SRI LANKA

UNESCO NATIONAL COMMISSION

FESTSCHRIFT 1985

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Edited by

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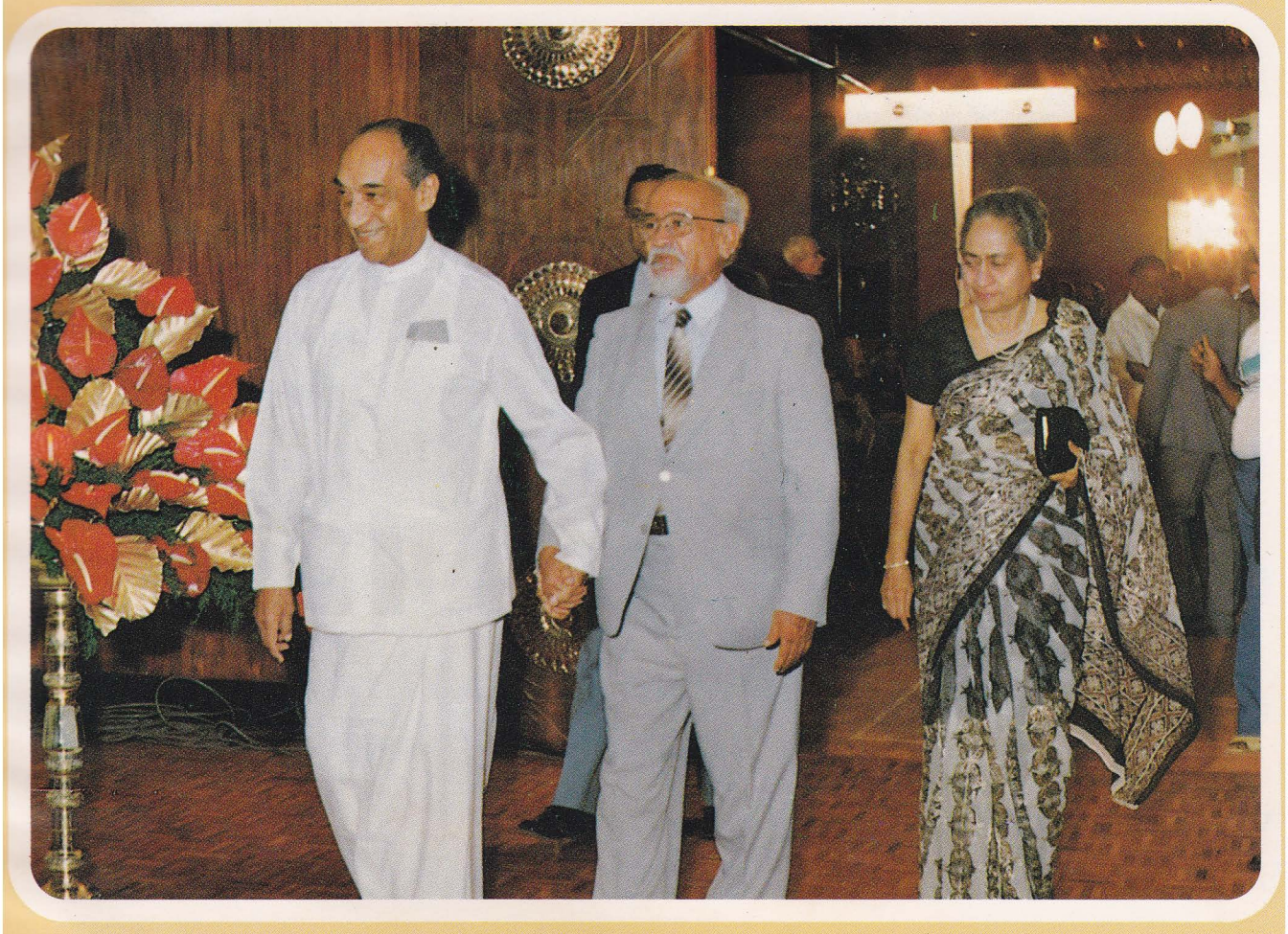

James Rutnam accompanied by His Excellency the President Mr. J.R. Jayewardene and Madam Jayewardene enter the Golden Ballroom of the Hotel Lanka Oberoi on 13th June 1985 for the Celebration Dinner.

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1. GREETINGS TO DR. JAMES T. RUTNAM

With pleasure genial Dr. Jim
We'll dine with you quite soon,
When you breast the tape at Eighty on
The thirteenth day of June.

On that festive big occasion
Grand Ball Room Oberoi
Will bustle with your many friends
Who wish you health and joy

Will guests recall the highlights of
Your colourful career?
The ardent, young romantic who
Braved bias and barrier

Defying social sanctions,
Convention and taboo,
Your story featured on the screen
Is now for all to view.

Researcher lone, collector rare,
An Alex. Johnston fan,
Persistent bidder at the polls,
A warm, large-hearted man.

Bibliophile, historian
And free-lance journalist,
Your precious gifts to knowledge show
The true philanthrophist.

Mervyn Casie Chetty.

2. JAMES THEVATHASAN RUTNAM

A.R.B. Amerasinghe

"Here I am, Eighty years old today. And if I had to live my life again, I would do it all. Exactly the same as I have done", said Jim Rutnam, throwing his hands up triumphantly, on the 13th of June 1985 at the Golden Ball Room of the Lanka Oberoi Hotel. I heard him, as hundreds of others did that night— Cabinet Ministers, judges, members of the diplomatic corps, officials, scholars, professionals from all disciplines, men and women of many lands and all sections of our Sri Lankan community who had gathered to raise a glass to a remarkable man of our time.

Jim was responding to a toast proposed by His Excellency J.R. Jayewardene, President of Sri Lanka. His Excellency and Jim have been close friends from the days that they had both been students at the Law College. Jim was then Prime Minister of the House of Commons of the law students. Although politics (and affairs of the heart) distracted Jim to such an extent that he abandoned both his studies at the University and Law Colleges, he never succeeded in entering a real legislative assembly.

In his own words "I stood for the State Council as a candidate from the Labour Party and was beaten, but not disgraced. I repeated my election bids on several other occasions as an independent candidate, and was defeated in every election. Once I was beaten by a small margin of votes and I won the election petition that followed". (*Tribune)* Rutnam polled 11,093 votes, M.D. Banda 12,652, Beddewela 1,484 and Alawatugoda 201.

The election that gave rise to the successful election petition was significant not only because it was a fine example of his tenacity in his unceasing battle for justice but also because it clearly demonstrated that his failure to be an elected representative of the people was no reflection on his policies or personality. Justice Hearne in unseating M.D. Banda on the basis of allegations of intimidation made by Rutnam in his election petition said: *(Rutnam v M. Dingiri Banda,* 1944, 45 New Law Reports 145 at p.155):

> "I hold that there was gross intimidation, that it was widespread in the area where Mr. Rutnam had good reason to count upon heavy voting in his favour and that it may *well* have prevented a majority of electors from returning the candidate whom they preferred."

A newspaper columnist, "The Whip", writing in his regular column in the *Times of Ceylon (Politics and Politicians)* of 22.10.43 tried to white wash the disgraceful affair:

> "The Nuwara Eliya by-election has been won and lost. M.D. Banda has won. Jim Rutnam has lost. The other two forfeit their deposits
>
> It was a creditable victory for Banda, but Jim is undaunted by his third failure. He has promised to be back in the arena once again. In Nuwara Eliya, Nanu Oya and Ragalla, Jim polled more than his victorious rival who was not entirely without Indian labour support.
>
> Jim's friends in Colombo are pained at his sentiments he expressed after his defeat. "Perhaps he was overwhelmed with disappointment", they say. His friends expect him to take his defeat in the spirit which has been so characteristic of him in all his undertakings so far. There may be some who will egg him on to this course of action and that, but Jim must know his friends.
>
> Balangoda, Bandarawela and Nuwara Eliya now have really capable men to represent them. Banda's popularity in the area in which he served for five years as a Government official was amply evident from the manner in which even the sick and the infirm and the aged of Walapone and Udahewaheta insisted on registering their votes. Banda is on the threshold of a career of public service which, from his past record, one may forecast, will end with distinction.
>
> Only one Minister actively participated in this election. Colonel John Lionel Kotelawala, Minister of Communications and Works. Another feather in his cap, for he has an uncanny way of spotting winners. Every candidate he has supported in the recent by-elections has won. Simon Abeywickreme, Thomas Amarasuriya, Bernard Jayasuriya, Francis Molamure and now M. D. Banda.
>
> Writing from Nuwara Eliya, a friend says that the Colonel is a tremendous draw at meetings. "He was like the Pied Piper of Hamelin. Wherever he went crowds thronged, lining the roads to get a glimpse of him."

I certainly saw something like it in Balangoda. One reason, I believe, is that he is fast becoming a first-rate speaker in Sinhalese. He quotes profusely from Ceylon History and Buddhist lore, and even Buddhist Philosophy: the Abidhamma."

James Rutnam's rejoinder was published in the *Times of Ceylon* of 26.10.1943.

"Sir", he said, "I have always enjoyed the gossipy comments of your weekly columnist The Whip, although I often disagreed with the views he expressed. In the present case, he has allowed himself to comment intimately about me...Jim Rutnam, as he so kindly calls me.

The Whip pays me a nice compliment saying that I have taken my earlier defeats in the proper spirit. But I am sorry I cannot even to oblige him or the friends whom he mentions or to earn a pat on my back from men like Mr. Siripala Samarakkody, retire from the present context without uttering my protest against the methods employed by my opponents to snatch a victory. The spirit in which a defeat is taken depends on the spirit in which a contest is fought.

My supporters were waylaid at carefully prepared places, assaulted and driven back to their homes. Does The Whip want me to remain dumb in the face of all this organized intimidation?

The Whip rushes to put a feather in the already well-feathered (thanks to The Whip) cap of Colonel J.L. Kotalawela "the one Minister who participated in this election." I do hope the gallant Colonel had no hand in the introduction for the first time, to Nuwara Eliya of methods with which some other electorates are familiar.

The gallant Colonel it was who came to Nuwara Eliya and raising the communal cry by piping the clarion call to the Sinhalese to vote for the Sinhalese candidate. I take my hat off to those far-sighted Sinhalese voters, especially those who reside in Nuwara Eliya,who refused to follow his lead.

The Whip who was not an eye-witness to this election, has in his enthusiasm drawn a moving picture of the aged and the sick of Walapone and Udahewaheta going to polling booths and not to infirmaries. Well, if he was present, he would have seen not only the aged and the infirm, but also the dead and the dying going to cast their votes!"

The remarks which had upset The Whip centered around Jim's assertion that the thousands of plantation workers of Indian origin who had been enfranchised were denied their right to vote by the use of disreputable tactics. For Jim, winning or losing an argument or an election was not the most important thing. He would, as The Whip himself admitted, accept it all in good grace. What he rebelled against was injustice. His claim that the Nuwara Eliya election was unfairly fought was fully vindicated. Then, as now, an independent judiciary was there to give redress where it was due and make Sri Lanka fit for democracy. In unseating M.D. Banda, Justice Hearne, observed (146) that:

"Freedom of choice is essential to the validity of an election and if by intimidation of voters, this freedom is prevented generally, the election is void.. .. If voters are prevented from going to the polls by threats or obstruction or denunciation and abuse, freedom of election in Ceylon will cease to exist. The successful candidate will be the one whose supporters have the ***power*** to record their votes and, as far as possible, to prevent the rival candidate's supporters from doing so. It would be utterly subversive of the principle of freedom of election."

After referring to specific instances of intimidation, Justice Hearne goes on to say (147):

> "It is impossible to conceive of a more astounding situation. Unmitigated hooligans had taken full control of affairs. They were deciding who were to be permitted to vote and who were to be turned away and they were doing this, it is to be noted, almost at the very portals of what has been called the "voters' hall of freedom, the polling booth."

On the question of Sinhalese voters claiming a right of precedence to vote, Justice Hearne commented (148) that:

> "The arrogation to itself by any class of voters of priority over any other class is completely devoid of legal sanction and the sooner Mr. Banda's supporters disabuse their minds of all pompous ideas of precedence, the better for them and for him. However deserving he may be of a Seat in the State Council, that is most emphatically not the way to get there."

Indeed it was unfortunate that M.D. Banda should have been unseated for hooliganism and violence, for he was, as Amita Abayasekera said (*Island* June 22, 1985) "a meek, mild and inoffensive man whom S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike once described as a 'sheep in sheep's clothing!".

However, he was held responsible. Asking the question (p.153) whether "these three rapscallions" were agents of Mr. Banda in the sense that in furthering his election, they were acting with his authority, express or implied?" Justice Hearne said (pp. 154—155):

> "Putting the matter at its lowest, the respondent was aware of their activities and adopted them as his own. But, in addition to this, difficult as it is of direct proof there is a very high degree of probability that these two brothers were acting with the express authority of the respondent. E.U.B. Ratnayake, a relation of the Samarakones, was possibly a volunteer. Mr. Banda may or may not have known of the keen interest he was taking in the election on his behalf.
>
> ...I am far from thinking that these offences were committed with Mr. Banda's sanction or connivance. I am even prepared to hold that they were committed contrary to his orders. He was his own "election agent" and was guilty of no election offence. But I cannot hold that he took all reasonable means for preventing the commission of corrupt and illegal practices."

Jim Rutnam's desire to be a politician goes back to the days of his youth.

At the age of sixteen he was already sufficiently inspired and provoked to write,

> I cannot rule my land
> For I am black
> If I had a white hand
> I'd have the knack.
>
> Our fathers were great men
> As all do tell
> They must have been white men
> To rule so well!

As a student at St. Joseph's College during the Le Goc era (he also spent some years at Manipay Hindu College and at St. Thomas' College during the "Stone age") he says *(The Tribune)* he heard

> "the thunder of Goonesingha, the Labour Leader, reverberating from the Railway grounds at Darley road during one of those early strikes. It was a memorable event which left a lasting impression on many of us. At that time Ceylon was slowly trying to assert its independence.
>
> Goonesingha, E.T. de Silva and others who had formed the Young Lanka League, and who were responsible for the clarion calls that came from the weekly journal *The People* were our daring political extremists. They found a prudent and responsible leader in Ponnambalam Arunachalam, a radical wolf in a conservative sheep's clothing. Arunachalam was then gathering the bold and timid ones together, patching up differences here and there and preparing for the humiliation and destruction of the Riots of 1915, a united counter-offensive against the British raj. Arunachalam was my own political guru, and if anybody gave me a pat on my back in those impressionable days, it was Goonesingha. I should also place E.T. de Silva at this altar."

Rutnam adds that

> "Despite occasional differences in politics, Goonesingha kept close to me to his dying day. A week before he entered hospital in 1967 and about a fortnight before he died, he brought me the manuscripts of his autobiography saying, "Jim, you are the man who will be able to look into this. A definitive biography of Goonesingha must be published, and when it is out, the country will discover how much faith, how much courage, how much steadfastness went into the making of this man who really broke open the doors of freedom for the workers. E.T. de Silva was struck down in his prime. Had he lived, he would surely have been our first Prime Minister, notwithstanding the caste to which he belonged."

Rutnam was one of the band of angry young men who joined the Young Lanka League and the Ceylon Labour Union. In 1925 he formed the Progressive Nationalist Party with S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike, R.S. S. Gunawardene, C. Ponnambalam (the first Secretary of the party who later became Mayor of Jaffna), A.J.M. de Silva , A. de Fonseka, D.N.W. de Silva, M.D. Wijesinghe (who placed the Felix Press almost free of charge at the disposal of the Party), S.B. Ranasinghe, Valentine S. Perera (at whose office at 119 Hulftsdorp Street they usually met) and others. The party described itself as an "advance party of the youth of Ceylon who aim to secure national emancipation" with the resolved object of attaining "such a form of self-government which is satisfactory in practice and consonant with our national honour."

As a trade unionist, Rutnam performed effectively for his time. E.C.T. Candappa recalls Rutnam's own graphic description of the role he played as the first President of the Labour Union at Nuwara Eliya:

> "It was here that I came to grips with our colonial masters in a grim battle. We had formed a Labour Union at Nuwara Eliya of which I was

elected first President.

I had to see the Manager of the Grand Motor Depot regarding some grievances. When I entered the office of the Manager, one Mr. Smith, presumably an ex-sergeant-major in the British Army, I found Smith apparently a patient listener. I therefore gained heart and recited at length all the grievances of the workers, and having finished, waited for his response. It was a terrible response that I got. Smith spat fire at me.

He said, 'I will give you five minutes to clear out of this place'.

I was taken aback. The lamb had become a lion and I answered the lion in the language of the jungle. I said 'I will give you three minutes to give me a satisfactory answer.'

It was now Smith's turn to look up. What could this *podian* (green horn is an approximate translation - Ed) do?

Curiously he bided his time for the ticks of 180 seconds to go by.

I sat glued to my chair. He sat in his. Both looked at the clock. Tick-tick-tick. My heart was pounding with every beat of the clock.

At long last three minutes came to an end. It was like three hours. Smith looked at me.

"Well?"

I looked at him, got up from my chair, took my hat and walking stick and walked deliberately out of his office to meet 100 pairs of eyes looking anxiously towards me from the work benches.

I downed my thumb as if to give the man in the ring the sign for the *coup de grace,* and out poured the humanity that was cooped up in the workshops in the wake of my steps on to the road.

Smith was aghast but the deed was done. A strike was on.

The strike did not end for nearly two months.

Blacklegs were recruited from all parts of the Island. We had sympathy strikes all over Nuwara Eliya. But those were colonial days. The heel of the European task master hovered over our heads. The strike I dare - say was broken. But the workers were not embittered. There were many to help them and I did not forfeit their friendship and loyalty."

The *Daily News* lashed out at Rutnam for leading the strike describing him as an "obstreporous schoolmaster who will soon have to take to his heels" in view of new legislation which was contemplated. Rutnam responded, as he later confessed *(Tribune)* "rather ungallantly", by stating that the editor, S. J. K. Crowther, was "a cantankerous ex-padre who should go to his pulpit and learn the text. Every labourer is worthy of his hire". (For a more sober view of these events, see Kumari Jayewardana's treatise on *The Rise of the Labour Movement in Ceylon* especially at pp. 257-258 and at p. 324 where she refers to Rutnam as a "radical nationalist teacher.")

Nuwara Eliya also has other memories for Jim Rutnam. For it was here that he was Chairman of the Reception Committee to Pandit Nehru when the Nehru family was on vacation. One of Jim's most prized possessions is a cable from Nehru postmarked 15 August 1947 reading: "I have been deeply touched by your telegram and hand you warm thanks for your greetings and good wishes - Jawaharlal Nehru."

Rutnam was picked to attend the sessions of the Ceylon National Congress held at Galle in 1926. He recalls his "travelling companions" to the conference as being "J. Aloysius Fernando, the famous Kalutara Proctor (a Roman Catholic) and the Rev. J.W. Perera Jayatunga, a devoted Christian Nationalist from Ambatenapahala." (*Tribune).*

However, Rutnam soon had to go his own way. Although he had been an admiring supporter of S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike, so much so that at Bandaranaike's first public lecture at the Y.M.C.A. Rutnam had in proposing the vote of thanks described him as "the hope of young Ceylon", yet he became disillusioned and unhappy with his policies. Rutnam says *(Tribune):*

> "Soon I came to disagree with Bandaranaike. For in the Progressive Nationalist Party Bandaranaike had incorporated a fundamental plank viz. to agitate for a Federal form of Government for Ceylon. He had further written a series of articles in the Press in May and June 1926 extolling the Federal idea. I joined with him in the controversy and opposed him in a long letter to the Press. This was published in the *Ceylon Morning Leader* in July 1926.... I was a member of the Committee of the Progressive Nationalist Party to draft a Scheme of Constitutional reforms to be submitted to the Ceylon National Congress, but I dissented from the general object by opposing the Federal system. At a meeting when the report was discussed, my dissent was ruled "out of order" by Chairman

Bandaranaike who declared that it was against the fundamental creed of the party."

In later years, he continued to fight separatist forces. For instance in 1969 Rutnam *(Ceylon Daily Mirror,* 28th & 29th May and *Tribune* 25th May) scoffed at Suntheralingam's agitation for *Eylom* reported in the *Observer* of 15th May 1969. After stating that

> "Our Sinhalese brothers and sisters who are ethnically the same as the Tamils and only linguistically different",

he urged those in the North and the East to be patient, for

> "they too have a conscience and the nobler among them who undoubtedly form the majority are bound to see the error of their ways soon. Nothing is lost by waiting. The life of nations does not end with three score years and ten. Our Professor has introduced a new English word to Geography. His 'Eylom' which is a philological monstrosity is understood to stand for the old Tamil word transcribed into English as "Izham" with a long "i" and with a "zh" phonetic term for the old and inadequate sound of 'I'. But 'Isham' really stands for the entire island of Ceylon and it has been in use for a very long time with the equivalent Elu word "Hela".

The break finally came when, Bandaranaike supported by R.S.S. Gunawardene, challenged Goonesingha for the Maradana seat. Rutnam's loyalty to his mentor gave him no other choice.

Although he made little or no progress as a candidate for the legislature, Rutnam made a significant and lasting contribution to the life and thought of Sri Lanka in a myriad other ways. Hence he describes himself as a "successful failure"

As Secretary of the school debating team, as a committee member of the Union Society of the University, as Prime Minister of the Law College House of Commons, as Speaker of the Y.M.C.A. Forum, he agitated for political reform. With D.S. Senanayake, A.W.H. Abeysundera, D.B. Jayatilaka and G.K.W. Perera (S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike and J.R. Jayewardene joined it later) Rutnam formed a political study group which met regularly at the Senanayake residence, "Woodlands", to explore ways and means of finding a sound theoretical base for their strategies and future plans. Many an important speech in the Legislature has been based on Rutnam's research. These include D.S. Senanayake's speech for the abolition of capital punishment.

Rutnam's knowledge and research not only benefited politicians. It also helped many a scholar. Professor T. Nadaraja in his monumental treatise on *The Legal System of Ceylon in its Historical Setting* (1972) says that he is

> "much obliged to the late Sir Arunachalam Mahadeva and to Mr. James T. Rutnam, not only for persuading me to resume work on this book when the pressure of administrative duties at the University had compelled me to abandon it in dispair but also for directing me to much information I could not have obtained in any other way. The latter placed at my disposal his collection of books and papers relating to the Chief Justice, Alexander Johnston.... who was described by the first Ceylonese President of the Royal Asiatic Society (Ceylon Branch) as "the founder of literary and scientific research in British Ceylon".

Dr. Kumari Jayewardene in her treatise on *The Rise of the Labour Movement in Ceylon* (1972, Duke University Press) also acknowledges Rutnam's "invaluable help and criticism."

And Professor Indrapala (1975) said:

> "Almost every young historian of modern Sri Lanka in our University campus today has at one time or other stepped in at Baron's Court, the residence of Mr. Rutnam, seeking his advice and guidance. Some of them, including a few reputed ones had even revised their drafts in the light of information supplied by him".

Rutnam not only persuaded scholars to revise their views but also reached out to a wider audience through the news media.

Rutnam's contributions through the newspapers began at the age of eighteen with his tribute to Arunachalam which J.L.C. Rodrigo, the Editor of the *Ceylon Morning Leader,* published in the editorial page. Among those who helped and encouraged him in his journalistic career were J.L.C. Rodrigo who, he recalls, "indulgently crossed the t's and dotted the i's, " the Corea brothers, George E. de Silva, A.P. Van Reyk, his uncle Gate Mudaliyar C. Thiagaraja and his father, Denis Henry Seeva Rutnam, the owner of the Colombo Transport Company.

It was a letter that he wrote to the press in August 1926 that later brought on the *Suriya Mal* Campaign. In his letter, Rutnam pleaded for the distribution of Poppy-day collections among the disabled in both the Allied and German camps. "It would be", he wrote, "a noble gesture of victory to feel for the distress of the vanquished." This was followed by a

meeting at the Town Hall presided over by G.K.W. Perera. Among the other courageous speakers were A.W.H. Abeysundera, A.T.G. Britto, Valentine Perera, A.J.M. de Silva and Aelian Perera. It was at this meeting that Stanley de Zoysa made his first public speech, coming straight from the class room. Rutnam joined in the campaign to picket poppy-sellers and to paste "large posters on the walls of the town especially in front of fashionable poppy sellers' houses in the Cinnamon Gardens" reading "Why support Poppy Day Fund? Ceylon's needs are greater. Charity begins at home." The campaigners had a measure of support both from politicians and others. D.S. Senanayake gave financial support for the hire of Tower Hall and for printing. However, he wished it to be kept a secret since D.B. Jayatilake did not approve of the movement. The movement also had the support of the Cosmopolitan Crew of Lauries Road, Bambalapitiya. This was a society established in 1925 "to promote unity and co-operation between the different races, creeds and classes resident and thus build up a Ceylonese nation." Membership was restricted to those who were not members of political associations or a racial or religious body. C. Ponnambalam was the Commander of the Crew, Hema Basnayake (later Chief Justice) was a member of the Administrative Council and Harry Gunawardena, the elder brother of Philip Gunawardena, was the Crew's Treasurer.

The anti-poppy day movement was converted into the *Suriya Mal* campaign when Rutnam and others realised that by selling 'Sun Flowers' they could offer a positive rather than a negative approach. Many a prominent politician of later years began his career with this campaign. In Rutnam's words: "From our movement sprang the ultra-leftists of today."

Professor K.M. de Silva *(A History of Sri Lanka,* Oxford University Press 1981, p.434) commenting on the campaign says:

> "The entry of Marxists into politics had come through the Suriya Mal movement which had its origins in the dissatisfaction of some Sri Lankan war veterans over the proportion of the funds collected by the sale of poppies on Remembrance day which was to be retained for local use. With the support of the Youth Leagues in the city of Colombo, a Ceylon Ex-servicemen's Association was formed in 1926, and set about establishing a campaign to rival the sale of poppies. The suriya flower was chosen for the purpose, and it was used to collect funds for Sri Lankan ex-servicemen. In the early 1930s the Youth leagues came under the control of Marxists who proceeded to take the leadership in the suriya mal campaign as well. The latter was continued up till the outbreak of the Second World War as an anti-imperialist campaign, pure and simple, with no reference any longer to the island's war veterans and disabled soldiers."

The same sense of justice which inspired Rutnam to launch the anti-Poppy day campaign also led him to defend other causes. Two instances, one relating to Mahatma Gandhi and other relating to Rev. A. G. Frazer, deserve special mention.

Mahatma Gandhi is alleged in the *Madras Catholic Leader* of 26th March 1931 to have remarked that "Every nation's religion is as good as any other. Certainly India's religions are adequate for her people. We need no converting spirituality."

On 11th April 1931 James Rutnam wrote (see Rutnam Felicitation Volume 1975) as follows to the Mahatma:

> "I am a Christian, but I certainly am against Christianity being brought as an instrument of Imperialism. But as a message of love and fellowship, who will deny it a place in Indian life? In this great struggle for swaraj, are we not fighting for liberty, liberty to worship our God as we please, liberty to convince our fellows who are willing to be convinced by us, liberty to be convinced by our fellows who can convince us? Is India so bigoted as to think that within her are confined all the riches of the world, all the treasures of knowledge and human experience?
>
> Religion, I deem, is a matter between an individual and his own conception of right conduct. Religion belongs to the great realm of thought and personal experience which knows neither boundaries nor nations ....But I would like to know, if you made those remarks, what you meant by them, for I confess they are a mystery to me."

The Mahatma, writing from Borsad on May 3rd, said:

> "Dear Friend,
> I am publishing your letter and a brief reply to it in the forthcoming issue of *Young India.* I hope that the reply will satisfy you and those friends who had any misgivings about my attitude.
>
> Yours sincerely,
> M.K. Gandhi".

To digress for a moment, this letter was significant for another reason. In 1927, Rutnam, who was editor of the *Law College Students Magazine,* and

others had gone to persuade the Mahatma who was on a visit to Ceylon to write an article for the journal. When he asked the Mahatma for his autograph, he had offered to give it in exchange for a promise that Rutnam would always wear *khaddar.* He refused to give such an undertaking but with this letter he got the autograph!

On 7th May 1931 the Mahatma published a reply in *Young India* referring to his earlier article in the same paper and stating as follows:

> "It might be as well to add that in mentioning, Hinduism, Islam, Zorastrianism, etc. as India's religions, I had no desire to claim them as India's exclusively or to exclude Christianity. The issue was Christianity on the one hand claimed as the one true religion and other religions on the other being false. In joining issue I contended that the great world religions other than Christianity professed in India were no less true than Christianity. It was thus neither relevant nor necessary for me to assert before Christian missionaries and their protogonists that Christianity was true.
>
> Moreover, with my known partiality for the Sermon on the Mount and my repeated declarations that its author was one of the greatest among the teachers of mankind I could not suspect that there would be any charge against me of underrating Christianity. As for Christian Indians, I count among them many warm friends and I have had no difficulty whatsoever in establishing friendly touch with the Christian masses wherever I have gone. Nor is there any fear of my estranging even the foreign missionaries among whom I claim many personal friends. The attack against me has therefore surprised me not a little especially because the views I have enunciated have been held by me since 1916 and were deliberately expressed in a carefully written address read before a purely missionary audience in Madras and since repeated on many a Christian platform. The recent criticism has but confirmed the view, for the criticism has betrayed intolerence even of friendly criticism. The missionaries know that in spite of my outspoken criticism of their methods, they have in India and among non-Christians no warmer friend than I. And I suggest to my critics that there must be something wrong about their method or, if they prefer, themselves when they will not brook sincere expression of an opinion different from theirs. In India under swaraj I have no doubt that foreign missionaries will be at liberty to do their proselytizing, as I would say, in the wrong way, but they would be expected to bear with those who, like me, may point out that in their opinion the way is wrong"

Rutnam was by no means taking a bigoted stand in favour of any particular group of people. He was simply concerned that the freedom of everyone to challenge beliefs and explore the truth must be safeguarded. On his seventy first birthday Rutnam said *(Tribune).*

> "I have tried to be charitable knowing only too well that if I knew everything I would have forgiven everything. In my own mind I have challenged all beliefs, but have never been sure of my own answers."

And in his search for the truth he spared no pains and he spared no one. In his defence of Frazer *(The Rev. A.G. Frazer and the riots of 1915* published in the *Ceylon Journal of Historical and Social Studies,* New series Vol. 1 July - December 1973 No. 2). Rutnam completely clears Frazer's name with regard to the part he was alleged by E.W. Perera to have played in supporting the officials in a pamphlet denouncing the Sinhalese for alleged conspiracy and anti-government organised rebellion and winning over the Highland Chiefs during the riots of 1915. Rutnam waded through masses of correspondence and confidential documents in order to defend Frazer and explained that the cloud over Frazer had remained for want of access to them. "Today", he says,

> "we are familiar with masses of private correspondence, secret papers, love letters and other evidence of the lives of great and little men who have lived their days and passed away, laid bare to the public gaze. These make the characters real and human, not mere images graven for adoration as tribal gods or household deities. Truth the greatest of all human objectives, is thus vindicated".

Another notable instance where Rutnam came to the aid of a national figure under attack was in his defence of James D' Alwis. Kamal de Abrew had censured D' Alwis' reference to Sri Lankans as "Natives" and "the artful sophistry of Buddhism". In a heated debate in the press Rutnam defended D' Alwis. (See *Times Weekender* of 31st May and *Tribune* 11th May 1969, *Times Weekender* 7th and 14th June and *Tribune* 6th and 13th July 1969). Rutnam's view was that one must not judge a man or generation by what he says out of their context.

James Rutnam had no formal training as a historian. Yet, as, Angus-Butterworth in his biographical study of *Ten Master Historians* (University Press, Aberdeen 1961) says:

"The great historians have not been professionals. They have devoted themselves naturally to historical research and the writing of history in mature life, although even then combined with other occupations."

Rutnam combined his historical research with numerous other activities - Trade Union leadership, politics, journalism, teaching (he taught at Uva College, Badulla, Wesley College, Colombo and was Principal of St. Xavier's College, Nuwara Eliya from 1928—30), Guarantee Broker to Carson Cumberbatch & Co. Ltd. (1932—1947), Rice Expert of the Ceylon Government delegation to Burma in 1940, Rice Surveyor to the Ceylon Government and Bank of Ceylon (1941—1943), Shipping Agent, and ship broker (he is an Associate of the Institute of Chartered Ship Brokers of London), Founder-President of the German Democratic Republic Friendship Association and a Founder Member of the United Nations Association of Ceylon. However, he did not wait till he was advanced in years to begin his work as a historian. He started with his work on the introduction of trial by jury when he was yet a law student. For this he was awarded the coveted Walter Pereira Prize for Legal Research at the Ceylon Law College. Ever since then he has been travelling around the world collecting data on the man who introduced the jury system in Sri Lanka - Sir Alexander Johnston. It is hoped that his long awaited work on Johnston will be published before long.

Perhaps it will, if that were possible at all, enhance his great reputation as a biographer. One recalls the fact that his work on Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of his birth in 1953 was published by the Government in Sinhala, Tamil and English. Incidentally, this led him to examine the work of William Digby - Arunachalam's mentor, and to the acquisition of the valuable Digby papers. (Indrapala 1985).

Several biographical sketches by Rutnam have appeared from time to time in the newspapers including one on Sir Arunachalam Mahadeva *(Ceylon Daily Mirror* 13th June, *Tribune* 15th June and *Morning Star* 13th June 1969) and another on Gate Mudaliyar C. Thiagarajah *(Ceylon Daily Mirror* and the *Tribune* 6th April 1969).

The depth and range of his historical writings has been considerable. extending from pre and proto-history (e.g. see his paper entitled *A Megalithic Burial Site at Anaikudai, Jaffna* read to the Jaffna Archaeological Society) to our own times. H.A.I. Goonetilleke in the Preface to his great work, *A Bibliography of Ceylon,* 1973 calls Rutnam the *"aficionado* of the British period of Ceylon history." Professor K. Indrapala *(Lanka Guardian)* observes in his article entitled *A True Scholar* that, although modern history has been Rutnam's forte,

"He is not one who favours narrow specialisation and has shown as much zeal for the medieval and ancient history of Sri Lanka as for the modern. His writings on Frazer of Trinity College, the Polonnaruwa Colossus and the Tomb of Elara clearly reveal that he is at home in all the periods of the island's history...Thorough in his investigation, critical in his approach and dedicated to his research, James is a master of words which he puts together very elegantly. A scholar of true universality, his intellectual personality is perfectly imaged in his fluent style."

E.C.T. Candappa writing in the *Ceylon Observer* of 26th April 1968 makes the following assessment of Rutnam's writings:

"He also calls himself a "journalist of sorts" From a very early age he has contributed articles to the local press, both in stylish prose and that elegant verse cultivated by genteel people of a by-gone age. And although there are sheaves of clippings saved through the years, a collection begun lovingly by a doting father and then continued by a devoted and loving wife, future generations will hardly remember Rutnam for his writings.

What will earn him a niche of fame? What will make him a part, even a modest unspectacular part, of the tapestry of this country's history?

His scholarship, his dedication to learning, to the pursuit of knowledge for its own sake, his abiding love of books and writing, his patient determination to trace matters to their origins - the mark of the true scholar - these have enabled him to make a lasting contribution to the country's cultural attainments."

Professor Bertram Bastiampillai *(Island,* 13th June 1985) comments that Rutnam

"made his entry into the charmed circle of academic historians with his invaluable contributions both to ancient and modern history of Sri Lanka. He challenged whatever was a mystery and unravelled the mysteries and made clear to the reader the truth. His quest for academic truth was indeed sedulous and versatile as his many publications do prove."

Rutnam may not have said the last word on any subject he has written or spoken on, be it politics,

history or geneology. Indeed there is a great deal that will continue to be controversial, and would perhaps be demonstrated to be hopelessly incorrect. Yet one is entertained and stimulated by his writings. In his paper on *The Tomb of Elara,* published by the Jaffna Archaeological Society in 1981, where he quesions the ancient beliefs regarding Dutugemunu's tomb, he proceeds to conclude that the ash in the burial mound "may not be human ash, far less 2000 years; but if at all it is so, the likely one to whom it belongs is Elara".

And in his paper on the *Polonnaruwa Colossus* read at the conference of The International Association of Tamil Research held at Jaffna in January 1974, he attacks another fondly held belief and concludes that the famous statue is "not that of Parakrama Bahu or Vijaya Bahu. It represents a typical Indian *rsi* or sage. In accordance with the circumstances of the history of Sri Lanka, at the probable time it was erected, the statue would undoubtedly relate to the Tamils from South India who were Saivities and known to esteem the sage Agastya as their tribal divinity. The statue thus should be a representation of the sage Agastya, patron sage (as Nilakanta Sastri would have it) of Tamil civilisation".

Perhaps one of the most interesting pieces of detection was that relating to the portrait of the Queen of Kandy. Dr. Andreas Nell, the great scholar and antiquarian, in 1917 questioned the prevailing view that the portrait of the Queen of Kandy that had appeared in the *Oriental Journal* of London in 1934 was by William Daniell, R.A. According to Nell, the portrait was the work of Samuel Daniell, William's brother. Nell had hoped to submit a further note on the identity of the Queen but died without doing so. Rutnam re-opened the questions with a letter to the *Ceylon Daily News* of 16th February 1982 and in a well-reasoned paper at a symposium held at the Sri Lanka Foundation Institute on 8th January 1983 chaired by Mr. H. W. Jayewardene, Q.C., he concluded that the Queen was Muttu Kannamal, King Muttusamy's wife. The artist he said was Samuel Daniell. The date it was drawn was sometime between 1805 and 1811 and the place where it was drawn was very likely Ceylon, although south India could not be excluded.

Asa Briggs once wrote that "History is concerned not only with facts but with speculations of this kind and the debates surrounding them." And few would hesitate to pay tribute to James Rutnam as a great historian of our times, however controversial his work may have been sometimes.

