

= Jaffna kingdom =

The Jaffna kingdom (Tamil : ஜாஃனா இராச்சியம்) (1215 @-@ 1624 CE) , also known as Kingdom of Aryacakravarti , of modern northern Sri Lanka was a historic monarchy that came into existence around the town of Jaffna on the Jaffna peninsula after the invasion of Magha , who is identified as the founder of the Jaffna kingdom and is said to have been from Kalinga , in India . Established as a powerful force in the north , north east and west of the island , it eventually became a tribute paying feudatory of the Pandyan Empire in modern South India in 1258 , gaining independence in 1323 with the fragmentation of the Pandyan control when the last Pandyan ruler of Madurai was defeated and expelled in 1323 by Malik Kafur , the army general of the Muslim empire Delhi Sultanate . For a brief period , in the early to mid @-@ 14th century , it was an ascendant power in the island of Sri Lanka when all regional kingdoms accepted subordination . However , the kingdom was eventually overpowered by the rival Kotte Kingdom , around 1450 when it was invaded by Prince Sapumal under the Kotte Kingdoms directive .

It was freed of Kotte control in 1467 ; its subsequent rulers directed their energies towards consolidating its economic potential by maximising revenue from pearls and elephant exports and land revenue . It was less feudal than most of the other regional kingdoms on the island of Sri Lanka of the same period . During this period , important local Tamil literature was produced and Hindu temples were built including an academy for language advancement .

The arrival of the Portuguese colonial power to the island of Sri Lanka in 1505 , and its strategic location in the Palk Strait connecting all interior Sinhalese kingdoms to South India , created political problems . Many of its kings confronted and ultimately made peace with the Portuguese colonials . In 1617 , Cankili II , an usurper to the throne , confronted the Portuguese but was defeated , thus bringing the kingdom ' s independent existence to an end in 1619 . Although rebels like Migapulle Arachchi with help of Thanjavur Nayak kingdom tried to recover the kingdom , they were eventually defeated . Nallur , a suburb of Jaffna town , served as its capital .

= = History = =

= = = Founding = = =

The origin of the Jaffna kingdom is obscure and still the subject of controversy among historians . Among mainstream historians , such as K. M. de Silva , S. Pathmanathan and Karthigesu Indrapala , the widely accepted view is that the Kingdom of the Aryacakravarti dynasty in Jaffna began in 1215 with the invasion of a previously unknown chieftain called Magha , who claimed to be from Kalinga in modern India . He deposed the ruling Parakrama Pandyan II , a foreigner from the Pandyan Dynasty who was ruling the Kingdom of Polonnaruwa at the time with the help of his soldiers and mercenaries from the Kalinga , modern Kerala and Damila (Tamil Nadu) regions in India .

After the conquest of Rajarata , he moved the capital to the Jaffna peninsula which was more secured by heavy Vanni forest and ruled as a tribute @-@ paying subordinate of the Chola empire of Thanjavur , in modern Tamil Nadu , India . During this period (1247) , a Malay chieftain from Tambralinga in modern Thailand named Chandrabhanu invaded the politically fragmented island . Although King Parakramabahu II (1236 ? 70) from Dambadeniya was able to repulse the attack , Chandrabhanu moved north and secured the throne for himself around 1255 from Magha . Sadayavarman Sundara Pandyan I invaded Sri Lanka in the 13th century and defeated Chandrabhanu the usurper of the Jaffna Kingdom in northern Sri Lanka . Sadayavarman Sundara Pandyan I forced Chandrabhanu to submit to the Pandyan rule and to pay tributes to the Pandyan Dynasty . But later on when Candrabhanu became powerful enough he again invaded the Sinhalese kingdom but he was defeated by the brother of Sadayavarman Sundara Pandyan I called Veera Pandyan I and Chandrabhanu lost his life . Sri Lanka was invaded for the 3rd time by the Pandyan Dynasty under the leadership of Arya Cakravarti who established the Jaffna kingdom .

