

**THE HISTORY  
OF  
THE TAMILS  
AND THE  
SINHALESE  
OF  
SRI LANKA**



**By G. K. Rajasuriar**

*This book is dedicated to the  
memory of those who have  
sacrificed their lives in  
the name of FREEDOM.*

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## ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Christy Rajasuriar hails from Manipay, a regional town in the district of Jaffna, where his ancestral family lived for generations as the land-owning elite. He had his initial education at De Mazenod College, Kandana, St. Anthony's College, Wattala and Hartley College, Point Pedro. There he mixed brawn and brain admirably and was awarded the College Colours for athletics.

He joined the Customs Department of Sri Lanka in 1951 as a Customs Officer and rose up to the rank of an Assistant Collector of Customs in charge of the Marine Division which was mainly responsible in almost wiping out the activities of the coastal smugglers. His first book *Smugglers' World* published in the year 1991, gives an account of his 'modus-operandi' in stemming the activities of the smugglers.

In 1979 he was appointed Justice of the Peace for the district of Colombo, in recognition of his services to the Customs Department.

Due to the unsettled state of the country, he migrated to Australia in the year 1988, and his flair for social welfare kept him busy with his contribution to the welfare of the Tamils and the Tamil Senior Citizens Fellowship Inc. of Victoria, where he was president in the year 1996.

As a student of history he devoted his leisure time in Australia to delve into the history and the influence of the Dravidian and Aryan races in Sri Lanka and the present volume is a result of his dedication to a race to which he belongs.

## PREFACE

In the wake of writing my memoirs, "Smugglers' World", I was inclined to venture in 'digging the past', of the Tamils and the Sinhalese of Sri Lanka, and unfold to the reader the trail of their glorious past.

In these pages are enshrined sketches of history compiled from numerous historians who have been recognised in their field, to which nomenclature I do not wish to be classified, for the edification of those to whom history is sacred.

The emblem of the 'Tiger', which had been the standard of the Dravidians 3500 years ago of Mohenjo Daro; of the Cholas and now of the Tamil struggle for freedom is given prominence.

I believe that in the not too distant future, the indomitable spirit of the Tamils to live with dignity in their own homeland of Eelam, would be a reality.

My thanks are due to Emeritus Professor C. J. Eliezer for his foreword, Mrs. Rane Eliezer and to my friend Mr. Kumar Martyn for his foreword and for their valuable contributions.

My thanks are also due to my daughter Rebecca for the artwork on the front cover; to my friends Dr. Rajagopal Rajaratnam and Mr. and Mrs. K. Ganashemoorthy for presenting me with rare books; Miss Shereen Reginald in typing my script and drawing the maps; to the Staff of Saraswathie Mahal Library, Thanjaur, Tamil Nadu and my brother Dr. D. K. S. Rajasooriar in obtaining photographs of the Mausoleum and Plaque of the last King of Lanka from Vellore, South India. Last but not least to Dr. Theodore Brito Babapulle for editing my script and to my wife for her encouragement without which this book would not have seen the light of day.

27th March, 1998  
Australia

G. K. Rajasuriar



# FOREWORD I

by

*Emeritus Professor C. J. Eliezer, AM (Australia)  
Maamanithar (Tamil Eelam)*

It has been well said that a community which has forgotten its origins and its history is like a man who has lost his eyesight. This book will help many, and especially those of us born in South India or Sri Lanka, whether we are Tamil or Sinhalese, Telugu, Kannada or Malayalam, to have some insight into our early history and heritage.

Most historical works are a blend of fact and fiction. The author has critically analysed certain parts of standard accounts of history, and has identified the parts which are probably fictional.

The book surveys the intimate connection that has prevailed between South India and Sri Lanka for something like 3000 years. For example the Dravidians, along with the Yakkas, Nagas and Veddhas, have contributed in large measure to the Sinhalese origins.

A variety of interesting themes have been selected for detailed treatment. I found the following specially interesting to me: The Indus Valley Civilisation and its influence in the region and on the world, the aborigines of India and Sri Lanka, the advent of Vijaya, the Pali Chronicles, the Culavamsa, Mahavamsa and others, the Kings of Jaffna, the decline of the Kingdom of Jaffna, the Rise and Fall of the Tamil Kingdom of Kandy (1687-1815) and the Tamil connection in Sinhalese Royalty.

The book concludes with an account of the last 50 years in Sri Lanka which are described under the heading "From Independence to Chaos".

I commend this book to all prospective readers.

## FOREWORD II

“Historical objectivity”, wrote Edward Schillebeeckx, “is not a reconstruction of the past in its unrepeatable factuality, it is the truth of the past in the light of the present”. Christy Rajasuriar has understood the profound thought very meaningfully and has revealed this understanding in his book *The History of the Tamils and the Sinhalese of Sri Lanka (Ceylon)*. He views history more clearly and distinctly from a modern perspective and one is able to see the past events with much clarity.

This is Christy’s second book and it is mind-boggling, at least to me, that while catching smugglers as a Customs Officer for most of his prime life he had the time and inclination to delve into history. Here is a perfect example of a dedicated and determined mind and Christy has wisely used the talents God has blessed him with. The research he appears to have done is monumental and we, the ignorant, are immensely benefitted by his efforts. One might agree or disagree with events of the past but one stands proud and tall to know that one belongs to a race that had its own unique civilisation and culture long before the invasion by and resultant influence of foreign races.

Christy’s book will, we can rest assured, fill the void that had left a race at the brink of despair and uncertainty and create a sense of pride and hope in the future.

Victoria

E. K. Martyn

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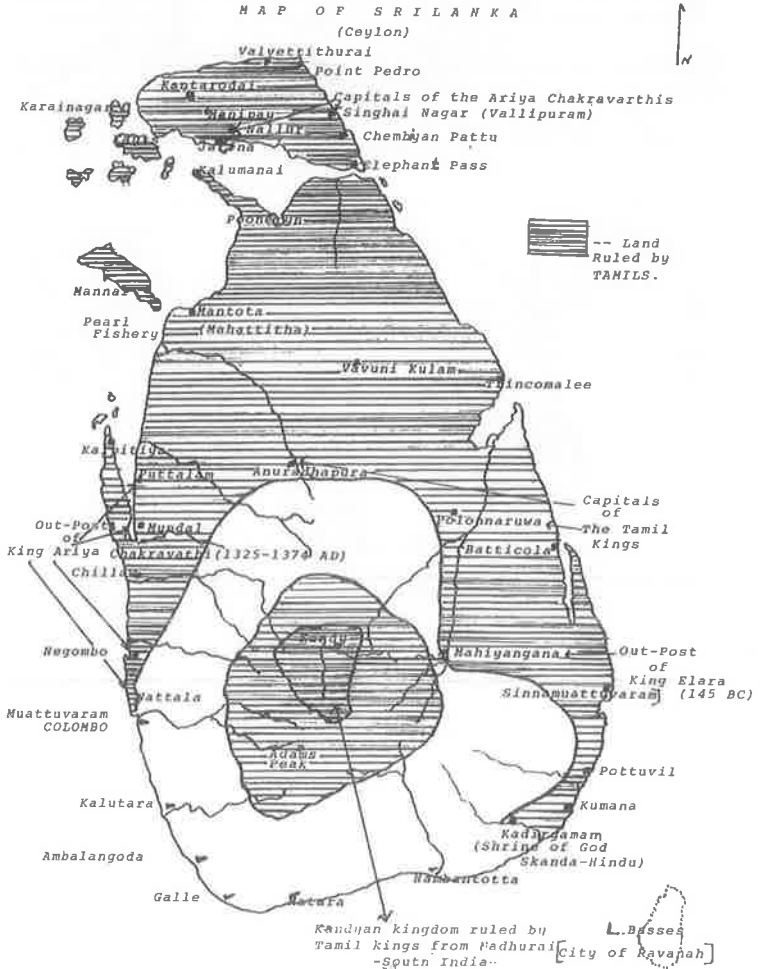
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*1798 AD to 1815 AD*



MAP of INDIA



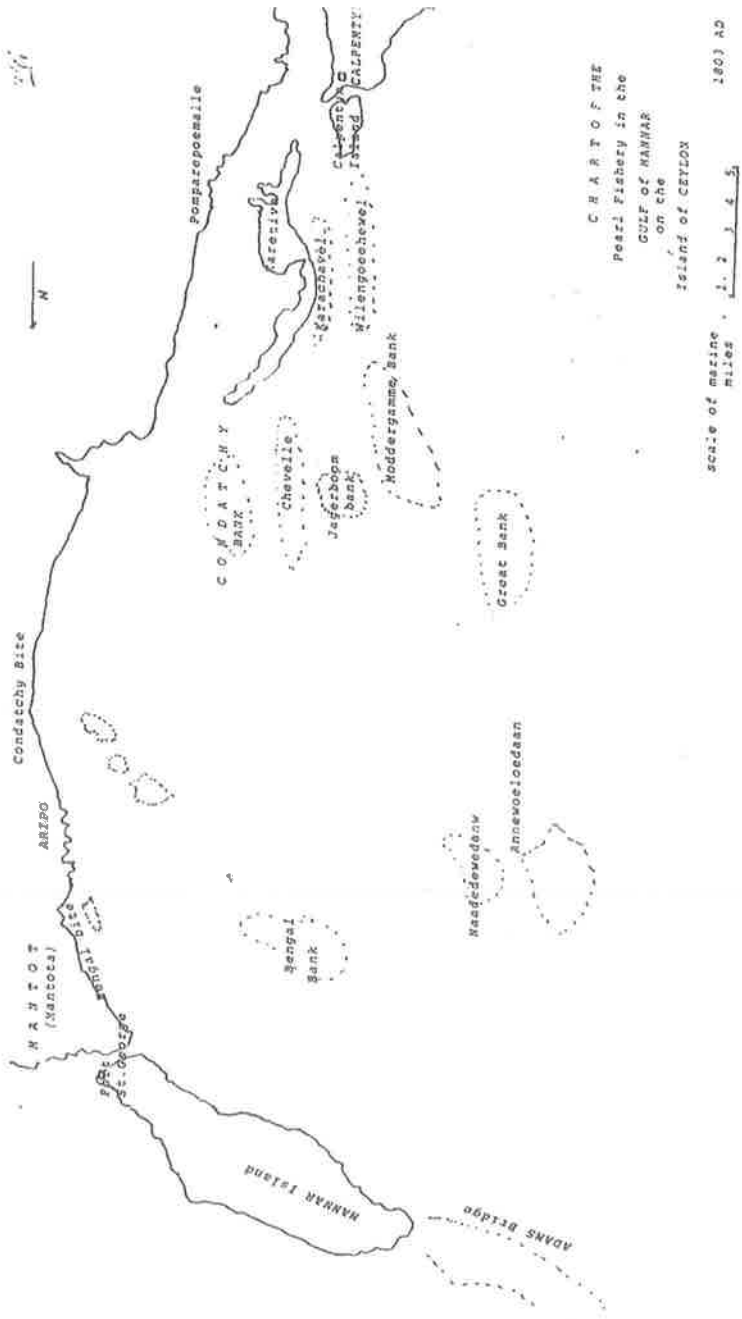


CHART OF THE  
Pearl Fishery in the  
GULF OF MANNAR  
on the  
Island of CEYLON

scale of marine miles 1 2 3 4 5  
1803 AD



## CHAPTER 1

# THE TAMILS

It is rather strange that the ancient and glorious history of India was resurrected and written by a foreign power which had one purpose in mind, to learn from the history of Vedic India and thereby enrich from the wisdom of the East. With the establishment of the East India Company in the 18th century, after the conquest of India by the British there were a host of learned men who devoted their entire life delving into the history of India, which was complex due to the fact that many a nation had tread its soil by the west, east and by the sea and had left their indelible mark which had been buried in the vast region of the country we call India, in the sands of time.

The archaeological find in Harappa and Mohenjo Daro in the Indus valley, of present day Pakistan, has drawn the Curtain of darkness of the history of India, with the revelation of its age, its people and the culture that was in vogue 3000 to 4000 years ago. E. Royston Pike in his book *Ancient India* concludes: *'At a time when in these islands of ours ancient Britons dressed in skins of animals, dyed their bodies blue with the juice of the woad plant, and lived in shacks and holes in the ground, in India there were cities filled with busy folk, brave knights and fair ladies, artists and craftsmen of superb skill and invention, and deep thinkers in philosophy and religion. All this, when our ancestors were not much better than savages.*

*There is no doubt about it. The only thing we cannot be sure about is the date. Three thousand years ago at the least, four thousand years a distant possibility. The more we search and find out about ancient India, the more the date of it's civilisation is pushed further and further back into the remotely distant past.*

*And yet until the other day, as it were, it was never believed that this had happened! Historians used to maintain that civilisation in India was very much younger than the civilisation of Mesopotamia and Egypt; the first civilised men in India, they said were wandering tribes of the great Aryan family, and they opened their histories with a very picturesque chapter describing these Aryans pushing their way through the Himalayan passes with their ox-wagons and establishing themselves in the great northern plain. This was supposed to have been about 1500 B.C.*

*But no one would start with the Aryans today. The historians have been shown to be wrong by evidence that was there all the time right under their feet! It is now quite clear, beyond the shadow of a doubt, that*

*the Aryans were not the first civilised men in India. When they arrived in the land, they found already established there a people compared with them who were barbarians. These people had been there a very long time'.*

Historians admit that the way the ancient civilisation of India was discovered is one of the romances of Archaeology. The story is told in the middle of the last century when a British engineer was constructing the railway between Multan to Lahore of the accidental find of pretty little objects from mounds of rubble. This find led to the find of the century. During this time there happened to be visiting a young British army officer Alexander Cunningham who found the pretty little objects fascinating. Later on he became Sir Alexander and a General and the first Indian Archaeological Surveyor. Under him a whole new civilisation came into being. As Royston Pike aptly put it, '*. . . a new civilisation came to light, 'new' in the sense that after it had been buried and forgotten for thousands of years its resurrection came as revelation. Every history book was made out of date. India's history had not begun with the Aryans*

Sir Mortimer Wheeler, in his book *The Indus Civilisation* has this to say. '*. . . the most remarkable of the authenticated Indus figurines, the dancing girl from Mohenjo Daro 5.51 inches high found in a house 6 feet 4 inches below the surface. The right hand rests on the hip; the left arm, covered almost entirely with bangles, hangs loosely, and the posture of the legs is easy. The head provocatively tilted, is a skilful impressionist rendering of a prognathic 'aboriginal' type, with large eyes, flat nose and bunched curly hair; whether it has been suspected, a Baluch native or whether the derivation is rather from South India, with which the Indus civilisation was certainly in contact, is disputable . . . another seal from Mohenjo Daro also shows a man (or God) attacking a buffalo with a barbed spear, a scene which recalls the attack on Dundubhi by Siva and other Gods with a trident. But no doubt arises as to the divinity of a remarkable figure on three seals from the same site. The figure is represented as seated either on the ground or on a low stool. In two instances the head is three-faced and all it bears is a horned head-dress with a vertical central figure. The arms are laden with bangles from wrist to shoulder, after the fashion of the left arm of the dancing girl and there is a girdle or waist cloth. A seal from Mohenjo Daro shows that the tiger was considered to be the emblem of a goddess. A goddess is seen on the horns of a goat with the body, hind legs and the tail of a tiger. According to Dr. Mackay in early times the tiger goddess was looked upon as a consort of the deity Siva. A tiger also appears on two seals with the horns of a bull and it is possible that the bull was regarded as the vehicle of Siva.'* ( AI.p64). '*On one of the seals, the figure is flanked on its right by an elephant and a Tiger and on its left by a rhinoceros and a buffalo, whilst below the stool are two antelopes or goats. Marshall recognises in the figure a prototype of Siva in his aspect as Pasupathi,*

Lord of the beasts . . . two other crude figure-settings may be added, both from Harappa, one shows on one side a central squatting 'Siva' with a blurred group of animals on his left and the motif, already described, of a tree above a Tiger on his right; on the other side a bull and a standing figure in front of a wooden structure . . . no uncertainty at least attaches to the divinity of the seated 'Siva' of the seals a figure which, even in these small scale representations, is replete with the brooding, minatory power of the great god of historic India. Here, if anywhere may be recognised one of the pre-Aryan elements which were to survive the Aryan invasions and to play a dominant role in the so called Aryan culture of the post-Vedic period. Another such element was phallus-worship, a non-Aryan tradition which appears to have been obtained amongst the Harappans if certain polished stones, mostly small but up to 2 feet or more in height have been correctly identified with the lingam and other pierced stones with the yoni. The likelihood that both Siva and Linga-worship have been inherited by the Hindus from the Harappans is perhaps reinforced by the prevalence of the bull-like vehicle of Siva or the bull-like animals amongst the seal-symbols . . . and the universal use of 'tanks' in modern Indian ritual, and the practice of bathing before principal meals, may well derive ultimately from usage of the pre-Aryan era as represented in the Indus civilisation . . .'

In the wake of the Englishmen, Dutch, Portuguese etc., who were primarily interested in trade, came the Christian missionaries who saw India as a rich ground to sow the seed of Christianity. To them Hinduism was, 'at best the work of human folly and at worst the outcome of a diabolic inspiration'. (AI, p.1). In view of Charles Grant, 'the people of India lived in a degenerate condition because Hinduism was the source of dishonesty, perjury, selfishness, social divisions, sexual vices etc. They saw through their religious convictions that the people of India had no future except through Christianity'. ( AI, p.1).

Historians divide India into four different entities viz, the northern mountains with their western and eastern ranges and their slopes encompassing Kashmir, Kumaon, Sikkim and Bhutan; the Northern plains irrigated by the Indus and Ganges; the plateau of Central India and the Deccan and the long and narrow strip of plains of the Eastern and Western Ghats. They comprise of the rich land between the Malabar and Coromandel coasts right down to Cape Comarin, (Kannier Kumari) and particularly land irrigated by the life giving waters of the Cauvery, which had been sung by many a bard; and comprising the land of Tamilakam.

Tamilakam or land of the South was insulated from the political upheavals of the North and it is seen from history that a conqueror had to face the natural barriers of hills, rivers and forests to get to the South. The invaders who were Nomads, poured into India through the Eastern and Western passes as invasions by sea was foreign to them. Even if they got through, it took them a long

period of time. Although North India came under the sway of the Aryans, South India continued to be the centre of Dravidian culture. It was Agastya Rishi who took the Aryan culture to the South in the first half of the first century. The South was the repository of the Hindu religion when it was threatened by Buddhism in the North and a place of refuge to the Jains when they were virtually driven out by the North, and a safe haven when the Muslims invaded North India.

It was the South Indian who helped in the growth of oceanic trade commencing around the 9th century B.C., where the treasures of the South enriched the kingdom of King Solomon, and the South Indian rulers like the Cholas led expeditions to the North to extend their political influence and military power. Their feats of maritime expansion to the Far East have been extolled by many a historian where battles were won on board boats so much so the bay of Bengal was considered as a Chola lake and playground. It is an accepted fact that there would not have been a greater India if not for the rulers of the South. For them maritime expansion was purely for trade and to obtain tributes. The Tamil bard put it more effectively when he said, '*Thirai kadal odium thiraiviam therdu*' (ride the high seas in quest of treasures).

History they say is the story of the past. It is a story of the rise and fall of royal kingdoms and dynasties consequent to the slaughter of a multitude of people on the field of battle or the wipe-out of a people by flood or other acts of nature, either in the name of jingoism or Providence. It is a doleful episode of the displacement on the map of the world of a large mass of humanity, some eager to plunder the wealth accumulated by the patient toil of peaceful people, the story of rape of maidens and the shedding of innocent blood in revenge. History also unfolds the gradual evolution of the social and religious life of a people by geographical conditions and the inherent influence of contact with peoples of different cultures, the way they ate, drank, played and loved, sang, danced, paid homage to their Kings, worshipped their Gods, built inspiring temples to their glory and the praise of their life giving rivers. This then reflects the history of the Tamils.

The word Dravida may connote a Tamil, but it has a deep-seated origin and meaning. Sanskrit pandits 'conception of the word 'Dravida' primarily refers to that part of the country in Southern India which we call Tamil Nadu. This land extends East and West from sea to sea, and North and South from the Thirupathi hills to Cape-Comorin, and to have included the modern states of Travancore and Cochin and the districts of Malabar. This refers to the country where Tamil language is spoken, an inhabitant of the country and a class of Brahmanical tribe. The Tamil speaking non-brahmins have always called themselves Tamilar but never

Dravidas. The Tamil Brahamins called themselves the 'great men' and are even now known to the other Brahamins of India as Dravidas. Dr. Caldwell gave it a further extension of the meaning of the word Dravida being that they were allied languages of the non-Aryan group of people. He called these languages of South India Dravidian and the people speaking them Dravidians. Sanskrit pundits think that Dravida is a corruption of a sanskritised form of Tamil. The origin of the word Tamil derives from the root TAMI (lonely) and believes that Tamil means the 'peerless' language or better known as the 'sweet' language. However, it may be observed that this word is used in early Tamil works to denote the language, the people and their country. To Tamils that part of 'Tamilakam' and the abode of the Tamils was that part of the Indian peninsula which the Indo-Aryans called Dravidia. Tolkapyar a Tamil grammarian of 4th century B.C., Ilangoadigal the royal ascetic and reputed author of the Silappadikaram put the Tamil land from Venkatam to Kannier Kumari in the South. The Tamil land seemed to have extended from east to west from Thirupathi hills in the north to Cape-Comorin in the South, which includes the states of Travancore and Cochin. The Tamils in the West coast who were cut off from main stream Tamil land and who were under the control of the Brahamins, eventually developed a dialect of their own called a patois of *Kodum-Tamil* and Prakritic Sanskrit, which is known as Malayalam since the 13th century. This loss of the western strip was compensated for by new districts by the colonisation by the Tamils of the Northern portion of Sri Lanka, Burma, Sumatra, Malaysia and Java. The Tamil land consisted of three types of people namely, the Dravidian Tamils, the Aryan Brahamins and the aboriginal Nagar tribes. The different modes of disposing of the dead prevalent amongst the Tamils of ancient times, namely of cremation, interment and exposure, could not have been practiced by one and the same race (TTC).

There are many theories about the original home of the Dravidians put forward by anthropologists. The Dravidian race, says Dr. Grievson *'is commonly considered to be the aborigines of India or at least of Southern India and we have no information to show that they are not the aboriginal inhabitants of the South'*. Sir Herbert Risely states, *'Taking them as we find them now it may be safely said that their present geographical distribution, the marked uniformity of physical characters among the more positive members of the group, the animistic religion, their distinctive languages, their stone monuments and retention of a primitive system of totemism justify us in regarding them inhabitants of India of whom we have any knowledge'*. Professor Huxley includes them in the smooth-haired division with the North African and South Europeans, assuming Australia as the land of their origin.

*There are others like Dr. Keane who think that the 'Dravidians preceded the Aryan speaking Hindus and that they were not true aborigines of the Deccan and they themselves being preceded by a dark peoples, perhaps by a Negrito type' (TTC). R. Sewell, says that 'at some very remote period the aborigines of Southern India were overcome by hordes of Dravidian invaders and driven to the mountains and desert tracts where their descendents are to be found'.*

If the Dravidians are not the aborigines, then what was their original home and by what route did they come to South India? According to one theory, they were the first Aryan settlers. Another places them in the submerged continent in the Indian ocean, from where they had migrated into India from the South. According to some they were originally from Central Asia and had entered India, (a) by the North-Eastern route through Assam and Burma or (b) by the North-Western gates. Yet there are others who place them from Western-Asia either through the mountain passes or direct by sea. The Aryan concept was never advocated by ethnologists, as Tamils themselves called the Aryans as foreigners. The Lumerian theory is that the Dravidians original home was the submerged continent of Lumeria somewhere in the Indian Ocean. This continent is alleged to have extended from Madagascar to the Malay Archipelago, connecting Southern India with Africa and Australia. Hence, they would have entered before the submergence of this continent. The use of the boomerang by the Kahlans of South India are found nowhere else except among the Aborigines of Australia. Tamil literature of the 4th century A.D., the Silappadikaram has it that the cruel sea swallowed up the Pahruli river and the Kumari peak with the chain of mountains. W. Hunter in his account of the non-Aryan races says, *'there are two branches of the Dravidians the Kolarians and the Dravidian people. The former entered India by the North-east and occupied the Northern portion of the Vindhya table land. There they were conquered and split into fragments by the main body of Dravidians who found their way through into the Punjab through the North-western passes and pressed forward towards the South of India. There is a theory that a large number of emigrants from Western Asia came into the country either by a direct sea route or by land through the Western mountain passes and became superimposed on the aboriginal stock probably of Lumerian origin, before any Aryan influence in Southern India. Dr. Caldwell thinks that the 'Dravidian languages may be affiliated morphologically to the Finno-Tartanic family of tongues. To the same family belonged the Accadian, a fully developed language spoken by a highly civilised Turanian race that lived in Assiriya, Chaldea, Sumeria and Media. He draws the resemblance in grammar and vocabulary between the Accadian and Dravidian languages'* and concludes *'that*

*the Dravidian race though resident in India from a period long prior to the commencement of the Christian era, originated in Central tracts of Asia and that from thence, after parting company with the Aryans and Turanians and leaving behind a colony in Baluchistan, entered India by way of the Indus' . (TTC).*

It is my contention that God destroyed the then known world, about 5017 B.C., according to old testament scriptures when it rained for forty days and forty nights and the only survivors being Noah, his sons and his wife, and his sons' wives who were safe in a Ark. According to Biblical records every one in the then known world perished except for the family of Noah. It is stated that the waters covered the world for 150 days when finally the waters abated and the Ark rested on Mount Ararat. Noah had three sons, Shem, Ham and Japheth. At that time the world knew only one language and a common speech. They moved eastward and found a plain in Shinar and settled there. (Gen. 11:1-2; NIV Bible). There they commenced to build a city with a tower that reached to the heavens. This tower is a typical Mesopotamian temple-tower, known as ziggurat. It was square at the base and had sloping stepped sides and led upwards to a small shrine at the top. They were meant to serve as a staircase from earth to heaven. It is stated that God confused their language so that they would not understand each other. Hence God scattered them all over the earth and they stopped building the city. That is why it is called the tower of Babel. The word Babel is of Accadian origin and means, 'gate-way to God'. A descendent of Shem and his followers pushed eastwards from Meshar toward Sephar, in the eastern hills. Through the passage of centuries, descendants of Shem migrated to the Indus valley about 3000 B.C., through the western hills and settled down in the Indus valley regions, of Harappa & Mohenjo Daro. About 1700 B.C., due to natural disasters they migrated down to South India as the Dravidians of today. Abraham was one of the descendants of Shem and he was born in 2166 B.C., in Ur of the Chaldees and migrated to Canaan, in 2091 B.C. Abraham, Shem's descendant, was born 2859 years after the flood waters. (Gen: 11:10-26). Hence the number of years from the birth of Abraham to the floods, during Shem's time, would be approximately 5017 years.

From the great number of phallic stones discovered at Indus sites and the popularity of the bull as a device on the seals we may postulate that Siva was worshipped in several of his subsequent forms. In latter years, 'Nandhi', Siva's mount would be seen patiently waiting, legs tucked underneath it's body, at the entrance to every Hindu Shaivite temple. In its sanctum sanctorum stands the icon that represents Siva himself, a polished stone phallus, Siva's dual role of yogic fertility, deity and destroyer.

Indus civilisation extend over half a million square miles of Punjab and Sind, from the border lands of Baluchistan to the desert waste of Rajasthan, from the Himalayan foothills to Gujarat, probing the limits of it's ecosystem during its period of survival. Recent find in the Harappan outposts along the Makran coast, including that of the Sutkagen Dor near the border of Iran, clearly attest to the brisk and continuous trade with Sumer, especially during the reign of Sargon of Akkard. (2334-2279 B.C.). As a result of Indus seals found in the Sumerian dig at Ur, we know that merchants from Harappa and Mohenjo Daro were trading with their Sumerian counterparts. The huge granaries found beside the river at Harappa seems to indicate that Indus merchants exported their excess grain to Sumeria. It would appear that the worship of the 'Bull' is a relic of the Shemites, the descendants of Shem. The long history from Abraham to Moses is punctuated by the worship of the 'golden calf' in the wilderness on their journey to the promised land. *For they set up images and groves on every hill and under every green wood tree and burnt incense in all the high places, as did the heathen.* (2 Kings:17:10). *It is stated that, 'At Horeb they made a calf and worshipped an idol cast from metal. They exchanged their glory for an image of a bull which eats grass'.* (Psalm 106: 19-20 NIV,B). A striking resemblance is seen in the following, to those worn by South Indian women-folk even to this day. *'In that day the Lord will take away the bravery of their tinkling ornaments about their feet and their cauls and round tyres like the moon, the chains and bracelets and mufflers, the bonnets and ornaments of the legs and headbands and tablets and earrings, the rings on the nose-jewels.'* (Isiah 3:18-21). These are the forms of worship and the ornaments which they jealously carried wherever the descendants of the sons of Noah traversed, whether be it to the Indus valley or to Egypt or their long trek to the promised land.



## CHAPTER 2

## THE NAGAS

The tales brought into Macedonia by the companions of Alexander the Great from the home of the Land of the Five Rivers, were about the multitude of the tribe of reptiles which inhabit the land, so much so, when the houses are flooded by the swelling of the rivers, there is such an influx of reptiles, big and small, which invade homes that people had their beds secured high above flood level to escape the multitude of reptiles which they had to fear, their fatal bite more than their slithering and crawly bodies or the devastating flood waters. The fear of the serpent led to the veneration of the serpent. According to James Ferguson in his book, 'Tree and serpent worship', he states that '*the Nagas were not originally serpents but serpent worshippers — an aboriginal race of Turanian stock inhabiting Northern India, who were conquered by the Aryans*'. He declares that, 'Neither the Aryans nor the Dravidians were serpent-worshippers.' He further states, '*Any traces of serpent-worship that may be found in the Vedas or earlier writings of the Aryans must be interpolations of a later date or concessions to the superstitions of the subject race*'. Buddhism, which replaced serpent-worship, he qualifies, 'little more than a revival of the coarser superstitions of the aboriginal races'. It is the Cobra which under the name of the NAGA, was worshipped in large parts of India. According to the chronicle 'Mahavamsa' (chapter 12:9), Naga King Aravala wreaked havoc on crops by his miraculous power of hail-storm in Gandhara (Peshwar and Rawl Pindi) and in Kasmiri — modern Kashmir. The Naga in Indian mythology and folklore is not really the snake in general, but the cobra glorified to the rank of a divine being. It was a five-headed cobra which sheltered the Buddha against the inclemency of the weather by spreading its hood over his head. It is stated that the peculiar spectacle marks on its hood according to Buddhist legend is a favour which the Buddha bestowed on the cobra that had sheltered him against the heat of the sun, (IS). Ferguson states that, '*the Indian snake worship was not an Aryan concept but that it was adopted by the Aryans from the Dasyus, the dark-skinned aborigines of the Peninsula*'. This fact has additional support in the fact that the 'Rig-Veda' (collection of poems of the Aryans), the earlier of the four Vedas, has no reference to snake-worship. In the 'Yajur-Veda' and especially in the 'Athra-Veda' serpent-worship is referred to. The same is true of the late Vedic

literature. The mystic snake-kings had personal names which are not Dravidian but purely Aryan. The very word 'Naga' by which the serpent demons are generally designated is supposed to be related to the English word 'snake', and consequently is Indo-Germanic in its origin. If we are to explain serpent-worship, we must start from the animal itself, which among primitive people is regarded as a demonic being endowed with magical powers. The serpent is different to all other animals owing to it's peculiar shape and swift mobility without legs or wings. Above all its deadly poison is dreaded. (IS).

The Mahavamsa (Geiger's ch. 1 verse 45-70), speaks about the impending war between the Naga Mahodara and Culodara, uncle and nephew, when the Buddha came to Nagadipa (north-west Sri Lanka) and settled the battle which was to be fought in Kalyani, present Kelaniya, in the heart of Colombo, about the 5th century B.C. The Mahavamsa claims that the Naga King Mahodara was gifted with miraculous powers and was living in a kingdom in the ocean, that covered half a thousand yoganas. (MV).

It would be seen that certain parts of Northern and Southern India and North West of Sri Lanka had primitive aborigines worshipping the serpent and hence referred to as the 'Nagas'. The close proximity of South India, present Tamil Nadu to the North of Sri Lanka, would have facilitated these Nagas to cross over and intermingle, as there was only a narrow strip of water fordable by both people of South India and Sri Lanka. Hence, H. Parker in his book *Ancient Ceylon*, states, 'that the Nagas who occupied North Sri Lanka long before the arrival of the Gangetic settlers were actual South Indian immigrants and were an off-shoot of the Nagas of South Western India'. According to C. F. Oldhm's book *The sun and the serpent* states, 'Naga chiefs were frequently mentioned as ruling countries in or under the sea. Thus Yadu the son of Hariaswa, who was the son of Ikshvaka, was carried off by the Naga raja Dhamarvarna whose kingdom was beneath the sea. This kingdom was called Ratna-dwipa (the land of gems) and the people there had ships and traded and fished for pearls. Yadu married the five daughters of the Naga King, and Harita, one of his sons succeeded his grandfather in this island kingdom which was perhaps Sri Lanka'. (SS).

The serpent is mentioned in old testament scriptures (Gen. 3:1), in the garden of Eden, where it is portayed as a evil being who beguiled Eve to eat the fruit of the forbidden tree of good and evil and thereby man sinned. As a result of this, God cursed the serpent, "Because you have done this, cursed are you above all cattle and above all wild animals; upon your belly you shall go and dust you shall eat all the days of your life. I will put enmity between you and the women and between your seed and her seed; he shall bruise your head and you shall bruise his heel". The serpent comes up in scriptures

when Moses (1550 B.C.), was tending the flock of his father-in-law in the Mount of Horeb, when God turned the staff of Moses into a serpent. This was to convince Pharaoh of Egypt among other things, to let the Israelites go from bondage to the promised land of Canaan. Although Moses turned his staff into a snake, so did the magicians of Pharaoh, but the serpent of Moses swallowed all the serpents of the magicians. When Moses led the people into the wilderness the people murmured against God for bringing them out of Egypt without food to die in the wilderness. It is recorded that God sent serpents among them and they bit the people so that many died. Moses appealed to God and as the people repented of their sins, Moses was told to make a 'Bronze Serpent' and set it on a pole and if a serpent bit anyone he would look at the bronze serpent and live. (Num: 21:9). It would be seen that the serpent had played a prominent role in the lives of the people of Israel, so much so that they worshipped the serpent during the reign of Hezekiah, about 715 B.C. Old Testament tradition traces the origin of the Jewish people to 12 tribes, from the 12 sons of Joseph. When King Solomon died in 970 B.C., the tribes split up into two kingdoms. The tribes of Judah and Benjamin formed the southern kingdoms and the remaining 10 tribes constituted the 10 northern kingdoms of Israel. When Sargon II (721 B.C.), ruled Assiriya, Israel was taken captive and the ten tribes disappeared from the stage of history. Is it far-fetched to presume that a section of the 10 tribes sailed from Phoenecia (North Western Israel), and settled in Tamilaham utilising the intimacy achieved by the already existing trade links with the land of the Tamils.

In 874 BC, Ahab King of Israel took as wife Jezebel the daughter of Ethbaal, King of the Sidonians. Ahab under the influence of Jezebel, set up an altar for Baal and worshipped it in the temple. Baal, a Phoenician and Hebrew word meaning Lord, was the Phoenician weather god. It is stated that many cruel and immoral rites were practiced in the worship of Baal. Prostitutes were attached to the temples and were dedicated to Baal worship and that of the fertility Goddess Astarte or Ishtar. A sacred pole called Asherah symbolic of the male sexual organ was found in Canaanite and Phoenician temples. (Digging-up the Future with David Brown Adventist Centre, Sydney).

It is apparent from the above, that there is a familiar ring in the Tamil practice of having 'dance-girls' (*nautch-girls*), attached to their temples to entertain the worshippers and at the same time dance before the Hindu Gods as part of a ritual in the ceremony of temple worship. The practice of worshipping the sacred pole called Asherah by the Phoenicians and Canaanites coincides with the Tamil worship of the Phallus. It is very likely that the Phoenicians sailors who came to trade remained in Cochin, the land of the Seras, till the change of the tradewinds, had Baal worship in the Tamil country and the Tamils adopted the practice of introducing 'dance-girls' and the worship of the Phallus.

