconography when it is said that the *jatā-makuṭa*, long, pointed beard, and *upavīta* are the main features of *ṛṣis*.[8] These conditions are very well satisfied by the images of *ṛṣis* that we know from India and elsewhere, and they bear a close resemblance to our statue.[9] That the *ṛṣi*-type had already been introduced at Polonnaruva is evident from the two sculptured figures from Siva Devale No. I.[10] This neglected group (see Figs. 6 and 7) undoubtedly represent a *ṛṣi* (Siva Mahāyogi ?) and an attendant. One cannot fail to observe the close iconographical affinity of these two figures to the Potgul statue.

We must admit that although the *jaṭā*, beard and *upavīta* are mentioned specifically in connection with the images of *ṛṣis* they could very well be used in the representation of ordinary ascetics as well, as it has been the case already at Bharhut and Sanchi for example.[11] The difference between an ascetic and a *ṛṣi* (sometimes both types are called *muni* without any distinction) is only the degree of spiritual attainment which cannot be shown in the physical appearance alone : thus the mahāyogi Śiva referred to above.

As for the figures at the Tivaṅka shrine there is no doubt that those shown with the *jaṭā-makuṭa* depict ascetics that we come across in the *Jātaka* stories illustrated there. There is for instance the Vessantara *Jātaka* where we see a figure as described above and identified as Jūjaka by Bell.[12] Bell's identification, however, is open to doubt since the *jātaka* description of Jūjaka tallies more with that of an old, decrepit and not very handsome Brahamin than with that of a serene and venerable ascetic : there is no difficulty in recognising in our painting a person of the latter type who should be taken as Vessantara himself in his grotto. We have another figure of similar appearance representing the Bodhisatva as the ascetic in the Asaṅka *jātaka*. In these two instances therefore we need entertain no doubt whatever that we have to do with ascetics : their distinguishing mark the *jaṭā-makuṭa* being present. But some of the other figures at this shrine, though identical in the other respects, are shown without the *jaṭā-makuṭa* and we have to take them, correctly we are sure, as lay

8. Gopinatha Rao, *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. II, pt. ii, p. 567.
9. O. C. Gangoly, *op. cit.*
10. *ASCAR*, 1906.
11. Marshall and Foucher, *Monuments of Sanchi*, Vol. 2, pl. XXVII, 29.
12. *ASCAR*, 1909, Appendix C.

characters from the *jātakas*, Brahamins and otherwise. As regards the identification of the figures from the Galvihāra shrine and the relic chamber of Mahiyangana *dāgāba* we are compelled to be reserved since all that we have to deal with is no more than a few small fragments of paintings. The figures from the Galvihāra are certainly not those of ascetics as we do not find the *jaṭā-makuṭa*. They are shown bald and bare headed like the lay figures of the Tivaṅka image-house mentioned above and Bell has therefore taken these old men " shown almost side face, with pinched features, drooping moustache, and scanty beard now white from age " simply as devotees.[13] We are, however, of the opinion that these figures represent not just devotees but devotees from the *brahma*-world : these figures are placed on a plane higher than that of the figures of the gods (or Bodhisatvayo according to Bell)[14] and this position is quite in agreement with that given the *brahmas* in their relation to the *devas* in Buddhist mythology. The characters standing on either side of the Buddha in the fragment of a painting from the Mahiyaṅgana *dāgāba* referred to above are also to be identified as two *brahmas*. We cannot be sure of the scene depicted, but the *bo*-tree behind the Buddha seems to point to the Enlightenment as suggested by Dr. Paranavitana.[15] It is for this reasen that we feel tempted tc identify the two figures as those of *brahmas*. The study cf these paintings results, in our opinion, in the observation that during the period generally called that of Polonnaruva this particular type of figure had been in popular use in the representation of *brahmas*, *ṛṣis* or ascetics and elderly laymen and that each of these classes of beings had a distinguishing mark : *brahmas* with (Mahiyangana) or without (Gal-vihāra) the *kirīṭa* (head dress) were distinguished by the white umbrella, fly-whisk, or lotus carried in the hands ; laymen, mostly bare-headed, were marked by the absence of any particular object in the hands ; and the *ṛṣis* or ascetics alone wore the *jaṭā makuṭa*. We must admit however that except in the case of the *ṛṣis* we have no support for our thesis from the texts of iconography. But this should not deter us from our conclusion above, since Indian texts have not been much concerned with the iconography of Buddhist deities (*brahma* in Buddhist mythology and art is quite different from the four-faced Hindu Brahma) or that of ordinary laymen. From this analysis one may conclude that the Potgul-Vehera statue, from the iconographical point of view, is more that of a *ṛṣi* or an ascetic than that of a *brahma* or an ordinary layman.

Now the other distinct feature of this statue is the object held in the hands. Judging by its superficial appearance it was generally taken to be

13. *ASCAR*, 1907, Appendix C.
14. *ibid.*
15. *ASCAR*, 1951, p. G18.

Fig. 1 *The Statue at Potgul Vehera, Polonnaruva.* (*Courtesy, Department of Archaeology, Ceylon.*)

Fig. 2 King Nissankamalla worshipping the foot-print of the Buddha, Srīpāda.. (I am indebted to Mr. D. T. Devendra for the photograph from which the line-drawing was made.)

Fig. 3 Brahma (?), from Galvihāra, Polonnaruva.

Fig. 4 *Vessantara (?) reading a palm-leaf manuscript, Tvaṅka Pilimage, Polonnaruva (line drawing made from a photograph supplied by the Dept. of Archaeology.)*

Fig. 5 A Brahma (?), Mahiyangana Relic Chamber (Line drawing from a photograph. History Seminar, University of Ceylon.)

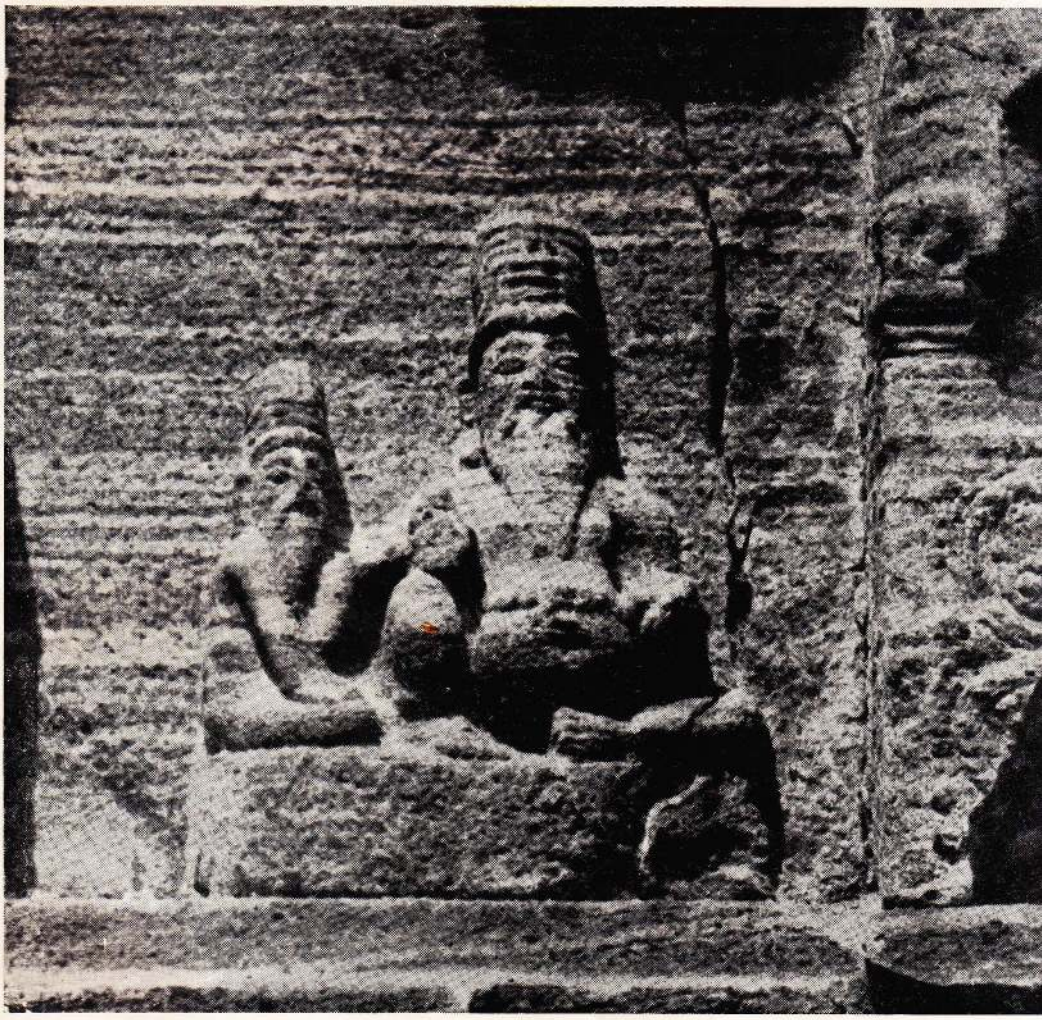

Fig. 6 Sage with attendant, Siva Devale I, Polonnaruva (Courtesy, Dept. of Archaeology, Ceylon).

a palm-leaf manuscript. But a very lengthy study of the symbolism of this object has been made by Dr. Paranavitana—in fact the only study of this aspect of the statue—in which he concludes that it is not a palm-leaf manuscript but an artistic representation of a yoke symbolising " a king's responsibility." Dr. Paranavitana's opinion that it is not a palm-leaf book is based on the observation that it has no " wooden boards which serve as covers " while the books in the hands of Indian images have such covers ; that it is " one solid block, with no indication of leaves, nor of holes for the string which holds the leaves together ; " and that " towards the two ends, on the upper side of the object are two projections of which the one on the right side is of indefinite shape." His conclusion that it represents a yoke is based on the fact that " the yoke of a single-bullock cart in Ceylon today " would look very similar if " held upside down " and that the word *dhura* meaning yoke " has been often used figuratively to mean burden " in Sanskrit and Pali.[16]

It must be admitted at the very outset that Dr. Paranavitana leans too heavily on a literary image in working out this symbolism and one must state that literature could be a shaky basis for the interpretation of a pictorial symbolism if taken too far. This is not to say that no pictorial symbolism has been developed out of literary imagery. *Dharmacakra*, as Dr. Paranavitana says, is one such. Many more may be cited. What we mean is that where there is no other evidence from the other arts or from generally accepted convention to support the interpretation, such interpretation could easily degenerate into obscurantism. This is easiest when it concerns an isolated symbol not recognised by any iconographical tradition. We do not deny the possibility that an ingenious artist could create a new symbolism. But it seldom happens in a tradition-bound discipline and, when it does happen, the symbolism does not reach its perfection in one specimen to die with this specimen. The object in the hands of the Potgul statue, if taken as a yoke, is not to be seen in the same role anywhere else before or after. Granted however that all this is possible, if at least for once, we would still be at a loss to understand the mentality of an artist who would select a symbolism which would remain for ever obscure.* It will be accepted by anybody that an obscure symbolism is no symbolism. In fact the greatest advantage to art of a symbol is that it is clearer and more concrete a statement than any other. It has always been the general practice in all schools of art to represent a king as a conquerer or a ruler and not as one suffering under the burden of responsibility, and kings have been represented in art as *cakravartis* and not as burden bearers. That

16. See note 2.

*The same goes for the symbolism of the thread for *rājyatantra* suggested by Dr. Paranavitana, *op. cit.*

Parākramabāhu was no exception to this rule can easily be seen from the *Cūlavaṁsa* and other works where he has been described in the most glowing terms. And it is unimaginable that a powerful ruler like Parākramabāhu the Great would choose the yoke of a bullock-cart (not a regal concept) as his symbol.

Granted, however, that Parākramabāhu the Great for some obscure reason decided to have his portrait done in the fashion of a burden-bearer we are still faced with the question as to whether the object held in the hands is a yoke or not. Dr. Paranavitana's conclusion that the object is not a book is based mainly on the consideration that it is not a realistic representation. To say that it cannot be a book because the covering boards are not shown, nor the holes for the strings, goes counter to all criteria of interpretation of art. Moreover we know that, even today, there are palm-leaf books without the wooden coverings. We do not know for certain that wooden covers were in general use during the Polonnaruva period : the earliest reference to the use of wooden covers for palm-leaf books is to be seen in the *Mahāvaṁsa tīkā*. Whether such boards were in use during the Polonnaruva period is of no particular significance for us since we know that *ōla* books are often used without these covers. We also read in the *Cūlavaṁsa*[17] that Māgha destroyed the books and scattered the leaves removing them from the strings. Here the chronicle makes no mention of the wooden coverings. This may not be proof either of the presence or otherwise of such coverings. It shows however that palm-leaf books could be spoken of without reference to covers. They could therefore be shown so in art as well. As for the two instances referred to by Dr. Paranavitana (Fig. 9 of Plate IV in Gopinatha Rao's *Elements of Hindu Iconography*, Vol. I, part I and Fig. 18 of Aravamuthan's *Portrait Sculpture in South India*) where he could discern palm-leaf books with their coverings we must admit that such coverings are not so clearly shown after all. Gopinath Rao's illustration is only a rough drawing which gives no idea as to how the book is held in the hands ; nor does it show clearly enough the boards. The example from Aravamuthan's work does not help us either. The book placed in the hands of this statue is not the long *ōla* book typical of Ceylon, but the short, fat type often found in South India. Besides it is held in the middle giving it no chance to sag and the person is not shown as if he is reading it but as if he is making an offering of it like a handful of flowers. The wooden boards are not shown clearly either, if they are there at all. It will thus be seen that it is not justifiable to compare these South Indian examples of *ōla* manuscripts with the object in the hands of the Potgul-Vehera statue,

17. *Cūlavaṁsa*, 80 : 67.