Although James had worked hard and long, recognition took time to come. In 1984, the Government made Rutnam, a Justice of the Peace for the whole island. On May 6, 1972 S. Gunawardena hailed James Rutnam in the *Ceylon Daily News* as an "unsung scholar" and called for the conferment of an honorary degree. The University of Jaffna, of which he became a Faculty Member and later a member of the Council, conferred the degree of Doctor of Letters on him at its first convocation. He was elected President of the Jaffna Archaeological Society which published a felicitation volume in his honour in 1975. He was elected a Member of the Governing Council of the Sri Lanka Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society.

Scholarship, which Indrapala (1975) says is "the breath" of Rutnam's life, probably runs in his blood as well, for he is the great grandson of John Sinnakuddiar Tappan who was one of the earliest graduates of the Batticotta Seminary of the American Christian Mission in Jaffna.

The name 'Tappan' was given to his ancestor by a couple from New England, U.S.A., John and Sara Salisbury Tappan. It seems that the American Missionaries conferred the names of those wealthy Americans who spent for the education of a child in Ceylon on that child. Rutnam's mother, Alice Rathenam Dwight, probably acquired her name in this way. The *Lowell Sunday Sun* of Massachusetts, USA of January 3rd 1971 refers to Rutnam's extensive research in various American Universities and other institutions tracing the geneology of the Tappans and Dwights. He had among other interesting facts discovered that the American Tappans were descended from a Tappan from Yarmouth, England, in 1637 and had distinguished himself in the Anti Slavery Campaign at New England. Jim's own connection with the American Missionaries goes back to June 13th 1905 when he was born at the McCleod Hospital in Inuvil, Jaffna.

Rutnam acknowledged his debt to the American Missionaries in his paper entitled *The Earliest American Impact on Sri Lanka* which was published in the *Ceylon Journal of Historical and Social Studies* Vol. VI New series, No. 2, July-December 1976.

Of his work as a geneologist, Indrapala (1975) says that

> "Rutnam has few peers in the country. The uncanny instinct that he displays in the pursuit of clues for the reconstruction of family trees - be it Sinhalese, Tamil or European - has always amazed both layman and researcher alike. The skill with which he smells his way through the shadowy alleys and dusty corridors of the old-world mansions of some of our leading

families, sensing the path of their blood with the nose of a sleuth-hound is known to many."

Rutnam's passion for digging up the past has sent him to various parts of the world including India, the U.K., U.S.S.R. and China. His love of books and fine writing (which he attributes to his teacher at St. Joseph's College, J.P. de Fonseka) gave him a massive collection. With characteristic generosity he has shared these. For instance when W.S. Lewis of Yale University (who had edited and published the Walpole Correspondence) asked Rutnam "like most Americans would do" how much he wanted for the two hundred Walpole letters Rutnam had, he told him he would not sell them but would give them to him for nothing. The Jaffna University Library received his massive collection of books on permanent loan.

Perhaps it will be the Evelyn Rutnam Institute Building which was generously donated by James Rutnam and his children, Rajah, Indrani, Chandran, Jeyam, Iswari, Denis, Padmini and George that will be his most tangible contribution. The foundation stone of that magnificent building was laid on 28th October 1970 by His Excellency Professor Howard Wriggins, the Ambassador of the U.S.A. in Sri Lanka, and it was formally inaugurated by his successor, His Excellency Donald R. Toussaint on 10th May 1981.

Appropriately the motto of the Institute is *Unmaiyum Anbum* - truth and love. Enough has been said of Rutnam's pursuit of truth and his concern for the suffering masses. No account of Rutnam will, however, be complete without some reference to Rutnam the lover - lover of Ivy, lover of Evelyn lover of humankind. Quoting Bertrand Russel, whose works he greatly admired, Jim once said *(Tribune)* that the passions that have governed his life have been "the longing for love, the search for knowledge and the unbearable pity for the suffering of the people."

Jim lost his mother when he was only nine years old and he never had the love and care of a woman in his early years. When he was only eighteen years old he fell desperately in love. The girl was a Sinhalese. And after five years of courtship, the affair broke up. Jim recalls (*In the Spring-Some verses by James,* 1977 - only fifty copies of the book were published)

> "It lasted for five years but did not end up in marriage, solely because of obstruction from parents on both sides. Each party went his or her separate way and was very happily married. The girl became an endearing wife, a fond mother of several children and a doting grandmother. The boy too went through a similar experience and had a supremely happy married life, indeed a very exceptional one, and is now a great-grandfather.

At that time, however, Jim must have suffered great anguish. In a poem called *Despised* he wrote *(In the Spring,* 1977):

> Is it for this, is it for this
> That I have waited all these years?
> Despising all I sought thee, dear,
> And now despised am left in tears.

In another poem addressed to the girl's mother he says:

> You loved her I know with a love that is strong
> And you know that I love her as much as you do
> But you thought of my race and you thought it was wrong
> That a Tamil should marry your Sinhalese *du.*
>
> But now you have changed and have come to know
> That a love that is true cannot be killed
> That races and castes are but empty show
> For when hearts are united, by death they are stilled.

Hardly had he recovered from his bitter disappointment when he fell in love again with another Sinhalese girl - Evelyn Wijeyaratne. However, notwithstanding opposition, he succeeded in marrying her and enjoying an "exceptionally happy marriage". Jim recalls *(Tribune)* that

> "Black flags were flying in my father's house when I married outside my community. My wife who mothered eight children, eventually won my father's heart as well. She is now dead. Her children arise and call her blessed, as do I. The Library in the Evelyn Rutnam Institute now at the Jaffna Campus is her Taj Mahal".

The Institute provides facilities for the study of inter-cultural relations towards the promotion of understanding and fellowship. It is particularly interested in the study of past and present cultures and in the exchange of knowledge relating to such cultures, S. R. Asirwathan (*Island,* 12th June 1985) explains that

> "What is meant by *inter-cultural studies* is not only multi-cultural studies. It has an additional dimension of the study of inter-cultural relations, cultural inter-dependence, cross-fertilization of cultures and above all global unity in diversity".

Speaking at his residence, Baron's Court, 35, Guilford Crescent Colombo 7, which was the original headquarters of the Evelyn Rutnam Institute, James Rutnam, the first President of the Humanist Society expressed *(Morning Star,* January 9, 1970) the essential ideas behind the Institute and the Society in the following terms:

> "We hold Man to be sacred. We declare that this life is precious whether he be king or commoner, and that there is no justification whatever to deprive him of his existence. The accident of birth does not make one man superior to another. We believe in human brotherhood. Our Society will endeavour to introduce these fundamental principles into human conduct.
>
> Our Society is open to all who value human life as our most supreme inheritance. As a Society we neither uphold nor denounce any religion.
>
> We do not make a fetish of race or religion or of theism, polytheism, pantheism, atheism, capitalism or communism.
>
> Our members are free to hold their own individual views. But as a Society we are not anti-Religion, anti-Communist, anti-Capitalist, anti-Russian, anti-American, anti-Chinese, anti-German, anti-Indian, anti-Tamil, anti-Sinhalese, anti-Arab, anti-Jew, anti-Black, anti-White - in short we are not anti any group, sect or institution.
>
> We seek maximum benefit for humanity from the stupendous technological revolution of our times that is bull-dozing the barriers that divide mankind....We are against persecution or discrimination of any group or people, caste or race because of the accident of birth.
>
> We believe in the evolution and progressive amalgamation of the cultural heritage of Man, which, we maintain, does not exclusively belong to any single group or sect. Indeed we claim we are the heirs of all the ages.
>
> We seek and emphasize points of accord and endeavour to strengthen factors that go to establish the integrity of the human family. For long we have had fratricidal decimation caused by wars of religion and racial arrogance. The time has now come for mankind to realize that we are on the brink of total extinction because of pride, greed and fear.
>
> We are aware that words and terms have often meant different things to different men. We shall therefore endeavour to solve problems and differences by the human approach, as man to man, bearing in mind that if we had understood everything we would have forgiven everything.
>
> We believe in the inherent goodness of Man. While journeying in our unending quest of knowledge, which is in fact a search for the Truth, we bear no malice but love towards all. Thus our motto, ***Veritas et Caritas,*** Truth and Love."

Former Chief Justice, Mr. M.C. Sansoni, in his report on the Presidential Commission of Inquiry into the August-September 1977 incidents, referred to the fact that two historians, Dr. James Rutnam and Dr. Paul Casperz had spoken of the affinity which had long existed between the ancient religions and races of Sri Lanka and he concluded, as Rutnam did:

> "We are heirs to the national legacy of Sri Lanka. We find Buddhist monuments in Jaffna, we also find Hindu shrines and temples throughout the island. Some of the greatest Buddhists were Tamils".

His wife, Evelyn, was a kindred soul. She shared Jim's interest in human rights affairs and was a Committee Member of the UN Association of Sri Lanka. S. P. Amarasingham writing in the *Tribune* of 19th September 1964, shortly after she had gone to her reward, said:

> "Evelyn Rutnam who moved unobstrusively in every circle, never losing the common touch, presided at a home in Cinnamon Gardens, Colombo, which was known to her friends as Freedom hall where the white and the black, the brown and the yellow, the gay and the reserved, the loyalist and the rebel, all met on a footing of equality and broke bread together".

And Jim says,

> "I married for love in 1933, against my parents' wishes. She was a Sinhalese and I a Tamil. She came to me to learn and remained to be my teacher. She looked after me and my books. She arranged and dusted them, but never moved them from their appointed place without first asking me. Only one favour she asked of me - never to bring more than one book at a time into the parlour or bedroom, for the sake of order. I obliged her. She was my constant friend and companion. She guided and inspired me. She was an exceptional woman."

Jim has missed her these many twenty one years. And, in his response to the toast on the night of his celebration dinner, lamented her absence that evening and ended his speech with the words, "Now, you go to sleep and I to dream."

And his dream, his "fondest wish", as expressed in the introduction to his collected writings published in 1969 under the title *Mixed Grill* was simply this:

"May my beloved country which has achieved freedom also attain enlightenment".

Is it surprising then that it was to Jim Rutnam that W.S. Senior dedicated his famous poem, *The Call of Lanka?*

As we wish him well and wish him a long enough life to see the dream of an united Sri Lanka come true, may we all re-dedicate our lives to the cause of truth and love and vow to keep dreaming and hoping and trying, as Jim has done undaunted, these many, difficult and dark years, that we may indeed receive enlightenment.

As he waltzed and even jived with his granddaughter that night of his eightieth birth anniversary celebration - ballroom dancing was always one of his major relaxations, fishing being another - he was President of the Angler's Club -, this benign, placid, short, rotund little man hardly seemed like the fire brand he has been. Perhaps the years have mellowed him. But one thing has been constant - James Thevathasan Rutnam has been a perfect gentleman.

Acknowledgements

Much has been excellently written of James T. Rutnam from time to time. Professor K. Indrapala as Editor of the James Rutnam Felicitation Volume, published by the Jaffna Archaeological Society in 1975 and more recently in Vol. 8 No. 5 of the *Lanka Guardian* of July 1st 1985 in his article *A True Scholar* made two such contributions. Others include E.C.T. Candappa's *Profile - Humanist who reached for the moon (The Ceylon Observer* 26th April 1968) and Amita Abayasekera in his column *This is My Island* - in the *Island* of 20th, 21st and 22nd June 1985 under the caption *Gentleman Jim;* S.H. Hoffman in the *Sun* of June 10 1983 under the title *A Giant of our Times.* Rienzie Wijeyeratne in his column *People* in the *Island* of 16th June 1983, D.J. Moldrich in the *Sunday Times* of 14th September, 1980 under the caption *The Amazing Jimmy Rutnam,* Christine Motha in the *Daily News* of 13th June 1985 in her article *James Rutnam - A Survivor All The Way,* Roshan Pieris in the *Sunday Observer* of June 9th 1985 in *Dr. James T. Rutnam - At eighty-fine symbol of his times,* Professor Bertram Bastiampillai on June 13th 1985 in the *Island* on *Ageing graciously with time.*

This article is based on their work and it is only the thread that binds the posy that is my own. Much is owed to Rutnam's *Some Memories and Reflections* published in the *Tribune* of June 12 1976. Most of all I am grateful to Jim Rutnam himself for the many hours we spent together talking of his life and times.

3. THE PREHISTORY OF SRI LANKA: AN OUTLINE

S. U. Deraniyagala

Environment

Sri Lanka is an island situated some 40km off the southern tip of India, at ca. 80° east long. by 8° north lat. The form is ovate, with a maximum length and breadth of ca. 400 and 220km respectively. Physiographically, the island is composed of three peneplains separated by escarpments. These peneplains are at ca. 0-30m, 420-750m and 1,600-2400m, above sea level, with the highest forming a central massif. The climate is equatorial, with average annual temperatures ranging between ca. 12°C in the mountains and ca. 33°C in the coastal plains, and there is very little seasonal fluctuation. The pattern of rainfall is dominated by the Southwest Monsoon during the summer, supplemented by tropical cyclonic and convectional rains during the remaining months. The country can be divided into two major ecozones, the Wet Zone in the west and southwest and the Dry Zone encompassing the balance two-thirds of the island. The Wet Zone in itself is divisible into lowlands, uplands and highlands, and the Dry Zone into arid, semi-arid and dry lowlands, dry uplands and the intermediate-dry lowlands. It is important to bear in mind that the central mountains act as a rain trap for the summer Southwest Monsoon, which then traverses the Dry Zone as a dry katabatic wind. Winter witnesses cyclonic rain storms affecting the summer-dry Dry Zone. The Wet Zone averages around 2,500mm of rain per annum, whereas the Dry Zone varies between 950 and 1,900mm.

Chronology

Sri Lankan prehistory has a fairly extensive literature. The initial probes took place around 1880, and a relatively sustained course of enquiry has been maintained ever since, latterly almost entirely under the auspices of the Department of Archaeology of the Government of Sri Lanka.

Potentially, the oldest Quaternary deposits in Sri Lanka comprise the Ratnapura Beds. These are alluvial sediments filling the strike valleys in the lowlands of the south-western Wet Zone. They consist of sands, silts and clays ranging up to 30m or more in depth, with gravel intercalations in the basal levels. These gravels have occasionally yielded artefacts of a chopper industry, termed the Ratnapura Industry, made of quartz and chert. The gravels also contain a fossil fauna, the Ratnapura Fauna, which includes palaeoloxodont elephants, two rhinoceri, and the hippopotamus *Hexaprotodon palaeindicus*. The last occurs in the second major aggradation cycle of the Pleistocene alluvia in peninsular India, which, by correlation with coastal tracts in southeast India and hence by eustatic altimetry, I have tentatively dated to the last interglacial period at ca. 125,000 - 80,000 BP. A discovery of some significance is that of a probable hominoid incisor tooth, which has been compared to *Gigantopithecus*, and of a hominid premolar, in separate localities of the Ratnapura Beds. Then there are bovine fossils, smaller than anything assignable to a water buffalo or gaur, which could be ancestral to modern *Bos indicus*.

However, despite the indubitably Pleistocene element in the Ratnapura Beds, the chrono-stratigraphy of these sediments is still far from clear. Certain artefactual contents, faunal elements and uranium assays have indicated that some of the beds have undergone redeposition, thereby complicating the stratigraphy. A detailed survey, employing careful coring, will be required before further stratigraphic resolution can be achieved.

Moving on to another set of Quaternary sediments, the coastal tracts of the semi-arid zone, particularly in the northern sector, are characterised by large expanses of sheet gravels capped by sands which have undergone latosolic weathering resulting in a colour range of buff to crimson. These two beds in combination are referred to as the Iranamadu Formation. The sands have conclusively been identified as being ancient coastal dune sands weathered into aeoleanites. The basal gravels are coastal alluvial in facies, and thus hypothetically amenable to eustatic altimetric studies.

In 1972, the present writer set out to ascertain the antiquity of two separate sets of deposits of the Iranamadu Formation at Bundala in southern Sri Lanka. In the first instance, the basal gravel was at ca. 8m above present sea level, capped by ca. 4m of ancient dune sands. The excavations yielded stone age occupation horizons within the gravels and in the overlying sands. The artefacts in the gravels were typologically indeterminate, due to alluvial attrition of diagnostic traits. However, the implements in the sands were clearly microlithic, with a strong element of geometric forms such as lunates and triangles. Unfortunately, no organic remains had been preserved,

and hence it was not possible to radiocarbon date these deposits. Recently, however, it has become possible to date dune sands by their thermoluminescence, and Dr. Ashok Singhvi's and Mr. D. Sengupta's (Physical Research Laboratory, India) assays on the samples from the excavation site have dated them to ca. 28,000 TL BP. This dating tallied exceedingly well with Dr. Rita Gardner's (Geography Department, Oxford University) radiocarbon dating of ca. 25,500 BP for the 8m beach in southern India. The only problem was to reconcile the occurrence of geometric microliths with such an early date, particularly since Gardner's sediments in India are not reported to have contained artefacts.

The resolution of this problem as to the antiquity of geometric microliths in Sri Lanka came from two independent sources. Excavations in Kitulgala Beli-lena cave yielded a consistent series of radiocarbon dates ranging from ca. 12,500 to 10,500 BP. These levels contained numerous specimens of geometric microliths, as did the earlier layers which are currently being assayed. Hence Kitulgala indicated that geometric microliths are definitely older than 12,500 years in Sri Lanka. This was firmly corroborated subsequently by the results of the excavations in Batadomba cave at Kuruwita. Once again, excellent and numerous specimens of geometric microliths—lunates, triangles and trapezoidals — were excavated from well defined stratigraphic contexts which have provided a very consistent series of radiocarbon dates on charcoal. This latter ranges from ca. 28,500 BP to 11,500 BP, thus leaving no doubt whatsoever that the dates from Kitulgala and Bundala are reliable. One simply has to accept the fact that geometric microlithic industries, technologically what one would term Mesolithic, are very much earlier in Sri Lanka than hitherto estimated: supporting evidence has recently been forthcoming from van Noten's work in Zaire (Belgian Congo) and apparently also from Zambia, where geometric microlithic industries have been dated to 28,000 BP and beyond on radiocarbon dating of charcoal. It thus appears that the whole concept of microlithisation, as a prehistoric technological innovation, will have to be revised. Up to now theoreticians have tended to view it in the light of European data, where microliths do not establish themselves as a clearly defined component in the tool assemblages until ca. 12,000 BP. This angle of approach is no longer tenable and the Sri Lankan and African data will have to take precedence.

The second site in the Iranamadu Formation to have been excavated, also at Bundala in the south, relates to a basal gravel at ca. 15m above present sea level and thus much older than the 8m level dated to ca. 28,000 TL BP. The thermoluminescence assays on these sediments by Dr. Singhvi have dated them to ca. 74,000 BP, namely the end of the last interglacial (Eem). The artefact assemblage included backed non-geometric microliths on flakes. There are yet other localities in the Iranamadu Formation where the basal gravels are as much as ca. 60m above present sea level. These deposits could indeed date back to the Holstein interglacial—having made due allowance for regional tectonic uplift as estimated on available evidence (1m per 3,500 years) — which would place them back around 250,000BP. Thermoluminescence dating of these sediments is an urgent necessity, even if artefacts do not occur within them. Quaternary stratigraphy in South Asia could thereby witness a major advance with regard to its chronology.

The Mesolithic in Sri Lanka has three more absolute dates: ca. 9,700 BP for Alu-lena Attanagoda (C-14), ca. 7,500 BP for Beli-lena Maniyangama cave (C-14), and ca. 6,500 BP for the open-air midden at Bellan-bandi Palassa (TL). It is difficult to ascertain the exact age of the end of the prehistoric (i.e. Stone Age) period in Sri Lanka in the absence of suitably (radiocarbon) dated deposits. However, the ancient chronicles maintained by the Buddhist monks, and which have provided a very accurate chronology for the historic period of the island from about 250 BC onwards, suggest a terminal date of ca. 500 BC. According to these chronicles,a major episode of settlement by peoples speaking an Aryan language, the present Sinhalese, occurred at about this time. However, there is an intermediate phase between prehistoric to historic, termed the proto-historic period in Sri Lanka, which is characterised by an iron-using technology, agriculture, the horse, a distinctive ceramic termed Black and Red Ware and certain other traits as revealed in the lower levels of the citadel of Anuradhapura. It is not as yet possible to date this phase with any certainty; but there are strands of evidence suggestive of an inception to this phase at ca. 1,000 BC. The historic period proper, with the introduction of writing is thought to have occurred at ca. 250 BC. This is the classic dating based on the Indian Emperor Asoka's chronology. However, once again, hard archaeological data are likely to reveal that writing commenced at a somewhat earlier date than hitherto estimated.

Palaeo-Environment

One of the major topics considered by the current research programme pertaining to Sri Lanka's prehistory is the evaluation of environmental, namely climatic and biotic, fluctuations during the Quaternary. Some of the salient results of this line of enquiry may be set out as follows.

The ancient coastal dunes and underlying alluvial gravels constituting the Iranamadu Formation,

which I have referred to earlier, have been investigated for their pedology and geomorphology. There is a large body of evidence to indicate that these sediments were deposited during interglacial or interstadial periods (i.e., altithermals) under a climate of seasonal rainfall of considerable intensity associated with a longer period of summer drought and a rate of evaporation that was higher than that prevailing in Sri Lanka's Dry Zone today.

Pedological studies by Dr. K. de Alwis of the Soil Survey (Irrigation Dept.) have indicated that subsequent to their deposition the sands have not been weathered by climates that were significantly wetter on a non-seasonal, continuous basis, than that prevalent in the Dry Zone today. There are also indications which suggest that Southwest Monsoonal and tropical cyclonic wind velocities during certain altithermals exceeded those of the present. It was the katabatic foehn effect of the Southwest Monsoonal airstream, with its increased activity during altithermals, that probably produced the marked climatic seasonality apparent in the geomorphology of the sediments. The texture of the basal gravels are suggestive of catastrophic sheet floods, from cyclonic activity, eroding an otherwise desiccated landscape. These data shed important light on the vexed question as to whether tropical atmospheric circulation increased or decreased during the Quaternary glacial/altithermal oscillations as recorded in higher (i.e., temperate) latitudes. For the first time it is possible to gauge the effect of glacial episodes on the Monsoon, which in turn can be extrapolated to the extensive tropical land masses affected by the Monsoonal system. However, one must not underestimate that monster, the Southwest Monsoon: meteorologists consider it to be the most complex whether phenomenon in the world. There is the tropospheric jet-stream oscillating over the Himalayas, intimately associated with the dynamics of the Monsoon which consequently links the Monsoon with weather phenomena at a global scale: recent studies of upper air circulation should provide further insights into Pleistocene S.W. Monsoonal configurations.

In the absence of pollen studies on deposits dateable to the Upper Pleistocene or early Holocene in Sri Lanka, it is not possible to delineate with any precision the climatic sequence associated with this period. However, certain isolated bits of evidence could suggest that the climate since the last Würm plenigla cial at ca. 15,000 BP was not significantly different from that prevailing today on the island — certainly as far as the Wet Zone is concerned. In the Dry Zone, namely in the dry lowlands, the presence of certain exclusively Dry Zone vertebrates at Bellan-bandi Palassa—sloth bear, spotted dear, star tortoise — indicates that the climate at 6,500 TL BP was within the range of variation of today's lowland Dry Zone. As for the Wet Zone, more precisely the lowland Wet Zone, the occurrence of the tree snail *Acavus roseolabiatus* at Kitulgala cave from ca. 12,500 to 10,500 C-14 BP also indicates that the climate was very similar to that of today during this period. *Acavus roseolabiatus* has a very restricted range of distribution, some 200 square kilometres, around Kitulgala, depending on a very local combination of temperature and rainfall. This evidence from the molluscan fauna at Kitulgala is corroborated by the discovery of fragments of the wild breadfruit *Artocarpus nobilis* within the same stratigraphic horizons as *A. roseolabiatus*. Indeed, the wild breadfruit—which once again has a restricted habitat — the Wet Zone's lowlands and a part of the uplands —occurs in the levels preceding 12,500 C-14 BP, which are currently being dated. Finally there is the evidence from Batadomba cave where the genus *Acavus* occurs from 16,000 C-14 BP onwards. These data suffice to indicate that the climate in Lanka's Wet Zone lowlands during the height of the Würm upper pleniglacial when it was coldest in higher latitudes, was not significantly different from that of today and that the temperature could not have averaged more than 5°C lower than it is today.

Technology

Now comes the question as to how humans adapted to the environmental conditions postulated above, in terms of his technology — which may be considered a totally cultural (defined as learned behaviour) response. The Ratnapura Industry is indefinable typologically, as mentioned earlier. The best one can do is to call it a predominantly chopper industry. Besides, its chronology is far from secure. The only definable prehistoric technological entities, as far as Sri Lanka is concerned, are the microlithic industries. The non-geometric assemblage at Bundala - Patirajawela has been dated to ca. 74,000 BP on the basis of the thermoluminescence assays on correlative sediments; and geometric microlithic assemblages with microlithic lunates, triangles and trapezoidals at Bundala and Batadomba cave have been dated to ca. 28,000 C-14 and TL BP respectively. The geometric microlithic techno-tradition appears to have survived up to the advent of the proto-historic Iron Age at ca. 1000 - 500 BC. (A microlith is here defined as a small (<4.5cm, usually <2cm) flake or blade with blunting retouch used to achieve a specific plan-form). Within these microlithic assemblages there are several variants of non-geometric microliths; and a very conspicuous non-microlithic type is the so-called Balangoda Point which resembles an Australian Pirri Point, except that it is frequently bifacial. Balangoda Points are small (less than 3cm), exquisitely trimmed points, with shallow trimming designed to control plan-form and cross-section, presumably for aerodynamics and balance in flight; and they

have been dated to ca. 20,000 C-14 BP at Batadomba cave and ca. 28,000 TL BP at Bundala.

Apart from the small tool component, the Mesolithic assemblages include relatively crude choppers, some of which are indistinguishable from choppers of the Ratnapura Industry, and hammer-stones, grinders, grindstones, pestles and mortars on gneissic crystalline rocks and, more rarely, on quartz. Of particular note are hammer-stones with one or more dimple pits drilled into them. It is probable that these formed a part of the fire-drill equipment used by prehistoric man. Then there are flat slabs of rock, frequently used as grindstones (probably multi-function artefacts) with numerous dimple pits on the flat surfaces. These are found exclusively in the areas where the wild edible nut, *Canarium zeylanicum,* locally known as *kekuna,* occurs. Hence, it may be proposed that they were used for cracking nuts, much as the Australian aborigines use similar stones for cracking their Macademia nuts.

Apart from the restriction of the above mentioned nut-stones' to certain areas in the Wet Zone and the rarity of pitted hammer-stones in the Dry Zone (vs. the Wet Zone), no regional differences in the distribution of stone tool types is discernible. Finally, while non-geometric microliths occur at ca. 74,000 TL BP with geometric microliths appearing at ca. 28,000 C-14 BP, there is no visible evolution of tool types through the last 28,000 years of the island's prehistoric record, although statistical treatment of assemblages in the future might reveal significant quantitative trends through time.

It is perhaps not out of place to highlight the fact that no artefacts assignable to the Acheulean tradition of biface manufacture, namely handaxes and cleavers, have so far been discovered in Sri Lanka. There have indeed been a few false alarms, but on closer scrutiny these have turned out to bear mere spurious resemblances to handaxes. One is at a loss to account for this absence in Sri Lanka of a major technological tradition in the Palaeolithic of the Old World. On the other hand, it is noteworthy that the Acheulean tradition is absent in the extreme south of India, south of the river Kaveri, where, unlike in the Madras region with its abundant supplies of quartzite and Acheulean bifaces made on this material, quartzite deposits are lacking. The Acheulean tradition is also absent in the southwest of India, in Kerala State, which is heavily forested and hence parallels the African situation where Acheulean artefacts are notably rare or absent in the non-savanna, heavy-forest regions. These two instances in southern India could give us a clue as to why Sri Lanka does not have Acheulean artefacts: it is probably attributable to the lack of quartzite deposits on the island, as well as the occurrence of heavy rain-forest vegetation which is likely to have prevailed throughout the Quaternary according to present estimates of Pleistocene climatic variability. Both these factors are likely to have acted in combination to serve as a check against the diffusion of the Acheulean tradition in Sri Lanka.

Apart from stone tools, there are the bone and antler artefacts. These have so far been found only in Mesolithic contexts, usually, from cave habitations. The most common category are small single or rhomboidal points, on slivers of bone or antler, that had been ground down. Then there are spatulae ranging in size from small to large, and picks. Serrated, and at times grooved, spatulate objects from Kitulgala constitute a distinctive class, as do the bone slivers with transverse grooving from Ravanalla and Nilgala caves. Barrel beads on bone and disc beads on shell with radial incisions have been found in the caves of Kitulgala and Batadomba (ca. 12,500, 16,000 BP) respectively. Shells of the tree snail *Acavus* with perforations through the body-whorl are likely to have been used as ornaments. Although no harpoons have been discovered, the unaltered spine of a marine ray found at Batadomba (ca. 20,000 - 16,000 BP) resembles one, with its double row of barbs. Awls seem to have been fashioned from longitudinally split teeth of monkeys, and it is possible that the spurs on the shanks of jungle fowl and jaws of pythons were used for similar purposes.

Subsistence and Settlement

Since the stone tools found in the Ratnapura Beds cannot be assigned to primary contexts, it is impossible to so much as speculate as to whether animals such as the hippopotamus and rhinoceros of the Ratnapura Fauna had been exploited for food by prehistoric man, although the chances are that they were indeed. As for the settlements in the ancient coastal dunes, the Iranamadu Formation, the permeability of these sediments and tropical climatic conditions have led to the destruction of any organic remains there might have been within them. Hence it is not possible to point to any substantive data on prehistoric subsistence practices pertaining to these deposits. However, being a coastal environment, it is very likely that the rather considerable marine resources occurring in the lagoons of the semi-arid zone of Sri Lanka would have been exploited by prehistoric man living on the sand dunes. Recent excavations at Mantai have exposed a Mesolithic habitation, at the upper limit of the then inter-tidal zone, with remains of dugong, conch shell and other shellfish which had been consumed. About 35km to the north of Mantai there is a series of Stone Age oyster middens along the Mandakal-aru river near the estuary.

It is the sites in the hinterland, particularly caves in the lowland Dry and Wet Zones, that have provided the bulk of the data pertaining to prehistoric (i.e., Mesolithic) subsistence practices. Among the animals exploited for food were: elephant (young), gaur, water buffalo, sloth bear, pig, sambhur, spotted deer, muntjac, chevrotain, porcupine, hare, giant squirrel, flying squirrel, pangolin, civet cat, monkey, jungle fowl, spur fowl, python, land monitor lizard, hard and soft-shelled terrapins, star tortoise, mahsier and small fish *(Puntius titteya),* freshwater crabs and molluscs, and terrestrial and arboreal molluscs, notably of the genus *Acavus.* Few published accounts are extant concerning the quantitative aspects of subsistence strategy; but the general picture is one of non-specialised, broad-spectrum exploitation. There appears to be a tendency for the smaller vertebrates such as porcupines to be more frequently represented than the bigger forms such as bovines. This probably reflects the fact that the smaller animals were easier to hunt than the more formidable ones such as the gaur, and that the heavier carcasses were butchered at the kill sites, rather than any deliberate selection for the former by prehistoric man.

As for the exploitation of plant foods, many of the Mesolithic sites in the Wet Zone's lowlands have yielded remains of the wild edible nut termed *kekuna.* At Kitulgala, wild breadfruit, which is rich in starch and fats, has been baked and eaten from the earliest occupations (at well over 12,500 BP) onwards. The wild banana, which grows in the vicinity of Kitulgala, has also been found among the food remains within the cave. The plant material from Batadomba and Kitulgala await detailed analysis, and once this is effected we shall be in a position to form a more complete idea with regard to prehistoric plant exploitation in Sri Lanka. Meanwhile, the present writer has compiled an ethnography of wild food plant utilisation in the island; the dioscorea yams and the palms such as *kitul* and *dotalu* for starch, sugars from fruits such as *palu* and *veera,* and numerous other forms to meet various dietary requirements.

So far, there has been no conclusive evidence that plant or animal domesticates had been exploited in prehistoric times: there is no trace of a Neolithic phase in Lanka. As mentioned earlier, there appears to have been a rather abrupt transition from a Stone Age hunting and gathering subsistence economy to a full-fledged Iron Age technology with irrigated agriculture.

Compared to, for instance, savanna habitats, the rain-forest environment of Sri Lanka has a very low exploitable biomass. This may be worded in an alternate way: the island's carrying capacity is low, as with all equatorial rain-forest environments. Since the estimated environmental fluctuations throughout the Quaternary are not of any magnitude, it can be hypothesised that prehistoric carrying capacity was never much higher than it is today. This means that prehistoric human populations would probably not have been much denser or sparser per hectare than the density of hunter-gatherer tribal populations, namely the Vaddas, in recent times. It is at this juncture that the ethnographic accounts of the Vaddas, written mostly at the turn of the century, assume significance. These indicate that the basic settlement unit was the nuclear family, and that larger groupings were very rare and only seasonal. The prehistoric data at our disposal, meagre though they be, appear to validate the use of this analogy. Most of the open-air sites which may be considered base camps have a modal extent of ca. $50m^2$. This has been observed in the coastal sites (the Iranamadu Formation), certain open-air sites in the forests of the Wet Zone uplands around Handapan-ella, and in the grasslands of the highlands and dry uplands. It is hypothesised that the $50m^2$ modal extent represents occupation by not much more than a single nuclear family. The hearths excavated at Kitulgala are also relatively small, averaging some 1m in diameter, suggesting that they could not have serviced more than a nuclear family, thus corroborating the evidence from the open-air base camps as to the number of individuals in an average settlement unit. In this context I might mention that the rubble footing of a structure has been partially excavated at Kitulgala. This feature is coeval with the stratum dated to 12,500 C-14 BP. Once it is completely exposed it would be instructive to compute its square area and then compare it with ethnographic accounts relating to area occupancy by tropical hunter-gatherers.

Seasonal migrations of prehistoric man in Sri Lanka have not been delineated so far with any degree of confidence. However, that such migration did take place can scarcely be doubted; the Vaddas are said to have followed the game into the hills during the annual wet season in the Dry Zone. But these migrations would probably not have been massive events, in the absence of strong seasonality in the climate; and, besides, large herds of ungulates were probably never extant on the island during the Quaternary, due to the environmental constraint of rain-forest vegetation, thus obviating the need for large-scale human movement in their tracks. The contrary situation is known to have prevailed in the northern tundra, with its vast herds of reindeer on the move being followed by humans.

My explorations in the Horton Plains of the central highlands resulted in the discovery of some 25 Stone Age sites. This ecozone is extremely inhospitable in that it is cold, damp, and possesses a low exploitable biomass even by equatorial standards. How-

ever, the prehistoric sites were invariably located on strategic points, hill-tops and hill-saddles, in the grasslands which form a prominent feature of these plains. Botanists consider these grasslands to be of secondary origin, resulting from the clearing of the montane rain-forest that constitutes the climax vegetation of this ecozone. Hence it can be hypothesised that prehistoric man had been responsible for the initial clearing of the forest, probably by ring-barking the trees and then setting the dead stands on fire during the February droughts. The resultant grasslands, which would have increased the (? seasonal) habitability of this region and the driving of game by firing the grasslands, once again during the February droughts, is likely to have increased hunting efficiency to the degree of compensating for the low faunal biomass of this ecozone. The same mechanism was probably responsible for the origin of the dry *patana* grasslands of the Dry Zone uplands, particularly in the Uva Basin around Bandarawela. Skeletal remains of a canid from Nilgala cave in the Dry Zone intermediate lowlands and Bellan-bandi Palassa in the dry lowlands bring up the possibility that domestic dogs were used by Mesolithic man for driving game, much as the Vaddas have done in recent times. However, the identification of these canids as domestic dogs, as opposed to jackals, has to be established on a firm footing before this hypothesis can receive serious consideration.

As for interzonal trade or exchange mechanisms, the occurrence of marine molluscan shell fragments in Mesolithic deposits of the hinterland suggests that these were brought in as items of trade. Salt probably constituted a major item of barter. Corroboration of this proposition exists in the discovery of the very small lagoon snail *Potamides cingulatus* in the lowermost Mesolithic horizon at Kitulgala (over 12,500 C-14 BP). This mollusc is often to be found in the unrefined rock-salt which forms in the coastal tracts of the semi-arid zone over 80km away; and its presence at Kitulgala can only be accounted for by postulating its inclusion in salt brought to the site by prehistoric man. Another item of trade appears to have been the tree snail *Acavus* which seems to have been transported to the Dry Zone which is quite outside its natural habitat. This latter form is restricted to the Wet Zone and its occurrence in the Dry Zone in association with a Dry Zone fauna can only be explained as being the result of importation, possibly as currency or ornaments. In fact the specimens found at Bellan-bandi Palassa in the dry lowlands have been identified as belonging to *Acavus roseolabiatus*, which is known to have an extremely restricted habitat range in the wet lowlands encompassing a mere ca. 200 square kilometres of area.

Ritual and Mortuary Practice

Nothing has survived in Sri Lanka by way of prehistoric art. The cave drawings encountered in the lowland dry and intermediate Dry Zones are ascribable to the Vaddas, as indeed has been attested by the Seligmanns, anthropologists who watched the Vaddas execute these primitive semi-symbolic works at the turn of the century. It is significant that none of the subterranean caverns occurring in the limestone terrain of the island bears any traces of ritualistic use. The only item of possible ritualistic import is the discovery of a human frontal bone in the prehistoric deposit of Ravanalla cave. This bone had been bifacially drilled, and the rough sutural edges and a zygomatic prominence chamfered off. One aspect of the bone had been smeared with red ochre. Traces of this latter substance are frequently encountered on prehistoric grindstones; but this is the only instance where one of its uses has been demonstrated.