The Arabs who were hitherto contented in receiving such goods in ports in the Gulf, soon ventured out on direct sea routes to South India followed by the Greeks and Romans and entered into trade with the kingdoms of Sera, Chola and Pandya. The Greek names for rice (*Oryza*), ginger (*Zingiber*) and Cinnamon (*Karpion*) are phonetically the same with the Tamil names for '*ARISI*', '*INGHI*' and '*Karuwa*'. The Romans who soon cashed in find them as soldiers guarding the fortified forts of the Pandyan kingdom (*Yavanas*). They were also employed on board the merchant vessels of the Tamils against pirates. A Pandyan King, may have been Mudu-Kudumi-Peruvaluid who sent an embassy to Augustus Caesar. There were also Greek settlements in the Chola land of Kavariptatinam in the 2nd century A.D. According to the Silappadikaram, Roman soldiers were employed to guard the gates of the fort at Madura. They also had 1500 soldiers to protect the trade at Muchri (Kerala). Trade with the westerners took on an ugly turn, where we see them first as peaceful traders and subsequently owning the very source of supply of spices by territorial conquest. The greed for spices saw the loss of many lives in the field of battle.

During the reign of Emperor Augustus there was a great impetus in trade with South India. Rome's territorial expansion in Egypt saw the port of Alexandria as the world centre for trade

and commerce. It was the pride of the Roman Emperors to exhibit Indian Tigers at important festivals and the star attraction was a caged Tiger gorged with blood of victims. The Romans as well as King Solomon imported large quantities of Ivory which was put to numerous uses from trinkets like combs, brooches, pins, chairs to chariots. The import of ivory from India was cheaper than Africa. The killing of elephants in Africa was difficult as it was not easily accessible in dense forests. Elephants in India were easy to reach and further the ivory was of a higher quality. The costliest commodity that was imported by the Romans was pearls which were available in much profusion in the coasts washed by the Gulf of Mannar. Pearls fashionable with the ladies of Rome, so much so that St. Paul in his first epistle to Timothy (1 Tim. 2:9), bemoaned the wearing of pearls by women. Cotton and cotton muslin were exported from Uraiyur (Trichinapoly) to Rome and Palestine. During the time of Tiberius of Rome, the import of diaphanous textiles was prohibited as it was indecent. It is stated that Pearls and these textiles were a drain on gold to South India, due to the frivolous fancy of the ladies in Rome (HT).

The Silappadikaram has it that Romans were used to equip the walls of the Forts of the Tamil Kings with mechanical devices which propelled anything from fire, arrows, stones to molten liquids at any potential enemy. As these Yavanas were the military advisers to the Kings of Sera, Chola and Pandya, thereby earned the respect of both the royal household and the people that special quarters were constructed to house them.

The trade with the far East led to the commencement of emigration from India. Several centuries before the Christian era, a double stream of traders and adventurers began to flow into Indo-China from Northern and South India by land through Burma and Tibet and by sea founding new settlements in Malacca of Malaysia, Bali of Indonesia and Fu-Nan of Cambodia dating from the first century A.D. The Brahamana and Buddhist clergy carried on with their religious beliefs and the Tamils carried on with trade. The silk trade with Europe and China started via the coast of South India and ousted the Turks from the Gobi desert. Trade with Burma, Malaya, China and Indonesia increased. Pepper was the commodity which was in demand in China before Rome. Chinese junks sailed to the Malabar coast in 2nd century B.C., and perhaps earlier. It is also stated that apart from religion and trade, Indians exported martial arts to the Far East. In the 4th century A.D., a 'Sakier Muni' and his followers left India to Tibet and they had to encounter several bands of bandits before reaching Tibet. They were able to cross the mountains as they were adept in martial arts. It is also stated that martial arts taught to the Tibetans reached China in the form of 'Kung-Fu' as we find it

today. Some secrets of Kung-Fu found it's way into Okinawa in 1930 A.D., in the form of Jujutsu and subsequently Judo and their variations in Japan. The Chinese traders who peddled silks in Sri Lanka in the early 19th century taught the art, which is popularly

### MAP OF SOUTH INDIA TAMILNADU





*Chola Emperor Karikalan — statue on the banks of the river Cauvery, Tamil Nadu, South India.*

known as 'Cheena-Adi' or China-footing as it is known today.

#### CHAPTER 4

## THE CHOLAS

The kingdom of the Cholas, '*Chola Mandalam*', is steeped in antiquity. The Chola country comprised the land lying between two rivers of the same name Vellaru, in the north and south, the sea of Bengal in the east and on the west to the great fort embankment at Trichinopoly. The river Kaveri, the praises of which have been sung by poets and peasants alike, and it's branch "*Kollidam*" (Coleroon) winds it's way into the sea at Kaverippatinam on the east coast (Coromandel), leaving on it's bank profuse plantations of sugar-cane, plantain trees, groves of mangoes etc., giving sustenance to the people and a mode of transport into the interior of the country. The entire delta of the river holds paddy fields as far as the eye could see. Tanjore one of the capital cities of the Cholas, is irrigated by the river Kaveri. Even to this day, Tanjore is known as the 'rice bowl' of India. The vast extent of green fields feed millions of Indians as it fed the Chola country in the past. The town of Kaverippatinam is situated on the northern bank of the river proper, amidst several other branches of the river that flow into the sea.

Regarding the origin of the name 'Chola' or 'Colas' there is no knowledge whatever. It may be a name like Pandya or Sera or a clan or a ruling family of a much distant past. It may be the names of three brothers *Chola*, *Sera* and *Pandya* who carved out a kingdom in Tamilaham. Whatever their origin the name Chola was known to describe a people and the country they occupied. *The Cholas adopted the 'Tiger' as their crest and had it in their national flag [TC], [SI]*. The origins of this too is shrouded in antiquity. The Tiger emblem was carved on the main door of the Fort of the Cholas. The Tiger seal was also used on all import and export cargoes. Perhaps it is a coincidence that the peoples of Harappa and Mohenjo Daro (who lived 4000 years ago) of the Indus Valley, historically accepted as a Dravidian civilisation, had the 'Tiger' in their seals.

The earliest reference to the Cholas is found in the Mahabharata. They are referred too in the account of Megasthenes and Asokan inscriptions where it is mentioned in his edicts that the kingdoms of the South were on friendly terms with Asoka the Great. The Chronicles of Ceylon '*Mahavamsa*', '*Culavamsa*' and '*Rajavali*' refer



to the relations between the Cholas or Colas and the rulers of Ceylon. Ptolemy also refers to the Cholas. The Tamil Sangam literature refers to many Chola Kings who were models of justice. The Periplus gives information about the ports and inland towns of the Cholas.

The Pali Chronicle Mahavamsa contains an account of the early intercourse between the Chola country and Ceylon. In early Buddhist literature, reference has been made to 'Kolappatinam' as the best seaport town in the Coromandel coast. According to the Mahavamsa, Ceylon began to fall under powerful Chola influence early in its history. This Chronicle refers to 'Damila' in general and makes the distinction between Cholas and Pandyas in their references to events and the synchronisms furnished by it on the important sources of knowledge of Tamil history and chronology. The Mahavamsa has it that in about 2nd century B.C., a Damila of noble descent, Elara by name, overpowered King Asela who was ruling the island and ruled for 44 years, '*with even justice to friends and foe on occasions of dispute at law*'. (Mahavamsa 21:13 Geiger). The 'Dipawansa' also states that King Elara '*avoiding the four evil paths of lust, hatred, fear and ignorance*', this incomparable Monarch reigned righteously'. (Dipawansa — 50, p207 — Oldenberg). But the Rajavaliya a historical narrative of Sinhalese Kings (one of the Chronicles of the island of Ceylon) has it on page 25 by B. Gunsekera AES 1995, that '*... a Tamil King of Soli country whose name was Elara, came with a great army of Tamils and landed at the mouth of the river Mahaveli ... he kept 20 grand champions, and taking with him 1,000,000 armed Tamils, demolished the numerous dagobas built by Devanampiyatissa in the city of Anuradhapura, and reigned wickedly for the space of 44 years*'. King Elara, a Hindu and not a follower of Buddhism lived in friendly terms with the Buddhist clergy and the people. His rule was confined to the land north of the Mahaveliganga from Mahiyangana. (Mahavamsa 22:86 and 24:4).

The earliest references to Chola Kings have been made in the 'Sangam' literature. It is believed that this literature belongs to the first few centuries of the Christian era. From this literature we gather names of Kings and princes and those poets who extolled them. We also have an insight into the life of the people and how they lived. Two prominent names mentioned in the Sangam literature are Karikal and Kogeenganan, whose memory is cherished in song and legend for posterity.

The Sangam age unfolds legends of Chola Kings, who were looked upon as descended from the sun which led to long mythical genealogies incorporated in the Kanyakumari stone inscriptions of Virarajendra and in literary works like the '*Kalingattupparani*' and '*Vikramasolan Ula*'. The episode of Agastya the Rishi while in

devotion to King Kanton brought the river Kaveri into existence. Another legendary hero *Cembyian* who had destroyed some mysterious flying fortress of the Asuras. The story of the King who sentenced his son to death for killing a calf by rash driving of his chariot. These stories, although bearing some semblance in history, make their appearance in the twin epics of the '*Slippadikaram*' and the '*Manimekalai*' but not found in the Sangam literature.

King Karikala Chola of the Tiger flag was the greatest King of the Sangam age. Karikalan, means the man with the charred leg. He was deprived of his birthright and was confined to a prison by his adversaries. The manner by which he escaped from prison has been eulogised by many a poet. Subsequently, Karikalan with the garland of the 'atti' flowers (*Bauhinea racemosa*), and flying the Tiger flag, fought a great battle at Venni where the combined forces of the Sera and Pandya Kings suffered a crushing defeat. The Sera King who received a wound on his back in the battlefield, through shame committed suicide. The battle of Venni brought Karikalan into the limelight of Tamil politics and made him lord of the land of the Tamils. Many a battle did he fight and the poet Pattinappalai describes fully the destruction carried out by the forces of Karikalan into the territories of his enemies and awe-



*The river Cauvery — banks of which were built by P.O.W's from Lanka during the reign of Karikalan the Chola Emperor — 2 A.D.*

inspired by his deeds of valour. This poet gives a vivid description of the city of Kaveripumpatinam and its foreshore and the improvement that was made in the field of industry and commerce. He has been said to have promoted the reclamation of forest land and added to the prosperity of the country. His grandest peace-time project was the development of tanks and irrigation works. Karikalan erected a dam across the Kaveri river to conserve the river water for irrigation works. To achieve this he had to strengthen the river banks and it is stated that he obtained 12,000 men as prisoners-of-war from the island of Ceylon. The Chronicle Mahavamsa and Dipawansa are silent on this matter, while the Rajavaliya states that during the reign of King Vannasinambapa that, *'during his reign the King of Soli country landed on the island with an army of Tamils and carried away 12,000 prisoners'*. His son Gajabahu (171-193 A.D.), is alleged to have, *'taking the giant NILA with him he went and struck the sea with an iron mace, divided the waters in twain and going quietly to the Soli capital struck terror into King Soli, while Nila seized elephants in the city and killed them by striking one against another'*. This chronicle states how, *'Gajabahu threatened the soli King with his giant Nila and single-handed with no army to back him, forced the Soli to give him the 12,000 men and in addition 12,000 more men besides them, or else he would destroy this city and reduce it to ashes and saying so, he squeezed out water from sand and showed it; squeezed water from his iron mace and showed that'*.

This chronicle further adds that he intimidated King Choli and took 24,000 men to Lanka. *'He also took away the jewelled anklets of the goddess Pattini and the insignia of the Gods of the four devalas and also the bowl relic which had been carried off in the time of king Valagamba, and admonishing the King not to act thus in the future, departed'* (the Rajavaliya, incidentally was written in the 18th century A.D., in Sinhalese Prakrit) — page 47 to page 49 by B. Gunesekera. According to the chronicle Gajabahu caused the supernumerary captives to be located in the following districts viz., Colombo, Kandy, and Kurunegala. According to the Mahavamsa (ch.35:15 — Geiger's), Vankannakatissa was the father of Gajabahu, while the Rajavaliya makes one Vannasinambapa father of Gajabahu.

Another endeared King of the Cholas was Kopperujolan who ruled from Uraiyur. He was a poet and was an intimate friend of two poets viz., Andiyar and Pottiyar. The former was from Pandya country while the other from the Chola country. Andaiyar was asked why, though old, his hair had not turned grey. He replied (Puram) thus:

*My years are many, yet my locks not grey:  
You ask the reason why, it's simply this*

*I have a worthy wife and children too:  
My servants more obedient to my will;  
My King does me no evil, aye protects:  
To crown the whole, around me dwell good men  
And true, of chastened souls with knowledge filled.*

Andiyar's attachment to Kopperujolan was greater than that to his King of Pandya. There is another poem where he says:

*'If you ask us 'Who is your King'? Our King is he who  
To the labourers give strong palm wine strained and  
mellow,  
And with the fat of turtle satiates their desire,  
And fills their mouth with lampreys rich roast flesh.  
They leave short toil for feet; the feast prolong!  
In that good fertile land the minstrels with their kin  
Find our King a foe of want hunger's pangs.  
He is the lord of Koli, the mighty Cola King.  
He loves converse with Potti, whose friendship knows no  
flaw.*

*All the day long he laughs with heart right glad'.*

The civil war between the sons of Karikalan, Nalangili and his rival Nedungilli, which lasted till the death of Nedungilli at Kariyur was a war of rivalry in the Chola family who ruled from Puhar and Uraiyur. Nalangilli, like his father enjoyed a veiled beginning among the Tamil states as contained in Puram, . . . *'thy war steeds starting from the eastern sea stay not till the waves of the western ocean wash their hoofs in brine, the Kings of the north keep watch with sleepless eyes as they dread the possibility of thy marching against them'.*

There are many other Kings like Killivallavan, Prunarkilii and others who reigned in the wake of the might of Karikalan. The poets of the Sangam age, were drawn from men and women from all walks of life. They composed verses to suit the occasion and were rewarded by the King for their literary works. It is stated that the, *'author of the Kalingattuppavani tells us that Kadiyalur Rudrangaunar got for his Pattinappulai over a million gold pieces from Karikalan'.* There was no dearth of poets in the Sangam age.

*'The short poem, the long ode, the dramatic epic and the religious lyric were all known; and in the Kural of Thiruvalluvar we have a work that transcends the limitations of time and place'.* (HT).

During the Sangam age, the Cholas were considered to be Kings of the seas around them. They held the largest and extensive shipping lanes in the east, west coast and Malaya and Sumatra in the Far East. In the Ports of the Cholas, says the author of the Periplus, *'are ships of the country, coasting along the shores as far as Damrica and other very large vessels made of single logs bound together called Sangara (present day called catamaram), but those which make*

*the voyage to Chryse and to the Ganges are called Colandia are very large*'. Apparently they seemed to be anchored at Puhar the port of Kaverippattinam three varieties of ocean going vessels, small coasting vessels for coast wise trade, large vessels for greater capacity and lastly the big ocean going vessels that make voyages to Malaya, Sumatra and the Ganges. The larger vessels had mast-heads with flags. As we see that the Chola Kings, though eclipsed for a time, the power of the Cholas revived in the 10th and 11th centuries. The sea-faring qualities had not deserted them and a glorious and adventurous future was awaiting them in the post Sangam Age.

Agriculture, held the chief place in the Chola country among the industries. The fertility of the soil in the basin of the Kaveri and the unceasing flow of the river from the western hills gave an impetus to the farmer to indulge in agriculture. No wonder that Tanjore, a capital of the Cholas, is even today the 'rice bowl' of India.

Spinning and weaving of cotton had been kick-started by the Nagas of the Chola country. This achievement in the weaving industry was so advanced in Uraiyur. According to the Periplus, '*cotton cloth, thin-like the slough of the serpent bearing fine floral designs and so finely woven that the eye cannot follow the course of the yarn*'. There were foreigners also from Magadah, Avanti and Yavana carpenters working side by side with the Tamil counterparts. Trade was done on a barter basis although small copper coins were also used in their transactions.

The influence of Aryan fire-cult was felt during the Sangam age, in religion and ethics. The legends and myths which had percolated into the very fabric of the Tamil civilisation impinged on their thoughts and minds so much so the Sangam literature abounds with the acquaintance of Tamil poets with the Vedic and mythology of Sanskrit and the ethical concepts of the Dharmasastras. This effect of Aryan myth and legend is echoed in the *Silappadikaram* and the *Manimekalai*. Brahminism had since found a firm root in the Tamil country. Chola Kings performed costly sacrifices and the fire-cult became part and parcel of religious observances. The *Manimekalai* mentions the day-to-day fire worship of the Brahmanas and the Peranuru which states thus: '*O! Scion of the celebrate race of wise men who laid low the strength of those that opposed Siva's ancient lore, who saw through sophistry of the false doctrines and preferring the truth and shunning error, completed*



*Rajarajeswari Temple — Tanjore [S.I.]. Built by Raja Raja-Chola, Emperor  
— 10 A.D.*

*the 21 ways of Vedic sacrifice'.*

## CHAPER 5

# THE RISE OF THE CHOLAS

The ebb in the fortunes of the Cholas was once again revived, after the transition from the Sangam age, by the dynasty founded by Vijayalaya. The apparent gloom that enepeloped the royal house of the Cholas for three centuries changed like the wheel of fortune in the 9th century A.D., well on a glorious highway to military success extending up to the 12th century. The dark patch of their suspended hibernation on the banks of the river Kaveri, little is known. But they were there sustained by the life-giving river. Perhaps like the Tiger laid low to leap again to fame and glory. The opportunity came the way of the Cholas when they aligned with the Pallavas against the Pandyas

Vijayalaya was the first of the Imperial line of the Cholas who in 850 AD, joined with the Pallava, under whom they were the vassals, against the Pandyas and seized Tanjore and made it his capital. *'Little could the Pallava ruler have suspected that in thus employing his Chola subordinate', he was, as the Indian saying has it, 'training his tiger-cub to a taste for blood'.* Nor could Vijayalaya have dreamt that his vicarious victory was to be the beginning of one of the most splendid Empires known in Indian history. His son Aditya I, enhanced the power and prestige of his dynasty. He put an end to Pallava power by annexing Tondai-mandalam, their capital. The Anbil plates say that Aditya I, built temples all along the entire course of the river Kaveri to the sea from Sahyadri.

Aditya I, was succeeded by his son Prantaka I (907-955 AD). He is attributed to be the real founder of the Chola supremacy in Southern India. He waged war on Rajasinha King of the Pandyas and defeated him in battle. Rajasinha solicited the help from Kassapa V, the sovereign of Lanka. Kassapa accompanied his Senapathi and his army to Mahatittha (Mannar), and *"standing at the edge of the coast he spoke of the triumph of former Kings and having aroused their enthusiasm, he made his troops embark".* ( CV 52:70-76). The combined forces of Pandya and Lanka fought a bitter battle at Vellur, where the Cholas were victorious. It is stated that the battle is remembered long after, for its exceptional heroism of its incidents. The Lankan Senapathi tried again but the Culavamsa has it that he died of a plague, in India. The Udayendiram plates concur with the account of the battle but there is no mention of a



plague and the subsequent battle. The ruler of Lanka hearing of the plague and the death of his Senapathi recalled his troops. Rajasinha fled leaving behind his kingdom to Lanka in the reign of Dappula IV. As no further military aid was forthcoming, Rajasinha left his diadem and other valuables with the sovereign of Lanka and proceeded to Kerala, as it was the house of his mother Vanavan-Mahadevi. As the political alliance with the Cholas was close, with the Seras, (Kerala), in this period he depended more on the sovereign of Lanka, Dapulla for further military aid. As a last resort he arrived in Sera country. The Chola King Parantaka I, invaded Lanka to lay his hands on the diadem to enable him to be crowned King of Pandya. When the Chola army attacked Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa, King Udaya who was on the throne fled to Rohana with the diadem and valuables of Rajasinha. (CV 53:45). The Chola army unable to penetrate the hills of Rohana, which were always the refuge of the Sinhalese Kings when attacked by the Tamils (Damilas), departed the shores without the crown jewels. Before departure, the Chola army devastated the twin cities of Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa and carried away much booty. (CV 53:47). The Culavamsa further states that, "The Senapati laid waste the border land of the Chola King and forced him with threats to restore all that he had carried away from here (as booty)". There is no palaeographic record in South India to substantiate this contention. There is no such record either in the Culavamsa that 'the booty' was handed back to the ruler of Lanka.

Parantaka I, extended his empire at home, by annexing the kingdoms of the two Bana kings and conquered the Vadumbas. He swept away all traces of Pallava power and pushed his territory up to Nellore in the North. The wars with his neighbouring kingdoms specially against the invincible Krisna II and his allies won him the name 'Vira-Cola'. Towards the end of his reign, he was involved in a terrible battle with Krisna III, the Rashtrakuta King. Although some late inscriptions credit Prantaka with victory, it appears he lost Tanjore and Kanchi. He lost his eldest son Rajaditya in the battle of Takkolam in Arcot. The Cholas, apparently had a temporary set back at this stage of their reign. The 'Karandi' plates stress his promotion of agriculture by constructing irrigation channels. The 'Thiruvallangadu' plates and the 'Leyden' grant concur in the fact that he covered with gold the Siva temple of Cidambaram. His reign was a great epoch in the history of South Indian temple architecture.

The most powerful ruler of the Chola kingdom was Rajaraja, the Great, who ruled from 985 to 1014 AD. With his accession '*we enter upon a century of grandeur and glory for the dynasty of the Cholas*'. He laid a sound foundation for the splendid achievements of his son and



*A painting of Raja Raja,  
the Chola Emperor and  
his consort.*



*successor Rajendra I, under whom the Chola Empire attained it's greatest glory which was felt throughout entire Tamilaham and beyond the seas. Early in his unblemished reign, Rajaraja assumed the title, Mummudi Chola Deva' viz., the Lord who adorned the three crowns (Chola, Sera and Pandya) and one whose naval fleet destroyed the fleet of the Seras at Trivendram. The Tanjore inscriptions mention his victories over Vang-nadu, Kollam, Kalin-gam, Gangapadi, Talagapadi, Nolampadi, Kudamalai nadu llamandalam (Lanka) and 1200 islands of the sea. (Maldives). He next conquered Madura and captured King Amarabhujanga and deprived the Pandyas of their splendour. His battle against Malai nadu, the western hill country has been eulogised by Ottakkuttan where he says that his great achievement was the crossing of the 'eighteen forests' for the sake of his ambassador and setting fire to Udagi, as a result of an insult to his ambassador. The Chola*

Kalyani. He was ruthless in battle as it is stated that, "*cows were carried off and womens' girdles were unloosed*". Historians have condemned the Cholas for their barbarity in slaughtering children and humiliating women. (TC). Rajendra I, founded a new capital at 'Gangikonda Cholapuram'. He cultivated friendly relations with the Emperor of China and sent ambassadors in 1016 and 1052 AD.

Rajadhiraja I, (1044-1052 AD), succeeded Rajendra I. The Pandya and Kerala rulers who were in league with the King of Sri Lanka were subdued. In view of the victories over his enemies he performed the '*Asvamedha*' sacrifice. He fought against the Western Chalukyas though successful at first, he lost his life in the famous battle of Koppam on the Thungabadra.

Rajendra II (1052-1064 AD), succeeded Rajahraja I. Rajendra II, continued to struggle against the Chalukyas. Both sides claimed victories. There was a famine in the Chola country in 1055 AD. He invaded Sri Lanka and drove its King who fled to a fort in the hills.

Vira Rajendra (1064-1070 AD), succeeded Rajendra II to the throne. According to his inscriptions the battle at Kudal Sangam was devastating to the Chalukyas. Vira Rajendra defeated the powerful army despatched by Villalan and fought the Camundrayan and cut off his head and severed the nose of his daughter Nagalai who resembled a peacock in beauty. The Chalukyas regrouped for the third time to avenge the death of their King but they fled the battlefield as there was so much slaughter. Vira Rajendra captured Ahanarmalla's wife, his family, treasures, conches, parasols and all the elephants and horses and put on the crown of victory. He foiled all attempts made by Vijebahu the ruler of Sri Lanka to extend his authority and turn out the Cholas from the island. Friendly relationship was maintained with Chalukyas by giving his daughter in marriage to Vikramaditya the Chalukya prince.

During the reign of Vijebahu I (1064 AD), envoys sent by the Mysore monarch and by the Cola King came to Polonnaruwa with gifts. They were warmly treated and the King rendered both ambassadors the courtesy and formalities due to them. Subsequently, when Vijebahu sent envoys to Mysore, the Cola maimed the noses and ears of the Sinhalese messengers when they entered their country. (CV 60:24). When Vijebahu saw his messengers mutilated he was furious and hurriedly got up his troops to proceed to the Cola country. At this stage the Velakkaras revolted against him and they refused to proceed to Cola country. These Velakkaras were a Tamil military clan employed by the King to guard the Tooth relics. They slew the Sinhalese generals and plundered the country around Polonnaruwa. They also captured

the young sister of the King with her three sons and set fire to the palace. The King fled to Rohana with all his valuable possessions and hid them in Vataragri rock at Kegalle. It is stated that Vijebahu returned with many troops and after much fighting captured the ring leaders and had them burnt at the stake. Although he boasted of taking the battle to the Cola country, he contended to remain at the shores of Mantota (Mannar) awaiting the arrival of the Cola troops. He waited for one full month and as the Cola army did not arrive, he returned to Polonnaruwa.

The presence of Buddhism in the Cola country in the reign of Virrajendra and the impact of Buddhist scholarship on Tamil literature are attested by 'Vira-Soliam' a rather curious work on Tamil grammar, conceived as ultra-sanskritic lines by Buddharakita, who calls himself Chieftain of Ponperri. This place is identified with Ponpetti in the Puthkkotai taluq of the Tanjore district.

Kulottunga I (1070-1120 AD), succeeded Virarajendra, after the latter's uneventful reign. The accession of Kulottunga I marks the resurgence in the history of the Chola empire. He brought peace to his kingdom and to his neighbours. He avoided unnecessary wars and saw that his people were contented. War and rebellion were looming on the horizon of the southern area of his kingdom including Lanka which proclaimed their independence. Vijebahu I the ruler of Lanka took advantage of the political unrest in the Cola country and proclaimed himself King in 1073 AD. Kulottunga I, made peace with him in 1088 AD, and gave his daughter Suttamalliyar in marriage to Virapperumal, a Sinhalese prince of the Pandya party in Lanka. (TC). The Pandya and Sera revolted but the uprising was put down. He established military colonies to keep them under control, allowing the internal governing to the people. After Kulottunga I, the Chola power was on the wane.

Kulottunga I, was succeeded by Vickrmachola (1120-1135 AD). He was succeeded by Kulottunga II (1135-1150 AD), who was succeeded by Rajaraja II, (1150-1173 AD). He was succeeded by Rajadhirajah II, (1173-1179 AD). During Rajadhirajah's time a dispute in succession broke out in the Pandya country. In 1169 AD, Parakrama Pandya of Madura sent an appeal to the Sinhalese ruler Parakaramabahu I, to help him against his rival Kulasekera who was backed by the Cola King. (MV 76:76 et seq).

Parakrama the Great or better known as Parakrama Bahu 1, *'was the grandson-son of the Pandyan (Tamil) prince who married the Sinhalese princess Mitta (CV 59:41). He had defeated the rightful heir to the Sinhala throne and become king by sheer might. He was the first Sinhalese King (Tamil extraction) to possess a fleet, and like his Tamil ancestors he longed to conquer foreign lands. He was probably a near kinsman of Parakrama Pandyan, and therefore on receiving the appeal,*

he immediately despatched a powerful army to Pandya'. (ZD).

(The Mahavamsa chapter 62.52 records thus 'Versed in the ritual his father had the ceremony of the piercing of ears and the ceremony of the first rice food performed exactly according to custom'. This reveals his true identity as a Tamil as the Sinhalese do not have their ears pierced, to adorn a 'Kadu kan' earrings as the custom of the Tamils in South India.)

Parakrambahu I, sent an army under General Lankapura to Madhura. Before the army could reach Madhura, Kulasekera had captured Madhura and killed Parakrama, his wife and children. In spite of the set back, Lankapura was instructed to carry on with the war until the kingdom was wrested from Kulasekera and bestowed on a scion of the house of Parakrama. Lankapura having landed at Rameswaram, having embarked from the port of Mahathitta (Mannar), and in the face of opposition fortified himself at Rameswaram. It is stated that the prisoners of war were badly treated by Lankapura and either impaled or transported to Lanka to work on the Ruwanveli Vihara which had sustained damage during Tamil domination. Lankapura defeated a Damila (Tamil) army and proceeded to Kundukala and built a fortress with a high wall 3600 feet long and dug trenches so that the sea flowed from one side to another. Although Kulasekera attacked the fort he was driven off. King Kulasekera himself accompanied with a huge army proceeded to the fort at Kundukala called 'Parakramapura'. It is stated that Kulasekera made an oath as recorded in the Culavamsa 76:148. '*Only when I shall cut off the heads of the Sinhalese shall this time my sacrifice to the Gods in Rameswaram take place*'. (CV). In order to destroy the encampment of 'Parakramapura' the fort of Lankapura, Kulasekera sent a large army from the land side. He also sent an army by sea and the battle commenced. The Damilas were driven off and Kulasekera fled to the Cola country, and returned with an army and gave battle to Lankapura, in Ramnad district. In the ensuing battle Lankapura had defeated and put to flight. In the meantime Lankapura had given the kingdom of Pandya to Vira Pandya. Kulasekera pursued Lankapura with a Cola army defeated him and deposed Vira Pandya. *Thereafter Kulasekera cut off the heads of Lankapura the army general of Parakramabahu I, and other Sinhalese generals and nailed the heads on the gates of Madhura*. (TC). This was during the reign of Kulottunga III, the Cola King. According to the '*Pallaiarayanpettai*' (Tanjore), inscriptions Lankapura was defeated and the heads of Lankapura and others were nailed to the gates of Madhura by Kulasekera. He took Madhura and thus averted the city of Madhura becoming a province of Lanka. The Culavamsa, a chronicle of Lanka, is silent about the fate of the war in the Pandya country and the fate of it's army general

Lankapura. In fact the narration in the chronicle comes to an abrupt end. It is strange that such a skilful army general as Lankapura who is alleged to have won many a war suddenly disappears from the history of Lanka. There was no hero's welcome for Lankapura by King Parakramabahu I, in the Culavamsa. To quote Geiger's note at the end of chapter 77:104 of the Culavamsa. *'It is curious that his (Lankapura) return to Lanka is never mentioned and that there is no word of the distinction bestowed on him by Parakramabahu I. It is pretty clear that the Chronicler has concealed the failure which overtook the expedition after it's initial success. The ideal figure of Parakrama which he has in mind, must not be dimmed by association of misfortune'*. (CV). South Indian inscriptions relate that Lankapura was defeated and that his head with those of his officers were nailed to the gates of Madhura. In the 4th year of Kulottunga Cola III (1181-1182 AD), King Virapandu of Pandya was driven out and the Sinhalese troops defeated. (SH).

In an inscription found in the North Arcot district, carries an account that a land was gifted to one Anna Pallavarayan for his services to the Cola state. It reads that when Kulasekera was restored to the throne of Madhura, Pallavarayan heard that Parakramabahu I, was making arrangements to prepare for another war, perhaps to avenge the death of his General Lankapura and others, on the Cola King and his protege Kulasekera and that he was building ships in Uratturai (Kayts), Pulaiccre (Pooneryn), Mattotam (Manar), Vallikaman (Valligamam) and Mattuvil (Jaffna). On behalf of the Cola Monarch, Anna Pallavarayan employed Sri Vallabha, the nephew of the King of Lanka and a claimant to the throne of Lanka, with an army and captured Pulaiccri and Mattotam (Manar), where Parakramabahu I, was gathering his forces and set fire to many places around and the booty was presented to the Cola King Kulottunga III. There is no mention of this in the Culavamsa. Parakramabahu I, having heard of the activities of Sri Vallabha made a calculated change in his diplomatic position by recognising Kulasekera as monarch of Pandya and sent rich gifts and thus winning him over, from his tendency to seek Cola protection. Kulasekera resolved to co-operate with Parakramabahu I, in hostilities against the Cola King. He then proceeded to the gates of Madhura and removed the heads of Lankapura and others which were nailed. Letters and gifts from Parakramabahu to Kulasekera fell into the hands of the general of the Cola King. This discovery exposed the treachery of Kulasekera. On the orders of Kulottunga III, Anna Pallavarayan the general of the Colas removed Kulasekera from the throne and installed Parakrama Pandya on the throne of Pandya. When Rajadhiraja III, succeeded Kulottunga III, (1206-



Coins of the Cholas.

1256 AD), Sundara Pandya I succeeded Parakrama Pandya to the throne of Pandya. Sundara Pandya expelled Cola power from Pandya country and saw to it that the 'Carp', the national symbol of the Pandyas, be flown from the Fort of Madhura. Although he won the battle with the Colas a code of conduct, '*respect an ancient and established line of royalty was a more abiding sentiment than irritation due to transient political occurrences. Never to destabilise an old line in the role of honour and principle of policy laid down in the Sastras*'.

It was during the reign of Rajadhiraja III, due to domestic strife and attacks from all sides by the Pandyas, Hoysalas and Kakatiyas Chola power began to decline and finally partitioned off by her neighbours, and thus Chola empire ceased to exist in 1245 AD.

#### THE GOVERNMENT OF THE CHOLA EMPIRE

In spite of the scanty data available, an attempt is made to write from the available material, the machinery of government from the accession of Vijayala to the decline of the Chola Empire.

The form of government, as in the Sangam age, was a monarchy. From the beginnings of a ruling family, like the Sera and Pandya, there blossomed a royalty with it's display of pomp and pageantry which enveloped the entire land of South India.

The head of a Mandala was a Viceroy. He is either a close relation of the King or a descendant of royalty. He had a large number of officials who reported to the King and carried out his orders. Revenue was collected by an agrarian policy, where tax was collected in cash or in kind. Land was owned by the state and by the people. There were village councils which looked after the tanks and irrigation channels and the proper supply of water to irrigate land. There were other forms of taxation on imports and

exports where Customs duties are collected and packages sealed by the 'Tiger seal' as proof of payment.

The Cholas had a huge navy. The 'numberless ships', which carried Rajendra's troops 'across the rolling seas' to conquer Sri Vijaya, Lanka and other dependencies. This could not have been achieved overnight. It must have been an art inherited from past generations. The Navy was also used in maritime trade off the East and West coasts of India. The army consisted of elephants, cavalry and infantry. The strength of the elephant brigade was 60,000 and the army of about 150,000. There were mechanical machines introduced by the Romans. Roman engineers made for the Tamil Kings battering rams to destroy the walls of forts and numerous other engines of destruction.

The Slippadikaram gives a list of the engines. There were mechanical bows which shot arrows, mechanical slings that propelled stones, engines that sprayed boiling oil, boiling copper, boiling steel and other contraptions of war including poison gas. The Chola Kings behaved like barbarians in war. It is stated that '*their soldiers danced with the entrails of their enemies round their necks in victory.*' (TC).

The Chola Kings followed a policy of religious tolerance. Saivism enjoyed royal patronage. There are many Siva temples constructed by Chola Kings. One of the finest temples that filled the skyline with such grace and splendour was the temple built by Rajaraja the Great in Tanjore in 1010 AD, called Brihadisvara and also known as Rajarajeswari. This temple has on its walls the gifts bestowed by the King by way of inscriptions. The second temple was built by his son Rajendra I in 1025 AD, in his new capital 'Gangaikonda Cholapuram'. Although the latter is in poor shape and surrounded by mud huts of a desolate village, the former still stands supreme, like a sentinel, giving a silent message to the people of the devotion the King had for his religion and country. The insidious intrusion of the Aryan fire-cult to the Chola country was during the reign of Karikala the Chola King, of the first or second century AD. It was Rajadhiraja II, who performed the 'Asvamedha' sacrifice, an Aryan concept, to celebrate his victories over the Kings of Lanka, Pandya and Sera. *Agattiyanar* and his disciple *Tolkapyanar* who introduced Sanskrit words into the Tamil language by introducing passive verbs into Tamil. '*The latter chapters of the Tolkapyaam deals with every form of incident in the course of love and war (Agam & Puram), about which the ancient Tamil poets sang in their peculiar way. From the latter part of the Tolkappiyam called Poruladigaram can be constructed a full picture of the type of life led by the Tamil people long before they came into intimate contact with the Aryans, and of Tamil literature before the Tamil mind was subjugated by Sanskrit literature.*'



*'Tolkappiyanaar was oppressed by his knowledge of Sanskrit literature and his belief that Aryan Social polity and religious systems were divinely appointed ones. Thus to him its ideal social organisation was the division of the people into four varnas, with the three higher, enjoying besides social privileges, the literary privilege of being heroes of poems'. He tries to fit Tamil schemes of life whose interest was only love and war, with the Aryan one which has aims of Dharma. Artha, Kama and Moksha, though Tamil Agama is a milder concept of Kama and Dharma. Artha and Moksha cannot be squeezed into Puram. From this social division sprang the caste system in Tamil country. This has brought in its wake the social stigma which has culminated in the collapse of the very social structure of the Tamil race.*

During the four centuries of Chola domination the Chola country was studded with stone temples of various heights and proportions from foundation to superstructure, fringed with graceful architecture which is the hallmark of Chola architecture. This canon of Chola architecture was adopted specially in Sri Lanka, Mysore and Andhra.