so as to deny that this object is a book. That the separate leaves are not shown is of no significance since realism is not an important consideration. If it were, then we would expect to see each separate hair in the moustache, (for example). Dr. Paranavitana's contention that this is not a book because the holes for the strings are not shown, springs from the same need for realism. Or, if realism becomes the basis of the argument then this object cannot be taken as a yoke either, since even a yoke must have such holes for the rope to pass through. It is also obvious that there is no reason why the yoke should be shown upside down, although the natural tendency would be for the yoke to turn upside down when held lightly at the two ends, as the object is held in our statue. It would have looked more like a yoke if it were held upside up. The question also arises as to whether the type of yoke that is commonly used today was ever used during the Polonnaruva period. We note that Dr. Paranavitana himself has had to entertain this doubt as could be seen from the following statement of his: "It is, I think, safe to assume that the shape of the yoke of a cart in the twelfth century, ... did not differ from what it is at present in Ceylon." This is no more than an assumption as he admits. But we do not see any grounds for such an assumption. No one could however explain why a yoke should be depicted as a rectangular block of wood with sharp cutting edges when the stone could have been very easily rounded off and given a closer resemblance to a yoke : the illustration of a modern yoke as given by Dr. Paranavitana is far from what it looks like even to a superficial observer. It thus becomes clear that none of the arguments adduced by Dr. Paranavitana to prove that the object held in the hands of the Potgul-Vehera statue is a yoke will stand examination. And just as it is very difficult to see in this object a yoke, it is very easy to see in it the representation of a palm-leaf book. The graceful curve which has been the main theme of Dr. Paranavitana's argument is in our opinion very natural for a palm-leaf book without the covers and held at both ends. To show that this object placed in the hands of the Potgul-Vehera statue is only a palm-leaf book, as has been generally accepted, we need not resort to any theorizing. All that we need is to refer the reader to a hitherto neglected painting from the Tivaṅka shrine depicting an ascetic holding a similar object in his hands exactly in the same fashion as in our statue (see Figs. 2 and 6). We have already referred to this painting as a representation of the Vessantara *jātaka* and the person we are concerned with here, as we have shown above, is Vessantara. In this picture we see Vessantara the ascetic, seated in his grotto in all seclusion holding an object very similar to the one placed in the hands of our statue. Here we have no doubt that whatever the object is, it is not a yoke ; it is meaningless for an ascetic to be gazing at a yoke. We must say that Bell was perfectly correct when he said that the person, (mistaken as Jūjaka by him), is reading, although

we are not very certain what he is reading (it is the Vedas according to Bell). Whatever it is that he is reading it is certainly a book that he has in his hands, and it sags in the middle. There is no reason to believe that the same type of representation will be used in one case to depict a yoke and in another to depict a book in two works of art created within a very short period of time. And perhaps it is the same master-craftsman that directed both these creations if they are not the work of the same artist. The similarity between the Potgul statue and this figure, except for the posture however, is so obvious, that one is surprised it has escaped the attention of those who attempted to identify the statue. That both representations depict the same type of person, and the object held in the hands is, in each case, a book, there can be no doubt.

From this examination of the paintings of the Polonnaruva period we can safely arrive at two significant conclusions : (*a*) that the Potgul-Vihāra statue is only one example of a type of human form commonly used during the Polonnaruva period to depict sagely personages or ascetics ; (*b*) that the object in the hands is a book.

It is natural now to raise the question as to who this sagely person reading a book could be. It might be argued that it is Parākramabāhu the Great himself appearing as a pious and learned layman, almost a sage. But we have no justification whatsoever for such an assumption. The *Cūlavaṁsa* which considers Parākramabāhu as its greatest hero speaks of him more as a conqueror than as a pious sage. Even his benefactions to Buddhism are given less prominence than are his battles. And it is most surprising that the chronicle would remain silent if Parākramabāhu resorted to such a singular *tour de force* as to have his effigy made in the garb of a sage.

We believe that some information for the identification of this statue could be brought to light if the character and purpose of the site with which it is associated could be established. According to Dr. Paranavitana the place marks the cremation grounds of Parākramabāhu the Great. The discovery of a *stūpa* containing the ashes of a cremation could lead to only one conclusion : that at the particular spot a body had been cremated and a memorial stūpa erected over the ashes. To go beyond this and identify the person cremated with certainty we should have more evidence. The only evidence available at this spot, so far, is limited to a few remains of buildings and our statue itself. It must be stated that very little excavation has been done at this site and no attempt whatever has been made to define the nature of the establishment. In our opinion there are two establishments at this site and not just one, and the term Potgul-Vehera, if correct,

(it has been already stated that Potgul-Vehera is a misnomer[18]) applies only to the circular building, further south from our statue, along with the other buildings connected with it whose remains are to be seen lying close to the circular building itself. The statue in our opinion is quite independent of this establishment. We are led to this conclusion because the Potgul-Vehera had been laid out independently as a self-contained unit separated from the surrounding area by a moat and a wall as it has been usual in the case of monastic establishments. Besides, with its main entrance to the east, the Potgul-Vehera seems to turn away from the statue. If the two were in any way connected we should expect them to face each other rather than have the statue face the blind northern wall of the *vihāra*, especially because the north-south orientation of buildings is not uncommon in Polonnaruva. Although at present the ground between the statue and the *vihāra* is devoid of any buildings giving the impression that the statue is having its gaze directly fixed on the *vihāra*, the remains indicate a different story. We are compelled therefore to observe that the statue is independent of the Potgul-Vehera. A very significant piece of evidence for such a conclusion is that the Potgul-Vehera is a Buddhist establishment as is seen from the general lay-out and the four stūpas at the four corners, while the statue is, without any doubt, a non-Buddhist item.

Independent as it is the statue is not to be taken as an isolated object. Although no student of the archaeology of Polonnaruva has taken any serious notice of the remains lying behind in the vicinity of this statue we suggest that these remains speak of some institution with which the statue must be directly connected. This institution cannot be Buddhist since there are no remains of the usual Buddhist variety in its precincts. It is neither a purely Hindu establishment for if it were so we should expect a Śaiva or Vaiṣṇava statue instead of the present one, in the absence of a temple belonging to one or the other of these two faiths. We prefer to take this institution therefore not as a place of Buddhist or Hindu worship, but as a place of an entirely different character. *Cūlavaṁsa* bears ample testimony to the fact that both Buddhist and Brahmanic learning was very widely pursued during the Polonnaruva period. A very important feature of the learning of this period is the heavy emphasis laid on Sanskrit which included perhaps not only the study of the *Vedas* and the connected subjects but also other forms of secular learning. Brahmanic ritual, according to the chronicle, occupied a very prominent place in the lay life at least of the court. Rites such as the *homa* sacrifice were practised.[19] The *upanayana* ceremony was performed for Parākramabāhu himself.[20] We

18. *ASCAR*, 1906, p. 15-16.
19. *Cūlavaṁsa*, 62 : 33 44.
20. *ibid.*, 64 : 13.

are told of many scholars who came from Cola etc.[21] and also of family priests and other Brahmins versed in the *Vedas* and *Vedāṅgas*.[22] It could be safely stated that while Buddhism maintained its spiritual (so to say) import during this period, the purely lay life and lay learning were dominated by Brahmanic ritual and the study of Sanskrit. There is no doubt that royal patronage was readily accorded to this new learning and that institutions devoted to this kind of learning were established under such patronage.

On the evidence of the *Cūlavaṁsa*, one could state that Parākramabāhu I, while being the patron of the Buddhist church, was also the author of buildings intended purely for Brahmanic ritual. The chronicle mentions a *Hemamandira* and a *Dhāraṇīghara* built by him for the Brahmins to perform their ceremonial ritual.[23] According to the epigraphical records of Nissaṅkamalla one may observe that there was a very large congregation of Brahmin priests and scholars in Polonnaruva and in its neighbourhood, for whose benefit this King built many alms-houses.[24] We are, however, not able to identify any of the institutions mentioned in the *Cūlavaṁsa* or in the inscriptions in the present state of our knowledge of the archaeology and the topography of Polonnaruva. Nor can we be too sure that any one of these institutions was adorned with a statue.

There is nevertheless the remarkable statement in the *Cūlavaṁsa* that Parākramabāhu had a *giñjakāvasatha** built for a sage named Kapila (*Kapilesissa*),[25] which is very significant because it is the only reference, in this part of the chronicle, to any Brahmanic sage, who merited this honour. (The term *isi*, there need not be any doubt, refers to a Hindu or a Brahmin sage and not to a Buddhist Arahat or monk). *Kapilesi* of the chronicle could mean not only the sage Kapila, but his image as well. We would therefore suggest that Parākramabāhu had a *giñjakāvasatha* built for the image of Sage Kapila, which consequently is the only non-

21. *ibid.*, 60 : 19.
22. *ibid.*, 64 : 16.
23. *ibid.*, 73 : 71ff.
24. *Epigraphia Zeylanica* II, pp. 171, 284.

*In some manuscripts (one in the University of Ceylon library) we have *gijjhakāvasatha*, which has been translated as "eagle shaped dwelling." The term *giñjakāvasatha* has been translated as "house of bricks." We would rather take it to mean a building used for a specific purpose. It could mean an assembly hall, for example. (See Malalasekera : *Dictionary of Pali Proper Names*).

We would like to make a distinction between what the *Cūlavaṁsa* calls the Kapilavihāra and what it calls the *Giñjakāvasatha* built for Sage Kapila. According to the text Kapilavihāra is a Buddhist institution. The *giñjakāvasatha*—although it may have been in the precincts (*tahim*) of the *vihara*—need not be the same as *vihāra*. Kapila-vihāra itself may have derived its name from the *giñjakavasatha* of Kapila. (Our attention was drawn to the Kapilavihāra being Buddhist by Dr. Paranavitana).

25. *Cūlavaṁsa*, 78 : 92 ff.

Buddhist image referred to in the *Cūlavaṃsa*. It is therefore very tempting to identify our statue with that of the sage Kapila of the *Cūlavaṃsa*—as was done by Bell ; but we are compelled to await precise archaeological evidence. On the basis of the present analysis all we can say is that the Potgul colossus is the representation of a sage (*ṛṣi*) other than Agastya and not that of King Parākramabāhu the Great.

THE STRUCTURE OF A SINHALESE RITUAL

GANANATH OBEYESEKERE

THIS essay will attempt to interpret an important aspect of traditional Sinhalese social structure in functional terms, i.e. the mode of analysis employed by social anthropologists, particularly the British anthropologists.[1] The main focus will be on the form of ritual grouping known as *uḍupila* and *yaṭipila* which was a feature of Sinhalese social organisation in almost every part of the Island at one time. However it has now lost its importance as a feature of social organisation. This is particularly true of the low country, where the traditional culture has undergone considerable change.

In the low country it is only in the very south, in Akuressa and its environs, that the division of society into *uḍupila* and *yaṭipila* is of any significance. The evidence of informants however, suggested to me that in other parts of the low country this ritual division of society was common at one time. The analysis of *uḍupila* and *yaṭipila* presented here will be mainly applicable to the low country which constitutes a broad cultural area. It may, however, be true of other culture areas too. In the low country, the *uḍupila* and *yaṭipila* division appeared in conjunction with the annual harvesting ceremony known as the *gam-maḍuva* or Village Hall, whereas in other cultural areas this is not the case. However the following analysis may with some modification be applied even in the areas where the *gam-maḍuva* is not performed.

Society in the low country is divided into *uḍupila* and *yaṭipila* only during the performance of two rituals known as the *ankeliya*, Horn Game, and *polkeliya*, Coconut Game. These two rituals are a part of the annual harvest ceremony to the gods after the Maha season. About thirty five rituals are performed during the *gam-maḍuva* and it may take anything between twenty four hours to seven days to perform all or most of these rituals.

It will not be possible here to give even the briefest description of these rituals. Suffice it to say, that they are designed to banish sickness and

1. Other types of analysis of the same institution is possible, e.g. a symbolic analysis. The terms *uḍupila* and *yaṭipila* suggest a sexual symbolism, *uḍupila* being Prince Palanga's side and *yaṭipila* his wife Pattini's side. An old informant in Matale once told me, "The Prince is a male and he must be on top (*uḍa*)."

bring prosperity and blessings on the village. The gods appeased during the ritual are Skanda, Saman, Vishnu, Devol, Vibishana, Vāhala and minor village deities. The chief goddess worshipped in the *gam-maḍuva* however is Pattini. It is under her suzerainty that the Hall is performed. The priest who officiates at these ceremonies is the *kapurāla* He is assisted by other Kapurālas, dancers, drummers and washermen. In some of the rituals—*marā ippaddima, salamba santiya*—the *kapurāla* impersonates the goddess and blesses the worshippers with the sacred anklets, the main symbol in these rituals.

In most of the rituals performed in the *gam-maḍuva* the villagers are strictly worshippers. They stay outside the arena and receive the beneficence of the deities, through the mediation of the *kapurāla.* There are some rituals however in which the villagers directly participate. These are the *ankeliya* and *polkeliya* rituals. These rituals are performed daily for two or three weeks before the night when the other rituals of the Hall are performed.

It is for these rituals that the villagers are divided into the two ritual groups—*uḍupila* and *yaṭipila.* These groups cut across caste and kin lines so that members of the same caste or kin group may belong to opposite ritual groups. Membership in these groups is hereditary. Sometimes a single village may be divided into the ritual groups. If a *gam-maḍuva* has been traditionally performed by the joint effort of several villages, then each village may belong to one or other of the two ritual groups. This is the case in Maliduva and its neighbouring villages in the Akuressa area.

Ankeliya (Horn Game).

The main actors in the *ankeliya* and *polkeliya* are the *vattādi* (attendants, organisers, helpers) recruited evenly from both ritual groups. The *vattādis* have to procure well tested horns and ropes, supervise the setting of the stage for the ritual, hook the horns, etc.

They have to observe many more interdictions and purificatory rites than the ordinary villager. The number of *vattādis* on either side depends entirely on the scale of the ceremony. The " horns " chosen for the ritual are either long, hooked pieces of hardwood, or the lower part of the antler and brow tine of the Sambar deer. The " horns " are tightly upholstered with leather ropes to give them strength and endurance.

A huge tree (*angaha* or horn tree) serves as a post for the *uḍupila.* Opposite this a few yards away is the *yaṭipila* post (*hena kanda* or ' lightning

trunk'), a coconut palm trunk about ten feet high with its broad base facing up, and its narrow end neatly fitted like a socket into a groove dug at the bottom of a small pit.