= = = Aryacakravarti dynasty = = =

When Chandrabhanu embarked on a second invasion of the south , the Pandyas came to the support of the Sinhalese king and killed Chandrabhanu in 1262 and installed Aryacakravarti , a minister in charge of the invasion , as the king . When the Pandyan Empire became weak due to Muslim invasions , successive Aryacakravarti rulers made the Jaffna kingdom independent and a regional power to reckon with in Sri Lanka . All subsequent kings of the Jaffna Kingdom claimed descent from one Kulingai Cakravarti who is identified with Kalinga Magha by Swami Gnanaprakasara and Mudaliar Rasanayagam while maintaining their Pandyan progenitor ' s family name .

Politically , the dynasty was an expanding power in the 13th and 14th century with all regional kingdoms paying tribute to it . However , it met with simultaneous confrontations with the Vijayanagar empire that ruled from Vijayanagara , southern India , and a rebounding Kingdom of Kotte from the south of Sri Lanka . This led to the kingdom becoming a vassal of the Vijayanagar Empire as well as briefly losing its independence under the Kotte kingdom from 1450 to 1467 . The kingdom was re-established with the disintegration of Kotte kingdom and the fragmentation of Vijayanagar Empire . It maintained very close commercial and political relationships with the Thanjavur Nayakar kingdom in southern India as well as the Kandyan and segments of the Kotte kingdom . This period saw the building of Hindu temples and a flourishing of literature , both in Tamil and Sanskrit .

= = = Kotte conquest and restoration = = =

The Kotte conquest of the Jaffna Kingdom was led by king Parakramabahu VI 's adopted son , Prince Sapumal . This battle took place in many stages . Firstly , the tributaries to the Jaffna Kingdom in the Vanni area , namely the Vanniar chieftains of the Vannimai were neutralised . This was followed by two successive conquests . The first war of conquest did not succeed in capturing the kingdom . It was the second conquest dated to 1450 that eventually was successful . Apparently connected with this war of conquest was an expedition to Adirampet in modern South India , occasioned according to Valentyn by the seizure of a Lankan ship laden with cinnamon . The Tenkasi inscription of Arikesari Parakrama Pandya of Tinnevely ' who saw the backs of kings at Singai , Anurai , ' and else where , may refer to these wars ; it is dated between A.D. 1449 @-@ 50 and 1453 @-@ 4 . Kanakasooriya Cinkaiariyan the Aryacakravarti king fled to South India with his family . After the departure of Sapumal Kumara to Kotte , Kanakasooriya Cinkaiarian re-established the kingdom in 1467 .

= = = Decline & dissolution = = =

Portuguese traders reached Sri Lanka by 1505 where their initial forays were against the south-western coastal Kotte kingdom due to the lucrative monopoly on trade in spices that the Kotte kingdom enjoyed that was also of interest to the Portuguese . The Jaffna kingdom came to the attention of Portuguese officials in Colombo for multiple reasons which included their interference in Roman Catholic missionary activities , (which was assumed to be patronizing Portuguese interests) and their support to anti-Portuguese factions of the Kotte kingdom , such as the chieftains from Sittawaka . The Jaffna Kingdom also functioned as a logistical base for the Kandyan kingdom , located in the central highlands without access to any seaports , as an entrapment for military aid arriving from South India . Further , due to its strategic location , it was feared that the Jaffna kingdom may become a beachhead for the Dutch landings . It was king Cankili I who resisted contacts with the Portuguese and even massacred 600 @-@ 700 Parava Catholics in the island of Mannar . These Catholics were brought from India to Mannar to take over the lucrative pearl fisheries from the Jaffna kings .

Client state

The first expedition led by Viceroy Dom Constantino de Bragança in 1560 failed to subdue the

kingdom but wrested the Mannar Island from it . Although the circumstances are unclear , by 1582 The Jaffna king was paying a tribute of ten (10) elephants or an equivalent in cash . In 1591 , during the second expedition led by André Furtado de Mendonça , king Puvirasa Pandaram was killed and his son Ethirimanna Cinkam was installed as the monarch . This arrangement gave the Catholic missionaries freedom and monopoly in elephant export to the Portuguese , which the incumbent king however resisted . He helped the Kandyan kingdom under kings Vimaladharmasuriya I and Senarat during the period 1593 @-@ 1635 with the intent of securing help from South India to resist the Portuguese . He however maintained autonomy of the kingdom without overly provoking the Portuguese .