*'The significance of the sea as a geo-political factor cannot be minimised while discussing the Cholas. India's interest of the seas was undoubtedly remote, but the Cholas were the first architects of highly organised naval power in the Indian Ocean. The history of Chola shipping and trade is as old as the Sangam age itself. In Tamil literature and western classical accounts there is eloquent account of Chola's share in the shipping trade off the Coromandel coast and across the bay of Bengal. The Cholas had large ships of complicated structure and great carrying capacity, known as 'Colandia'. They were ocean-going vessels specially useful for voyages to distant lands. The impact of Chola shipping and navigation was felt strongly in the Far East since the ninth century AD. Throughout the rule of the great Cholas the South Indian navigators exhibited commendable sea faring enterprise and carried their civilization and religion across the Bay of Bengal to the east Indian archipelago. The Chola navigators supported the Indian colonies in the Far East and established a firm rule of the Cholas in Srivijaya. Their success nearer home in Sri Lanka so often that it became like a lake to them lying within the Chola Empire'. (BS).*



## CHAPTER 6

## THE CHRONICLES OF CEYLON

The Chronicles of Ceylon purport to reflect a semblance of the ancient political history and matters pertaining to the Buddha, Dhamma and the Sangha of over 1000 years. Cloistered in their stone caves the Theras reduced to writing on 'Ola leaves' the sayings of the ancients (Attha Kattha), in the Pali language. These 'Attha Kattha' —true stories — have come down to us compiled by many Theras (Buddhist monks), and not by any one in particular. It is reasonable to presume that these Theras wrote down things they considered necessary in matters relating to the Buddhist faith and affairs of the state where the ruling King featured in the limelight and to some extent to controversial matters in relation to the inherent wars with the 'Damilas' (Tamils), across the sea, and blissfully contended to be silent when it came to impinge on their national pride. Obviously, those matters have been left out.

The oldest of the Chronicles is the *Dipawansa*. It is a compilation of the 'Attha Katthas', (true stories), of the ancients written down by many Theras and not by any particular author. These written records which accumulated in the stone caves and later in the Buddhist viharas, through many moons, were finally compiled in the 4th century AD. Unfortunately, its author is unknown. The *Mahavamsa* has it that King Dhatusena ordered the *Dipawansa* recited at the annual Mahinda festival. This was in the middle of the 4th century, thereafter it was eclipsed by the work of Thera Mahanama of the popular Mahavamsa the 'Great Chronicle'. It is known as the 'Great Chronicle' as it contained matters relating to Great Kings and themes. The latter supplements to the Mahavamsa are called 'Culavamsa'. The Mahavamsa proper has Duttugamini as it's hero and compiled by Thera Mahanama, the Culavamsa with Parakramabahu the Great as its hero was compiled by Thera Dhammakitti. This Thera is from the Chola country (Tamil), and was got down by Parakkramabahu II, probably from Kanchi (Kanchipuram), to reorganise the Sangha as he had dismissed many Theras for indulging in forbidden occupations. (CV 84:7-17). According to note 3 of the aforementioned chapter, this Dhammakitti was the compiler of the continuation of the Mahavamsa. It was during the reign of this King there was a split in the teachings of the Buddha. These are the Hinayana who had their principal seat in the Mahavihare and

the Mahayana who had theirs in the Abhayagiri and Jetavana Viharas. It was to bring harmony to the two orders that King Parakkramabahu II got down the Thera Dhammakitti from the Tamil country of Cholas in South India.

Among the latter Chronicles, of which there are a few, the Rajavaliya is the latest known Chronicle containing the history of the accounts of Kings of Ceylon. This is generally accepted as the work of a single individual of the 18th century AD. According to the Preface of Gunesekera on the Rajavaliya, he states, '*The fact that in some places the compiler writes as a Buddhist, whilst elsewhere he uses phraseology natural to a Christian, added to a marked diversity of style, warrants the inference that it's compilation of more than one*'.<sup>1</sup>

The Chronicles were written for the edification of the people and for the growth of Buddhism in the island. They also portrayed the part played by successive Kings from Vijaya for the propagation of the faith and other matters relating to the history of Kings, their wars, trials etc. The historical narration, covers the wars with the Tamils in Lanka and across the sea, is more national and racial. The tragedy is in fact what has been not recorded, in spite of exaggerations, myths and miracles, but what has been deliberately left out of the records. However, it is generally agreed that the quintessence of the Chronicles could be relied upon.

For purposes of history, the Chronicles had to start their narration from a particular time of a major event for purposes of chronology. This they attempted with a certain amount of confusion when it came to details.

The Mahavamsa has it that Vijaya was banished by his father Sinhabahu from the country of Bengal, along with 700 of his followers with heads half-shaved and put on a ship along with their wives and children. The children and their wives were put in separate boats. The children, are alleged to have landed in an island called Nagadipa (island of children), and the women landed at Mahiladipaka (island of women). Vijaya and his followers landed first at Supparuka (west coast of India), and due to violence by his followers, embarked and subsequently landed in Lanka in Tambapanni on the day the Buddha died in 483 BC (MV 6:39-47).

The Dipawansa, the oldest Chronicle has it that Vijaya was uneducated, wicked and plundered the people. The rest of it is in line with the story as in the Mahavamsa. (DV 9:7-30).

The Rajavaliya states that after seven days of the death of the Buddha, Vijaya and his followers were put on a boat and set adrift. They saw the mountain Samantakuta (Adams Peak), in Rohana and they landed at Tammanatotta. (RV.p 16). The Rajavaliya does not speak about the fate of the women and children who have been recorded in the Mahavamsa and the Dipawansa. Further, the Chronicles seem not to agree in the most important event in

history of the exact landing place of Vijaya. Dipavamsa and the Mahavamsa place the spot at Tambapanni in the west coast while the Rajavaliya puts it down to Tammanatota off the east coast of Lanka. They do not agree in the most important point as to whether the landing was on the day of the death of Buddha. The Rajavaliya fixed the day as seven days after the death of the Buddha, while the Mahavamsa and the Dipavamsa fix the day when the Buddha died.

According to tradition Vijaya landed at Tambapanni or Tammanna-Nuwara, and whether it was Vijaya or some other Prince is in doubt, or is it the first Gangetic settlement in Lanka? Burnouf's opinion is that Tammana Nuwara is the same as the modern Tamblagam in the bay of Trincomalee. His argument was that according to the Mahavamsa, Panduvasudeva, nephew of Vijaya, coming from India landed at the mouth of the Mahakandra river. This river he identifies with the Mahaveliganga which runs into the Bay of Trincomalee. According to E. Muller in his book, Ancient Inscriptions in Ceylon, states that the Mahakandra is the present Aripo river or Malwattuoya which runs into the sea near Silavuthurai, on the North West coast of Lanka. It is argued by the latter that if the second colony under Panduvasudeva landed at the mouth of the Mahakandara river, it is very likely that the first Gangetic colony under Vijaya also could have landed at Silavuthurai or in the neighbourhood. It is further argued that if they came from Bengal with the North East monsoon, they could never land on the west coast of Lanka but on the East coast. It is likely they came from South India, *'as a sea voyage from Bengal to Lanka without a fixed destination would suppose a much more enterprising spirit than the Indians ever had'*. Two other historians Lassen and Dr. Caldwell, have pointed out that *'Tambapanni was originally the name of a river in Tinnevelley, South India, which the immigrants brought with themselves to Lanka and that Tinnevelly or Tirunevelly is only a mutilation of the Tamil Tambirapanni'*. It is not far-fetched to say from the circumstances that Vijaya and his men landed on the mouth of the river Tambapanni of the district of Thinnevelley of South India and having recuperated from the long sea journey embarked and drifted, and eventually landed on the mouth of the Kadamba nadi or Malvatuoya in the Silavauthurai of Mannar district. *'It is accepted that "Upatissa Nuwara", the modern Tantrimalei, on the road from Madawachchi to Mannar, was the station they had to pass on their way from the coast to Anuradhapura, their final settlement'*.

It is not understood how the ships carrying Vijaya and his followers, having embarked from the east coast of India (Bengal) and had put into Broach and Sopara which are on the North West coast of India, and thereafter embark and sail and land on the

West coast of Lanka. It is also not understood why the wives of Vijaya and his men were put on separate boats as to that of the children and how they too landed on separate islands. It is even strange that none of the Chronicles state the fate of the women and children who landed on separate islands North West of Broach.

The Chronicles and historians, pay a glowing tribute to Asoka the Great of North India for his propagation of the faith of the Buddha in Lanka, in spite of his killing 99 of his half brothers to ascend to his father's throne. It is stated that Asoka after killing his brethren and the killings in the battlefield, was filled with remorse, that he embraced Buddhism. They depict him as the greatest builder of Viharas and religious monuments and promoter of the faith abroad. It is recorded that he sent his son and daughter to Lanka to do missionary work.

The disappointing fact is the lack of corroboration of the truth in the legend claiming Mahinda and Sanghamitta to be children of King Asoka. From the available Rock edicts of Asoka there is absolutely nothing to bolster the claim of the Chronicles, that they were his children. The episode of Mahinda and others coming by air from Jumbudipa (India) to Lanka, is debunked by Chinese traveller Hiuen Tsang's narration that Mahinda's missionary work had been directed to the country of Malayakutta, situated in the extreme south of the Deccan of 'Tanapanni' of Asoka edicts (RE II and XIII). It is from the country of Malayakuta of Tinnevely of South India that Mahinda went across to Lanka during the reign of Devanampiyatissa about 247 BC.

The Mahavamsa makes Duttugamanu their hero by defeating the Tamil King Elara from the Chola country of Tamilaham. The Chronicle and historians unfold a graphic and dramatic account of the battle of both Kings, in the presence of their respective troops on the backs of elephants when Elara was killed. It is reasonable to ask the question whether the story is a legend? There are no inscriptions in Lanka left by King Duttugamnu to prove that there was indeed a war fought on the plains of Anuradhapura between the Tamil King Elara and the Sinhalese King Duttugamunu.

The Dipawansa, which was written in the fourth century AD, does not record the story of the battle between the Tamil king Elara and the Sinhala king Dutugamnu, as alluded either in the Mahavamsa which was compiled in 6th AD or the Rajavaliya compiled in the 18th AD. The Dipawansa righteously states, 'A prince, Elara by name, having killed Asela, reigned righteously for forty-four years.' (DV p.207). The Dipawansa states categorically that 'Elara killed Asela', but no where does it state that 'Dutugamanu killed Elara'. Wilhelm Geiger in his introduction to the Mahavamsa states, 'The Mahavamsa is then a new treatment of the same thing,

distinguished from the Dipawansa by greater skill in the employment of the Pali language, by more 'artistic composition' and by a more 'liberal use' of the material contained in the original work. (MV p X ). Obviously Mahanama the compiler of the Mahavamsa, had used more, 'artistic composition' and 'liberal use' of the original Dipawansa by using '*Alankara*'. This then is a legend entrenched in the '*Atthakattha*' long before the compilation of the chronicles Dipawansa, Mahavamsa etc.

The split in dogma during the reign of Vokara Tissa, was called the Vetulla or Vedalla Pitaka. The King caused the books pertaining to this dogma burnt as they were sinful. This dogma split the faith and the two contending groups, one housed in the Mahavihara and the other in the Abeyagiri Vihara. The true doctrine of the Buddha was contaminated by these heretics some coming from South India. But the Nikayasangraha stated that despite the varied divisions, retained it's purity. B.C. Law in his book '*On the Chronicles of Ceylon*', has this to say, '*It will be seen that the Buddhist works mentioned above were all texts on ritual and magic . . . the Theras of Ceylon were forgetful of the fact that the Paritta texts were also works on ritual and magic*'. (OTC) It was during the period of Parakaramabahu I, that both factions were united into one order.

## CHAPTER 7

## THE TOOTH-RELIC OF CEYLON

The Hindu Sage (Sakya Muni), Gautama Buddha was born in 624 BC, at Kapilavastu at the foot of the mountains of Nepal to Princess Maya Devi. She had a dream of a white elephant descending on her from Tushita. *'Tusita is the fourth heaven out of the six, where Bodhisatvas or beings destined to become Buddhas, dwell. It is believed that the 'Patra' or Almspot, the Holy Grail of Buddhism was taken up into that place, which ascension was held to be indicative of the disappearance of the Law from the surface of the earth to be restored by the future Buddha Maitreya. The restoration was looked forward to by the Buddhist with as much anxiety as the coming of the Messiah by the Jews of old, and perhaps by the modern too. This Patra is now shown in the Maligava Vihara at Kandy' (TRC).*

From the Lalita Vistara, a legendary biography, Buddha, was born with certain peculiarities of body and mind, which according to the soothsayers, he was destined to great heights either in politics or religion. 'He belonged to the family of the Sakyas or 'self potential' by which patronymic he is often named, with the suffix Muni (a devotee or an ascetic), or with that, 'a lion', peculiar to the military class: hence Sakyamuni means as anchorite of the family of the Sakyas. He is also named Sacya Sinha, or Scythian Lion. The fancied etymology of the latter name, combined with the sculptured appearances of Gautama, has given rise among writers to speculation about the originator of Buddhism not being a native of Hindustan, but of Scythia or Abyssinia'. Sir W. Jones, was the first to suggest that the *'curled and woolly appearance of the hair on the head of the statues of Buddha, many of which are sculptured in black granite or basalt of Western India, indicated African descent . . . Among the thirty two 'lakshanas' or characteristics and eighty "vanjanas' or peculiar signs of beauty or personal appearance of Gautama Buddha, we meet with, 'srvrana varnah' or golden complexion, and 'tunga nasikah' or aquiline nose, which are certainly not negro features'.* (Remusat, Melanges Asiatiques, vol. vi., p 100). *'Curly locks are considered, besides, by natives a point of beauty, odd though the fact may appear to a sect that insists on tonsure'.* It may be also a particular vestment for the head or perhaps due to the influence of Greek sculpture on the Indian scene (TRC).

Although born with a silver spoon in the mouth, Gautama was highly contemplative and critical of life. Blessed with a child, he

sought the solitude of the forests of Magadha than the pleasures of the castle. "Solitude", says a great man that recently departed from amongst us, 'is essential to any depth of meditation and of character and which is the presence of natural beauty and grandeur in the cradle of thought and aspiration'.

Found ensnared by severe vortex of tantric Brahminism, who claimed to be roof and crown of the religious world, and who were best known for their avarice and cruelty, the time was ripe for an emancipator to come on the scene to preach equality. Seven years of meditation under a spreading Bo tree in the forest of Uruwela by the river Nairanjana, Gautama attained Budhahood or 'Nirvana' in his 36th year. This Hindu Sage in the solitude of the jungle learnt the effect of temperance upon mind and matter. He looked upon himself and man as a mere 'Rupa', an organised body with certain faculties. Like Dr. Holbah, 'looked upon nature as a machine, morality as self-interest, and deity as fiction; the reason of man his safest guide and the law of nature perfect justice in the whole creation. He had in his ideas and sentiments great elevation and magnanimity, hatred of all that is low and mean of every systematic sham and organised hypocrisy, which then, more now, were the order of the day. Gautama was in this respect but a feeble reflection of the great Galilean, who, attracting toward him on the margin of the lake of Galilee in Israel, large crowds of the people, instilling into them his own enthusiasm, being identified with the joys and sorrows and constituting himself their champion and friend, converted them into his most devoted followers'. (TRC)

Gautama Buddha, emerging from the forest of Magadha, preached his beliefs which resulted in the foundation of the mendicant order of Buddhist monks, which has won millions of supporters in the East. His name is revered from the palm-fringed coast of Lanka, from the sprawling towns of China, cherry blossomed gardens of Japan, the mountains of Nepal and to the frontiers of Tibet and Mongolia.

After 45 years of preaching at Banares and other places he knew the inevitable, that death was knocking at his door and to Nirwana. At Kusinagara, as it is stated, he entered a grove of Sal trees and having received food, breathed his last, on the following day in the full moon of May 483 BC.

*'Notwithstanding the sublimity of his doctrine, however, the religion of Buddha is vague after all, and could not be a better symbol used by his followers than by the 'Chakra' or wheel; for Gautama ignored the beginning and was equally uncertain as to the future. Fair, humane, and lovely as may be its outward forms, its inherent principles confessing no supreme GOD, its moral code void of all authorities, denying the true dignity and investing moral sentiments and relations with a kind of physical outsidersness, it has left the countries it has over-run a prey at*

with out further expeditions, worshipped and adored by a grateful people who have faith in the Hindu Sage Gautama who attained Nirvana and paved the way for others to emulate. (TRC).

From the burning funeral pyre of the Buddha, it is stated that one of the disciples by the name of Khema, saved from the flames the left upper canine tooth among other relics for posterity. The tooth relic was taken to the city of Dantapura the capital of Kalinga and deposited with King Brahmadata. This remained in the capital for 800 years in spite of the protests by the Brahamans of 'a piece of human bone', being set up as an object of worship. The relic was the bone of contention between the Buddhists and the Brahamans and legend has it that the relic encountered adventures against its destruction, some due to magical powers. In the year 361 AD, during the reign of King Siri Meghana of Lanka, a Brahaman woman brought the relic concealed in her hair to Anuradhapura from Kalinga. (MV 37:92). The Rajavaliya gives a slight twist to the episode. King of Kalinga Guhasiva instructed his son-in-law Prince Danta, 'who disguised himself as a Fakir and having traversed the intermediate road, embarked at Tuttukudiya (Tuticorin), landed in Lanka and handed the tooth-relic to King Kitisrimevan'. (RV p53). Subsequently, this relic was enshrined in the Maligawa temple of Kandy in 1268 AD, after a lapse of 793 years (approx.), during the reign of Parakramabahu II of Lanka. In about 1280 AD, during the reign of Bhuvanabahu I, a Tamil General known as Arya Chakkravathi, sent by the Pandya King Kulasekera, of the Tamil country, came with an army and seized the tooth relic which was in Yapahu and removed it to Madhura. (CV90:44-47). History has it that King Parakramabahu III (1284 AD), sought out King Kulasekera and in Madhura (Mathurai), and obtained the tooth-relic after much pleadings and brought it back to Lanka. (Polonnaruwa) (CV 90:54). The Culavamsa is silent about the fate of the tooth-relic during the time of Rajasiha I (1581-1593 AD), but records in the Culavamsa chapter 93 verse 10 and 11 that he, '*Smearing his body with ash and adopted the religion of SIVA (Hindu), and slew the community of Bhikkus, burned the sacred books and destroyed the Monasteries*'. The Culavamsa is silent on the fate of the tooth-relic as to whether it survived the fury of a Hindu King Rajasiha or an episode of its adventurous survival.

The same tooth-relic makes its appearance during the reign of Vimaladhrmasuriya I, alias Konappu Bandara (1592-1604 AD), who reigned from Jayawardhenapura (Kotte), (CV 94: 12-14), after his return from exile from Goa.

The Culavamsa does not say much about the events which took place during his reign. Due to the wars with the Portuguese the



tooth-relic was hidden in Dumbara, Kandy by King Senaratna (1604-1635 AD). When Vimaladharamasuriya II, took the reins of government, he took the daughter of the King of Madhura as his wife (Tamil from Pandya), (CV 97:2), and enshrined the tooth-relic at Sirivaddhana. His son Narindasiha became King and too fetched a princess from the town of Madhura and made her as his Queen, (CV 97:23), '*in order to protect the royal dignity of Lanka*'. King Vijayarajasingha (1739-1747 AD), to establish his own dynasty fetched princesses from Madhura and made them his Mahesi (Queens). He too reigned from Jayawardhanapura (Kotte), with the tooth-relic in his possession. (CV 98:51). After Vijayarajasingha, his brother-in-law became King of Kings. Gifted with physical beauty a delight to the eyes of the people, filling the whole superb island of Lanka with splendour, a prince of glorious grace'. (CV 99:1). According to the notes in the Culavamsa, referred to above, the brother of Virarajasinghe's Queen came from Madhura (Tamil of Pandya), to the court of Lankan King with his sister and with his father Narenappa Nayaker. He took the name of Kittisirirajasingha (1747-1782 AD). In his reign too the tooth-relic was worshipped by the people. (CV 99:59). During his reign the Dutch under Baron Van Eck sacked Kandy and the relic was removed to the hill country. (CV 99:123). The Dutch were beaten badly and the army massacred by the guerrilla tactics of the King's army. His devotion was so great that he brought back the relic to Kandy and made a golden casket encrusted with a '*magnificent large diamond placed on the point; 168 beautiful costly splendid small diamonds well worth seeing, and 171 topaz he had put on it. Further he had it set with 585 blue sapphires and 4880 rubies, also he had it set with 778 pearls, and when the costly casket was finished he had a further two caskets made in which to place it and had them also set with costly splendid, beautiful jewels*'. (CV 100:14-20). King Kittisirirajasingha, in return for the books sent by the King of Burma, the King sent to King Dhamonika a model of the tooth-relic fashioned out of a costly jewel and many varied gifts, a shell curved towards the right and other things. (CV 100:154). Incidentally, the right-whorled shell is called in Tamil, '*Vallampuri*', and it is used in temples for religious rites is extremely rare and brings good luck to the possessor. This is a Tamil belief and hence a practice with the Tamil Pandyan Kings of the Kingdom of Kandy in Lanka. Kittisirirajasingha, was succeeded by his younger brother Rajadhirajasingha (1780-1798 AD), who is stated to have received the tooth-relic by lighting 1000 oil lamps. (CV 101:14). He in turn was succeeded by the sister's son of Rajadhirajasingha. Sri Vickrama Rajadirajasinghe (1798-1815 AD), he too ruled from Kandy and sacrificed to the tooth-relic. (CV 101:20). Sri Vickrama Rajasinghe, the last King of

Kandy, (Tamil), was defeated by the British and sent into exile in 1815 AD, to Vellore, South India, far from his Tamil Pandyan connection where he died. It is stated that Sri Vickrama Rajasinghe and his group were fleeing Kandy on news of the impending British invasion had intended to make their way into the Goda Nuwara Rock fortress that had to be reached through a tunnel which entrance was at the base of Rajagala hill. According to legend, the group had been unable to find the entrance and so they were forced to seek shelter in an adjoining house belonging to Udupitiya Arachchi who loyally had welcomed the King and found shelter. They lay concealed in the house under bundles of hay. The Sabaragamuwa section with a large group of people were looking for the fugitives. It is stated that a small boy through fear for his own life betrayed the hiding place of the King and his party. The King and his group were dragged out of their hiding place and being stripped naked, their jewellery wrenched off and then subject to physical torture. Although a memorial has been constructed in the actual place, it was a disgraceful event in which they saw the last royal monarch of Lanka ( Tamil), being dragged out with his two Queens and subjected to humiliation. With the capture of the King by the British, the chronicles of Lanka are silent on the matter of the tooth-relic. The Culavamsa, being the recent part of the Mahavamsa closes its records of history with chapter 101:29 with 'the "Ingiris" by name seized the whole country'.

During the reign of Don Juan Dharmapala (1551-1597 AD), successor of Bhuvanekabahu VIII, was ruling from Kotte but under the power of the Portuguese. To curry favour with them, he became a Christian. This fact is not recorded in the Mahavamsa. In the year 1560 AD, during the reign of Don Juan, the Buddhist world was shattered by the news that the Holy Grail of Buddhism, the tooth-relic had been captured by the Portuguese, the infidels from the West and that the national and sacred treasure had changed hands and the people were frightful as to what was in store for them as '*he who holds the tooth-relic holds the power to rule the country*', was their sacred belief. However, the native authorities strongly affirmed that the relic was safe during the war with the Portuguese. They claimed that the relic was hidden in several places like in Delgamoia in Sabaragamuwa, Kandy, Kotemalay etc. In 1555 AD, Vije Bandara was defeated by Raja Singha and he fled with his son with the tooth-relic to Jaffna and sought refuge in the court of Sangili. According to (AJ p382); Mudaliyar Rasanayagam, Vije Bandara was encamped in a place called 'Tara Kulam', in the city of Jaffna. (Pieris: Vol. I, pp.136, 137 and 157).

It would appear according to records that during the course of

the Nallur festival, there was a loud explosion which may have been due to part of the festivities, or a pure accidental firing of gunpowder, Vije Bandara drew his sword thinking it was a part of a plan on his life. During the commotion that followed, Vije Bandara and his son were killed by Sangili's men and all the treasures including the tooth-relic fell into the hands of Sangili. The Portuguese historians asserted that the tooth-relic mounted in gold which had been carried to Jaffnapatinam for safe keeping, as a result of the battle in the Buddhist states, was really a part of the spoils of war, taken from a Buddhist temple and handed over to D. Constantine Da Braganca, the Viceroy of Goa, who submitted it to the inquisition where the tribunal ordered it to be crushed to pieces, cast into a brazier and the ashes thrown into a running stream. In spite of the unlimited amount offered in exchange for the relic by the wealthy monarch of Burma who annually sent to Kandy gifts for its worship. Accordingly, *'the Viceroy called upon the Treasurer to produce the tooth-relic. He handed it over to the Archbishop who in his presence placed it in a mortar, and with his own hands reducing it to powder, cast the powder into a brazier which stood ready for the purpose, after which the ashes and the charcoal together were scattered into the river, in sight of all who were crowding the verandahs and windows which looked upon the water'*. To commemorate the event and approved by the Fathers of the Company a brass plate was made as follows: *'On an escutcheon was a representation of the Viceroy and the Archbishops surrounded by the prelates, monks and divines who had been present for the occasion, and in their midst was the burning brazier together with Buddhists offering purses of money, and above the letter C, being the initial of Don Constantino, was repeated five times thus CCCCC and below it the five words: 'Constantinus coeli, cupidine, cremavit, crumenas — the interpretation being that Constantine, devoted to heaven, rejected the treasures of the earth'*.

Padre Francisco da Souza in his 'Oriente Conquistado', states that, *'the moment the Archbishop places the tooth-relic in the mortar and was about to pulverise it, it made its way through the bottom and went straight to a light on a lotus flower in Kandy, where they have built for it a temple called 'Dalidagis' or temple of the sacred tooth'* (TRC).

There is another episode of the relic, where when the King of Pegu wanted a princess from Lanka, the King Don Juan who was childless sent a girl brought up in his palace a daughter of his great chamberlain of royal blood along. But the Chamberlain did more; in concert with the King he caused to be made out of a stag's horn a facsimile of the ape's tooth carried off by Don Constantine and mounting it in gold he enclosed it in a costly casket, richly decorated with precious stones. When the time arrived for the young lady to take her departure, it was so cunningly arranged that neither the Captain of Colombo, Diogo

de Mello, nor the priest hood suspected anything. Andrea Bayam Moodliar accompanied her as an ambassador from Lanka . The story runs that the King of Pegu who married the lady subsequently came to know of the truth through the Chinese at Pegu who received it from Andrea Bayam. However, the King was not moved with the story, but continued to worship the relic in spite of the promises of the King of Kandy who sent an envoy and informed the King of Pegu that the princess sent by Don Juan was only the daughter of the great chamberlain and that the relic was also fabricated out of a deer horn. He further promised to give his real offspring to him and that he was the possessor of the original tooth-relic and was prepared to prove it by documents by ancient ola leaves. The King of Pegu pondered over the whole matter and thanked the envoy by sending two ship-loads of rice and other goods to the King of Kandy and one for Don Juan, King of Kotte'.

It is recorded that Don Juan turned against the allies by driving them from Kandy and became the undisputed master of Kandy. He assumed the Kandyan crown under the fantastic name of 'Vimala Dharma'. He also abjured christianity, which secured the support of the Buddhist priesthood and crowned his fortunes by producing the tooth-relic, without which, as the national palladium inseparable from royalty, he could not have the support of the people. He convinced the people and the priests that he held the genuine relic which had been hidden at Delmagoa with the advent of the Portuguese and that the one destroyed by the Portuguese was a spurious relic. 'This is the very relic that is now exhibited in the temple at Kandy'.

Mr. Rhys Davids says, '*Jaffna is an outlying and unimportant part of the Ceylonese kingdom, not often under the power of the Sinhalese monarchs . . . there is no mention of the tooth brought by Dantakumara having been taken there, an event so unlikely and of such importance that it would certainly be mentioned had it really occurred. The fact remains that the relic was well within the range of the Portuguese army and the Chronicles had no need to mention that during those troublesome days the relic was concealed at Delmagoa, in Suffragam, and elsewhere, if it was so secure in its sanctuary at the Maligawa temple. Could not the relic have fallen into the hands of the Portuguese during its roving about the country? If spurious, there was no necessity for the King of Pegu to offer such a handsome amount of money for it, which fact has not been denied*'.

*'The dimensions and form of the tooth-relic, the clumsy substitute manufactured by Vickrama Bahu in 1566 AD, are, moreover fatal to any belief in its identity with the one originally worshipped. The present Dalada is said to resemble the tooth of a crocodile, as the old one was asserted to be that of a monkey. But it is neither. It is but a curved piece*

*of discoloured ivory, as Sir E. Tennent rightly observes, about two inches in length and more than one inch in diameter, which unexplained dimensions are by Buddhists accounted for by a strange argument, that in the days of the Buddha, human beings were giants, and their teeth kept pace, so to speak, with their larger stature' (TRC).*

The next drama the relic featured in was the rebellion against the British in 1818 AD, when the relic was removed by a priest and was subsequently found in Matale district and was given to the residents of Kandy as custodians . It was subsequently surrendered to the British together with the Kandyan kingdom in 1825 AD.

*'What stirring times has not the Dalada gone through during the twenty-five centuries which have elapsed since it was first picked up from Kusinagara funeral pile of the great sage while monarchs were fighting for its possession, until its present comfortable lodging in the richest shrine raised by man to a mistaken devotion; and what a part has it not played in the religious history of India, from the epoch in which Buddhism became the dominant faith of the country, subsequently persecuted and tyrannised over by a powerful enemy, ruined by the degeneracy of its own adherents, and enfeebled by schism and heresy until at last all disasters culminated in its being banished from its birth place to find refuge in distant lands' . (Memoir on the relic by J. Gersoil Da Cunha).*

## CHAPTER 9

ANCIENT INSCRIPTIONS IN  
CEYLON (SRI LANKA)

Palaeography is said to be the science of describing or deciphering ancient writings. These inscriptions have been brought to see the light of day, once again, after many centuries of silence due to the fall of kingdoms and taken over by the jungle-tide. These inscriptions on rock faces and other ancient places of worship were resurrected from the jungle-tide by men like Dr. Goldschmidt who was appointed Archaeological Commissioner of Ceylon in the year 1874 AD, and then by Dr. Edward Muller who carried on as Commissioner since 1878. Inscriptions have been discovered in the regions of Polonnaruwa, Anuradhapura, Hambantota etc. The first report of Dr. Goldschmidt was published on 2nd September, 1875 and which was reprinted in the Indian Antiquary, V.189. He went on to translate the inscriptions and writings of notes on Sinhalese grammar which were published by the Ceylon Asiatic Society for 1879.

The language of the inscriptions were mainly in *ELU*, ancient Sinhalese and bears a close resemblance to the so called Magadhi of the inscriptions of Asoka the Great. Subsequently Pali words transpired and the introduction of Sanskrit in the 12th century. Dr. Muller states, 'An alphabet altogether different from the others is used in one inscription only (No. 103), and here I am doubtful not only with regard to the alphabet, but also with regard to the language of the inscriptions' (AIC).

The inscriptions consist mainly of religious matters and grants to different temples, a few genealogies but devoid of historical information. There is seen the frequent reference to the construction of tanks and irrigation works down to the 4th century.

1. Dr. Muller places the inscription at '*Tonigala*', (Toni in Tamil is a boat), 14 miles from Puttalam on the road to Kurunegala, and found on a rock 20 feet above the level of Kudaweve tank, which is an endowment by King Gamini Abhay to the priesthood in the four quarters.

7. Inscription '*Periyankulama*', which should read as Periakulam. Periakulam in Tamil means 'big tank'. It says "Hail the great king Vasabha . . . at Patangala, having restored the decayed buildings at Thiragama . . ." This is restoration of buildings and given to Thera Majjhima.

8. Inscription '*Periya Kadu Vihara*', in Tamil means 'big forest'. This according to Dr. Muller is a rock temple at Dehelgomuwa a village eight miles from Kurunegala which is an endowment by king Gamini Abhaya of four tanks to Thera Tusa.

113. Inscription '*Inginimitiya*' which reads as 'Hail His Majesty Srisangabo, in the Swanaka year of his reign, on the 10th day in the bright half of the month Himata . . . the great sage declared, according to the rule made by former Kings in their hereditary secession in this kingdom . . . in three days at this temple, the chief secretary Arak, a great privilege has been granted. In one place the headmen shall come together in the monastery . . . according to the rule formerly fixed by the TAMILS, they shall divide it between themselves. All this we give to the Giriwihara so it was sanctioned by Mahinda . . . including the villages and lands that belong to the priesthood of Hindinipitiya a privilege is granted. All the villages beginning from Sirigala'.

114. Inscription '*Pillar*' in the jungle near Mihintale: 'Hail King Abhaya Sirisangaboy' . . . that travellers and pilgrims shall enter that officers of the royal family, shall not enter that palmyras and coconuts, and ferns, and tamarinds shall not be cut . . ." This is a grant to the vihara (Seygiri) Caityagiri at Mihintale.

115. Inscription '*Ellawa Pansala*' 'Hail Sirisangaboy who descended from a line of kings of the Ikswaku family Kalinga . . . who in the 9th year of his reign ransacked the kingdom of Pandi and obtained glory . . ."

121. Inscriptions at *Mihintale*.

#### TEXT A

'He who having born into King Salamewan an eminent Kshatriya . . . in the womb of the Queen Gon, descended from the same caste . . . His Majesty Srisangaboy Abhaya in the 16th year . . . the Priests who supervise the nikayas and the superintendents of the Vihara and the elders of the villages . . . including the receiver of revenue all these persons shall be under the control of the Abhagiri community at Aetwihara, according to the rule established by the TAMILS.'

#### TEXT B

' . . . so much water in the tank shall be distributed to the Vihara lands in the manner formerly regulated by the TAMILS. To ensure prosperity to the institution these regulations shall be strictly obeyed'.

#### INSCRIPTIONS ON THE FRIESE ROUND THE

#### 'THUPARAMA'

#### Upper Portion I

' . . . His Majesty Nissanka Malla Kalinga Parakaramabahu, descended from the great king Jayagopa and his Queen Parwadhi.

#### Lower Part VII

' . . . having built at Pulastpura (Polonnaruwa) the Nassanka

resthouse and the Brahamana resthouse and many other resthouses . . .'

Inscription at 'Galotta: 'He who gained endless glory through the number of his qualities the Lord descended from the unbroken line of Kings Ikswaku, the Kalinga Chakrawatti, passing through the air 1700 years after the period when King Wijaya landed on the island of Lanka . . . in the kingdom of Kalinga on the continent of Dambadiwa, which is the birth place of Buddhas, Bodhisatvas and Chakrawatties, conceived in the womb of Queen Parvathi Mahadevi unto the King Sri Jayagopa, the glory of the dynasty which reigned in the city of Simhapura, invited by the king to come and reign over his hereditary kingdom of Lakdiwa, Wira Nissanka Malla landed with a great retinue on Lanka . . . His Majesty wearing the crown and being decorated with the royal ornaments, caused himself, as well as the chief Queens, Kalinga Sbdhra Mahadevi, and Ganga Wamca Lalyana Mahadevi, and his son the great sage, and his daughter Sarwangsundari to be weighed in the balance every year and by bestowing five times their weight on the priests and brahamans . . .'

Copper Plate Inscription: ' In the 9th year of the reign of his illustrious Emperor Srisangbo Sri Wijebahu . . . seated at Udugampola in the midst of all engaged in state affairs has granted on the day of the eclipse of the Sun on the terms granted from court of Kurunegala the field Walala Palle Rerawila situated close to it, the field Lindora Akatadiwela, Kaekulan Owita . . . together with villages many lands, owita belonging to the nilaya of the Paelas of husked rice of Dombawala belonging to Udugampola in Alutkuru Korle, to the Brahaman *Wenda Rasu Kond Perumal* making arrangements for its protection so that the grant may endure permanently. In proof whereof, I, Sanhas *Makuta Weruna Wanapa Perumal* have written and granted this copper plate'.

26. Temple inscriptions: *Wirandgoda Mukulana*. 'The cave of Tisagutaha, son of the Brahaman Sumana, brother of Kudasumana given to the priesthood'.