The hooking of the horns is a complicated process which shall not be described here. The *uḍupila* horn is tied to the *angaha* or *uḍupila* post. The *yaṭipila* horn is hooked to the *uḍupila* one, and the long end tied to the *yaṭipila* post. A rope, about twenty-five feet long, is tied to the *yaṭipila* post. The villagers belonging to both ritual groups hold this rope, and heave it with all their might. The *vattādis* on both sides exhort them with ritual cries of exultation "*hoiyā* ! *hoiyā* !" It may take from a minute to a couple of hours before one of the horns snap. The horn which is unbroken is the victor. The chief *vattādi* on the victorious side carries the triumphant horn covered in white cloth on his head, his followers shouting their jubilance and exultation. He circumambulates the arena three times, the winning team following him. Then he places the victorious horn on an altar before a *bō* tree and invokes the gods to bring blessings on the village. After this the victorious side comes back into the arena, shouting, mocking, and abusing the defeated side. The cries of joy, and obscene shouts and swearing go on for many hours.

Polkeliya (Coconut Game).

Unlike the *ankeliya* where any villager (generally male) can participate in the ritual, in the *polkeliya* only a few representatives of each group actively participate. The rest of them surround the arena and encourage their respective teams. Paul Wirz has a good summary of this ritual.

> The whole crowd presses around the Kapua waiting attentively until he has finished the *mantra*. He hands the two coconuts to two men, one *yaṭipila* and one *uḍupila* for them to begin the game. First all those present are sprinkled with a little yellow root water, particularly the players who are standing next to him. They then go to opposite ends of the field, the *yaṭipila* to the north, the *uḍupila* to the south....
>
> Two drummers announce the beginning of the game. The coconuts are once more counted by a referee and each one is carefully examined. Now the game proper is begun. There are only four or five players on either side, but they are men who have the necessary experience. Seizing the nut with both hands, the first throws it with all his strength towards his partner who has to stop the blow with a nut held out in front of him. To do this he grasps the nut with both hands so that the germ holes point forward to meet the blow. Particular care has to be taken that the fingers are kept drawn back as far as possible, otherwise the fingers would be broken when the two nuts hit each other ; nevertheless, injuries occur rather often. If the blow is checked, almost always one of the two nuts, and sometimes both of them, flies to pieces, but he whose nut has remained intact has the right to fling one back. Any nut which shows the slightest crack must be withdrawn. Of course, they always try to hide any such small crack and it is therefore a common occurrence that one party decries the other's cheating. The result is that they finally come to fighting. For this reason a number of umpires is always present who have to see that fair play is observed. During the whole time two drums are beaten and much noise is made..... The game continues until all the nuts of one party have gone to pieces ; then, the remaining nuts of the other party are divided and the play is carried on again..... the party whose nut is the last is the victor[2].

2. Wirz. (1954), 170—171.

Generally seven or fourteen sessions of the *polkeli* are held either before or after the main ceremony of the Hall, or both. Each evening after the game both parties go in procession through the village, the broken coconuts carried in white bundles, drums beating, flag and banners waving, all shouting, " *Hoiyā* ! The god bless us. *Hoiya* ! " The oil from the broken coconuts is extracted and used for lighting, cooking, etc., during the Hall.

Deiyanne Dane (Almsgiving of the Gods)

The final ritual in the agenda of the Hall is the communal feast. The meal is cooked from the food contributed by the villagers for the Hall. The food is stored in the hut known as the *gabaḍāgē* and cooked in a special kitchen (*multänge*) by the *vattādi*. No outsiders are permitted to enter the *multänge*. Greatest care is taken by the *vattādi* to avoid *kili*, or pollution.

After the meals are cooked, the large pot of rice is consecrated by the *Kapurāla* and dedicated to the gods. The people of the village assemble outside the Hall. The chief *Kapurāla* or an important villager recites the Buddhist prayers of the Five Precepts (*pansil*) which the villagers repeat. This done, the *vattādi* serve all the villagers assembled rice and curries on banana leaves. All worshippers eat together irrespective of caste affiliation.

In the following analysis we will not consider the content[3] of the rituals at all. We will only deal with the structure of the ceremony, the manner in which the ceremony is organised, the constitution of its personnel and the functions of the ceremony in relation to the social structure of the low country village.

Social Structure and Ritual Structure

The structure of the Village Hall seems at first glance to be based on opposed and contradictory principles. The structure of the Hall consists of two main arrangements which for the purposes of analysis will be called (*a*) the internal structure and (*b*) the external structure. The internal structure relates to the arrangement of the performers of the ritual in terms of status and role—the priest and his troupe. The external structure relates to the arrangement of the worshippers—the village community who gather in a group for worship and obeisance. The internal ritual structure is vertical and in conformity with that of the structure of the wider society ; the external structure is horizontal and seems contradictory to the structural arrangements of society. Together these arrangements constitute the total ritual structure. When we speak of the ritual structure

3. The content of the rituals will be dealt with in a forthcoming monograph on the Pattini cult.

we will refer either to the internal structure or the external structure or both. The purpose of this essay is to explore the differences in organization of these two parts of the ritual structure and their importance for our knowledge of Sinhalese social structure.

Our first proposition can be stated thus. The internal structure of the Hall reflects the main structural arrangement in Sinhalese society (the caste system) and in doing so one of its latent functions is to reinforce and sanctify it, thus contributing to the stability of society. The internal structure of the Hall reflects in epitome the caste hierarchy of the wider society. This is seen in the recruitment of its personnel.

(1) The higher castes. The most important figure in the Hall, the *Kapurāla*, generally belongs to the *Goyigama* caste. His assistants and some of the dancers also belong to the same caste. In the introduction to the collection of ritual poems (*pantis kōlmura*) sung in the Hall this is explicitly recognized.

Utum govi kulaye kapuvek araganne
(Take a *kapurala* from the noble *Govi* caste)

In actual practice, however, *kapurālas* are recruited from the other three major castes too. For instance, a *karava* village may have a *karava kapurāla*. This is probably due to the rapid rise, owing to their occupational importance, of these castes during the period of foreign domination (sixteenth to the twentieth century). Broadly, we could say that the *kapurāla* is recruited from one of the four major castes.

(2) *Navandannā* caste. This caste provides the new knives and other implements needed for the ceremony.

(3) *Radavā* caste. The washermen play a crucial role in the ceremony. They provide the white cloths (*piruvata*), symbols of purity, and lay out the white footcloths and canopies.

(4) *Badahāla* caste. This caste of potters provide the many types of newly fired, or unfired, pots necessary for the ceremony, especially the pot known as the *pūna*.

(5) *Beravā* caste. These are the drummers without whom any ceremony cannot be held.

(6) *Oli* caste. Sometimes members of the *ōli* caste perform certain dances, e.g. the *Garā* dance.

The personnel of the ceremony represent microcosmically the various castes in the village. Not merely this : the interdependence reflected in other aspects of social and economic relations is here given clear organizational concreteness. The interdependence is actually seen in the active

collaboration that takes place among the castes within a given time span. Today this interdependence is not so marked since, for example, one could do without the *navandannā's* knives, which could be bought from the market, but at one time the interdependence would have been more heavy and more pronounced, for all castes, irrespective of their statuses, have a stake in the ceremony. The ceremony cannot be performed without the co-operation of the castes and if the ceremony cannot be performed, how could one avert the breath of the pestilence, the drying up of the waters and the consequent ravage of the earth ? The multiplication of beast and procreation of man, the abundance of crops and the general weal are recognized by all to be dependent on this ceremony by which the gods are pleased ; and the performance of the ceremony depends on the castes. The assembled worshippers are presented a symbolic and micro-cosmic view of the principles operating in the wider society. One could, therefore, say that the structure of the ritual not merely reflects the structural principles of the society ; as a latent function it perhaps helps the worshippers recognize on a symbolic level the indispensability of the castes for the perpetuation and maintenance of a stable society.

Recognition of interdependence is not a recognition of equality. On the contrary, another important function of the ritual structure is to reinforce the already existing status system. In precisely the same way that inter-dependence is recognized, the symbols of status and distance that operate in the society at large are reflected in the organization of the actors in the ceremony.

(1) The *kapurāla* and his assistants, as members of the higher castes, sit on chairs in the arena.

(2) The drummers cannot sit on chairs ; they sit on mats laid on the arena floor.

(3) The washermen would not condescend to sit with the drummers, so they stand behind the altars and come forward when they are called upon to assist the *kapurāla*.

However, there is no neat reflection of the hierarchy, for in the practice of commensality among the personnel of the various castes there is a partial transcendence of the structural arrangements of society. Outside of the ritual there is hardly any inter-caste commensality. An approach to it is where various castes work together in the fields and eat in a group ; but they never eat of the same meal. In the Hall, the actors all eat in the same place and of the same meal. Nevertheless commensality here is at least conditioned by seating differences and other symbols, e.g., the drummer may not wear a shirt. Even when the actors among the three castes eat

together on a mat, as they often do, the *kapurāla* will be given special recognition of his higher status. His banana leaf (on which people eat in ceremonies) would be placed on a plate, and the plate on a white cloth, whereas the drummer would eat on a plain banana leaf.

The operation of these status symbols does not preclude inter-caste camaraderie in the arena. There is a general tone of comradeship, restricted to decent bounds of propriety by status symbols. Sometimes underlying tensions may be aired in the form of witty repartee ; some tension is canalized in the comic rituals where there is a brisk verbal duel between the drummer and the *kapurāla*, e.g., the *Ät Bandun* and *Hatabambura* rituals.[4] Whatever tensions that may be built up in the close co-operation demanded in the ceremony are ventilated by traditional responses. Generally, the attitude of the *kapurāla* towards the lower caste actors is paternalistic. He sees that the drummers and washermen are well fed. When one of the dancers performs a special dance for a member of the audience and gets money, he hands the money over to the drummers. At the conclusion of the ceremony it is the drummer who distributes the money thus collected among the rest of the actors. All these relations epitomize the way the castes are ideally expected to interact in society ; cordiality and higher caste paternalism, governed by symbols of status and caste distance. These conventions, by the very fact of being observed in the Hall under the suzerainty of the gods, are given symbolic sanctification and reinforcement.

We have so far been concerned with the caste relations in the internal structure of the Hall. The relationships depicted here crystallize and symbolically sanctify, as it were, the scheme of caste relations and convention operating in the wider society. But what about those assembled in worship, the *āturas* or " patients," who have come here to worship the gods ? Here we are confronted with a paradox, for the organization of worshippers—the external ritual structure—seems to violate the principles operating in the social structure. But in effect the seeming violation actually promotes inter-caste solidarity and consequently enhances the solidarity of the village.

The organization of the worshippers themselves for the ceremony, we suggested, seems to violate the structure. In the organization of the worshippers of the Hall all the worshippers *irrespective* of caste affiliations contribute food and money. All worshippers are either standing or seated irrespective of status symbols, and all worshippers are divided into

4. These are comic rituals performed in the *gam-maḍuva*. They have a broad fertility significance.

two ritual groups—called *uḍupila* (side above) and *yaṭipila* (side below)—irrespective of caste status. These ritual groups crosscut the caste arrangements. What is more important is that these two groups come into conflict in the two ritual games known as *ankeliya* (horn game) and *polkeliya* (coconut game). Thus we find that the external ritual structure is organized into horizontal, non-hierarchical groups whereas the social structure itself is organized vertically into castes. Each member of the village community is (*a*) a member of a caste, (*b*) a member of a ritual group. At first glance it would seem that the ritual structure is opposed to the social structure, but this opposition exists only for the duration of the ceremony and has no behavioral function outside the ceremonial season. It is true that people are allocated to the groups on a hereditary basis, but these groups actively operate only for, and during, the ceremony. The problem is to find out whether this opposition and expression of overt aggression which follows, is, sociologically viewed, functional or dysfunctional.

A further description of the manner in which villages are organized for the Hall may help us to elucidate the problem. Sometimes a Hall is performed for a single village, sometimes for a cluster of villages with close ties of kinship. It is often true that most members of a caste in one village or in a number of neighbouring villages are related to each other consanguineally or affinally. Marriage takes place generally within a single caste among a number of villages. Sometimes members of one ritual group come from a given village and the members of the other ritual groups from another village—this would be where a Hall is traditionally performed for several villages. Otherwise members of both ritual groups would be drawn from a single village. In either case, these hereditary ritual groups cut across caste and kin lines whether they are drawn from a single village or a number of closely related villages. If these two ritual groups were focal points for interpersonal relations within a village or a group of villages, then they would naturally introduce a cleavage and produce tension between members of the same caste. But the cleavage of caste lines brought about by the principle of the two groups, exists only during and for the organization of the ceremony. An important latent function of the ritual groups is, perhaps, to enhance inter-caste solidarity in structural terms. In the *ankeliya* ritual the two groups are pitted against each other. But each ritual group, which consists of a cross-section of the castes in society, are united and proud of their group affiliation irrespective of their caste affiliations. This bond of ritual union repeated every year during the ceremonial season, contributes to create inter-caste solidarity and hence the solidarity of the wider society.

Psychologically viewed the principle of the ritual groups may be looked upon as a reflection of intra-caste tension and as an institutionalized mode of expressing it. There is strong evidence of intra-caste tension in Sinhalese society—the practice of sorcery against members of the same caste (as well as those of other castes) are an indication of it. In the Hall the ritual known as the *pūna* has for its purpose the counteracting and immunizing of the village against sorcery. But whatever the psychological motivations, our conclusion that, sociologically viewed, the principle that the ritual groups contribute to inter-caste solidarity is not affected.

If the principle of the ritual groups were also a part of the non-ritual social structure, it could well have produced dysfunctional consequences, e.g., it could have contributed to intra-caste tension. As far as we know, however, such a principle is not found in the social structure of villages in this culture area. But outside this culture area there is evidence that at times this temporarily-introduced cleavage did coalesece and penetrate the social structure. Such examples were rare, but undoubtedly did occur at one time. Parker, writing in 1909, says :

> .... so strong is party feeling of jealousy between them that those of one side usually avoid marriage with the members of the families belonging to the other side, and in fact never have much intercourse or friendly relations with them.[5]

Here we have an example of a hypertrophy of a structural arrangement in ritual contributing to the formation of a structural arrangement beyond, i.e., the formation of traditionally hostile endogamous groups within the already existing endogamic framework of caste.