Cankili II the usurper

With the death of Ethirimana Cinkam in 1617 , Cankili II , a usurper , took control of the throne after killing the regent nominated by the late king . Unable to secure Portuguese acceptance of his kingship , Cankili II invited military aid from the Thanjavur Nayaks and allowed corsairs from Malabar to use a base in Neduntivu , hence posing a threat to Portuguese shipping routes through Palk Straight . Cankili II was supported by the Kandy rulers . After the fall of the Jaffna kingdom , the two unnamed princesses of Jaffna had been married to Senarat 's stepsons , Kumarasingha and Vijayapala . Cankili II expectably received military aid from the Thanjavur Nayak Kingdom . On his part , Raghunatha Nayak of Thanjavur made attempts to recover the Jaffna Kingdom for his proteage , the Prince of Rameshwaram . However , all attempts to recover the Jaffna Kingdom from the Portuguese met with failure .

By June 1619 , there were two Portuguese expeditions : a naval expedition that was repulsed by the Malabari corsairs and another expedition by Phillippe de Oliveira and his 5 @,@ 000 strong land army which was able to inflict defeat on Cankili II . Cankili , along with every surviving member of the royal family were captured and taken to Goa , where he was hanged to death . The remaining captives were encouraged to become monks or nuns in the holy orders , and as most obliged , it avoided further claimants to the Jaffna throne .

= = Administration = =

According to Ibn Batuta , a traveling Moroccan historian of note , by 1344 , the kingdom had two capitals : one in Nallur in the north and the other in Puttalam in the west during the pearling season . The kingdom proper , that is the Jaffna peninsula , was divided into various provinces with subdivisions of parrus meaning property or larger territorial units and ur or villages , the smallest unit , was administered on a hierarchical and regional basis . At the summit was the king whose kingship was hereditary ; he was usually succeeded by his eldest son . Next in the hierarchy stood the adikaris who were the provincial administrators . Then came the mudaliyars who functioned as judges and interpreters of the laws and customs of the land . It was also their duty to gather information of whatever was happening in the provinces and report to higher authorities . Administrators of revenues called kankanis or superintendents and kanakkappillais or accountants came next in line . These were also known as pandarapillai . They had to keep records and maintain accounts .

Maniyam was the chief of the parrus . He was assisted by mudaliyars who were in turn assisted by udaiyars , persons of authority over a village or a group of villages . They were the custodians of law and order and gave assistance to survey land and collect revenues in the area under their control . The village headman was called talaiyari , paddankaddi or adappanar and he assisted in the collection of taxes and was responsible for the maintenance of order in his territorial unit . In addition , each caste had a chief who supervised the performance of caste obligations and duties .

Relationship with feudatories

Vannimais were regions south of the Jaffna peninsula in the present @-@ day North Central and Eastern provinces and were sparsely settled by people . They were ruled by petty chiefs calling themselves Vanniar . Vannimais just south of the Jaffna peninsula and in the eastern Trincomalee district usually paid an annual tribute to the Jaffna kingdom instead of taxes . The tribute was in cash , grains , honey , elephants , and ivory . The annual tribute system was enforced due to the

greater distance from Jaffna . During the early and middle part of the 14th century , the Sinhalese kingdoms in western , southern and central part of the island also became feudatories until the kingdom itself was briefly occupied by the forces of Parakramabahu VI around 1450 for about 17 years . Around the early 17th century , the kingdom also administered an exclave in Southern India called Madalacotta .

= = Economy = =

The economy of the Kingdom was almost exclusively based on subsistence agriculture until the 15th century . After the 15th century , however , the economy became diversified and commercialized as it became incorporated into the expanding Indian ocean . Ibn Batuta , during his visit in 1344 , observed that the kingdom of Jaffna was a major trading kingdom with extensive overseas contacts . The Kingdom 's trades were oriented towards maritime South India , with which it developed a commercial interdependence . The non @-@ agriculture tradition of the kingdom became strong as a result of large coastal fishing and boating population and growing opportunities for seaborne commerce . Influential commercial groups , drawn mainly from south Indian mercantile groups as well as other , resided in the royal capital , port , and market centers . Artisan settlements were also established and groups of skilled tradesmen ? carpenters , stonemasons , wavers , dryers , gold and silver smiths ? resided in urban centers . Thus , a pluralistic socio @-@ economic tradition of agriculture marine activities , commerce and handicraft production was well established .