Apart from fragmentary human remains excavated from the cave sites of Nilgala, Beli-galge, Batadomba, Ravanalla and Beli-lena Maniyangama, remains which were too fragmented for proper analysis, the bulk of the human remains has been secured from the open-air midden of Bellan-bandi Palassa, dated to ca. 6,500 TL BP, where at least twelve individuals have been found represented. The majority of these latter individuals have been assigned to the 25 - 35 year age group, although older and younger specimens do occur. Here, as with all the other Stone Age burials found in Sri Lanka, the bones were excavated from within undifferentiated habitation deposits comprising, notably, ash, charcoal and faunal remains. No obvious burial pits were located by the excavator, although the coarse texture of the matrix would have made their differentiation difficult. The skeletons belong to both sexes, and they occurred in a flexed position with an east-west orientation. There is some evidence of fractional interment, as suggested by the occurrence of isolated skulls and calvaria in association with somewhat more complete skeletons. Recent excavations at Kitulgala have yielded two fractional interments (among midden deposits) in a stratum dated to ca. 12,500 C-14 BP , and excavations in Batadomba cave produced three humans, one being fractional and the other two more complete, in flexed positions. This latter group from Batadomba has been dated to ca. 16,000 C-14 BP. Once again there are no clear signs of burial pits; rather, the interments appear to have been in slight hollows in the cave floor, and heaped over with food debris. It is very probable that all the burials are secondary, namely after exposure to the elements to divest them of their flesh.

Biological Anthropology

The physical traits of the humans from Bellan-bandi Palassa, popularly called Balangoda Man, have been studied by the excavator Dr. P.E.P. Deraniyagala and by Dr. K.A.R. Kennedy of Cornell University. The results of their studies may be summarised as follows. The overall characters may conveniently be described by the blanket term 'Australoid Vaddid ' although such taxonomic procedure is no longer in vogue among physical anthropologists. The Australoid traits are considered to be variable. The estimated stature is 174 cm for males and 166cm for females. The vertebrae, however, are thought to be disproportionately short for the stature, the axis vertebra in the neck in particular. The skull has a variable cranial capacity, and its bones tend to be thick. It is dolichocephalic, with a low vault and a markedly receding forehead. The occipital curvature at the rear is pronounced. The cheek bones are thick and wide. The brow-ridges are heavy at times, and the post-orbital constriction is marked. The nasal bones are concave dorsally and depressed at the root. In some adult males the distance from the lower margin of the nasal aperture to the base of the upper incisors is conspicuously great. The canine fossa is ill-defined and alveolar prognathism is evident in most males. The palate is large. The lower jaw is very robust and tends to possess a pointed chin. The teeth are usually large, especially the molars, although the incisors tend to be small. The pelvis is small. The limb bones are robust.

It is significant that the recently excavated humans from Kitulgala (12,500 BP) and Batadomba (16,000 BP) are said to display traits that are very similar to those from Bellan-bandi Palassa (6,500 BP) despite the considerable difference in time. Professor Kennedy at Cornell has almost completed his report on this material and it is likely to contain very interesting comparisons between these chronologically widely separated populations. Meanwhile, as far as the humans from Bellan-bandi Palassa are concerned, Kennedy's analyses employing metrical indices and discrete morphological traits have revealed that traits of Balangoda Man survive in varying degrees among the living populations of Sri Lanka. However, they are said to be most pronounced among the Vadda aborigines, and he affirms that they undoubtedly represent a biological continuum, the latter being the descendants of the former. The links between Balangoda Man and certain tribal populations of India are also said to be strong, although not nearly as pronounced as with the Vaddas. It is worthwhile noting that Sri Lanka's ancient chronicles mention the Vaddas as being the descendants of the aborigines who were on the island at the time of the Aryan intrusion at ca. 500 BC. It is also worth noting that the Palk Strait separating Sri Lanka and India is only ca. 11m at its deepest. Hence a slight eustatic drop in sea level would create a land bridge between the two countries, and this is likely to have occurred on numerous occasions during the Quaternary, the last being estimated at ca. 7,000 BP. The crossing of the straits by sea craft over the last 30,000 years is also a possibility by analogy with the settling of Australia. It is thus clear that prehistoric human traffic to and fro between India and Sri Lanka would have been commonplace, leading to complex patterns of miscegenation between groups. Moreover, it is also necessary to bear in mind that the southern tip of India would have constituted a cul-de-sac for groups moving down the peninsula under pressures from the northwest and northeast. The present diversity in physical traits among the tribal people of India bear ample testimony to these trends in population movement. It can therefore be concluded that southern India and Sri Lanka constituted a regular melting pot of Stone Age groups, both in terms of their biological traits as well as their cultural concomitants.

Historic Period

The main thrust of this paper has been the prehistory of Sri Lanka. However, it is perhaps expedient to conclude this outline by sketching the sequel to the prehistoric period in Lanka. This will be done in very summary form.

The chronicles maintained by the Buddhist clergy have provided a very accurate chronology for the historic period from ca. 200 BC onwards, when Buddhism was first introduced to the island under the auspices of the Emperor Asoka of India. The period antecedent to this, from ca. 500 to 200 BC, has been termed protohistoric since writing was not extant as yet. However, excavations conducted by me in the ancient citadel at Anuradhapura have revealed that this so-called protohistoric period had an advanced iron technology and irrigated agriculture of rice. It is probable that once radiocarbon dates become available for this horizon the lower limit would be much earlier than 500 BC. (? 1000 BC). Radiocarbon dates secured by Dr. Bennet Bronson of the University of Pennsylvania for the northern site of Kandarodai appear to support this view. Here there are a few dates which have come out as early as ca. 1,000 BC. It is proposed to probe the protohistoric levels of Anuradhapura so as to secure the requisite samples for dating these horizons.

At Anuradhapura, around 200 (? 400) BC there is evidence of a major efflorescence in material culture: there is the introduction of writing, high quality ceramics and glassware and numerous other traits. This conforms with the historical dates for the introduction of Buddhism to the island. The material

traits have strong links with the Mauryan culture of northern India, with its epicentre in the imperial court of Asoka. From about 100 BC there are clear indications of links with the eastern Mediterranean: some of the ceramics have been identified by specialists from Prague as being Hellenistic imports. By the first century of the Christian era Roman contacts had been established, as documented by historical sources in Sri Lanka and in Rome, and the Roman trade links appear to have peaked around 300 AD. Thousands of Roman coins assignable to this latter phase have been found in various parts of the island; a recent discovery is a hoard of over 20,000 coins near Godavaya in the south. The final phase of this Roman trade seems to have been around 450 AD, as indicated by coins found in the excavations at the port site of Kuchchaveli in the northeast.

Apart from Roman influences, there are indications of Parthian contacts during this latter period. Certain glazes found on roof tiles of around the fourth century AD appear to have had Parthian origins. This West Asian connection really came into prominence during the seventh, eighth and nineth centuries, as amply demonstrated by the Islamic ceramic finds from the ancient port site of Mantai, which is currently being excavated by the Department of Archaeology in collaboration with the University of Chicago. The West Asian trade at Mantai is superimposed upon by Chinese links from the nineth to the eleventh centuries; and a profusion of imported Chinese ceramics have been unearthed at this site. At other locations, Chinese ceramics from up to the thirteenth century are said to have been found.

So much for international contacts. The Early Historic period (ca. 200 BC-300 AD) witnessed the peak of ancient Sri Lankan culture, and then there were the Middle Historic (ca. 300—800 AD) and Late Historic periods with their own apogees. True urbanism had set in by 200 BC, as exemplified by the ca. 50ha citadel at Anuradhapura and the very large extents of the towns at Tissamaharama and Kandarodai. High art and monumental architecture, most of it religious, bear ample testimony to the calibre of culture during the Early Historic period, as well as in the two succeeding periods, under the patronage of the kings of Sri Lanka.

The economy of the country was geared to rice cultivation under a highly sophisticated system of irrigation through giant reservoirs and canals. These irrigation works continue to amaze the modern engineers assigned the task of restoring them, or otherwise adapting them to modern conditions. They represent a high point in hydraulic engineering with reference to the entire ancient world. The inception of the system is likely to have been as early as ca. 450 BC, according to the chronicles.

Finally, there was the decline of the material culture of Sri Lanka from about the thirteenth century onwards. We are not quite certain as to the prime mover in this process; there is one school of thought which attributes at least a part of this debilitation to the spread of malaria, but this has yet to be substantiated. Then came the wars against Portuguese, Dutch and English colonial interests. While ensuring the independence of much of the hinterland of the country, some five hundred years of these colonial wars left the economy in tatters, until the final capture of our last capital in Kandy by the English in 1815 through an act of treachery by some of our own notables. From then onwards, the historical process in Sri Lanka assumed a new look, with major influences arriving from the industrial West. These have served to revitalise the economy with its new concepts. However, it is a matter for some pride that our country and culture has not been drowned in this veritable deluge of new ideas, and that beneath the outward veneer of modern "progress" we have managed to keep at least a significant portion of our traditional values, based on the sublime philosophy of Buddhism, the flower of Indian culture.

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4. REFLECTIONS ON THE WALL PAINTINGS AT SIGIRIYA

Raja de Silva

It is a remarkably curious feature that the well known wall paintings in Sigiriya adorn the outer surface of an enormous rock boulder whereas wall paintings elsewhere are generally done on the inner surface of a wall of a room, temple or chapel. This extraordinary feature shows that the Sigiriya paintings were meant to be viewed from outside.

The rock that was utilized as the support was one that had long been exposed to weathering. It was hundreds of feet above ground level and assailed by strong winds particularly during the mid-year monsoonal season, and the hot direct rays of the sun. The uneven rock surface needed the application of layers of ground (ie. plaster) to smoothen it for the purposes of painting. Such trying disabilities which would have beset the painters at Sigiriya one and a half millennia ago deserve our wonder while we pause to analyse the paintings regarding their technique, subject, style and the standard of the art.

Overhanging the gallery or ambulatory set in a long declivity and enclosed by the mirror wall is a vast rock surface, its vertical sides towering and inaccessible. It is evident that a large area of this western face of the great rock was once decorated with paintings, for towards the upper levels of this rock face are long drip-ledges cut to prevent rain water from flowing down its surface. Below these cut ledges are remnants of plaster still adhering to the rock. Paintings existing in several small pockets were photographed in 1897. Today all that is to be easily seen are those paintings in the fresco pockets numbered A and B, and it has been made possible for the fortunate modern visitor to admire from almost at arm's length every detail of the painted figures that were originally meant to be viewed from various distances along the western escarpment of the Sigiriya rock.

Technique

Let us place ourselves in the position of the master-painter and reconstruct the stages of the work of painting. The first task was to prepare the support of high-rising scaffolding to enable the stone masons to perform their arduous labour. These scaffoldings which were much more than 50 ft. in height were constructed from jungle timber and bound with strong creepers traditionally used for such purposes. If the scaffolding had to be set from the escarpment at the base of the rock, which is quite likely, the height of the structure would have been more than double this estimate.

Then came the cutting of a long knee-deep drain along the western brow of the rock, and of several drip-ledges somewhat lower down to prevent the overflow of rain water on the surface of the intended paintings. The rock surface below the ledges was next pitted purposefully to provide a key to the first layer of ground which was applied so as to even out the irregular surface with its concavities and cracks. This layer was of a brown clay plaster which could well have been derived from termite nests, prepared with an admixture of chopped straw, rice (paddy) husks, dried leaves, tiny twigs, and a binding medium containing an emulsion of a drying oil and a vegetable gum. A second layer of ground which was made by adding water containing the gum and oil to a mixture of freshly burnt lime, a light coloured clay, and sand, was then applied. In certain areas of the rock, however, where the surface contour was satisfactory, the first layer of brown clay was done away with. There are also signs of the painters having dispensed with this second layer of ground as well in certain areas.

A final coat of plaster containing lime and sand and little or no clay was laid on and trowelled smooth. A long period of time would have been taken for the application of the layers of ground on the large surface area of the rock. Joints on the surface of the plaster should generally be visible to indicate the extent laid on each working occasion or day. Within the fresco pockets, however, no such joints are to be seen. They have evidently been well covered by trowelling in the course of the following day's application of lime plaster.

The paints prepared by the painters were of traditional colours used by ancients in wall painting. The unchanging earth colours were used for the three main pigments red, yellow and green. These were red ochre, yellow ochre and green earth *(terre verte)*. Carbon was the black pigment, lime the white, and the off-white and buff colours were clays. Orange hues were obtained by mixing red and yellow. A dark red shade was produced by mixing red and black colours. The gum commonly used was obtained from the woodapple *(diwul)* tree, and the oil may have been the drying oil known as *dorana thel* (dipterocarpus glandulosus) or the semi-drying oil of sesame (gingelly, *thala thel)*.

The stage was now set for the drawing of the design or conception of the proposed paintings (known as the *sinopia* in Italy). This was done on the lime plaster employing a dark red colour. Then a very thin white-wash of lime was brushed on and the pure white colour was toned down by the use of a wash of an off-white clayey material. This was an overall colour which was also made use of for the representation of the clouds which were later painted in red or green colour. Apart from these cloud forms, the general background was darkened perceptibly by the application of another wash of a slightly darker (buff) colour. To sum up and compare with classic Italian paintings methods, we can state that the *intonaco* in Sigiriya was in the form of two washes applied on the *arriccio* of lime plaster.

The next stage in the process of painting was a follows. Once the *intonaco* was dry (in a short time) over each design, the painter once again drew in outline the design of the painting. This was evidently done in a variety of colours thinly applied such as black, red, yellow. The painter then painted the contours in sure bold linework before filling in the colours. On numerous occasions, it could be seen, the painter had at this later stage changed his mind and altered the position of some feature such as the position of a hand or palm.

The Paintings and their Subject

What the purpose of the Sigiriya school of painters was and what effect it was intended to create in the mind of the viewer is a matter for surmise. However, it is evident that the subject of the paintings is the female figure, and hundreds of such figures were arranged on the lofty heights to the gaze of man from the earth below:

The long eyed ones
With tender lips
Stand in the sky
Of the summit of the rock
Graffito 514

The figures are shown as cut off from the hips or even somewhat below at the thighs by representations of clouds and are depicted as fair skinned or as dark complexioned, referred to as "golden coloured ones" and "dusky hued ones" respectively in a number of graffiti incised by visitors on the gallery wall in ancient times. Several ladies appear to be clothed at and above the breasts in extremely fine raiment patently transparent, the presence of which can be observed from their shading and their outlines at the neck, arms and the breasts. Other ladies do not wear such *cholis* but all are painted as adorned with a plethora of necklaces. Generally, the darker females are shown as wearing *cholis*, or breast-bands or even both garments.

The little of the dress that is shown as worn from the hip downwards enables us to conclude that it is a bifurcated, candy-striped (red, green, yellow) garment known as the *dhoti* with a flaring fan-like frill behind. An abundance of jewellery girdles the neck and arms while gem-set tiaras, flowers and rosettes deck their elaborately done coiffeurs. The females carry a variety of flowers in their hands as well as in trays which are supported in the palms (either one or both palms) particularly of the dark skinned ladies, and mostly recognised as the water lily, sunflower, temple flower and lotus. There was also held by one dark complexioned female (Pocket B, No. 4, damaged by vandals in 1967) a rounded unidentified object which could well have been a toilet box.

On a off-white-coloured background the females were shown as half-covered by clouds, the lower part of the body not being painted, - like divine beings. What else could they seem but divinities, *apsaras*, or goddesses dropping from their abode in the heavens a flower or two upon mortals below? The suggestion was made to me by the late Gauribala Swami of Thondamannar that these paintings represent Taras of the Mahayana pantheon, and that Sigiriya itself was the representation of the sacred *enciente*, or Mahayana place of initiation in the tantric tradition. Several views of the subject of the paintings have been published earlier.(1)

The intention of the painter (or rather his patron as I am inclined to believe) was to draw the admiration of the visitor and for this purpose the figures were endowed with the conservative (Sinhala) attributes of beauty. The paintings were meant to be sensual in character and at the same time they had some religious content in that they constrained upon the visitor to ponder upon beings that were like humans but were yet raised to a higher level of existence. Thus we recognise humanistic paintings of beautiful virginal females, mature matrons, dowagers endowed with much grace, ladies in waiting from noble families, done according to the conservative canons of beauty which poets have preserved for us in their literary works for seven centuries.

When a painter was commissioned to depict beautiful women in Sigiriya it was natural for him to have contemplated on the features of females familiar to him and then to paint their lonely portraits high up on the rock safe in the knowledge that they would not be subject to scrutiny by those in authority. Thus, regardless of what exactly the figures were meant to represent, there can be little or no doubt that they were, in fact, largely portraits of persons whose features were familiar to the painters; for example special notice may be taken of Pocket A, No. 6; Pocket B, No. 13, 12.

Character and Style

It is proposed now to consider several of the characteristics and stylistic elements of the paintings especially from the point of view of the use of line, colour, light and shade, shading, and space and form. It would always be kept in mind that these paintings were not meant to be viewed as in a picture gallery *(citrasala)* but that distance was truly the criterion that lent enchantment to the view.

A well known concept in the assessment of a painting from the point of view of the standard of the art is the degree of clarity and boldness of the linework, particularly in portrait painting. If the Sigiriya paintings were not to be confused with mere blotches of colour from the fair distance of their viewing, it was indeed necessary that they should have been boldly outlined. This the (master) painter had succeeded in doing: after several attempts at drawing the proposed outline using various colours, black, red, or yellow, the final linework was effected in a sure, bold, curvilinear contour in dark red or black, visible today in all the extant paintings.

A painter is further beset with a peculiar difficulty in conveying on a wall surface the impression of a three-dimensional subject and in Sigiriya he has met with this problem admirably by the use of his colours to good purpose. Otherwise the paintings would have tended to appear as flat as the surface on which they were done. It would be agreed that if an uniform shade of colour had been applied both on the background as well as on the figures this effect would not have been gained. One of the reasons for concluding that these paintings are of a high order is that they do give us the impression of the rounded well-proportioned, beautiful female figure.

The means used by the painter to gain this end deserves examination. Firstly, he was aware of the varied effect in the eye of the beholder of the reflection (or lack of it) of natural light from the curved surfaces of the human body. Direct or diffused sunlight falls on the paintings depending on the time of the day when they are viewed.(1) The painter was aware that he would have to utilize the properties of the reflection of light from the colours that he would need to use in order to convey the desired impression of the rounded human form.

Those parts of the body that would be closest to the viewer were highlighted by the use of lighter shades of colour (eg. yellow) that would reflect the natural light. And areas that would be in shadow, more or less, were coloured in darker reddish shades which would consequently reflect less light. Thus the painter did not restrict himself to the colours red and yellow and black but used a variety of intermediate shades among which were a dark chocolate brown, dark red, orange, golden yellow and green about which more would be noted later. At the periphery of the body there was used not only the bold single-line work but a shading of reddish hue to give the illusion of the three dimensional rounded form (eg. the folds of the flesh in the region of the stomach).

Another device that was employed by the painter was the application of several more or less similarly curved thin lines in close proximity to each other. This was done by the application of reddish brush strokes to indicate the fullness of the breasts, and rounded shoulders. Linear perspective was enhanced by the delineation of the three-quarter view of the figure and the foreshortening of outstretched arms and palms.

With regard to the use of colour, several further points of interest should be mentioned. Even though the background to the painted figures was meant to represent the sky the white colour of the *intonaco* was not left unshaded. Instead, an overall off-white colour was imparted over which a slightly darker colour reminiscent of a light buff was superimposed in certain areas particularly away from the painted figures, also leaving undarkened in this manner other areas to show the position and forms of clouds. Several such clouds were then coloured red or green. This slight darkening of the sky was (we may imagine) calculated to reduce the glaring distraction of an otherwise white background. This unusual use of green or red in the clouds was the very opposite of naturalism, for a more realistic shade of (say) a golden yellow could have been imparted if it was intended to paint the clouds with the setting sunshine.

Another inexplicable use of the green colour deserves recording. We are not unaware the word "green" has been used to describe the jealousy that the female of the species is capable of, but we have not heard that any females were green in complexion. But some of the ladies of Sigiriya were painted in a green colour of light hue, and these have evidently been referred to by ancient visitors (in their graffiti) as dusky coloured ones. Now the question arises as to why the painter resorted to a green paint for the complexion of the dark ladies, and a darker green for the hair of all of them that we see today. This was an example, I would reflect, of how the artist substituted the unnatural colour for the commonly used natural shades, all of which were available in Sigiriya, to indicate that the figures were not human but divine.

Aesthetics

If we were asked to comment on the paintings from the aesthetic point of view, I think we would all agree that they are beautiful: they portray beautiful women in a way that is pleasing to us, but what is of great interest to us is that the paintings embody the traditional concept of a beautiful woman as recorded in Sinhalese literature. A few such comparisons come easily to mind.

In the Dharmapradipikava, the author Gurulugomi (ca. 12th century A.D.) records the story of the younger prince Kalinga and describes the daughter of the king of the Madu country. The charms of a beautiful woman are aptly described with the aid of several similes. The palms for example are painted red. Ladies, particularly princesses, were in the habit of wearing chaplets of flowers in their hair. The beautiful princess is described as being fair in complexion like the *champak* flower which is yellow in colour or golden. A sign of beauty was also, evidently, three folds of flesh in the region of the waist which was described as narrow. The eyes are broad or wide and are long. The sinuous body is described elsewhere as like a golden creeper. The lips are copper, that is reddish, in colour. The breast is likened to the peak of a golden mountain.(2)

Further aspects of feminine beauty are referred to in the Pujavaliya (chapter 12) of Mayurapada Budhaputra (13th century A.D.) in the description of the charms of the daughters of Mara. The lips are red as musk-melon. The beautiful women had black streaks of hair down the centre of their bellies, and the waist was slim like a golden (kettle) drum. Their loins, that is the region of the hips, are broad. There is a beauty spot in the middle of the forehead.(3)

In the story of the ordination of prince Nanda, in the Pujavaliya, the charms of the beautiful princess Janapadakalyani are extolled. Her hair is decked with flowers. The black streak of hair on her stomach is referred as similar to a line of bees which have alighted on the lotus of her navel. Her slender waist is likened to a golden drum.(4)

In the story of Prince Sali, as described in the 14th century Saddharmalankara, the beauty of Asokamala is adverted to. Her waist is so slender that it could be held within the grasp of one hand. There are three lines of hair in the middle of her body. Her lips are crimson in colour. Her hair is adorned with garlands of *(idda)* flowers. Her body is described as golden in complexion. The eyes are long and wide like the petals of the blue water-lily.(5)

Such attributes of beauty are seen in the female figures painted at Sigiriya, eight centuries earlier.

Notes

1. Bell, H. C. P. - Archl. Survey Ceylon, Annual Report, 1897, 14. Coomaraswamy, A.K. - Mediaeval Sinhalese Art. Lond. 1956, 178. Paranavitana, S. - India Antigua. Leyden, 1947, 264.

2. C. Reynolds (ed) - Anthology of Sinhalese Literature. 1970, 95

3. ibid., 170

4. ibid., 188

5. ibid., 259

5. EUROPEAN INTEREST IN THE STUDY OF ANCIENT SRI LANKA UNDER BRITISH RULE

Bertram Bastiampillai

A scientific study of Sri Lanka's past in diverse fields was begun by foreigners when the country was under British rule; and a review of their early activities is a fascinating facet of the record of British government in the Island. The studies of the past, undertaken by foreigners, is of interest to historians for other reasons too. For instance, the contributions made by foreigners towards the revival of an interest in their heritage among the indigenous inhabitants of Sri Lanka and India paved the way for a growth of a pride amongst them in their ancient civilisations and cultures. A stimulus also was afforded to scholars in Asian countries to undertake studies on their own by the pioneering efforts of Europeans in the area of Oriental studies.

These early investigations led to an unraveling of the past heritage of Asian lands as in Egypt and India which, in turn, engendered the development of religio-cultural nationalism in Asia. Religio-cultural nationalism proved to be a precursor of political nationalism, and was significant in fostering independence movements in Asia. Foreign enterprise in the pursuit of Oriental learning in the Island evoked among Sri Lankans (Ceylonese) a sense of national consciousness and pride which impelled a national reawakening which later on carried with it political overtones that in turn strengthened resentment and sentiments against British rule and fortified the desire for freedom.

In recent times, there has arisen an articulate and aggressive demand from countries, that had emerged from colonial domination, that antiquities, objects of art and of cultural and historical value, which had been removed by the colonial authorities, should now be returned back to the countries to which they belonged from the custody of those nations that had appropriated them. Such objects had often been removed at a time when foreigners had begun demonstrating an interest in probing into the past of their subject territories as in Egypt and India.

For example, at the beginning of the nineteenth century, Sir Alexander Johnston, one of the earliest and most famous of the Chief Justices of Ceylon, stated that, "Between five and six hundred books in the Cingalese, Pali, Tamul and Sanscrit languages, relating to the history, religion, manners and literature of the Singalese, Hindu and Mohammedan inhabitants of Ceylon, which I had collected at considerable expense, were lost in 1809 in the *Lady Jane Dundas*....on ....which ship I had taken passage for England." (1) Some documents that were carried safely were presented to the library of the Colonial Office, as is evident from his letters of February and 5 March 1832 to the Secretary of State in England. He was only one, among governors and administrative officials, who had removed documents, old literary works, sculptures and objects of art either to be bequeathed to institutions in England or to enhance private collections of treasures or even sometimes to be sold.

Interesting and salient though these above aspects may be and demand scholarly investigation, it is first necessary to draw an outline of the early activities of Europeans in probing into the past heritage of Sri Lanka. Epigraphy, archaeological excavations, conservation of monuments, numismatics, study of old literary works, ethnology, anthropology, paleography, folklore, foreign notices of a land, geology, examination of ancient works of art, architecture sculpture and religion, all help in the reconstruction of a country's past civilisation, and its politics, economics and sociology.

In Sri Lanka, a study of ancient and medieval times began in the nineteenth century, long after the country had come under western influence since the arrival of the Portuguese in 1505, - the first of the Europeans to gain a foot-hold on the land. Although the Portuguese, and later the Dutch, had governed the maritime areas, it was with the coming of the British, in the last years of the eighteenth century, and after they had administered the country for sometime, that a study of ancient literature, archaeological studies, and interest in kindred subjects about the island really commenced.

In the early stages, when ancient history and antiquities came to be explored, this was done in an amateurish manner. Consequently, many of those pioneering researches were replete with errors; later on, when scientifically trained personnel came to man a more systematically organised Department of Archaeology these past errors continued to be

corrected. Sins of omission and commission came to be rectified, and scientific studies of antiquities and of the past were increasingly made, mostly by officials of the department. However, the story of initial archaeological ventures forms an important episode in the history of antiquarian studies in Sri Lanka.

These early "scholars" were mostly Europeans. They came to Sri Lanka as administrative officials while a few worked as Christian missionaries Administrative officials relieved the tedium of routine work by engaging themselves in investigating aspects of ancient studies. Some who came equipped with a scholarly background were inclined to continue their studies in trying to unravel the land's past. Moreover, similar studies of civilizations of other areas in the British empire were being conducted at this time, and this too stimulated the activitv of a few of these offi cials. (2)

Missionary "scholars" interested themselves in studying the past of Sri Lanka for quite another reason. They found that the past of the country was closely tied up with religion, and religion was a living, influential, and popular force in society. As the missionary's idea was to convert the "heathen" he had first to learn about the prevailing religions, understand them, and then expose their weaknesses and reveal the strength and truth of the religion he had come to preach before he could convert. Whatever may have been the motives and causes that impelled these foreigners to interest themselves in archaeological studies in Sri Lanka, they deserve credit for having commenced the study of antiquities, which is much alive and growing today as is evident in the activity in the 'Cultural Triangle'.

In 1826, a British administrator realized that in Sri Lanka there were Pali chronicles written in a continuous manner (3) The early interest of foreigners turned towards literature, particularly towards records dealing with history. These Pali chronicles were not only historically valuable, but appeared to be even useful for a reconstruction of the chronology of neighbouring India's past. George Turnour, a young civil servant, administered the area where the holy Adam's Peak was situated. He learned the Pali language under the tutelage of a Buddhist *bhikku* and investigated certain rare and valuable manuscripts. Later, he published the results of his studies as, "The Pali-Buddhistical Annals" in the *Journal of the Bengal Asiatic Society.* (4) He pointed out that Sri Lanka had an history of over 2300 years, reasonably substantiated with evidence. At this time, James Prinsep who was trying to find out the identity of "Piyadassi", referred to in the Buddhist inscriptions in India, was enabled to identify this with Asoka, the Emperor of India, largely, owing to the discovery and publication of the material about the chronicles of Lanka by Turnour. (5)

Meanwhile, as the importance of Buddhist records in the scholarship of the East came to be increasingly recognised by research students, a new impetus was given to a study of them. In 1833, Edward Upham at the request of Sir Alexander Johnston, the Chief Justice of Sri Lanka and a scholarly official, translated into English the *Mahavamsa* from Pali and two other Sinhalese chronicles, the *Rajaratnakara* and the *Rajavali* and published these in three volumes entitled, *The Sacred and Historical Books of Ceylon* (Parbury Allen and Co. London, 1833). Later George Turnour translated eightyeight ot the hundred chapters of the *Mahavamsa,* but only thirtyeight of these chapters were published along with their text in Pali, before Turnour died, by the Cotta Church Mission Press, Sri Lanka, in 1837: (6) Useful as a pioneer publication, although there were inaccuracies, as a study of that time it was critical enough.

Turnour also provided a resume' of the contents of articles written for the Bengal Asiatic Society's Journal and added a short dissertation on Pali language along with a few of its more important grammatical works. In an appendix, he furnished a detailed account of the *Tipitaka* giving its arrangement and divisions. Not only had George Turnour discovered the "Commentary", but he had also with its aid critically edited the chronicle and published it in Sri Lanka. Rev. Thomas Foulkes, another of the missionary scholars, published an article on the, "Vicissitudes of Ceylon Literature", in the *Indian Antiquary,* Vol. XVII. (100-122 pp).

Turnour's importance in the history of ancient studies in Sri Lanka cannot be underestimated. His valuable contribution lay in that he had by his initiative invited the attention of other scholars towards the facilities for the study of Pali, available in the island. He had indicated the availability of historical material and data for a study of the doctrines and metaphysics of Buddhism. Before Turnour, Rev. Fox had rendered a translation entitled "The Sacred and Historical Books of Ceylon". Although Fox was reputed then in Europe to be the best Pali and Sinhalese scholar, it is to the credit of Turnour that he pointed out the errors in Fox's translation in the introduction to his version of the *Mahavamsa.* (7) As the first European student of Pali in the country, Turnour laid the foundation for a systematic investigation of the historical works of Sri Lanka. The first critical edition of the *Mahavamsa,* along with a translation of this work contained his masterly Introduction, which was of much value to students subsequently.

The years 1815—1840 were in Sri Lanka a period devoted to a study of old manuscripts as in Bengal. It was clear that the enterprise in ancient studies undertaken in India inspired similar activity in Sri Lanka too, especially in the 19th century. But other factors also quickened the interest of researchers to delve into Sri Lanka's past culture. Scholars like Fergusson in his, *History of Indian and Eastern Architecture* had complained of the neglect of studies of the past by governments.(8) During this seminal period in antiquarian studies in the Island, Turnour turned out to be a link connecting Sri Lanka and Bengal in the study of old manuscripts and epigraphy through his correspondence with James Prinsep, the scholar in India.(9)

Robert Knox, known for his valuable account of Sri Lanka, was the first foreigner from the West however, to have referred to epigraphic records or inscriptions at the Gadaladeniya *vihara.* (10) He had been confined in Sri Lanka by the King of Kandy, Rajasingha II (1635 — 1687). Being the keen observer he was, Knox noted the existence of lithic records, but lamented that he could not meet anyone who could satisfy his inquiring mind by deciphering them for his elucidation.

However, with the decipherment of the "Brahmi Lipi" in India by James Prinsep, there occurred far reaching repercussions on the study of historical works of Sri Lanka. It also further stimulated interest in the study of Sinhalese epigraphy. As Turnour received a copy of the "Brahmi Lipi" alphabet from Prinsep he applied it to decipher the epigraphic records of Sri Lanka, and discovered that early inscriptions of the country were engraved in the normal Indian "Brahmi Lipi". Thus Turnour, who had acquired a knowledge of Pali and Prakrit, also became the first person to read Sri Lanka's earliest rock inscriptions.(11)

Missionaries, who ventured to Sri Lanka, studied Pali and Sinhalese for their use. Their writings were meant for the use of those who succeeded them and they translated some works relevant to them into English. The British missionary, Benjamin Clough, learned Pali and produced a Grammar of this language along with a vocabulary (12) . The first attempt to prepare a catalogue of literary works in Sri Lanka was made by Rev. Spence Hardy who resided in the island from 1825 to 1845 collecting manuscripts. At the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society in Colombo he presented a compilation of the, "Books in the Pali and Sinhalese Languages", which was published in the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (Ceylon Branch), Vol. I, No. 3 (pp. 189). This was a mere list of names of books, often erroneously spelt, and their authorship was not quoted, nor were dates of compilation established. Furthermore, it proved to be an incomplete enumeration of available literary works.

Meanwhile, in the area of Pali studies, appeared the *Pali-English Dictionary* by R.C.Childers which was first published in 1875: it was a monumental work and the Introduction to it furnished an account of the books of the *Tipitaka* and of Buddhagosa's "Commentaries". Childers also briefly referred to one or two other works in Pali such as the *Sara sangaha* and the *Abbidhammamatha sangha.* Childers encouraged his teacher, Vaskaduve Siri Subhuti, to publish *Nama mala,* a work on Pali grammar. The prefaces contained a valuable historical account of works on Pali grammar either written or used in Sri Lanka.

In 1876, two other local scholars, urged by Governor Sir Williams Gregory, (13) brought out an edition of the *Mahavamsa* completing its account from the time of King Kittisiri to the cession of the island to the British in 1815: the writer was Sri Sumangala and Pandita Devarakkhita assisted him. The *Mahavamsa* was also edited in English by Louis Corneille Wijesinha, while the Sinhalese edition of Sri Sumangala was undertaken in collaboration with Batuwantudave. A chronicle older in date than the *Mahavamsa,* the *Dipavamsa* had been published in London in 1879 by the German scholar, Herman Oldenberg. Though less valuable than the *Mahavamsa* the *Dipavamsa* also serves as a source for the study of early history.(14)

The Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society had been formed in 1845 on February 7 at a time when an History of the country was written by W.H. Knighton. It appeared for the first time in the same year. The aims of this Society (which exists even now fostering Sri Lankan studies, researches and publications) were to institute and promote inquiries into History, Religion, Literature, Art and the Natural Philosophy of Ceylon together with the social conditions of its present and former inhabitants.

Under the auspices of British administration, James D'Alwis, (15) a learned local scholar, published a monumental work - an English translation of Vedeha's Sinhalese grammar - *Sidat Sangara.* In an introduction to it he traced the development of the Sinhalese language and gave a continuous history of books written in it. There was only a bare mention of Pali works but unfortunately no particulars were given of scholars who had written in Pali.

In 1869, during the governorship of Sir Hercules Robinson, an advocate of Oriental studies, the Government Oriental Library of Ceylon had been established with a collection of books in Pali, Sinhalese

and Sanskrit. In the year before, an Archaeological Commission had also been appointed to consider practical measures to be taken to conserve ancient architectural structures and works of art. J.G. Smither, Government architect and a Fellow of the Royal Institute of British Architects, was selected to function as Secretary. He prepared a folio volume, *Architectural Remains of Anuradhapura,* (London, 1894), embodying detailed plans and scale drawings that were prepared in 1877 following the lines adopted by James Fergusson, so well known in the history of antiquarian studies in India.

In 1871 Lawton and Captain Hogg [16] had jointly obtained photographs of historical monuments of principal importance in the ancient capitals of Sri Lanka, Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa - fertile for such a venture. Two years afterwards, G. Capper surveyed the larger ruins of Anuradhapura and ran out principal traverses to the main spots.

The end of the eighteen sixties and eighteen seventies assume special importance in the pursuit of oriental studies in Sri Lanka because of the personal interest taken by the Governors of these years.[17] D'Alwis was invited by the Governor to compile a catalogue of books in the library and of other valuable and unknown manuscripts which were lying only in the libraries of temples. Before the completion of the work assigned to him, D'Alwis unfortunately died. Yet, he had written descriptive accounts of twenty, published in 1870 as *A Descriptive Catalogue of Sanskrit, Pali, and Sinhalese Literary Works of Ceylon* by the Government Press in 1885. D'Alwis provided a list of the books with their titles, authors and the subjects that they treated. The detailed descriptions of the books were embellished with quotations from them.

The work entrusted to D'Alwis was continued by yet another local scholar, Louis de Zoysa, the Chief Interpreter Mudaliyar, a high official. He was assigned to visit the different libraries housed in temples and to scout for literary treasures. The report, he furnished to the Government in 1876, was illuminating. One valuable discovery was a copy of the Sinhalese gloss on the *Dhammapada,*[18] which, apart from the inscription at Mihintale, could be considered to be among the oldest known specimens of Sinhalese prose. Again death overtook De Zoysa before he could complete his task. The government, however, released the finished portion of the "Catalogue". The literary works were listed under several heads. The Pali manuscripts were divided into canonical works, commentaries, *Tika* or *scholia,* general, religious, historical, grammatical and philological works. In respect of manuscripts, their titles, sizes, places of deposit, the authors and dates, which were mostly hypothetical, and the subject matters they treated were furnished. The government press in Colombo published the results of the efforts of De Zoysa in 1876.

Both James D'Alwis and Louis de Zoysa had compiled catalogues of palm leaf manuscripts under government sponsorship. Then Don Martino De Zilva Wickremasingha, Assistant Librarian of the Colombo Museum, was chosen to finish the work of De Zoysa. He visited many neglected temples and presented the results of his researches in the *Administration Reports* of the Colombo Museum during the years, 1890 -1895. Subsequently, the *Catalogue of the Colombo Museum Government Oriental Library,* published by the Government Records Office in 1896 brought together his findings into a single volume.