A related phenomenon has been studied by Gluckman in Africa and has been the thesis of a recently published book. Says Gluckman :

> ....the conflicts in one range of relationships, over a wide range of society or through a longer period of time, lead to the re-establishment of social cohesion. Conflicts are a part of social life and custom appears to exacerbate these conflicts : but in doing so custom also restrains the conflicts from destroying the wider social order.[6]

Gluckman shows us how a cleavage introduced in one aspect of the social structure leads to the cohesion and fuller integration of the total structure in Africa. He implies that the examples from Africa are by no means exceptional but are an example of a more general phenomenon which could be investigated in other societies. In Sinhalese society the conflict-cohesion configuration is not as consistently found as in Africa, perhaps owing to vast differences in social structure. But when it does

5. Parker (1909), 637—638.
6. Gluckman (1955), 2.

occur, as in the Hall, it " emphasizes conflicts in certain ranges of relationship and yet establishes cohesion in the wider society.[7] The function of the division is to produce a bond of union among the castes which in the long run would have beneficial effects.

To put it in a different form, one could say that the function of group division into *uḍupila* (side above) and *yaṭipila* (side below) is to strengthen artificial kinship ties. In ordinary social living certain kinship terms (brother, sister, aunt, uncle) are extended to include non-caste members. These artificial inter-caste kinship links are strengthened in the Hall. Moreover, there is in Sinhalese society a strong interdependence among the castes. While it is true that interdependence itself could produce solidarity, there may be factors militating against it in a caste society with its differential ordering of statuses. Indeed the practice of sorcery by members of one caste against the others suggests the existence of inter-caste hostility. The songs sung in the ritual of the *pūna* explicitly recognizes this :

> The feuds in village from caste envy
> People may have cursed you with hatred
> Just as the ocean's waters vanish into *Makara*'s (a mythical dragon) mouth
> By breaking this *pūna* your *dos* (misfortune) will be no more.

In situations like this it is almost necessary that mechanisms should exist for enhancing inter-caste solidarity in order to ensure the proper operation of the social structure.

In Sinhalese society there are other mechanisms for the maintenance of solidarity and interdependence. Some of the most important of these are:

(*a*) The economic and ritual division of labour discussed earlier. Whether this in itself can produce solidarity is open to question.

(*b*) Economic co-operation in the fields. During sowing and harvest time members of diverse castes may work together in the same rice field. There may even be a partial suspension of status symbols. For example, all the castes may eat together in one place, though not of the same meal.

(*c*) A common linguistic and racial tie.

(*d*) The influence of Buddhism. The villages under consideration are Buddhist villages and the sharing of a common religion, combined probably with the Buddhist non-recognition of caste (on a doctrinal level, at least), contributes to create a sense of solidarity. In a way, the principle of the two ritual groups is a manifestation of the common Buddhistic experience.

7. Ibid., 109.

The Village Hall is *one* of the mechanisms by which inter-caste solidarity is produced and it is an important one. The sense of cohesion brought about by the two groups is strengthened in the process of communal worship and in the culminating feast. The community assembled worship together irrespective of caste. The *Kapurāla* fans all those assembled with the sacred shawl (shawl-fanning ritual) and blesses them with the anklets of the goddess. Towards the end of the ceremony young and old, male and female, of all castes rush into the arena with great fervour to drink the divine water dripping from the sacred anklets. And in the final feast, known as " The Almsgiving to the Gods " (*Deiyanne Dāne*), all castes eat of the same food in the same place and in the same type of vessel (banana leaf). Rules of intra-caste commensality and symbols of status are temporarily suspended as the community gathers together to partake of the consecrated repast.[8]

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8. Part of this essay is an excerpt from a M.A. thesis presented to the University of Washington. (1958).

JUVENILE DELINQUENCY AS A GANG ACTIVITY IN THE CITY OF COLOMBO

J. E. JAYASURIYA and SUNDARI KARIYAWASAM

THE findings reported in this paper form a part of a research study into the problem of juvenile delinquency in Ceylon. In connection with the larger study, all juvenile delinquents and youthful offenders[1] in every Remand Home and in all but one institution in the island were interviewed[2]. Table I gives the names of the Remand Homes and institutions, and the numbers interviewed. The only institution that was left out was the Open School at Senapura which contained very few offenders.

TABLE I. NUMBERS INTERVIEWED FROM DIFFERENT REMAND HOMES AND INSTITUTIONS

		Male	*Female*	*Total.*
1.	Approved Home, Maggona ..	320	—	320
2.	Woodford School, Makola ..	26	—	26
3.	Gotama Lama Niwasaya, Panadura ..	46	—	46
4.	Certified School, Hikkaduwa ..	202	—	202
5.	Certified School, Koggala ..	74	—	74
6.	Kundasale Home ..	7	—	7
7.	Borstal Institutions of Watupitiwala and Negombo ..	372	—	372
8.	Samajeewa Home, Lunawa ..	—	31	31
9.	Jayasekara Home, Colombo ..	—	9	9
10.	Salvation Army Home, Colombo ..	—	1	1
11.	Remand Home, Koggala ..	13	—	13
12.	Remand Home, Kottawa. ..	37	—	37
13.	Remand Home, Kundasale ..	8	—	8
		1,105	41	1,146

Interviews were at first conducted individually but it soon became clear that the interviewees were holding much information back, possibly through fear that any important information divulged would be used against them or their friends. Assurances were given that this would not be the case, but the response was disappointing. Interviewing four or five children together as a group was then tried, and it was found that they completely abandoned their reserve and became very communicative. The groups were often the natural groups that had been seen at work or

1. Under the law in Ceylon, an offender between the ages 7 and 16 is called a "Juvenile Delinquent" and one between 16 and 21 is called a "Youthful Offender." This, however, is only a legal concept and psychologically there is not much difference between (say) a boy of 15 years 6 months and another of 16 years 6 months. In the circumstances, the word "delinquent" is used in this paper to refer to any offender between the age of 7 at the lower end and the age of 18 at the upper end.

2. The interviews were conducted by Mrs. Kariyawasam on the basis of a plan provided by Professor Jayasuriya.

play in the institutions, and ranged from four or five children in some groups to nine or ten children in other groups. Special efforts were taken to establish friendly relations with those children who appeared to be the leaders, and their co-operation proved most helpful. A leader's friendly tap on the shoulder of a lad who was seen to hold information back had immediate results, and the encouragement by the leader made the lad come out with his full story. As the collection of information through these group interviews proceeded, it became clear that juvenile delinquency in Colombo had a pattern distinct from that of the rest of Ceylon, and every effort was made to study this pattern in full detail.

The two distinctive features about juvenile delinquency in Colombo are firstly the existence of clearly marked delinquency areas, and secondly the preponderance of gang activity. No earlier study had been made on the ecological distribution of juvenile delinquency in Colombo, and hence no delinquency area had been previously located. In the case of gang activity, the writers had in an earlier study[3] concluded that juvenile delinquency in Colombo " did not appear to be a group or gang activity .... and only 6 per cent of the cases fell into this category." This conclusion was based on an analysis of the case records of a representative sample of one hundred juvenile delinquent probationers from Colombo. The writers had been careful to stress the limitation of an approach based on case records compiled by Probation Officers, but it is only after their present study that they realised how grievously these records were in error. According to the present study, juvenile delinquency in Colombo was a group or gang activity in 85.4 per cent of the cases, and only in 14.6 per cent of the cases had offences been committed except in the company of others.

TABLE II. TYPES OF JUVENILE OFFENDERS (COLOMBO).

		Number	*Per cent*
Committed offences in gangs	..	163	85.4.
Committed offences singly	..	28	14.6.
		191	100.0.

For the whole island, however, gang activity was evident only in 15.1 per cent of the cases :

TABLE III. TYPES OF JUVENILE OFFENDERS (WHOLE ISLAND).

		Number	*Per cent*
Committed offences in gangs	..	169	15.1
Committed offences singly	..	977	84.9
		1,146	100.0

3. J. E. Jayasuriya and Sundari Kariyawasam : " An Analysis of the Case Records of One Hundred Juvenile Delinquent Probationers from Colombo," in Department of Census and Statistics publication : *Juvenile Probationers in Ceylon—a preliminary survey*, Colombo 1957.

TABLE IV. REGIONAL DISTRIBUTION OF JUVENILE GANG CRIME (WHOLE ISLAND).

	Number	Per cent
From the city of Colombo ..	163	99.6
From outside Colombo ..	6	.4
	169	100.0

It will be seen, therefore, that gang activity in juvenile delinquency is almost wholly confined to the city of Colombo, and that in Colombo the incidence of gang crime is as high as 85.4 per cent. It is also an exclusively male activity. The percentage composition by ethnic groups of these boys is shown in Table V.

TABLE V. ETHNIC ORIGIN OF JUVENILE GANG OFFENDERS (COLOMBO).

	Per cent
Sinhalese ..	47
Moors ..	30
Ceylon Tamils ..	8
Malays ..	7
Indian Tamils ..	6
Burghers ..	2
	100

Delinquency Areas in Colombo

The homes of the 163 juvenile offenders from Colombo who had committed offences in gangs were found to be located in areas which can be classified as follows :

TABLE VI. LOCATION OF HOMES OF JUVENILE GANG OFFENDERS (COLOMBO).

	Per cent
Squatters' areas ..	19
Slum tenement areas ..	78
Single dwelling house areas ..	3

The squatters' areas consist mainly of the southern bank of the Kelani River[4], the banks of the Beira Lake, the banks of the Wellawatte Canal, and the marshes of Wanathamulla. In these areas which belong to the Colombo Municipality, squatters have built huts out of cadjan or timber. One striking feature is that huts in all these areas have been constructed more or less according to a uniform type. There is only one door for a hut, and there are no windows. The cooking place is very near the entrance so that an easy outlet is provided for the smoke. No sanitary facilities are available. Water is obtained from the nearby lake, canal or river

4. The nothern boundary of the City of Colombo.

except in Wanathamulla. The more aggressive of the squatters construct additional huts and lease them out to others on a monthly rental of Rs. 5/-. The whole attitude of the squatters towards the law is one of contempt, born of a bitter grievance against the State for their economic plight and landlessness.

The slum tenement areas from which 78 per cent of the delinquents came are in Pettah, Maradana, Slave Island, Kotahena, Dematagoda, Obeyasekera Town and Kollupitiya. Some of the tenements consist of a small verandah, a room and a kitchen ; some have only a room and a kitchen ; a few have only a room. In many tenements there are no windows. Most of the tenements have an entrance as well as an exit. Very narrow passages serve as approaches to these tenements from the main road and some of these passages are so narrow that two persons cannot walk abreast. They are sometimes so long and unending with numerous branch passages that one cannot easily find one's way back to the street from which one started. There is no space at all for children to run about and play and experiment with sand and water. The passages stink as it is in these narrow passages that children urinate and wash themselves. Some of the tenements are shared by two or three families, and some even by four families. The extent of over crowding is very considerable. Nearly 12 per cent of the delinquents came from tenements with more than 20 occupants in all. One could not imagine how so many could sleep inside such a small area and it was evident that some of the male occupants slept outside the tenements on the approach passages or nearby street pavements.

Both the squatters' areas and slum tenement areas are very cosmopolitan. People belonging to many different ethnic groups as well as many different religions inhabit these areas. They are in fact, using Thrasher's terminology[5], geographically and socially interstitial areas, of which one may say with Thrasher, " Threads of social disintegration tend to follow alongside rivers, canals, rail-road tracks, and business streets whose borders are manifestly undesirable for residential purposes and permit gangs to thrive in the interstices between very good residence areas." They also constitute the city's poverty belt. The gross family income of the homes from which the delinquents came was less than Rs. 50/- a month in 23 per cent of the cases, between Rs. 50/- a month and Rs. 100/- a month in 46 per cent of the cases, and over Rs. 100/- in 31 per cent of the cases. The chief breadwinner of the family was the father in nearly 40 per cent of the cases, and in the remaining 44 per cent a sibling, a relative, a step-parent or the offender himself was the breadwinner, or the family was in receipt

5. W. Thrasher : *The Gang*, Chicago, 1947.

of state aid. Employment was irregular in 71 per cent of the cases. Investigation into the social and emotional relationships within the family group showed a preponderance of the factors urged by psychologists as pre-disposing children to delinquency. The more important of these were parental disharmony (Burt, [6]) ; unintegrated family life (Gluecks, [7]); parental lack (Warren, [8]); child-mother separation (Friedlander, [9] and Bowlby, [10]); erratic discipline (Gluecks, [7]); parental indifference and hostility (Gluecks, [7] and Warren, [8])—all of them conditions productive of anxiety and psychological insecurity.

The Structure and Activities of Gangs

The 163 juvenile offenders from this kind of environment who had committed offences in gangs belonged to as many as 153 different gangs. This meant that it was very rarely that more than one member of a gang was found in an institution. There was a solitary case where all four members of a gang were in the same institution, but generally speaking only one member of a gang was found in an institution. An obvious conclusion from this state of affairs is that the extent of undetected delinquency must be very high.

Gangs were formed according to similarity of age, geographical proximity, and social background. Boys of the 9—12 year age range tended to group together. These gangs were often quite large and had 15 to 20 members. Boys of the 12—15 year age range formed themselves into gangs of 4 to 5 members and were by far the most daring gangs. Boys of over 15 years of age generally worked in small gangs of two to four members. Members of gangs in the lower age groups very often became members of older gangs temporarily to carry out a theft. Some of the latter gangs consisted of adults, largely Muslims. It was evident that some of the juvenile gangs sought membership in gangs of adults more often than others. Temporary alignments with adult gangs were generally sought when there was a pressing need for money after a particularly lean and unsuccessful period. Very often, children in the same street became members of one gang. There was, however, social intercourse and communication between gangs quite irrespective of the geographical area from which they came.

6. Cyril Burt : *The Young Delinquent*, London, 4th Edition, 1948.
7. Sheldon and Eleanor Glueck : *Unraveling Juvenile Delinquency*, New York, 1950.
8. W. Warren : " Conduct Disorders in Children Aged Five to Eighteen Years," *Brit. Journal of Delinquency* Vol. I, 1951.
9. Kate Friedlander : *The Psycho-Analytical Approach to Juvenile Delinquency*, London, 1947.
10. John Bowlby : *Forty-Four Juvenile Thieves*, London, 1947.