29. Temple inscriptions: *Nettukanda*, or Diluwaewa three miles from Kahatagasdigiliya.' The cave of the sons of *Paramuka Welu* is given to the priesthood in the four quarters, present and absent'.

39. *Ganekanda Wihara* a village 31 miles from Kurunegala on the Anuradhapura road:' The cave of the *Paramakua Gilika Naga* son of the *Paramuka Welu* is given to the priesthood'.

75. *Kataragam Vihara*: 'This is the richest and most celebrated temple in Ceylon, and the principal place for Hindu worship . . . at present there are two temples, one Hindu, one Buddhist, but the former is much celebrated and pilgrims from all over India resort to worship here . . . the inscriptions have been defaced except for the word *SKANDA*, the god of war, to whom the temple is



dedicated. ( inscriptions have been defaced for obvious reasons). This belongs to the 4th century.

Mineri. (Pali Manihiraka, the pearl necklace. There are also the remains of a Kovil dedicated to Mahasea, and destroyed in the rebellion of 1817, and some ancient statues of Hindu deities, which impress the natives with so much awe that no inhabitants of the village can be prevailed upon to approach the spot). This pillar is on a bund of the famous tank constructed by King Mahasena the apostate, in order to conciliate his outraged subjects; it is inscribed on two sides but 44 lines have been defaced and nine only left'. (The 44 lines defaced obviously contained information against the spirit of the ruling party and defaced at a very latter stage).

139. *Pooliamkullam*: 'Ten miles east of Chilaw, now in Government Agents house at Puttalam. Partly defaced. It is about the remittance of taxes by Parakarma Bahu Lankeswara . . .'

167. *Lankatilaka Wihara*: 'Eight miles from Kandy; temple is on the top of an immense rock, to which a flight of steps leads, and there are two very long inscriptions, one in Sinhalese and one in *Grantha* or OLD TAMIL characters . . . The Sinhalese inscriptions record the erection of the temple and the grants of land made to it by King Bhuwanaka Bahu IV of Gampola'. (No mention is made of the TAMIL inscriptions and nothing to indicate that they have been defaced.) The original Tamil text is also not available in the book of Dr. Muller. This does not appear also in the Plates of the inscriptions put out by the learned Doctor. It is obvious that an explanation in English of Lankatilaka Vihara is available but not the translation of the TAMIL text of the said inscriptions. His books have been put out by the Government of Ceylon as Commissioner of Archaeology and it is pretty obvious that it has been censored for evident reasons.

98. *GALKOWILA*, at Karagaswaewa, about 5 miles west of the 29th mile post on the road from Kurunegala to A'pura. The inscription begins, 'Maha NakaMaharajah puta — and then follows with a name of a king which is not legible. This inscription is beautifully preserved and the form of it leaves no doubt that it belongs to a period later than the 4th century. (It is obvious that the stone Kovil was a gift from the Naga King who was a Hindu in this area during the said period was the realm of the Nagas.)

VIII. Inscriptions of Parakramabahu I, and his successors: "*In the year 1023 the capital of Ceylon, Polonnaruwa, was overrun by the TAMILS, who established a Viceroy there and held possession of the island for 30 years. Rohana, the southern district, was the only refuge for the royal family of the Sinhalese . . . No Sinhalese inscriptions record any of the incidents of this long protracted war . . . as for Tamil inscriptions I have discovered the following:*

*Budumuttawe Vihara*, half mile from Nikaweratiya, on the road

from Kurunegala to Puttalam. Three Tamil inscriptions on two pillars inside the temple and one large slab lying outside. On one Pillar we read the words *KALINGA MAKAN*, the son of the Kalinga. (Nothing further is given about the rest of the inscriptions in Tamil.)

*NAIMANA*, an upright slab with a TAMIL inscription standing in the jungle about two miles north of Matara. (No mention of the gist of the inscriptions. Dr. Muller tends to ignore TAMIL inscriptions for obvious reasons.)

TAMIL inscription on the walls of a Hindu temple, not far from the Thuparama at Polonnaruwa.' (Again no translation of the inscriptions — his style is revealing!)

CHAPTER 10

A FEW INTERESTING EXTRACTS  
FROM THE EPIGRAPHIA  
ZEYLANICA

by Don M. De Silva Wickremasinghe

1. MAHA-RATMALE ROCK

Inscriptions: This epigraph mentions about the benefactions to the Buddhist temple and makes no mention of the invasion of the Chola country by Gajabahu (177-199 AD), and bringing back 12,000 Sinhala prisoners of war, captured by the Tamil Chola King Karikalán and capturing 12,000 Tamils at the same time and settling them in Lanka. This epigraph does not even mention his bringing the jewelled anklets of the goddess Pattini or the insignia of the four devalas or the rice-bowl which had been carried off in the reign of Valagamba. The older chronicles Dipawansa and the Mahavamsa do not refer to the above exploits of King Gajabahu. Strangely enough the Rajavaliya and the Pujvaliya (written in the 18th century in Sinhala) mentions the above. If this was not a fairy tale, it would have found a place in the inscriptions, specially the recovery of the insignia of the four devalas and the 'Bowl-Relic' of the Buddha, the holy grail of Buddhism. p 61, Vol. 1.

2. SLAB INSCRIPTION OF MAHINDA IV MIHINTALE

This mentions the '*appropriation of the trees and shrubs which exist . . . in the TAMIL villages and lands situated in the four directions*'. (p. 120. Vol. 1).

3. RAMBAVA PILLAR

Inscription: This is located on the right bank of the Yoda Ala in the village of Ramba. Reign of Udaya I (952-963 AD), where it is stated that *Tamil & Sinhala coolies are debarred from entering the lands of the pirivena.* ( p. 175. Vol. 1).

4. BADULLA PILLAR

Inscription: This epigraph by Udaya III (942 AD), line D 14, 16 reads — "*The office of district Headman should not be given to TAMILS & DAUGHTERS should not be given in marriage to them*". (p. 71. Vol. III).

5. PILLAR INSCRIPTION OF KASSAPA IV (891-908 AD)

This epigraph mentions certain lands specially set aside for the upkeep of the *TAMIL soldiers* in the Kings service. (p. 273. Vol. III).

## 6. TWO TAMIL PILLAR INSCRIPTIONS FROM BUDUMUTTAVA IN THE NIKAVARITIYA AREA

This epigraph is in *TAMIL* re dispute between the blacksmiths and the washermen for social privileges. The chronicler laments that under the rule of King Manabharana (676-711 AD) and his contemporaries men of lower classes were placed in high positions.

### *On Second Pillar*

The object of this epigraph was to register certain gifts made by the Princes Suttamalliyar, daughter of Kulotunga 1, Chola Emperor (Tamil), married to one Vira-PPERUMAL a Sinhala Prince of the Pandyan party (Tamil) in Lanka. The Gifts were 10 gold coins for maintaining a perpetual lamp AND one standing lamp. The pillars were engraved by *MAKKALINGAM* and attested by *VIJAYA BARANAN*. From this epigraph it is evident that the Chola King Kulotunga I (1070-1120 AD), made peace with Vije Bahu I (1059-1114 AD), in 1076 by giving his daughter Suttamalliyar in marriage to a Pandyan Prince called *VIRAP PERUMAL* belonging to the court of the Sinhala King. The gifts were made by the Princes, Suttamalliyar, to the *ISVARA* temple in the Kurunegala district — page 311 of Vol. III.

*'Not only the tomb of MAGALA, but the Siva shrine at the place was also named after Vikramabahu; but it is possible that he was the founder. This shows Vikramabahu had leanings towards the SIVA faith and in keeping with what we learn from this inscription he and his contemporaries are described in the Mahavamsa as rulers who were hostile towards the Buddhist religion'. (p. 310 of Vol. III).*

The Epigraphia Zeylanica, edited by Don M. de Silva Wickremasinghe and H. W. Codrington at page 308, Vol. III state that, 'The record which, like its companion, is dated in the eight year of Jayabahu I, is of considerable historical interest. It introduces us to a princess whose name has been read, with some doubt, as Cundhamalliyalvar, whose father was the Cola King Kulottunga and who was the wife of a Pandyan prince called Virapperumal. This princess and her husband are both unknown from South Indian sources'.

The copper-plate grants state that Kulottunga married Madhurantaki the daughter of Rajaendra-deva of the Solar race, and she was also known as Dinacintamani. In the stone inscriptions from *Cidambaram*, she is mentioned in the years 1114 and 1116 AD.' Besides his seven sons by Madhurantaki, Kulottunga had, as we have seen, a daughter *SUTTAMALLI* married into the royal house of Ceylon'. ( TC p. 333). The assumption that 'Suttumalli and her husband are both unknown from South Indian sources' as put forward by the said Epigraphist, is not understood.

7. TAMIL INSCRIPTION ON THE GALLE TRILINGUAL SLAB

Found in Galle and carries inscriptions in TAMIL & CHINESE. The quintessence of the epigraph is the very commencement of the TAMIL inscription which would have thrown light on the inscription that followed. Very strange, though unfortunate the first line starts with 'SIVA' . . . and the rest of the words in the line defaced. This is an endowment of articles by the CHINESE Emperor in 1403 AD, during, the reign of Vijebahu VI (1405-1411 AD), to the God of 'TENAVARAI NAYINAR' of 'ILANGA'. (331. Vol. III). This may refer to god 'SKANDA' worshipped by the Hindus further south in Kathirgamam or God of the South, Vishnu, of TENNEVERA which in due process of time came to be called DEVUNDRA. According to the map of Sri Lanka (see map), the area between Galle and Matara was known as TENEWARA. This shrine was managed by a Brahmin by the name of *Thenevera PERUMAL*. (EZ. p. 334).

8. POLONNARUWA COUNCIL CHAMBER PILLAR INSCRIPTION

(a) This epigraph refers to Dappula or Kassapa V, granting immunities to certain lands apparently in Polonnaruwa titled, 'TAMIL allotment' . . . to the owners or interest to a hospital. (p. 44. Vol. IV). (b) Should there be any dispute of the above it should be arbitrated by the gentlemen who sit in assembly. (p. 45. Vol. IV).

9. POLONNARUWA PILLAR INSCRIPTION OF MAHINDA V

This epigraph extols the qualities of King Mahinda, but "In contrast to the fulsome eulogies on Mahinda in the present epigraph, he appears from the chronicles to have been a weak and incapable ruler. A certain tragic interest attaches to his name as the last of the long line of A'pura Kings. *In the 36 years of his inglorious reign, the armies of the Great Chola King Rajaraja (Tamil), swept over his kingdom. He and his Queen and his treasures fell into the invaders hands and had to pay the penalty of his inefficient rule by ending his days as a captive at the Cola court*". (p. 62 Vol. IV).

10. A'PURA SLAB— INSCRIPTION OF KHUDDA PARINDA

The epigraph refers to a TAMIL King named PARINDA, one of the six Tamil rulers who occupied the throne of A'pura before the accession of King Dhatusena (460-478 AD). He is referred to as Kudda Parinda who reigned from 436 to 439 AD. (CV. :38:29). He was one of the six kings who reigned between 433 to 460. The object of the epigraph was to register some donation made to a Buddhist monastery by the *Queen of Kudda Parinda*. (p. 113 Vol. IV).

11. FOUR ROCK INSCRIPTION FROM VESSAGIRIYA

The epigraph describes the setting free of slaves from the Buddhist monasteries during the reign of Kassapa from

into the royal service from their skills in Naval Officers'. (B.C., 247 Mahavamsa ch. xxi. p. 127). A National Marine was afterwards established for this purpose, AD 495 by the King Mogallana, (Mahavamsa ch. XL Turnour's MS. Transl.)

It is apparent from these available inscriptions, that the Tamils administered the country of Lanka for a considerable period of time from King Elara to the Arya Chakkravathies of Jaffna, although not continuous, but yet to be engraved in stone, in matters of conduct of persons, the bestowing of land, caves, gifts to Buddhist temples etc., and even the manner by which water for irrigation should be regulated. This does not include the Tamil influence in the hill capital of Kandy which was ruled by Sri-Vickrama Rajasinghe, and his predecessors.

The events displayed by the inscriptions, reflects the ominous relationship between the Tamil and the Sinhalese which goes back to the enmity between the two races springing up from the marriage of Vijaya to a Tamil Princess of the kingdom of Pandya of South India. The seeds of dissension, strife and enmity sown by this matrimonial union, of persons of divergent ethnic and cultural backgrounds, was bound to 'short-circuit', as the union brought with it hordes of Tamils into the Sinhala palace with divergent language and religion who by right expected to share power, and many a time when they took over power of governing the country. This tragic practice of importing brides from Tamil country have been repeated by many a Sinhala monarch, by which the multitude of the Queens retinue who joined the 'band wagon', had through the passage of time and circumstances staked their claim to govern the country.

The Sinhala chronicles have faithfully recorded the mixed marriages of the Sinhala Kings with the TAMILS of South India, from the time of Vijaya. This eventually terminated in 1815 AD, after 2298 years in the rule of Sri Vickrema Rajasinghe, a Tamil, as the last King of Lanka.

## CHAPTER 11

## THE ABORIGINES OF LANKA

The island of Sri Lanka lies to the South of the continent of India, separated in the north of the island by the Palk Strait. The distance from the northerly point called 'Point Pedro', in the Jaffna Peninsula to the south of Tamil Nadu called 'Point Calimere', is about 34 nautical miles. Mannar in the north-west of the island to Dhanuskodi of Tamil Nadu is about 18 nautical miles and the waters of the Gulf of Mannar washes these shores.

To discern who were the original inhabitants of Lanka, one has to depend on ancient writings not only of the island but also the corresponding history of neighbouring countries, specially of India, which is the closest country. The '*Yarlpava Vaipava Malai*', written in the 18th century AD, from traditional stories handed down from generations, states that the island was inhabited by 'Yakkas' and 'Nagas'. The '*Slippadikaram*', the epic of the anklets, gives a description of the country of 'Ilam' (Lanka), her Kings and her people. This epic was written about the 1st century AD, by Ilango Adikal younger brother of the Cera King Chenkudavan alias Imaya Varman. The Mahavamsa states that the Buddha visited Kelaniya, of the Colombo district, to settle a conflict between two Naga families. According to the Mahavamsa, which was compiled in the 6th century AD, the western and central parts of the island were inhabited by the Nagas and the people called Yakkhas living in the central district. The Nagas according to tradition were people who worshipped the serpent, while the Yakkhas were given to worship spirits or devils. Buddha who hailed from northern India, according to tradition died in 483 BC. If he visited Kelaniya to settle a conflict between two Naga sections, then the Nagas were inhabiting the island long before the birth of the Buddha. It is also reasonable to assume that the Yakkhas were also co-existing with the Nagas. It would be seen that the Nagas were inhabiting the Northern and Western parts of India, including parts of South India. According to the Ramayana, Ravana was a powerful King who ruled in Lanka. There were Yakkhas, Assura, Rakshasa etc., living in India in ancient times. They, according to Sanskrit and Tamil writers the enemies of the Aryans who had a contempt of these tribes as they possessed brute strength and courage and hence the Aryans attributed to supernatural power. I have detailed in an earlier chapter about the Nagas and their worship of serpents.

Historians like A. K. Muzumdar, state that the Nagas were in 400 BC, driven by political upheavals in Central Asia, entering India through the East. They were there when the Aryan hordes swept North India in 1600 BC . As a result of this invasion the Nagas were forced to seek new pastures and dispersed South and occupied the Deccan, South India and Lanka.

The Ramayana, which contains reference to Lanka mentions the Nagar capital of Ravana, and the quest of Rama for his wife Sita who was kidnapped by Nagar King Ravanah of Lanka.

The Mahabharata, refers to them as living in various parts of India and Lanka in an advanced state of civilization under their own Kings and ruled according to well established laws. The marks of this we find in the names of Nagoor, Nagapatinam, Nagarcoil etc.

The Sinhalese chronicle, Mahavamsa records that the Nagas were existing in the 5th century BC. According to this chronicle an uncle and nephew, Mahodara and Culadora respectively of the Nagas, had drawn battle lines to fight to the bitter end for the possession of the Naga throne. The Buddha appeared and sat on the throne and preached the gospel of reconciliation as a result '80 Kotis' of Nagas embraced Buddhism. Hence the gemset throne, became an object of worship by the Buddhists, who go on pilgrimages to Nagadipa. This episode is also contained in the '*Manimekalai*' a Tamil epic written in the 2nd century AD. This epic portrays Manipallavan as the same place as the Mahavamsa of Nagadipa. The island of Manipallavan had been claimed by the sea, according to the Rajavaliya (a Sinhala chronicle of the 18th century AD), during the reign of Kelani-Tissa. This King killed a monk by immersing him in boiling oil as he was suspected to be intimate with the Queen; as a result of which the Gods, submerged 7 leagues of land with 970 fishing villages and 400 villages inhabited by pearl fisheries. This has been confirmed by Ptolemy that there were 1,378 islands around Taprobane. It is possible, at this period of time too that 49 Tamil lands including the Kumari hill and river Pahruli were claimed by the sea. This claiming of the sea would have extended to the islands of Manipallavan in the Gulf of Mannar where the pearl fisheries extend from about north of Mannar to the south towards Kelaniya. The Pearl fisheries which extended along the coast from Cape Comorin to the low land of Kayal and the island of Lanka is called the pearl fishery.

Megathenas, the Grecian ambassador to the court of Chandra Gupta wrote in 300 BC, that Taprobane (Lanka) was only separated from the mainland of India by a river. Hence he had lived before the submersion of the land South of India, including the Naga kingdom of Nagadipa during the reign of Kelani-Tissa. When the Naga kingdom was submerged, what was left is the



present Jaffna Peninsula and the adjoining islands and a small portion of the present island of Nagadipa. The inland land area covered the present Vanni, Mantai and Pooneryn districts. The present Mantai (Mantota) or Mahathitha of the Mahavamsa, was the centre of a flourishing trade. The Nagas were in command of the Gulf of Mannar as the ancient shipping lanes from the west used by the Arabs and India was through the Gulf of Mannar. As a result of the Nagas having a monopoly of the shipping lanes, they became pirates and plundered the cargo from vessels passing through the Gulf of Mannar. During this period Indian merchants complained to Asoka the Great of the loss of their cargo and vessels in the Gulf of Mannar and Asoka was only able to stop the loss after he became a Buddhist. Legend has it that the Naga Fort of Mantai (Mannar), was built in iron and that beautiful maidens stood on the towers beckoning to sailors on vessels passing by and those vessels which put into port were seized and the cargo taken over and the sailors imprisoned. This Fort was destroyed by the Tamil King Karikalan the great Chola King of the 1st century AD, who is said to have captured 12,000 Sinhala prisoners to raise the banks of the river Kaveri, which the Rajavaliya alludes to. It was after the destruction of the hanging Fort of the Nagas that Karikalan was referred to by the Sangam poets as the 'destroyer of the hanging fort', in the Silappadikaram. Mantai is referred to as a kingdom ruled by an artisan by the name of Visvakarma. It is alleged that there were five types of artisans in this city including goldsmiths.

## CHAPTER 12

## THE VEDDAS

When the Aryan hordes entered India, they were mystified and stricken with morbid fear of the people they encountered. They appeared to be the embodiment of evil, brave and barbaric in their actions. These people they termed as Rakshasas, who drew their particular attention, to those of other inhabitants. The Aryans feared the Rakshasas so much that they prayed to Agni, the fire-god and Indra to destroy the evil beings as they were their constant enemy. The Rig-Veda of the Aryans has the following prayers:

*'Rise Agni, drive off those who fight us,  
make manifest thine own celestial vigour  
slacken the strong bow of the demon  
driven . . . destroy the cursing Rakshasas'.*

The Sama-Veda and the hymns of the Athra-Veda, we learn of the presence of the Rakshasas and that they could not face their God Indra.

In the epic Ramayana, the Rakshasas were depicted as wandering demons inhabiting forests extending to the south and to Ceylon, where they were dominated by Ravana their King. The story is that they were banished to Ceylon by Vishnu.

The chronicles of Ceylon refer to these Rakshasas, as Yakkhas in the Pali terminology. The historical works of Ceylon contain a mythical episode of their presence during the visit of Gautama Buddha and his predecessors. *'It is not found in the canonical works and therefore not accepted by the more intelligent Buddhists in the island, whether monks or laymen; but it is credited as an article of the faith by less instructed classes and it has the effect of greatly enhancing the prestige of the Buddhist remains in Anuradhapura and Kelaniya, the sites of two of the alleged visits.'* (AC. p. 12). In these accounts the Buddha is credited with the miraculous expulsion of the Yakkas from the island. The second visit of the Buddha, was to the Nagas who were involved in a civil war. The Nagas, according to records are civilised people having their own Kings. According to the Mahavamsa, Vijaya married a Yakkani by the name of Kuweni and with her assistance overpowered her own people and made safe for the rule of Vijaya. *'A great part of the story of Vijaya's exile from his fathers realm and his journey to the island appear to be fictitious; but the whole account is valuable as indicating the early beliefs current in the pre-christian times regarding the aborigines'.* (AC. p. 17).

According to the Mahavamsa, Vijaya discarded Kuweni and his two children, a boy and a girl, and married a Tamil princess from the Pandyan kingdom of Madura (South India). The story unfolds that Kuweni and her two children went back to her people, having left behind the two children outside the capital, the Yakkas on seeing her killed as they feared that she had come to spy on them. The two children were informed of the death of their mother. They took to the forest around Adams Peak. As time went by, the boy married his own sister and settled down in the forest. Through passage of time they became so numerous and spread in the vicinity of the Adams Peak Mountain. This is the origin of the Veddas of Ceylon.

Prince Pandukabaya (317 -394 BC), solicited the help of the Veddas to establish himself on the throne and saved the country from many years of bloodshed and insecurity and converted the Veddas into peaceable inhabitants. The Veddas were employed in the armies of King Parakaramabahu I, and his cousin Gajabahu in their wars. During the reign of Sri Vickrema Rajasinghe, the Veddas comprised of his army to fight the Portuguese.

*'As immigration from the Ganges valley practically ceased from the time of Pandukabaya, his policy of admitting the natives to an equal status with the Indian settlers must have caused rapid fusion of the two races, and the admixture of Tamil blood at last produced the race which we now find in the Kandyan Province. They differ from that of the western and southern coast tracts in all respects but colour, religion and language. Even to this day, the Kandyan villagers look upon the people of the western coast as a separate race and do not term them Sinhala, but always refer to them as, 'Pathe rate minissu', men of the low-country. The Kandyan Sinhalese are the modern representatives of the great bulk of the ancient Veddas, an extraction of Royal blood via Vijaya, inevitably the findings of historians'. (AC).*

# ANCIENT MAP OF CEYLON (Sri Lanka)



## CHAPTER 13

## THE ADVENT OF VIJAYA

It is a popular conception of most historians to refer to the hordes of a wandering tribe who invaded Northern India in about 1600 BC as the 'Aryans', for want of a name as they spoke sanskrit a language spoken by certain peoples of Europe who claimed to be Aryans. In this context reference is drawn to Myths of Race and Culture, '*... There has been similar and notoriously disastrous muddled thinking about the 'Aryan' race. There never was an Aryan Race and all we are entitled to infer is the existence in the second millennium before our era of a group of people inhabiting the steppes of Turkistan and Central Russia with a common Indo-European language and culture who over-ran or influenced a very wide area so that their tongue is the ancestor of many others including Sanskrit, ancient Greek, Latin and the majority of the languages spoken in Europe today*'. (RS). '*Be that as it may, the creation of an Aryan race first germinated in the mind of Count de Gobineau, who is referred to as the first apostle of Racism, who wrote that, to combat liberalism; the better to defend the threatened interests of the aristocratic caste of Europe, against the rising tide of democracy. He postulated their descent from a so-called superior race, which he labelled 'Aryan' and for which he postulated a civilising mission ...*' (RS).

The history of Lanka (Ceylon), appears to some, to commence with the coming of Vijaya of an Aryan heritage from Kalinga in West Bengal. History of Lanka or Ilam should start with the history of the Nagas and Yakkhas, who inhabited the island long before the advent of Vijaya in 483 BC, or the birth of Gautama Buddha. In a previous chapter, I have cited reference to various authorities and specially to the Mahavamsa, where it is recorded that the Buddha visited the island thrice, one of these visits to settle a dispute between a Naga clan.

The history of the Nagas of Nagadipa (Ceylon), and the Nagas of the Tamil country in South India, writers had obviously played it down. The fact that there was only a small river between the two countries would have made them to cross the river at will and associate with their brethren in the Tamil country. According to the Rajavaliya (RV. p. 22), Gunesequera says, '*In former times there was no sea between Tutukuddi (Tuticorin) and Ceylon, but there stood the city of Ravana*'. Perhaps this was before the great continental drift alluded to by the geologists. With the advent of the Dravidians (Tamils), about 1700 BC to South India, the Nagas were

pushed to the hills and the coasts and some got absorbed into the Tamil community and others mingled with their counterparts of Nagadipa of Lanka. H. Parker ( AC p. 16), says that, '*the Nagas who occupied Northern Lanka (Jaffna) long before the arrival of the Gangetic settlers were actual Indian immigrants and were an offshoot of the Nayars of Southern India*'. (AC). M. S. Iyengar (TC), states, '*all these fishing castes form part of the great Naga race who lived on the South Indian sea-board*'. Fishing industry in the waters of South India was considered to be very lucrative for the fact that Pearls were found in abundance, specially off the shores of Tinnevely district and close to the river Tamrapanni. It would be seen that the Pearls of the Tamil country adorned the throne of King Solomon in the 9th century BC. The Portuguese made their appearance on the coast of Tinnevely in 1532 AD, when a deputation of Paravas (Nagas), of the fisher community met the Portuguese and wanted their assistance to get rid of the Moors who were holding the monopoly of the Pearl fishery. These fisher caste people, one time Nagas, undertook to embrace Christianity if the Portuguese assisted them. As a result of this the rich Pearl fishery fell into the hands of the Portuguese in 1542 AD. The Nagas, now christians of the fisher caste were used by the Portuguese to dive for Pearls and for the left-whorled shells off the shores of Tinnevely. The Portuguese already had a Fort in Colombo in 1517 AD. They organised pearl fishery in the Gulf of Mannar. *Caesar Frederic*, was a Venetian merchant and fellow-men of *Marco Polo* says, "*The sea along the coast which extends from Cape Comorin to the lowlands of Kayal and the island of Ceylon (Zeilan) is called the Pearl fishery. The fishery commences every year in March to April and lasts for fifty days*". During this period the sea is calm in the Gulf of Mannar and the Portuguese used the Parava (Nagas), to dive for Pearls at both Thinnevely (South India) and off the shores of Mannar (Ceylon). Long before the Portuguese and Vijaya's time these Nagas were fishing for Pearls off these coasts as they held the monopoly of the shipping lanes from West to East and vice versa. During the period March-April the sea is relatively calm in the Gulf of Mannar and the Portuguese used the Paravas to dive for pearls and shells at Thinnevely and off the coast of Mannar.

Although, '*A great part of the story of Vijaya's exile from his father's realm, and the journey to the islands appears to be fictitious*'. (AC p. 17), the Mahavamsa states that, Vijaya was of evil conduct and his followers were like him. Hence his father King Sihabahu of Lala in Bengal caused, '*Vijaya and his 700 followers to be shaven over half the head and put them on a ship and sent forth on the sea and their wives and children, also* (MV 6:42). The men, women and children were put on separate boats. The women landed on an island

Mahiladipaka — island of women — and children landed on an island called Naggadipa — island of children. Vijaya and his followers landed at Suparaka, on the west coast of India, but because of the violence of his men they embarked again and landed at Tambapanni of Lanka, on the day that Buddha attained Nirvana. It is stated that the Buddha implored to God Indra to protect Vijaya and his men and that his faith be propagated in Lanka. Thus Indra handed the guardianship of Lanka to the God who is in colour like the lotus — Vishnu. (MV 7:3-5). Vishnu is the God of the Hindus of the Tamil country. It appears to be an irony of fate that the protector of Lanka was given to God Vishnu worshipped long before he became a Buddha.

Vijaya a Brahmin and Hindu (ZRT. p. 4) met Kuveni and married her and lived in Tambapanni and called themselves Sihala. Although they built cities, Vijaya refused to be venerated King unless he found a maiden of noble birth. The chronicles are silent as to how he was aware that there was a Pandya kingdom north of Lanka. Did the Nagas who had their brethren in that country inform Vijaya? Quite likely this must be the case. This is one of the facts the chroniclers chose not to record. Subsequently Vijaya sent his men to the city Madhurai of the Tamil country, with gifts of jewels pearls etc., and obtained the daughter of the Pandya King to be his wife and Queen and maidens for his ministers. The Mahavamsa describes the notice of marriage in graphic terms. *'Those men who are willing to let a daughter depart for Lanka, shall provide their daughters with double store of clothing and place them at the door of their houses. By this sign shall we know that we may take them to ourselves'* (MV 8:53). The above proclamation was followed by beating drums. Having obtained their intended Queen and many maidens and their attendants with many gifts fit for a King along with horses, elephants and wagons, this multitude landed at Mahatittha, now Mantota opposite the island of Mannar. On hearing of the coming of his intended Queen, Vijaya sent Kuveni his son and daughter away. Kuveni in sorrow left with the children back to her folks whom she deserted to marry Vijaya. The Yakkhas on seeing Kuveni, killed her but the children escaped in the jungles of Adams Peak. The boy and girl lived in the jungles and are the progenitors of the Vedda community. (MV 7:67-68). According to Dr. Seligmann, who made a study of the Veddas states that the *'upcountry Sinhalese have absorbed a considerable amount of Vedda blood'*. Dr. Seligmann is also of the opinion that the *Bandara cult among the Kandyans consists of making offering to deceased chiefs and prominent ancestors is a remnant of the Vedda practice of Propitiating the dead'*.

Vijaya married a Tamil maiden who hailed from Tamil country of Madhurai in the Pandyan kingdom. He was crowned King with his wife, and it is recorded that Vijaya sent every year to his Tamil

father-in-law, 'a shell-pearl worth twice a hundred thousand pieces of money'. (MV 7:73). It is also stated that, 'he had forsaken his former evil ways of life and ruled for 38 years in peace and righteousness in the city of Tambapanni'. (MV 7:74).

The Dipawansa, compiled in the 4th century AD, states Vijaya was uneducated, committed the most wicked of crimes and did fearful deeds plundering the people and the King ordered that the boy and his attendants, his wives, children, relations etc., be sent on board a ship and set sail. He was separated from the relations and they went on board a ship and sailed away. The children and women reached two islands, but Vijaya's ship lost its way and bearings and reached the port of Suppra on the west coast of India. At this port the local folks invited the 700 men and Vijaya to embark and offered lavish hospitality. During the reception they were found guilty of theft, adultery, falsehood etc., and the people decided to 'let us quickly kill these rascals'. They then stayed three months at Bharukacch and having infuriated the inhabitants went again on board their ship and were driven away by violence of the wind (South West Monsoon), and lost their bearings and went ashore at Lankadipa. They were unable to walk due to fatigue and they crawled on their hands and legs and found their hands coloured red, hence they called the place Tambapanni. Vijaya and his men arrived in Lanka in the last year of the life of the Buddha. This chronicle is silent about the fate of Kuveni.

The Rajavaliya, does not speak about the women and children but only of Vijaya and his men. It says that after seven days after the death of the Buddha, they were put on board a ship and sent adrift. The ship drifted in the direction of Ruhuna and they saw the mountain Adams Peak while at sea and deciding that it was a good place to live, they landed at Tammanatota. Vijaya married the Yakkini, Kuveni, but refused to be crowned King. He got down a princess from Pandya country and 700 maidens for his men along with five types of tradesmen.

Vijaya discarded Kuveni who wanted to kill Vijaya but she was turned into a stone.

The Mahavamsa and the Dipawansa are silent on the final fate of the women and children, while the Rajavaliya does not refer to any children or women.

These chronicles do not agree with the landing place of Vijaya and his men. The Rajavaliya puts them at Tammanatota on the east coast of Lanka while the Mahavamsa and the Dipawansa make them circumnavigate the entire continent of India (Jumbudipa), and finally lands them on the west coast of Lanka, anywhere on the sea shore where it is 'red coloured' which they called it Tambapanni! It is possible that they may have landed on



the opposite coast of India, at the mouth of the Tamrapanni river, in Tamil Nadu, and may have crawled on their fours at the delta of the river and found the red colour on their persons, and thereafter arrived on the west coast of Lanka carrying the name of *Tamrapanni* which by usage turned into *Tambapanni*. The alternate explanation would be that when they landed on the shores of Lanka, they gave the place as a land watered by the *Tamrapanni* river of South India. There is a whole story of doubt created in the minds of people reading the chronicles of what has been said by them as to whether it is another story merging on a legend where the main facts are not known and the writers went on a journey of discovery to make up some plausible story that may be believed.

Mudaliar C. Rasanayagam in his book 'Ancient Jaffna' (AJ p. 47), says, 'The Dipawansa, which is supposed to be an earlier work than the Mahavamsa, does not say that Tambapanni Nuwara was built by Vijaya at or near the place where he first landed in Ceylon'. Obviously, the Mudaliar had not read the entrenched clause further down at verse 34 of page 162 of Hermen Oldenberg's, where it is categorically stated that, '*The town of Tambapanni surrounded by suburbs built by Vijaya in the south on the most lovely bank of the river*'. This means the probable place of landing is about the Kadamba-Nadi (Malvatu Oya), as four of Vijaya's ministers built cities at Anuradhapura and Uppatissa gama which are located on either side of the Kadamba Nadi, except for Vijitapura and Uruvela which are situated at the beginning and at the end of the Goana Nadi (Kala Oya), which river is south of the Kadamba-Nadi (Malvatu Oya-see map). If Vijaya landed at Tammanatota in the Trincomalee district, then he would have built cities down the banks of the mighty Mahaveli ganga and the possibilities of Vijaya and his men traversing the entire breadth of Lanka, from east to west, to build cities at Anuradhapura, Uruvela, Upatissagama and Vijitapura is most unlikely. The Mahavamsa has a story, (MV 7:24), that when Vijaya informed Kuveni that his men were hungry, she showed them rice and other food and goods of every kind that had been in the ships of those traders whom she had devoured. This was obviously the place where Vijaya and his men had landed, because of the fact that Kuveni and her people had plundered the cargo and ships of traders, hence this had to be the place close to the coast probably on the banks of the Kadamba Nadi (Malvatu oya), close to the sea. According to the map of ancient Ceylon found in the Mahavamsa of Geiger's, the cities built by Vijaya's ministers are located at Upatissagama and Anuradhapura on either side of the Kadamba Nadi-malvatu oya — twenty miles apart: Uruvela at the end of the Kala oya (Gona nadi), close to the sea and Vijitapura

almost at the beginning of the river. Unfortunately the city of *Tamananuwara at Tambapanni*, which was built by Vijaya has not been located or identified on the map referred to (see map).

Mudaliyar Rasanayagam's contention is that the present Kantarodai was the capital of Vijaya and that the Mahavamsa, written 1,000 years after the landing of Vijaya had forgotten of his sojourn at Kantarodai, by his successors at Anuradhapura. He further states that Vijaya was the guest of the Naga King of Kantarodai which accounts for the peaceful relations he had with the Nagas. When Vijaya later shifted to Anuradhapura, the Naga capital there existed at Kantarodai, as in the 2nd century AD, a Chola King Killi Valavan who married the daughter of the Naga King of Jaffna. He says that the Buddhist emigrants from Magadha during the time of Devanampiyatissa and his successors landed at a place called Jumbukola, now known as Sambuthurai. A road connected this port through Kanterodai to the northern entrance of Anuradhapura. The sending of ambassadors by Devnampiyatissa to Asoka of Magadah was also from the port of Jumbukola. The arrival of Asoka's ambassadors was at this port. He further states that out of the eight plants of the Bo tree one was planted at Jumbukola on the spot where the disembarkation occurred. He points out that the old Bo tree standing by the side of Paraly Kandasamy temple at Chullipuram, about 1½ miles from the port, was the plant referred to. The fact that it took 14 days to transport the balance seven plants to A'pura, as contemplated in the Mahavamsa (MV 19:39), testifies to the fact that it had come from rather a long way off, than if it came from Mantota (Mannar), hence a place in the Jaffna peninsula is indicated. Mudaliyar Rasanayagam indicated that Jumbukola was at the coast of Chullipuram in the Jaffna peninsula (A).

From the reign of Devanampiyatissa to the reign of Mahallaka Naga spanning a period of 400 years no mention is made of Nagadipa (Jaffna) in the Mahavamsa. Even during the reign of the Tamil King Elara, who ruled from Plonnaruwa, the North had its independent rule. The Northern coast line from Kovilam Point, Thiruaddinilayam, K.K.S., Tondimannar, Valvetithurai, Point Pedro, Vallipuram, Nagarkovil and Chembiyanpattu were landing places to and from India. The Mahatittha of Mantota landing places was utilised to gain access to Pandya kingdom via Rameswaram. The Cholas too used this route when the kingdom of Pandiya was under their control, specially at Chembiyan Pattu which they made as their military outpost in Lanka.