At this time, the British Museum had acquired a collection of Sinhalese manuscripts. In 1899, Wickremasingha was invited to prepare a catalogue of the Sinhalese Manuscripts in the Museum as a part of the series of catalogues of manuscripts in the languages of India which were then being published in Britain. This "Catalogue" was released by the British Museum in 1900. The historical Introduction to this "Catalogue", running through twentyfive pages, presented an authentic account of Ceylon literature which had hitherto been published. In regard to Pali literature, Wickremasingha provided the names of scholars from Ceylon who had written in Pali and titles of their compositions. The valuable service rendered by Wickremasingha was in that he identified the periods during which these several scholars had written.

Sometime later, the library of Hugh Nevill [19] was acquired by the British Museum and added to its collection. Nevill had spent many years in the Ceylon Civil Service travelling extensively in the island seeking rare and unknown manuscripts. He had displayed a remarkable interest in the literature of Sri Lanka and had engaged himself in the preparation of a catalogue of his collection which was to be prefaced by a historical survey. His "Catalogue" formed a part of the Nevill collection of the Oriental section of the library of the British Museum. Its value lay in that it included works then unknown to exist elsewhere.

In 1913, Sir (later Lord) Robert Chalmers came as Governor of Ceylon. He had already taken a great interest in Pali literature in England, edited a portion of the *Majjhima-Nakaya* for the Pali text Society, contributed articles on Buddhism to the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* and translated a part of the *jatakas* into English. He desired to bring out an edition of the Ceylonese "Commentaries" which was to be named the *Aluvihara* edition. But with the World War in Europe, and a riot in Sri Lanka

(20) between the Muslims and Buddhists, the plans of Sir Robert suffered. Only one book the *Papancasudani,* on the *Majjhima* was published.

The interest shown by European scholars in ancient history and the sponsorship of the study of ancient Pali literature by the government formed a valuable part of the foreign contribution made towards the revival of oriental studies on Sri Lanka. Pali literature was important not only to students of history, folklore, philology, and comparative religion, but even as literature it was intrinsically valuable. The Pali works dealt with exegesis and laws, medicine, poetry, religion, folklore, history, philosophy, prosody and rhetoric. Thus they covered a wide range of the academic field in Oriental studies.

Moveover, when royal patronage, which had been lent to learning, disappeared in Sri Lanka with the decline of royal authority, (21) a large quantity of the island's ancient literature began to disappear. Foreign invasions, neglect and sectarian rivalries among Buddhists had adversely affected the growth and preservation of literature even before the arrival of the Europeans. Only a few pious custodians endeavoured to save and keep alive learning under difficult conditions. It is in this context that the services of foreign scholars and the patronage lent by foreigners, especially in the nineteenth century, to rekindle an interest in ancient literature have to be estimated.

In epigraphical studies, the pioneer proper could be considered to be Dr. Paul Goldschmidt, (22) who was appointed by the government in 1874 to function more or less as a Commissioner of Archaeology. From 1875 to 1879, the two German scholars employed by the government, Goldschimdt and after his death Edward Muller, studied ancient inscriptions in certain parts of the country. India had employed a Director-General of Archaeology in 1847, General Cunningham, and here again Sri Lanka seemed to have followed the Indian example.

Goldschmidt immediately explored ancient sites to prepare a list of inscriptions. First, he investigated Anuradhapura and its surrounding areas and submitted, "A Report on the Inscriptions in the North Central Province". He collected, scrutinised and read eighty three inscriptions. Many of these records were in a state of decay owing to the ill-effects of natural causes while some had been destroyed by the rural folk who did not understand their value. Only a few were in a reasonable state of preservation. Having examined the inscriptions in Anuradhapura and Mihintale, Goldschmidt later went to find out epigraphic records in other districts overtaken by the jungle. His chief interest in compiling the Sinhalese inscriptions was naturally a linguistic one because of his training. "By finding out the links between the old Indian alphabet and the modern Sinhalese, I was enabled, after a short time to decipher inscriptions in the North Central Province", he stated in his, " A Report on the Inscriptions in the North Central Province, 1875," (23) and concluded that Sinhalese was an Aryan dialect.

Continuing the search for inscriptions, in spite of hindrance to his endeavours from jungle and inclement weather, Goldschmit issued yet another report. He had spent the wet season examining some of the records he gathered at Anuradhapura, and he produced a fairly exhaustive report on the epigraphy of Sri Lanka. A report on the inscriptions in Hambantota in the South was based on copies of records he had made and photographed. For the first time, the inscriptions of the Island were arranged in a chronological order along with their full texts and translations. At the outset, Goldschmidt classified these inscriptions on paleographical grounds although thereafter he was able to effect necessary chronological readjustments by consultation with the *Mahavamsa* and other historical works. Thus he demonstrated how interlinked in Sri Lanka was the study of epigraphy and literary records.

Goldschmidt grouped the inscriptions into three chronological divisions: from the introduction of Buddhism to the beginning of the Christian era: from the beginning of the Christian era to the fourth century AD; and from the fourth century to the eleventh century AD. Concluding this pioneering report, Goldschmidt observed accurately that the, "New inscriptions, though probably pretty modern, will certainly be of great interest for their language as well as the account of the historical matter, they are likely to contain".(24) He re-emphasised the usefulness of epigraphic material for a reconstruction of history.

Unfortunately, the labours of Goldschmidt came to an untimely end; he died prematurely in 1877. According to Dr. Edward Muller, "He went on translating the inscriptions and writing notes on Sinhalese grammar until his strength failed, and he died on the 7th May, 1877, much lamented by his friends and all those of the inhabitants of Ceylon who took a real interest in the history of the country". (25) Like Turnour, Goldschmidt too had rendered an immense service by arousing a keen in terest in the epigraphy of Sri Lanka among European scholars through his contribution to the *Indian Antiquary.*

Edward Muller's first report, on his investigation of inscriptions, was largely based on the principles followed by his predecessor Goldschmidt. How-

ever, Muller's approach to the problem of epigraphy conformed more to that of a historian than that of a linguist. "These are the inscriptions I could find, partly by inquiring from the natives, partly with the help of the Government Archaeological Returns; but I am convinced that if a systematical research would be made by the government in all the temples of their province a great many more inscriptions would be found which, perhaps might give us some valuable information in addition to what we know from the books on the ancient history of Ceylon", stated Muller.(26) The study of epigraphic finds was to be auxiliary to the study of ancient history.

Muller's sole contribution was valuable enough - a report on inscriptions in the North Western Province His main effort had been directed towards compiling a "Corpus", similar in type to the, *"Corpus Inscriptionum-Indicarum, Vol. I"*. Muller utilised profitably various works on Indian epigraphy, then being published. While the, *"Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum"*, facilitated his reading of early inscriptions, the *"Elements of South Indian Paleography* by Burnell helped him in deciphering Sinhalese inscriptions of later centuries. (27) Muller was also entrusted with the papers on which Goldschmidt had been working at the time of his demise. Although Muller lamented that "Unfortunately, his papers were in great disorder", (28) yet, he arranged in chronological order, Goldschmidt's papers. The value of his report finally lay in the chronological arrangement of inscriptions, and the attempt made, for the first time, to identify the names of kings as given on the stones with those in the *Mahavamsa*.(29)

Muller's Ancient Inscriptions of Ceylon demonstrated that the study of epigraphy in Sri Lanka had developed into a more detailed exercise from tentative beginnings. Errors that had crept in owing to incorrect readings, wrong literary interpretation, and a mistaken listing of inscriptions had all been corrected subsequently and made evident to scholars later in the *Epigraphia Zeylanica*. As a corpus, his work laid a firm foundation for subsequent epigraphical studies.

Both epigraphists had submitted preliminary reports, but Muller alone had done a more systematic study in his *Ancient Inscriptions of Ceylon* of 1881. Although epigraphs were especially useful to historians, they also provided valuable information on social, economic, fiscal, legal, civic and various like matters which served scholars of other disciplines too.

Regular activity in the field of archaeology commenced with the appointment of Harry Charles Purvis Bell as Archaeological Commissioner in 1890, by Governor Sir Arthur Gordon, (30) another colonial administrator who took a keen interest in espousing ancient Oriental studies. Financial provision for archaeological work to be conducted on a permanent and recurring basis, had been made by the Legislative Council in November, 1889. However, as a sequel to the individual efforts of earlier scholars and even before a Department of Archaeology was inaugurated, scholarly officials like S. M. Burrows had engaged themselves in excavation work under the supervision of the Government Agent, North Central Province. Likewise, there were other officials too who had performed similar work, but on a lesser scale.

Bell, a scholar in the classical tradition, had come with some experience in antiquarian research. He had visited the Maldives in 1879 and submitted a learned report to the government. Bell had also collaborated with Albert Gray, (31) a former civil servant interested in Oriental research, in publishing two volumes for the Hakluyt Society. Bell became a competent linguist and epigraphist, and gathered a fair knowledge of architecture and history. A capable administrator, it was no wonder that he left an indelible impression on the development of archaeological studies in Sri Lanka. Bell's last researches in the Maldives were published in Colombo in 1940.

During Bell's tenure of office, the annual reports, preliminary progess reports, and district reports presented were of immense value. These reports set out the landmarks of the general archaeology of the island and provided invaluable information on matters pertaining to Sri Lanka's past. In his labours, Bell was methodical and accurate while his reports were lucidly expressed and well arranged. His studies of the past dealt with exploration, excavation, topographical surveys, circuit notes, conservation and epigraphy. They were, however, intermingled and linked together in presentation. Observing that earlier endeavours had been made in haphazard fashion, he excavated at likely sites thereby revealing a knowledge of a number of existing monuments.

Judged by standards of today his technique was not all that scientific. Archaeology was still a young science and excavations even in other countries were often conducted unsatisfactorily. His reports were not as erudite as latter day reports of the Department of Archaeology while excavation work itself was often entrusted to unskilled labourers, sometimes prisoners, supervised by village headmen. (32) The section of Bell's reports dealing with epigraphy supply only a brief account of the inscriptions probably owing to restrictions imposed on the length of publications because of a want of adequate financial support.

His lists of inscriptions, selected from a wide area, were, however, extensive. Inscriptions examined, copied, and photographed appeared regularly in *Annual Reports.* In respect of epigraphical records, Bell furnished a serial number, the names of the *korales,* (33) villages and the site at which inscriptions were found. Additionally, details such as the class, the Sovereign, the year and remarks and particulars connected with records were given. Bell's most useful contribution to future researchers was the particular geographical location of inscriptions he provided. In his reports, Bell fully utilised the data in earlier reports issued by Goldschmidt and Muller.

During 1890, Bell examined thirtyeight inscriptions including one Tamil record from Anuradhapura. The next year, he planned to edit and publish them in an "*Epigraphia Zeylanica,*" comprising the numerous inscriptions of the North Central and other provinces. In this year, assisted by D.M. de Z. Wickremasingha and B. Gunasekera Mudaliyar, he scrutinized about ninety inscriptions. As a result of his study, Bell realised that some inscriptions, discovered earlier and interpreted by Goldschmidt and Muller, had to be reconciled with the system of naming that had been used in the Pali and Sinhalese chronicles with respect to the Sovereigns and Ministers referred to in them. Continuing his work, in 1892 Bell took estampages of three inscriptions after examining them; and by 1893 he urged the government to consider the edition and publication of all the inscriptions that he had copied or photographed. Consequently, Gunasekera Mudaliyar, the Chief Translator to the government, was entrusted with this task. Meanwhile, Bell also examined another one hundred and nine inscriptions.

Besause of his efforts in 1894, Bell secured the services of a man trained under Hultzsch from India for a brief term, and the head overseer of the Ceylon Archaeological Survey was initiated into details of the new and then exclusively adopted process of copying inscriptions on stone and metal estampages or, in other words, impressions in ink on bibulous paper. Following this method, over two hundred and ten estampages were taken, while Bell spent time on examining another fiftyfive new impressions. Again on the lines of the, *"Epigraphia Indica"*, in 1895 the head overseer was instructed to take estampages of all the inscriptions Bell had discovered between 1891 and 1893 while he continued to examine eighty three and thirty six inscriptions in 1895 and 1896, respectively. Owing to the endeavours of Bell, the number of inscriptions examined had increased, but without an "Epigraphia Zeylanica" little could be done regarding the important records reproduced by photo-lithography. Only summaries of contents could be made available.

Moving into Polonnaruwa in 1897, Bell investigated inscriptions there. Since the exploration at Tamankuduwa revealed a number of cave and rock inscriptions, up to now unknown lithic records, it proved to be a fruitful venture. He examined seventyone inscriptions. Between 1898 and 1900 over one hundred and twenty new inscriptions had been added to the list already examined, and materials for the first volume of the "Epigraphia Zeylanica" were at last despatched to M.de. Z. Wickremasingha, now a lecturer in Sinhalese and Tamil at Oxford.

In the summary of the operations in archaeology conducted by Bell, during 1890 to 1900, in the North Central, Sabaragamuwa, Central, North Western and Eastern provinces he furnished an alphabetical index of the sites where inscriptions had been found. Between 1901 and 1905 over one hundred and sixtyfive inscriptions, some of which had been noticed earlier by Parker and Muller, were examined and copied. Estampages and copies were made and almost all these records proved to be valuable in enabling the names of important sites of ruins to be fixed with certainty.

Wickremasingha, who was to edit the "Epigraphia Zeylanica", requested that all estampages be sent to the Oxford University Press, but he was provided with only two hundred and eighty seven. An alternative proposal to preserve the estampages in the Colombo Museum could not be implemented owing to lack of space. Evidently, a co-ordinated plan could not be adopted in regard to the utilisation of the estampages.

Meanwhile, in 1902, S.M. Burrows, the Director of Public Instruction, because of his own interest, established a Committee on Oriental Studies to systematize the instruction provided at pirivenas and or temple schools. Government undertook to give an annual subsidy as assistance for this; yet another fillip to Oriental studies

Between 1906 and 1912, A.P. Siriwardhana, an assistant who had been trained by Bell, went round the Central, North Western, North Central, Western, Southern and Sabaragamuwa provinces taking estampages and copying out inscriptions. A museum at Anuradhapura was established for the preservation of inscribed pillars and slabs were thus assembled together at one place. These pillars were numbered, labelled, and a brief account was given of the sources from which they were taken. The report for 1911—12 contained a large number of cave inscriptions and a short summary of the rock, slab, and pillar inscriptions at Mihintale.

The archaeological report for 1911—12 was important because of many features. Bell had published a number of cave inscriptions which were not included in Muller's *Ancient Inscriptions of Ceylon* . It was pointed out that this omission on the part of Muller was unfortunate, because several of these records were of historical interest, as they revealed names of early kings, their queens and children. Moreover, this report contained some inscriptions of Polonnaruwa and, according to Bell, the early inscriptions so far known from this area were only two.

Furthermore, the report published cave inscriptions of Sigiriya, and thereby Bell indicated the antiquity of this site. Sigiriya as a rock-fortress had captured the interest of many, but even a few had not recognised that it was a place of archaeological value before it was converted later into a citadel. (34) However, the exploration of the caves, beneath the massive boulders off Sigiriya on the west had proved that prior to its conversion into a strategic stronghold, forest hermits had resided at the place. Some names of these hermits could be made out from records inscribed below the edges of the cliffs of the rock habitations which had once been their abode.

For the first time, there also appeared an extensive list of fortyeight Tamil inscriptions in this report. Bell tabulated them giving serial numbers, divisions, *korales,* towns or villages, sites and other details, such as the class to which the record belonged, and also references to Sovereigns, years, and other facts which could be derived from the epigraphic records. His comments were provided. These Tamil inscriptions had been discovered in the North Central, the Northern and North Western provices. As at that time, there was no competent Tamil scholar to assist him, Bell had utilised the offices of Dr. Hultzsch, attached to the Archaeological Survey of India, to translate them. Bell considered these epigraphic findings of great value.

The 1911—12 report was also noteworthy because Bell published his last list of inscriptions totalling about two hundred and eighty-six. As Head of the Archaeological Survey, Bell had examined and copied about nine hundred inscriptions. This was a remarkable advance in the growth of archaeological activities in the Island considered against the constraints of the time and difficulties he encountered since archaeological activity was yet to be reckoned as a worthwhile function of a government.

Finally, in 1911—12, Bell again brought out a resumé index of all the work he had performed in the area of archaeology such as conservation of ruined sites, work in relation to epigraphs, discoveries of ancient historical places, his circuit notes, and general measures initiated for the preservation of the island's antiquities. (35)

Bell appears to have established *rapport* with the rural populace which made his task easier and helped him in the collection of data for his informative and useful reports. His own interest, energetic involvement, and collaboration of others which he gained, accounted for the massive proportion of his output and contribution in the field of archaeological enterprise. In 1912 he realised the fruition of his afforts when the first volume of *Epigraphia Zeylanica* was completed.

Bell was recruited into the upper echelons of the administrative service, but even while a District Judge of Kegalla he showed that he was different from the usual bureaucrat. He conducted researches around the area of his jurisdiction and produced his first extensive work, *Report, Historical and Antiquarian on the Kegalle District,* which as a compilation is a rare but highly valued source of information for scholars.

The twentytwo years of Bell's service was a landmark in archaeological studies. As a pioneer he had toiled ceaselessly, sometimes without permanent assistants,and with no particularly specialised training. In the early years, he did not have the services of either an architect or an epigraphist. The duties he performed in having forests cleared, excavating, exploring, conserving, and studying and writing in the conditions of that time were amazing indeed. It is on Bell's insistence that the foundations of the study of epigraphy were laid in accordance with modern requirements.

After him, Edward R. Ayrton took charge of archaeological duties in the Island. Ayrton had already published research findings and was looked upon as a promising Egyptologist; as an archaeologist he had already gained seven years of experience. Unfortunately, he died within a year leaving behind valuable field notes; his successor Arthur Maurice Hocart published some as a Memoir. (36) Hocart claimed in it to have laid the foundations of systematic archaeology in Sri Lanka. (37)

Hocart headed the department of archaeology for about ten years till he retired owing to ill-health. With the background of a classical scholar and experience in ethnology in the Pacific islands, he had come to Sri Lanka. His most useful contribution to scholarship in ancient studies appeared in the *Ceylon Journal of Science* (Section G) which he edited under the General Editorship of the Journal by Joseph Pearson, Director of the Colombo Museum. (38) In his researches, Hocart attempted to build up a

sequence in the evaluation of the building styles of the past.

Till Hocart had assumed duties, the archaeology department's fortunes were left in the hands of A. H. Longhurst, who was a brother-in-law of John Marshall, (39) the famous Indologist. Longhurst had come with experience in South India and noticing the affinities of the remains of Polonnaruwa to those in South India, he naturally devoted greater attention to archaeological work in the Polonnaruwa region. Longhurst adopted quite successfully an unusual method of keeping down the growth of jungle vegetation on the Rankot *vihara* in Polonnaruwa, a massive *stupa* built in the 12th century. Hocart sifted scientifically the material which Bell had sedulously collected over years and this data was to be the basis of his study for a long period along with the information he had garnered. Since Hocart underwent a course of study in conservation methods adopted in India, he expected to utilise that knowledge too. Naturally, therefore, conservation received greater importance under him.

In conclusion, some general observations on the efforts of foreigners in fostering ancient studies may be made. No private initiative was shown by foreigners on a large scale in undertaking a study of ancient civilisation or in archaeological work in Sri Lanka as in Egypt or in the Middle East. However, a few foreigners who had come to the country to serve in other capacities diverted some attention to antiquarian studies. It is in this context that the exertions of the Europeans, whether they be missionaries, civil servants or others, have to be estimated. As in India, until the government took direct responsibility for the furtherance of archaeology, it was the private labour of foreigners that produced researches which first brought home to inhabitants of Sri Lanka the glory of their past and aroused an interest in similar studies.

Clergymen like Clough, Gogerly, Hardy and Copleston demonstrated a deep interest in the language and literature of the island. A succession of civil servants showed an understanding of the institutions and learning of the people, and laboured delving into ancient Sri Lanka's culture as a respite from the boredom of often mundane official duties and the monotony of living in lonely areas. Some of them were Armour, Tolfrey, Tennent and Upham, but most remembered is T. W. Rhys Davids, whose fame is owing to his subsequent close association with the Pali Text Society in London. His contributions on Pali literature and antiquities are familiar to students of ancient India and Ceylon. Many of these foreign scholars showed a deep interest in ancient studies, and not only as a part of their official functions.

In the light of later advances made in ancient studies of the East and archaeology it is possible to criticise the work of these amateurs and pioneers and what was then done in Sri Lanka. For instance, the pre-history of the country was little studied except by dilettantes.

However, the only monograph on paleolithic and neolithic times was that of a British planter published in Calcutta *(John Pole: Ceylon Stone Implements, 1913).* In numismatics, Rhys Davids wrote the *Ancient Coins and Measures of Ceylon (London, 1877).* Since then, it has been superseded by the work of H.W. Cordrington (40) another foreign official, who was more a historian and also contributed to the editing of the *Epigraphia Zeylanica.* John Still, who is today remembered for his *Jungle Tide* , (41) a literary work, had once been assistant to Bell from 1902 to 1905. Henry Parker (42) interested himself in archaeological activities in Tissamaharama while C. H. Collins (43) similarly interested himself in archaeology in Sabaragamuwa. Yet, few associate these foreign officials with early archaeological studies in Sri Lanka.

Finally, it may be alleged that the fields of research in ancient Sri Lanka in which foreigners showed interest were limited. Very little was done in other related areas. In archaeology proper, the field of activity had been confined mainly to discovery, excavation and conservation of Buddhist monuments or in surface archaeology. This may have been partly owing to the influence brought to bear upon foreign officials of the Archaeology Department, and also because of political and nationalist sentiment and religious concern. Moreover, in allocation of funds, the Department of Archaeology received little to engage trained specialists to undertake work in narrow but important fields which were salient for a study of the country's past.

However, ultimately, contributions made by Europeans, be it on their own or as Government officials, did play a significant part in the history of archaeological advance in Sri Lanka. In this sense their pioneering endeavours need to be assessed. Moreover, their activities aroused the interest of local scholars and brought home to many the heritage of Sri Lanka. Indigenous scholars were stimulated to pursue the study of ancient Sri Lanka, and their efforts contributed to the growth of cultural nationalism in Sri Lanka which in turn inspired and stimulated the development of nationalism itself.

The study of Pali and Sri Lanka's past played a vital part in shaping mass consciousness and led to the moulding of the present. However, the study of early history and historiography also unfortunately created an emotive climate. The cultural nationalism

that was inspired by a study of the past led to the growth among the Sinhalese of a collective ethnic consciousness of a group and in this way a sense of an exclusive community with collective interests and values was built up. This was an ominous development.

Notes

1. Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society of Gt. Britain and Ireland (London, 1824) pp. 547—548.

2. See The Revival of Oriental studies in Ceylon and Indologists by T. Vimalananda, The Ceylon Historical Journal, Vol.I. Jan. 1952, No. 3, (Dehiwela, Sri Lanka) p. 226; G. P. Malalasekara, The Pali Literature of Ceylon, (Colombo, 1958) pp.5—6.

3. George Turnour, the younger, an able administrator and scholarly civil servant in Sri Lanka, 1917—1842. The Turnour Prize at Royal College, Colombo was founded in his memory - J. R. Toussaint, Annals of the Ceylon Civil Service, (Colombo, 1935), pp. 69—70.

4. G. P. Malalasekara op.cit. p. 6; Turnour knew Pali and Prakrit languages - see, T. Vimalananda - op-cit. p. 228.

5. For a discussion see, G. P. Malalasekera - op.cit. p.5.

6. Turnour translated the Mahavamsa and brought it to the notice of western scholars. His identification of the author of the chronicle is not accepted - see, History of Ceylon Vol. I Part I Ed. S. Paranavitana, (Colombo, 1959), p. 392.

7. See, G. Turnour, An Epitome of the History of Ceylon, 1836, p. 11

8. See, D. T. Devendra - Seventy years of Ceylon Archaeology in Artibus Asiae, Vol. II, 1/2, MCMLIX p. 24, (Switzerland); also J. Fergusson, History of Indian and Eastern Architecture, 2nd, ed. (London, 1910).

9. See, G. P. Malalasekera, op.cit. p.5, T. Vimala nanda, op.cit. p.226.

10. For an account of Robert Knox and his invaluable book, An Historical Relation of Ceylon, first published in London in 1618, see edited S.D. Sapara madu, An Historical Relation of Ceylon By Robert Knox, 1958, p.p. VIII-LV.

11. T. Vimalananda, op. cit. p. 226.

12. In the 1820's Rev. James Carter, a Baptist missionary, had begun compiling a Sinhalese grammar and assisted by other scholars commenced a translation of the Bible into Sinhalese. This task was continued by Methodist missionary, Rev. Benjamin Clough. Clough published in 1821 an English-Sinhalese dictionary and nine years later a Sinhalese-English dictionary and a Pali grammer, see edited, K.M.De Silva - History of Ceylon, Vol. Three, (Colombo, 1973) pp. 72—73.

13. See B. Bastiampillai, The Administration of Sir William Gregory, Governor of Ceylon, 1872—1877, (Dehiwala, 1966), Ch.VII.

14. For more about Oldenberg and the chronicle, see Dipavamsa, ed. and translated into English, H. Oldenberg, (London, 1879) and also the edition and translation into English of the same chronicle by B.C. Law, (Colombo, 1959).

15. James D'Alwis was member of the Legislative Council of Ceylon and a prominent erudite Ceylonese. For details see. J. R. Weinman, Our Legislature, (Colombo 1947), pp.II, 31,34,37,44—45, 58, 61, and 63; also Ed. K. M De Silva, op. cit. pp 137, 181—2; 185, 234, 248, 266 and 273: D'Alwis published The Sidat Sangarawa, (Colombo, 1852).

16. See, B. Bastiampillai, op. cit. Ch. VII.

17. Governors, noteworthy in this respect, were Sir Hercules Robinson (1865—1872), Sir William Gregory (1872—1877), Sir Arthur Gordon (1883—1890).

18. For information about the Dhammapada, See, C. E. Godakumbure, History of Sinhalese Literature, pp. 31—33.

19. Hugh Nevill edited the Taprobanian, devoted to researches in Oriental Studies.

20. For an account of the riots see Ed. K. M. De Silva op. cit. pp. 389—393.

21. Ancient kings of Sri Lanka lent patronage to development of learning and the arts; for an account of this, see edited S. Paranavitana, History of Ceylon Vol. I. Parts I and II (Colombo, 1959, 1960) pp. 241—267, 378—409, 563—609, and 770—792.

22. For an account of Paul Goldschmidt see, Puruvakala, Bulletin of the Jaffna Archaeological Society, (Vaddukoddai, Sri Lanka, 1973), pp. 13—15— Paul Goldschmidt - Sri Lanka's first Archaeological Commissioner by Dr. K. Indrapala.

23. P. Goldschmidt, Report on the Inscriptions found in the North Central Province, Sessional Paper No.9; (Colombo, 1875); also, Further report on the Inscrip-

tions found in the North Central Province Sessional Paper No. 24, (Colombo, 1875).

24. P. Goldschmidt, Report on Inscriptions found in the North Central Province and in the Hambantota District, Sessional Paper No. 11 (Colombo, 1876).

25. Edward Muller, Ancient Inscriptions in Ceylon, (London, 1883), p.5.

26. A Report on Ancient inscriptions in the North-Western Province, Sessional Paper I, (Colombo, 1879).

27. Edward Muller, op.cit. p.5.

28. Ibid.

29. Ibid. pp. 4—5.

30. For an account of Gordon's administration in Sri Lanka (Ceylon) see, J.K. Chapman, The Career of Sir Arthur Hamilton Gordon, First Lord Stanmore, 1829—1912 (Toronto, 1964).

31. Albert Gray served in the Ceylon Civil Service from 1871-1875 at Anuradhapura in North Central Province of Sri Lanka. Later, a member of the Royal Asiatic Society, England, see J. R. Toussaint, op.cit. p.167.

32. H.C.P. Bell, Archaeological Survey of Ceylon, Third Progress report, Sessional Paper, (Colombo, 1891).

33. Korale meant a sub-division of a district.

34. For information about Sigiriya see, Ed. S. Paranavitana, History of Ceylon, vol. I, part I, (Colombo, 1959), pp. 8, 34, 69, 296- 7; 307, 402,407-8; also Sigiriya Graffiti, (Oxford University Press, London, 1956), Introduction by same scholar.

35. For a full account of Bell's archaeological activities see his archaeological survey reports published as Sessional Papers by Government of Ceylon at Colombo in 1890 and later years.

36. E. R. Ayrton, Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of Ceylon, Vol II, (Colombo. 1926).

37. A.M. Hocart, Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of Ceylon, Vol. II, (Colombo, 1926).

38. A. M. Hocart, Archaeological Summary, Ceylon Journal of Science, Section G. Vol. I. pp. 1—14; 43—60,91—100, 143—164, also Vol. II pp. 1—16, 73—97.

39. Sir John Marshall famous for his publications about the Indus Valley civilisation - see. Mohenjodaro and the Indus Civilisation, 3 vols. (London, 1931).

40. H.W. Codrington, (Ceylon Coins and Currency, (Colombo, 1924).

41. John Still is better known for this literary production.

42. See. Henry Parker, Ancient Ceylon, (London, 1909).

43. C.H. Collins served as Chief Secretary, the highest office open to a civil servant in the Colony. After retirement, wrote Public Administration in Ceylon, (London, 1951).

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6. THE RITUAL STATUS OF THE SINHALESE MUDALIYARS [1]

Patrick A. Peebles

Mudaliyars were the most important local administrators in the British Crown Colony of Ceylon, a role they assumed under Portuguese (1505—1658) and Dutch (1638—1796) colonial governments [2] Until the twentieth century they functioned effectively, as I describe in Part I below. Their greatest value for the colonial rulers, however was not their efficacy but their cost. The title of "mudaliyar" carried so much prestige and power in Sinhalese society that members of the families who competed for these offices worked for nominal salaries, and reputedly paid large bribes to improve their chances of appointment. It is assumed that mudaliyars recovered these costs and much more from their subordinates and from the people of their districts. Although the British colonial government resented the power of the mudaliyars, they recognised the value of such willing collaborators and attempted to maintain the prestige of the mudaliyars by publicly acknowledging the social superiority of the mudaliyars. The second part of this paper examines the ritual aspect of the mudaliyar system and its effect on the social status of the Sinhalese mudaliyars.

Part I

The mudaliyars were an anomaly in colonial administrative policy from the beginning of British rule. British colonial practice dictated that the island would be administered under "direct rule," but the mudaliyars were a product of the opposite school of colonial administration, "indirect rule". Under direct rule "authority was established in the colony operating within a European administrative framework and reaching directly every person in the community through officials....appointed from above" (Emerson 1964:3). Under direct rule "traditional law and customs are in large measure left intact under the immediate supervision of native authorities rooted in a feudal past." (Emerson 1964:2) Indirect rule flourished in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, particularly in Africa, to provide a cheap government for colonial dependencies. In the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries, however, "...indirect rule was forced upon the ruling power by the strength of indigenous institutions and dominant groups with whom the new rulers had to come to terms." (Arasaratnam 1971: 57)

The mudaliyars were in no sense an aristocracy when the British conquered Sri Lanka. The Portuguese had eliminated the last traces of the Sinhalese kingdom in coastal ("low-country") Sri Lanka and the Dutch had assembled a diverse set of Sinhalese collaborators. The Mudaliyars were primarily military commanders until the last half-century of Dutch colonial rule. Civil administration was in the hands of a separate official, the *korala,* Governor Jan Schreuder (1756—61) wrote a classic account of the mudaliyars in his memorial to his successor, written just as the Dutch East India Company entered into its permanent decline:

> The majority if not all of the Corles/*korale* have each two native chiefs called Mudaliyar and *Koraal/*korala/, who in turn have lesser chiefs and servants under them.
>
> The Mudaliyar only exercises his authority over the Lascarins or native soldiers, and the Coraal must see that the services incumbent on landholders are duly rendered, and that the taxes which are imposed by the Dissawa.... are recovered without any deviation whatsoever.
>
> ...With reference to the native headmen I cannot sufficiently caution Your Honour that they are harmful subjects in respect of the interest of the low country, but that they cannot however be dispensed with.
>
> Nothing is practised by them so much as illegal exactions from the poor inhabitants, and nothing can be less easily detected or absolutely prevented than that, as they know full well how to command a particular reverence among their own people.
>
> ....Those whom one would gladly have for such posts are rare, whilst, on the contrary, there is no lack of thoose who would willingly pay for the principal posts among the native and push themselves forward with gifts and presents.
> (Ceylon. Government Archivist 1946:47—48).

By the arrival of the British in 1796, the Mudaliyars had combined the roles of Mudaliyar and *korala* in a single person; furthermore, they enhanced their strength by engaging in various schemes for land development used by the failing Dutch government to stave off financial

collapse. (Kanapathypillai 1970:19—23). Before describing the place of the mudaliyar in British colonial Ceylon, it should be pointed out that they already had become under the Dutch far more bureaucratic than their counterparts elsewhere in the Dutch East India Company's empire. The *priyayi* of Java, for example, were still hereditary chieftains, the greatest among them "powerful local princes and the officials of great courts" (Sutherland 1979:3). They governed in traditional style, administering their hereditary domains from their residences, which served as offices, ceremonial and entertainment centres, and homes for dozens of less fortunate kinsmen. They were looked to as authorities on traditional law, magic and religion. In contrast, the Dutch mudaliyars in the second half of the eighteenth century were urban, western educated and Christian.

In the nineteenth century the Dutch reinforced the traditional authority of the *priyayi* through the culture system, which has been described as "a means of deriving agricultural products from the Indies without fundamentally changing the structure of the indigenous economy." (Geertz 1963: Ch. 4). Sutherland has demonstrated how the *priyayi* gradually evolved into a bureaucratic elite in the last half-century of Dutch rule; such a process was unnecessary in Sri Lanka: the British always considered the mudaliyars as bureaucrats subject completely to colonial regulations.

Initially the British attempted to abolish the mudaliyar system entirely. When this resulted in a serious rebellion in 1796, they evolved a compromise in which the mudaliyars were granted the privileges of a hereditary aristocracy, but all officials, from the village policeman upwards, were centrally appointed and bureaucratically organised (Wickremeratne 1964: *passim).* The mudaliyars were lumped together into a government department, the "native department", and were appointed by the governor on the recommendation of the government agent, (G.A.) of the province. They did not enforce traditional law and custom but British legislation, and laissez-faire capitalism was encouraged to operate at all levels of society. The British discovered that not only was this system effective, it was far cheaper than hiring bureaucrats on the basis of ability.

Before 1833 there were four types of mudaliyars and *muhandirams* (subordinates to mudaliyars) in the native department (Peebles 1973:82ff). First, "gate" and "guard" mudaliyars, including *maha* mudaliyars (the highest ranking mudaliyar), were attached to the governor personally. They served as interpreters and translators for His Excellency, other high officials, and courts. Second, *atapattu* mudaliyars served as officials of the district headquarters, or *kachcheri.* The first mudaliyar of the *atapattu* was in charge of Sinhalese correspondence and the issuance of orders from the G.A., the second mudaliyar of the *atapattu* was the G.A.'s interpreter. Third, *korale* mudaliyars administered territories of varying size and population, usually one or two *pattus* (sub-districts). Finally, caste headmen were equivalent to mudaliyars, although they often had different titles (e.g. *maha vidana* of Washers, *mustry* of Silversmiths)

After 1833 the practice of appointing caste headmen and "Guard" Mudaliyars was discontinued and the Gate Mudaliyars became purely ceremonial, except for the Maha Mudaliyar, who served as the governor's interpreter and aide. In 1852 the British began to use the title of mudaliyar outside the native department as an honorary rank awarded to individuals not in government service for "deeds of extensive benevolence, in the construction of great works for the good of public, or from distinction of great learning, or from acts showing great loyalty". As the number of Sinhalese civil servants in other departments increased in number and in importance, *"ex officio"* mudaliyars were created, usually interpreters with duties comparable to the mudaliyars of the native department. *Ex-officio* mudaliyars held their rank only during their tenure of office and were not allowed to wear swords. Mudaliyars of the native department frequently complained that *ex officio* madaliyars received too many honorary mudaliyarships and that they then claimed higher social status than that to which their hereditary rank would entitle them.

The use of the term "mudaliyar" in three distinct senses (administrative, honorary, ex officio) has led to a great deal of confusion in the twentieth century, along with some intentional misrepresentation of family pedigrees. The number of honorary and *ex-officio* mudaliyars eventually greatly outnumbered the mudaliyars of the native department, and they were appointed without regard to social status. To further confuse the issue, the British invested sons of mudaliyars with the "titular" rank of mudaliyar. These were awarded at the discretion of the governor to members of high status families who did not hold office. Either they were incapable of performing a mudaliyar's duties, or there were no suitable offices available. Excluding titular mudaliyars, there were only about ...) mudaliyars and as many *muhandirams* in the Western Province at any one time, and there were even fewer officers in the Southern Province.

In the early part of the nineteenth century the most important duties of the native department were the recruitment of corvee labour *(rajakariya)* and interpreting. *Rajakariya* was abolished in 1834, and in-

terpreting became a job for specialists - by late colonial times there were 53 interpreters with the *ex-officio* rank of mudaliyar or *muhandiram,* ten of them Tamil interpreters (Ceylon 1935:no.6166). The primary functions of the native department was to assist the GA in the collection of revenue. Government agents tended to be obsessed with increasing revenue receipts; the importance of revenue collection to the mudaliyars is signified by the fact that the civil servants who replaced the mudaliyars when the system was abolished in 1946 were (and still are) called Divisional Revenue Officers.