Every gang had a leader who had emerged from the membership of the gang and won the acceptance of the members. The leader was often one who showed the same interests as the members and had the same likes and dislikes. He was one in whom the others could have implicit faith. In the event of his being caught by the police, neither threats nor assaults could make him give his friends away. When the leader is caught, the deputy-leader takes over the leadership and the gang goes on. Most of the boys in the institutions were confident that their old gangs were going on and that they would be able to join them after they were released. Personal relationships were such that every member of the gang experienced a sense of acceptance and affection, and his need for security, recognition and adventure was satisfied. Every member of the gang had a role to play, according to his special ability or skill. If he was a fast runner, his role would be that of the runner in the gang. If he was a slow, clumsy boy he would play the role of the " pusher," the one who knocked heavily against a victim and unsettled him, giving an opportunity to another member of the gang to snatch some possession off the victim's hands and run away. In this way, responsibility was shared by giving a role to each individual. Irrespective of the part played, everyone was paid equally and every effort was given its full share of praise.

The gang, rather than the home, is the basic social unit for these boys. They carry on most of their activities together ; they sleep together on the pavements, roundabouts in the city, or the open spaces near the Kelani river and the Maradana and Fort railway stations. They visit cinemas together, go sea bathing and river bathing together, and seldom go to their homes. They often buy their food off women who cook meals on the pavement and sell them at very low rates.

The main occupation of these gangs is thieving and in that connection they use a language and an imagery peculiar to themselves. Thieving or pilfering according to them is *pilli arinavā*, a term used in magical practice to indicate the procedure of sending a supernatural spirit to perform some harmful act. Any type of picking (e.g., picking a pocket) is *gahanavā* (sometimes heard in colloquial use in popular descriptions of such practices), but the word is also used to denote pilfering or stealing. Stealing sarongs is *sāmbal gahanavā*, the word *sāmbal* being perhaps a corruption of *sāmbuva*, as one sometimes speaks of *saron sāmbuva* or pair of sarongs (sarongs come out of weaving mills to traders generally in pairs). To give a cue or a clue enabling the taking place of a theft is described as *kuttuva denavā*, an unknown usage of the word *kuttuva*. In ordinary usage it means ' to pierce,' and possibly the act of piercing is suggestive of pointing out. To lie is spoken of

as *keppa gahanavā*, a slang usage. Chasing (generally chasing of the culprit by the victim) is referred to as *hāvo allanavā*, literally 'chasing rabbits,' or in other words, a wild goose chase. When the boys succeed in pilfering something or picking a pocket they say *jāmak bēra gattā*, the word *jāma* being perhaps a corruption of the Sinhalese word *jāvārama*, meaning "business undertaking". When the stolen goods are valuable, they say *hodda hondā*, which means that the gravy is good. To walk past a person or to pass by a person is *jirā māruvenavā*, *jirā* being perhaps a corruption of *grahayā* or *girahā* meaning planet and *māruvenavā* is movement. The arrival on the scene of a projected theft of someone who is an obstacle to the execution of their plans, is referred to as *onna hūniyamak āvā* or *tōntuvak āvā*. *Hūniyama* is a magical practice intended to bring harm to a person, and *tōntuvak* literally means a person whose physical appearance is disgusting. To deceive is *gunḍu gahanavā*, an expression which is used in some quarters to indicate a sharp practice. To hit is *aḍi arinavā*, which is a common slang usage. To steal a cocount is *kukulā maranavā*, literally 'to kill a cock-bird.' Asked why they used a word meaning 'cock-bird' to denote a coconut, the boys explained that on days when they failed to steal anything else, they always stole a coconut on which they could subsist and which was their saviour from hunger. In magical practice the sacrificing of a cock-bird in order to save a human life from danger or impending disaster is every common, and in a sense therefore, the cock-bird is like a saviour. To be in very high spirits is described as *paraṇa venavā*, obviously a corruption of *paraḷa venavā* which in magical practices means being overcome by the spirit of a demon. The carrying out of a theft was narrated in their specialised language as follows : *onna itin jāmak bēraganṭa yanavā. Etakoṭa ekek kuttuva denavā. Etakoṭa passen kaṭṭiyak yanavā. Ekek jirā māruvenava. Etakoṭama tava ekek talluvak dēnavā. Tik gāna koṭa tava ekek pilli aran duvanavā. Etakoṭa tava ekek māruvenavā. Hāvo allana koṭa kollo kaṭṭiyak gal äda bānava. Kohoma hari api edāṭa jāmak bērā gannavā.* The passage will not make sense to those who are unfamiliar with the specialised vocabulary and imagery of Colombo's juvenile gangland. The English rendering is as follows : "We are now setting out on a coup. One gives a clue. A group follows. One goes past (the victim concerned). Another pushes him so that he knocks on (the victim). In a second, another snatches (a purse or goods) off (his pockets or hands) and runs off. Another goes past (the man) then. When he chases, another group aim stones at him. Somehow, we bring off a successful coup for the day."

Thieving under any circumstances is a hazardous task and perhaps the use of words associated with magical practices might originally have been

the result of a sub-conscious attempt to experience a much needed sense of security. Such words also have an esoteric kind of appeal facilitating their absorption in a sub-culture. The phrase for being given chase *hāvo allanavā*, chasing rabbits, with its implications of a fruitless chase does surely have the effect of boosting the morale of the delinquent boy who is being chased.

Types of Gangs

Though there are many variations in the internal structure of these gangs, certain basic patterns exist. Six patterns were noticed.

A. JUVENILE GANGS UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF ADULTS. There are three such types :

(i) *Decentralised Gangs.* The term 'decentralised' is suggested as being appropriate for these gangs, as each of these gangs is autonomous in most respects, although an integral part of a large gang controlled by an adult. The large gangs generally consist of 20 to 30 boys whose ages range from 9 to 15 years, and within the large gang are the smaller gangs consisting more or less of boys of the same age. The large gang acts as a unit in order to carry out a theft, and the smaller decentralised gangs have well defined parts to play. These gangs operate chiefly in the neighbourhood of the Maradana and Fort railway stations during the crowed hours of the day. The modus operandi is as follows. An adult keeps a close eye on people and gives the clue when he sees a possible victim. A gang (9—12 year age-group) follows behind him, closely followed also by two boys of the 15—18 year age-group. When the opportune time comes, one of these latter boys pushes the man and the other boy picks his pocket or fountain pen, sometimes with the help of a hook, and runs. The victim gives chase but is somewhat obstructed in his start by the gang of younger children that had followed close at hand. As the victim gives chase, another gang of the 12—15 year age group on the roadside distracts him by aiming stones at him. He gives up the chase, and in the meantime the 'picker' will have passed on his 'booty' to another awaiting him some yards away. The latter would then make a spurt, to be relieved some yards away by another in the manner of a relay race, and finally an adult will take over. The boys later get together and a share of the money stolen (or money realised from the sale of stolen articles) is given to the boys. The gangs then go their independent ways while the money lasts, with cinema attendance as a regular activity, until they are again in need of money and called into action.

(ii) *Centralised Gangs under the direct control of an adult.* This type of gang works under the full control of an adult. The members eat and live together, and are briefed and coached by the adult. They are then given independent assignments. During this period, contact is maintained with the adult, but one member of the gang may not even meet the others. The children who belong to these gangs are generally stranded children or children who have run away from their homes.

The adult leader usually has some employment that places him in an advantageous position for directing activities. Often he is a lunch carrier and maintains a gang of 12 to 20 children in his house. The children are fed with the remnants of the lunches he carries, and he wins their confidence by taking them to the pictures and generally looking after their welfare. In the course of his visits to collect lunch baskets, he becomes friendly with the households and is requested in course of time to find a servant boy for the household. He agrees to try and arranges for a boy in his gang to take on the job and to run away after a few days taking from the house various articles listed by the man. The man, without committing himself in any way, satisfies the household by getting them a servant boy and later satisfies himself with the proceeds from the sale of the stolen goods.

Another way in which centralised gangs under adult control operate is by making some of the boys stage a fight. Among the onlookers are other boy members of the gang and the adult leaders. Some innocent passers-by join them and in the general confusion, the pocket of some innocent onlooker is picked and there is no trace of the culprit.

(iii) *Gangs of dope sellers under adults.* These gangs consist of 3 to 4 boys of the age range 12—15 years. They trade in dope under directions from an adult leader and receive about Rs. 5/- a day in addition to food, clothing and shelter. If any member of the gang is caught by the Police, his interests are looked after by the adult. Loyalties are strong and the boys come back to the gangs even after a period of enforced absence. A very large percentage of the adult leaders in this kind of gang and in those described earlier are Muslims.

B. HORIZONTAL GANGS.

These are gangs working independently without being influenced by adults. This is the most common type of gang activity among the delinquent boys in Colombo. Very often, the boys belonging to these gangs are those who have graduated from membership in the centralised or

decentralised gangs described earlier. They are generally over 12 years of age. The most common theft carried out by these gangs is the removal by night from houses of window railings, hinges etc, for which a ready market is found among Indian Tamils. Others participate in day time pilfering. They would walk into shops and while one or two engage the salesmen in conversation, one or two others would snatch sarongs or other articles off the counters and run away. The theft of rubber sheet from rubber buying depots is a common activity. There are other gangs which would follow loaded carts. Some would distract the carter, one or two would cut open a loaded bag in the back of the cart as it goes along, and one or two others would hold another bag to collect what falls off. Bags of copra are often interfered with in this manner. Some gangs engage in more daring thefts. They have their own devices for opening padlocks and for entering houses through the roof. Once entry is gained, they remove jewellery and other articles of value.

c. Mutual pairs.

Early investigators into delinquency, like Burt [6], did not regard a pair as a gang but the tendency among social psychologists now is to do so. Mutual pairs generally belong to the 12—15 year age group. Very often, one of the pair is dumb or otherwise physically handicapped but the two together work as a team. They resist any separation and behave as if one cannot get on without the other. Usually, they get caught together, too, and there is a sameness even about their emotional responses. If one cries, the other too cries. Their activity is generally confined to stealing from shops or houses. While one keeps watch, the other enters the shop or house, picks up some article (often vases from houses) and both run away.

Mixed Gangs

Gangs which fail to rob anything will often get together into larger gangs and go to the Destructors on the Nugegoda Road and at Madampitiya. There they will collect anything that can be converted to money—pieces of copper, iron, buckles, bottles etc.—and sell them to Indian Tamils. Sometimes they pick up dead fowl, which finds a market among scavengers. On days when accumulation of water prevents their approaching the Destructor on the Nugegoda Road, they swim to the place with the aid of plantain trunks (*teppan padinavā*, as they describe it) and pick up what they want. When they return from the scene, they again get back to their original gangs.

Sale of Goods

The cheaper varieties of stolen goods find a ready sale among Indian Tamils who trade in such goods. In the case of more expensive articles such as wrist watches and fountain pens, customers are sometimes found on the streets. There are also so-called Social Clubs which are purchasing centres of such goods. Many boys gave the names of a shop in the Pettah "X Stores" and said that when it was first established a few years ago, they frequented it as it readily purchased stolen goods.

Inter-gang Aggression

In most Western cities where delinquent gangs have been reported to exist, a kind of gang warfare between rival gangs has been reported. In Colombo, there was no evidence of inter-gang aggression and gangs appeared to exist and operate side by side in perfect harmony.

Implications of This Study

A number of factors emerge from this study regarding the problem of juvenile delinquency in the City of Colombo.

1. Juvenile delinquency appears to be endemic in the slum areas of Colombo. They correspond to the interstitial areas which Thrasher[5], and Shaw and Mc Kay [11] speak of, and are characterised by bad housing, over crowding, unhygienic living, poverty, unemployment, disease, ethnically mixed groups without stable roots in any culture, adult crime—in short, by almost every sign of physical and social deterioration.

2. Juvenile delinquency in the city of Colombo is almost wholly a gang activity. The children living in the above areas are denied satisfaction of their basic psychological needs in the home environment, and readily seek the company of peer groups in an endeavour to fill the emotional and social vacuum in their lives. In these groups, as Mays says of Liverpool, [12], 'delinquency is an accepted part of the pattern of juvenile conduct handed down by tradition and maintained by the familiar system of gang alliance." Elsewhere, the same

11. Clifford, R. Shaw and Henry D. Mc Kay : *Juvenile Delinquency in Urban Areas*, Chicago, 1942.

12. J. B. Mays : " A Study of a Delinquent Community," *Brit. Journal of Delinquency*, Vol. 3., 1952.

writer says [13], "The group sets the pattern of behaviour, provides the stimulus, offers rewards in prestige and companionship and, above all, gives to delinquent life the ethical content without which it would perish." The pressures of the group, even if it be anti-social, towards conformity are too powerful for most individuals to resist and they can certainly be overwhelming in the case of children whose home situations are disturbed or whose emotional relationships within their families are strained.

3. A great deal of juvenile delinquency in Colombo goes undetected, as is evidenced by the fact that 163 juvenile offenders belonged to as many as 153 different gangs, and in the vast majority of these gangs only one member, out of a possible membership ranging from 2 to 20, was in an institution.

4. Being sent to an institution is no remedy and is certainly a harsh punishment for the vast majority of boys who commit delinquent acts in this kind of social setting. We cannot agree too strongly with Titmuss when he says [14], "Such behaviour is for the majority of boys not so much a manifestation of individual maladjustment but is a part of the total process of adjustment to a sub-culture in conflict with the culture of society as a whole." Institutions for juvenile delinquents in Ceylon are almost completely devoid of therapeutic procedures and are in spirit and in practice penal institutions. Bovet's warning [15] that "few fields exist in which more serious coercive measures are applied on such flimsy objective evidence than in that of juvenile delinquency" is most appropriate in the Ceylon situation. The chief danger in sending to an institution a boy who had committed an act of delinquency in the kind of setting we have described is that, as Bovet stresses, the mere fact of being labelled 'delinquent' may set in motion a new chain of delinquency producing factors such as insecurity, anxiety, aggression, guilt, insecurity resulting ultimately in a more dangerous and deep seated kind of delinquency.

5. The rehabilitation of this kind of delinquent is essentially a task for the social psychologist, and requires the application of therapeutic procedures not so much to the individual delinquent in isolation but more to the whole group of which he is a member. The work of Slavson [16] and Bierer [17] is very suggestive for this purpose.

13. J. B. Mays : *Growing up in the City*, Liverpool, 1956.
14. R. M. Titmuss in his foreword to Mays (13).
15. L. Bovet : *Psychiatric Aspects of Juvenile Delinquency*, Geneva, 1951.
16. S. R. Slavson : *The Practice of Group Therapy*, New York, 1947.
17. J. Bierer : *Therapeutic Social Clubs*, London, 1948.

It must be remembered that gangs of children taking to delinquent acts can often be made, by the right socio-psychological procedures to participate with equivalent satisfaction in socially accepted projects.