There would have been a residue of the Tamil invaders and traders who would have made the island their permanent home from Chilaw to Mannar and thence to the Jaffna peninsula and in the East, places like Trincomalee, Batticaloa and beyond. The

Nagas in due process of time got assimilated with the Tamil community while the Nagas and Yakkhas living further south went to form the Sinhala community. It would be seen that the Naga connection ruled the island as would be seen from the names of Kings given below.

Khallata naga	433-439 AD
Cora naga	480-492
Mahadathikamaha naga	549-561
Illa naga (married Demala devi)	578-584
Mahalla naga	676-682
Knyjja naga	724-726
Kuncnaga	726-727
Sri naga I	727-756
Abhaya naga	768-776
Sri naga	776-778

It would be seen from the above, Kings who bear the names as 'Naga' are related by blood to the Naga nephew of Duttugemnu, when he became King destroyed several Buddhist temples and old manuscripts as he was of Hindu persuasion, perhaps of his mother a Naga from the Jaffna peninsula. Apparently Gajabahu (174 AD), had married a Naga princess from Jaffna. After the death of Gajabahu his father-in-law Mahallaka Naga ruled the kingdom. He built the Salipabbat temple in Nagadipa.

The Mahavamsa and the Dipawansa carry a small account of the deeds of Duttugemnu and his defeating an old Tamil King called Elara in single combat. In comparison with the glossy account in the Rajavaliya, compiled as late as the 18th century in Sinhalese Pra-kit, Gajabahu's heroic deeds of procuring from the King of Chola 12,000 Tamils in addition to the 12,000 Sinhala prisoners of war carried away by King Karikalan, by merely appearing in person before the King with a giant called 'Nila' and by threats conducted 24,000 persons to Lanka. Apparently the author of this chronicle had heard about the reference of one Gajabahu in the Tamil epic Silappadikaram and concocted the story that he also brought the jewelled anklets of the Goddess *Pattini* and the insignia of the Gods of the four devalas together with the bowl-relic which was carried away during the reign of Valagamba. The chroniclers go on to state how the 12,000 Tamils were rehabilitated in the country. There is no mention of Gajabahu bringing 12,000 Tamils and the relics stated earlier in the Mahavamsa or Dipawansa. If the story was true, specially the sacred relics, it would have been written down by the authors of the main chronicles of the Dipawansa and the Mahavamsa. It is apparently an after thought by the chronicler of the Rajavaliya, to interpolate the story to boost Sinhala jingoism. There is no record

to show in the history of South India that Gajabahu visited the Sera country and took part in the *Pattini* celebrations. The Pattini cult was already in vogue in the Tamil country to which Gajabahu worshipped and paid homage in his own country.

## CHAPTER 14

## FOREIGN TRADE

Long before Vasco Da Gama, Christopher Columbus, Spanish and Europeans sailed the turbulent seas of the East, in quest of new frontiers for territorial conquest or trade, there was the enterprising Arab, Jew and Tamil sailors sailing the seas making use of the trade winds of the North East and South West to barter for goods in gold, pearls, spices, gems, sandalwood, horses, elephants etc. Pearls from Korkai on the banks of the Tamrapanni river in Tamil Nadu and those from the pearl fishery of Puttalam and Mannar, were in demand long before the advent of the Portuguese. The Nagas, the ancient inhabitants of Lanka were diving for pearls off these shores long before the coming of the Hindu prince Vijaya to Lanka. The Mahavamsa has it that when Vijaya married the Tamil princess from Madhurai of Pandya, he sent annually to his father-in-law, 'a shell pearl worth twice a hundred thousand pieces of money'. (MV 7:72). Hence we had a commodity with resources which were tapped even before 483 BC, the advent of Vijaya. The monopoly of the Pearl fishery off Mannar and Punnai-Kayal of South India was under the Nagas, who had their principality in the North and North West of Lanka. *'The bay of Condatchy is the most central rendezvous for the boats employed in the fishing. The banks, where it is carried on, extend several miles along the coast from Mannar southward, off Aripu, Condatchy and Ponparipu. The principal bank is opposite to Condatchy, and lies out at sea about twenty miles (TIC).* The close proximity of Mannar to Dhanuskodi helped the Nagas consolidate their trade. When Colombo was covered by the jungle tide, Mannar was a bustling trade centre in the East where, Arab, Jew, Greek, Roman and others sailed the comparative calm seas which afforded safe anchorage to barter for the produce of Lanka. The existence of ruins at Mantota, Ponparipu (golden plains ) or called Aripu and the vast expanse of water available in the Giants tank bears ample testimony of a place which was populated and whose people were advanced in agriculture. Strangely enough none of the Sinhala chroniclers attach the construction of this tank to any Sinhala King. This tank comes as a relic of the Naga's agricultural expertise carried from the Tamil country of the present Tamil Nadu. The ruins of the ancient trade belt from Ūruvela, Kuddiraimalai, Mantota to Kadiramalai in the Jaffna peninsula, tells a tale of cities

thriving on export orientated trade. According to Mudaliyar Rasanayagam, Mantai (Mannar), shows signs of ancient ruins which were neglected by the Archaeological Department. This area was sold to the Nattucotai Chetties who in search of the site of the ancient Tiruketisvaram temple had committed acts of vandalism. These Chetties were also responsible for similar offences in South India (Thinnevelly), in their religious zeal to redecorate the temples. They were called Chitini (Chetties) who are learned in pearls; and are employed to sort and value them according to their weight, beauty and goodness, dividing them into four sorts (AHT).

In ancient times Jaffna peninsula was an island. The south east end of it was the eastern entrance by sea to the Gulf of Mannar from the Bay of Bengal. All maritime trade to the East by ships was through this channel. At present this channel at the East end has been permanently silted by the action of the sea through the ages, at Elephant Pass. The shipping lane from the South to the North was either through the gap in the Adam's Bridge or through Rameswaram in the South-East of Tamil Nadu. The ruins from Chilaw to Jaffna testify to the fact of very early settlements by the Tamils. The temple at Muneswaram was the place visited by Rama who after the battle, with remorse, thought of the dead in battle. He is supposed to have performed religious ceremonies to absolve him of the death and misery of many in war. This temple was renovated by Vijaya after his coronation as an offering as a good Hindu. Parakrama-Bahu Vi (1412-1467 AD), gifted several villages and land for the up-keep of this temple, specially after the victory over the Mukuvars who were monopolising the dry-fish trade in the Chilaw and Puttalam districts.

Dr. Paul Pieris (JRAS cb. Vol. 26) has this to say, '*Long before the arrival of Vijaya, there were in Lanka five recognised Iswarams of Siva which claimed and received adoration of all India. There was the Tiruketheeswaram near Mahattitha (Mannar), Muneswaram dominating Salawatta and the pearl fishery, Koneswaram near Mantota, Tirukoneswaram near the great Bay of Kottiya and Nakuleswaram near Kankesanthurai. Their situation close to the Ports cannot be the result of accident or caprice and was probably determined by the concurrence of a wealthy mercantile community whose religious wants called for attention. The presence of these ancient temples, speaks to us of the grandeur of a past generation of Tamils who inhabited the vicinity for commercial enterprises and which stands as a sentinel to the memory of those Tamilian entrepreneurs of a by-gone age*'. (FJ).

There were the Romans, Arabs, Greeks etc., who came with the trade winds to barter for spices, pearls and other commodities. The Jewish traveller Benjamin Tudela visited Ceylon in the 8th century and states that the inhabitants were fire worshippers and

are called Duchbin and that there were about 3,000 Jews in the island. (JC). The Old Testament records that the ships of Phoenecia with Jews came in for trade during the reign of King Solomon of Jerusalem in the 9th century BC. They visited every Port on the Malabar coast, Coromandel coast and Gulf of Mannar for trade. The contention of Sir Emerson Tennent, identifies Tarshish as Point de Galle in the south of Ceylon, is not correct in the light of the Old Testament records which indicate that Tarshish is a sea Port in the south of Spain, which had trade links with the Phoenecians. Prophet Jonah of the Old Testament scriptures, sailed in the opposite direction to Tarshish, without proceeding to Nineveh. The question of Ophir is rather in doubt, except for the fact that algumwood was used in the building of King Solomon's Temple in Jerusalem, is identified with sandalwood which is available in South India. The fact that the Old Testament commentators state that Ophir is a place south of Palestine, perhaps somewhere in Africa or South Arabia and suggests a further country of Arabia and North Africa and India has been suggested, since the journey takes place once in three years. Ophir may be a Port in the Tamil land either in Tamil Nadu or Lanka. Mudaliyar Rasanayagam, ventures to suggest that Ophir was the country of the 'Oviyar', a tribe of Nagas who had lived in and around Mantai (Mannar), and cites the Tamil Sangam work *Cirupunarusapadai* and refers to the phonetic similarity between Ophir and Oviyar as striking.

The Old Testament records have it that the Servants of Solomon who brought gold from Ophir, brought algumwood and precious stones, (2 Chronicles 9:10 Rvd.Std.B). This verse in the Bible shows that gold, algumwood and precious stones were commodities from the country of Ophir. The vessels came once in three years proves that the country was far away and that algumwood has been identified with sandalwood and precious stones, points to the country of the Tamils of South India. According to the Silappadikaram it is stated that gold, precious stones and food from Ilam were available in the warehouses of Kaveripumpatinam of the Cholas. Could it be a place called 'Ponparipu' (golden plains in Tamil), a place where 'Pon' may have been available south of Mannar and popularly known as *Aripu* which is on the banks of the Kadamba Nadi now called Malvatu oya, the traditional landing place of Vijaya and his men who found copper coloured substances on their hands and legs?

Mudaliyar Rasanayagam's contention is that *'the derivations given by the Sinhala chronicler to Tambapanni as Sinhalam are fanciful and that the people of Ceylon came to be called Sinhala not because they were the descendents of the lion, but because they populated the land Ilam, Silam or Sinhalam and that the story of a lion living with a princess was a wild piece of romance. Hence he adduces that it was easy for the*

author of the Mahavamsa to make up a fanciful derivation for the word 'Sinhalam' (AJ).

When foreign commerce increased in the region of the Gulf of Mannar and the Bay of Bengal, it saw the influx of sea going vessels of Arabs, Romans, Greeks and others calling at the Port of Mantota, another Tamil tribe called the Kadambas who had their headquarters at the mouth of the Kadamba Nadi (called after the Kadambas) took to piracy. The Nagas concentrated in the Gulf of Mannar while the Kadambas held sway around the Arabian sea up to Cochin. To combat this, vessels of the Romans and the Tamils in South India were manned by Roman soldiers. The Chola King Karikalan of the 1st century destroyed the 'hanging forts' of the Nagas at Mantota and the Cera King Senguttuvan too destroyed the might of the Kadambas in the 2nd century.

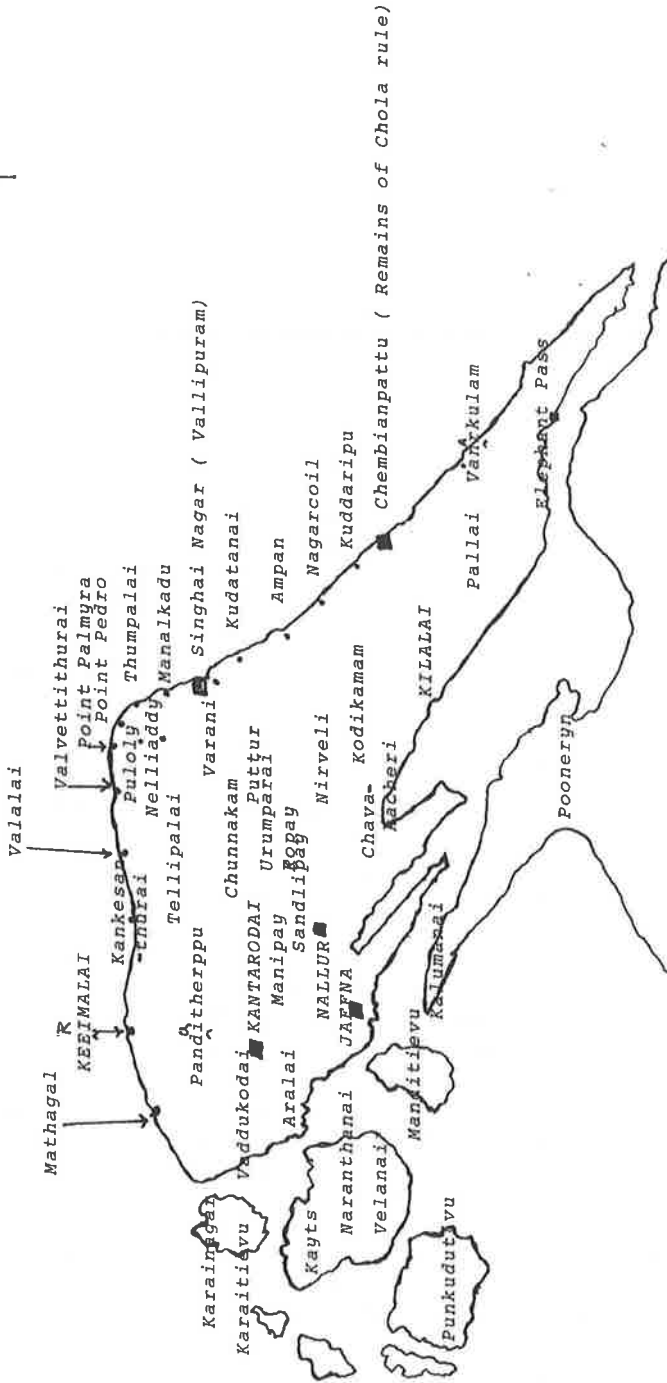
When the eastern entrance to Elephant Pass was blocked by sand banks, ships of the Arabian, Persian, Indian and Chinese were anchored off Kovalam, Jumbkovilam and Katkovilam (Pt. Pedro). Arab merchant vessels put into Jaffna and Karamban (Kayts), to take in water before they sailed to the Bay of Bengal. There is still an ancient Mosque at Karambam with a fresh water well by the sea shore, perhaps a relic of a bygone age.

Ibn Batuta (1344 AD), the Moor traveller from Tangiers mentions his visit to the island of Saylen (Ceylon) to the territory ruled by 'Ayri Shakarwati' (Arya Chakravathi) who is an evil tyrant and keeps pirate ships. When he put into the Port of Battala (Puttalam) which is his capital, he saw the wooden walls and the wooden towers and the coast was covered with cinnamon trees. He says he met the King and stayed with him for three days and enjoyed his hospitality. He understood Persian and was delighted to hear tales of many countries. The King presented him with some valuable pearls and asked him what he wanted. He requested that he wanted to see the footprint of Adam. The King arranged for a palanquin and some men to carry the palanquin. He speaks of Puttalam and some gem pits of Ratnapura on the way to Adams Peak. On the return journey he visited 'Dinawar' (Dondra Head), where there was a vast temple. *There were 1,000 Brahmans who sang and danced before the statue every night.* The idol is of gold about the height of a man and in place of the eyes it had two great rubies. From here he visited the town of Quali (Galle), and thence to Kalanba (Colombo) and thence to Puttalam where he embarked and set sail (IB).





JAFFNA PENINSULAR



■ Ancient Tamil Capitals

## CHAPTER 15

# THE KINGS OF JAFFNA

The word Aryan is a connotation for a 'great or exalted person'. It is basically Tamil in origin. Professor Rhys David in his 'Buddhistic India', commenting on the evolution of the Aryan languages of India maintains that the Vedic Sanskrit is largely mixed up with primitive Dravidian. *'There is little doubt that the Dravidian languages are incomparably older in point of time than Sanskrit. It is not an unreasonable supposition that they once occupied the whole of Hindustan and have been driven to this present position in the South and along the coast by encroachment of other languages coming from the North West'*. (Dr. Maclean).

It is a popular conception that Ugra Singan of Kalinga dynasty was reigning in the kingdom of Jaffna, which included the northern part of Ceylon and the island of Rameswaram about the 7th century. He ruled from the capital of Kanderodai (Kadiramalai) and subsequently shifted his capital to Singai Nagar, in the vicinity of Vallipuram. According to the *Yarlpana Vaipava Malai*, Ugra Singam had a defect in that he was lion-faced and that he was cured by bathing in the waters of Keerimalai. He took the opportunity of descending upon the northern province during the period when there was a rebellion by the district chiefs refusing to pay tribute to Mahinda III (797-801), King of Anuradhapura. With the appearance of Ugra Singam with a huge army, Mahinda changed his policy by coming to terms with the Tamils by displaying tendencies of embracing Hinduism by restoring ruined Hindu temples and winning the hearts of the Brahmins. Ugra Singam, subsequently married a Chola princess of Tanjore who visited Keerimalai and who was healed of her equine face by bathing in the waters of Keerimalai. The princess in gratitude of her miraculous healing built a temple at Mavidapuram known as Mavidapuram Kandasamy Kovil.

Ugra Singam, was succeeded by his son Jayatunga Vararasingam, who retained Singai Nagar as his capital. During his reign King Sena I, of Ceylon was converted to Saivism as his daughter was cured of dumbness by the Sivite Manikkavachakar Swamy. A Pandyan army under Sri Vallabha invaded the country and sacked Anuradhapura. Jayatunga died in the encounter with the Pandyan army. As he had no issues, the Kalinga period of Jaffna kingdom ended with Jayatunga.

The *Yarlpana Vaipava Malai*, has it that a blind minstrel by the name of Vira Raghavan or Raghavan Mudaliyar, a Vellala had a

quarrel with his wife on her delay in giving him his food at the proper time and hence deserted her and the village of Urhalar in the Chingelpet district of Tondaimandalam, came to the Northern Province and sought audience with Jayatunga. It is stated that the blind minstrel sang songs of praise of the King accompanied on his lyre (YAL), that the King Jayatunga was so taken up with the songs that he presented him with an elephant and a piece of sandy stretch of land 'Manalthidel' which subsequently came to be known as Yalpanam after 'Yal' (lyre) Pannan (Poet), which is known even to this day. This piece of land comprises of the areas of Colombuthurai, Karaiur and Navanthurai of the city of Jaffna. The Yalpani, settled a large number of his people from Thondaimandalam of South India. Subsequently due to conflicts with the Sinhala people living with them, most of the Tamils returned to their native land. Hence the first major colonisation received a temporary set back. There was a vacuum of about 90 years which was filled by another Kalinga prince, Magha in 1215 AD. Jaffna relapsed for 90 years under the yoke of the Lambakkana King Sena II (853-934 AD), who sacked Madhura and thereafter under the supremacy of the Cholas of the Polonnaruwa period and further by the Kalinga Kings of Polonnaruwa period till 1215 AD. There are two instances which are quoted to prove that Tamils had lived in Jaffna during these periods, in around 797 AD, under Mahinda II, when the district chiefs of the Tamil inhabitants revolted against Mahinda and the other proof was the *Nainatievu Tamil inscription* of Parakaramabahu the Great of the 12th century AD.

According to a copper plate inscription near Giants tank, Parakaramabahu II (1153-1186 AD), was born in Singai Nagar in the Jaffna Peninsula and ruled from here, before fighting his way into the throne of Lanka. It is stated by Farrer that, '*By the grace of his Tamil alliance, Parakaramabahu became master of all Ceylon*'. Then again Still states, '*The hand of the Tamils was strong in Lanka, Parakaramabahu himself a Brahmin and chiefly of Tamil blood, made his conquest largely through Tamil aid. Indeed he would not have been King of Lanka but for the Tamil allies. He belonged to the Brahmin Kalinga blood of Jaffna*'. (A).

The colonisation of Yarlpanam commenced by Yarlpani ended in failure as many Tamils returned to their homes in South India due to persecution by the Sinhala community. As a matter of desperation and to save the Tamils, Malavan, son of Selvarajah of Pompattiyur of Pandya, went to Madhurai and prevailed upon Magha who was studying state craft to take up the vacant throne of Yarlpanam (Jaffna).

Magha alias Singhai Aryan arrived in Yarlpanam and amidst much rejoicing, Malavan handed over the crown of Yarlpanam to Singhai Aryan. Brahmins were bestowed with land and gold and

the poor were fed and the King taken on an elephant round the streets for people to pay homage. Singhai Aryan arrived with his Brahmin Prime Minister Nilakanda Aiyar alias Puneka Vahu and a priest by the name of Kangethra Aiyar, a Brahmin and founded a fortress and city of Nallur. He built temples on all four corners of the city. On the east, Veyiluvantha Pillaiyar Kovil, on the west Veerakathi Amman Kovil, on the south Kalaya Vinayar Kovil, in the north kovils of Saddanathan, temple Thaiyalnayaki Amman and Salaivinayakar temple. After building the city of Nallur and the temples he made a triumphant entry into the city with his Queen Thilkaivathiyar and celebrated the occasion with pomp and splendour. *'He bathed and arranged his hair, applied sacred ashes and worshipped the Gods. He wore an overcoat, a silk cloth shawl, earrings, a head cloth, rings on his finger, wrists and ankles, necklace with pathakkams, a golden waist string of many folds, a pair of epaulettes and all other ornaments specially worn on his forehead which were the gifts from Malavan. There were various kinds of music which sounded like the voice of thunder. There were moon coloured umbrellas, chowries and torches, the waving of camphor lights, sprinkling of perfumes and the hum of Brahmins uttering blessings. The King that day, gave alms of land, gold, virgins, cows, rice and elephants. (Kailaya Malai). Having thus secured his position, he obtained many colonists from Sera, Chola and Pandya, with their families, slaves and dependents and settled them in and around his kingdom'.* (AJ).

#### COLONISATION OF YARLPANAM BY TAMILS

During the arrival of Kalinga Magha in Jaffna there were already in the peninsula Tamil people, Kalingas in Singai Nagar in the extreme East end of the peninsula, Vanniyars and Tamils left behind by the numerous invasions of Ceylon. There were the Keralas and Tamil soldiers of Magha's army. The King Kalinga Magha alias Singhai Aryan got down from the Chola country Siva Vellalas to establish his agricultural and Siva kingdom. (YM).

According to the Yarlpana Vaipava Malai, King Singai Aryan settled the following people to occupy his kingdom.

##### 1. *Thinneveli*

Pandimalavan of high caste family of Pompattiyur and his brother, his cousins Sanpakamalavan, his brother and the five families who had come with him.

##### 2. *Myliddy*

He settled Narasingadevan, the eldest son of Puravalaithidevan of the city of Kaveri.

##### 3. *Tellipalai*

He settled Senpakamapanam a Vellala from the city of Vavi, his kinsmen Senthaira Sekeramanapanan and Kanagarayar of the Chetty clan.

4. *Inuvil*

He settled Perayiramudaiyan a Vellala from Kovalur. He later moved towards the west since Inuvil was not developed.

5. *Pachilapalli*

He settled Neelakandan, a Vellala from Kachuyur who had won many royal distinctions and his four brothers.

6. *Puloly*

He settled Kanagamalavan a Vellala from Chigaramanagar and his four brothers.

7. *Tolpuram*

He settled Kooparyeethiran a Vellala from Poopaha country and a Puniyapoopalan.

8. *Anuradhapura*

He settled Thevarajendran, a Vellala from Pulur.

9. *Irupalai*

He settled Mannadukona mudali, a high caste Vellala from Thondaimandalam. He had sung Ererelu, a collection of songs.

10. *Delft*

He settled Seyurerumara Punthuaiya Thanninayakan.

11. *Palavarayankaddu*

He settled Pallavan, a Lord from the city of Kanchipuram and two other Lords.

Most of the present inhabitants of Jaffna are of Chola origin. The Cholas at this time were called 'Aryan Tamils' by their Pandyan neighbours. They arrived with this 'Aryanculture' and continued to conserve it's purity of race, language and Hindu Dharma. Tamil words of the Sangham age like *MUTISAM* (inheritance) and *THEDIYATHETAM* (earned income), continued to be in use in Jaffna even to this day, but forgotten in the Tamil land of its birth of Cholamandalam, South India, which has been replaced by Sanskrit words.

Mudaliyar Rasanayagam states that, 'The next King of Jaffna to rise to power and fame was Kalinga Magha who overran the whole island of Ceylon' and quotes the Culavamsa (CV.80: 62-79), "*Maghas warriors oppressed the people, boasting cruelly everywhere, we are Kerala warriors. They tore from the people their garments, their ornaments and the like, corrupted the good morals of the family which had been observed for ages, cut off hands and feet and the like, destroyed many houses and tied up cows, oxen and other cattle which they made their own property. After they had put fetters on the wealthy and rich people and had tortured them and taken away all their possessions, they made poor people of them. They wrecked the image houses, destroyed many Cetiyyas, ravaged the viharas and maltreated the lay brothers. They flogged the children and tormented the five comrades of the order, made the people carry heavy burdens and forced them to do heavy labour. Many books known and famous, they tore from their cord and strewed them hither and thither. The beautiful vast, proud*

Cetiyas like the Ratnvali and others which embodied as it were the glory of former pious Kings, they destroyed them. Alas many of the bodily relics, their souls as it were disappeared. Thus the Damila warriors in imitation of the warriors of Mara, destroyed in the evil of their nature the laity and the order'. Further the chronicle states that Kalinga Magha, 'invaded Polonnaruwa and captured Parakrama, that man of great might and valour put out the Monarch's eyes and plundered all his resources, pearls, jewels and so forth. The leaders of the soldiers with Manabharana at the head consecrated the Kalinga Magha to the glorious royal dignity of Lanka'. He ruled from the year 1214 to 1240 AD and he and his men were called Malabars and Tamils by the chronicles. He was known as Kalinga Magha and it is plain that he was the King of Jaffna who was better known according to the *Yarlpana Vipava Malai as Koolangai Ariya Chakravathi alias Kulesekera Singhai Ariyan, a Prince of the Chola dynasty, who ruled from Jaffna*. He subsequently took the title name of Segarajasegeram I. The name Koolangai does not appear in the *Kailaya Malai* or *Viyapadal*. It is therefore seen that there is a similarity in the names of Kalinga and Koolangai. It is believed that Koolangai was a misreading of Kalinga from the original moth eaten Tamil manuscripts. The word Kalinga in Tamil could be easily mistaken for Koolangai and Vijaya Koolangai Chakravathi was thus mutilated to Vijaya Kulangai Chakravathi, either by Mylwagana Pulavar or other person. In the *Kailaya Malai*, the first King was called Segarajan (Segaragasegram I). Contrary to the *Yarlpana Vipava Malai*, Mudaliyar Rasanayagam states that Kulangai (Kalinga Magha), did not build the city of Nallur, but the city of Singapura or Singai Nager situated in the Vallipuram area. Most of the Ariya Chakravathies reigned from the above place. When the Portuguese arrived in Jaffna its capital was Nallur and some of the predecessors of King Sangili ruled from Nallur. There were ten Tamil Kings bearing the name of Ariya who ruled the kingdom of Jaffna. The eleventh King was Sapumal Kumaraya alias Sempha Perumal alias Bhuvanakabahu, a Tamil by extraction, ruled from 1440 to 1467 AD. He was the Viceroy of Parakramabahu VI, King of Kotte. Sapumal Kumaraya was the son of an Indian Panikkan by a Sinhala lady and adopted by Parakramabahu V, as his own son. (JCBRAS. Vol. XX No. 10 p. 69). After the year 1467 AD, Kanagasuriar Singai Ariyan ruled from the kingdom of Nallur, which was vacated by Sapumal Kumaraya alias Bhuvanakabahu, as Segarajasegram VI. The old city of Nallur had been rebuilt by a new and beautiful town in Nallur, which he made his capital. It was from this point of time, that Nallur was the capital of the Kings of Jaffna. Previously they ruled from Singai-Nagar. Hence it is presumed that Bhuvanakabahu the Viceroy of the Sinhala King Parakramabahu V of Kotte, was builder of the seat of Government of Nallur. It is alleged that a

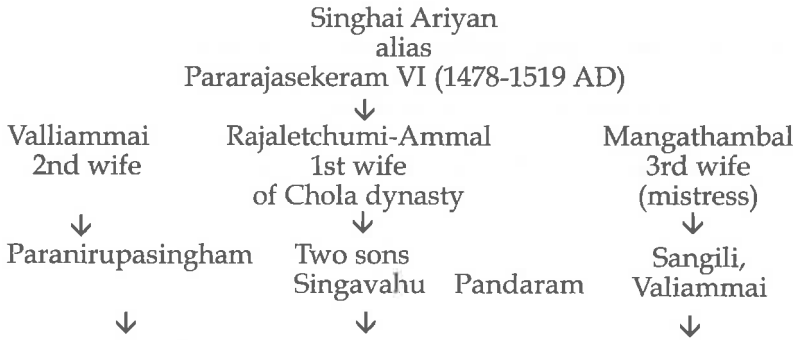
Tamil verse quoted by Mootootambypillai in his 'History of Jaffna' states that Bhuvanakabahu caused the Jaffna town and the Nallur temple to be built. It was also known as Sri Sanghabodhi a title borne by Kings of the Sinhalese. It is further alleged by Dr. Pieris that Bhuvanakabahu was daily invoked in the 'Kattiyam', of Nallur Kandasamy temple, during festivals. This is reproduced in part here (KJ).

*'Sriman Maharajati rajaya ahanda Pumandala pratiyati kandara visvanta kirti Sri Gajavilli mahavalli sameta Subrmanya padra vinda janatiruda Sodasa mahadana Suryakula vamsotbhava Sri Sangabodhi Bhuvanakabahu smuha'.*

The last sentence commencing as 'Suryakula' and followed up by 'Sri' Sangabodhi Bhuvanakabahu', categorically points to Sapumal Kumaraya alias Sempha Perumal alias Bhuvanakabahu, as associating with the Sun line of Kings, although he was a Tamil by extraction, as the builder of the temple in question. He was the Viceroy of Parakramabahu V, King of Kotte. When Parakramabahu abdicated his throne in favour of his daughter's son whom he called Vira Parakramabahu. On hearing of the news Sapumal Kumaraya abandoned the kingdom of Jaffna and proceeded with an army and captured Kotte and slew Vira Parakramabahu and ascended the throne as Sri Bhuvanakabahu vi (1473-1480 AD).

Chapter 91 of the Culavamsa does not indicate much about Parakramabahu VI, except that he enshrined the relics in gold and gemstones. The Rajavaliya (RV p. 68 and 69), states that Parakramabahu sent his minister Senanayake Sapumal Kumaraya to capture Yapapatuna as he thought that there should not be two seats of government in Lanka. The chronicler makes Sapumal Kumaraya a hero by giving a graphic account of how he charged on his black horse to battle the Tamils. *'The streets of Yapapatuna were deluged with blood and how he slew King Aiyiya Chakravathi and took the king's consort and children prisoners and presented them before King Parakramabahu at Kotte, who conferred on him many honours and who delivered to him Yapapatuna and sent him away'.* If Sapumal captured Jaffna it would be in the year 1440 AD, when Jaffna was ruled by Kanagasuriar Singhai Ariyan alias Segarajasekeram VI, who was weak and lenient towards the Sinhala people. The Yarlpana Vipava Malai has it that the Sinhala people got help from the people of the Vanni to rise in open rebellion and that he fled to India with his Queen and two sons, Pararajasekeram and Segarajasekeram. Perhaps it was at this stage the hero of the Rajavaliya is alleged to have killed its ruler and presented the Queen and the children to the King of Kotte. According to the Yarlpana Vipava Malai, Ariya Chakravati Kanagasuriar Singhai Ariyan returned to his kingdom after a lapse of 16 years. Perhaps this was when Sapumal Kumaraya had

ascended the throne of Kotte by killing Vira Parakramabahu having placed Vijayabahu as King of Jaffna. Vijayabahu was slain by Pararajasekeram VI, son of Kanagasuriar Singhai Ariyan. The former restored the kingdom and installed his father back on the throne of Jaffna. The ring leaders of the rebellion were slain and many Sinhala families fled to Kotte. Some Sinhala families remained faithful to the Tamils and stayed on in Jaffna. Pararajasekeram VI, married Rajaletchumi a Princess from the Chola dynasty. They had two sons, Singha Bahu and Pandaram. The second wife Valliammai was a Vellala, belonging to the line of Pandimalavan of Thinnevely to whom were born Paranirupasingham and three others. Sangili was his son by a third wife an irregular marriage (TAE). Before the death of his father he was crowned King of Jaffna (1478-1519 AD). His family tree is appended below.



Mudaliyar Rasanayagam states, 'The reign of his successor Pararajasekeram was equally illustrious. The encouragement given by the latter to literature resulted in the composition of the very able and learned work called *Raghu Vamsam* by Arasakesari, afterwards the son-in-law of the King, and of another work on medicine called Pararajasekeram. During the reign of Vijaya Bahu vii (1511-1529 AD), of Kotte, Jaya-Vira Bandara was king of Kandy. The latter's queen was suffering from a stomach ailment which could not be cured by his physicians. He appealed to Pararajasekeram VI, king of Jaffna, to send a physician. The latter sent his son Paranirupasingham to Kandy. The ailment of the queen was cured by Paranirupasingham and the king was surprised at the early cure that he honoured Paranirupasingham. The fact that there is at Nallur a land called "Arasakesari Valavu" points to the time when Arasakesari lived and when Nallur was the capital of Jaffna. It is therefore, submitted that Pararajasekeram, the father-in-law of Arasakesari was the son and successor of Kanagasuriar who established himself at Nallur after the town had been abandoned by Sempha Perumal alias Bhuvanakabahu



## VI King of Kotte'.

It is stated that one Parajasekeram was reigning in the kingdom of Jaffna in 1414 AD, who was Gunaweera Singhai Ariyan who ruled as Parajasekeram V, and that there are inscriptions at the base of the chief shrine at Rameswaram, South India, where it is recorded that the shrine was built by him. (Arch: S.S.I. Vol. IV, pp. 56 and 57, Shrines). During the reign of King Marthanda Singhai Ariyan Parajasekeram III (1325-1348 AD), the Moor traveller Ibn Battuta from Tangiers, in his voyages of the East visited a place called Batthalah in Lanka where he had audience with the Sultan Ariya Chakravathie whom he describes as '*who is an evil tyrant and keeps pirate vessels*', (MC, p. 254). The place called Batthalah of Ibn Batuta is none other than a village between Puttalam and Chilaw called Mundal, four miles North of the Battul Oya, which was the frontier town of King Marthanda Sinhahi Ariyan alias Parajasekeram III, and explains the presence of 'trunks of cinnamon trees torn up by the torrents', (MC p. 254) of the Battul Oya. The cinnamon plantation is still in the Chilaw district and extending further south. During the latter half of the 14th century of the reign of Vickramabahu III, (1347-1374 AD), his minister Alagakkonara came into prominence. The Minister built the fortress of New Jayawardhanapura or Kotte. Ariya Chakrvarthi (1348-1371 AD), Gunapooshana Singhi Ariyan alias Segarajasekeram IV, the King of Jaffna was attacked by sea and land, but was repulsed, capturing his encampments at Colombo, Wattala, Negombo and Chilaw (SH p. 84). According to the late chronicle Rajavaliya, the war was brought about by the Alagakkonara hanging the tax collectors of the Ariya Chakravathi. '*The very position of Kotte in the swamps near Colombo is proof of the straits to which the Sinhalese had been reduced, and there can be little doubt that the Jaffna Kingdom was for a time paramount in the low country of Ceylon. The Tamil inscriptions at Kotagama in Kegalle district however, is almost its only surviving relic*'. (SH. p. 84). The writer was unable to locate the Kotagama inscriptions in 'Ancient Inscriptions in Ceylon' collected and published by Dr. Edward Muller for the Government of Ceylon — ex Civil Service Ceylon, or in the more elaborate publication in four volumes titled 'Epigraphi Zeylinica by D. N. De Silva Wickremasinghe — chief epigraphist to the Government of Ceylon. According to Codrington, '*The Kotagama inscriptions are published in the report of the Kegalle district, page 85; but the translation has to be amended 'Setu' being the motto of the Jaffna Kings and 'Anuresar', meaning 'Lord of Anurai', a word used in Tamil originally for Anuradhapura and then for any capital of the Sinhalese*' (SH p. 89).

The writer is personally aware that a Sinhala Karava family going by the name of Johny Silva (late), Catholic and perhaps one of the Karava descendants of the Tamils from the Coromandel

coast, owned his ancestral property in Chilaw where the deeds (*Thombu*) of the property have been written in Tamil. Then again, the case of a friend of the writer who owns a coconut estate in the *Mundal* area found to his astonishment that the notarial deeds (*Thombu*) of his estate are all in Tamil. These were property sold by the original owners in less than fifty acre lots to beat a restriction brought in by a Government then in power.