The mudaliyar was required to assist virtually every department in matters requiring the cooperation of the people of his territory, from reporting births and deaths to the Registrar-General's Department and encouraging school attendance to apprehending criminals for the Police department. The *Headman's Act Book,* which listed legislation the mudaliyar was required to enforce, grew to a volume of nearly 100 pages. As A. J. Wilson has written, "with every expansion of government activity, increasing burdens were placed on the native chiefs, so much that . . .they were performing a multiplicity of functions which were altogether inconsistent with their original status." (Wilson 1963: 214).

The bureaucratic nature of the mudaliyar system is evident from the careers of mudaliyars. A prospective mudaliyar began his career as an unpaid apprentice in the *kachcheri.* These "volunteers", as they were called, worked at clerical duties until a suitable appointment became available or the youth resigned, with or without a "titular" mudaliyarship. In the middle of the nineteenth century a young man could spend a decade or more as a volunteer before the GA appointed him to an office. The appointment need not have been in the ancestral home, or even in the same province - although the British attempted to place mudaliyars where their property, family connections and presumably local influence also were the greatest. It was rare for a single office to pass through three generations of a single family as the mudaliyarship of Siyane Korale West did in the Dias Bandaranaike family. Contrast this with the career of the Javanese *priyayi:* a youth of a *priyayi* family entered the household of a regent or other official (Sutherland 1979:31—34). His duties began as menial housekeeping duties and promotion depended entirely on the personal favour of his master. His future was secure, however, as the *priyayi* were supported by *ex officio* land holdings and a hereditary right to offices, guaranteed by the constitution of 1854.

The British treated the mudaliyars with unusual deference and allowed them to require extreme gestures of respect from the people while carrying out official duties. The phrase "hereditary claim to office" was used repeatedly by the British throughout the nineteenth century to reinforce the preferential status of the "mudaliyar class" of families, although always with the insistence that it was not to be construed as a right to succeed one's father (which tended to be the case in indirectly ruled colonies). Their uniforms were specified in great detail with minute differences in decoration intended to show differences in status. Their privileges included free first class transportation and exemptions from certain taxes. They were awarded medals, titles, and grants of land. Their sons were educated in the Colombo Academy. Most significantly, they were invested with the office of mudaliyar with all the ceremony associated with office in tribal society.

To sum up, the pomp and ceremony with which the British surrounded the mudaliyars contrasts starkly with the incontestibly bureaucratic nature of the native department. The life of a mudaliyar by the latter part of the nineteenth century had degenerated into an uncertain competition for a limited number of very tedious jobs. Even the successful mudaliyar was doomed to a lifetime of correspondence and supervision of sub-ordinates - the village headmen who actually performed local duties. The reward for this effort was the appearance of majesty: the swords, medals, titles and privileges granted by the British. This, it seems, was sufficient to attract enough candidates to increase the competition for offices in the late nineteenth and into the twentieth century. The rules had achieved the control of "direct rule" at the cost of the trappings of "indirect rule", at least in the areas of mudaliyar responsibility. In the second part of this paper I examine the ceremonial side of the mudaliyar system.

Part II

It is my argument in this paper that the rituals of the Native Department elevated the status of the mudaliyars far more than can be accounted for by the wealth and power that resulted from office-holding, and that it was the conscious and successful manipulation of the symbolic value of mudaliyar rank that enabled the system to succeed as well as it did. I use the term "ritual" loosely, however, because these were merely rituals of colonial society, which survived only while the colonial administration remained legitimate.

In the period from 1796 to 1833 the British consciously restricted appointments to certain families within the mudaliyar class until there was a group of about 50 *goyigama* caste mudaliyars who organised themselves through intermarriage into a large alliance of families. Thus, although the mudaliyars

had no pretensions to aristocratic origins - most could trace their pedigrees back no further than the middle of the eighteenth century, nor were they of the ruling *(radala)* subcaste - British practice enabled them to become a distinct elite. Their internal organisation by kinship followed the Sinhalese form of kinship alliance known as *pelantiya* (cf. Obeyesekera 1967:Ch. 9).

By rigidly excluding kinsmen who failed to succeed within the Native Department from marriage negotiations, and by using dowries to attract the most successful mudaliyars, the mudaliyars *pelantiyas* combined to form what they called the "first-class *goyigamas*".

The British did not create this tactic of using mudaliyar status to enhance family status, as Dutch sources show. The diary of Adirian de Alwis for the period 1777—1795 (which was published in the early twentieth century for the purpose of identifying families who had mudaliyar origins but who were no longer considered "first class") consists largely of references to status symbols permitted by the Dutch, from the number of tom-tom beaters in a mudaliyar's retinue to the ranks of his pallbearers (Pieris, Ed. 1911: *passim).* In 1740 Governor Gustav Wilhelm Van Imhoff (1736—40) complained that his policy of reducing the number of mudaliyars was frustrated by "troublesome petitions for titles, distinctions, and offices by the sons, brothers and other relations of the chiefs." (Ceylon. Government Archivist 1911: 30). With the advantages of a thoroughly bureaucratic administration, the British were able to regulate such practises much more closely. They developed an elaborate etiquette for their relations with the mudaliyars. They attended, for example, the funerals, weddings and other ceremonial occasions. Their public recognition of mudaliyar status sometimes drew complaints from others. Several petitions to the Commissioners of Eastern Inquiry in 1829 complained, for example, that mudaliyars should not be allowed to ride in palaquins or wear shoes in the presence of Europeans (Public Record Office 1829:268—269). Sixty years later another petition reached as far as the House of Commons criticizing the governor for showing undue favouritism to the Maha Mudaliyar by allowing him to ride on the inside of his carriage while two Europeans rode outside on the front seat (Public Record Office 1889:unpaged).

Such protests notwithstanding, the British expended great efforts to maintain proper etiquette in their relations with mudaliyars. They were particularly strict when a mudaliyar overstepped the limits set down for them. The case of Jacobus Dias (1773 — 1865), a son of Maha Mudaliyar Conrad Peter Dias Bandaranaike, and the father of three of the most prominent Sinhalese of the nineteenth century, seems to have been a test of British-mudaliyar etiquette (Peebles 1973: 149—1505) Dias was dismissed from office in 1839 for refusing to accept an order from a GA which used the disrespectful second person form "*tamuse*" rather than an honorific term. Dias, who near retirement and had no sons in the Native Department whose careers would be affected, appears to have been testing the extent to which mudaliyars could command gestures of respect from the British; it demonstrated that the British were determined not to show any unnecessary deference.

The most significant ritual in the Native Department was the investiture of a mudaliyar with the rank and insignia of office. Each vacancy or the approach of the sovereign's birthday (when higher investments took place) set off a furious round of applications, petitions, and letters and editorials in the newspapers. The governors recognised the importance of these events to the mudaliyars. Former governor William Gregory (1872—77) wrote in 1884 to governor Arthur Gordon (1883—90), "Your account of the investiture affords me the greatest pleasure... it is a wise thing to surround the conferring of rank with as much splendour and dignity as possible". (British Museum 1884: foll. 2—3).

The Government Agent read through and commented upon all the applications and nominations - a time - consuming duty which some GA's protested - and sent his recommendations to the governor, who made the final decisions. The mudaliyar was informed by letter and was formally invested in the presence of other mudaliyars. The ceremony consisted primarily of reading the act of appointment and placing the sword and belt of office over the shoulders of the new or newly-promoted mudaliyar. After the ceremony the mudaliyar returned to his home in a procession accompanied by drums, banners, attendants and a large crowd of onlookers,.

The investiture followed roughly this same pattern from the eighteenth to the twentieth centuries, with allowances for technological change and the anglicization of the ceremonies. It varied, however, with the rank and social status of the actors in the ceremony. D'Alwis in his diary, and the *Government gazette* in the nineteenth century, were careful to specify who read the act of appointment and who placed the sword on the mudaliyars' shoulders. The higher the rank of the actors, the greater the prestige of the recipient. The governor himself presided at the Queen's Birthday Honours. Occasionally lesser officials presided, as for example when the Bible translator Don Abraham De Thomas, who had no kinship ties with the leading mudaliyars, was made a mudaliyar of the governor's gate in 1817, that cere-

mony was held not at an assembly of mudaliyars, but at a meeting of the Colombo Auxiliary Bible Society (Ceylon 1817:No. 829). The chief secretary read the act of appointment rather than the governor, and the sword and belt were placed on him by the second maha mudaliyar. Apparently only one other representative of the mudaliyar class, the fourth maha mudaliyar, attended.

The best-documented case I have of the investiture of a mudaliyar is that of Maha Mudaliyar Solomon Dias Bandaranaike in 1895. Bandaranaike's appointment is interesting not only because he was the most-decorated Sinhalese of his time but because the appointment was controversial and shows the lengths to which a mudaliyar would go to secure the honours to which he felt entitled. Bandaranaike had left school in 1881, at the age of 19 years, to assist his father who was Mudaliyar of Siyane Korale East. This he continued to do until his father retired in 1887, when he took the post to become an unusually young korale mudaliyar.

Bandaranaike's autobiography spells out in detail each and every honour he received. In 1882 Prince Albert Victor and Prince George (later King George V) visited the island. Solomon and his father received the royal youths at the old Hanwella Fort, where his father had entertained H.R.H. Prince Alfred, Duke of Edinburgh, and where his grandfather had been awarded a gold medal in 1803.

> "It was on this historic spot that Prince Albert, the Heir-Presumptive, invested me, at the request of the then Governor, Sir James Longden, and on the earnest recommendations of Mr. F.R. Saunders, Government Agent, WP., at the time, with a sword and belt and the rank of Muhandiram (or chieftain) of the Governor's gate. To commemorate this event.... the Government gave me special authority to attach to my name of Bandaranaike the additional names of Rajakumarun-kadukeralu, which signifies 'The Bandaranaike who was invested with a sword by a Royal Prince'. The authorities were chary of granting me the right to assume these names, but Sir Arthur Gordon...swept aside the mumblers with one gesture. But I digress." In 1894 he was invested Mudaliyar of the Governor's Gate "Certain factors had worked to withhold it from me for two or three years previously, and Sir Arthur Havelock, governor, who was on leave in May, 1893, expressed surprise, when he returned, that I had not yet received my due. At first he wished to hold a special investiture and grant me the rank, but ultimately we waited the few months that intervened."
> (Dias Bandaranaike 1929:52—56).

Bandaranaike had been on vacation in England in 1895. Knowing that the maha mudaliyar, another Dias Bandaranaike, was ill, he left his application for the position with a friend. Not trusting to this means alone, he wrote to the Lieutenant - Governor that he would be an applicant as soon as he heard that the old man was in failing health. When he returned from England he received a letter from the Government Agent (who had opposed his gate mudaliyarship) informing him that he had been appointed maha mudaliyar and requesting him "to fix a date and place to receive my Act of Appointment". Not willing to be handed the office without the appropriate ceremony, Solomon marched directly to the GA's office. Asked if he had come to receive his Act of Appointment, "I promptly replied that I had come to pay him my respects and report my return".

He then made his way from the GA's office to the secretariat, where he met the lieutenant-governor, and to Queen's House, the governor's residence. Although he missed the governor, he was invited to lunch there the next day, when he complained that he had not received his Act of Appointment. As Solomon expected, the governor had intended the GA to send the Act of Appointment on board to greet him on his arrival. The governor then sent for the Act to be delivered to Queen's House.

Solomon then managed to turn the episode into a triumph. The investiture was delayed until the mudaliyars' official farewell to the Governor, whose term was ending. Rather than handing over the appointment privately at the *kachcheri* as he had intended, the Government Agent was forced to read the Act of Appointment in the presence of the entire body of mudaliyars of the Western and Southern Provinces, as the Governor publicly invested Solomon.

> "That official complied rather unsteadily," Solomon writes, "like a man striken with an ague.... His Excellency himself then placed the sword and belt of office over my shoulders, and subsequently I briefly made my thanks for the distinction conferred on me. The ceremony then terminated." He then held a reception at his Colombo residence. Several days later he returned to his Walauwa in a regal procession. His train was met by "at least 50,000 people ... the journey to Horagolla occupied over two hours, resolving itself into a triumphal march without precedent in recent Sinhalese history... I played the part of the 'Conquering Hero' one of the marches delivered by a brass band to perfection...I must have listened to quite half a dozen addresses of welcome in the course of those three miles of decorated roadway, and delivered as many speeches in return... Leaving the sta-

tion, we sat ourselves in carriages, and were given the place of honour in a procession typically Oriental. Elephants and my Lascoreen Guards, tom-tom players, conch-blowers and dancers, the brass band above mentioned, and the whole population of the Korle, fairly sum up the swaying assemblage...At various intervals the roadsides were lined for long distances with bamboo poles, and several pandals - or triumphal arches - under each of which an address was presented that necessitated acknowledgment, spanned the route. The sharp crack of guns and a riotous fanfare heralded my entry in each of these, and as we got deeper into the East, acrobats and devil-dancers did their best to add to the enchantment of the fleeting hour. Acres of illuminated paper and furlongs of floral cable were not unhappy emblems of the wishes of the populace. Probably the finest arch of all was that erected at the entrance to Horagolla. It was square and dignified, and inscribed with words of welcome. Through it I passed to the Hall of my House, where I received and responded to four more addresses...Such, then, was my home-coming. It warms the cockles of my heart to think of it. It may not have been the highest form of Art: it may even have been crude and bucolic in sentiment; but it was tremendously genuine."

Bandaranaike's immodest account conveys the ritual importance of the event. It clearly describes more than a promotion within a bureaucratic hierarchy. It illustrates how "ritual mobilizes incontrovertible authority behind the granting of official office and status and thus guarantees its legitimacy and imposes accountability for its proper exercise." (Fortes 1962:86). Moreover, the appointment, investiture, and procession together seem to follow the form of a "rite of transition" *(rite de passage)* in which the mudaliyar - and his kinsmen are magically elevated to a higher social status.

Seen as a rite of transition the mudaliyar before his investiture is in a state of marginality, which becomes evident when the significance of the sword and belt is understood. They are the part of the mudaliyar's uniform that identify the social status of the mudaliyar most precisely. The coat and trimmings in most instances vary little from rank to rank, but the ceremonial swords show complex gradations. the hilt and scabbard could be of gold, silver, wood, horn, or tortoise shell. Some were inlaid, others embellished, with one of the above or with copper depending on social status and rank. As mentioned above, honorary mudaliyars were not entitled to personal swords; titular mudaliyars had that fact inscibed on the sword. The sword belt also varied; it could be of lace, silk or ribbon. The proper combinations were specifiied in official publications, although they were modified slightly during the nineteenth century. My point is that the mudaliyar's status is unclear until the sword is placed over his shoulders. When he receives the sword he is transformed, and the new status is revealed. Thus the investiture begins the "rite of aggregation", concluded with the procession that is a public affirmation of this new status.

This analysis falters, however, due to the absence of any evidence of a corresponding "rite of separation" in which the mudaliyar is removed from his prior role in society. It could be argued that the announcement of the appointment and the frantic preparations for the investiture (and for the spontaneous demonstrations afterward) remove the mudaliyar from normal social life. In the absence of a formal "rite of separation", however, one cannot assume that Sinhalese society in general considered the investiture a rite of transition. This conclusion supports the opinions of Sri Lankan scholars (other than those of mudaliyar family origins), most of whom feel obligated to remind the foreign historian that the mudaliyars were not as highly regarded by others as they regarded themselves.

This does not mean that these rituals were insignificant. The fact of mudaliyar success as administrators and the post-independence success of their descendants in government and politics indicates that they held real power and prestige. However, the context in which these rituals operated appears to have been not Sinhalese society as a whole, but the more limited sphere of British colonial society. This seems to fit insofar as the office, uniform and the symbols all were of European origins (although more Portuguese and Dutch than British). A "rite of separation" would not seem necessary to the British actors since the uninitiated mudaliyar would be separated from birth from the ruling class, until the investiture elevated the mudaliyar into it. In this context, Bandaranaike's references to "a procession typically Oriental" and "deeper into the East" take on new meaning. At that point he considered himself a part of the British ruling class, a towering height as long as colonial government remained legitimate.

Notes

1. An earlier version of this paper was presented at the Thirty-fifth annual meeting, Association for Asian Studies, March 25, 1983.

2. This paper is adapted from a much-revised monograph based on my Ph.D. dissertation, and on subsequent research. Other parts of the original dissertation have been published elsewhere. I am greatly indebted to Dr. James T. Rutnam for the encouragement, scholarly assistance and intellectual stimulation he has given me so generously.

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7. THE ETHNIC CONFLICT AND PERCEPTIONS OF HISTORY

C. R. de Silva

One might argue that contemporary ethnic conflicts are fuelled by present-day disputes and that events far back in the past cannot really be stimulants of such disputes. Others would go further and argue that paying attention to the past would merely obscure and cloud the issues of today.

However, perceptions of the past can be shown to directly affect the attitude of one community or ethnic group towards another. The interaction between man's heritage (or at least his conception of his heritage) and his attitudes is an extremely complex one. The inter action is a two-way process for a person's view of the history of his community could change with experience and education. What is important to note, however, is that while one's perception of the past does not completely determine current values and attitudes it is surely a factor which influences them. Thus the alteration of a community's vision of its past or even simply placing emphasis on one part of its history rather than another is a way of manupulating the attitudes of people of that group.

This kind of manipulation is not confined to our view of the past. It could extend to changes in the definitions of what is considered the cultural core of any group. Paul R. Brass has effectively described such manipulations in relation to the Muslims in modern India.

'....the study of ethnicity and nationality is in large part of the study of politically induced cultural change. More precisely it is the study of the process by which elites and counter elites within ethnic groups select aspects of the group's culture, attach new value and meaning to them and use them as symbols to mobilize the group to defend its interests and to compete with other groups.' (1)

Such changes in emphasis are easier in relation to the past particularly when the period of time in question is far back in history and when conclusive evidence on any issue is difficult to find. Elites in Sri Lanka have resorted to such manipulations and unfortunately they have generally had unfavourable repercussions on ethnic harmony.

Let us first take the example of the identification of the Sinhalese as an 'Aryan race'. As historian R.A.L.H. Gunawardena has recently pointed out the very concept of an 'Aryan race' based on the common origin of the non-semitic people of Europe and India arose in the nineteenth century. The basis of this tenuous theory was the discovery of some structural affinities between European and Indian languages. With the identification of the Sinhala language as one related to Sanskrit, the Sinhalese elites obtained an argument that could be used to show that their ethnic group was one which had as distinguished a pedigree as that of the colonial rulers - the British. (2) The Sinhalese were seen as descendants of the mythical ruler Vijaya and his followers all of whom migrated from North India. The Tamils who migrated to Sri Lanka from South India were thus seen as a different - and perhaps inferior - group. The admixture of the Sinhalese with both the original proto-Austroloid peoples of Sri Lanka and with South Indian migrants was played down. The Sinhalese were thus 'Aryans' who migrated to Sri Lanka in the 5th century BC before the South Indian Tamils and thus had a 'prior right' to the country. Moreover, with the Buddhist revival of the late nineteenth century Sri Lanka was extolled as the repository of the purest form of Buddhism. It was not merely the land of the Sinhalese but the land of Buddhism and the Buddha himself had foretold that the religion he preached would survive there.

This picture of the past, however, was by no means wholly an invention in colonial times. It had some basis both in fact and in tradition. There is clear evidence of a migration from North India around the 5th century BC, though it is likely that immigrants from South India might well have preceded them. Moreover, although the Sinhalese ethnic group as it emerged by the first millenium BC was biologically very mixed, it seems clear that a single language was spoken all over the island and that a single major religion - Buddhism - predominated for well over a thousand years up to the end of the first millenium AD. The ancient Sinhalese who were concentrated on the northern and eastern plains constructed a sophisticated system of irrigation channels and reservoirs. They built impressive Buddhist monuments, presumably from the returns generated by a flourishing agricultural economy. The rulers of the period maintained a close liasion with the Buddhist *sangha* (order of monks). (3) The tradition of

Sri Lanka being a land of the Sinhalese and of Buddhism dates from this time and it is to this period that modern Sinhalese nationalists make nostalgic references.

The view of a prosperous Sinhalese-Buddhist civilization in the past is combined with a vision of Dravidians in South India as the historic enemy. Diverse groups in Sri Lanka appeared to have lived in relative harmony for long periods. However, there appears to be evidence of increasing clashes between the powerful Hindu States that rose in South India from about the fifth century AD and the rulers of Sri Lanka. These clashes seem to have generated a greater sense of self-identity among the Sinhalese. Furthermore, chroniclers writing about this time seem to have injected interpretations of ethnic hostility to even earlier periods. For example, Duttagamini (161—137 BC) a Sinhalese prince who unified Sri Lanka by conquering the realm of Elara, the Tamil ruler of the northern plains has been portrayed by the *Mahavamsa,* the main Sinhalese chronicle as the hero of a Sinhalese struggle against Tamils though the internal evidence in the chronicle itself indicates that the Tamil Elara had considerable Sinhalese support and the struggle was probably one for political supremacy. The vision of south Indian Dravidians being the historic enemy received a decided impetus when the old Sinhalese civilization collapsed in the thirteenth century in the wake of South Indian invasions. The Sinhalese moved southwards and an independent Hindu Tamil kingdom (1250 - 1619) based on the Jaffna peninsula and its environs came into existence in the north (4)

This decidedly slanted 'Sinhalese-view-of-history' had received more emphasis with rising contemporary tension between the two communities and, in turn, has further contributed towards it. The reaction of the Tamil elites has been two-fold. In the first place there has come the equally dogmatic assertion that Tamils were settled in Sri Lanka well before the arrival of the Sinhalese. The evidence often cited for this is the prevalence of similar mesolithic cultural remains on both sides of the Palk Straits and the geographical proximity of South India to Sri Lanka. This argument is generally extended to provide a picture of a culturally plural Sri Lanka rather than an exclusively Sinhalese Buddhist Sri Lanka - a picture which has considerable support from historical evidence. (5) More recently, with the rise of Tamil separatism there has been an attempt to build a completely new version of the past. The legitimacy of the separatist ideology is facilitated by the view of an ethnic group with its own unique history. Thus not only are the Tamils seen as the 'original migrants' to Sri Lanka but with some stretching of the imagination Tamils and Sinhalese kings are seen as alternating in power until at last a wholly Tamil kingdom is founded in the north in the thirteenth century. As Anthony D. Smith explained, when the ruling group legitimises their action in terms of history, 'the intelligensia of the minorities themselves seek out a new historical rationale for their own situation and experience'. (6)

Amidst the storm of emotionalism roused by ethnic conflict the reaction of some Sinhalese has been not only to contradict the clearly exaggerated claims of the existence of a Tamil political unit enjoying 'sovereign rights' from pre-historic times but even to deny the well-documented existence of a separate Tamil kingdom in the north from the thirteenth to the seventeenth centuries.

These disputes in history are not simply issues in academic debate. They are key elements of the 'world view' of each community. For example, whatever is written in primary school texts, many Sinhalese teachers inform their students that the Sinhalese arrived in Sri Lanka before the Tamils and many Tamil teachers teach precisely the opposite. Among many in both communities prior arrival is seen as a factor that gives the community special rights as 'sons of the soil'. This is especially strong among the Sinhalese whose view of history inclines them to believe that Lanka is essentially a Sinhalese country and that Buddhism ought to have a special place. Efforts of Tamil propagandists to reverse this view of history and portray the Sinhalese as invaders of an originally Tamil country has thus evoked considerable controversy. (8)

Unfortunately the debate has tended to obscure many positive aspects of ethnic relations in ancient and medieval Sri Lanka. Ethnicity was no bar to the highest positions of the land and even to the throne. Sinhalese princes had few qualms about recruiting South Indian mercenaries in their bids for the throne and Sinhalese rulers occasionally married South Indian princesses. Caste was often more important than ethnicity. Buddhist temples gradually began to accommodate shrines to Hindu Gods within the temple premises. Even after the establishment of a separate Tamil kingdom (AD 1250—1619) conflicts between it and the kingdoms of the south were sporadic rather than continuous. This was partly because an extensive no-man's land comprising largely of the abandoned centres of the old civilization separated the northern kingdom from the rest of Sri Lanka. It was also because no single kingdom in Sri Lanka during this time had the resources to extend its authority over the whole island. However, there was also an element of mutual co-operation. Tamil rulers of Jaffna are known to have assisted Sinhalese rulers in their struggles against their enemies and when the Sinhalese invaded Portu-

guese-occupied Jaffna in 1627 they were welcomed as liberators. (9)

The debate on the impact of the colonial period is as intense. Tamil separatists claim that the transfer of sovereignity from the northern kingdom of Jaffna to the Portuguese in 1619 led to periods of colonial rule by the Portuguese (1619—1658), the Dutch (1658—1796) and the British (1796—1948). They claim that at the end of British rule sovereignty over the north-east ought to have been handed over to the people of the north and not to a "Sinhalese" government based in Colombo. When it is argued that the Tamil political leaders elected by the people gave their assent to a united Sri Lanka in 1948, the Tamil extremists claim that even if this was so, the changing of the Constitution in 1972 without the consent of the elected leaders of the Tamils freed the people of the north and the east from allegiance to the government of Sri Lanka.

These arguments are somewhat tenuous and are based on the assumption that any one ethnic group has the right to veto over constitutional change in a plural society. Moreover, it obscures the fact that when the Jaffna kingdom fell into the hands of the Portuguese it was a small and weak principality with control over a little more than the Jaffna peninsula and the adjoining coastal areas. This theory, even if accepted - thus would have little bearing on the Tamils living in the eastern Province today - an area which was clearly beyond the power of the Jaffna kingdom in 1619.

More moderate Tamil views of their history during the colonial period have greater plausibility. It has been pointed out that despite European awareness of the cultural identity of the Tamils of Sri Lanka, as illustrated in Dutch efforts codify customary Tamil law, the administrative unification of the northern areas with the south tended to integrate Tamil areas with the rest of Sri Lanka. The development of road, rail and telegraph links in the nineteenth century strengthened this effect. Moreover, unlike in neighbouring India, local government institutions were slow to develop in Sri Lanka. Thus it could be argued that at independence in 1948, Sri Lanka's rulers inherited a workable machinery of central government while minority ethnic groups were left bereft of any institutional framework within which to organise themselves, even in the areas they were dominant.

However, colonial rule did not have an effect that was altogether unfavourable to the Tamils, indeed, in some ways it strengthened them *vis-a-vis* the Sinhalese. For instance, the successful resistance of the kingdom of Kandy in the central highlands up to 1815 led to the creation of a distinction between the Lower Country Sinhalese and the Kandyan Sinhalese. The former, because of their longer experience under the Western powers, were better equipped to seize the new economic opportunities which arose in the highlands after a plantation economy came into being there in the nineteenth century. Low-Country Sinhalese entrepreneurs moved up to the Hill Country as traders, contractors, craftsmen and professional men. However, they encountered opposition from the Kandyan Sinhalese who remained attached to traditional values and who as a consequence found themselves outpaced in a period of rapid change. Although the tension between the two groups of the Sinhalese rarely came to the surface, and was often tempered by inter-elite marriage alliances, it enabled the Sri Lankan Tamil minority to lay claim to being one of the three major ethnic groups in the country. These claims were strengthened by the importation by the British plantation owners of indentured Tamil labour from India to work on their plantations; the colonial administration also used these workers to undertake some of the ill-paid and unpleasant work in the urban sector. By 1931 the Indian Tamil immigrants outnumbered the Ceylon Tamils, and altogether the two Tamil groups comprised some 25 percent of the country's population. Because the new immigrants were settled far away from regions where Sri Lanka Tamils predominated and also because they were generally persons from the 'lower' caste groups in South India few close links developed between the two Tamil Hindu groups. However, at least from the second quarter of the twentieth century Sri Lanka Tamil leaders began to think in terms of leading the entire Tamil peoples of Sri Lanka.

The colonial period also saw the emergence of a stronger sense of ethnic identity both among the Sinhalese and the Tamils. We have already seen the impact of the 'Aryan theory' in Sinhalese ideology. The Buddhist and Hindu revival of the late nineteenth century - originating largely as reactions against the proselytysing efforts of Christian missionaries reinforced this trend. So did the publication of newspapers in Sinhalese and Tamil languages. Later the development of indigenous literature and drama instilled a greater awareness of one's cultural heritage. In this respect the novelist N.V. Thirugnanasambanda Pillai (1886—1955) performed much the same role for the Tamils as did dramatist John de Silva (1875 — 1946) for the Sinhalese. Both communities burrowing into their past to gain a sense of pride to combat their common colonial master were, however, strengthening their ethnic identities with dire consequences for the future.

The Sinhalese viewed the colonial period as one which brought them profound disadvantages as a

community. This was especially so far the Sinhalese Buddhists who viewed with resentment the loss of state patronage for Buddhism and the award of favoured treatment for various Christian denominations. In this respect they had the sympathy of the Tamil Hindus but in many other respects the colonial period proved divisive.

In the first place the influx of South Indian Tamil labourers to estates - largely in the highlands created dramatic changes in the ethnic composition in the highland areas. Since the workers lived in the plantations their assimilation by the Sinhalese who resided in the surrounding villages was very limited. The Sinhalese - especially the Kandyan Sinhalese - saw themselves gradually being converted into a minority in parts of their ancestral homelands and deeply resented the new comers - British and Indian alike. They proved quite receptive to a Sinhalese-Buddhist ideology.

Then again by the twentieth century, education in English had become the key factor in access to the lucrative professions and to higher posts in government services. Because of numerous Christian missions teaching in the Jaffna peninsula, the Sri Lankan Tamils secured a lead in knowledge of the English language. For example the census of 1911 reports that 4.9 percent of the Sri Lankan Tamil males were literate in English in comparison to 3.5 percent of Low Country Sinhalese and 0.7 percent of Kandyan Sinhalese males. The growth of government schools in Sinhalese areas especially after 1920 and the closing of the Malayan Public Service to (largely Tamil) applicants from Sri Lanka in 1922 increased competition for state employment in Sri Lanka. The proportion of Sri Lanka Tamils obtaining such employment was high. Even in 1946 the proportion of Tamils to Sinhalese in the elite Ceylon Civil Service was 1:2 and the proportion in the Judicial Service 2:3. The British colonial rulers also prudently preferred to recruit minority ethnic groups to key positions in the security services so that the army and the police had large numbers of Tamil officers.

Finally there was the question of political representation. The evolution of the economy in the nineteenth century had produced a new elite among both Sinhalese and Tamils. Both groups agitated for concessions from the British. However, the Legislative Council as it evolved from 1833 to 1931 was not constructed in terms of representative ethnic proportions. In 1921 for instance the Council consisted of twelve Sinhalese and ten non-Sinhalese. As greater power was devoted to the indigenous people the minorities - particularly the Sri Lankan Tamils - sought to retain the disproportionate representation they had secured in the early twentieth century. This was difficult to maintain with the advent of universal franchise in 1931. In the elections of that year, of the fifty elected seats in a State Council of sixty one (eight were nominated by the British governor and three were ex-officio members) thirty eight were won by Sinhalese candidates. It seemed inevitable that unless there were constitutional measures to prevent it, that the Sinhalese with two-thirds the population would dominate the legislature. The Sinhalese considered this perfectly legitimate and when the Tamil leader G.G. Ponnambalam proposed in the mid-1930s that half the seats in the legislature and half the ministers in any government be reserved for minorities, the Sinhalese resented it as an effort to convert the minorities into a position where they would have a veto on all proposals.

The drifting of the Sinhalese and Tamil elites away from each other had its origins in disputes for political power. With the advent of universal suffrage it became clear to many politicians that appeals to ethnic, caste and religious loyalties could reap rich dividends. Thus was born the politics of communalism.

Events since then have shown that our perceptions of the past can be modified in response to current disputes. What then is the role of our vision of the past? Some writers have argued that our view of the past could well be a major factor that poisons our view of other ethnic groups. The "Sinhalese view of history",- it is argued had tended to persuade Sinhalese in contemporary Sri Lanka that they have a legitimate right to primacy in the island. The Tamil "nationalist" view of a Tamil Eelam which, "lived as a stable national entity with a state structure and was ruled by its own kings" is used to justify the establishment of a separate state. Disputes over these differing views could become acrimonious, thus exascerbating existing ethnic tensions. Moreover, the divergent "world views" based on these different visions of history lead to further conflict.

There is some truth in this argument. However, differing perceptions of history are but subsidiary factors that fuel ethnic tension. Conflicts have often arisen without disputes over history as was evidenced by the Tamil-Muslim clashes in the Eastern Province in April 1985. Moreover, often antagonistic popular perceptions of history pay scant heed to historical truth as individuals or groups choose particular historical trends or events which support their views and shut out the rest. Thus changes in popular visions of the past are often bound with the resolution or otherwise current disputes.

Notes

1. Paul R. Brass, Elite groups, symbol manipulation and ethnic identity among the Muslims of South Asia in *Political Identity in South Asia* ed. by David Taylor and Malcolm Yapp, London, Curzon Press, 1979 p. 40.
2. R.A.L.H. Gunawardane, The people of the Lion: The Sinhalese identity and ideology in History and Histrography, *Sri Lanka Journal of the Humanities* Vol. V. Nos. 1 &2, 1979 pp.1—36 esp pp.27—36.
3. *University of Ceylon History of Ceylon* ed. S. Paranavitane, Vol.II part I Colombo, University of Ceylon Press, 1959.
4. See *The collapse of the Rajarata civilization in Ceylon and the drift for the South-west* ed. K. Indrapala, Peradeniya, Ceylon Studies Seminar 1971.
5. For instance see D.J. Kanagaratnam, *Tamils and Cultural Pluralism in Ancient Sri Lanka,* Colombo. n.d., Paul M. Jayarajan, *History of the Evolution of the Sinhala Alphabet.* Colombo. n.d.
6. Anthony D. Smith, Towards a Theory of Ethnic Separatism *Ethnic and Racial Studies II* (I) Jan. 1979 p.30.
7. For an account of the kingdom of Jaffna See S. Pathmanathan, *The Kingdom of Jaffna Part I c. AD 1200 — 1450* Colombo, Ceylon Newspapers Ltd., 1978: For an attempt to show that Jaffna was not a Tamil (Dravidian) kingdom See W. Wijesuriya *Uture Kalinga Rajaya ha Dravida Rajyavadaye Itihasaya,* Colombo, Sri Lanka Puravidya Sangamaya 1984.
8. For an example of the New Tamil Extremist View of History see Satchi Ponnambalam *Sri Lanka: The National Questio.i and the Tamil Liberation Struggle* London, Zed Press, 1983.
9. See C.R. De Silva *The Portuguese in Ceylon 1617 — 1638* Colombo, H.W. Cave & Co, Ltd. 1972.

8. THE BARATAS: A CASE OF COMMUNITY INTEGRATION IN EARLY HISTORIC SRI LANKA

Sudharshan Seneviratne

The term Barata occurs as a pre-fix to personal names in association with twenty two individual Brahmi cave inscription of Sri Lanka.(1) These particular inscriptions can be approximately assigned with a pre-Christian date and it is significant that some are written from right to left.(2)These are primarily distributed in the northern half of the island, with the exception of a solitary inscription (No. 643) at Situlpavuwa in south-east Sri Lanka. It is also interesting to note that some of these inscriptions are situated in close proximity to the Megalithic-Black and Red Ware sites (vide Seneviratne 1984).

Several scholars have suggested a wide range of meanings to the term *Barata.* According to Parker, this term derived from (Sanskrit) *bhrta i.e. worker* (1909: 426 No. 5) Wickramasingha, on the contrary, traced its origins to the sanskrit terms *bhartr* i.e. brother and *bhratr* i.e. lord (1912:140—41). Bell suggested that *barata* derived from Bharata, and quite naturally it reflects a community that arrived from India (1917—18:204). Interestingly, Paranavitana suggested that, both *bata* (another prefix to personal names found in the early inscriptions) and *barata* derived from a common term.(3) In his view, these terms '....derived from Sanskrit *bhartr,* nom. sin., *bhartta;* the former has preserved the *r* by *svarabhakti;* in the latter, the *r* has been lost due to the assimilation of conjoint consonants' (1970:cv). Paranavitana translates the term *barata* as 'lord' and also argues that this term was used by both, the clergy and laymen, indicating the continuation of lay designations even after such individuals entered the Order of the *Sangha (Ibid).* Ellawala also holds the view that *bata* derives from *bhartr* > *bhattu* (1969: 41).

It was perhaps Malony, who made an effort to locate the term *barata* in a different context. He was the first to notice a historical linkage between the *Barata* group mentioned in the inscriptions and the ancestors of the community today known as the Paravara, who inhabit certain coastal areas of North-west Sri Lanka and South-east Tamilnadu in South India (1968:1969). Parata, according to Malony, '....is the Tamil rendering of Sanskrit "Bharata" and Prakrit or Sinhalese "Barata" ' (1968:112). In the overlapping transformation from *parata* > *paratavar* > *paravar,* there is a situation where the '... final *r* being the human plural suffix, the *va* a euphonic infix and Paravar being a contraction' (Ibid). It is also interesting to note that the *Dravidian Etymological Dictionary* equates *paratar/paratavar/paravar* with the term bharata *(DED*3263). Some hold the view that the community name Paratavar itself originated from the root *para* ' to expand/expansion' > *paravai* 'the sea' (Dorai Rangaswamy 1968:130). Malony does not accept this derivation, though notices on the paratavar in the sangam texts *(PPTI* 531—532) and ethnographic notes on the present Paravara folk (Thurstan 1909:vi. 140—155) clearly establish that this community thrived within a marine-littoral ecology from a very remote period.