6. Simultaneously with the application of therapeutic procedures to rehabilitate delinquent children, there must be social welfare programmes directed at the eradication of delinquency producing factors in the community as a whole. In other words, not only must the delinquency sub-culture be changed by psychological engineering, but the conditions that gave rise to the delinquency sub-culture must also be changed by social engineering, in order to combat effectively the problem of juvenile delinquency in the city of Colombo.

ORATORIANS AND PREDIKANTS

The Catholic Church in Ceylon Under Dutch Rule

S. ARASARATNAM

THE driving force behind the expansion of Europe overseas in the past four centuries was both economic and religious. In general, the former may be said to have been the predominant factor at every stage in the rise and growth of European influence in Asia but the latter was always not a poor second, varying in the extent of its effect with each power and in different stages. The intellectual and religious movements of the 15th and 16th Centuries had given Christianity a new vigour and a dynamism which it did not possess in the medieval era. Though Christendom split into several sections, it throve on controversy and competition. It was but natural that each nation should have carried over with it to the East not only its flag and its account books but also the cross. Thus an integral part of the history of the activities of each nation in the East is its attempt to propagate its own brand of the Christian faith in the countries where its influence extended. While much work has been done and excellent literature produced on the temporal side of the careers of these nations in the East, insufficient attention has been paid to their religious influences. Propagandists of particular denominations have made disproportionate claims in their own favour.

Judging from a broad Asian standpoint, it must be admitted that the attempt to conquer Asia for the doctrines of Christ, in one or the other of its forms, has been a failure. There have, however, been some remarkable exceptions where this work has met with some limited success. The most important of these is the Phillippines where Spanish attempt to implant Catholicism met with considerable success. Other instances of this limited success are some isolated pockets of Christianity planted in some parts of India such as the Malabar coast, the Madura coast and Goa, and the coastal lands of the island of Ceylon. Ceylon's first large scale contact with Christianity came through Catholic missionary activity in the 16th Century. This led to the founding of the Catholic Church of Ceylon and, with the withdrawal of the protective hand of the Portuguese power in 1658 when it was replaced by the Dutch, this Church entered a period of trials and innumerable difficulties. Though Robrecht Boudens's work,

The Catholic Church in Ceylon under Dutch Rule (Bibliotheca Missionalis—10. Rome, Catholic Book Agency, 1957) is manifestly an account of how the Church faced and solved the difficulties it met with in the years when the Dutch East India Company exercised power over the maritime portions of Ceylon (1658—1796), it raises a number of issues which are relevant to the general problems connected with the attempt to evangelise an Asian community.

Father Boudens discusses, at the outset, the efforts made and the success achieved by the various Catholic missionary movements in the work of planting Christianity in Ceylon (pp. 30—59). All the major orders—Franciscans, Jesuits, Augustinians and Dominicans—took part in this organised attempt, though the Franciscans were the first in the field and enjoyed the largest harvest. It is a story of unqualified success; thousands embrace the faith ; hundreds of churches are established in all parts of the island. But there is something lacking in the narrative, as indeed throughout the whole work. The book certainly tells us a great deal ; but there is also a great deal that it does not tell us. With monotonous regularity missionaries come, preach, convert, baptise and depart. We look in vain for the kind of society they operated on, the nature of the religions they tried to replace, the motives for such large scale acceptance of a new faith and the reasons why the new converts stuck to this faith amidst grave difficulties. For the author, as for some other Christian writers who have dealt with this theme, the belief that these missionaries were preaching 'The Truth' seems to be sufficient explanation for everything that happened. It only remains to examine such details as who did it, where did they do it, to whom and with what success.

In order to place the spate of conversions of the 16th Century and early 17th Century in its proper perspective one should inter-relate Catholic missionary activity with Portuguese policy. One should bear in mind that proselytisation succeeded in the context of a rigorous suppression of the indigenous religions, Buddhism and Hinduism, by the political authority. The widespread suppression of the public exercise of these religions along the coastline, the destruction of temples, shrines and images and the expulsion of priests created a spiritual void among the people which something had to fill. The immense success of the missionaries in the Kingdom of Jaffnapatnam has to be seen alongside the boast of a Portuguese Governor of Jaffna that he had destroyed 500 Hindu temples in that Kingdom alone.[1] In an age when there was no material security, and the spiritual security

1. C. R. Boxer, " Christians and Spices. Portuguese Missionary Methods in Ceylon 1518—1658," *History Today* 8(5) May 1958, p. 351.

provided by the traditional religions was breaking down, many people seem to have embraced Catholicism as some solace in those troublous times.

Christianity as it was presented to the people was not totally dissimilar to the forms of worship that they had so far been used to and this too is an aspect of the question neglected by the author. The rich ceremonialism of Catholic worship was a good alternative to their now proscribed ceremonies. The missionaries were themselves following a conscious policy of adapting Christianity to Asian soil. In the early 17th Century Father de Nobile took this to an extreme and tried an ingenious experiment in Madura of presenting Christianity in terms of Brahmanic Hinduism.[2] Again in the late 18th Century a similar experiment was attempted in Mysore by Abbé Dubois.[3] Jesuits in China tried to combat Buddhism by adapting Christianity to Confucianism.[4] These were generally frowned on by the orthodoxy in Rome, but it did not preclude the ingenious missionaries from making particular alterations within the broader framework of the faith. There is evidence to believe that the native converts did not look upon their new faith as anything contradictory to their traditional beliefs. Baldaeus observed, in the early Dutch period, the prevalence of 'pagan' practices among the Christians left behind by the Portuguese.[5] In the authoritative opinion of Dubois, 'If any one of the several modes of Christian worship be calculated more than any other to make an impression and gain ground in India, it is no doubt the Catholic form, which Protestants consider idolatry.[6]

Yet another factor that is worth examining is the influence of the caste system on missionary activity. The constant complaint of missionaries was that they could only attract the lower castes in the social order towards the new faith. Tennent poses the interesting problem of why it was that the fishing castes along the coast seem to have been greatly attracted towards Christianity. He attempts to provide an answer, though not quite convincingly.[7]

A charge that has pricked the conscience of Christian missionaries is that much of the conversion of the Ceylonese was superficial and his knowledge

2. Panikkar, *Asia and Western Dominance* (London, 1953) pp. 383—4.
3. Roderick Cameron, "The Abbé Dubois in India," *History Today* 8(3), Mar. 1955, pp. 166—8.
4. Panikkar, *op. cit.* pp. 391 ff.
5. Baldaeus, *Naewkeurige Beschryvinge van Malabar en Choromandel en het Eyland Ceylon*, Amsterdam 1672, pp. 182—3.
6. Quoted from J. E. Tennent, *Christianity in Ceylon* (London, 1850), p. 18.
7. Tennent, *op. cit.* p. 11.

of Christianity very scanty. The author dismisses this important aspect of his subject in one cryptic sentence (p. 59). But for the keen student of the history of Christianity in Ceylon this is a matter that requires examination. Mass conversions, such as were achieved at that time, must necessarily have been, to some extent, superficial. Dutch *padre* Baldaeus discovered the knowledge of some Catholics he came across very scanty, though their zeal was out of all proportion to their understanding.[8] Dutch officials who took over from the Portuguese in Jaffna were pestered by the people with requests that they be permitted tc return to their 'heathen' practices.[9] The statistics produced by Father Boudens speak for themselves. In 1634 he gives the exact figure of 72,348 as the number of Christians in the Kingdom of Jaffnapatnam (p. 44). In the 18th Century the figure is placed at anything between 15 and 20 thousand (p. 100, 133). There had thus been a considerable apostasy. In the absence of a widespread literature in the national languages on Christianity, even the literate could not have had a deep knowledge of Christian theology.

One cannot help feeling that the missionaries have been using the multiplication table in the reports they sent home regarding the number of converts they were making. All sorts of contradictory and conflicting statistics are put forward in contemporary records. Reports to the superiors in Europe painting their work in the brightest colour was not a phenomenon peculiar to Ceylon. It is in fact a characteristic of almost every missionary society of this time.[10]

The bulk of Fr. Boudens's book deals with the manner in which the Catholic Church of Ceylon faced the challenge of political domination by a Protestant power. Intolerance of both the Catholic and the Protestant State being the order of the day in Europe, the new Catholic Church of Ceylon could expect no quarter from the East India Company. It must be admitted, however, that the Netherlands was one of the least intolerant of European states and, as it had a sizeable Catholic minority within its boundary, its anti-Catholic laws existed more in theory than in practice. As soon as the Portuguese were expelled from the island, the Dutch took stern measures to root out all trace of Portuguese influence. One of the prime sources of Portuguese power was the Church which was looked upon with deep suspicion. The first stage of Dutch rule in Ceylon 1658—1687, a period which Fr. Boudens designates from the point of view of the Catholic Church, 'The Dark Ages' (pp. 72—88), saw a ruthless

8. Baldaeus, *op. cit.* p. 150.

9. Van der Meyden to Directors of V.O.C., 29 January 1662, *Koloniale Archief* 1124 f 20, Instructie voor Opperkoopman Pavileon, 31 October 1658, *Kol. Arch.* 1121, f 201.

10. Panikkar, *op. cit.* pp. 414—5.

suppression of Catholics in Ceylon. This anti-Catholic policy has to be viewed in relation to the insecurity felt by the Dutch in Ceylon and the possibility of a Portuguese attempt at reconquest. These were the years when, hounded by the Dutch power, without any priests to minister to them, several of the superficial converts back-slided leaving behind only a hard core of believers.

This challenge to the existence of the Catholic Church in Ceylon produced a response in the person of the Venerable Father Joseph Vaz and his Oratorian mission. Defying the prohibitionary bans of the Dutch and establishing the Kandyan Kingdom as his headquarters, this Goanese missionary saw the Church in Ceylon through its most difficult period, re-established the connection between them and their co-religionists on the mainland and gave them the moral and material leadership necessary to defy the Dutch and continue their separate existence on the island. The career and achievements of Fr. Joseph Vaz are dealt with in detail (pp. 89—115), who emerges, in many ways, the hero of this work. The establishment of the Oratorian mission in Goa ensured that his work would not be a mere flash in the pan, but would be continually carried out by Indian missionaries, aware of Eastern conditions, proficient in the national languages, and could easily be smuggled into Ceylon from the mainland.

One of the interesting features of this period is the competition for the conscience of the Ceylonese between the Catholics and the Protestants. Though the latter was the established religion having the whole machinery of the State behind it, the former had several advanatages over it. In fact the contest was, in many respects, unequal. While the Catholic effort was the result of volunteer enthusiasm, the entire Protestant attempt was chanelled through the State because the Company would not brook of any unofficial intrusion into its Eastern possessions. The Dutch administration, as befits a commercial Company, was never prepared to spend any large sum of money on any massive effort to proselytise. The State always lorded it over the Church and there are numerous instances of mutual recriminations and conflict. Paradoxically enough, the Catholics always had a larger number of priests attending to them in the 18th Century, though their presence in Ceylon was illegal, than the Protestants ever had. In the days when Dutch persecution was effective, the priests were able to take advantage of the tolerant attitude of the Kandyan Kings towards Catholicism and use this Kingdom as a springboard for their activities in Dutch territories.

The mission that provided an unfailing source of recruits for work in Ceylon was more adopted to Eastern tradition than were the *Predikants*

of the Dutch. They were Indians and hence could pass undetected in disguise. As contrasted with the rigorous Calvinism of the Dutch they were preaching a more colourful creed. Protestantism of the Dutch variety never seems to have caught on in Ceylon. Their strict opposition to image worship and ceremonialism took away much of the attraction from their Church. Fr. Boudens records an interesting discussion that was held in the Kandyan court between Fr. Goncalvez and an unnamed Calvinist in the presence of King Sri Vira Narendra Singha. The Calvinist attacked the use of images in Catholic worship which the priest defended with reference to Scriptures. Evidently, the King was highly taken up with the arguments adduced by the Catholic priest in defence of image worship (pp. 193—4). Very few of the Dutch Predikants could speak either of the national languages and hence could never get down to the people.

Towards the latter part of Dutch rule the Protestant Church in Ceylon virtually ceased to be a proselytising Church and was content with ministering to Dutch officials and free burghers. Most of the anti-Catholic *placaats* lost their edge and open breaches of the law were condoned by the officials. In fact, if Fr. Boudens's sources are any guide, Catholicism had penetrated even the highest rungs of Dutch officialdom. While the *Predikants* were trying to urge the political authority on to more repressive acts, the latter were more cautious as they did not want to upset the peace of the land. Yet another factor was the favour shown to the Catholic priests by the Kings who, time and again, intervened to use their influence with the Dutch on their behalf. All these factors encouraged the Catholics to acts of open defiance and public profession of their faith.

A very interesting chapter discusses the policy of the Kandyan Kings towards Catholicism (pp. 189—203). Rajasinha II started, at the beginning of Dutch rule, a policy of toleration towards Catholic refugees from the maritime provinces. This was, no doubt, largely from political motives for he desired to use these Catholics against the Dutch, with whom he had fallen out. This tradition of friendship towards Catholics was carried on by his successors ; this factor proved very favourable in establishing the Oratorian mission in Ceylon. With the Nayakkar accession, however this facility was denied to them because the Kandyan kings became more wary of Catholic activities. This is largely due to the Buddhist revivalist movement that was taking place in Kandy in the mid 18th Century which was viewing with alarm the growth of Catholic influence. Nayakkars themselves in Madura were very tolerant of Christian missionaries but in Ceylon they were bending over backwards trying to placate the Buddhist

clergy and thus popularise their rule. Fortunately for the Catholics, they were by this time sufficiently well established in the maritime areas as to dispense with the need to use Kandy as a springboard.

When in the last years of the 18th Century the English replaced the Dutch in Ceylon there is definite evidence of a virile and active Catholic community, which, though not numerically as large as in the period of Portuguese power, now consisted of a hard core of believers scattered all over the island who had seen the faith through its worst days and had been strengthened through years of sacrifice and suffering. Writers of the early British period such as Emerson Tennent bear testimony to this fact, while at the same time showing us that the Dutch church virtually disappeared with Dutch power except for the small Dutch community. This is largely the work of Father Joseph Vaz and the galaxy of devoted and earnest missionaries who not only kept the faith alive in a hostile land but also made fresh conquests and ensured the continuance of a Church which had showed such promise in the Portuguese period. Fr. Boudens's work is eloquent tribute to the labour of these men.