These are incidents where we find that the civil administration of Chilaw and as far down as Negombo and even in the area of Keppungoda, north of Hendala in the western Province and within the district of Colombo, have been in the TAMIL language of the then ruling King, which in this case was the Tamil Kingdom. This further establishes the claim by the travel findings of the Moor traveller Ibn Battuta of the 13th century when he visited the Tamil King Ariya Chakravathi alias Parajasegeram III, at Puttalam whom Ibn Battuta refers to as 'Tyrant' and a 'Pirate' but yet was so good enough to help him to worship at the foot impression of Adam at Adam's Peak. It would be seen that the deeds '*Thombu*' of the land in the Maravila and Negombo areas too had been written in TAMIL and attested by *Tamil Notaries* in the TAMIL language six hundred years ago. These are then the land of the Tamils in the 13th century and beyond, ruled by King *Ariya Chakravathi alias Marthanda Singhai Ariyan alias Pararajasegram III* (1325 1348 AD), and his successors until the capture of Lanka by the Portuguese in the 16th century. This proves, 'res ipsa loquitar', beyond any shadow of doubt, that as the Notarial deeds, '*Thombu*' were written in Tamil that the civil administration of these districts were by the Tamils whose Kings ruled from Jaffna. This was 'in situ', till the arrival of the first Europeans on the scene (see map).

The Sinhalese kings divided the country into various districts for revenue purposes. Each district was ruled by a Disawa appointed by the king. Two such districts were '*Hatkorale*' (seven Korala), and '*Wellasey*' (see map — Early British Times). The seven Korala covered Chillaw, Puttalam up to Matale and the Wellasey district covered Batticaloa up to Kataragamam. These were some of the areas occupied by the Cholas (Tamils), who fought under the Tiger flag. It is stated by Pundit Dr. Nandadeva Wijesekera, in his book, '*The Sinhalese*' at page 392 as follows: ' . . . *Tiger flag represented the Wellasey Disawa and also Hatkorala*' (ZS). This confirms the presence of the Cholas (Tamils), in these districts and their subsequent generation also adopting the '*Tiger flag*'.

## CHAPTER 16

## EXPLOITS OF SANGILI

Sangili, the son of King Pararajasekeram Vi, by his mistress Mangathambal decided he should rule the kingdom of Jaffna after his father, and hence adopted court intrigues and murder to achieve his ends. He got rid of Singha Bahu, the heir apparent, by administering poison in his food. Subsequently Sangili killed Pandaram, the brother of Singha Bahu and his half-brother by stabbing him to death. King Pararajasekeram through fear hid himself, but his son Paranirupasingham by his second wife Valliamai confronted Sangili, who pacified him by stating that they should not fight with each other as the Vanni people are awaiting an opportunity to capture the kingdom. It was then agreed that Sangili should be the King and Paranirupasingham to be his Prime Minister. Sangili, crafty as he was, captured the kingdom in 1519 AD, after gaining control of the armed forces.

Jaffna was the safe haven for all political victims of the South from time immemorial. In 1543 AD, the three sons of Vijay Bahu VII of Kotte; Bhuvanakabahu, Raigam Bandara and Mayadunne fled Kotte fearing punishment at the hands of their father. Sangili, helped the trio to defeat their father Vijaya Bahu VII and murdered him. The eldest of the three brothers, Bhuvanaka Bahu VII became King of Kotte, in 1521 AD.

During the reign of Sangili, who was not crowned King, but a quasi prince, went on a rampage, by slaughtering all the Catholic converts to Christianity in Mannar in the year 1544 AD. After the massacre of the Christians, Sangili fell upon the Buddhists in Jaffna, who were all Sinhala people. He destroyed the places of Buddhist worship and expelled them beyond the boundaries of his kingdom. Those Sinhala people who chose to remain or were unable to flee, became slaves of the Tamil chieftans and are known as '*Kovia*' to this day. The *Nalavas* of Jaffna, also appear to be Sinhala slaves, who due to lack of a trade climbed trees to tap toddy from the rustling Palmyrah palms (AJ p. 383). Of the so-called depressed castes, the Pallas were the slaves who accompanied their aristocratic Tamil masters from South India and subsequently were employed in cultivation of land belonging to their masters. They too took to climbing trees to enhance their living conditions. These two classes of people, Kovias and Nallavas were once Sinhala people, disowned by their original brethren and now find a homeland in the North as a general

factotum of the Tamil Vellalars. 'The 'Tanakras', were ancient elephant keepers. They are those who supplied the necessary fodder to the stables of the King. ('Tana' in Sinhala denotes 'grass'.) They perhaps on account of the services rendered by them were not expelled from the country and later became inseparably mixed with the Tamils among whom they had to remain'. (A.J. p. 383). Some of these depressed classes are often referred to as the people belonging to the 'one knot' society of Jaffna.

The Yakka tribe, the warriors of Vijayabahu and their families who were residing in Chavankoddai and Chavachcheri were also driven out of his kingdom. These were the prisoners of war captured by King Kulotunga Ariyan when he destroyed Yaapahu (YVM. TSCF). There is no such record, except for the fact that Mylwaganam Pulavar refers to the episode during the reign of the next King which was Bhuvanaka Bahu I (1273-1284 AD), where Ariya Chakravathi, Kulotunga Singai Ariyan (1256-1279 AD), where, 'He laid waste the kingdom in every direction and entered the proud stronghold of Subahadia Yaapahu. The sacred tooth relic and all the costly treasures there he seized and returned with them to Pandu kingdom. There he made over the tooth relic to King Kulasekera, who was the sun for the lotus blossom of the stem of the great Kings of the Pandus'. (CV 90: 44-47). According to the historical inscriptions of South India ( HC. p. 166), it is stated that after the death of Bhuvanaka Bahu I, the Ariya Chakravathi laid waste Yaapahu and captured the relics and handed them to King Kulasekera. It is apparent that Kulasekera Pandya on collusion with the King of Jaffna ransacked Yaapahu and the prisoners of that war were held at Chavankoddai and subsequently in the reign of Sangili driven out of the kingdom.

Sangili plundered all the wealth of the Vannis, when Vannian chief Karappidian was murdered by one of his servants for raping his daughter. The Maravars who came from Ramanathapuram in South India, to rob the people in his kingdom met with a terrible fate at the hands of Sangili. Most of them were murdered. The remnants settled in the forest of Pandyanthalvu. Although Sangili was the uncrowned king of Jaffna, yet, Paranirupasingham was recognised as King by the people, who had his headquarters in Nallur. Sangili, who was returning to Jaffna after quelling a rebellion in Vadamaradchi due to a famine, had to pass through Irupalai when his army band stopped playing. When Sangili was told that it was the area of Paranirupasingham, he was furious. He was aware that the former was alive and that the Vanni people had made peace with Paranirupasingham and there was a copper-plate inscription demarcating the boundaries of the Nallur kingdom. He once again adopted a policy of reconciliation by offering a title of 'Mudali' to the names of Pararajasingham and

Paranirupasingham. He then informed the latter that his father would reign supreme in all the districts and that it would pass on to his descendants and offered the title of '*Madappali*' to his descendants. The word *Madappali* connotes a title of Chieftain of five hundred districts. The former King Parajasingham took the precaution to hide all his treasures in the Vanni country, as did his predecessors in time of upheaval. It would be of interest to note of a similar title of '*Mudali*', conferred on a ruling party in the Kandy district. It is stated that of the great '*Bandaras*' who ruled much of the present Kandy district thus, 'Seemingly after this the turbulence of the Bandara was brought to an end by Vickrama Bahu. The Bandaras were deprived of their umbrellas and shields and were given '*Mudali*' titles' (EZ. vol. IV. p. 10).

Father Xavier, a Portuguese missionary desirous of settling Portuguese people in Yalpanam ever since Sangili massacred the converts of Mannar, was in secret contact with Paranirupasingham as he was aware of the ongoing enmity between them. The latter was aware that he could not reign unless he ousted Sangili and hence decided to support the Portuguese in capturing the kingdom of Jaffna. Having conspired, Paranirupasingham and Kakkai Vannian impressed Sangili of the benefits in trading with the Portuguese. Although Sangili refused in the first instance, subsequently consented, which was to be the first step in his downfall. Sangili, was enamoured by the gifts bestowed on him and allowed the Portuguese to build houses on the sea coast. The Portuguese lost no time in building a fort close to the sea, camouflaged by the jungle. Sangili, who went on a hunting expedition came across the fort and ordered the fort to be demolished and all the soldiers withdrawn. As the fort was not demolished, Sangili attacked the fort. The battle commenced with heavy casualties to the Portuguese, in spite of their superior fire power, while sometimes they refused to fire, during which time Sangili's warriors slaughtered the Portuguese. On the eleventh day of fighting the Portuguese were defeated. Sangili sacked the fort and demolished it and captured all the treasures.

Paranirupasingham, was distressed at the failure of the Portuguese, hence he decided openly to assist them. He sought the help of Kakkai Vannian with an ingenious plot to capture Sangili. Kakkai Vannian and Paranirupasingham attacked the Nallur kingdom by night while the Portuguese attacked from the west by day. During the course of the battle, Kakkai Vannian, as planned, went in disguise into Sangili's army and while another was engaging Sangili in a conversation about his valour, Kakkai Vannian stepped forward and took off his disguise. Sangili was happy to see him on his side of the camp, and thinking that he had come to help him embraced Kakkai Vannian. Kakkai Vannian

held him in a body grip and at this juncture the Portuguese rushed in and captured Sangili. Paraniurupasingham, who was also present forbade the warriors not to fight. Sangili was chained and Nallur kingdom was captured in 1620 AD. The former King Pararaja-segeram, fled to the Vanni district, where he was killed by a Brahamin for a reward, which was not paid, as the Portuguese wanted him alive. Instead the Brahamin paid with his life.

Sangili was produced before a Portuguese court, where he was accused of reigning without being crowned, of rising in revolt against the father, of murdering the heir apparent to the throne etc. He was found guilty and was duly executed in a court yard of the temple, perhaps in Nallur.

The Portuguese, ruled the kingdom of Nallur. They demolished the fortress of Nallur and from the stones built a fort near the sea shore, which Sangili had previously destroyed. The Portuguese destroyed the temples and spread the Roman Catholic faith. During the lifetime of Paraniurupasingham, the temples of Nallur and Keerimalai were spared. These areas were given to be governed by Paraniurupasingham with the title of 'Madappali', to his Pararaja-singham Mudali clan, as was decreed by Sangili. He distributed his property to his seven sons and daughter. Nallur and Kaliyankadu to Aakamaivalli. Mallakam was given to Thanapalasingham Mudali, Sandlipay to Vettivelautha Mudali. Arali to Vijayadevendra Mudali, Atchuvely to Thevaraja Mudali, Udupiddy to Sandrasegrampanasinga Mudali, Kachchai to Rajaratna Mudali. His daughter Vethavalli was given in marriage to a Vellala caste man and was given Mathagal.

At the death of Paraniurupasingham, the Portuguese demolished the remaining Hindu temples and many were converted to their faith. The Portuguese thereafter followed the tradition of appointing Chieftans to the districts in the kingdom.

In 1560 AD, Don Constantine de Braganza the Viceroy of India, *'fitted out an arnament against the people of Jaffna in Ceylon, to revenge the persecutions to which the native Christians were subjected. It was accompanied by the Bishop of Cochin, who before the town was assaulted, performed Mass and granted numerous plenary indulgences for those soldiers who should fight valiantly and a general absolution to all who should fall'*. (ZLP. p.109).

It is interresting to note the waywardness of the Portuguese, while professing the Roman Catholic faith enforced their religion through trade or by sword to proselytize the natives, but repugnant to the teachings of Jesus Christ.

Juan de Castro, was a most meritorious Governor of India in 1545 AD, under whom justice prevailed and commerce protected. He died in 1548 and left the following record of his countrymen.

*"I dare not govern India, by men who are so changed from the truth and honour. The Portuguese entered India with the sword in one hand, and the crucifix in the other: finding much gold, they laid aside the crucifix to fill their pockets" (ZLP. p. 108).*

A Portuguese priest at Goa being asked by one of the Dutch in power, *"when do you imagine the sway of my countrymen will melt away like that of yours in India?"*, in reply the Portuguese priest said, *"As soon as the wickedness of your nation shall exceed that of my people"*. (ZLP. p. 118).

## CHAPTER 17

DECLINE OF THE KINGDOM OF  
JAFFNA

From 1564 to 1573 AD, Paraniropasingham ruled Jaffna as Premier under the Portuguese. According to Yarlpana Vipava Malai the kingdom of Jaffna ceased to exist after the death of Paraniropasingham in 1573 AD.

Rev. S. Ganaprakaser O.M.I., of Jaffna, who wrote the book titled 'The Kings of Jaffna during the Portuguese Period', states that the following Kings ruled from Nallur from 1467 AD:

1. Kanagasuriar	Segarajasingham	1467AD
2.	Pararajasekeram	1478
3. Sangili	Segarajasekeram	1519
4. Puviraja Pandaram I (son of Sangili)	Pararajasekeram	1561
5. Kunchi Nayinar	(usurpher)	1565
6. Periya Pulle	Segarajasekeram	1570
7. Puviraja Pandaram II.	Pararajasekeram	1582
8. Hendamana Cinga (Ediemanasingha)	Pararajasekeram	1591
9. A minor son under the regency:		
a. Arasakesari		1651
b. Sangili Kumara		1617
10. Philip de Oliveria	Portuguese	1620 AD

After the death of Paraniropasingham in 1573 AD, Six vassal Kings ruled Jaffna under the Portuguese. All of them showed resistance to the Portuguese and tried to wrest power from them.

Puviraja Pandaram I, son of Sangili ruled for five years.

Kunchi Nayinar, of unknown ancestry seizes the kingdom and was imprisoned by the Portuguese.

Peria Pulle Segarajasekeram, although nothing was known of his ancestry, made three attempts to capture Mannar with the help of the Naik rulers of Tanjore, but failed in his attempts.

Puvirajah Pandaram II, reigned for about ten years. During his reign Rajasingha I, became King of Kandy. Dona Catherina was sent by her cousin Rajasingha for safety to the Palace of Puvirajah Pandaram II, King of Jaffna. The Portuguese shifted her to Mannar to be brought up by the Franciscan Friars in their monastery along with her cousin. Puviraja Pandaram was in league with the



Sinhalese King of Kandy by assisting him with troops against the Portuguese. This brought about tremendous losses to the Portuguese, who sent in retaliation troops who landed at Colombuthurai and captured Nallur, with the blessings of the Catholic Priests. After a valiant battle by the Tamil King he was killed in battle near Veerakaliamman temple and his men fought on the streets up to Nallur Kandasamy Kovil, where they made their last stand dying for the cause which they held.

The Portuguese plundered and destroyed everything within their reach. The two Queens with their five children, the wife of Gaya their commander in chief, two Princes, Sangili Kumara and his twin brother and two sons of Kunchi Nayinar were taken prisoners. Ethirmanasingham the son of Periya Pulle was saved by a Portuguese general to be appointed the new King of Jaffna. He was made King in 1591 AD. His position was like that of Don Juan Dharmapala of Kotte, who had to put up with the restraints of the Portuguese and became their puppet. He too was suspected of procuring troops from the Coromandel coast for the Sinhalese King of Kandy.

In 1615 AD, Sangili Kumara was made subruler by the Portuguese and allowed him to carry on with the government as they were involved on two fronts in Kotte and in India. Sangili Kumara presuming that an opportunity had come his way made attempts of alliance with the ruler of Tanjore, the Singhalese King and the Dutch, by withholding tribute. Thereafter, the Portuguese sent Major Oliveria who landed with his troops in Jaffna and defeated Sangili Kumara at Vannarponnai. He was captured and taken to Goa where he was baptised as a Catholic and then beheaded in 1623 AD. It is stated that he refused his hands to be tied behind his back and bowed gracefully to the executioner. Many of the remaining Jaffna royal families were rounded up perhaps due to intelligence reports supplied by the Catholic Priests. Some were sent to Colombo and some to Goa where they spent the rest of their lives.

CHAPER 18

## CASTE SYSTEM

The Tamil country was free from class differences, until the intrusion of Brahamans from the North to Southern India. The Aryans invaded North India in about 1600 BC, and spread their Vedas and the gorgeous three-fire Arya rites in religious observances from East to West and thence to the Deccan. If not for the natural barriers of vast forest-clad hills and rivers which run across India's midriff, protecting the South they too would have been engulfed with the Aryan concept of religious rituals, with 'Agni' (fire), as its most flamboyant ritualistic form of worship backed up with the four Vedas, long before the first century BC. The impact of the Vedas on the lives and minds of North Indians was so great that what was left of the Aryan intrusion into the Hindu religion was their fire-rites. Their language Sanskrit, managed to be confined within the Brahamana fraternity and the imposition of which on the masses met with failure. Today, it is a dead language and so with the Aryan nationality which met with the same fate, as they were absorbed by the Indians and there are no Aryans not even in India. The only relic left behind by them is their Sanskrit mantras, known and understood by the Brahamans, to the Hindhu religious rites where fire played an integral part, specially in matters of 'Hatch, match and despatch'. ( Birth, marriage and cremation.)

Although different classes by occupation existed long before the Aryan influence, it was they who were directly instrumental in bringing about class consciounes by attaching religious connotations to the different occupations held by people of North India.

Inscriptions in South India, indicate that from time to time a small band of Brahamans from the North were invited by Tamil Kings and made to settle in their countries. They settled down far from the city and continued on the fringe of the jungles and in remote places in mountains. Their presence, first influenced the average Tamil and subsequently spread as a fire into places of power from the Hindhu temple to the very palaces of Kings.

It took almost 2000 years to penetrate into Tamilaham. Before the arrival of these Brahamins, there was no caste system in Tamil countries. The Brahamins had one aim and that was to introduce their four-fold division of people, and their fire-rites, as they did in the North, but to this they had opposition.

'No Dravidian was considered worthy of being classed as a Brahamin. The Tamil Kings alone were elevated to the rank of Kshatriyas in spite of their marriage connections with the ancient Velir or Vellala tribes. These Velirs were on that account called 'Ilangollal' or 'minor kings' The Brahamins conjured genealogies tracing them to the sun, the moon or fire. This rendered the position of the Vellalas who had to oscillate between the Vaisya and the Sudra castes dubious and unsettled. Their greatest difficulty, however, was with the hill and forest tribes and the Nagas, who constituted the bulk of the South Indian population. They could not put these earlier Naga inhabitants in the Sudra division along with the Dravidian Vellalas for fear of injuring the feelings of the Tamil Kings and the Velir nobility. They thus contrived a method of classification that would meet their ends by classifying people on the nature of the soil or region in which the tribes happened to live. Hence they contrived the following nomenclature:

Region	Tribe
1. Neytal or Maritime	Paravas, Nulayas and Valaiyas.
2. Marutam or fertile	Mallar (Pallar) and Kadaignar.
3. Mullai or pasture	Idaiyar and Toduvar.
4. Palai or desert	Maravar and Eyinar.
5. Kurinji or hilly	Kuravar, Irular, Savarar, Vedar and Villiyar.

The above classification does not include the Velir or the Vellalar caste. According to Tamil works, they inform us that there were two sections of the Vellala or pure Dravidian. They were those involved in cultivation and those non-cultivation. The latter section furnished statesmen, generals to Tamil kings and carried elaborate titles like Udyans, Rayans etc.

The South Indian living in isolation developed his own tradition of class system based on geographical conditions and occupations. They could not be classed as Sudras owing to the above reason. The Dravidians of the South had no caste system. It was a concept of the Aryans to divide and rule. The southerner either by descent or inclination went into occupations necessary for human living and existence, which broadly was seen in the following tribes:

1. The Hill tribe (Kurunchi people)
2. Forest tribe (Mullai people or shepherds)
3. Those on the sea-board (Neydal the Paradavas)
4. Those in the Desert and barren land (Palai)
5. The Velir's or Vellala (cultivating people who settled down in the luxurious plains and banks of rivers — Mathuram people)

*'The above five tribes through the ages became water tight compartments of social divisions, became castes by geography and occupation. There were the other sub-castes formed like the shepherds and hunters who became Eiyinas, Maravas, Parayans etc. All of them based on occupation. Hence it should be seen that one's occupation determined his caste. However the caste system preserved the identity of the Tamils by protecting against the influx of foreigners like the Arabs , Greeks, Persians who entered and became residents of India, whereby foreign blood and ideas were shut out of Hindhu society. Caste consciouness played an important role in the growth and preservation of Hindu society and culture, minimising class rivalry and enmity and developing a feeling of solidarity' (ITC).*

CHAPTER 19

## CASTES IN JAFFNA

### 1. Vellalas:

These were the landed proprietors of agricultural land and Tamil aristocrats associated with Kings and nobility. People who maintained noble blood right down the ages and unmixed. According to 'Pattinappalai' of the Sangam age the six great virtues of the Vellala were abstinence from:

- a. Killing
- b. Stealing
- c. Propagation of religion
- d. Justice
- e. Hospitality
- f. Honesty.

There are also Siva Vellala Kurukkals, remnants of the Ananars, strict vegetarians who settled down in Navalay probably around Kurukkal Kovil, Varani, Chulipuram and Vannarponnai.

### 2. Madappalis:

When Sanglili, son of Mangathambal mistress of King Pararajasekera VI (1477-1519 AD), wrested power in 1519 AD from his father, to become the uncrowned King of Jaffna, he kindled the wrath of the King and the heir apparent. To appease them he conferred the title of Mudaliyar to the names of the heir apparent as Paranirupasingham Mudaliyar (YVM), which title was conferred on their heirs by the Portuguese. After the death of Paranirupasingham, the Portuguese conferred the title of Madappalis to the Pararajasingha clan. The connotation in this context is a ruler of 500 villages. The Madappalis and the Vellalas got involved in a controversial rivalry as to who was at the top of the caste system. *The Madappalis, the heirs and successors of the ancient Kings of Jaffna demanded more respect than the Vellala clan, when it came to dealings with the state and society. According to Mudaliyar Rasanayagam, 'Kalinga was the original home of the Kings of Jaffna and their near relatives were called Madappalis. The Raja and Kumara Madappali are connected with royal blood increased in number along with the increase of the members of the Jaffna royal house. Those belonging to the Madappali class but not connected with the royal house were termed Sangu-Madappalis. The Charaku-Madappalis were those people who bought these titles from the Portuguese for money. Madappalis were so-called after their original home 'Madappali' in Orissa, Kalinga.'* Madap-

pali is said to be a village in the district of Nathavadi in the Kakatiya (Telugu) kingdom of the 13th century AD in ancient south Kalinga. Nathavadi was ruled by petty kings, one of them was Rudradeva Raja of Madappali in Nathavadi and nephew of Kanapathi. Both became later famous kings at Kakatiya. Rudradeva's daughter Bayyala Mahadevi lived in Madappali (inscriptions of Bezwada and Amarawathy). According to Paranavitana, the Ceylon historian, *'After the conquest of the Muslims of the Kakatiya kingdom which was called, the kingdom of Motupalli', by Marco Polo, the Madappalis migrated southwards and joined forces with the Ariya Chakravathies of Rameswaram and ultimately found their way to Ceylon.'* When the Chola King Rajendra I (1012-1044 AD), conquered Kalinga and Odda, he erected a 'liquid pillar of victory' (ganga — *jalamayam jayastambham*) in his capital with the waters of the Ganges in the form of the tank Colaganga. (TC. p 210). It is also stated that the invasion had left some permanent marks in Bengal of the founding of the Sena dynasty. Kalinga was under the power of the Cholas right through the successors of Rajendra. During the reign of the Cholas, King Kulottunga I, in 1110 AD, due to instability in the affairs of Kalinga, Kulottunga invaded Vengi territory and, *"defeated many powerful leaders of the Kalinga army whose heads rolled on the battlefield, pecked by kites and in the end subdued the seven Kalingas"*. This battle was the result of the non-payment of tributes to the Chola Monarch. It would be seen that the Cholas had their representatives from the royal family to administer the territories conquered in Kalinga, from Madapalai in Orissa during the reign of the Chola Kings and that with the decline of the Cholas, they joined the Arya-Chakravathies in Rameswaram and finally entered Ceylon in 1215 AD and conquered Ceylon and ruled from Jaffna as Kings of Ilangai.

Although the Kings of Jaffna married among the Vellalas, the Madappalis considered themselves higher than the Vellalas and their struggle for supremacy continued for a long time, and became so troublesome that the Portuguese and the Dutch had to secure peace by treating them alike in the matter of honours and offices. Governor Van Rhee writing in 1689 AD, had to explain, *'I think it is necessary to state that a bitter irreconcilable hatred had always existed in Jaffnapattinam between the caste of Vellalas and Madappalis, so that they must not be elevated in rank and offices of honour, one above the other. For these reasons the two writers of the commanders are taken from each so that one of them is a Vellala and the other a Madappali.'* Finally, the Madappalis lost themselves to the Vellala caste (TAE). Mudaliyar Rasanayagam traces the blue blood of the Madappalis not only to the Arya Chakravathi Kings, he goes back to the Kakatiya kingdom of the

12th century where some of the Madappalis had royal blood and were relatives of the Kings of Kakatiya, one of the last of the South Indian kingdoms captured by the Mohamedan invaders.'

3. *Artisans:*

They comprise the goldsmiths, carpenters, braziers, sculptors, blacksmiths and consider themselves Brahamin descendants of Visakarma the Brahamin architect of Gods, some of whom wear the sacred thread.

4. *Dhoby and Barber:*

The Dhoby or Vannan came along with the Vellalas to Jaffna as 'Kudumais' (dependents). There is no Tamil word for Barber. The terminology 'Ambattan', is of Aryan origin. It is stated that during the migration, the boats were overloaded and the Ambattans came without their wives. These Ambattans who came with the first migration were allowed to marry Vellala woman folk. The wives of the Ambattans felt below their dignity to grace functions held in Vellala homes, even to this day.

5. *Kovias:*

It is alleged that they served in the temples — 'Kovilar'. When the temples were destroyed in 1620 AD, by the Portuguese, the *Kovias* lost their jobs and became field assistants of the one time Vellala temple managers. According to Mudaliyar Rasanayagam, the *Kovias* were Sinhala govias who resided in Jaffna, long before the reign of Sangili. Some of them fled Jaffna due to the wrath of Sangili, to the Vanni and Kandy. Those who chose to stay over eventually spoke Tamil and became Tamil *Kovias* of the Vellalas.

6. *Nalavars:*

The present day Nalavars were formerly called 'Nambis'. They were the swordsmen and archers of the Vanniars. It is stated that sixty Nambis were in the pay of Karaippidi Vanniar of Kantharodai, who it is alleged to have raped the wife of a Nambis, whereupon the Nambis murdered his master and the entire Nambis fled through fear and sought refuge with the Sanars who were climbers of trees. From them these Nambis for want of a profession learned the art of climbing palmyrah palms displacing the Sanars from their traditional occupation. These Nambis were later called *Nalavars-shinners* of trees to tap toddy from the palmyrah and coconut palms. The displaced Sanars, took to fishing by using nets.

7. *Pallas:*

During the migration of the Vellalas from the Chola country to Jaffna, the *Pallas* accompanied their masters as their field assistants. Some of them returned back home. But those who remained climbed trees of their Vellala masters to tap toddy, being displaced

by the Kovies as field labourers.

*"According to tradition (TTC p 12), current in Malabar, the toddy tappers are considered immigrants from Izham or Ceylon . . . and it is observed that the Pallar and the Shanar castes are numerous in the Tamil districts which are adjacent to Ceylon — the abode of the Vedda, Yaksha and Nagar tribes".*

8. *Maravars:*

They are those who came from Ramanathapuram, during the reign of Sangili, and were involved in mass thefts in Jaffna. Sangili had many of them killed and the others fled to Pandyanthalvu forest where they settled down.



## CHAPTER 20

## NAVAL WARRIORS

In the first century AD, the discovery of the monsoons by Hipparchus of Alexandria in the late Ptolemaic or early Roman times, saw the opening of direct sea routes between Egypt and India. This made the Arabian harbours lose their importance. The new trade route by the trade winds, was established as the date of the Pereiplus. Ptolemy's description in the first half of the second century showed that Roman trade now reached beyond India to Indo-China and Sumatra and that trade with India and China was highly developed. Southern India was midway between China and the West and the carriage of goods by sea between Malaya Peninsula and Sumatra in the East and the Malabar coast in the west were to a large extent under the monopoly of the Tamils.

Who were these Tamils who ruled the seas? They are the descendents of the Dravidians of Mohenjo Daro who about 3500 years before Christ had a formidable merchant navy in the gulf of Cambay and had their own dry docks to build ships and repair them. These are the people who settled in Southern India about 1700 BC, long before the so called Aryan invasion of Northern India.

During the reign of Karikalan, the Chola Emperor, the port of Puhar in the Chola kingdom, was the world trade centre between East and West during the first century AD. The Cholas ruled the waves in territorial conquests in the region and for the advancement of maritime trade.

Living down the Eastern sea board of South India known as the Coromandel coast or *Kurumandalam* (*Kuru Kula Desa*), comprising the present state of Madras, Kanchipuram, Kaveripattinam and the Tanjore districts on the Kurumandal coast of Kodikarai and Keelaikarai (Pandya), a great martial race belonging to the fishing tribe of swash-buckling sailors, able navigators lived in a group of Vamsams called *Kuru Kula Vamsa* and *Varna Kula Mudalis*. Even to this day sections of them in South of India, present Tamil Nadu, and the eastern province of Ceylon, are still called Kauravars. These Karava commanders named Kuru Kula Rayans, Kuru Kula Taharians and Kurukulat-Tharayains, existed during the reign of the Chola King of Vira Rajendran, Kulotunga III, and Sundara-Pandya-Deva in the 11th to 13th centuries AD. These *Kurukulams* were dynamic military leaders and naval adventurers par excellence. It proved that they could change the history of those

countries, the shores of which were washed by the Indian ocean. From near Ceylon to the west coasts of India, the islands of the seas including Maldives to distant Bali and China was their playground.

The history of Ceylon is replete with the adventures of these Kurukulams employed by their Chola rulers and sometimes by the Kings of Ceylon to further their own ends.

CHAPTER 21

## KURUKULAMS OF JAFFNA

The entire Karear (Fisher), community in Jaffna covers not only the *Kurukulam* proper but also the *Varnakula Vamsams*. According to tradition they migrated from Kaveripattinam, Kanchipuram on the Coromandel coast, bringing with them their chiefs during the reign of Tamil and Sinhala Kings. Having lived on the seaboard, they soon spread from Karaiur and Passaiur in the city of Jaffna to Navanthurai, Mathagal, Myliddy, Valvetithurai, Point Pedro, Trincomalee, Mannar, Mullativu and Batticalo districts. There is a tradition in Mathagal that they accompanied the Bo tree with Sangamitta and landed in Mathagal. The Batticalo Karears were descendents of five families of Kurukulams who migrated from Manampitiya to Chenkaladi, Eraur and Batticola. Their ancestry springs from Negombo.

The *Yayapadal*, a history of Jaffna written in the 16th century records that colonists of Varanakula descent arrived in Jaffna during the first Kalinga dynasty of Jaffna Kings in the 9th century. F. S. G. Perera, refers to Karears in connection with Sangili Kumara's period (1616-1624 AD), where they fought for the lawful claimants to the throne against Sangili Kumara who usurped the throne. When Sangili Kumara went on a begging mission to Tanjore, he got the assistance of the Naik of Tanjore and obtained an army of Kareras to capture Jaffna from the Portuguese. These Karears always fought against injustice on the side of the Tamil and Sinhala Kings against their common enemy the Portuguese. They were patriotic people who placed the interest of the country before religion. They belonged to the *Varana Kula Vamsam*. (*Varuna — God of the Sea*).

## CHAPTER 22

THE KURUKULAMS OF THE  
SINHALESE

During the reign of King Parakrama Bahu VI of Kotte in 1410 AD., *Karavas*, pure Tamils and Hindus, came from the Coromandel coast (Kurumandalam), of the East coast of South India, to defend Ceylon against the Mukuvars at the request of Parakrama Bahu. *'Their much heralded arrival in Ceylon was like celebrating of a processional festival. They marched to Ceylon, led by their Pattankattinars or Pattankattis (Sgh. Patabende), Devars (commanders), Talaivans (leaders), Mudianges, mohottiaras, Aratchies, Kudaikarars (umbrella holders), Tivettikarars (torch bearers), alavattam and fly whisker carries etc. They also came with their kudumais. The Pattankattinars wore frontal plates, with inscriptions of their titles on them, tied round their foreheads, which were on palm leaves, copper or gold plates according to their ranks. "Parakrama Bahu inquired of their lineage and was glad". The first settlement of the Pattankattinars was at Kalutara'.* (Kallu thurai) (TAE).

They came by sail boats and landed in *Muwatuwaram* (Mutuwal) and marched to Puttalam and took on the *Mukuwars* in fierce battle. The battle was fought on land and from the boats of the *Mukuwars*. It is stated that about 1,500 *Karavas* died in the battle. The *Mukuwars* lost the battle and were driven away from Puttalam. These *Mukuwars* came to Puttalam to trade in dry-fish and were harassing the local people. The *Karavas* motto was, *'MUN VACCHA KAAL PIN VAIKA MATAANE'*. After the war, the King settled these *Karavas*, pure Tamil Hindus, in Negombo. As the King's treasury was depleted due to the internecine wars fought by him with his own Sinhala people, he found it difficult to pay these *Karavas*. Hence he gave them gems, fertile land on the west coast and eighteen harbours on the same coast for sea-going trade. These Ports extended, from Puttalam, Chilaw, Negombo, Mutuwal, right down to Kalutara and beyond Ambalangoda, where a great many of them were engaged in trade with the Coromandel coast. (CG. p 8). These *Karavas* did not come with their families and the King to keep them in his service married them to Sinhala brides of the Goigama caste. They were glad at this arrangement by the King and settled down on the west coast having their headquarters in Negombo.

These *Karavas* belonged to three main classes:

*KURUKULASURIYAS  
ARASA OR MAHINDAKULASURIYA and  
VARANAKULASURIYAS.*

These are the house names of the three different classes . The Sinhalese never mention their house-names ("Ge" names) e.g. Kingsley Mendis. It may well be 'KURUKULASURIYA ARACHILAGE Kingsley Mendis'. *This would reveal the true Tamil Hindu extraction.* (Karavas of Ceylon Society and Culture by M. D. Raghavan, K. V. G. de Silva and Co. Ltd., Colombo Publishers (TAE).

Pundit Dr. Nandadeva Wijesekera in his '*The Sinhalese*' states, '*Caste or kula can be known if one's cognomenor family name is known. This is referred to as "ge name" or surname or "wasagama" or "pelentiya". It says that a person belongs to a certain family or a certain caste. The descriptive "ge" name enables anyone to trace the ancestry of the family. People living in the village need to know such particulars in order to associate with persons of different denominations according to their social status*'. (ZS. p 230.)

From the west coast these Karavas married into Sinhala Goigama families and spread to the following areas: Manampitiya (NCP) , Chenkaladi , Eravur and Batticola and Ratalavava (Matale South District). Since the year 1410 A.D. to the present time, the Karavas grew to a multitude of Karava Tamils now speaking the tongue of their Sinhala mothers. Most of them blissfully ignorant of their ancestry.

The story is told of a prominent politician who became the President of Sri Lanka (Ceylon), as having paid rupees 5000 to trace his ancestry, found to his dismay his uncertain ancestry that he is alleged to have paid rupees 50,000 to bury it.' This fact was highlighted by the opposition political party then in power.

The 'footprints' of these Tamil Karavas are still standing as monuments in the form of Hindu Kovils in Negombo's Nacchundankarai (Iswaram's beach) and Kamachiodai (Devi-channel), bear the names of Siva and Parvathy respectively. The present folks living in Muneswaram still speak Tamil in it's original purity. 'The Karava people who lived along the south-western coast, the Arasakulams of Kalutara, Mora tuwa etc., as in Negombo, took a different turn. They were converted from Hinduism straight to Catholicism, during the Portuguese period. Let loose from their Hindu moorings were caught in the net of Catholicism just before they got enmeshed into the intricate social structure of the Sinhala race. The names also changed to Portuguese names, such as Fernandos, de Silvas, Pereras, de Mels, Diasas, Mendis and so forth. 'They were the first to be westernised. With the possession of their own emblems, insignias and titular ranks, suffice it to say that the Karava, whether villager or urbanised, never covers up his caste,

to the contrary he is usually proud of it. (Bryce Ryan, Caste in modern Ceylon, 1953.)