II

The origins of the Paratavar is obscure, though one cannot totally rule out their ancestry extending to the pre Historic(Mesolithic)period. Archaeological investigations revealed the association of marine fossils, especially chank, with the microlithic sites situated along coastal Tirunelveli (Zeuner et Allchin 1956:135). The primary chank fisheries, even until the early 20th Cent., spread along the south-east coast of Tamilnadu to the northern coast of Sri Lanka (Hornell 1914: 28,66,74,88). It is extremely significant that during the pre historic period, chank shell from this region moved inland to the Neolithic sites in the Southern Deccan e.g. Tekkalakota and Nagarjunakonda (Nagaraja Rao et Malhotra 1965:86; 1965: 86; Subrahmanyam 1975:162—4; Foote 1901; Nos. 1353, 1442,1574, 2203, 2783). The movement of marine resources, in the form of pearls and chank, continued during the Proto Historic Iron Age e.g. Tirukkampuliur in the middle Kaveri valley (Mahalingam 1970:59,65,106). This points to an inter regional and inter-tribal exchange net-work that linked southern Deccan and south India. archaeological evidence indicate that pearl and chank moved from South India along the eastern coast to the urban centres in the Gangetic valley, during the pre Maurya period. The *arthasastra*(7.12:24-25) mentions pearls and chank among other luxury items imported from the south, through the long distance trade mechanism. It is therefore most obvious that before the early Historic period, a particular community or several communities specialised in the task of extracting pearls and chank from the ocean.

The original cultural identity of the Paratavar is lost to us, perhaps due to a particular social attitude they adopted in relation to their subsistence pattern and their habitat. The dependence upon marine resources and their location in the littoral areas, constantly exposed this community to intrusive techno-cultural elements and ideologies brought in either by peaceful merchants and missionaries or by marauding fortune hunters across the ocean. In successive stages in history, their adherence to Buddhism, Hinduism, Islam and Christianity, is a case in point (Malony 1969; De Silva 1978:20). This process of acculturation to the Great Tradition, is one of the most consistent features in the history of the Paratavar/Paravar community

It is therefore quite likely that during the Early Historic period this coastal community was influenced by the Aryanized long distance traders who arrived in this region in search of valuable raw material. If this assumption is correct, Malony may not be incorrect in suggesting that the community name Paratavar derived from Bharata, due to a process of acculturation, which may also account for the prevalence of sea-faring legends within the Paravar folk tradition (vide Malony 1968:115).[4] In the event of such contacts, the cultural identity of sections of this community, residing at certain micro locations where interaction with alien groups was most intense and regular, may have undergone an appreciable transformation. Subsequently, this seems to have provided a basis for upward socio-economic mobility in certain sections of this community. At other localities, where this contact was irregular or non existent, the coastal communities continued to remain culturally and materially backward.[5]

The Sangam texts indicate that during the Early Historic period the Paratavar were scattered in small settlements situated between the estuaries of Kaveri and Tambaparni. These text quite clearly indicate that an internal social hierarchization had evolved within the Paratavar, clearly reflected by an economic stratification and a disparity in cultural sophistication. In short, they were shareholders to the vicissitudes arising from an uneven distribution of social wealth in a rapidly evolving surplus economy based on agriculture and commerce.

A Paratavar settlement, under the chieftainship of Matti (who had spearmen), was situated at Kalar, on the confluence of the Kaveri *(Aham.* 6,211,226, 376). British administrative records indicate that, until 1826 a lucrative chank fishing centre existed at Tirumalavasal, at the mouth of one of the northern branches of the Kaveri (Hornell 1914:65). Thus, it is not surprising to find a Paratavar settlement in this area during the Early Historic period. Korkai, the port town at the mouth of the Tambaparni, was one of the most lucrative chank and pearl fishing centres during the Early Historic period and most naturally we come across notices on the 'southern' Paratavar chiefs in this region (Maduraik. 135—138; *Aham.* 350.13). The Pandya king Nedunjeliyan, managed to subjugate them, though at times these chieftains had sufficient resources even to challenge the Cola king (*Puram.* 378.1). According to the *Periplus...* (90—95 AD), the pearl fisheries at Colchi (Korkai) were controlled by the Pandyan kings who used condemned prisoners for pearl diving (Schoff 1912/1974:46, 237). Large quantities of worked and unworked chank and remains of pearl oyster have been obtained from surface investigations as well as from stratified layers at archaeological sites belonging to the Proto and the Early Historic context in these areas (Caldwell 1881; Malony 1968:9 Nagaswamy 1970:52—54). The Sangam texts more often depict the settlements of the Paratavar as hamlets where people lived in small houses under improverished conditions (vide *Aham.* 200,210).

The literary sources also describe another group among the Paratavar who led a qualitatively different life to that of the coastal fisher folk. This group may be identified as members of the elite commercial class of the Early Historic South Indian society. They were essentially located at port towns and were shareholders of the luxury trade. In describing the commodities they handled, the Sangam texts list conch bangles,[6] spices, salt, gems and horses. The texts also describe their stately mansions, ware houses, ships and chariots *(Maduraik.* 315—323; *Perumban* 319—324; *Aham.* 86).

It is clear that the upper stratum of the Paratavar of South India resided at port towns and were involved in trade and commerce. They handled items of trade such as pearls, gems, chank, salt, which were oceanic products, non-perishables and were important items of barter from the Proto Historic period. The quantity of these items transported to inland areas from the coast most obviously increased with greater regularity during the Early Historic period. The Sangam texts quite frequently refer to the *Umanar* or salt vendors who moved through agricultural, pastoral and hilly tracts in their bullock carts and caravans *(Aham.* 119:i. 8; *Puram.* 116.11.8). *Upu vanikan* or the salt merchant is mentioned in a pre-Christian Tamil Brahmi donative record from Cittanavasal in District Pudukottai (Mahadevan 1966:7 No. 34). There is little evidence to establish that the Paratavar depended upon agriculture as their economic base. Therefore, the initial accumulation of wealth in the hands of the affluent members of this community may have largely derived from the above mentioned oceanic resources. This accumulation of wealth on the one

hand, led to an economic disparity within the Paratavar community and to a hierarchization based on differential access to resources. On the other hand, this accumulated wealth was used as the initial capital investment by a section of the Paratavar to launch upon more ambitious commercial ventures viz. to import horses, own ships, conduct overseas trade and even control certain port towns. It is therefore not surprising that by the Early Historic period the Paratavar formed a section of the *etthi (setthi)* or merchant-bankers *(Maduraik.* 317, *Perumban.* 324). At least by the Ist. Cent. BC/AD period, with the intensification of Roman trade, we hear of the fabulously rich and affluent merchant princess known as *Bharata Kumarar (Silap.* Canto. vi 156). (7)

III

Malony's suggestion to equate the *Barata* (mentioned in the early inscriptions of Sri Lanka) with the *Paratavar* (mentioned in the Sangam texts) may not be incorrect after all and we document further evidence to substantiate the above assumption.

Techno-cultural and community interaction between coastal Tamilnadu and North-west Sri Lanka has an antiquity extending to the Pre/Proto Historic period. (Begley 1981; Seneviratne 1984). We have suggested a possible integration of certain Mesolithic groups to the intrusive Proto Historic Iron Age techno-cultural milieu from South India (Ibid). In our view marine resources associated with the Gulf of Mannar, may have originally caused seasonal inter-coastal interaction during the Pre/Proto Historic period and it subsequently evolved habitations of a more permanent nature in micro ecological zones in North West Sri Lanka and in the Jaffna peninsula.(8) Remains of worked and unworked chank and pearl oyster occur all along this coastline and in some places these remains are associated with Megalithic and early Historic Black and Red Ware.(9)

It is interesting to note that early chronicles of Sri Lanka associate chank, pearls, gems and horses as items that circulated within an inter-coastal and long distance trade network, during the Early Historic period (Mv. vii. 49—50,73;xi. 14, 22; xxviii. 36, 71). The *Mahavamsa* (xxi. 10) quite clearly mentions horse traders and calls Sena and Guttaka not only *assanavika* but also identify them as *damila.*(10) It may be noted that Sena and Guttaka had sufficient resources to establish their political hegemony at Anuradhapura *(Ibid).* We have already pointed out that during the Early Historic period, the Paratavar merchant-mariners imported horses to South India.(11) Apparently, this animal continued to figure prominently in the luxury trade of South India right down to the Portuguese period. (De Silva 1978:20).

The Early Brahmi inscriptions in fact shed a great deal of light on the commercial connection of the Baratas. An inscription (of a *Barata)* from Duvegala (Polonnaruwa District), carries an interesting symbol of a ship (Bell 1917—18: pl, xx; Paranavitana 1970 No. 270, pl. xxv). This symbol may be described as a single mast vessel carrying a *nandipada* (Taurine) symbol at its helm. It is extremely significant that the identical symbol is found on the satavahana coins, unearthed along the coastline of Andhra and Tamilnadu (Elliot 1886/1970; Rapson 1908: pl. v, no. 96).(12) These symbols correspond very closely to the Negapatam seven leg-type vessel used for east Indian coastal travelling and until recent times these vessels also operated between Negapatam (Kaveri delta) and Sri Lanka. The Negapatam seven leg-type vessel is also the largest of the *catamaran/kattumaram* (vide Sopher 1965;9-10).(13) The *Perplus...*describes it as a '...very large vessel made of single logs bound together, called *sangara'* (Schoff 1912/1974:46).

A second Barata inscription from Periyapuliyankulam (no. 368). near Vavuniya, has four non-Brahmi symbols. These are: a symbol similar to the Brahmi *ma,* an ornate *nandipada, a swastica* and the triangle with a standard. All these symbols are found on the early historic coins of India, ranging from the punch-marked coins to the copper cast coins (vide Allan 1936/1975). It is likely that these symbols carried some significance associated with craft and commercial guilds. Most naturally the *Paratava/ Barata* who came into contact with the northern merchants, may have borrowed such symbols as much as they continued to use North-Indian Punch-marked coins as a high-value universal currency in transactions.

It is therefore not surprising that we come across, in the same inscription, the names of a *Barata* and a *parumaka,* who is identified as a *dutaka* i.e. envoy (no. 1049. Valleva vihara, Kurunegala District). It is well known that merchants were called upon to serve as envoys and often diplomatic relations were established to promote commercial transactions between two countries.(14) Inscriptions at Paramakanda (nos. 1053—55, Puttalam District) do confirm that there were *parumaka* chieftains who were also merchant-mariners cum envoys i.e. *duta-navika.*(15)

Perhaps, the Brahmi inscription found on the 'Tamil householders terrace' at Anuradhapura (near Abhayagiri), may shed some light on this overlapping situation (vide no. 94; Paranavitana 1940:54—56).(16) It is evident that Ilabarata refers to a place name, perhaps a port town in South India, controlled by the Paratavar. The individuals mentioned, are all identified as *dameda.* One is also called *samana* i.e. monk (who arrived from Ilabarata) and the rest

as *gahapati* i.e. householder. The *gahapati* named Karava is associated wiht an additional title called *navika* i.e. merchant-mariner, and his name is engraved on the highest part of the terrace, probably indicating superior status. This was obviously a place for council meetings held by a group of householders involved in overseas trade, known to the texts as *setthi-gahapati* residing at urban centres. The merchant-householder connection is clearly recorded in an inscription from Periyapuliyankulam (nos. 356—7) which mentions an endowment made by one *gahapati* Visaka who called a *demeda vanijha.* It is not our intention to call every *dameda* or *dameda vanija,* a *barata.* Yet, in certain cases, the overlapping situation is too obvious to be treated as a mere coincidence.

The proposed equation between the Baratas and the Batas, may give us further clues related to the above. An inscription from Kuttikulam (No. 190) records a joint donation made by a *parumaka* and a *Bata-kumara.* If the above mentioned equation is acceptable, the *bata-kumara* mentioned in the inscription may well be the *Barata kumarar* or merchant princes mentioned in the south Indian texts. Another inscription from Seruwila records a joint donation made by Bata Mahatissa and *gahapati dameda* Cuda *(EN* 1974:No. 13.4). The craft and commercial interest of the Bata group is also reflected from other inscriptions where they had direct contact with craft groups such as potters, ivory workers, lapidaries and even architects (nos. 807,657) not to mention their association with a city guild/corporation (no. 959).

The early Brahmi inscriptions mention only a single generation in the case of the *barata,* which may probably indicate this group as intrusive elements to the Early Historic society. With the exception of the Galleva vihara inscription (no. 1049) which also mentions a Parumaka, none of the inscriptions associate any other socio-economic group in making joint donations with the *Baratas.* However, the inscriptions do mention their kin groups and the household unit, which may suggest that they were probably permanent residents of the island. For instance, the only known Barata from south east Sri Lanka (no. 643. Situlpavwa), is identified as a *gahapati* and the inscription also mentions his son-in-law/nephew. A second inscription mentions a donation made by the son of a *Barata* (no. 146. Medagamakanda) and yet another, the relatives of a Barata (no. 1011. Sasseruwa).

In addition to trade and commercial activity, the Barata group may have tried other means of integrating themselves with the island community. Their effort to share a common culture emanating from the Great Tradition may have been one such method. It may be noted that they already had Sanskritized their community name *Paratavar* into *barata.* They also took up Indo-Aryan personal names such as Tissa, Naga, Sangharakshita, Uttara, Jyoti etc. Further to this, by taking up the term *gahpati,* they may have tried to use popular terms indicating authority over the household group. The Barata group also patronized Buddhism, thus identifying themselves with the most effective mechanism of acculturation and social integration. Certain members of this community also became Buddhist monks and some of them even became scholars who specialised in particular sectors of the doctrine e.g. *majhima-banaka* i.e. recitor of the *Majjhima nikaya* (no. 330. Erupotana).[17] The prescribed relationship between the *sangha* and lay patrons, in turn was a useful channel to initiate an interaction cutting across community affiliations.

Certain socio-cultral traits of the pre-existing non Indo Aryan tradition however persisted at the substratum level, a situation that is true of certain other social groups as well, espacially in the case of the *parumakas.* For instance, in his inscription, *gahapati* Barata Utara mentions the term *marumakana.* This is clearly the Dravidian kinship term *marumakan,* which means nephew (brother's son or sister's son) as well as son-in-law. This also means that, in spite of undergoing a process of acculturation to the Indo Aryan culture, the Baratas continued to use dravidian kinship terms and the cross-cousin marriage system, which is clearly alien to the Indo-Aryan kinship structure.

Table I. Socio-economic groups affiliated to the Batas

a) **Kin affiliates**

parumaka : father (3), son (1), brother (1)
Gahapati : father (1), brother (1)

b) **Social affiliates**

Parumaka : $15 + I^{*} + I^{*}$
Amatya : I
Senapati : I^{*}
Asa : 3
Gahapati : 5
Gamika : $4 + I^{*}$
Craftsmen : 1 (potter), 1(ivory worker), 1 (lapidary), 1 (architect).
City-guild : 1

(Figures marked with an asterisk indicate other members of the family (wife, sister or son) who associated themselves with the Bata group).

The Batas also indicate only a single generation

in their inscriptions, though it can be speculated that those who originally used Barata may have used Bata more commonly after the first generation. It is also possible that most of the Bata inscriptions may even post-date the Barata inscriptions.(18) Paranavitana in fact points out that in the Sigiri graffiti *Bata* and *Bati* (fem.) occur against personal names as honorifics (1970:cv). In addition to taking up Indo Aryan personal names,(19) patronage to the Buddhist establishments and some entering the Order of monks, their interaction with other socio-economic groups consequently integrated the Batas to the Early Historic society in absolute terms. This is perhaps best demonstrated by the political, social and economic power they wielded in society (see Table 1). It may be useful to quote some examples to confirm the above assumption. An inscription from Patahamulle vihara in the Kurunegala region (no. 934) records a donation made by one Bata Naga *rajha.* Most probably, this may have been a Bata who acquired political power over a small region and maintained a chieftaincy. Sena and Guttaka, who captured power, after all were merchant-mariners themselves. Secondly, the Bata's had kinship ties with *parumakas* and also maintained social contact with *senapati, amatya* and the *gamika* groups. The *parumakas* appear to be the largest individual group who had kin and social affiliations with the Batas, which naturally infers the socio-political prestige entailed through such connections. This may also point to the important status the Batas secured for themselves in a newly evolving social hierarchy.

It is quite possible that the Batas may have played a vital role to form a socio-economic group that linked the 'old elite' i.e. the *parumaka* with the 'new elite' i.e. the agrarian and commercial elite. The Batas therefore had links with this new elite represented by the *asa, gahapati,* and*gamika groups.* It is precisely this form of synthesis based on class interest that ultimately completed the final integration of this intrusive group into the Early Historic society.(20)

In this sense the Barata and the Bata groups were more successful in intergrating themselves with the Early Historic political, social, economic and the religio-cultural structure in total terms than the Paratavar of South India. The latter on the other hand continued to remain as peripheral elements due to their exclusive involvement in trade and other oceanic activities. The decline of Roman trade and urban centres and also the gradual evolution of a dominantly agrarian order (based on the 'land-grant' economy) in the post 3rd cent. AD period, may have eroded the economic base of the Paratavar to a considerable extent. Unlike their counterpart in Sri Lanka, the Paratavar did not possess an agrarian base to neutralise economic adversity resulting from the decline of trade-craft production and urban centres.

The case of the Baratas and the Batas can be considered as a useful example to understand the dynamics related to the peopling of Sri Lanka and the process of social formation during the Early Historic period.

Notes

1. Inscriptional number quoted, indicated otherwise is from Paranavitana 1970. Inscriptions recording the term Barata are: 43 (Mihintale), 101 (Billevogala), 114 (Tantirimale) 137 (Kuda Ambagaswewa) 144, 146 (Medagamakanda), 270 (Duvegala), 330,335, 336 (Erupotana), 349, 359, 361, 368, 371 (Periya Puliyankulama), 643 (Situlpavuwa), 989 (Kaduruwewa), 1011 (Sasseruwa), 1049, 1049b (Galleve Vihara), 1073 (Mullegama).

2. Nos. 137, 270, 335, 1011.

3. 'Tisaguta terasa sadivihariya barata majhimabanaka tisa lene sudasane agata anagata catu disa sagasa niyate' (no. 330. Erupotana). The identical inscription is found at Dambulla (no. 852), with Bata in place of Barata. There are nearly 180 individual inscriptions recording the term Bata, indicating its designation to both monks and laymen. These inscriptions have a far wider distribution than the Barata inscriptions and are found in most parts of the island where Early Brahmi inscriptions occur. If the Bata and Barata represent the same, they seems to form the single largest group who caused their inscriptions to be written from right to left (vide nos. 116, 310, 325, 374, 409, 441, 445, 502, 537, 671, 935).

4. Malony also points out that subsequent to their conversion to Roman Catholicism. The Paravar community more often took the surname, Fernando, pronounced as Parnantu (1968:120).

5. The Maduraikkanchi records the existence of other coastal communities. For instance, it records the existence of a community by the name Panar. On one occasion, this text specifically calls them the 'ancient people, the Perumpanar' residing in the sandy coastal tracts (Madurai. 341). On another instance, the Panar are associated with the sea, fish, and pearls (Ibid. 375). It is interesting to note that the Panar were also known as singers and dancers during the Sangam period. To this day there are other coastal communities who are not identified with the Paravar community. The Adivasis of Kodaikkarai are an ancient community who thrive within a marsh-forest-littoral ecology in the southern Thanjavur District (Sarma 1976). Similarly, the Kadayiyar of

north-west Sri Lanka dig for chhaya roots, fish and prepare chunam for burning. Malony points out to a clear disparity in the physical appearance between the Paravar merchant class and the fishermen of the same community and suggests the assimilation of other coastal groups into their fold as the reason for this situation (1968:119) More research on physical anthropology and ethno history is essential to confirm this speculative suggestion.

6. At present the Paravar do not indulge in the chank cutting industry (Hornell 1914:44). The Malayalam Paravar are shell collectors, lime burners and gymnasts. There titles are Kurup, Varakurup and Nurankurup. The west coast Paravar are descendents of these who fled from Tirunelveli to avoid Muhammadan oppression (Thurstan1909:vi. 143).

7. In his previous birth Kovalan was known as Barata (Silap. Canto. xxiii. 154)

8. 'It stands to reason that a country which is only thirty miles from India....would have been seen by the Indian fishermen every morning as they sailed out to catch their fish...' (Pieris 1919:65).

9. One cannot totally overlook the role of the nagas who are associated with coastal Sri Lanka, in this exchange net-work (see Mahavamsa). The exact relationship between the nagas and the Barata is not known though, some Batas and Baratas did take up the personal name naga.

10. The Dipavamsa (xvii. 47) simply calls them ...damila sena-guttaka...' Damila or Dameda, which derives from Tamil, must be considered as a lingustic identity, as much as Indo Aryan, and not in a racial sense. The Sangam texts quite clearly use the term Tamilaham to identify the geo-physical area (approximately covered by the kingdoms of Chera, Cola and Pandya), which was occupied by people who spoke Tamil(Puram. 168.19; 17; 19.2).

11. Interestingly, an inscription from Periyapuliyankulam (no. 355) mentions a Parumaka (chieftain) Velu, who is identified as a asa adeka (asvadhyaksaka) or superintendent of horses. In another instance, the texts associates a horse from Sindh (Sindhu) with Velusumana (Mv. xxiii. 68—72). It may be noted that Velu is not an Indo Aryan but a Dravidian personal name, which is also often mentioned in the Sangam texts and in the inscriptions of South India.

12. The ship-type coin of yajna Satakarani is a bilingual coin carrying its legend in, both, Parakrit and Tamil (Mirashi 1941:43—44).

13. The small catamaran is the normal fishing and transport craft used by the coastal communities in this region. Several scholars have noted the coincidence between the coastal areas (in India and Sri Lanka) where the catamaran is used and the Dravidian based language belt (Hornell 1920; Sopher 1965).

14. For instance, among the group of envoys despatched by Tissa to emperor Asoka, was a Setthi (Mv. ii. 26).

15. It may be noted that the same Brahmi ma type symbol is found on the Barata inscription at Periyapuliyankulam (no. 368) and on the inscriptions recording the endowments of the Parumaka at Paramakanda (nos. 1053—55). The Paramakanda ma type symbol is also associated with another symbol depicting an anthromorphic figure. A similar anthromorphic figure is found as post-firing graffiti marks on the Megalithic pottery at Pomparippu, which is only a few miles north west of Paramakanda (Seneviratne 1984:295—297).

16. 'Illubaratahi Dameda-Samane karita Damedagahapatikana pasade sagasa asane Nasatasa asane Ka...Tisaha asane...asane Kubira Sujhataha Navika-Karavaha asane' (no. 94). Paranavitana reads the first word as Ilubarata. The Brahmi letter ළ is read as l and not lu in the Tamil Brahmi inscriptions (Mahadevan 1966). Hence we read this word as Ilabarata.

17. The Mahavamsa (Turnour ed. 1837:100) idenfifies the religious beliefs of Sena and Guttaka with sacred rituals associated with water, i.e. Brahmanism.

18. An unpublished inscription from Matale Aluvihare mentions a bata Mangala. This inscription carries the symbol of a highly ornate nandipada which is normally found in the Early Christian era (Pers. Com. Dr. W.S. Karunaratne, Seneviratne 1984: 296).

19. Personal names such as Manalikachi (no. 30) and Ayimara (no. 1097) taken up by the Batas, are certainly not Indo Aryan ones.

20. The very nature of their economic affluence is reflected in the donations of the Bata group. For instance, a Bata in association with a senapati's (army commander) son donated a stupa and cave to the sangha (no. 1013: Sasseruwa). In inscription from Kumburulena in Kurunegala (no. 896c) records bata Badata Tisa as a vihara samika or the Master of the monastery, which may indicate his ownership over this establishment and the possession of resources even as a monk.

Abbreviations

Aham : Ahananuru.
Artha : The Kautiliya Arthasastra.
DED : A Dravidian Etymological Dictionary. (eds). Burrow, T et M.B. Emeneau. Oxford. Clarendon. 1961.
Dv. : Dipavamsa.
EN : Epigraphical Notes. Colombo. Archaeological Survey.
Maduraik : Maduraikkanchi.
Mv. : Mahavamsa.
Perumban : Perumbanarruppadai.
PPTI : Pre-Pallavan Tamil Index. (ed). N. Subrahmanian. Madras. University of Madras. 1966:
Puram. : Purananuru.
Silap. : Silappadikaram

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9. SRI LANKA AND CHINA

John Carswell

It is almost exactly ten years - 19 July 1974 — since I first set foot in Sri Lanka, arriving by boat from Rameswaram and spending the first night in the (unforgettable) Rest House in Mannar. The very next day I visited Mantai, little guessing that a decade later that it would become the focus of my research into the history of trade between China and the Near East. During the same ten years, James Rutnam has moved with alacrity from his first to his second *festschrift;* like all those of his friends who have been invited to contribute to this volume, we look forward to the successive volumes in this intriguing series, to be published in his honour at regular ten-year intervals....

Among his many interests is the way in which Sri Lanka's history has been shaped by external forces. Although I did not meet him on my first visit to Sri Lanka, when we finally became acquainted I found he was keenly interested in the historical contacts of the island with China. For this reason, this seems a suitable occasion to review what I have found out on that topic during the past decade. Much of my contribution is largely archaeological, the result of surveys and excavation, reinforcing what is already known about Far Eastern contacts from the various literary sources.

While the evidence I have found over the years has been (not surprisingly) out of chronological sequence, in putting it into some sort of overall perspective it is best to begin at the beginning, and this means Mantai. To my mind there is no doubt that the earliest imported Chinese material will be found at Mantai, with its long-established history as the major trading port up till the tenth century. So far, the earliest Chinese pottery from Mantai is of the T'ang dynasty (618—906AD), and a wide variety of T'ang material has been recovered. (1) This includes white, and cream-coloured stoneware, grey-bodied Yueh ware of varying quality, other assorted grey wares, heavy "Dusun" storage jars, dark grey ware with a jet-black glaze, and various kinds of inglaze Ch'ang-sha stoneware.

But what appear to be the earliest of all the T'ang material are two sherds of earthenware with a fine, off-white body, decorated with splashes of amber-brown and dark blue lead glaze. One sherd is part of an irregular, hand-moulded vessel, perhaps of a ewer; the other is of a small bowl which has a direct parallel, a similar bowl found in the tomb of the Princess Yung T'ai in China. who died in 706 AD. (2)

The white stoneware bowls are of the classic type, made of a very fine, high-fired proto-porcelain. Similar examples are known to have been exported as far afield as Brahminabad in Sind, Nishapur in north-east Iran, Siraf on the Gulf, Kufa in Iraq, Fustat/old Cairo in Egypt,and Antioch on the Orontes in Syria. They have also been found at Samarra, the ninth century Abbasid capital on the Tigris, north of Baghdad. The bowls are of almost uniform shaped, with curving sides and often with rolled rims; sometimes the rims are nicked, and the cavetto moulded with vertical ribs. (3) The bases either have side, disc-shaped footrings, or more conventional short, carefully-carved footrings. The cream-coloured stoneware bowls are of similar form, and display the same variations. What is interesting is that a large number of Islamic imitations of these stoneware bowls have been found at Mantai, with a yellowish earthenware low-fired body masked with an opacified white tin-glaze. Similar Islamic copies are known from Samarra, and they are probably of Mesopotamian origin. That there should have been a market at Mantai for these obviously inferior copies suggests some sort of price differential. In this context, one might note that of all the sherds of white ware found at Anuradhapura recently, all were Islamic copies and none were Chinese. (4)

The most spectacular find at Mantai in 1984 was a fragment of a Ch'ang-sha stoneware ewer, with a sprigged relief of a bearded man with a curly moustache, embroidered robe and floppy hat. A similar sherd was excavated at Fustat in the 1920's, and is now in the Benaki Museum in Athens. The ewers are a common Ch'ang-sha type, and a number of complete vessels can be seen in Western collections. (5) The man is not Chinese, but from Central Asia, with which area the Chinese had close contacts during the T'ang dynasty. It was during this period that wine-drinking and the practice of viticulture were introduced to China from Central Asia; it is not impossible that these ewers, with single spouts and three handles, were connected with the consumption of wine. (6) The form and the moulded decoration, like so many T'ang ceramics, suggests some alien, non -Chinese metallic prototype.

Beside this sherd, a second sherd from Mantai from another similarly shaped ewer has a moulded pattern of feathery leaves. This fragment can in turn be paralleled with another excavated at Nishapur, and now in The Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. (7) An intact ewer with similar feathery leaves and pairs of birds is in the Buffalo Museum of Science, New York, and another is in the Cleveland Museum of Art. The two Mantai sherds are thus ex-

amples of a type of vessel made in south central China of Central Asian inspiration, exported to South Asia, Egypt and Iran. A further tangent to this almost circular pattern of influence is provided by a lustre-decorated ewer excavated at Susa in Iran, which is obviously an Islamic copy of the Chinese original. (8)

The Yüeh ware from Mantai: is often of the finest quality, thin-walled bowls with almost straight sides, sometimes with deeply undulating rims. A coarser kind of Yüeh bowl has patches of glaze removed in a circle at the bottom inside. This appears to have been to allow a stack of bowls to be fired together in the kiln, with some kind of multiple spur supporting the footring of the bowl above. (9) The grey-bodied, highly fired and extremely heavy black-glazed stoneware is something of a puzzle. It was handmade, showing clearly on the inside where the surface has been smoothed with some kind of brush, or comb. (10) Although I know of nothing like it from China, similar sherds have been excavated by David Whitehouse at Siraf, on the Gulf.

A number of late Sung sherds have been found at Mantai, with carved-and-combed decoration, but all of them are either surface sherds, or from the confused, unstratified upper levels of the site. In my opinion this is evidence for the later occupation of the site after northern Sri Lanka was devastated by the Chola invasions from south India in the late tenth century. Mantai effectively came to an end as international trading emporium with the Chola conquest; the Cholas were themselves keenly interested in Far Eastern trade and sent no less than three trade missions to China in the eleventh century. Nagapattanam was the chief Chola port, at the south-east corner of India, and probably supplanted Mantai as the chief South Asian trading centre. Late Sung sherds found at Nagapattanam during a survey of the Coromandel coast in 1984 would appear to confirm this.

Chronologically, what is the next evidence for Chinese imports in Sri Lanka after the demise of Mantai? A number of *ch'ing pai* fragments of cosmetic boxes and lids have been found at Polonnaruwa;(11) which was the port for Polonnaruwa during its ascendancy remains a matter for speculation. However, two sites with significant amounts of late Sung material have been identified elsewhere in Sri Lanka. The first of these, just south of Vankalai at the north-west tip of the island, was excavated by Diana Kirkbride-Helbaek and myself in 1978.(12) This settlement probably lasted no more than fifty years at the beginning of the twelfth century, and may well represent an attempt, ultimately unsuccessful, to resettle the northern dry zone after the depredations of the Cholas a century earlier. Numerous sherds of local earthenware rice-cleaning bowls (popularly known as *arukan chitty,* and more properly termed *nambiliya)* (13) suggest a rice-subsistence economy, probably augmented with some fishing. Although of no great duration, the village was apparently sufficiently affluent to be able to afford both Chinese and Islamic pottery. Among the former were examples of white ware, carved and combed *ch'ing pai,* and a Northern celadon type from Xicun, near Canton. (14) Another distinctive type with carved and dotted, incised decoration comes from the kiln site at Tong'an, close to the great port of Ch'üan-chou (Zaytun) on the coast of China opposite Taiwan.(15) A further example of a crude type of cream-coloured ware of imperfect glaze and mealy-textured body was identical with a base sherd excavated in Male, in the Maldive Islands, in 1974. (16)

Contemporary with the Vankalai material is a great quantity of Chinese pottery found buried in a sand-dune at Allaippidy on Kayts Island, near Jaffna, during the course of another survey in 1976. (17) This material, also of late Sung date, included the finest, translucent *ch'ing pai,* and other wares of varying quality, including more sherds of Northern celadon type. This hoard of material, probably an abandoned cargo, is equivalent in scope and interest to a shipwreck. The recent re-publication of the original corpus of material in the catalogue of an exhibition organised at the University of Malaya by the Southeast Asian Ceramic Society (West Malaysia Chapter) or material found on Tioman Island, has allowed close parallels to be drawn between the Allaipiddy and Tioman sherds, and material from excavations in China itself, particularly from Xicun. The Sri Lanka material has recently been moved from the Jaffna Museum to Colombo, and it is hoped that work may now commence on piecing together the many thousands of sherds, to add more forms to the five hundred or so vessels already identified.

For the period from the twelfth to fourteenth century, the most significant Chinese import consists of a group of three bowls, found at Yapahuwa in 1911. These consist of two white-ware bowls, and a single celadon bowl carved with a petal design on the outside. (18) As Yapahuwa was only inhabited for a limited span in the thirteenth century, these three pieces can be placed within a precise chronological framework. That the site could yield further evidence is unquestionable; on a visit in 1980, a sherd of celadon was sticking out of a cut made during the restoration of the outer town wall.

Even more closely dateable is a Chinese shipwreck off the east coast north of Trincomalee. The location of the wreck has yet to be discovered, but sherds of Chinese pottery from it litter the land nearby, to be

periodically deposited back on the beach after every storm. The sherds are scattered along the coast for more than half a mile. How did they come to be in this elevated situation? The obvious answer would be as the result of a cyclone; but a more romantic one would connect their deposition on land to a cataclysmic event which took place in 1883, just over a century ago.

The *Ceylon Examiner* record that at 4o' clock on Monday 27th August, 1883, a great commotion was caused in Colombo Harbour by the receding of the sea and the grounding of several boats. At the same time, an observer in Kalutara reported:

> "A strange phenomenon was observed here today from about 2 till 6 pm ...the sea suddenly rose about 4 or 5 feet, washing on land hitherto safe from its invasion, and as suddenly receded, not to its normal level, but to as many feet below its level as it had risen before. The effect of this unusual ebb was to make the river race down to the sea, and to carry with it all the rafts moored by the river-side" (19)

The cause of this rise and fall, felt to even greater effect on the east coast (at Hambantota, the sea rose 12 feet above its normal level), was the greatest volcanic explosion ever recorded, completely destroying the island of Krakatoa in the Straits of Sundra. It produced a tidal wave whose oscillations were registered right round the world, even in the English Channel. This tidal wave, and a dozen or more successive waves, may well have been responsible for scouring the Chinese wreck and beaching part of its cargo. That the Chinese ceramics had been in the water for many years can be seen from the water-worn edges of the extremely durable celadon sherds.

What of these ceramics? They consist almost entirely of Chinese Lung-ch'üan celadon, a variety of bowls and dishes with incised and moulded patterns. These are directly comparable with the celadon from the famous South Korean wreck, off the Sinan coast. The Sinan wreck has recently been precisely dated to the year 1323 AD, by the recovery of a set of inscribed wooden tags. (20) This is just about the time that the famous Arab traveller, Ibn Battuta, passed through Calicut on the Malabar coast of India, on his way to China. He describes the Chinese ships that touched Calicut as so large that each carried a thousand men. The Trincomalee wreck may have been just such a vessel. Its location and scientific excavation using properly controlled underwater archaeological methods is an exciting propect for the future.

For the fifteenth century, we have Ma Huan's account of the famous Chinese maritime missions to the Western world, under the leadership of the eunuch Cheng Ho. Six of the seven voyages touched Ceylon, in 1409, 1413, 1417, 1421 and 1431. Not only do we have the direct evidence of the trilingual inscription in Chinese, Tamil and Persian found at Galle, but also Ma Huan's testimony of the manners and customs of the Ceylonese, and the fact that "the blue Chinese porcelain dishes are very much liked". (21) The port of call was almost certainly Beruwala. With its sandy, monsoon-swept beach nothing remains today in the way of sherd material; but in any case, unless accidently broken, the "blue porcelain dishes" would have been doubtless carried off to the capital. It is tempting to think that in the middens of Kotte somewhere lie the fragments of peerless Yung-lo and Hsuan-te blue-and-white.

For the Portuguese, Dutch and British periods of colonial rule, evidence of Chinese imports comes not only from the earth, but also from pieces surviving in private hands, many of which have found their way into antique shops. In the former context, a walk along Galle Face and round the base of the lighthouse at the port is sufficient to acquire a pocketful of seventeenth century and later blue-and-white, particularly after a shower. So does an investigation of the ground round the walls of any of the Portuguese and Dutch forts, such as those at Mannar and Pooneryn. Even more profitable is the scrutiny of the contents of holes dug within the walls of Galle, be it for the foundations of a new house, a drain or an electric cable. For intact pieces, the National Museum in Colombo has some excellent examples of mid-seventeenth century Japanese blue-and-white, made for the Dutch market, with the initials VOC at the centre. Eighteenth-century and later examples of export porcelain are not hard to find. For broken specimens, consult the floor of the Buddhist temple at Dehiwela, where there are marvellous mosaics made from sherds of both Chinese and European nineteenth-century pottery. (22)

This, then, is the broad picture of Chinese imports to Sri Lanka during the past twelve hundred years. Hopefully, in the next ten years - for the next *festschift* - we shall be able to add substantially to the details.