Lastly, one of the most valuable sections of this work is its bibliography which seems so exhaustive that it goes far beyond the scope of the work and would be useful to any student of Christian missionary activity in this part of Asia. Helpful comments on each series of manuscript records and contemporary printed works would serve to save a lot of time and bother to any future student. The Appendix includes some hitherto unpublished letters of Fr. Joseph Vaz and two maps, one of which has plotted on it all the Catholic Churches in the island at the end of Portuguese rule.

BOOK REVIEWS

KNOX, ROBERT., *An Historical Relation of Ceylon*, with an introduction by S. D. Saparamadu (The Ceylon Historical Journal Vol. VI—July 1956 to April 1957, Nos. 1 to 4, First edition May 1958. Rs. 10.)

The contradiction between the statement that this is the " first edition " of Knox's *Historical Relation* published in 1958, and the announcement that the book represents Vol. 6 of the *Ceylon Historical Journal* (July 1956—April 1957) is explained in an editorial note which states that the periodical will resume publication from July 1958, and that a special issue " covering " Vol. 7 is in print. Confusion is worse confounded in the introduction written by S. D. Saparamadu " of the Ceylon Civil Service," for he " would particularly like to record by (*sic*) thanks to Miss S. Saparamadu, editor of the *Ceylon Historical Journal*." We can only conclude that the gentleman of the Ceylon Civil Service is " editor " only of this issue of Knox, but his " editing " is confined to a fifty-page introduction of doubtful value. Needless to say, the claim that this is the " first edition " of Knox is palpably false : the original edition was published by Richard Chiswell, printer to the Royal Society, London in 1681. The text was subjoined to *The History of Ceylon* by Philalethes (Robert Fellowes) in 1817, and a new edition by James Ryan was published in Glasgow in 1911. The present edition is in fact a photo litho offset from Ryan's edition, and the attempts to conceal this fact provide an amusing combination of craftiness and artlessness. We need only mention the *suggestio falsi* in the introduction, that " we have followed (*sic*) Ryan where modernising the text is concerned .. *the contractions ' yt ' for ' that,' ' ye ' for ' the,' ' wth ' for ' with,' and ' wch ' for ' which ' have been extended* and *the letters i, j, u and ff for F have been used according to modern custom* " p. liv.). The italicised words are reproduced from Ryan's preface to the 1911 edition (the conjunction " and " is original, and replaces Ryan's colon).

This is surely a most ungenerous and dishonest procedure for one who sets out to edit a classic. For the 1911 edition contained a great deal that did not appear in the original issue of 1681, and many of these innovations are reproduced photographically in the present edition, e.g., the dates inserted by Ryan at the top of each page, and his references to the folios of the original edition. It is precisely this kind of information regarding differences in various editions that one would have expected in the appended bibliography, but for obvious reasons no collation of the editions listed is even attempted. Thus, besides the general issue, 100 copies of the 1911 edition were printed on hand-made paper, and the result was elegant indeed. The present edition excludes the Bodleian autobiography (1696), Ryan's photographs of Knox's tree, the Coat of Arms, the facsimile of the title page of the 1681 edition which appeared as a folder, and the facsimile of Knox's handwriting. (What goes as a facsimile of the original title page is reduced from the 1681 folio to fit a full-page of the present edition).

Mention must be made of the unpardonable implication that the present edition " will possibly lead to a definitive edition " including the MSS notes for the second edition. The editor could hardly have been ignorant of the fact that the Hakluyt Society's edition is in active preparation, with the collaboration of the Ceylon Government Archivist, quite independently of Mr. Saparamadu's non-definitive edition, for the event was widely published in the local newspapers.

Plans for a revised edition of the *Historical Relation* date as far back as 1713, in which year Knox wrote to his cousin Rev. John Strype that his publisher had given him an interleaved copy of his book, " the only thing which will keepe my name in the memory of the world," for a revised edition. Although this interleaved copy came to the British Museum in the 1890's it was " discovered " only in 1925 and is now in the Christy Ethnographic section. Its existence was unknown to Ceylon students until recently since it was never included in the British Museum general catalogue, presumably because its identity was being " established " by " experts " in England, and even when it had been finally identified the secret of its existence was not made known via any of the British Museum catalogues. A few years ago it became generally known that the Hakluyt Society was arranging to bring out a new edition incorporating the MSS notes. Mr. Saparamadu's statement that copies of the interleaved edition are not available in Ceylon libraries (p. viii) is incorrect. A copy was procured for the Colombo Museum Library as early as 1955, but the reviewer was not permitted to examine it then because material being worked on by museum officials was taboo to the public ! A museum official, protected by some harsh provision in the Ordinance, was withholding an expensive photostat of a MSS from students on the ground that it was being " edited " for publication ! Another photostat was ordered shortly afterwards for the Government Archives, but the reviewer has been informed that it is not available for inspection. In other words, two copies of a MSS. in institutions maintained expressly for the public, have been withheld from students over a period of three years ! This is surely a fit subject for the attention of the Antiquities Commission appointed last year.

The fate of Knox's classic at the hands of successive editors is remarkable indeed. The editions which have appeared in the present century have been undertaken by persons ignorant of the tradition of Sinhalese social life with which Knox's book largely deals. Although it has been discussed as an account of the island " through Puritan eyes " (Boxer), as a literary work which influenced Defoe (Secord, Ludowyk), and so on, its authenticity has never been examined even from internal evidence until Dr. Karl Gunawardene's article, " Some considerations on Robert Knox and his writings on Ceylon," appeared in the current issue of the *University of Ceylon Review*. This paper points out that nowhere in the text does Knox mention that he had an audience with the King of Kandy, and that his account of Rājasiṁha, still more his drawing, may have been fanciful. Besides, the illustrations could not have been the work of Knox in view of the ineptitude he has exhibited as an artist in his illustrations in the MSS for the second edition.

The student can only lament that even the proposed Hakluyt edition is unlikely to consider the text against the background of Kandyan village life, the life which Knox himself lived and described. As Ludowyk rightly says,

> " Because Knox was .. the ordinary product of a traditional culture in many ways like the Sinhalese, for all its prodigious differences from it, he was able to live so fully and completely in the Kandyan Kingdom for close upon twenty years .. Throughout his life in Ceylon he moved with the ordinary villagers of the various parts into which his several enforced changes of residence took him " (*Robert Knox in the Kandyan Kingdom*, xii).

Unfortunately the present edition omits the Bodleian autobiography discovered in 1910 which provides the best evidence of Knox's mode of life in the Kandyan kingdom. He grew his hair long to the waist in the manner of the natives, had a beard, " got a cloth and wore the country habit," went about bare-foot and naked above the waist, drank arrack and got accustomed to betel-chewing. Indeed, when given European clothes and shoes after his escape, he found them at first " very troublesome and uneasey like as a Collar to a dog, or yoake to a hog."

It remains to point out some inaccuracies in Mr. Saparamadu's introduction to the 1958 edition :

1. p. xviii. *Accrareagala* (spelt " Accaresgull " in Knox's map) is Akiriyagala, not " Etiriyagala " (cf. *Alphabetical List of Sabaragamuva Villages*, Government Press, 1926). This Village is in the Mavata Pattuva which once formed part of Handanpanduna, which latter appears in Knox's map and text (v. Bell's *Kegalle Report*, pp. 2, 51, 55.)

2. There is no such place as *Diyaladdhapattuwa* which the editor suggests (p. xviii) is the modern name for Handanpanduna. The reference can only be to Deyaladahamuna Pattuva in Kinigoda Korale (which Knox marks in his map as " Kenagoda Courle " but does not mention in his text).

3. It is not true that Knox " soon had two houses built " in Handanpanduna (p. xviii). According to the Bodleian Autobiography, Knox built his first house in Bandarakosvatta, in Kurunagala District (" that portion which the Knoxes occupied is designated by the natives *parangi-vatta*—by which I suppose they mean the ' foreigner's garden'," *Monthly Lit. Reg.*, III, 1985, p. 220). He had the pleasure of returning to see it, and being welcomed by his former neighbours, after the house had been converted into a royal store for coconuts. At Akiriyagala (in Handanpanduna) " they put me into one of theire owne durty and darke houses," but he built himself " another house on a fine situation on the bank of a fine fresh water river, (forgitting how I was served with my former house in Bonder Cosse Watt)." He built a third house on a piece of land which he purchased for 25 larins at Eladatta in Udunuvara (the village tradition is that it was the site of the present *valavva*, cf. Lawrie's *Gazetteer of the Central Province*, I).

4. Regarding Knox's statement, " The Countrey being wholly His, the King Farms out his land not for money, but service," the editor comments : " this of course is not correct for the King did not own all the land .." (p. xxxvii). In theory at least, as in many feudal societies, the king was considered " lord of the soil " and the subject had only a contingent interest in his possession which could be confiscated for various reasons, e.g. treason, or non-performance of the service associated with the land. The fact that compensation was paid in practice when land was appropriated to the crown without good reason, does not invalidate the theory or Knox.

5. The statement on p. xxxvii regarding the *perahara* is wide of the mark, viz.
" What would appear to be another mistake is that Knox makes no mention of the Tooth Relic in the book and his description of the Kandy Perahera is one of a ceremony to honour the four devalas. This however has a simple explanation for the Tooth Relic was hidden by Rajasingha II's father Senerat and revealed again only in the reign of Vimala Dharma Surya II. It received a place in the Perahera only during the time of Kirti Sri Rajasingha, fifty years later."

In the fist place failure to mention the Tooth Relic cannot be a " mistake," merely an omission. Knox confines the *perahara* to the *devales* not because the Tooth Relic was hidden away, but because neither the Temple of the Tooth nor any Buddhist temple had a place in it until Kirti Sri's time when, it is said, the king gave pride of place to the Temple in the procession at the insistence of Upali Stavira who brought the Upasampada ordination from Siam. The Tooth Relic itself was never taken in the procession, as the editor implies, only the symbolic casket. Knox does not mention four *devales*, but three Gods, Pattini, Kataragama, and Alutnuvara. The last is probably an error.

With all its shortcomings, and the questionable *modus operandi* of the editor, there is no denying that this edition will be a boon to students, being the only complete reprint of Knox available at a moderate price. The reader would have been greatly assisted if Knox's quaint rendering of Sinhalese words were modernised, at least in the index. His amusing transliteration of words such as Potting Dio, Horse Pot, Attoms, Gom Sabbi, Wanniounay, can hardly be expected to make sense to the average reader, and Ferguson's admirable compilation of Knox's vocabulary is hard to come by.

RALPH PIERIS.

LUDOWYK, E F. C., *The Footprint of the Buddha* (London, Allen and Unwin, 1958, 30 Sh.)

" To discard legend, and myth, and fairy tale would just as much rob one of one's most valuable sources of information about a people as to reject its art and literature as unimportant." This statement from Dr. Ludowyk's Prologue to his *Footprint of the Buddha* seems to justify fully the expectation with which we awaited the book since the first announcement about it. That quotation underlines an attitude not often displayed by writers who make the hidden past their field. There is always something in these legends and myths which escape the modern mind handicapped as it is with an unsympathetic scepticism which passes for scientific detachment. To understand what is not easily understood of a culture's past one needs more than anything else a certain amount of sympathy and a good deal of what is derisively called gullibility. Once you have understood what you would have otherwise missed you need not gull yourself any longer ; you can treat all the legends and myths in the same way as the raft in the Buddha's famous parable quoted in this book (p. 55). In this sense we felt that the author had struck the correct note and we were sure that his troubles in writing this book, and ours in reading it, would be amply rewarded.

There have been other writers on Ceylon who had a peck or two at the vast store of legends about the Buddha, the kings, the warriors, the *dagobas*, the temples, the peaks, the rivers, and men and women. I could think of Parker, Burrows, Cave, Keble, Gibson, Still and Hennessy, to name only a few. But they have, none of them, been able to grasp the elusive poetry of these unsophisticated tales. They were either too prosaic, or where they tried to be otherwise they have succeeded only in creating new legends (Clark, Keble, and Still) which do not possess the same flavour. This may be probably due in the main to the fact that none of these writers really felt the pulse of the culture they were trying to deal with. They were literally foreign to the tap-roots. Dr. Ludowyk on the other hand, with his greater claims to understanding the ethos of the Sinhalese, one felt, would be just the right person to search for the meaning of these tales, since he has all the necessary intellectual equipment and long years of acquaintance with the Ceylon village where the legend still lives. But one closes the book with a tinge of disappointment : the author has not kept his promise. No doubt his sympathy and understanding show up occasionally in such spirited sentences as " The legends are not only poetic in form, they express the truth of poetry, which is, after all, a more philosophic thing than history " (p. 39), or " The sensibilities of the majority of men are so hardened today that if any one single priceless possession of the world's art were made to disappear, it would apparently make little difference to the sum of things " (p. 171). But the overall effect of the book is not altogether different from that of any other written on similar aspects of the culture of Ceylon. Written in a very facile style, it recounts many stories and retails out legend after legend interspersed with scholarly quotations which, however, tend to obscure the poetry of the simple belief. The author has relied too much on history.

The Prologue and Chapters Two and Three are the most readable since in these the author has maintained the tone he proposed for himself to begin with. But he seems to have found it a difficult task to sustain his original role unselfconsciously, and has let himself rise to heights of scholarship from which he refuses to come down. We would not have made this allegation but for the fact that the author in his preface says that " This book seeks to bring before the common reader the Buddhist monuments of old Ceylon .." We have not been able to find out who the " common reader " is for whose edification the author cites one learned opinion after another. There certainly is no need for such support from authority unless we take it that the writer felt the need for reinforcing his work.

In fact these quotations, some absolutely unnecessary (e.g., reference to Basham, *The Wonder that was India*, on page 16), in our opinion, destroy the simplicity and the poetry that the author wants to maintain. We have known Dr. Ludowyk as being thoroughly capable of exacting some poetry out of even the driest piece of information. But in this book he leaves us disappointed in spite of the wonderful opportunity he has. His treatment of the Sigiri Graffiti is a case in point. Every poem he quotes from the Graffiti is prefaced by a statement, of doubtful factual validity, regarding its date. We do not say that some intimation concerning the age of the poems is altogether unnecessary. But the reader does not want to be stuffed at every turn with a jarring statement like " an eighth-century writer " or " another in the second half of the ninth century."