When you take away a main ancient family name, you destroy for all times one of the fundamentals of its existence, an ancient identity. This took place during the Portuguese period, where they manipulated the natives specially of the maritime provinces by a draconian law that only a Catholic had the right to register land. This forced the natives to take up Christian names or Portuguese names for identification by the Portuguese officials. Leading Sinhala families adopted Portuguese names and embraced the Catholic faith to curry favour with the Portuguese for trade benefits and social elevation, thus diluting their national identity for ever. This trend was soon adopted by the lower caste groups to join the bandwagon in taking foreign names and becoming Catholics to hide their identity and rub shoulders with the rich and famous. Thus we see the birth of a new class of people from the flotsam and jetsam of local society who have lost their heritage and history.

Dr. Paul E. Pieris has published extracts from the Portuguese Tombo which gives the original names of the Fernandos etc. before their conversion to Christianity. Dr. Pieris states: "*The names deserve special attention, the majority appear to have been converted to Christianity and adopted European names. Fernando being the most popular surname, but the native name is also given among them being the following: Vira Cutti, Parama Cutti, Nila Citti, Sembaga Perumal, Adambara Perumal, Nahepulle, Avepulle, etc. These point to recent South Indian origin. Purely Sinhalese names are very rare. Important information regarding the South Indian races and tribes who are found on the coast of Ceylon e.g. , Mukkuvas, Moors, Chaleas, Chettis, Achari is supplied by Durate Barbosa*". (The Ceylon Littoral 1593.) The most common surname in the Sinhalese community is FERNANDO, and it is a popular conception in usage and in Sinhala Baila song, that if you are in a crowd among the Sinhalese and call out the name FERNANDO, you are certain to see 30% answering your call!

## CHAPTER 23

JAFFNA, SINHALA KAREARS  
OR KARAVAS

The Karavas of Jaffna and the Karears of the Sinhalese hailed from the sea board of the Coromandel coast of South India, extending from Kanchipuram, Kaverappatinam, Nagapatnam, Velankerni, Vetharaniyam, Kodakari and Keelakkarai. They are both from the same blood stock belonging to the Chola Hindu Tamil clan. They spring from the same locality, Kurukuladesa. They were invited by the Kings of Jaffna and Kotte for their valour in war to help the kings in their local wars and they settled down in the coastal regions particularly the west coast from Puttalam down to Ambalangoda of Ceylon (Sri Lanka). During the time of the Portuguese the Sinhala Karavas adopted Portuguese names and the Tamils changed their names to those of Catholic Saints and were converted to Roman Catholicism.

The Sinhala Karears or Karava adopted the Sinhalese language and were ultimately absorbed into the Sinhala nation, while the Tamil Karavas continued with their own language (Tamil), and customs etc.

In peacetime, history unfolds the part they play as sailors who crossed the rough seas in search of commerce and trade for king and country. In the words of Avaiyar of the 4th century AD, "*Theerai Kadal Odiyum Thiraiviam Theedu*". (Ride the rough seas in search of treasure). In war, they were formidable warriors who flew the 'Tiger' emblem and changed the course of history of several nations specially Ceylon, (Lanka), where they were the King makers. Apart from the Jaffna kingdom, there were 186 kings extending from 483 BC to 1815 AD (CV), most of whom solicited the help from these Karava to either stay in power or to conquer the neighbouring king. The Sinhalese chronicles, Mahavamsa, Culavamsa, Rajavaliya etc., mention the import of these Karavas from the Tamil country in the general terminology of, '*Velaikkaras*', for the assistance in their wars. They were reputed to be ship builders and their ships had carried goods to distant lands in the Persian Gulf, Coral Islands, Burma, Indonesia, Cambodia and perhaps beyond. These Karavas were seasoned sailors who could predict the change of weather conditions on the high seas and plot a course by gazing at the stars, and position of the sun and moon. They carried on their voyages 'Compass birds'. These birds

were used as direction finders of land in rough weather during coastal voyages. The birds when released flew over the boats and thence flew towards the nearest land, hence helping them to find their bearings. These Tamil Karavas of the Chola country, ruled the waves long before Brittania. (*Kappal Ottiya Thamilan.*)



## CHAPTER 24

## SONAKARS

Poets of the third Sangam age (50 BC), refer to Matota (Mannar), as an emporium of trade along with other associate Ports of Kudaraimalai, Kayts, Singhai-Nagar and the inland town of Kantarodai, in Jaffna, where Roman coins have been found exposed by the weather. During this period, all the maritime trade in the region was in the hands of the Nagas, Tamils and the Arabs. Their ambit of operations were confined to the ports of Ceylon and the Coromandel coast and Cochin on the Malabar coast. Large numbers of these ubiquitous Arabs remained in these parts for purposes of trade. They earned the name of 'Marakkalayers' — people of the boats from the Sinhalese in the 14th century AD. By the 8th century, Arab Muslims were engaged in trade from Singhai-Nagar to Batticalo on the west coast.

The town of Kurunegala was the capital of the Kings of the Sinhalese. Perhaps this was also one of the 'refugee capitals' of the Sinhalese Kings from the onslaught of the Tamils. The last Sinhala King who ruled from Kurunegala was Vijaya Bahu V, (1345 AD), who at his death left behind a son by his Queen and another by one of the inmates of his harem; who was of the Moorish tribe. The son of the Moorish woman, named Vasthimi Kumareya gained support of the Ministers by bestowing gifts from the royal treasury and claimed the throne excluding the heir apparent, who retired from the capital and lived in disguise. Vasthimi, continued to reign with popular consent of the Ministers and the people when his predilection for the faith of his Moorish mother soon became his undoing. The Buddhist Ministers lured the king to a hill close to the capital and pushed him over the cliff where he died. As a Moorish usurper had polluted the sanctity of the city by sitting on the throne, the new King abandoned the city and made Gampola the new Capital. (CG, p 146).

During the Dutch period some Tamil families who were converts to Islam came from Kayalpattinam of South India and settled at South Mirusuvil, in the Jaffna peninsula. According to the Yarlpana Vaipava Malai, they carried on trade at the open-air markets of Chavakachari, Kodikamam, Mirusuvil and Eluthumaduval. They held the monopoly of trade to such an extent that they were able to change the name of Mirusuvil to Usan. After some years they found the place not suitable and hence moved to the area close to the Nallur Kandasamy Kovil. The

Hindus living in the area found them a hindrance in the extensions to the temple and as a ruse to get rid of them offered exorbitant prices for the land they occupied. The Muslims did not want to sell. As they could not be dislodged, the Hindus threw chunks of pork in the wells of the Muslim houses. The Muslims did not eat or drink for several days and they sold their properties and shifted to Navanthurai. Periakadai was the street where they lived 'Sonaka Theru' was named after them even to this day.

According to Simon Casie Chitty, the origin of the Muslims is traced to a colony of exiles, *'who were banished from Arabia for their pusillanimous conduct by Mohamed and that they have become so much amalgamated with the converts they made from the lower orders of Malabars, that they are not held in any great estimation by other nations. Though in their own opinion and belief they resemble their progenitors, yet in their habits and customs they resemble the Malabars and speak no other language'*. (CG p 56.) It is stated that according to tradition the *'Moors who reside on the coast of Ceylon (Lanka), and those on the Coromandel coast are descended from a tribe of Arabs, of the posterity of Hashem, who were expelled from Arabia by their Prophet Mohamed as a punishment for their conduct in one of the battles in which he was engaged aganst the partisans of Abu Jaheel, and who afterwards founded a colony at Kayalpatinam (the Cochis mentioned in the Peripplus of the Erythrean sea), and from thence moved in successive emigrations towards this island and along the borders of the peninsula of Hindustan as far as Rameswaram'*. (CG. p 254).

In 1524 AD, the Portuguese demolished their fortification in Colombo and maintained a factory for their mercantile concerns instead. During this time a Moorish Chieftain who was informed of the reduction of the fortifications made an attempt to take the place by stratagem and to carry off those who had been left in charge of the factory. However meeting with an unfavourable reception from the Sinhala King, abandoned the idea and returned to Malabar.

In a memoir inserted by Mons. Burnard, the island of Lanka possessed a great amount of territory and that a considerable portion of it had been claimed by the sea in an ecological disaster. According to Tamil tradition the capital of King Ravana is alleged to be in the present location of the 'Basses', South East of the island. It is also stated that this part of the country, Galle, was set apart by King Ravana for the breeding of cattle. (CG pp 30, 92.) There were trade links with the islands of the Maldivies and the Chola coast of the Coromandel. Trade brought in many Muslims, who were originally Tamils now embracing Islam, and they settled down in great numbers in the present Fort of Galle. From here they migrated to other Ports in the island.

These Muslims by religious persuasion but Tamils, settled down at every port in the island of Lanka as they had trade links with their kith and kin in the Tamil coastal areas of Coromandel and Malabar and their success was due to the fact that they themselves are Tamils by nationality, but Muslims by religion.

In so far as Muslims are concerned, it needs no prophet to foretell that they are Tamils by ethnicity and the language they speak. Peer Mohamed writes: 'There is a significant difference between Muslims living in Sri Lanka and Muslims living in other countries speak different languages, belong to diverse ethnic groups and different cultural backgrounds, the Muslims of Sri Lanka are Tamils both by virtue of their ethnicity and also by the language they speak. It is therefore important that Muslims of Sri Lanka who are distinct from the Tamils only because of their religion, realise that their future is inevitably linked to the Tamils of Eelam'. (PJ p 28.) Like the Tamils, they too had their share of violence in the anti-Muslim riots of 1915 AD, the Sinhala — Muslim riots of 1976 in Puttalam and the riots in Galle in 1982.

## CHAPTER 25

## THE MUKKUVARS

A Tamil named Pandu came with a large army in the year 433 AD from South India to Anuradhapura and conquered it having slain the then Sinhala King Mittasena (CV 38:11), and held sway in Lanka. During his reign he visited the districts known as Mannathidar, where the Sinhala people had employed these fishermen called *Mukkuvars*, Tamils to catch fish, dry them and transport them to Anuradhapura. The chieftains of these *Mukkuvars*, Usman and Senthana were responsible for the employment of Sinhala people to fetch water from the temple wells. The Brahmins as a mark of protest closed the temple doors. King Pandu visited Keerimala in the Jaffna peninsula, and held an inquiry and expelled the *Mukkuvar* families from the district. These families subsequently took up residence at Paunakai, Valairavu in Batticaloa. A few families settled down in other places close to the sea far from Keerimalai. The places of abode of the *Mukkuvars* was known as Usmanthurai and Senthankulam of Keerimalai.

During the reign of Parakrama Bahu VI (1410 AD), the *Mukkuvars* came up in prominence again, this time with an intention of capturing Puttalam. Having landed with an army they soon set about trading with the locals in dry fish. The King failed to eject them and hence got down a *Karava* army from the Coromandel coast (Tamils), who disembarked at Mutuwal near Colombo and marched to Puttalam and took on the *Mukkuvars* in battle. After a siege of three months the *Mukkuvars* were defeated and expelled from Puttalam. Another *Mukkuvar* army assembling on the shores of Kanchipuram to come to the aid of those at Puttalam were also defeated by the *Karava* army of the Coromandel coast,

Arab traders in pepper, in the Malabar state were encouraged to marry local women with a view to building an Arab principality in Malabar. These Malabaris in order to escape from the compelling power of the Arabs by their riches, soon migrated to Lanka and settled down at Kudurai-Malai and thence to different parts of the country specially Batticaloa as peaceful settlers. From Kudurai-Malai, they also overflowed into Puttalam and neighbouring towns of Chilaw and Kurunegala and carried on a lucrative business in internal trade.

The Majority of the residents in Puttalam were Moors, while the Mukkuvars who had settled before the Moors, ranked next in number and were either nominal Christians or Mohamedans. The Chief of the district were Vannias, who were Mukkuvars by race (Tamils). Their chiefs, twelve in number who formed a '*Rata Sabahava*' presided over by a Kanakapulle and Vidane appointed by the King's Disava. Their office was hereditary, and their lands exempt from Rajakariya. Their main industry was making salt and fishing in the lagoon and the sea, which afforded a means of livelihood. Deep-sea fishing was generally salted and dried and sold to the Sinhalese.

Batticaloa included Korale Pattuva, the Mukkuvar settlements and Panava (see map), the principle native official being the Land Vidane who collected the revenue and dealt with legal matters in the presence of the Pedies, as Mukkuvar headmen were called. These latter by a document of 1766 AD acknowledged the company's sovereignty and undertook to pay a tithe of their paddy crop, perform *Uliyam* and service of catching elephants three months in the year and sell all their surplus produce to the company. (ZCH. p 81-82.)

During the stay of the Mukkuvars, Tamils from Malabar, in Puttalam, their chief Vedarasan picked up a quarrel with Manica Thalavan, the leader of the Karava, Tamils as the former refused to give his daughter in marriage to Manica Thalavan.

Vedarasan, the Mukkuvan with the help of an Arab crew of a ship anchored at Calpenty (Kalpitiya), defeated the Karavas. As a result of this some Mukkuvars embraced Islam. Subsequently, Indo-Muslims emigrated to Puttalam as traders and purchased properties from the Mukkuvars and hence Puttalam became a Muslim enclave. The Mukkuvars were robbed of their trade and they eventually shifted to Kandy as elephant keepers to the Tamil Kandyan Kings. During the time of the Portuguese invasion some of the Mukkuvars who were Muslims embraced the religion of the Portuguese by compulsion. These Mukkuvars subsequently sent an embassy to the King of Sitavaka with costly gifts. The King entertained them with uncommon kindness and in a copper-plate gifted all the lands in the Calpenty and Puttalam districts to the Mukkuvars. The King instituted a royal tribunal where eighteen Mukkuvars were conferred the title '*Wanniyar*' with special privileges. After the advent of the Dutch the special privileges were abolished along with their tribunal of '*Muttrakudam*'.

It is stated that in the year 1545 AD, King Tanni Valla Bahu of Madampe, brother of Dharma Parakaramabahu IX, King of Kotte by a Royal grant of land engraved in a copper-plate, bestowed to a Mukkuvar (Tamil) by the name of *Raja Vanniya* all that land

this side of the mountain of Kudurai-Malai land this side of Uluvahau Kubuka situated at the river Kala oya and land this side of rock Paramakanda (CG).

In another Royal grant of land on a copper-plate, King Mayadunne of Sittavaka (Avisawella) 1521-1581 AD, granted to Nava Ratna Vanniya of Lunavila the seven Vilas (vilas are a kind of a bog, but susceptible to cultivation). The seven Vilas specified in the copper-plate are as follows:

Mailavila, Peruvila, Kaluvila, Maravila, Taniavila, Kolinchivila, Attavila and Talevila. Pomparipoo and the villages of Lunavila, Senaikudiyiruppu, Mahanabandavla and Milapotana, with the dry and irrigated lands inclusive.

Both copper grants end up by stating as follows: 'As long as Etugala and Andagala, the sun and the moon endure, if any one should violate this matter, he will be born as a crow and as a dog' (CG). This royal admonition or curse, followed all royal edicts of the Monarchs found in the chronicles, the Mahavamsa and Culavamsa and in ancient inscriptions whether in stone or otherwise.

During the period of the Dutch the Mukkuvars appear to have prospered due to the agricultural venture of the Dutch. 'In 1784 Burnard was placed in charge of Batticaloa with a population estimated at 40,000 souls which originally was under a Vannia, who after a rebellion had been replaced by a Disava of the King. The bulk of the district was divided among seven Mukkuvar chiefs named Pedies, who claimed under a Sanhas and maintained their peculiar lives, by which a man's heirs were the sons of his sister or of his sister's daughter. The seven Mukkuvar families claimed all the forest in the district, but in 1792 these were declared to belong to the company except where a title from the Disava, followed by long possession, could be proved. It was a Mukkuvar custom not to sell lands to other castes or even outside their own families; castes lower than their own could not possess fields, and even the houses and gardens of such were regarded as the property of the Pedies in whose district they were situated. Burnard opened a canal at Batticaloa, which proved so successful that the paddy revenue increased four-fold'. (Z CH.)



*The Mausoleum for Sri Vikrama Rajasinghe, the last king of  
Lanka — Vellore, South India*

## CHAPTER 26

# THE RISE & FALL OF THE TAMIL KINGDOM OF KANDY 1687 TO 1815

*'The fortunes of the Kingdom of Kandy, 'Kande Uda Rata', had swayed with the appearance of a comet on the night of 21st December, when the people rose in open rebellion against King Rajasinghe 11' (1635-1687 AD) (ZCB). The King protected by his men fled into the jungles of Hangurenketa through fear. The rebellion came to a disastrous end, with the King taking charge and the rebels paying a terrible price with torture and confiscation of property. Several Bhikkus who had a hand in the uprising were executed and their bodies flung into the river. The Kings distrust with his own people were so great that he allowed the Dutch to occupy Sabaragamuwa. But this was short lived with the entrance of the French on the shores of the country. The Portuguese, Dutch, Danes, French and the British were all driven by greed to exploit the resources the island had in the trade of cinnamon, arecanuts, pearls, chanks etc.*

Rajasinghe II, whose Queen a Tamil, [CV 96.40] from the Royal family of Madura, South India, was aware that the English were keen in sharing the cinnamon trade granted shipping rights at Colombo and Galle, much to the consternation of the Dutch. Another bungled attempt to poison the King was exposed and the guilty cooks and palace servants were impaled, hanged or thrown to be trampled by elephants.

The French in 1672 sent a fleet under the command of Admiral de La Haye, which was anchored in the bay of Trincomalee. They occupied two islets and the Dutch set fire to their garrison at Kottiar and retreated. In May 1672 the French signed a treaty by which the King granted them the bays of Trincomalee and Kottiar. This occupation was short lived. The Dutch recaptured the garrison at Kottiar and seized two French vessels. The French surrendered and left the island.

Rajasinghe II, was the last important Sinhalese King. He died in 1687 and before his death he introduced his son Mahastana as heir to the throne.

In 1688, the new King took the name of Vimala Dharma Suriya II (1688-1707), and was crowned King. Unlike his father, he was a man of sober temperament having been brought up in a temple



by Bhikkus. During his time he demanded that the Dutch return all territories taken over by them, except the coastal forts. During his reign elephants were shipped from Kankesanthurai to South India. Don Philip Changarapillai, a powerful broker of the elephant merchants in South India, was in collision course with the Dutch and the latter patronised the Madappalis to spy on the activities of the Vellalas who were assisted by the people of the Vanni.

The reign of Vimala Dharama Suriya was devoid of wars as the King hated hostilities in any form. 'In 1706 an embassy was sent to fetch a Princess from Madura, of South India as a bride for his son, whose mother came from that country'. At his death his son took the reigns of governing the country under the name of Sri Vira Narendra Sinha (1707-1739). During his reign there was much trade with South India in arecanuts and 'an extensive system of smuggling was being carried out on along the coast'. (ZCB). The Dutch introduced horse breeding in the island of Neduntheivu, which yielded profit to the Dutch East India Company. Tamil Moors from Kilaikarai (South India), found a home in the island to cash in the profitable areacanut business and settled around Kudiraimalai in the west of the country.

With the death of Narendra Singhe in 1739, the so called Sinhalese dynasty came to an end. The custom set by Vijaya in 483 BC, was adhered to by numerous Sinhala Kings right down to 1815 AD. Narendra Singhe obtained his consort Udumale Devi, a Tamil from Madura and subsequently married her two sisters. They were the daughters of Pitti Nayaker of Madura in the Pandya kingdom. It is recorded as he had no issues, he nominated the brother of his Queen to succeed him as King. As there were local rivals fighting for the throne the King's brother-in-law, a Tamil, was put on the throne under the name of Sri Vijaya Rajasinghe. (1739-1747). (CV 98.4)

The King married shortly after his accession, to a *'lady from Madura, the daughter of Narenappa Nayaker a nobleman of that country, who with several members of his family accompanied the Queen to court'*. (ZCB). Hence we see the first complete introduction of a Dravidian (Tamil) dynasty to rule the Sinhalese people. This followed up with the entry of their entire relations and servants. Although a Hindu, the King and Queen patronised the Buddhist religion, as it was an off shoot of Hinduism, for political expediency. The Tamils from India wanted an unrestricted trade at the ports of Puttalam and Negombo, to which the Dutch protested by sending out armed patrol vessels around Puttalam. The King's father-in-law Narenappa Nayaker attempted to sail his own vessel past Kalpitiya and was intercepted by the Dutch

who refused the innocent passage by sea. The Tamil Narenappa Nayaker was a formidable foe backed up by the King, his son-in-law wreaked havoc on the Dutch Company.

*'When Narenappa Nayaker accompanied his daughter to the court, of Kandy he brought with him his two sons, the elder of whom was about sixteen years of age. He was nominated by the King, who had no children, as his successor and was accepted by the ministers of state. The administration of the country was in their hands till 1751, when the new King, whose physical beauty was a source of delight to his subjects, assumed the sword with the name of Kirti Sri Rajasinghe'. (CV 99:1).*

*'In 1749 the King married the daughter of Nadukattu Sami Nayer, the bride being conveyed to Ceylon in a Company's vessel, and with her there came her parents and other relatives, who settled at Court. The King appreciating the fact that only a Buddhist could rule over the Sinhalese, devoted himself enthusiastically to his peoples' religion. Though there were no Upasampada Bhikkus, novices were collected and encouraged, Vihares repaired, preaching halls established and religious books copied and distributed. The shrines of antiquity were visited by the King, elephants and horses were offered to the Great Bo, and a festival celebrated at Mahiyangana; while the Esala Perehera, which was regarded by all the people as conducive to prosperity, was observed with much splendour, the King himself taking part in the procession'. (ZCB). The King also married two others, the daughters of Gabbedature Nayaker and Rama Nayaker and their relatives and servants too had accompanied the Queen to Court. The Sinhalese continued to be Ministers but the real force behind the throne consisted of Tamils (Malabar) among whom his own father, Narenappa Nayaker was a determined and resourceful man and a strict disciplinarian. Sinhalese officials were watched as the King feared that they may secretly gang up together, and hence supervised by the Tamils who filled the most lucrative posts for whose appointments a large amount of revenue was required. The King who had no children by the Queen, took the daughter of Bintenne Disawa and she bore him a son and two daughters. Kirti Sri Rajasinghe, had two brothers, the younger of whom was born in Ceylon and the relations which existed between them were most affectionate. 'These brothers who had attained such royal power, shunned all discord and showed no weakness. They dwelt together in one town and were ever friendly with one another as their own shadow' (CV 99:95). 'They had received the status of sub-Kings with permission to use the Royal Parasol, and establishments which were almost regal. They were heartily in sympathy with the Buddhist tendencies of their brother, and themselves took an active part in endowing monasteries and*

training Bhikkus'. According to the Mahavamsa, the King finished the golden casket to enshrine the tooth-relic. He had a casket embellished thus, 'had a costly, splendid magnificent large diamond placed on a point; one hundred and sixty eight beautiful costly splendid (smaller) diamonds, well worth seeing, and one hundred and seventy one topazes he had put on it. Further, he had a set with five hundred and eighty five blue sapphires and four thousand eight hundred and eighty rubies. Also he had set with seven hundred and seventy eight pearls'. ( CV 100: 15 ). In spite of the Kings performance of many meritorious deeds, a syndicate conspiracy was hatched to assassinate him and place a youth said to be of royalty, who had become a Buddhist in Siam on the throne. The plot was exposed by one Gopala Mudiyanse, a member of a Muslim family of doctors and the perpetrators executed at Ampitiya. The outcome of the rebellion was the appointment of Pilama Talauva as second Adigar, who in the end of his career schemed and plotted by devious intrigues to bring down the Tamil dynasty which was ruling the Sinhala people of 'Kanda Uda Rate' with the ultimate goal of becoming king.

The Dravidians ruling the three kingdoms of Chola, Sera and Pandya of south India speaking the Tamil language, have been referred to in history books specially written by Sri Lankans, as Malabars. The Mahavamsa and the other chronicles of the Sinhalese refer to them as 'Demalass' and not 'Malabars'. Hence all those Tamils living in the North of the country of Ceylon were referred as 'Demalass'. However, it is strange that when it came to refer those Tamils who ruled in the Kandyan kingdom of the Sinhalese the terminology changed to 'Malabars'. Perhaps, they know the reason.

From the gradual influx of the Tamils of royalty along with their servants into the Sinhalese kingdom of Kandy, right through the ages from Vijaya (483 BC), the language of the court of the Kandyan kingdom was Tamil. There is no mistake about this fact. *'The conversation was purely formal and complimentary; the King's words were addressed to the Adigar, kneeling at his foot of the throne, who prostrated himself and conveyed them to one of the Disavass near Pybus. He passed them on to a Malabar doctor in attendance who repeats them in Tamil to Pybus' interpreter, who translated them into English. Every question and answer was recorded by a secretary, who sat by a square stool on which was a wax candle and writing materials were placed'* (ZCB).

In 1763 the Dutch commenced their hostilities as the King had occupied territory which was given to them by mutual agreement. Although Chilaw and Puttalam were attacked by sea and occupied, there was no further advancement as the whole

expedition was bungled due to bad planning. Torrential rain hampered the movement of troops and logistics, and hence the mission was aborted. The Dutch smarting under their failure planned another attack under Van Eck in 1765. In this battle the Sinhalese were driven back and the Dutch captured the King's garden at Katugastota on the banks of the Mahaveli ganga.

In spite of the generous concessions offered by the King not to enter his capital, the Dutch rejected the offer and advanced to the capital Kandy. The King, the Queen and brothers and other members of the royal family with their treasures disappeared into the hills which were kept prepared for any emergency. The Dutch sacked the capital and plundered the palace at Kundasala and much booty fell into their hands. In the meantime the Sinhalese were watching every road and from behind every thicket and rock came volley after volley of arrows and bullets from an unseen foe. The Dutch not used to guerrilla warfare lost heavily and fled. They burnt everything of the natives they came across, including all Sinhalese they could lay their hands upon. The tooth-relic and the clergy escaped the onslaught by the Dutch. With reinforcements from Trincomalee the Dutch were able to force the King to come to terms. By a treaty in 1766 the company was acknowledged as sovereign over the districts it possessed before the war and the King ceded the whole of the coastal areas. In return the company pledged to protect the King's domains from external aggression. The King rebuilt his capital and the Royal palace and all the temples destroyed by the Dutch. The tooth-relic which had been concealed in a cave at Kevulgama, in charge of Rambukwelle Unnanse, was returned and the whole city purified. The King carried the relic on his head and installed it in the new Maligawa built by the side of the palace, with much pomp and pageantry. The King, subsequently succumbed to his injuries from his fall from his horse in 1780. As he had no children he was succeeded by his younger brother with the name of Raja Adhiraja Singhe. (1780-1798). (CV 101:4)

The British fleet under Sir Edward Hughes entered Trincomalee in 1782. The Dutch garrison at Fort Ostenberg surrendered. In 1795 Jaffna was occupied while Colombo surrendered on 16.12.1796 AD without much resistance. With the occupation of the island specially the safe natural harbour of Trincomalee, the British saw in it the most valuable possession in the Indian Ocean, which could be a sentinel to the possession of the Indian sub-continent and the region around. Rajadhi Rajasinghe had five Queens. Since he had no heirs the question arose at his death as who should be his successor.

Pilama Talauve, the first Adigar, an ambitious courtier of royal

descent had his own designs on the throne. Due to rivalry in the court he could not push his claims. Hence he decided on a more subtle approach. The Adigar picked on a young *Ceylon-born Nayakker (Tamil)*, a relation and under the tutelage of the late King of Kandy. He was *Kannusamy* a Tamil youth of 18 years, the sister's son of Rajadhi Rajasinghe, with a figure pleasing to the eye. Other than being a handsome youth, he was devoid of any academic pursuits. Perhaps Pilama Taluve thought he had selected the right person to use as a tool in furtherance of his grand scheme to mount the throne on the ashes of this a Royal stooge . Hence, he nominated the youth of Tamil origin, from the land of the Pandyas to be the next King, with the blessings of court and people. The youth ascended the throne of Kandy as Sri Vikrama Rajasinghe in 1798, to the beloved land of 'Kande Uda Rate' the land of the Sinhalese. (CV 101:19)

Pilama Talauve, the first Adigar's (minister) subtle scheme in elevating Kannusamy to the throne was in the words of Forbes; *'to get rid of his enemies, amongst whom he reckoned all who could resist or interfere with his schemes of ambition, and to allow the odium of murders committed by his direction to fall on the young man on whose head he had placed a crown, which he intended to transfer to his own brow; this result he expected to accomplish either by the open assistance of the British Government or by secret treason and assassination of the King'*. It was the intention of the Adigar to use Sri Vikrama Rajasinghe as a puppet to meet his own ends. Right from the inception, all Tamils who had royal connections were persecuted. Close relations of the late King who were not in favour of his elevation were imprisoned, exiled or murdered. Even the King's Uncle the resourceful Gampola Nayakker, was thrown into prison. Sri Vickrama Rajasinghe married the two daughters of his Uncle, much against their will. Several of the royal relations escaped into the protective custody of the British, including the King's brother-in-law Muttusamy who had claims to the throne. Governor North saw in them a valuable asset for the future possession of Kandy. He despatched Muttusamy in the custody of Colonel Barbut to Jaffna.

Having installed his puppet on the throne, at least he thought so, Pilama Talauve ventured at every turn to befriend Governor North. He frequently complained to the governor that the King was not governing according to the hopes and aspirations of the Sinhalese as he was a Tamil and a foreigner. North was convinced that all was not well between King and Adigar. It is stated that the Adigar solicited the assistance of the Governor to do away with the King for which act he would make the British the masters of the island. This was dismissed as preposterous. However, the

Adigar changed his strategy and informed North that the King is favouring the Tamils more than the court, and that the King was ill-disposed to him and the British and suggested he invade Kandy and depose the King, and to crown him King. North refused to take such action as there were cordial relations with the King. He agreed to send troops to Kandy to protect the King. The Adigar had a meeting with the secretary of the Governor and declared his inherent hatred of the Nayakker (Tamils) and declared that the present King who was illegitimate and hence had no right to the throne and the King was put on the throne by his influence in Court. The intention of the Adigar was to drive a wedge between the King and people and make him react with violence, thus opening the way to the throne and thereby establish a new line of Sinhalese Kings. The Adigar tried to draw the Governor into direct confrontation with the King by sending troops to Kandy, but this too failed. The Governor insisted that troops for protection of the King would be had in writing under the hand of the King.

The Governor was now convinced that life of the King was in danger unless troops were despatched without delay, and thus decided to send an embassy accompanied by a formidable number of troops. He warned the Adigar against any acts of violence against the life of the King. The Adigar agreed and promised to escort the embassy to Kandy.

In 1800 General MacDowall left Colombo with troops, accompanied by the embassy to Kandy, The Adigar met MacDowall at the frontier as agreed with a formidable force. MacDowall had audience with Sri Vikrama Rajasinghe in the presence of the court. His proposals were not accepted by the King and he returned to Colombo. It dawned on Pilarna Talaue that the boy picked by him to be his tool had dramatically transformed and that he had under-estimated his personal power and position. Governor North soon realised that he was no match to the craftiness of the Kandyan fox of 'Kande Uda Rate'.

Although Pilama Talaue occupied centre stage in the affairs of the Kandyam kingdom for a season, it was the King who over-shadowed him by tightening the reigns of government with such power and authority, much to the astonishment of the Adigar.

The King realising the waywardness of his Adigar, appointed Levuke, a relation but a rival of the Adigar to the post of Disawa of Uva.

North tried to negotiate a deal to have a garrison at Kandy for the protection of the King, but the King refused, as he wanted a place in the coast which North was not agreeable. In the meantime the Adigar was desperate as he realised that North was not helpful

and that the King did not trust him anymore. Hence he used his influence to instigate hostilities with the British. *'He exerted his influence to precipitate hostilities with the British. He persisted in his aggression and attempted to rouse discontentment in the Maritime Provinces and tried to trick the British into hostile acts by sending false and ambiguous reports and letters'*. (ZCB).

The Adigar suggested that the British construct a road to Trincomalee on his personal orders but without the sanction of the King as the King would be against such a scheme. This he thought would rouse the King against the British. This attempt too failed. North's plan was to use Muttusamy in the event the Adigar was successful in deposing the King. On the Adigar's instigation a party of Moors who had gone to the Kandyan territory to trade were set upon and their cargo of arecanuts confiscated at the Puttalam bazaar. North was dismayed at the news of the 'arecanuts episode' and as no compensation was forthcoming he wrote to the King to sign the treaty proposed to him earlier, or that he would be compelled to back the claims of another Prince to the Kandyan throne. However, North despatched two divisions of troops one under the command of MacDowall from Colombo the other under Lieutenant Colonel Barbut of Trincomalee to Kandy to feel the pulse of the Kandyan peasantry. The contingent having reached Kandyan territory was compelled to camp due to lack of provisions. MacDowall informed North to obtain additional reinforcements from Madras their headquarters, to capture the seven Korales. But North had other grandiose plans to capture Kandy and set up Muttusamy on the throne as he felt that he was the rightful heir to the Kandyan throne. He expected that Muttusamy would swear allegiance to the British.

Sri Vikrama Rajasinghe as a precautionary operation, specially with the British at his boundaries and the unknown perils that his Adigar would concoct from within, fled the palace with all his treasures having set fire to the Palaces and sought the refuge of the hills. Muttusamy was conducted to Kandy by Barbut and he was willing to recognise the King of Great Britain, but refused to swear allegiance. Muttusamy agreed to certain concessions in trade and by a treaty ceded the Seven-Korales, the hill forts and a road to Trincomalee.

The gamble of Governor North of Muttusamy's presence in Kandy did not help the British. The Kandyans sought the refuge of the jungles and the hills and pursued guerrilla warfare. Pliama Talauve informed MacDowall that the King was at Hangurankata. In spite of attacks from the jungles the forces of the British reached Hangurankata and finding that the King had departed sacked

the city. The British sustained heavy losses but reached Kandy with many soldiers falling prey to the endemic fever. All logistics was cut off due to the torrential rain. The British were forced to retreat to Colombo having placed a garrison. North decided to abandon Muttusamy but he was already proclaimed King. The affairs of state in shambles and the loss of men to both war and disease was so great that North ordered the evacuation of troops from Kandy with Muttusamy and his attendants. At the crossing at Vatapaluwa ferry, due to the spate of the Mahaveli ganga, the troops had to camp on the banks of the river.

Sri Vikrama Rajasinghe, was dismayed at his Adigar for permitting the garrison to leave Kandy and threatened to destroy the British forces if Muttusamy was not delivered to him. The British handed over Muttusamy who was conducted before the King and executed. The British forces were to surrender their arms and returned to Kandy trailed by angry Kandyans. Thereafter the entire force was murdered in cold blood, not even sparing the sick.

The Kandyans continued a campaign of uprisings in the British held territories of the Maritime Provinces. The districts in the North were invaded and Pandara Vanniyar rose in revolt and the revolt spread to the districts of Hanwella. Martial law was proclaimed in the Maritime Provinces in 1803 AD. The rebellion was put down and the Kandyan army repulsed in the Maritime Provinces.

Pilama Talauve returned to Kandy and was re-established in power by the King. There appeared to be a temporary peace, which both sides needed. In 1805 North handed over government to Sir Thomas Maitland and his eagerness to negotiate with the King was disrupted due to the friction between King and Adigar. However, he thought, *'for it is by the sword alone we have obtained possession of the island, and it is by the sword alone we can expect to hold it'*.

The eventual fall of the Kandyan kingdom in 1815 AD was due to the intrigues of the ministers, firstly by the ambitious designs of Pilama Talauve and then continued by Ahalepola, his nephew, backed by the aristocracy against a Tamil who had weaned himself to the Kandyan throne. The constant quarrels between King and Adigar widened the gulf between them. When the Adigar in 1811, 'sought to marry his son to the daughter of Manpitye Bandara, a natural son of Kirti Sri, the action was interpreted as a sign of the Adigar's designs on the throne'. The Adigar was summoned to Kandy and was charged with maladministration and the King forgave him and heaped fresh honours upon him. Subsequently, on a trivial matter the Adigar was deprived of his office and



thrown into prison and compelled to retire. The Adigar, smarting under the dishonour meted out by the King, openly conspired to assassinate him. This was the last fling of treachery that he mustered, but it failed and he and Ratwatte were tried for treason and executed in 1812. With the execution of the Adigar, there was the Kandyan aristocracy that the King had to reckon.

The King's reliance on the Tamil Nayakkars to govern earned the displeasure of the Sinhalese ministers. The King to safeguard his tottering position kept changing the officers of the Disavas and appointed people of low-estate to positions of power, which was repugnant to the aristocracy. In 1812 Sir Robert Brownrigg succeeded as Governor. His ambition was to annex the Kandyan kingdom to the British Empire.