Notes

1. Some examples have already been illustrated in J. Carswell & M. Prickett, Mantai: A Preliminary Report , Ancient Ceylon, 5, 1984, Plates 7b, 8, lla, 13b.
2. Margaret Medley, T'ang Pottery and Porcelain, 1981, p.20, Plate 11. William Watson, The Genius of China, 1973, p. 141, no. 282: The bowl was excavated from the tomb at Ch'ien-hsien in Shensi in 1964, and along with two others from the same tomb exhibited in London in 1973.
3. Medley, op.cit. plate 77a,b.
4. This may, of course, simply reflect on the affluence or otherwise of the quarter of the town where they were found.
5. Medley, op.cit. Plate 88; Watson, op.cit.no. 290.
6. I am indebted to my student, Robert Linroth, for this information. It is hoped that his study of these Ch'ang-sha ewers will form a supplement to the next Mantai excavation report.
7. Charles K. Wilkinson, Nishapur, Metropolitan Museum of Art, 1973, pp. 257—8, no. 17 (MMA 40. 170.455).
8. This piece was kindly brought to my attention by my colleague, Donald Whitcomb, cf. Koechlin, Susa, 1928, no. 158.
9. Carswell & Prickett, loc. cit. plate 13b.
10. Ibid. Plate 8a.
11. John Carswell, China and Islam in the Maldive Islands , Transactions of the Oriental Ceramics Society, 41, 1975—77; Fig. 4, Pl. 2,3,4.
12. The results of the excavation will be published in full in a forthcoming issue of Ancient Ceylon. A preliminary report will appear in The National Geographic Society reserach reports (1978 Projects), 1985, pp. 129—137.
13. U.A. Gunasekara, P.L. Prematilleke, & R. Silva, A Corpus of Pottery Forms found in Ceylon , Ancient Ceylon, I, 1971, p. 168, fig.2; VIa.
14. A Ceramic Legacy of Asia's Maritime Trade, Southeast Asian Ceramic Society, Kuala Lumpur, 1985;P.4: 49), nos.25,26. Peter Lam discusses the question of the manufacture of these moulded Northern celadon types at Xicun and other southern kilns, and the problem of their precise provenance.
15. P. Hughes-Stanton and R. Kerr, Kiln Sites of Ancient China, O.C.S. Nos. 130—2.
16. Carswell, loc.cit., p. 158, no. 330.
17. First reported in John Carswell, China and Islam, A Survey of the coast of India and Ceylon , T.O.C.S., 42, 1977 — 78; further details and supplementary colour photographs are included in an update of this article, as a chapter in A Ceramic Legacy of Asia's Maritime Trade, (note 14, above) pp.31—47.
18. Carswell, Maldives..., pp. 128, Fig.3.- Yl,2,3, Plate 54b.
19. I am much indebted to Mr. Harischandra de Silva Director of the National Archives in Colombo, for allowing me to seek out this information and having a copy of the relevant passages made. For specific details of the effects of the earthquake and tidal waves on different points round the coast of Ceylon, see The Eruption of Krakatoa, Royal Society, London, 1888, pp. 115—24. The extreme rise and fall of the wave at Trincomalee was eight feet.
20. For details of the Sinan wreck, see Special Exbition of Cultural Relics Found off Sinan Coast, Seoul, 1977; and more recently, The Sunken Treasures off the Sinan Coast, Japan, 1983, with details of the wooden tags.
21. Ma Huan, Ying-yai sheng-lan ("The overall survey of the ocean's shores") (1433) trans. & edit. by J.V.G. Mills, Cambridge, Hakluyt Society, 1970, p.129.
22. Carswell, China and Islam Islam, pp. 34-5.

10. THAILAND REPAYS HER DEBT TO SRI LANKA: A STUDY OF THE CULTURAL CONTACT BETWEEN THE TWO COUNTRIES FROM THE FIFTEENTH TO THE EIGHTEENTH CENTURIES

L. S. Dewaraja

Nearly three hundred years ago, a Frenchman, Simon de la Loubere (1) had observed the close religious ties that existed between Sri Lanka and Thailand and also the high esteem in which the little island was held by the people of Thailand. In a very revealing account (2) he has left of the kingdom then called Siam (3), La Loubere states that in the city called Mee ung fan there was a tooth which the Siamese believed was the tooth of the Buddha. At another place called Prabat there was the imprint of a foot, cherished by the Siamese as that of the Buddha, and annually worshipped by the king himself. Both these were considered as sacred objects of worship not only by the Siamese but also by the people of Pegu and Laos. The Frenchman remarks that in "all these matters the Siamese are only gross imitators", explaining that they were merely copying the practices of the Sinhalese, who, too, venerated similar objects of worship. The Siamese, he says, believed that the Buddha placed his right foot on their Prabat and his left foot in Lanka "although the whole of the Gulf of Bengal runs between them". The very fact that the Siamese upheld this belief, however fantastic it may appear, that the Buddha stood astride the Bay of Bengal with his two feet firmly planted in the soil of Siam and Sri lanka, goes to prove that even in the late seventeenth century, the Siamese were conscious of the closeness and aware of the indissoluble bond that prevailed between the two countries - the bond of a common faith.

The introduction of Buddhism to Sri Lanka was achieved by the missionaries of Asoka headed by Mahinda. So successful was this mission that it could be regarded as almost a non violent conquest which attacked and subdued the hearts and minds of the king and his people. In Sri Lanka Buddhism found a congenial and permanent home and even after the doctrine ceased to exist in the land of its origin it continued to flourish in the land of its adoption and from there it inspired its adherents in South East Asian countries. From earliest times Sri Lanka had established foreign contacts, commercial, political and cultural with the littoral regions of the Indian Ocean and the Bay of Bengal. Though the island had been an entrepot for overseas trade even from pre-Christian times, the Sinhalese played only a minor role in it; the trade being mainly in the hands of the Muslims. Considering our military exploits abroad the wars of Parakramabahu I (1153—1186) in Burma and South India brought ephemeral glory to king and country but led to no permanent results except that they hastened the economic decline of the island. But in the sphere of religion Sri Lanka's foreign contacts bore fruitful results. The Sinhalese not only cherished and preserved but were also instrumental in disseminating in South East Asia, the Theravada tradition, and together with it an inward force which created and sustained the external manifestations of what we call civilisation. This spiritual culture and its tangible forms are clearly evident in Thailand today.

It will be seen in the course of this study that up to the end of the fifteenth century, Thai-Sri Lanka relations have been more or less a one-way traffic - Sri Lanka providing the inspiration and instruction and Thailand looking up to her for guidance. All the religious and cultural influences, whether in the form of religious texts, art objects, sacred relics or erudite monks flowed from the little island across the Bay of Bengal to a fertile and receptive field. The climax of this process was the introduction to Thailand in the fifteenth century of the Sinhala Sangha or the Sinhalese fraternity of Monks. From the sixteenth century onwards the island became a prey to European colonial expansion and Christian missionary enterprise. The resources of the rulers were spent on preserving the political independence of the island and hence they had little time for matters spiritual. Buddhist institutions, Buddhist art and Buddhist education which had entirely depended on royal patronage suffered as a result. For three centuries the struggle for survival went on. and in the

thick of it a King of Kandy, set his shoulder to the task of resuscitating the sangha and revitalising Buddhism. The tide had now turned, for on this occasion the king looked up to Siam for spiritual succour. It is the nature of this cultural debt which Thailand owed to Sri Lanka and the manner of its repayment in the eighteenth century, that we shall proceed to examine.

According to the Buddhist tradition prevalent in Sri Lanka, Asoka's missionaries were sent to evangelise the land of Suvannabhumi. There has been considerable controversy over the identification of Suvannabhumi but its exact location is immaterial for our purpose. It is certain that it was somewhere in the Indo Chinese Peninsula, and that the faith that was introduced gradually spread over the whole of the countries now known as Thailand, Burma and Cambodia. In the second half of the first millenium there were Mon people practising theravada Buddhism in the kingdom identified as Dvaravati which was located in the region of central Thailand. It is not unlikely that even in this early period the Sinhalese too had a hand in the spread of Buddhist culture abroad. Some of the most ancient remains unearthed in Thailand near P'ong Tuk, bear a resemblance, in certain architectural features, to the styles at Anuradhapura (4). The Dvaravati Buddha images too are reminiscent of the Sinhalese types.

It was with the emergence of the Mahayana School in India that Buddhism spread to the Central Asian countries. These ideas were transmitted to Siam as well, as is proved by archaeological evidence. The Khmers who occupied Siam from c.1000—1250 were patrons of Hinduism and Mahayana beliefs and hence it is reasonable to assume that their contacts with Sri Lanka were minimal. Relations with Sri Lanka were resumed, when in the second half of the thirteenth century, the Thais established themselves in Ayodhya and Sukhodaya. After their migration into the region which roughly corresponded to present day Thailand, the Thais embraced Theravada Buddhism. The influence of Sinhalese Buddhism reached the Thais from two directions. The strongest wave seems to have come through Burma, from where the Theravada faith spread to the northern Mon Kingdom of Haripunjaya or Lamphun and thence to Sukhodaya. Sinhalese Buddhism and Sinhalese forms of ecclesiastical discipline were well established in Burma by this time and these reached Thailand indirectly.

It is also evident that the Thais learnt the new faith from the kingdom of Sri Dhammanagara (Nakhon Sri Thammarat) or modern Ligor in the Malay Peninsula, were Theravada Buddhism was prevailing. From the twelfth century onwards there was frequent intellectual and spiritual contact between Sri Lanka and this region. Since Thailand was in communication with Sri Dhammanagara, Sinhalese Buddhism would have enriched the spiritual life of Thailand through this channel as well. The story of Sinhala Patima or the Sinhalese image related in the Pali work *Jinakalamali* (5), is perhaps symbolic of this tripartite cultural exchange. King Rocaraja of Sukhodaya with the help of King Siridhamma (6) of Sri Dhammanagara, obtained from Sri Lanka a miraculous Buddha image still venerated in Thailand as the Sihinga Buddha Rupa. The popularity of this image, the legends that grew around it, the number of replicas that were carried to different parts of the country, not only testify to the esteem with which sacred objects from Sri Lanka were held, but also symbolically express the rapid dissemination of Sinhalese Buddhism in Thailand.

From the fourteenth century onwards we have evidence of direct dealings between Thailand and Sri Lanka. An inscription (7) in the Thai language found at Sukhodaya records that a king named Lidayya or Sri Suryavarma Rama Mahadhammarajadhiraja who ascended the throne of Sukhodaya in 1339 invited a Sangharaja from Sri Lanka to reorganise the order.

The monk identified as Medhankana Sangharaja, was received with great honour by the Thai monarch who was so filled with religious fervour that he renounced all wordly pleasures and joined the Sangha. But the country needed his leadership and on the advice of his spiritual preceptor he came back to lay life and assumed royal duties. In the same reign a sprout from the Bodhi tree at Anuradhapura was taken to Siam and planted in a vihara at Sukhodaya. It is also possible that the Buddhist scriptures were taken to Siam from Sri Lanka in the same reign (8).

When the power of the Sukhodaya kings waned and Ayodhya rose to prominence cultural contacts with Sri Lanka continued. A king of Ayodhya built a monastery in his capital and named it Lankarama which suggests the dominant influence of Sri Lanka on Thai Buddhism. A resident of this monastery, Dhammakitti by name and the author of the Pali work *Saddhamma sangaha,* came to Sri Lanka and studied under his namesake, the great Thera Dhammakitti Mahasami of Gadaladeniya. (9)

The culmination of these events that were taking place for over two centuries was the establishment in Thailand of the Sihala sangha in 1425. A detailed account of this ordination is given in the *Jinakalamali* in the chapter entitled *Sihalasasanagamanakalo.* It is said that thirty-nine monks from Nabbisipura, Kamboja and Ramanna, having heard of the flourishing state of Buddhism in Sri Lanka and also the availability of the authentic scriptures there, decided to

visit the island, gain ordination afresh,study the doctrine and introduce both the theory and correct practice of religion into their respective countries. This incident took place under the patronage of Parakramabahu VI (1412—1467) of Kotte, whose reign is well known for its literary and cultural activity. The event is not mentioned in Sinhalese sources but we learn from the *Jinakalamali* that the visiting monks received ordination while mounted on a raft in the Kalyani river (near Colombo) and in the presence of a chapter consisting of twenty monks. The newly ordained bhikkhus (10) toured the island visiting sacred places of worship and returned to their native land taking with them two Sinhalese monks. The *Jinakalamali* goes on to describe how the Sinhala Sangha was popularised in Thailand. The monks tarried at Ayodhya, Sajjanalaya, Sukhodaya, conferring ordination and finally reached Nabbisipura. Khelanhanagara, Haripunjaya and Yonarattha. In all these places ceremonies of ordination were performed with the active support of the rulers, ministers and people; so that soon there were many bhikkhus belonging to the Sihala fraternity. All this goes to prove the prestige that Sri Lanka enjoyed in these countries as the home of orthodox Buddhism. Church discipline and ecclesiastical ceremonies were based on the patterns prevailing in Sri Lanka and Buddhist architecture and Pali scholarship were encouraged by its members (11). This was the last occasion that Sri Lanka was able to spiritually enrich her co-religionists abroad; for the reign of Parakramabahu VI was the final flicker of a dying flame.

For a brief spell in the reign of Parakramabahu VI of Kotte the island was united under one sceptre. But soon after three separate kingdoms emerged from the turmoil that followed. The kingdom of Jaffna regained her independence. The central highland districts, which had for long nurtured separatist feelings, broke away from the overlordship of Kotte, and became another kingdom, with Kandy as its capital. Divided and weak the Sinhalese could offer but a feeble resistance to the Portuguese intruders. By the end of the sixteenth century a greater part of the Kingdom of Kotte and the whole of Jaffna was in Portuguese hands and only the King of Kandy was left to bear the brunt of the struggle against the foreigner. While the Dutch replaced the Portuguese as masters of the maritime districts, Kandy continued her valiant resistance to preserve her independence. Amidst political instability and economic decline Buddhism suffered a severe setback. In the coastal areas controlled by Christian masters the religion lost its dignity; the Kandyan areas, though under a Buddhist monarch it lost its vitality. The Sangha could not cope with the situation for it lacked its former leadership and direction. Right through the history of the island it is clear that royal vigilance was necessary to maintain the continuity of the Sangha and only the king's coercive power could preserve discipline within it. But in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries the rulers were so pre-occupied with the struggle for survival that not only did the number of monks dwindle, but degeneration set in within the ranks of the Sangha. Just over a hundred years after the brilliant epoch of Parakramabahu VI, the Order of monks in the island became extinct (12). Matters were redressed by Vimaladhammasuriya I (1591—1604) in 1597, who invited bhikkhus from Arakan to restore the Sangha. Before the lapse of a century once again the island was devoid of the yellow robe and on this occasion Vimaladhammasuriya II (1687 — 1707), once again turned to Arakan for help. But none of these attempts produced any permanent results, for a few years after the death of the last mentioned ruler the *upasampada* (13) had lapsed, and some of the monasteries came to be occupied by a set of degenerate monks known as *ganas*. It is said in the chronicles that they "cherished evil, were of bad moral living, followed false doctrine, took pleasure in the maintaining of women and children and in domestic duties and devoted themselves to unseemly professions such as astrology, medical activity and the like". (14) Hence orthodox Buddhist opinion was against them and the need for the revival of the Sangha was felt.

In 1739 there was a dynastic change in Kandy. Narendrasinha (1707—1739) the last of the line of Sinhalese kings died without an heir, and a prince from Madurai, in south India, whose sister the king had married succeeded to the throne as Sri Vijaya Rajasimha (1739—1747). He was the first of the Nayakkar kings of Kandy. so called because of their connection with the Nayaks of Madurai. The King was a Hindu by birth, but on his accession he and his queens embraced Buddhism. This was a tactical move, for by this means the foreign dynasty was accepted by the people who had an intense devotion for their traditional faith. The task of reviving the sangha and restoring Buddhism now devolved on the new dynasty. At this juncture, another figure appeared on the scene. This was Saranamkara born in 1698, who renounced the wordly life at an early age and rose to eminence. He mastered the Pali language and the Buddhist texts, the study of which had gone into abeyance at this time, trained an energetic band of pupils and gained the recognition and respect of the Nayakkar king. Saranankara entreated the king to accomplish the most urgent need of the day, the restoration of the Sangha (15)

Since the king of Kandy had no ships to undertake a journey to any of the Buddhist countries in South East asia, Dutch help had to be solicited. The Dutch willingly complied with this request because it was

politically and commercially advantageous for them to control the king's foreign relations. It was the interference of the Dutch at this stage that paved the way for the Thai-Sri Lanka contact. The Dutchmen had their trading establishments in Siam and the Dutch *opperkoopman* in Colombo, Abraham Arnouts, had served in Siam as Agent of the Company. (16) He seemed to have been aware of the flourishing condition of Buddhism in Siam and suggested to the court that the request for *bhikkhus* should be made to the King of Siam. (17) The court accepted this advice and three ministers headed by Vilbagedara were accordingly sent in a Dutch boat, to communicate to King Boromkot (1733—1758) (18) of Siam the wish of the Kandyan King. But this mission was doomed for failure for unfortunately at this very juncture news reached the envoys that the king of Kandy had died on 11th August, 1747. Not knowing the attitude of his successor, king Boromkot was unwilling to permit the monks to proceed to Sri Lanka. Greatly disappointed the envoys returned home and conveyed the greetings of His Siamese majesty to the new king Kirti Sri Rajasimha (1747—1781).(19)

This king who was also of south Indian ancestry had from the very onset to contend with a powerful and ambitious land-owning native aristocracy. The king adopted the strategy of restoring the Sangha, endowing it and strengthening it so tha he could have the support of the monks, who wielded much influence over the people; and by winning over the Sangha and the people to his side he hoped to undermine the power of the Kandyan aristocracy. Two years after his accession Kirti Sri Rajasimha sent a mission comprising of five envoys including Vilbagedara, together with a retinue of 51 others. The culmination of these attempts was the arrival in May 1753 of Upali Thera with 24 other monks attended by 5 Siamese ambassadors sent by king Boromkot with a letter to be delivered to the king of Kandy. (20) In July the same year, in the presence of Kirti Sri Rajasimha and at his request six Sinhalese monks including Saranankara were admitted to the Higher Ordination with Upali Thera as *upajjhaya* and the Theras Brahmajoti and Mahapunna as *acariyas.* (21) "And thus after many years this feast of the Great Ordination which had so long been neglected in Lanka was re-established once more amidst the rejoicings of the populace, the triumphant noise of drums, chanks and five kinds of music and the roar of canon". (22) The cultural ties thus established between Sri Lanka and Siam did not stop at this. Three years after the arrival of Upali Thera and his retinue, the King of Siam sent to Kandy a further group of erudite monks who brought with them some religious books that had disappeared from the island due to the ravages of man and nature. (23) The founding of this Chapter which came to be known as the Siam Nikaya (or Siamese Chapter)was patronised by the King of Siam and the king of Kandy. In 1802, the British who were the masters of the maritime provinces of Sri Lanka, at the time encouraged the founding of the Amarapura Nikaya with its headquarters in their territory. This was an attempt on the part of the British to sever the bond that prevailed between the *bhikkhus* of the maritime provinces and the king of Kandy. In 1864 another chapter known as the Ramanna Nikaya came into existence in the same way. (24) Hence the Siamese Chapter is not only the oldest of the three chapters in Sri Lanka today but also the only one in the island which could boast of being established under royal patronage. It could also claim unbroken spiritual succession from the ancient Sangha of the Mahavihara, the first monastery established in the island, for in 1425 in the reign of Parakramabahu VI of Kotte, the Sinhala Sangha was introduced to Siam and 325 years later it was re-introduced to Sri Lanka as the Siam Nikaya. It has preserved to this day the name of its founder and the land of his origin for the Chapter is officially entitled the Syamopali Vansika Maha Nikaya - the great Chapter descended from the line of Upali of Siam.

Their main objective achieved the Siamese monks continued to labour for the spiritual and moral upliftment of their hosts. It is very likely that the institutionalisation of the Sangha which followed, was effected by the king with the advice of Upali Thera. Kirti Sri Rajasimha placed Saranamkara at the head of the *bhikkhus* in the island and presented to him the insignia of the office of *Sangharaja.* An *Upa Sangharaja* or Deputy was also appointed. The nomenclature too was based on the Siamese pattern for in earlier times the Primate of the Buddhist Church in Sri Lanka was known as *Mahasami.* From its very inception the Siam Nikaya had two chief monasteries in Kandy, Malvatta and Asgiriya. The king appointed heads to these two institutions and placed all the shrines and monasteries in the island under the supervision of these two institutions. Thus the Sangha which had dwindled into a nebulous state with no leadership or organisation was given form, shape and official status.

The extent to which religious practices had been neglected in Sri Lanka could be gauged by the fact that Upali Thera and his compatriots had to teach the Sinhalese monks the correct procedure in the performance of ecclesiastical acts; and this to a community which a few centuries earlier, had provided instruction to the Buddhist world in these matters. The Siamese monks toured the kingdom, instructing their Sinhalese brothers on the admission of laymen to the Order, performing the *Upasampada* and *Kathina* (25) ceremonies. Even the *Kammavaca,* The

Pali formula recited at the performance of ecclesiastical acts was not known in the island. When requested king Boromkot sent a copy of the *Kammavaca* to Sri Lanka and a fragment of this is still extent in the Malvatta Vihara in Kandy. The Sinhalese envoys who accompanied the monks on their return to their motherland reported to the king on the unqualified success of the mission; and that the Buddhist Church was firmly established in Sri Lanka by ordaining 600 monks as *upasampannas* and 3000 persons as *samaneras.* (26)

Apart from these acts of a purely religious nature the Siamese monks attempted to eliminate certain malpractices which had crept into Kandyan society. Due to the close political and social ties with South India, popular Buddhism had at this time imbibed many Hindu beliefs and practices. The upper strata of Sinhalese society had become Hinduised and Upali Thera too, felt the presence and influence of Brahmins in Kandy. He noticed that the Asala Maha Perahera, the annual procession held in the capital, was purely a festival in honour of the Hindu deities. He was perturbed that the deities should be honoured in all pageantry and the Buddha ignored in the heart of what he thought was a Buddhist country. It is said that as a result of the agitation of the Siamese monks, the king ordered that henceforth "Gods and men" should follow the Buddha in the procession (27). This explains how the Tooth Relic of the Buddha became the focus of the Asala Maha Perahara. It was reported that certain people in Kandy did not enter places of Buddhist worship in a decorous and respectful manner.(28) Upali Thera had considerable difficulty in persuading these people to conform to the correct procedure.

In 1756, after a very hazardous journey, a second group of *bhikkhus* and *samaneras* came to Sri Lanka headed by the Theras Visuddhacariya and Varananamuni. As was the custom in Siam the monks were accompanied by three envoys. They brought with them copies of canonical, exegetical, grammatical and other works numbering 97 in all. (29) The *Theras* **Visuddhacariya and Varananamuni who were** specialists in "monastic rules and linguistic knowledge" settled down in Kandy and guided the local monks in the practices of meditation. (30) It is recorded that after a long period of selfless service Upali and a few other Siamese monks died in Sri Lanka, and some others who found the climate of Kandy disagreeable returned to Siam. The Sinhalese envoys who accompanied these monks to their motherland reported to the king of Siam that Kirti Sri Rajasimha was so overwhelmed by the bounteous generosity of the Siamese monarch that at the end of every religious discourse held at his palace, eight times a month, he caused the merit acquired to be transferred to his royal brother in Siam.

The arrival of the Siamese *bhikkhus* and the consequent restoration of the Order was considered to be an event of singular importance in the religious and cultural history of the time. This is proved by the numerous references to the event in contemporary literature as well as in official documents. Detailed accounts are however given in the following documents:-

1. *Syamavarnanava,* attributed to Allepola,one of the envoys to Siam. (31)
2. The description left by Vilbagedara, the chief of the envoys who went to Siam. (32)
3. *Kusalakriyanu Sandesaya* or *Kirti Sri Caritaya* written by a grandson of Vilbagedara (33)
4. An account written by three members of the missson found in the Ceylon National archives.
5. *Syamopasampadavata.* (35)

There is also a Siamese manuscript which refers to these two religious mission to Sri Lanka. (36)

The first four works are of special significance since they gave first-hand information regarding the journey to Siam in a Dutch vessel and also eye witness's accounts of the conditions in Siam during the mid eighteenth century. The prosperity of Siam, particularly in the spheres of agriculture and international trade, the pomp and pageantry of the court, as depicted in these accounts are not mere exaggerated travellers' tales designed to impress the credulous Kandyans, for we learn from other sources too that the reign of Boromkot was the golden age of Siam. (37) There was peace in the country and the people were happy and contented so much so that it was unncessary for a man to build a fence around his house. (38) The picture so vividly painted by our envoys is very much the same. The magnificent reception accorded to the delegates from Sri Lanka and the honour shown to the letter from the king of Kandy is ample testimony to the high regard with which the island was held: - "The (king's) message was transferred to a boat adorned with various devices, with hangings of silk and red stuffs which served as curtains with awnings above and carpets below. The presents were taken in thirteen boats; five boats were set apart, for the five ambassadors and our attendants too were similarly provided for. The escort that had come from Siam accompanied us in forty-eight boats, with their tents adorned in the manner described above, rowing on the either side of us. Eight large boats with flags and umbrellas were attached to the one conveying the royal message by means of stout ropes, one to each, thus taking the latter in tow. We proceeded in this manner up the river amidst great rejoicings on the part of the people and the same afternoon we reached the district called Bangkok." (39)

Next the writer describes the journey to Ayodhyapura, the metropolis. Right throughout their stay in Siam the Sinhalese envoys and their retinue were maintained at state expense. They were not only provided with food but also with cash from the treasury. One has no reason to doubt the veracity of the Sinhalese writer regarding the system of protocol prevalent in Siam. The Frenchman de La Loubere says much the same things regarding the reception of ambassadors in the Siamese court 66 years earlier. "A foreign ambassador who arrives in Siam is stopped at the entrance of the kingdom until the king of Siam has been informed. Every foreign ambassador is lodged and maintained by the king." (40) It is seen from all accounts that both material and spiritual needs of the envoys were provided. Special instructions were given to the traders to attend on the visitors from Sri Lanka and the chief monks from the viharas were requested to visit and accept alms from them and preach the Dhamma, so that they could acquire merit. The envoys were conducted to witness a ceremony of Ordination, a *kathina puja,* which was glittering state function and another religious festival held in the river in honour fo the Sacred Foot Print. The last was held at the end of the rainy season and the royal family participated in it. The envoys visited several holy sites including the Sacred Foot Print and were also taken to pay homage to the Sangharaja of Siam and receive his blessings.

The audience with the king was a brief and formal one. They asked a few questions, distributed gifts and gave the envoys leave to depart. This seems to be a characteristic of the Siamese court for La Loubere mentions that even in his time the audience with the king was always a short one. "Harangues please him not at all"[41], remarks La Loubere. This may have seemed rather strange to the Sinhalese for nothing gave more pleasure to the kings of Kandy than obsequious flattery from foreign ambassadors.

The arrival of the Siamese monks, though an event of a purely religious nature had important political and social repercussions, some of them of a very permanent nature. The Siamese contact gave form and shape to a nebulous organistion, and this in turn strengthened and legitimised the position of Kirti Sri Rajasimha within his realm and enhanced his prestige without. The king had proved himself to be the defender of the Faith and was invested with an aura of religious sanctity which made him more acceptable to the people - not only to those within the Kandyan Kingdom, but also to the Sinhalese who lived in the Dutch controlled maritime provinces. So that Buddhism, now revitalised became the ideological force which infused a sence of unity to the Sinhalese against the encroachments of non Buddhist foreigners. Besides, the Siam Nikaya had its headquarters in Malvatta Vihara in Kandy. The *samaneras* in the coastal areas came thither for ordination. The Sangharaja who lived in Kandy had ecclesiastical jurisdiction over the monks who lived in the coastal areas. Thus religion provided a further link which unified the Sinhalese even superceding political barriers.

Royal patronage, together with the impetus received from Siam in the form of religious literature resulted in the development of a school of learning with its headquarters in the Malvatta Vihara. The three centuries which followed the reign of Parakramabahu VI of Kotte was a period of darkness devoid of any literary activity. The religious revival paved the way for literary efflorescence. The torch of learning thus kindled in Kandy spread into the southern parts of Sri Lanka and in the latter half of the eighteenth century there was a sudden outburst of Sinhalese literary works both in verse and prose. The generation of scholar monks whose antecedents go back to this time kept the flame alive throughout the nineteenth century.

Scanning the centuries it is seen that in Sri Lanka's relations with Thailand was an element of reciprocity and a feeling of mutual respect and goodwill. The gifts that Sri Lanka in her heyday bestowed on Thailand proved to be an investment for they were graciously returned in more lean times, their value enchanced.

(This paper was first presented to the Seventh Conference of the International Association of the Historians of Asia. Bangkok, 1977).

Notes

1. Envoy extraordinary from Louis XIV of France to King Narai of Siam during the years 1687—1688.
2. The Kingdom of Siam, by Simon de la Loubere; with an introduction by David K. Wyatt. 1969.
3. The old name Siam will be used wherever the sources refer to it by that name.
4. G. Coedes, "The Excavations at P'ong Tuk and their importance for the ancient history of Siam". Journal of the Siam Society, Vol. 21, Pt. 3, p.195.
5. Jinakalamali: Transcribed from a Siamese text and edited by A.P. Buddhadatta Mahathera of Sri Lanka. P.T.S. 1962. This is a treatise on some historical facts relating to the Buddhist Order written in A.D. 1576 by a Thai Elder named Ratanapanna, who belonged to the Sinhalese fraternity of monks. It is one of the few Pali works dealing with the International contacts of Buddhism.
6. Neither of these two kings could be identified.

7. (Ed.) G. Coedes, Bulletin de l'Ecole Francaise D'Extreme-Orient, Vol. XVII, 1917, pp. 1—47.
8. S. Paranavitane, "Religious Intercourse between Ceylon and Siam in the thirteenth to the fifteenth centuries" in The Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (Ceylon Branch), Vol. XXXII, No. 85, 1932, pp. 190—213.
Also see University of Ceylon, History of Ceylon, Vol. I. pt. 2; pp. 754—755. and A.B. Griswold and Prasert na Nagara, The epigraphy of Mahadhammaraja I of Sukhodaya, in Journal of the Siam Society, Vol. 61, pt. 1: January 1973,pp. 70—181.
9. University of Ceylon, History of Cevlon, Vol. I, Pt. II, p. 755:
10. A layman enters the Order as a samanera or novice. After a period of spiritual and intellectual training and at the minimum age of 20, he becomes a full fledged monk or bhikkhu.
11. On this subject see, W. M. Sirisena, Political Religious and Cultural Relations between Ceylon and South east Asia, from A.D. c. 1000—c.1500, Unpublished D. Phil. Thesis, Australian National University, 1969.
12. Five bhikkhus are required for the performance of any ecclesiastical act. If at any time 5 bhikkhus were not available in the island, the Order was considered extinct.
13. The Higher Ordination conferred on a novice is called the Upasampada.
14. Culavamsa, Part II translated by Wilhelm Geiger and from the German into English by C. Mabel Rickmers, London, 1930, 100, 45.
15. Sangharaja sadhu cariyava (ed.) Henpitagedera Piyananda, Ceylon, 1954.
16. Ceylon National Archives1/3355.
17. Ibid.
18. Younger brother of King T'ai Sra (1709—1733). After a struggle for the throne he succeeded his brother as Maha T'ammaraja II, though he is generally known as Boromkot. In all Sinhalese and Pali sources he is referred to as King Dharmika.
19. B.M. Or 6606 (157).
20. Culavamsa 100. 70—78.
21. The *Upajjhaya* functions as the chief disciplinary authority while the *acariya* teaches and interprets the sacred texts to the newly ordained monk. All three monks were Siamese.
22. J.R.A.S.C.B. Vol. XVIII, p.38.
23. Culavamsa, 100, 160.
24. On both these occasions the *Upasampada* was brought from Burma.
25. At the end of the rainy season, robes or *Kathina* were offered to the monks. This is an important annual festival.
26. Letter written by Commander in Chief of the king of Siam to the Commander in Chief of the king of Kandy dated 15th October, 1756.
This letter written in Pali in Cambodian characters is still found in the Malvatta Vihara, Kandy. See, Second Report of the Historical Manuscripts Commission, Colombo, 1935, p. 58.
27. Culavamsa, 99.67.
28. Letter written by the Commander in Chief of the king of Siam to the Commander in Chief of the king of Kandy
29. Ibid.
30. Culavamsa, 100, 172, 173, 174.
31. The Sinhalese text was published in 1897. Translated into English by P.E. Pieris in the Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (Ceylon Branch), Vol. XVIII, pp. 17—44.
32. Translated by P.E.E. Fernando in the Ceylon Journal of Historical and Social Stidies, Vol. II. Jan 1959, No. I, pp. 37—83.
33. British Museum Or 6606 (1575), Very similar to this is the *Kusalakriya Varnanava* in the Ceylon National Archives, CNA/HMC/5/63/12.
34. Second report of the Ceylon Historical Manuscripts Commission, 1935,p. 9.
35. Ed. Giridara Ratanajoti, Colombo, 1892.
36. Journal of the Siam Society, Vol. IV, part I, June 1907; P:23: Siamese Missions to Ceylon in the Eighteenth Century, by O. Frank Furter.
37. D.G.E. Hall, A History of South East Asia, London 1955, p. 288. Virginia Thompson, Thailand, The New Siam, New York, 1967, p. 26.
38. W.A.R. Wood, A History of Siam, London, 1926, p. 238.
39. J.R.A.S.C.B. Vol. XVIII, pp. 22—23.
40. La Loubere p. 108.
41. La Loubere, pp. 108.109.

11. ASPECTS OF THE FOLK SONGS OF LOWER UVA — CLUES TO HISTORY ?

S. J. Sumanasekera Banda

"Lower Uva" which is a term coined by the British applies to the area now known as Moneragala District and the AGA Divisions of Bintenna Pattu, Maha Oya and Wevagam Pattu in the Ampara District. A larger part of this area is still under jungle and thick forest with a few hamlets such as Henebedda and Pollebedda where a diminished number of Veddas in transition are fated to live counting their last days before what appears to be an inevitable extinction. In this sparsely populated area one may still find a number of villages which have not departed from their traditional way of life inspite of the inroads made even into their community by way of the onslaught of modernization. Compared to other regions in the country, lower Uva provides a rich resource for research to those interested in the different genres in the oral tradition. The purpose of this paper is to discuss some aspects of folk poetry found mainly in the Moneragala District and generally in the area popularly known as lower Uva.

Professor Nandasena Ratnapala in his 'Sinhalese Folk Lore, Folk Religion and Folk Life' has the following to say about the Sinhalese folksongs:

> "There are a number of publications that purport to contain Sinhalese Folksongs: it is only one of these, that is in 'Madulu Rata Sivupada' by B. Pannalankara that one sees a collection worthy of taking into consideration. The editor has collected the songs carefully sorting and selecting the sources and never interfering with the form, language or structure. Another collection, although full of methodological short comings, but nevertheless would be of some preliminary use to Folklorists is 'Purana Sivupada Samgrahava' by U. Pannaloka".

He adds:

> "The Sinhalese authors have analysed folksongs always culling out their materials from existing literary publications. They have never treated the veracity of their sources (i.e. genuineness of the folksongs) before they began to analyse them". (1)

I wish to begin this paper with this quotation, for I am entirely in agreement with the views expressed here. However, the editor of the publication Dr. Ratnapala commends is not B. Pannalankara. 'Madulurata Sivupada' published in April 1967 is the work of Rev. Batugammana Pannaratana a well known social worker and an exemplary Buddhist monk residing in Bolgalla, a few miles away from the Moneragala town. It is also my intention to quote from this work which is not only a representative collection of the folk songs of lower Uva but also a reliable and authentic presentation of folk poetry. For a long period, the researchers of folklore in other countries have been interested in the regional differences in folk culture. Professor Ratnapala has pointed out that "some ethnologists and "folklorists" of the early period wrote on customs, ceremonies, rituals etc. existing in the island observing the custom, ceremony or ritual in a general sense, that is without paying any attention to differences in a particular custom, ceremony or ritual exhibits in various geographical localities". "What they did was to study a cultural item as it exists in a particular locality or in different localities, collect data on it and describe it as one that represents the folk living in the entire island".(2) Even the recent collections, due to methodological errors in collecting and classifying data, fail to locate the sources and do not provide any information as to, "Who was the singer? Where did he live? What are the other particulars of his life? What is the importance of the song in the particular locality? Was it sung as part of the ritual or ceremony? etc." (3)

It has to be admitted that no scientific study of folklore has ever been undertaken in this country. The preparation of folklore maps for instance, has never been even attempted in Sri Lanka. The present state of poor folklore knowledge as pointed out by the learned professor could be attributed to the absence of comprehensive scientific studies in the area of folk culture. Having been associated with an attempt to collect folk songs in the Moneragala district which resulted in the publication of 'Madulurata Sivupada' and also having tried to improve on this publication by bringing out my own collection of folk songs, I must warn others of the difficulties in the preparation of folklore maps in presenting folklore areas and the dispersion of different folklore products by means of maps. Although beset with traps and pit falls, the 'tradition-geographical approach' would lead I believe, to more scientific folklore studies in Sri Lanka.

The categories of folk poetry predominant in lower Uva are limited in character and are mostly connected with agriculture. Ballads and narratives and

those songs describing or dealing with episodes connected with child birth, puberty, marriage and death, songs of recreation are few in number. Riddles and love songs and religious songs are abundant. One may yet find examples of the twelve categories of folk songs prepared by Dr. Ratnapala: i.e. folk songs associated with important occasions of life, folk songs associated with popular customs, festivals and ceremonies, ritual songs, occupational songs, songs of magic and witchcraft, songs of play and recreation, didactic songs, narrative songs or ballads, riddle songs, dual songs, love songs, and obscene songs. (4)

There is a class of folksong or folkpoetry which has a national character having being equally popular in all regions in the island. It is not hard to find local variations even among this category of folksong. Some folksongs because of their popularity are so well distributed as to make their origin obscure and intractable. Any attempt to trace the origin of a folksong would prove to be futile unless the process of its change and development is studied carefully. "The folkpoet has no knowledge of formal prosody and from the outset his creative work is grounded on an analogy with what he knows. It is natural that the folkpoet, without even thinking of it, retrieves from his store of knowledge lines and whole stanzas which, if appropriate, he uses to construct his song. The extreme case of this procedure is to take ready-made fragments of songs and create entirely new logical entities, songs, using the existing fragments as building blocks. This is supported by the meter that is common to all the songs. Accordingly, the same verses may be original in different places, being connected with the songs at their genesis." (5)

Compare for instance the following verse from lower Uva with more popular forms found in other districts.