To the " common reader " too many footnotes are only a source of irritation. He does not want to verify whether a particular quotation is to be found at *Dighanikaya* II, 156 or 157. Such notes are after all of no significance to the common reader once he learns not to run his eye to the bottom of the page. But we are tempted to make this comment because the resort to this kind of precision has made the book something of a ' learned treatise ' which, according to the Preface, is not the author's intention. In fact, this confusion between what the common reader needs and learned discourse appears every now and then throughout the book. And in consequence the ' beauty and the appeal of the objects appraised here ' are lost in a tangle of description, very archaeological and too factual : the sort of thing a student reads in an article which publishes and describes for the first time a newly-found piece of sculpture. One reads, for example, about the famous man-and-horse group from Isurumuniya : " Here is carved in a cavity of the rock the figure of a man seated in the pose maha-lila-raja (*sic*) (kingly ease), his right leg bent at the knee, the outstretched right arm placed negligently upon it, the left leg bent back on the ground, the left foot meeting the right thigh. The left hand etc., etc." (p. 118). Such descriptions may be necessary. Bur to bring out the beauty of the sculpture one needs something quite different from this kind of analysis with which the book abounds. The author then proceeds very systematically to discuss the various scholarly theories and interpretations, some of which he proposes to foist on the reader as if they were facts proven. This is all good in its own place. But the reader—the common reader—is still in the dark as to the beauty and the significance of the work of art. This kind of factual analysis and ready acceptance of archaeological theorising tends merely to make the book heavy reading wthout convincing the reader of the artistic value of whatever is being described, whether it is the ' Sacred City,' ' Royal Palace ' or ' Royal City.'

As main reading matter the book contains a Prologue, an Epilogue and nine Chapters. Of these, chapters Seven, Eight, Nine and part of the Epilogue alone deal with the central theme, according to the author : the Buddhist monuments of Ceylon. These chapters, unfortunately, suffer very largely from the burden of precision hinted at above. But there are occasional glimpses of the sympathy and simplicity with which the author originally set to work, e.g. his statement (p. 110) regarding the epic (a symbol, in our opinion, of the whole of the particular way of life that the author attempts to bring before the reader) which because of their rarity stand out clearly enough not to be forgotten. The reader, whether common or specialist, will feel fully rewarded by these few expressions if he has the patience to search for them, especially in the Prologue and the second Chapter. The latter entitled ' The Teacher ' is the most representative section of the author's original intent. In this chapter Dr. Ludowyk has gained unqualified success in piercing the halo of austerity surrounding the Buddha and making ' the human personality assert itself.' The best statement of the author's approach to the Buddha's personality is seen in the following passage : " The great figure from the past, even the great contemporary survives in the livelier colours of story than in the sober livery of history. The strongest lines in his character and personality come, not from the certainties of established fact, but from the imaginative power of human beings which loves to dower the great with the wealth of its own image-making faculties. The great man is so often better known to us by what he never said or did, but whatt people believed that he said or did. If one were dependent on history alone for our memories of the great, how scanty would be our garnering from the rich fields of human achievement " (p. 38).

Chapter one in our opinion is of no particular significance. If it were meant to set the stage for the drama of the life of the Buddha and His teaching, it has failed. Too much of scholarly matter regarding Vedic and Brahmanic ritual, Upanishad is theorising and political and social forces at work have been set forth to no apparent purpose. It would have been more to the point if the author devoted more space to the intellectual atmosphere which was the background to the Buddha. There is nothing we could say in support of chapter Four, ' The Emperor.'

We must congratulate Ina Bandy for photographs which very elegantly illustrate the beauty of the monuments that Dr. Ludowyk proposes to discuss. The most noteworthy feature is that these pictures are not the usual archaeological clichés : see for example figures 4, 5, 10, 11, 20, 31. Figure 28 is a beautiful view of Gadaladeniya, not noticed before, which brings out very clearly the peaceful seclusion of the village temple.

In spite of the fact that in respect of paper, type and format the book maintains the high standards of production for which the publishers are well known, we feel it necessary to point out that better proof-reading is essential if the book goes into a second edition : Rabula (for Rahula) in the Preface is unpardonable. More care should have been exercised in the use of Pali words : what is *maha-lila-raja* (p. 118) ; *buddhalambapiti* buddhalambapati (p. 172)? We believe that even the common reader would welcome some aid, in the form of diacritical marks or any other phonetic symbols, to the pronunciation of unfamiliar Sinhalese, Pali and Sanskrit words.

Allen and Unwin are to be congratulated on selecting this book to appear under their imprint—an all too rare privilege for an author from Ceylon. The price, however, puts it beyond the reach of the common reader for whom it is really intended.

SIRI GUNASINGHE.

HEWITT, A. R., *Guide to Resources for Commonwealth Studies in London' Oxford and Cambridge* (University of London, Athlone Press, 1957. 21 Sh.)

England has long been the Mecca of postgraduate students from all parts of the Commonwealth, and it is unlikely despite Official Language Acts, cultural renascences, and upsurges of chauvinism, that the supply of devotees for this pilgrimage will dwindle to any appreciable extent in the future. The absence of well-equipped learned libraries administered on professional lines, and extremely poor research facilities have been perhaps among the most important reasons for the much proclaimed paucity of postgraduate research and scholarship in Ceylon. Regarding this vital adjunct of a nation's educational system, and an essential feature of its cultural landscape, there exists the most abysmal apathy at both official and unofficial levels. As long therefore as Asian libraries lack the basic source materials and adequate amenities for research, probationary study leaves and sabbatical study leaves will continue to be spent west of Suez.

The research student in England, particularly among those arriving from underdeveloped library environments, confronted with the rich and varied assortment of libraries serving his interests, is bewildered and takes some time to find his bearings. The material he is interested in is likely to be scattered among a variety of sources and has to be quarried for in the collections of academic, technical, official, missionary, educational and other institutions. Mr. Hewitt, Librarian of the Institute of Commonwealth Studies, University of London, since its foundation, has explored the resources available for the study of Commonwealth affairs in the three principal centres of scholarship, and arranged his findings in this handy guide. The compiler has no doubt had long experience of the problems facing research workers, especially those from overseas, and has aimed to provide a systematic guide (the first, in fact) to the location of materials for the study of the Commonwealth, mainly, but not exclusively, in the fields of history and social sciences. The collections in the libraries of universities, colleges, government departments, learned societies and institutions in London, Oxford and Cambridge are surveyed and classified and it is hoped that the geographical range will be extended in a future edition, to take account of the valuable material available in other parts of England.

The book is divided into three parts. The first part, entitled " General Survey of Resources," deals after a rapid survey of the entire field, with public archives, private papers, papers of chartered and other companies, the important field of Parliamentary Papers and official publications, and periodicals and newspapers. Then follows a concise survey of library resources, arranged according to subjects and geographical areas. Valuable sections on sources of information regarding theses and research in progress, and a select list of bibliographies, works of reference and biographical dictionaries bring this part to a close. This list is particularly useful as bibliographical and biographical works published in various forms and diverse places are elusively difficult to trace, and in the absence of a comprehensive Commonwealth bibliography of bibliographies, this section may also, to some extent, fulfil the same purpose. The reviewer may be excused a minor grumble, in recording his disappointment at the almost complete absence in the lists of the admittedly small, yet important number of directories, yearbooks and sundry reference books available for Ceylon—even the venerable Ferguson's Directory, which celebrates its centenary this year, has not been considered worthy of inclusion.

Part II continues descriptions of the individual libraries in London, Oxford and Cambridge. All relevant information relating to the scope and significance of the collections, method of obtaining access, hours of opening, publications, journals, etc., is included. Part III deals with facilities for Commonwealth studies in British universities, and lists additional research institutions and advisory organisations concerned with various aspects of Commonwealth affairs. The value of the bibliography is considerably enhanced by a full subject index, which needs to be supplemented by the Concise Survey of Library Resources by Subject, pp. 50-68, for its fullest exploitation. With some exceptions, individual works referred to in the text have not been included.

The design of the bibliography reveals much thought and careful planning, and the resulting arrangement makes for convenient and easy consultation. Within its chosen limits, this work should prove invaluable as an essential reference tool in university and other learned libraries, directing students of Commonwealth affairs to the most profitable sources for their research in historical and social studies. Mr. Hewitt has produced a book of permanent value and put all Commonwealth scholars in his debt.

H. A. I. GOONETILLEKE.

MENDIS, G. C., *Ceylon Today and Yesterday. Main Currents of Ceylon History.* (Colombo, Associated Newspapers of Ceylon, Ltd., 1957 Rs. 4/50)

This book, consisting mainly of broadcast talks and newspaper articles comes from the pen of the author of the well-known *Early History of Ceylon* (1932) and *Ceylon under the British* (1944). Between these publications Dr. Mendis taught at the Ceylon University, and his edition of the Colebrooke Papers (1956) came at the end of his university career, while *Ceylon Today and Yesterday* is largely the product of research in his retirement. In view of the author's standing among historians in this country, the somewhat heretical views expressed in the latter book are likely to receive widespread currency, especially among prospective university entrants.

In *Ceylon Today and Yesterday* the author sets out " to interpret the (*sic*) developments in Ceylon from the beginnings up to the present day," pending the advent of a " serious " work on these lines. The first seven chapters comprise sketches of the civilisations of South East Asia, political and cultural relations with India, and brief accounts of Portuguese and Dutch rule in Ceylon. The discussions on cultural relations with India and differences in cultural development between the two countries (Chaps. 3—4) confuse " culture " with organised religion. Literature, music, architecture, sculpture and painting are summarily dismissed as " handmaids of religion " in those times. Whereas in the outlandish Asian countries like Burma, Buddhism became intervowen with local cults such as *Naga* worship, there was no such fusion in Ceylon—a statement which reveals an ignorance of Buddhism in practice. Even from documentary evidence one cannot fail to notice the repeated royal injunctions to monks to refrain from indulgence in the " despised sciences " of magic, exorcising devils, divining by means of omens, preparing charms for the detection of thieves, making sacrifices, not to mention the improper though popular practice of astrology. Is it no wonder that those who have any experience of living Buddhism, of *peraharas* and festivals, *pirit* and other ceremonies, find the history narrated even in popular books such as this as dry as dust.

For Dr. Mendis the Colebrooke Report (1832) constitutes a clear dividing line between past and present. Everything that went before is less important : the Portuguese Period is " a continuation of the history of the Sinhalese and Tamil kingdoms " (p. 55), while Dutch rule " made little difference to the life of the people as a whole." The argument is laboured that the common practice (followed in the projected University *History of Ceylon*) of devoting as much space to the periods before and after 1505, the date of the arrival of the Portuguese, is unjustified. Instead, the period after 1832, on account of the profound changes wrought by a laissez faire policy which saw the end of compulsory state service (*rājakāriya*) and brought feudalism to an end, deserves as much space in any comprehensive history as the millennia before it !

But it is hardly true that these changes came in 1832. Although compulsory labour for public works was formally abolished by an Order in Council of that year, slavery was made illegal only by Ordinance No. 20 of 1844. Moreover, Ordinance No. 8 of 1848 made every male inhabitant liable to perform six consecutive days' labour on the roads, subject to an option of commutation by a money payment. Since many villagers were incapable of raising the money, the jails were crowded with defaulters whose detention was a headache to the prison authorities since they could hardly be classed with other criminals. This backdoor revival of *rājakāriya* was confirmed by Ordinances of 1861 and 1884. Feudalism remained in the case of private estates of chiefs, and of temples. In view of all this, the selection of 1832 as a crucial date for the bifurcation of Ceylon history, is arbitrary in the extreme. It is easy to magnify the significance of events nearer our time. The description of the M.E.P. landslide at the last general election as " the revolution of 1956," before which "the river of life as a whole stirred little " is as ludicrous as the recent pronouncement of a politician that this event was comparable only to the French and Russian Revolutions. Happily, Dr. Mendis refrains from moving his dividing line forward from 1832 to 1956.

As its title implies, this book also deals with some contemporary social issues, and there are essays on the revival of Buddhism, the rise of communalism, and the language problem. Of these, Chapter II reproduces an article on " Causes of Communal Conflict " which appeared in the *University of Ceylon Review* fifteen years ago. In this edifying masterpiece of verbal obscurity and inconsequential reasoning it is portentously argued that " communalism," " a disease in the body politic " (the nature of the disease is unexplained) is essentially a " middle class problem." The crucial expressions, " communalism " and " middle class " are not defined, and the argument consists of a disingenuous manipulation of cliches.

> " Recent history has shown that the British helped to change the society of Ceylon from a cöoperative and feudal into a competitive and commercial basis. The changes effected led to the rise of the Middle Class, but it did not develop into a separate community. The various sections of this class soon realised that the Government and other posts were insufficient to satisfy their growing needs, and began to compete with one another. And in order to achieve their ends they sought the aid of their respective communities and transformed their individual conflicts into a communal conflict. Thus communalism is essentially a Middle Class problem and the chief causes of conflict are economic."

It is conceded that communalism exists among the masses as well. But the common people are apparently not so cute as to " transform their individual conflicts into a communal conflict." All this demonstrates that historical interpretation can on occasion be completely lacking in logical rigour.

But although his methods and conclusions leave much to be desired, the author has at least scratched the surface of many important historical and social problems and his provocative book should stimulate lively discussion and " serious " research.

RALPH PIERIS.

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The Editors regret that on account of the prevailing State of Emergency and pressure of work at the University Press, the appearance of this issue of the Ceylon Journal of Historical and Social Studies has been somewhat delayed. We hope to bring out Vol. II. No. 1 early in January 1959.

The issue of Vol. I. No. 1, January 1958, is now exhausted. In order to ensure continuity, therefore, subscribers are advised to renew their subscriptions well in advance. Cheques, money orders and postal orders should be made out in favour of H. A. I. Goonetileke, The Library, University of Ceylon, Peradeniya.

Forthcoming issues of the Journal will include :

" Proprietary and tenurial rights in ancient Ceylon " by Dr. Lakshman S. Perera.

" The Crewe-McCallum Reforms " by Dr. A. J. Wilson.

" The Sinhalese contribution to the development of the Buddha Image " by Dr. Siri Gunesinghe.

" A systematic bibliography of Ceylon numismatics " by H. A. I. Goonetileke.

PRINTED AT THE
CEYLON UNIVERSITY PRESS,
COLOMBO.