The King due to constant betrayal by his ministers shifted his residence from one place to another, never sleeping for too long at one place. This feeling of insecurity told on his health and his mental faculties as a result of which he was given to liquor. The King who was childless married two daughters of Degalasley of Madura. All the Chiefs were summoned for the nuptials. They attended the wedding with costly gifts. The King openly disgraced Ahalepola saying his gifts were not worthy for a King. Ahalepola returned to his disava of Sabaragamuwa smarting under the humiliation. He now openly corresponded with D'oyly in Colombo and in 1814 proposed to the British that the time had come to occupy Kandy. The Adigar was informed that this would be possible only if there was a successful rebellion. Ahalepola raised the standard of revolt with the assistance of arms from the British. The King retaliated by depriving him of his office and imprisoning his wife and children as hostages. Molligoda was appointed as Adigar who quelled the rebellion. Many Chiefs and Bhikkus were taken into custody and many were impaled (CV 101:23-27). The King wreaked vengeance on all concerned. *'Ahalepola's four young children were beheaded in the presence of the King and their mother compelled to pound their heads in a mortar; after which she was with Pussvalla's wife and sister and Ahalepola's son-in-law drowned in the Bogambara lake'*. (P. E. Pieris, Tri Sinhala).

Meanwhile, Ahalepola the ex-adigar supplied information to D'oyly of the King's military weakness and the likely places where the King would take refuge. The opportunity to invade Kandy came when ten Sinhalese traders were plundered of their goods having traded in Kandyan territory. They were arrested and taken to Kandy and charged as spies. They were maltreated by cutting off an ear and hand of each of the traders and sent them back to the Maritime Provinces with the dismembered limbs suspended from their necks. Only three managed to reach home to complain, while

the rest died on the way. Ahalepola through fear of the King took up residence in Colombo with the British.

Sri Vikrama Rajasinghe made preparations to defend his capital. Tamil soldiers were smuggled into Kandy from Madura of South India. The British forces advanced to Ruvanvela and captured it and Molligoda offering a semblance of resistance fled. Brownrigg's intention was to invade Kandy. The objective was, *'for securing the permanent tranquillity of these settlements and in vindication of the honour of the British name; for the deliverance of the Kandyan people from this oppression; in fine for the Subversion of the Malabar dominions which, during three generations, has tyrannised over the country'* (ZCB). Molligoda placed himself in the protective custody of the British and vowed to desert no sooner his family could escape from Kandy. Balana pass, Ginigama and Galagedera fell to the British. Molligoda on hearing of his family's escape defected to the British.

On 11th February 1815 by a proclamation, Brownrigg declared the Three and Four Korales and Sabaragamuwa formally annexed. When the troops reached Katugastota, the King fled his capital with his Queens and crown Jewels. Before his flight he impaled his headmen who deserted the areas of rebellion. On 14th February Brownrigg entered the ancient Palace of the Kings of the Kandyan kingdom.

The King, Sri Vikrama Rajasinghe, fled to Mahamadanuwara. Ahalepola with the British forces hot on the trail of the King encountered resistance from the Tamil soldiers at Hakketuvagala. The Sinhalese of Dumbura with the armed Kandyans surrounded and captured the King with two of his Queens in the house of Udupitiye Aratchi at Gallahavatta, hardly a mile from Madamahanuwara. His mother and two other Queens were also in custody. It seems that the King was the butt end of insults by the rabble and maltreated by his captors. He was relieved of all his treasures and *'trussed up like a pig'* and before the rabble could inflict bodily harm, D'oyly came on the scene and took them into his custody. They were all conducted to Colombo and, *'on the 24th January 1816, the King, with his wives, family and other dependents were put on board the British ship Cornwall for Madras. They were eventually sent to Vellore of South India, where he died on the 30th June 1832 aged 52 years leaving a son'* (ZCB).

Thus fell the Kandyan Kingdom from Tamil domination to the supreme power of another foreign power, the British and destined to be ruled by them for the next one hundred and thirty four years. Ahalepolas dream of ascending the throne was thwarted by the British. They conferred on him many honours, but he was a disappointed man, perhaps he may have wondered whether the

change of power from the Tamils to the British in his beloved 'Kande Uda Rate' was worth all his intrigues, directed first against his own King and then against the British, which earned him an enforced holiday in the island of Mauritius where he died in exile.

The 'Kandyan Convention' of 2nd March 1815 AD, was purported to transfer power from the Kandyan nation to the British. The signatories being the Kandyan Chiefs and headmen representing the Kandyan nation and attested by D'oily and James Sutherland for the British. The said convention was signed in Sinhalese, Tamil and Nagari by the Kandyan authorities and attested by the British. However, the validity of the convention is questionable as it did not carry the signature of Sri Vikrama Rajasinghe, the King of the Kandyan kingdom, who was deposed by the British.

From a Puppet to a King, Sri Vikrama Rajasinghe, showed the indomitable fighting spirit of a Tamil to have ruled the Sinhalese people with an iron hand, though scuttled by his Ministers with the connivance of the British; its fitting to harken back to his last words; *'Had my people behaved as they ought to have done. I would have shown you whether I was a man or woman. Twice during my reign have you obtained possession of the town of Kandy and twice have you been very glad to get out of it'*. (Marshall 171)

This pattern of gross betrayal has been seen to surface in the affairs of the state from time to time since 1815 AD, and as aptly stated by an eminent Sinhala politician, *"The Kandyans accomplished their own political doom"*. (ZCB 167)

During the European occupation of the island large tracts of land both in the low and up-country districts, came under coffee, rubber, tea and cinnamon plantations. It was during the Dutch rule that impetus was given to repair 'Katta Karai' (Tamil for shore in the jungle), tank which fed the prosperous province of Mantota in the present Mannar district. The extent of the tank was so vast it was called 'Giants Tank' by the Dutch, who anticipated that the lands which its waters could irrigate would be sufficient to feed the inhabitants of the northern province.

Tamils from South India, specially from the Madhura district, were brought into the island by the Europeans in large numbers as labourers to work on the plantations. Tamils, also from the Malayalam state of Kerala were imported as cinnamon-peelers and toddy-tappers and they were settled in the maritime areas extending from Chillaw, Seeduwa, Jaela, Kandana and right down to Ambalangoda.

Although with the fall of the last Tamil Kingdom of Kandy, the Tamil population imported to work in the low and up-country districts continue to work on the plantations even to the present day.



*The Plaque in the mausoleum —  
Vellore, South India.*

## CHAPTER 27

TAMIL CONNECTION IN  
SINHALA ROYALTY

According to the Mahavamsa and Dipawansa, the reputation of Vijaya was so profane that no King would have ever given the hand of his daughter in marriage to a man of such evil repute. Vijaya was aware that it was futile to seek a princess from the kingdom which had given him the boot, hence he looked to a kingdom where his reputation was unknown. The nearest was the Tamil kingdom of the Pandyas (Madhurai).

Mahanama, the compiler of the Mahavamsa records that 'Vijaya consecrated the daughter of the Pandu king with solemn ceremony as his Queen and every year he sent to his wife's father a shell pearl worth twice a hundred thousand (pieces of money) . . .' (MV 7.72).

Prince Vijaya is depicted as an evil person (MV 6.39), who married a local damsel by the name of Kuveni and subsequently chose to discard her, his son Jivahette and daughter Disala, to the wilds of Adams Peak to marry a Tamil princess, who '*when he had forsaken his former evil way of life, Vijaya, the Lord of men ruling over all Lanka in peace and righteousness reigned, as is known, in the city of Tambapanni, thirty eight years*'. (MV 7.72-74).

As early as 483 BC, with the advent of Vijaya to Lanka, the language in the palace of Tambapanni would have been in Tamil and King Vijaya come under Tamil influence. Mahanama, has faithfully recorded in the Sinhala chronicle Mahavamsa, that, '*All this multitude of men disembarked at Mahatittha. (Mantota in Mannar. MV 7.58). This multitude comprised his Queen and hundred maidens for his ministers, craftsmen and a thousand families of eighteen guilds*', (MV 7.55-58), would have been colonised in his city of Tamman Nuvera or Tambapanni on the North West coast of Lanka, on the banks of either the Kadamba Nadi (Malvatu Oya), or at Aripu on the banks of the Marchikatti Aar at Kudiraimalai. The Dipawansa states, '*The town of Tambapanni surrounded by suburbs was built by Vijaya in the south on the most lovely bank of the river.*' (DV p. 162). This multitude of Tamils would have carried on their daily lives as in Madhurai, in the present Tamil Nadu, in speaking the same Tamil language and faithfully following the customs of the Tamils and worshipping Hindu Gods, a practice not foreign to Vijaya.

This fact confirms the presence of Tamil words in the Sinhala language, much lamented by Nandasena Wijesekera in his book 'The Sinhalese' (ZS), and the practice of dual worship of Hindu Gods by the Sinhalese and the celebration of 'Tamil and Sinhalese' New Year on the same day in the month of April, reflects to the extent of Tamil influence in the Sinhala society.

The example set by Vijaya to obtain his Queen from the Tamil country, became customary among the Sinhala Kings during their latter rule in Sri Lanka, so much so that it would be seen from the history of the country that a whole kingdom and country was lost to foreign powers as a result of the Kings inherent desire to have Tamils as their Queens.

At the death of Vijaya, as he had no children by his Tamil Queen, his nephew arrived in the island. According to the chronicle his brother Sumitta, who was King of Lala, was married to a Tamil princess from Madras. (MV.8.7.) Hence his son Panduvasudeva of Tamil extraction took over reigns of government at Tambapanni. The episode apparently spun by the chronicler about the arrival of his would be Queen Subhaddakaccana in a boat with her women, friends having set sail by her father on the river Ganges and disembarked at the mouth of the Mahakandara Nadi, north of Mannar, on the second day of sailing is far-fetched. In all probability as he had Tamil blood in him he would have like his Uncle Vijaya, got down a Tamil princess from Madhura to be his Queen and reign from Tambapanni, where the residue of the Tamil population colonised by his Uncle had entrenched themselves. With the Tamils came the Brahamins to serve in the Hindu temples and serve the Tamil community in their ceremonies at birth, marriage and cremation.

The Sinhalese king Sura-Tissa (187-177 BC), ruled from Anuradhapura for ten years, during which period horses were imported for the use of the king. Two Tamils, 'Sena and Guttaka, sons of a freighter who brought horses hither conquered the king Sura-Tissa and at the head of a great army reigned for twenty two years'. (MV 20.10). For the next 22 years Anuradhapura would have been transformed into a small Tamil kingdom assimilating the impact of Dravidian rule enforced on the Sinhala people for the first time in their history. The chronicler is silent on the ravages of war and the destruction of places of worship and the massacre of people.

In 145 BC, a Tamil king of Chola country, Elala by name came with a great army and having landed at the mouth of the Mahaveliganga captured Anuradhapura by slaying Asela the Sinhalese king. Elala ruled Lanka for 44 years with 'even justice to friend and foe'. (MV 21.14). Although Elala patronised the

activities of the Buddhist faith he built many temples for the worship of his brethren who would have flocked by the hundreds from the Chola country to take up residency and for trade. He extended his kingdom to Plonnarua and installed a military outpost at Mahiyangana on the banks of the Mahaveliganga. The chronicler records events of the battle between Elala and Duttugemunu in flights of fancy, specially the exploits of the latter's commander Nandhimitta who is alleged to have, '*...when the elephant came to over power him, seized with his hands his two tusks and forced him on his haunches*'. (MV 25.22).

The next wave of invasion by the Tamils was by seven usurpers who gave battle to Vatta-Gamini Abhaya. (44 BC.), north of Anuradhapura. The Sinhalese king fled the battle field as he was vanquished by the Tamils and captured in the following lines in the Mahavamsa. (MV 33.42-44). A Nigantha named Giri saw him take flight and cried out loudly, '*The great black Lion is fleeing*'. It is stated that two of the seven Tamils, one, '*fired with passion for the lovely Somadevi, the Queen, made her his own and the other took the almsbowl of the Master and both returned straightaway contented to the other coast*'. (MV 35.54). The rest of the five Tamils ruled from Anuradhapura for a total of 15 years.

King Cora-Naga's Queen the infamous Anula having poisoned her husband, captured the throne as she was enamoured with a Tamil palace-guard by the name of Siva and he ruled for over an year with Anula as his Queen. Anula poisoned Siva for another Tamil Vatuka, a carpenter and he ruled for a year. Anula poisoned Vatuka for one Tissa, a wood carrier who made Anula his Queen. Eventually, Anula poisoned Tissa for a Tamil named Niliya, a Brahamin, who was the palace-priest. He governed the country with Anula as his Queen. The chronicle Mahavamsa states, '*When the princess Anula (who desired to take her pleasure even as she listed with 32 palace-guards), had put to death Niliya also with poison*' and ruled for four months. (MV 34.27).

*'During the reign of Vankanāsike-Tissa (170-173 AD), the Chola king of the Tamil country, Karikalan the great, landed on the island with an army of Tamils and carried away 12,000 prisoners*'. (RV p. 47). This fact is confirmed by Indian history, where these prisoners were used in the building of bunds of the Cauvey river in Chola country. (AI p.716). The Mahavamsa is silent on this aspect of the history.

From the period 491 to 516 AD, six Tamil usurpers ruled from the city of Anuradhapura for 24 years and the chronicler is silent about their reign.

Mahinda II (767-787 AD), ruled from Anuradhapura for 20 years and he assisted the Tamils in his domain with horses as they would not take cattle. (CV 48.145).

Udaya I, ruled from 880-891 AD from Anuradhapura and he carried out many constructions of shelters and buildings for the poor and the laity, while his Queen built on the Cetiya mountain the Kotthakacetiya and having built the Jayasena pabbata-vihare, she granted it to the (Tamils) Damila bhikku community. She also made over to them the village of Mahummara. (CV 49.24). This goes to prove that there were Tamils in the country who were Buddhists and that the Bhikkus of the Tamils formed a special group recognised by the Queen.

During the reign of King Sena I (826-846 AD), a 'Tamil of Pandu took possession of the island took away all treasures from the treasure-house of the King and plundered what there was to plunder in Vihara and town'. (CV 50.33). The King Sena had to load the Tamil King with elephants and all his jewels before he left the island.

The chronicler states that the Tamil King was successful in his invasion due to the presence of a multitude of Tamils in the country. During the war the Yuvaraja Mahinda lost his life, 'they showed the Yuvaraja's head to the Pandu King. When he saw it, he had the corpse burned and gave orders for the observance at the pyre of all the ceremonies prescribed by the Pandus for their Kings'. (CV 50.32).

King Kasappa V, ruled from Polonnaruva (908-918 AD), for ten years. The Chola king Parantaka I, invaded the Pandyan kingdom and on request made by the Pandyan king, Kassapa sent a huge army from the port of Mahatittha (Mantota at Mannar), to Pandya. The two armies of the Pandyas and Sinhalese were defeated and the Sinhalese army had to get back to their country due to a plague. (CV 52.78).

During Dapulla IV's reign (918 AD) of seven months at Polonnaruva Rajasimha III, the Pandyan Tamil King (HC p. 46), through fear of the Chola King left his country, took ship and came to Mahathittha. (CV 53.5). Dapulla received him and gave him residence outside the town of Polonnaruva with an abundant income. Although the king promised to wage war with the Chola King, this he could not fulfil due to the opposition of the nobles in his kingdom. 'The Pandu King Rajasimha left his diadem and other valuables behind and betook himself to Kerela'. (CV 53.9).

The Sinhalese King Udaya III, (942-950 AD), was ruling from Polonnaruva for 8 years during which time Parantaka the Tamil Chola king demanded the diadem and treasures left behind with Dapulla the previous king by Rajasimha the vanquished king of Pandu. On Udaya's refusal to surrender them, a Tamil army invaded the country and seized the diadem and treasures and removed to Tamil country. (HC p.46). According to the Culavamsa,



Udaya IV fled with the crown jewels to Rohana and the Cholas returned to their country.(CV 53.45).

During the reign of Sena V, his mother over a dispute of the appointment of a Senapathi over her lover, took Yuvaraja Udaya, the Queen and Senapathi Sena and with the assistance with the Tamils handed the country to the Tamils. The King who was in Rohana sent an army but was defeated by the Tamil army who plundered the whole country.(CV 54.73).

King Mahinda V's reign, (981-1017 AD), has been described in chapter 55 of the Culavamsa, a Sinhalese chronicle, as, '*The Pillage of Lanka*'. As a result of the Tamils brought in by successive kings, Mahinda was unable to pay their wages. The Tamils then armed themselves and stormed the palace door and demanded thus, "*So long as there is no pay he shall not eat*". The King duped them by making good his escape through a secret underground passage and fled to Rohana, to the hills. (CV 55.5-8). A horse dealer who was in the country informed the Chola King Rajaraja the Great of the chaos in the island. The Chola King sent a great army who advanced to Rohana and seized the Mahesi, the jewels, the diadem and all the treasures and captured king Mahinda who was hiding in the jungles and ravaged the country by breaking open the relic chambers and carrying away costly images of gold and all the treasures of Lanka. (CV 55.14-21). The treasures included the 'crown and necklace of Indra' which the Pandyan king Rajasimha left behind. Mahinda died in Chola country in captivity. (HC p.62).

Mahala Kitti who attained consecration as King (1041-1044 AD), to the seat of government of Rohana, was vanquished in battle by Rajendra Chola and as a result of the battle he committed suicide by cutting his throat. (CV 56.9 and HC p.69). The Cholas took the chief treasures such as the diadem and such like and sent them to the Chola monarch of Tamil land. (CV 56.10). His son Vikkama-pandu fled the country but subsequently returned. The Chola King Rajadhiraja slew king Jagtipala of Lanka and took all the treasures and his Queen and daughter to the Tamil country.

Vijaya Bahu I, (1058-1114 AD), reigned from the city of Rohana. He commenced to get up an army to attack the Cholas who had occupied Polonnaruva. The Cholas hearing of the preparations sent an army which advanced to Katargamam. Vijayabahu took to the Mountains and the Tamils plundered Katargamam and returned to Polonnaruva. As the inhabitants of Rajaratta grew hostile and refused to pay tribute a Tamil army landed in the island and slew many and subdued the people of Rajaratta and attacked Rohana. The Cholas were repulsed and finally defeated at Kurunegala. As internal border hostilities erupted they returned to their country.

King Bhuvanaka Bahu I, reigned from Dambadeniya and Yapavu for 11 years. (1272-1283 AD). It would be seen that the seat of Sinhala government which commenced at Tambapanni or Tamananuwara on the west coast by Vijaya was belted from one place to another due to the Tamil invasions from Anuradhapura to Polonnaruva to Dambadeniya and in extreme circumstances to the hills of Rohana. According to the Culavamsa this King had a host of Tamil warriors who were faithful to him when his own Senapathi turned against him. The Senapathi was beheaded by a Tamil warrior while he was occupying the King's throne. The chronicle refers to the Tamils as, '*chivalrous Ariya warriors*', (CV 90.16), who assisted the '*Sinhala warriors*', (CV 90.29), to put Bhuvanakabahu on the throne at Dambadeniya from his hide-out at Subhagri in Yapahu. During his reign a Tamil General by the name of Ariya Chakravathi invaded the country and laid waste the kingdom and entered the town of Subagiri and seized the tooth-relic and all the costly treasures and delivered them to the Pandu King Kulasekera. (CV 90.44-47). According to Yalpana Vipava Malai, Kulotunga Singhai Ariyan-Segarajasegaram II (1256-1279 AD), was ruling the kingdom of Jaffna from Singhai Nager. The Pearl Fishery of Mannar was under the kingdom of Jaffna. The Sinhalese King Bhuvanaka Bahu I (1273-1283 AD), was reigning from Yapahu and Dambadeniya, encroached on the pearl fishery. A battle ensued off Mannar where Bhuvanaka Bahus' naval flotilla was defeated and Yapahu was sacked and the tooth-relic (Dalada) carried away by Kolotungha, the Tamil king, and given to Kulasekera Pandya king of Madhurai. It was during the reign of Parakkrama Bahu III (1280-1293), by friendly negotiations the Dalada was returned to Lanka and deposited in the tooth-relic temple of Polonnaruva.

It was during the reign of Parakrarna Bahu VI, who ruled from Kotte (1410-1467 AD), that he got down warriors from the Tamil country of Chola to fight his wars at home with his kindred. These warriors were given 18 ports on the west coast for purposes of trade from Chilaw to Ambalangoda, and the King got them married into Sinhala Goigama families so that they would remain permanently to fight his battles. These warriors hailed from Kurumandalam of the eastern sea-board of the Chola empire, and better known as the Coromandel coast. By profession they were fishermen belonging to the Karava caste. In a previous chapter I have dealt with these warriors who could be identified even to the present day by their 'housenames'. From the year 1410 AD to the present generation counting over 500 years, these Tamil warriors have been integrated into the Sinhala mainstream and count a multitude still domiciled on the western sea-board of

Lanka and related inhabitancies perhaps, blissfully ignorant of their roots.

According to the chronological table of Ceylon Kings prepared by Don Martin De Zilva Wickremasinghe, in his *Epigraphia Zeylanica*, it reveals that 22 Tamil Kings ruled the Sinhalese for a total of 237 years and 8 months of their history. This does not include the rule of the kings of the Tamils of the kingdom of Jaffna or the Sinhala kings by Tamil extraction.

It has been a fad with the Sinhala Kings to obtain Tamil princesses as their Queens from the Pandyan kingdom, of present Tamil Nadu. The last chapter of the Tamil connection in Sinhala royalty continued unabatedly by Kings Sri Vira Parakrama, Sri Vijaya Rajasimha, Kirti Sri Rajasimha, Sri Rajadhi Rajasimha, who were all Tamils, and finally terminating in the closing phases of the history of monarchs of Lanka by a Tamil Kannusamy alias Sri Vikrama Rajasinghe, the last King of Lanka-1815 AD.

CHAPTER 28

## FROM INDEPENDENCE TO CHAOS

The western powers of the Portuguese, Danes, French, Dutch and subsequently the British, fought each other for the capture and ultimate subjugation of the island of Ceylon for its rich resources in spices, gems, pearls etc., and the strategic location the island held in the sea route to the Far east, with Trincomalee the third largest natural harbour in the world.

Before the advent of the Portuguese, the first European power, there were three distinct native kingdoms existing with their own Kings. One was the *Sinhalese kingdom* of the south, comprising of the *kingdom of Kotte* and the *kingdom of Kandy*, although a Sinhalese enclave but ruled by a Tamil, and the other was the *Tamil kingdom of Jaffna* in the Northern part of Ceylon. The Sinhalese and Tamils have their own separate religion, language and distinctive culture and hailed from different parts of India, before their migration. The Sinhalese speak Sinhala, a language which sprang up in the island after first migration and profess Buddhism, an off shoot of Hinduism, while the Tamils speak a Dravidian language, and profess Hinduism as their religion. The Sinhalese migrated from West Bengal while the Tamils migrated from the Chola, Sera and Pandya kingdoms of South India.

When the British conquered Ceylon, they governed the country under a unitary system of government for over a century. Ceylon achieved independence in 1948 and she continued to function under a unitary form of government, foisted on the people, at the time of initial occupation in 1815 AD. The marriage of convenience between the majority Sinhalese and the Tamils, since independence, ran on the the rocks and the country plunged into civil war since 1956, due to ethnic problems.

The Tamil leaders who joined hands with their Sinhala political contemporaries, like D. S. Senanayake the first Prime Minister of Ceylon, did not even foresee that after winning their political struggle for freedom from the yoke of the English, they would be gradually edged out eventually into a political wilderness and their subjugation a matter of time through a draconian policy of standardising the educational system and deprivation of employment for Tamil youth.

The Mahavamsa, Culavamsa, Rajavaliya and other Sinhala chronicles of Ceylon, apart from books in history, are replete with the beginnings of the so called Sinhala race. From the miscreant Vijaya of Kalinga, it needs no prophet to enlighten the reader of their obscure roots, bolstered by Tamil blood from the South Indian Tamil state of Pandya, weaned by the indigenous tribes of the Veddhas, Yakkas and Nagas. Of the latter there were, '80 kotis, who embraced Buddhism at the instigation of the Buddha', and evolved into a nation from the mire of a mixed ancestry of exogamy. This, in short is their genealogy.

The road to independence from the constitutional pen of Sir Ivor Jennings, to the 'do-no-more' constitution of Donoughmore was ramified with terminology that was devoid of safe guards to the rights of the minorities. As a result we find ourselves at war which we did not bargain or wanted, set as if it were a veritable time-bomb, wittingly or unwittingly by the authors of the constitution. This pattern of misfortune befell India after independence with the partitioning off of Pakistan and the subsequent emergence of Bangladesh as an independent country and the ongoing conflict over Kashmir. What the world is about to witness after July 1997 in Hongkong, would not be any better if what has been already seen in countries where the sun has set on the British Empire.

Ceylon (Sri Lanka), achieved independence in 1948, one year after India from the British Raj, and the two contending political leaders, Sir Ponnambalam Arunachalam and D. S. Senanayake, representing the Tamils and Sinhalese respectively, presumed that they had achieved their goal, of a free and independent Lanka. Fifty years since independence what the Tamils received as their share of freedom from foreign rule was a systematic fraud perpetrated on the Tamil people by the first Prime Minister of Ceylon and his successors. He was aptly called 'Jungle John' who was responsible for the colonisation of Tamil areas by clearing the jungle and rehabilitating Sinhala convicts, specially in the Trincomalee district, with the ultimate purpose to tip the scales for representation in the House of Parliament with majority Sinhala representatives. With this sinister scheme he pioneered in settling families of Singhalese in Tamil areas. Every successive government started state aided colonisation schemes in the guise of massive development projects in Tamil areas with the subtle manipulation in the diversion of the Mahaveli river and the Gal Oya projects for encroachments by Sinhalese on the periphery of Tamil boundaries. This plan of colonisation was vigorously continued by each and every Sinhala Government with consummate zeal. What they hitherto continued covertly, they

now executed openly with scant regard.

S. W. R. Dias Bandaranayake who was originally with the Sinhala United National Party, an opportunist, crossed over to the opposition and formed the Sri Lanka Freedom Party, and at the general election won a land slide victory with his infamous '*Sinhala Only*' policy, followed up on its heels by '*Sri*' and '*Tar-brush*' campaigns. He was the architect of '*Emergency 58*', the communal riots of 1958, where the very people employed for the security of the public chose to be in barracks, while unruly mobs went on a rampage in hunting down Tamils and their establishments where some were murdered in cold blood while others were burnt alive, not even sparing Hindu priests. Fate seemed to have taken its toll where he was concerned when a man alleged to be a Buddhist priest, shot him in cold blood.

The widow of the former Prime Minister, Madame Srimavo came to power on the ashes of her husband's popularity and continued on the course plotted out by her Sinhala predecessors. It was during her time troops were sent to Jaffna during a peaceful satyagraha campaign conducted by Tamil political leaders, where the demonstrators mainly women were booted by uniformed thugs of the government in power. During her government there were numerous army camps set up in the Jaffna peninsula to fight an unknown enemy, perhaps the peace-loving Tamil people.

The next Prime Minister was J. R. Jayawardhena who was voted into power by a two-third majority in 1976, specially bolstered by the votes of the Tamils living in his Colombo South electorate. He wormed his way as the first executive President of Sri Lanka. He had a golden opportunity of settling the Tamil problem once and for all and write his way into the history books, but he chose to exhibit a touch of sadism in the worst pogrom against the Tamils, by master minding the communal riots of July 1983 and the subsequent mayhem that followed assisted by his three political stooges of Mathew, Lalith and Gamini. He was brought to the limelight of political power by Tamil votes, but saw fit to destroy. The Tamil people will never forget the statement he made after four days after the communal riots on national television when he said, '*If you want peace, I, give you peace; but if you want war, I, give you war*'. That was the message he had for the Tamils after destroying their property, while others paid with their lives. This final betrayal of JR stirred Tamil's youths to take up arms for the liberation of their people. The '*Old Fox*', had stirred the slumbering '*Tiger Cubs*' to spring and devour. JR lived to see his handy work of '*Rata Kaava*' (destroyer of the country), like a withered peer, taking to his grave the dastardly acts of his stooges who burnt the Jaffna Library to cinders. It is alleged that it was his stooge Gamini

who was responsible for the burning down of the Library with the blessing of JR. Perhaps he too paid with his life when he was blown to bits at a political rally at 'Thotta-Langa' (Colombo).

Then there appeared Premadasa from the lush groves of 'Kesel Watte', President of Sri Lanka — from log-cabin to White-House. His own called him 'Gama Kaaver' (destroyer of villages), whose ideology it is alleged was that of an eliminator of all those who were against him. It is alleged that his band of uniformed cohorts carried out Kangaroo courts and summarily meted judgement. Many people disappeared from their homes after being abducted never to be seen again. His tryst with the 'Tiger' with false pretences were short lived when 'Babu' took him out on May Day with a few of his henchmen to eternity with a loud bang. Jesus Christ said, "he who lives by the sword, shall die by the sword".

Then came charming Chandrika to power on a popular mandate of Peace to settle the Tamil problem. There were great expectations by the masses, especially the Tamils, but like her predecessors she too elected for a military solution to a purely ethnic problem. Her change of heart is believed as a result of the influence of the Buddhist priests who are against granting any concessions to the Tamils. She went on battle mode and while talking of peace proposals sent her stooges to procure arms from arsenals of the world, so that they could trigger mass killings of innocent people, in the name of the Tigers, from the comparative luxury fortress-cum-bunker from Colombo. Sri Lanka as the bastion of the Buddhist faith, supposed to adhere to the *Triple Gem* of the *Buddha*, *Dhamma* and the *Sangha*, but now seen as a Sinhala Buddhist Government procuring arms capable of mass destruction while chanting for peace, perhaps, a new way of attaining Nirvana! Her cruel policy of 'economic blockade' of the Jaffna Peninsula was orchestrated with the aim of bringing the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam to their knees, but this boomeranged. Having no effect, she then went on a rampage like an elephant in rut of the Jaffna Peninsula with her bombings and the Navy bombardment of the coastal villages of Vadamaradchi, creating enormous damage to property and the resultant loss of innocent lives. Her state sponsored carnage of terrorism marches on and the Tamils are subject to search and arrest operations specially in the Colombo district at all times by day or night. Young men and women are subject to illegal detentions and tortured and valuables confiscated. It is alleged that regular cordon and search operations ensure regular income to those in authority, to obtain their release.

The catalogue of State sponsored terrorism has reached proportions that the push into the city of Jaffna devoid of

inhabitants, and the hoisting of the lion flag by Sinhala leaders in the presence of the military conquerors of a 'ghost city' and subsequent applause in the Sinhala parliament for their Minister of Defence depicts their jingoism. What they took pride in taking over was a city empty of people who had fled the advancing military thrust by air, sea and land, spewing out death and destruction on the sick and invalids left behind and on their property accumulated through ages of honest toil. This carnage goes on while the rest of the world looks on with indifference to the genocide of a people by a majority Sinhala race, all in the name of Sinhala chauvanism.

When we look at the world stage, we watch with awe the actions of a super-power, in the guise of 'world cop', invoking the assistance and blessings of the Security Council and the United Nations of, 'Blessed are the peace makers' to settle international conflicts and thereby secure their economic interests to keep afloat the mighty dollar. Their choice of concern to step into selected war torn countries to bring about a settlement has apparent economic ramifications. Their motto of, 'In God We Trust', in their coinage and on the other side, seek for economic targets with ballistics, to enforce their will. Even those who are blind could see their successful wooing the 'dragon' for economic gain. Their next target 'locked-in' is India where the 'eagle' would land not to in the distant future to propagate their economic designs. It is only then, perhaps the world community would be made to take stock of the genocide of the Tamils in Sri Lanka, where the 'Tigers' prowl would be detrimental to the financial and political stability of the region.

They were called 'the boys' who took the fourth largest army in the world, coming as a peace-keeping-force, but turned against them with the military might of the Sinhala forces assisted by foreign war mongers of the modern era armed with sophisticated killing machines and heat seeking devices against the Tamil Tigers. It is now an accepted fact that so-called 'boys' had graduated from the military academy of survival with distinction. From what we have hitherto seen in battle, specially in the debacle of Pooneryn where 750 soldiers are said to be missing in action, and the dramatic change in ownership of a huge stockpile of military hardware worth over US\$40 million, or the dawn onslaught on the military camp at Mullaitivu where 1400 soldiers were killed or missing in action, and the seizure of a vast haul of arms and other military equipment. The camp was run over too and the bungled military escapade at Thandikulam or the mystery surrounding the disappearance of arms shipment from foreign ports and with a catalogue of losses and defeats on land with comparative ease. The make-shift naval flotilla of the 'Black Tigers'



were able to take on the might of the navy where many naval vessels were sunk or destroyed in naval encounters. This is a marvel in the history of modern naval warfare.

May 13th, 1998, marked the first anniversary of Sri Lanka's military dismal display of her four divisions, 53, 54, 55 and 56 on the road to Kilinochi. In the ill-fated operation, ill-named 'Victory Assured' (*Jaya Sikurui* in Sinhalese), and picked on an unlucky day — 13th, the military's march to link a road from Vavuniya to Kilinochi, got bogged down at Mankulam due to the inimitable bravery of the Tigers. Planned and executed by a more intelligent military genius from the heart of Vanni, the military's advance has come to a grinding halt due to the tactical '*jungle-play*' by the Tigers. This reminds us of the statement made by the late C. Suntheralingam, one time M.P., for Vavuniya after the 1958 communal riots that, '*KAADU SUDDUM*' (fire will come from the jungle-Tamil). It would appear that the jungles of the Vanni, have once again harkened to the call of *Tamil Eelam*.

There is no power on earth with the indomitable spirit of the Tamils who are prepared to sacrifice their lives for their cause and live with dignity and honour, never to be extinguished. It is fitting to harken back to the Declaration of Arbroath, 1320 AD which appears to be the code of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam's (LTTE), fight against the Sinhalese Government of Sri Lanka. "*For so long as but a hundred of us remain alive, we will in no way yield ourselves to the dominion of the English. For it is not for glory, nor riches, nor honour that we fight, but for Freedom only, which no good man lays down but with his life.*" (Declaration of Arbroath, 1320).

It would be seen from a previous chapter regarding the Karavas of the Coromandel coast, how they migrated and settled in the coastal districts extending from Mathagal, Myliddy, Velvet-tithurai, Point Pedro, Trincomalee, and Batticalo. They remained Tamils speaking the Tamil language and predominantly Hindu by religion. The same Karava Tamils imported by Sinhala Kings from the Coromandel coast of South India to fight their battles at home, eventually settled down from Puttalam to Ambalangoda with the blessings of King Parakrama Bahu VI and other Sinhala Kings. They married Sinhala Goigama women whose descendants do not speak Tamil after 588 years. Sinhala is the mother tongue of their Sinhala mothers the majority of whom have adopted the Christian faith, but their ancestry is discerned by their house names' (Ge names Vasa gama).

It is paradoxical to see the descendants of the very Karava fighters of the North and East leading a section of the Tamil community of Sinhala origin, fighting the Sinhalese to achieve

Eelam for the Tamils.

In the midst of broken promises by the powers that be, battles and bloodshed there are many widows, orphans and still more men, women and children sans hands and legs. Together with the disturbed spirits of those dead in battle, all are howling to high heaven the part played by a third sinister force. Obstructing a just peace to both warring parties is the spectre of the 'Robe', who have been the stumbling block to any political solution. This scourge which is a relic of the past, coming down from the time of *Sinhala King Aggabodhi I (568-601 AD)*, to the present era, where the King allowed his Chief Buddhist Priest Dathasiva to run the country by influencing the reigning Monarch. (CV 42:22 and 57:23-39). According to W. Geiger's note, 'this is the beginning of the Political influence of the Bhikkus'. This has been recorded in the Sinhala chronicle Culavamsa in no unmistakable terms. In chapter 57 of the Culavamsa a more positive reference to the political influence of the Sangha appears, where it is stated, 'Since that time (7th century) of King Mana (676-711 AD) the Sovereigns of Lanka act according to the counsel of the Bhikkhus, who hold the leading position'. Today the tragedy is that Buddhist priests have gone beyond by influencing the powers that be demanding that more money be spent on the purchase of arms, not for peace but to kill.

If Sri Lanka, the 'Paradise of the Indian Ocean', is not to be called 'The killing fields of Dhamma Dipa', then at least in the name of sanity let those who are elected to govern, Govern, and those who elect to preach let them Preach the Triple Gem of the Buddha, Dhamma and the Sangha and not meddle in the affairs of state. In this then we would see the light of Peace at the end of the tunnel of misery, death and destruction.

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*The last words of Sri Vickrama Rajasinghe, the last King of Kandy, when captured by the British. "Had my people behaved as they ought to have done. I would have shown you whether I was a Man or Woman. Twice during my reign have you obtained possession of the town of Kandy and twice you have been very glad to get out of it".*

*"... This book will help many, and specially those of us born in South India or Sri Lanka, whether we are Tamil or Sinhalese, Telugu, Kannada or Malayalam, to have some insight into early history and heritage . . .*

*... I commend this book to all prospective readers."*

*Emeritus Professor C. J. Eliezer*