Ihaḷa velin ena kikiḷī — *nābari yē*
Pahaḷa velin ena kikiḷī — *pubbari yē*
Naḷala agaṭa ena dāḍiya — *mutukeṭiyē*
Nelum malata vas ärapan — *ekasari yē*

As the hen comes from the upper valley she looks youthful
As she comes from the lower she looks virgin
The drops of sweat that form on the brow are but pearls
Let the evil influences fall not on her but on the lotus flower

In giving explanations to variant readings of one poem what we often forget is that folksong is a form of popular entertainment which could be classified within the subject area of popular or folk media as well. In songs composed by people without any kind of formal education and transmitted by word of mouth we cannot expect any consistency. In folksongs the authors are usually anonymous and the song flexible. Modifying a folksong or folk poem will not infringe any copyright laws. In the absence of immutability, folk songs abound in local variation. Both scribes and singers are bound to be responsible for the variant readings found in the works published. How variant forms can take root even within a restricted area such as lower Uva, can be seen from the quotations given below:

Us usuvan miṭi miṭuwan (6) — *ammā yē*
Ḍetana kiri barin muhunaṭa (7) — *nammā yē*
Ȧndi sēlē bol pinnen — *temmā yē*
Mēväni lakunu ati apagē — *ammā yē*

Bedda vaṭaṭa sudu moramal — *pipīlā*
Sudda kala bambaru ēvaga — *vasālā* (8)
Iṭit panit lova sämaṭama — *bedā lā*
Yanna (9) *bambaru duk mäsivili* — *kiyā lā*

Kōḍi helē gal vaṭakara (10) — *mulullā*
Gal naḷalaṭa yanakala — *karakevillā* (11)
Gal naḷale bändā väni — *toṭillā*
Madugama (12) *hel balatot mehi* — *varellā*

Mother is neither too tall nor too short
Full of milk, her pair of breasts turn upward
The cloth she is draped in is not drenched by the morning dew
Such features belong to our Mother

Encircling the jungle white mora flowers have blossomed
The bees who were humming have covered them
Distributing to all the world honey and wax
Go away, Oh bees; grumbling away your mournful complaints

The kodi hill is fully surrounded by rock
On reaching the brow of the rock one is dizzy
As if one was being rocked in a cradle
Come hither if you wish to see the hills of Madu Gama

The verses quoted here are taken from a popular ballad which without any doubt can be traced to lower Uva. It relates the story of two brothers who went to collect honey from the combs of the 'bambara' *(Apis dorsata)*. According to this tale when the brothers climbed a Na tree by using the supports called "hara" made of branches tied with cane or strong vines the elder brother severs a few strands of the 'hara' leaving the younger exposed to death from sliding down while descending. He is hurt already by the enraged bees' stings in the process of

using smoke to drive off the bees. Although the narrative is well known I have so far failed to collect the full complement of verses to trace the development of the story. Nor could I find any document which contains the full text of the narative. It would be a worth while attempt to trace the different versions of this ballad with a view not only to reconstruct the ballad but also to arrive at a synthesis by analysing systematically the different variables of the oral transmission. It would enable our folklorists to get a holistic view of a story telling situation by directing their attention to many factors that can influence the transmission of tradition, such as those factors that concern the individual, the community, the culture, the structure of the tradition itself and the interaction between all these factors. This narrative contains most of the ingredients of folk life: belief in dreams, mother's affection, nature's beauty, hidden jealousy, adventure, sympathy, filial duty etc. to make it appeal to people of all age groups.

In the ballad a dream seen by the mother which alludes to the impending disaster is described in the following words:

Uḍa mālē malvähi vahina vā [13] *duṭin*
Bima māle lē vä hi vasina vā *duṭin*
Lipa liggal tuna ven vana vāt *duṭin*
Nāgasa bambara kapanna yanavāt *duṭin*

I dreamt that showers of flowers fell on the upper floor
Dreamt I too showers of blood falling on the ground floor
Dreamt I too the three hearth stones splitting asunder
And dreamt I too going to tap the honey comb on the Na tree.

Shower of flowers on the upper floor is an indication to the mental state of the elder brother. The shower of blood portends the death of the younger brother. In the symbolic separation of hearth stones, one can imagine the consequent separation and sufferings. The adamant young man however does not take the implications of the dream seriously and makes the necessary preparations.

Udu māle mal vähi vässat *yanavā*
Bima mālē lē vahi vässat *yanavā*
Lipa liggal tuna ven vūvat *yanavā*
Nāgasa bambara kapanna dennama *yanavā*
We will go, even if it rains showers of flowers on the upper floor
We will go even if it rains blood on the lower floor
We will go even if the hearth stones split
Both of us will go to tap the honey comb on the Na tree.

According to A.C. Dep who had access to an earlier version of this story, the brothers proceeded to the tree without paying any heed to the mother's misgivings, climbed it and started operating. "When the bees were getting stirred up the elder brother feigned illness and climbed down the tree removing the 'hara'. The younger brother found himself marooned on the tree".[14]

So the derring-do of the younger brother comes to an end with the helpless situation he falls into by the unpardonable selfish act of the elder brother. The sad plight of the younger brother is described in the following emotion-packed words put into his mouth by the folk singer:

Kusē upan loku aiyā kaḷa *ayutī*
Gasē indädī härapaṭa kapā *yatī*
Bambaru siya dahas änga lē urā boṭī
Palayan aiyanḍi mama ena gaman [15] *nätī*

The unjust thing that the elder brother did born though of the same womb
He goes away having cut the rope belt while (I) am still on the tree
Hundreds of bees suck the blood off my body
Go away, elder brother, I shall not be going with thee

Honey gathering is a daring act. As R. L. Spittel observes in his 'Wild Ceylon', the 'bambaras' build high on the precipitous sides of rocks; their security lying not in their seclusion but in their inaccessibility. These hives are the prize of the bold and skilful only.[16] When the rock is high, the ladder called 'yothala' by the Veddas, hangs free and the honey gatherer may even have to swing to and fro to enable him to get at the combs. The bambara combs are also often found attached to the lower surfaces of horizontal branches of the giant Na *(Messua ferrea)* trees. In such instances, the honey gatherer has to climb up the tree by tying up branches of trees as supports on to the trunk of the tree. The bambaras are dispersed by heavy smoking. Whilst the collector descends the tree after smoking, he is in a precarious situation. Collecting honey from rocks is still more dangerous. In Spittel's words:

"Imagine, then, the picture of the man smothered in smoke, assailed by angry bees, swinging in the darkness two hundred feet or more above the stony earth, with neck and knee hitched to the ladder so as to leave the arms free to manipulate torch and prong'.[17]

The honey gatherers ballad has a distinctive flavour of lower Uva, capturing vividly the emotion of its rural folk. "This story seems to have been known

throughout Uva. In all the places where these verses were collected at least one verse connected with this story was known. Most of the verses were collected from Wellassa-Bintenna area and it is, therefore, likely that this was a Wellassa-Bintenna story".(18) Whether this episode is based on fact or whether it is fiction we are unable to say. The villagers in lower Uva go to collect honey in the jungles during the months of June and July. They sing folksongs on their way either to appease the spirits or for personal entertainment. They do this according to Hugh Nevill "so as to get a certain degree of excitement, necessary to carry them through the task".

Anonymous ballads of this nature are valuable cultural property which become part of a common heritage. In the absence of living performers or folksingers to recite the verses in their proper sequence, and in the absence of occasions for repetitive performances or recitals we are left only with fragments of a poem, the full text of which exists only in the memories of its users. Unlike written literature, oral literature does not have an independent existence of its own. In the ballad quoted above, we see a most natural blend of life and nature which has almost disappeared from the community life of today despite the fact that it is a product of a rural society with a basic form of livelihood like hunting and gathering honey.

Ballad however is a rare feature in the folkpoetry of lower Uva. There is no other known ballad which appeals more to the popular imagination of the people of lower Uva than the one on the episode of honey gathering. The language of the verses does not present a problem. Those who are not familiar with the dialect of lower Uva may find it hard to get the exact meaning of a few words which truly belong to lower Uva. It is the presence of these uncommon words that lends authenticity to its poetry. One has to be careful however before deciding whether a folk song belongs to a particular area as in the transmission of folk songs from one geographical area to another, a certain amount of transformation takes place by the acquisition of local colouring in the way of changes in certain words and expressions although most stock phrases and passages remain the same. In tracing the origin of a folk song, this type of problem is tackled by the method popularly known as the Finnish Method or historical-geographical method conceived by Julius Krohn (1835—1888). In this method described by Hautala as 'Darwinism adapted to folklore' one has to analyse content and distribution of as many variants as possible to separate primary, from secondary features and reconstruct the 'original' form of the poem and then determine chronology of its development and the routes of its transmission and diffusion.(19) Fortunately no such labour needs be dispensed with, in this instance, as the 'Bambara kavi' quoted can quite safely be regarded as part of the cultural heritage of lower Uva. The language of this composition displays unmistakably its native character.

Opening up of large tracts of land for cultivation purposes under colonization schemes during the last few decades has brought with it an influx of people to lower Uva from other parts of Sri Lanka. They have carried with them a vast treasure of folklore inherited by them in their home areas from their forefathers. They have helped not only to establish but also to enrich the common tradition of folklore in lower Uva. 'Madulurata Sivupada' and 'Pahala Uve Janakavi', the two publications containing most of the folk songs of lower Uva provide a representative selection of the distinctive themes and motifs of oral tradition of lower Uva. Those who peruse through these two works will not fail to notice the extent to which lower Uva tradition is related and not related to common tradition. Inward movement of populations from more populated districts to lower Uva and the resultant social influences and changes have shaped and conditioned the oral literature of lower Uva.

Folk songs while preserving tradition and establishing values also play a role in the communication and promotion of new ideas and in the adjustment to evolving social situations. The flexibility of the folksong allows the singer to introduce new ideas by changing words or even complete lines in the stanza without altering the framework of the composition. A folk poet may even compose a new verse to convey a new idea still retaining the structural format intact.

Ernst Kurth in his *Musikpsychologie* says that "In investigating the thematic roots of folk song, one soon comes upon psychological roots as well, among all races there appear certain recurrent, simple idioms that are really nothing but ultimate symbols of their vital consciousness: calls, chimes, cradle - rhythms, work-rhythms, dance-forms, often intimately related to certain bodily movements and steps; shouts, hunting calls and military signals, highland themes *(Alphornweisen)* and tallyhos (symbols of popular humor persisting even in high artistic composition); also plenty of borrowing from the national liturgy; in short, all sorts of motifs in which an undercurrent of popular imagination reveals itself" (20) Susanne K. Langer says: "But the folksong is by no means restricted to jocose sentiments nor always based on dance rhythms: it derives from sacred sources as well as from secular excitements". (21) The usefulness of analysing the text of a folksong from different angles and at different levels in regard to content, form, style, structure, function, use and meaning etc. needs no further illustration.

As pointed out before a large part of folk poetry of lower Uva is devoted to agricultural pursuits chiefly connected with the shifting cultivation of the chenas.(22)

Most of life's problems are pivoted in the chena, for the peasant. A chena with an improvised shelter is a peasant's precious possession which he must protect with due care and attention. Apart from a few visits to the town to purchase essential food stuffs, kerosene and items necessary for agricultural work rest of his time is spent here toiling hard to have a successful crop. Saving chena crops from wild beasts entails keeping vigil all night and folk songs help to break the monotony and the deadly silence of the night.

The cultivation of crops depends on the weather and seasonal activities for the lower Uva farmer are prescribed by the folk poet.

Vesak poson masa bin torā	*ganṭa*
Āsala nikiṇi masa val pīrā	*ganṭa*
Binara mahē vāṭa koṭu savi kara	*ganṭa*
Vap masa purā vapuran aṭu pura	*vanṭa*

Select the ground in the months of Vesak and Poson
Clear the forest in the months of Nikini and Asala
Fix up the fences in the months of Binara
In the month of Vap reap a full harvest

Highland paddy which depends on rain water often proves to be a risky crop. A chena cultivator may have to abandon his paddy field either due to drought or unexpected floods. A farmer laments:

Niyara koṭā vāḍa nimakara tibu	*kumbura*
Vatura galā sōda gena giya	*kumbura*
Kataragama devindu bārai mage	*kumbura*
Ataraman velā man yanavā	*gedera*

The field which had been fully prepared with the ridges done
The field which had been washed away by the flood - waters
I entrust to you O God Kataragama, this field of mine
And go home hence lost and forlorn

Kurakkan is a more dependable and a drought resistant crop. Yet when rains fail the folk poet has to sing in supplication.

Ahasaṭa kavuda anaviṇa karapu	*deviyō*
Polovaṭa damū bōge danava	*deviyō*
Yāyaka ruwa balā väda karana	*goviyō*
Ada heṭa pamaṇa vässak vähäpan	*deviyō*

Who is the God who has done harm to the skies
The cereals that have been strewn on the ground are burnt O God
The cultivators who work looking at the tract of paddy
O God, send forth rain in a day or two

It is a remarkable fact of life that sometimes people meet with success immediately to be followed by a disaster. The following verses relate to a such tragic ending for a peasant farmer in lower Uva.

Kapā kurakkan kamatē goḍa	*keruwā*
Hapā dalu bulat kamatē kela	*gäsuvā*
Uyā häḷi valan ammā goda	*keruwā*
Kamaten gedera enaviṭa aliyā	*gäsuvā*

Having reaped the Kurakkan, she heaped them on the threshing floor
Having chewed the tender betel leaves, she spat on the threshing floor
Having done the cooking, mother placed the pots in a heap
But on her way home from the threshing floor she was attacked by the elephant

A variant form:

Kapā kurakkan kamatē goda	*keruvā*
Hapā mala bulat vaṭakara kela	*gasuvā*
Uyā bath mālu ammā ge	*täbuwā*
Hēnen gamata enaviṭa aliyā	*gäsuvā*

Having reaped the Kurakkan, she heaped them on the threshing floor
Having chewed the dead betel leaves, she spat all round
Having cooked rice and curry mother stored it in the house
Coming to the village from the field, she was attacked by the elephant

Another danger is from wild animals, notably rogue elephants. An attack by a leopard is a rare incident:

Kurakkanen piti peṭṭiya	*isēyā*
Rattaranin ran mālaya	*karēyā*
Aluta bändapu puskola deka	*kanēyā*
Evan kola lamā dividena	*baḍēyā*

The box of kurakkan flour is on the head
The gold chain is on the neck
The newly made ola leaves were on the ears
Such a young girl is now in the belly of the Leopard

In the minds of most people folksongs may have pejorative connotations merely because the material originates from subcultures of so-called civilized so-

cieties. For them folk songs originating in the backwoods of Moneragala may imply a form of primitive poetry lacking the niceties of refined forms of literature. From the excerpts so far given one could judge for himself whether this kind of literature is worthy of preservation. A careful study of folksongs of lower Uva will never fail to reveal at least a few gems of literary creativity.

Apart from the literary value of folksongs of lower Uva one may be surprised to find a wealth of historical information in them which is not readily available in other documentary sources. Place names, family disputes and historical incidents find their place in the folk song. It is even possible to trace the history of certain villages through the folk song. Sufficient data is available in folksongs of lower Uva for a number of sociological studies. To give one example, no one today would dream that there had been a thriving small scale textile industry in the Moneragala area before the advent of colonization schemes.

However, there are many folksongs in lower Uva which make reference to some activity connected with weaving. Doubts begin to clear when one looks at the number of inscriptions referring to villages in lower Uva where cotton cultivation appears to have been the main occupation. Ananda Coomaraswamy in his 'Mediaeval Sinhalese Art' mentions homespun cotton cloth near Vellassa in lower Uva.(23) The prevalence of folksongs connected with weaving in different parts of lower Uva is an indication of the existence of weaving at least as a home industry in those areas where the songs are preserved in oral tradition. The contents of folksongs discribing weaving activities provide enough proof to show that weaving had been a communal enterprise. In the religious ceremony of robe making *(Kathina)* women of different castes mixed up freely.

A word not in common usage today namely *'Alge'* had been used in the past to identify a house where 'weaving' took place on a communal basis. Service at the loom was called *'Alge rajakariya'*(24) The village called *'Alpitiya'* situated close to Dambagalla may have been a village where weavers were settled in the time of Sinhala Kings. The homespun cloth of Vellassa was of a distinct durable quality and a few samples may be seen in pieces in some old temples in lower Uva. A comprehensive collection of folksongs dealing with weaving as a handicraft is not yet available anywhere in the country.

On one side of the Moneragala (Peacock Rock) is the escarpment now popularly known as Maragala (Death rock). Folksongs of Moneragala area contain numerous references to this place which has an interesting history. It is the place where Parakramabahu I executed all rebel leaders in his effort to defeat Princess Sugala who claimed the throne by virture of having the custody of the Tooth Relic in the twelfth century. The *Culavamsa* mentions this place as 'Maragalla' possibly a direct translation of the word 'Maragala', found in many a folksong.(25) The village adjacent to the Peacock Rock is generally known as 'Muppane'. It is the village name cited in folksongs. References found in literary texts suggest that it is equivalent to 'Mulsala' (main rock) a term used for Moneragala-rock. According to a less known folksong the place name Moneragala appears to be a later introduction in place of the older Amaragiri. The reason for change has been to honour a saintly monk who selected Moneragala for his dwelling. 'Amaragiri' after the bloodshed by Parakramabahu turned out to be 'Maragiri' which gives a plausible explanation for the origin of 'Maragalla' or Maragala. The folksinger gives the name of the monk who resided at Moneragala as 'Mayurasata'.

Amaragiri namin tibu araṇehi poraṇa
Mayuragiri namak une kohomada kalaṇa?
Mayurasata terindu vädasiṭiyen etana
Mayuragiri namak täbuvē ē bävina

How did the sylvan sanctuary of old Amaragiri,
My friend, came to be called Mayuragiri?
A monk called Mayurasata, he said there resided
Hence Mayuragiri should it be called they decided

Gananath Obeyesekere in his latest work "The Cult of the Goddess Pattini" concludes: "a historiography that relies exclusively on well - documented and incontrovertible historic evidence, such as evidence from inscriptions, must surely be wrong, since it assumes that the recorded data must be the significant data shaping history and controlling the formation and transformation of the constitutions of a people. A more imaginative interpretation using a broad variety of sources - from myth, ritual, and popular literature - would correct this narrow perspective" (26)

Folksong defined sometimes as the 'un-notated art of the unlettered and formally uneducated' is often used by learned musicians in Sri Lanka in their compositions. It has enriched the modern Sinhala play. This valuable basic element of our culture which reflects the human spirit is also the foundation stone on which what is now called indigenous music has been based.

In folk art, music forms an integral part of words and physical movement. In the absence of folklorists, folklore libraries/archives or a discipline of folklore in the institutions of educational excellence

it would be more and more difficult to percieve folksong in the light of its cultural context.

Apart from the pioneering work of Hugh Nevill whose collection covers a range of ballad and popular poetry which throws some light on myths, legends, customs, rituals and ceremonies of the Sinhala race only two other collections by Professor Gunapala Malalasekera and Rev. U. Pannaloka contain most of the popular folksongs in Sri Lanka. In the main body of Sinhala literature preserved in formal or classical Sinhala, folksong has not found a respectable place, because the folk tradition is preserved in the colloquial form. Sinhala literature in spite of its diversity in form and content rarely depicts the aspects of rural life so well as in the folksong. It is from these perspectives that one should value the collection and preservation of folksongs of lower Uva which is becoming a vanishing heritage.

Notes

1. Sinhalese Folk Lore, Folk Religion and Folk Life - Nandasena Ratnapala, Sarvodaya Research. p. 17.
2. Op. cit p.23.
3. Op. cit p. 25.
4. Op. cit p. 58.
5. Juoko Hautala in his doctoral dissertation on the song of Lauri Lappaleinen, (1945) cited in Finnish Folkloristics 2 Helsinki 1974 p.16.
6. Us us van miti mitivan 7. Muhūnata 8. sadda kala bambaru evage andālā 9. Yannan 10. hela vatakara
11. gal nalalē bändā väni totillā
totilla mädata yanakota kårakävillā 12. Madugam.
13. ditim in place of dûtin is also found.
14. JRAS (Ceylon) Vol. V. (New series) 1956 pp. 49—50.
15. This verse too has its variant forms, for example, one version reads:

Kusē upan loku aiyā karapu	*hadī*
Gasē indiddī hāpota kapa	*basī*
Bambaru siya dahās ängalē urā	*botī*
Palayan aiyandi mama ena gaman	*nätī*

16. Wild Ceylon, R.L. Spittel, Colombo Book Centre 1951; p.147:
17. Ibid
18. JRAS Vol. V. (New series) p. 49.
19. Finnish Folk Poetry Epic-Finnish Literature Society - Helsinki 1977 — pp. 38 — 39.
20. Philosophy in a New Key - Susanne K. Langer - New American Library pp. 200—201.
21. Ibid. p. 207.
22. In Chena cultivation, the natural vegetation in an area is thrashed and burnt. The soil is worked with a mammoty and rice or maize is sown. After the first harvest the area is laid fallow to revert to bush whilst a new area is cleared for cultivation.
23. Mediaeval Sinhalese Art, A.K. Coomaraswamy Pantheon Books 1979, p. 232.
24. Ibid.
25. The Culavamsa - W. Geiger Pt. II Ch. 75 vv. 179 — 182.
26. The Cult of the Goddess Pattini - The University of Chicago Press 1984, p. 605.

(The writer is indebted to Bandula Jayawardena for English translations of most of the folksongs quoted here).

12. DRAVIDIAN CULTURE IN MALAYSIA:

S. Arasaratnam

Historical Background

The earliest Dravidian contacts with the Malay peninsula were through the medium of trade. Dravidians have been sailing, at least from the early centuries of the Christian era, from south Indian ports to the west coast of Malaya. The evidence of this trade appears in the early Sangam Literature and in the epics. Subsequently there is much epigraphic and other record of continuing contact with the Malay peninsula and many other regions of Southeast Asia. In the wake of commercial contacts, as often happened in ancient days, came cultural influences. Through these commercial contacts gradually elements of Dravidian culture and of Indian culture of which the Dravidian was a part were transmitted to the Malay peninsula. The most powerful of these elements were the ideas and practices of Buddhism and Hinduism that were carried to Malaya from the famous centres such as Kanchipuram and Nagapattinam. The great cultural ferment that South India witnessed under the Pallavas appears to have left its impact on Malaya. The inscriptions of the time found in Malaya are of the Pallava Grantha script. Later Hindu shrines appeared in the Kedah region of the Malay peninsula where south Indian traders landed. These shrines and the larger edifices, as well as the statuary which adorned them, were of a distinct Pallava style. A variety of Saiva monuments and artifacts have been unearthed from that period.

Dravidian contacts with the Malay peninsula continued under the Cholas. Overseas trading from southern India to Southeast Asia and further east expanded during the height of the power of the Vijayalaya Cholas who had themselves built up a strong navy and colonised some of the islands in the Indian Ocean. The Cholas had close links with the Sri Vijayan Empire, a maritime empire of Southeast Asia whose sway extended along the western coast of Malaya. Chola merchant navies sailed the straits of Malacca and traded with western Malayan ports. Dravidian merchant colonies were established in these ports and the large merchant corporations of South India had settlements and possessions there. These merchants built Hindu temples in their settlements and took with them Brahmin priests and sanskrit and Tamil religious texts. This culture was transmitted in this way to the upper segment of the tribal peoples of the region and has left a deep impact on their culture.

When the Vijayanagar Empire was in power, these trade contacts continued unabated. Telugu and Tamil merchants sailed to Malayan ports from the east coasts of India and, from the ports of Malabar, Kerala traders carried on a flourishing trade. When the Sultanate of Malacca was founded and Malacca grew into a great trading emporium in the 15th century, Telugu and Tamil Chetty merchant settlements were founded in that port. Some of these wealthy merchants rose to powerful positions in court, married with royal and noble families. Through the social position occupied by these merchants in Malacca, Dravidian language and culture seeped into the culture of the Malay nobility and left a permanent imprint on it. With the spread of Islam, Tamil muslims (or Cholia Muslims as they were called) continued their influence in Malay courts into the 17th and 18th centuries and reinforced some of the Dravidian cultural elements which their predecessors had transplanted.

The Hindu merchant communities that had settled and traded in Malacca from the time of the foundation of that Sultanate became domiciled in that portcity. With the destruction of the Sultanate and its conquest first by the Portuguese and then the Dutch, this community retained its identity, and carried on with the practice of its religious and social customs. It built its temples, retained the Tamil language and was known as the Malacca Chetty community and exists to the present day.

The modern phase of Dravidian cultural contact with the Malay peninsula begins with the 19th century. The expansion of British power into the peninsula from the Straits Settlements provided opportunities for employment of a wide variety of people from southern India. These migrants came from the Madras Presidency where conditions in the rural sector were bad. The prospects of steady wages in continuing employment, even though miles across the ocean, were attractive enough to induce people to migrate. These migrants came from Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam districts of Madras, though a great majority of those who migrated to Malaya were Tamils. This migration which began as a trickle in the 1870's grew into a steady and controlled flood in the following 70 years, resulting in the establishment of a settled as well as a transitory population of Indians from the three Dravidian speaking groups mentioned above.

Social Structure

A vast majority of these south Indian migrants were labourers who lived in the cooly huts provided by plantation owners of western Malaya. Soon, however, there took place the migration of educated classes, coming to take up white-collar employment in public services and the private sectors. These were followed by professionals who formed the top-most segment of the Indian migrant community. A large majority of these people also came from the Madras Presidency, mainly Tamil and Malayalam speakers and there were the Tamils from north Ceylon as well. They formed a middle class between the colonial authority and the labouring people, performing middle grade functions in government departments, commercial firms and the large European plantations

When large scale migration stopped in the late 1930's, a settled Indian population had established itself in the Malay peninsula. After the Second World War, this population underwent a process of natural increase and today totals about a million people, almost all of them on the Malay peninsula part of the modern state of Malaysia. Because of the circumstances surrounding the migratory movement, Tamils were a dominant element in this population, constituting about 80 percent. The second largest linguistic group are the Malayalees with a little over 7 percent and they are followed by the Telugus who constitute 4 percent of the total Indian population. Thus over 90 percent of Indians settled in Malaysia belong to the Dravidian ethno-linguistic group. This feature had been of enormous significance in integrating Malaysian Indians and giving them united political and cultural institutions.

Dravidian society of Malaysia exhibits the gradations that are prevalent in the country of its origin. Endogamous castes strove to maintain their cohesive character, though the caste system is far less entrenched in society now than it is in south India. Understandably, there are a very few Brahmins in Malaysia and even these few are engaged mostly in secular professions. Those performing the traditional functions of their caste are infinitesimal indeed. Hence the influence of Brahminical ideology has been far less felt in society. The higher non-Brahmin caste from all regions of the Dravidian south continue to be influential in Malaysia as well. Vellalas and Chetties hold positions of leadership among Tamils and among Indians generally. - Likewise, Nairs, and Reddis are influential among Malayalees and Telugus respectively. There are a large number of middling agricultural castes - vanniyar, nayakkar, kaundar, konar, idaiyar, kallar and many others - who migrated and are to be found in society today. The depressed castes make up about a third of society but their status is considerably higher than that of their counterparts in modern south India.

Except in respect of endogamy, caste little governs the life of the Malaysian Indian. The nature of plantation and urban housing was such that spacial separation between castes was not possible. In the early days of migration, it is true that government and plantation authorities tried to provide separate housing and water taps, at least to the point of separating 'untouchables' from 'clean' castes. This soon broke down and, as the zeal for social reform spread to Malaya in the 1940's and 1950's, a number of caste obligations performed by the depressed castes were given up. Temple entry for depressed castes was achieved earlier than in south India and more effectively. Even in respect of endogamy, practice has become less rigid and related castes are known to make marital unions. Social change is of course far more rapid in the urban areas where intercaste marriages have become more widespread.

Trade unionism, which grew rapidly among plantation workers and urban labour after 1945, has been an agent of social change. Labourers of the depressed castes became active militants in trade union movements and won many concessions of a social nature from their employers in the 1950's. The major trade union of Malaysia, the National Union of Plantation Workers, dominated for long by south Indians, was instrumental not only in winning for labourers decent living standards but also achieved for them a dignity and self-esteem and a respected place in the community. The Union is an excellent example of the working together of the three major Dravidian groups - Tamils, Malayalees and Telugus - at all levels from the grass roots to its highest executive.

Cultural Revivalism and the Dravidian Movement

When the Dravidian movement gathered momentum in south India, it soon spread to the Malay peninsula in the 1930's. In 1929, the Dravidian leader, E. V. Ramasami Naicker, visited Malaya touring estate villages and rousing the consciousness of his audience by his stirring speeches. Soon after his visit, an All Malaya Tamil Conference was called in Ipoh and Many Tamil Reform Societies *(Thamilar Sirthirutha sangam)* were formed. These associations fostered a Dravidian and Tamil cultural revivalism which began to bear fruit after 1945. Dravida Kalagams were formed in all parts of the country which maintained close liaison with the parent body in Tamil Nadu. In 1947 these *kalagams* were federated into All Malayan Central Dravida Kalagams. This body ran a weekly Tamil journal called *Ina Mani* and monthly called *Dravida Murasu.* All these associations were active in social reform.

Among the reformist activities engaged in by these bodies was the move to do away with Brahmanical marriage ritual and substitute a simple and secularised 'reformed marriage'. This move spread among the lower classes of society and in estates and country towns where, in any case, it was impossible to find Brahmins to perform the Indo-Aryan marriage ritual. Generally such 'reformed marriages' were presided over by the leaders of the Dravidian movement in Malaya or by trade unionists. A large number of marriages are now performed in this secular fashion, though the middle and upper classes still patronise Brahmanical ritual.

This was part of a wider Tamil cultural revivalism that was evident throughout society after 1945. Tamil cultural associations sprang up all over and these were spread right across the social spectrum. The upper and middle classes were influenced by the rising tide of Indian nationalism and shared a sense of pride in the emergence of India as a nation. This pride took the form of a return to the sources of their traditional culture. They lent their support to Tamil literary associations and a revival of religious and cultural activities. This enabled the whole Tamil community to be united behind a revived Tamil culture. Even Malayalees and Telugus were able to participate in this revival. All of these could speak the Tamil language, being the dominant language in society, and they shared in other elements of cultural revival such as music, dance and religion. As for the labouring class, this Tamil cultural revival gave them great satisfaction. They were able to enjoy popular and classical art forms in their new country of adoption. This enriched their lives and made them more meaningful. Tamil drama clubs proliferated, popular and classical music concerts were common, *bharatha natyam* performances were in vogue. All this was enriched by the forging of close links with Tamil Nadu. Well known artists were invited to visit Malaysia and perform before appreciative audiences. The relative affluence of the Malaysian Indian community enabled it to finance such visits.

Though the Tamil language was widely used in society, Tamil education has not had widespread support. In the plantations, the management provided schools where Tamil was taught bu the facilities were extremely poor. In a few estates with a large Telugu labour force, children were taught in Telugu. Teachers were poorly trained and children were taught only up to the primary level. In the urban working class areas, government opened up some schools which taught labourers' children in Tamil. Private effort began to step in to remedy government and employer neglect. Indian Associations, groups of Indian philanthropists, the Ramakrishna Mission and some Christian denominational missions opened schools. There was no demand among the middle class for education in Tamil. These children attended English schools. Some provision was made for the training of Tamil school teachers.

The situation with regard to Tamil education did not improve with independence. Official policy was to discourage pluralism and Tamil schools continued as a disadvantaged stream of education. Tamil educated youths who wanted to pursue secondary educated had to join English or Malay schools. The few Indian privately run schools continued to provide for Tamil as a second language in the higher forms. Because of the pressure exerted by the leaders of the Indian community, some provision was made for Tamil in the University of Malaya. In a department of Indian studies, established in 1960, it was possible for students to study Tamil language, literature, Dravidian linguistics and culture as subjects for the B.A. degree. That department also initiated post-graduate study and research into Dravidian studies and published a number of monographs on a variety of subjects. Out of that Department graduated a number of Malaysian Indian students with a sound knowledge of Dravidian studies. They took this knowledge into the various walks of life they subsequently took - in the public services, in the media industry, and in the private sector.

Mass Media

As constrasted with the slow growth of Tamil education, Tamil journalism and creative writing had an early start. This was because of the support for journalism among the educated classes. The major Tamil daily of Malaysia, *Tamil Nesan,* was inaugurated in 1924 in Kuala Lumpur. It was nationalistic in its views and took up the cause of Tamil labour with the employers. It also supported the Hindu cultural revival that took place after 1945 and gave publicity to Hindu religious activities. Its editor was recruited from Tamil Nadu. The other major Tamil daily, *Tamil Murasu,* was started in 1932 in Singapore and was by comparison more radical. It espoused social reformists causes. While these were the two national dailies, a variety of other periodicals were published by various bodies such as Hindu associations, social reform groups, literary associations and trade unions. Among trade union papers, the *Sangamani,* organ of the National Union of Plantation workers has great influence with Tamil labour.

Tamil was recognised as one of the languages for radio and television broadcasting. In the Indian section of these services, a staff was recruited to conduct programmes in Tamil. Some few Telugu and Malayalam broadcasts were also made. These prog-

rammes featured news services in Tamil, Carnatic and popular south Indian music, religious discourses and cultural shows. Visiting south Indian artists were invited to perform in these media. By these means south Indians have wide opportunities to enjoy programmes which satisfy their cultural needs.

The film is another popular medium of Dravidian culture. South Indian films are shown in a number of cinemas throughout the country. Even in the remote plantations, the management has taken steps to have Tamil films shown in improvised theatres. These films are a good medium for the transmission of ideas current in south India. Not only are these films popular among south Indians, they even draw large Malay crowds and impart to them some knowledge of south Indian society. During the 1950's and 1960's the didactic films with social reform ideologies had a deep impact on the attitudes of Malayan Indians.

Creative writing in Tamil began to appear from the 1930's and gathered momentum from the 1950's. The major Tamil newspapers threw open their columns to such writings and encouraged them through sponsoring competitions. A number of literary periodicals appeared now and then. Such activities were better organised with the formation of the Tamil Writers' Association. The medium for these writers were novels, short stories, poetry and drama. In the early stage most of these writings were just imitations of the literature of Tamil Nadu. Later, however, themes and issues coming from the Malaysian experience of Indian estate life, race relations, love of the country of adoption, among others, captured the attention of these writers.

Religion

Dravidian religious practices were soon implanted in peninsula Malaya from the earliest migrations. Each plantation had at least one temple of a relatively simple structure. District towns and the large capital cities had more than one temple each, much more elaborately built and adorned. There were also a number of wayside shrines reflecting the practices of folk religion. With the migration of commercial and professional groups, Hindu institutions were given stronger support and became firmly entrenched in the country. In the urban areas, the large commercial and white-collar employed groups financed the construction of temples. Particularly noteworthy is the activity of the Chettiyar business community in the construction and maintenance of temples.

South Indian saivism is the most common form of Hinduism that is practised. A large majority of the temples are dedicated to deities of the saivite pantheon. Besides Sivan temples, a number of temples are dedicated to his consort, Parvati, most commonly in the form of Mariamman. Almost all estates would have Mariamman temples. Another popular deity is Murukan or Subrahmanya, for whom there are a number of temples in cities and the countryside. There are also temples dedicated to Ganesh or Pillaiyar, who is favoured by the Tamils from Ceylon. There are a few Vishnu temples, also under the name of Rama. The village deities of South India are worshipped in estate shrines by labourers who are migrants from these villages. The deities thus found in estates are Muniandy, Muniappen, Aiyanar, Vairavar and Madasamy. These deities are looked upon as the guardians of the estate community in the same manner as a village deity is believed to have jurisdiction over the affairs of the village in Tamil Nadu.

The larger *agamic* temples have Brahmantic rituals performed in them by Brahmin specialists. A number of others are served by non-Brahmin *pusaris* and *pandarams*. This is the case with all estate temples. In these latter temples and shrines, the practice is a duplication of Dravidian folk religion. Blood sacrifice was a part of the ritual but is now being phased out. *Kavadi-bearing* is a recognised form of penance as is also fire-walking. In all temples annual festivals are carried out with great enthusiasm. One of the most popular festivals is *Thai Pusam* which is celebrated over a three day period throughout the country. The celebrations in the capital city of Kuala Lumpur are particularly grand, the centre of pilgrimage being the shrine deep within a mountain cave called Batu Malai. It is reminiscent of mountain shrines in Murukan in Tamil Nadu. Almost all other major festivals of the Hindu calendar are observed - Thai Pongal, Maha Sivarathri, Panguni Uttiram, Chithirai Paruvam, Vaikasi Visakam, Sri Krishna Jayanthi, Vinayaka Chathurthi, Navarathri, Kantha Shashti, Kartikai Deepam with varying degrees of intensity. Deepavali is celebrated largely as a domestic and secular festival. Telugus celebrate the Telugu New Year and Malayalees organise elaborate celebration of Onam.

Brahmanic Hinduism is thus seen to exist side-by-side with Dravidian and folk Hinduism. Sanskritic and Brahmanic Hinduism tends to bring all Indians together irrespective of linguistic differences. Folk Hinduism is very regional and local and reflects the ethos and beliefs of isolated local communities. Spirit cults, divine healings, inspired media are features of this worship. In the Brahmanical temples, there is encouragement of the use of Tamil scriptural texts. Tamil devotional literature is widely used in religious discourses and the dissemination of religious ideas.

Dravidian culture has been implanted in Malaysian soil by generations of migrants speaking Dravidian languages and coming from the Dravidian country of south India. This process of migration has resulted in a settled population speaking the Dravidian languages of Tamil, Telugu and Malayalam. These peoples have taken with them Dravidian social institutions and social structure which they still retain, though in modified forms. Dravidian literary culture and art forms, both of the classical and the popular variety prevail among them. So also do Dravidian religious practices, both of the Brahmantic scriptural variety and the folk tradition of the south Indian village. All these features make Dravidian culture a living phenomenon in Malaysia today.

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