Jaffna kingdom was less feudalized than other kingdoms in Sri Lanka , such as Kotte and Kandy . Its economy was based on more money transactions than transactions on land or its produce . The Jaffna defense forces were not feudal levies ; soldiers in the kings service were paid in cash . The king ? s officials , namely Mudaliyars , were also paid in cash and the numerous Hindu temples seem not to have owned extensive properties , unlike the Buddhist establishments in the South . Temples and the administrators depended on the king and the worshippers for their upkeep . Royal and Army officials were thus a salaried class and these three institutions consumed over 60 % of the revenues of the kingdom and 85 % of the government expenditures . Much of the kingdom 's revenues also came from cash except the Elephants from the Vanni feudatories . At the time of the conquest by the Portuguese in 1620 , the kingdom which was truncated in size and restricted to the Jaffna peninsula had revenues of 11 @,@ 700 pardaos of which 97 % came from land or sources connected to the land . One was called land rent and another called paddy tax called arretane .

Apart from the land related taxes , there were other taxes , such as Garden tax from compounds where , among others , plantain , coconut and arecanut palms were grown and irrigated by water from the well . Tree tax on trees such as palmyrah , margosa and iluppai and Poll tax equivalent to a personal tax from each . Professional tax was collected from members of each caste or guild and commercial taxes consisting of , among others , stamp duty on clothes (clothes could not be sold privately and had to have official stamp) , Taraku or levy on items of food , and Port and customs duties . Columbuthurai , which connected the Peninsula with the mainland at Poonakari with its boat services , was one of the chief port , and there were customs check posts at the sand passes of Pachilaippalai . Elephants from the southern Sinhalese kingdoms and the Vanni region were brought to Jaffna to be sold to foreign buyers . They were shipped abroad from a bay called Urukathurai , which is now called Kayts ? a shortened form of Portuguese Caes dos elephantess (Bay of Elephants) . Perhaps a peculiarity of Jaffna was the levy of license fee for the cremation of the dead .

Not all payments in kind were converted to cash , offerings of rice , bananas , milk , dried fish , game meat and curd persisted . Some inhabitants also had to render unpaid personal services called uliyam .

The kings also issued many types of coins for circulation . Several types of coins categorized as Sethu Bull coins issued from 1284 to 1410 are found in large quantities in the northern part of Sri Lanka . The obverse of these coins have a human figure flanked by lamps and the reverse has the Nandi (bull) symbol , the legend Setu in Tamil with a crescent moon above .

= = Culture = =

= = = Religion = = =

Saivism (a sect of Hinduism) in Sri Lanka has had continuous history from the early period of settlers from India . Hindu worship was widely accepted even as part of the Buddhist religious practices . During the Chola period in Sri Lanka , around the 9th and 10th century , Hinduism gained status as an official religion in the island kingdom . Kalinga Magha , whose rule followed that of the Cholas is remembered as a Hindu revivalist by the native literature of that period .

As the state religion , Saivism enjoyed all the prerogatives of the establishment during the period of the Jaffna kingdom . The Aryacakravarti dynasty was very conscious of its duties as a patron towards Saivism because of the patronage given by its ancestors to the Rameswaram temple , a well @-@ known pilgrimage center of Indian Hinduism . As noted , one of the titles assumed by the kings was Setukavalan or protector of Setu another name for Rameswaram . Setu was used in their coins as well as in inscriptions as marker of the dynasty .

Sapumal Kumaraya (also known as Chempaha Perumal in Tamil) , who ruled the Jaffna kingdom on behalf of the Kotte kingdom is credited with either building or renovating the Nallur Kandaswamy temple . Singai Pararasasegaram is credited with building the Sattanathar temple , the Vaikuntha Pillaiyar temple and the Veerakaliyamman temple . He built a pond called Yamuneri and filled it with water from the Yamuna river of North India , which is considered holy by Hindus . He was a frequent the visitor of the Koneswaram temple , as was his son and successor King Cankili I. King Jeyaveera Cinkaiariyan had the traditional history of the temple compiled as a chronicle in verse , entitled Dakshina Kailasa Puranam , known today as the Sthala Puranam of Koneshwaram Temple . Major temples were normally maintained by the kings and a salary was paid from the royal treasury to those who worked in the temple , unlike in India and rest of Sri Lanka , where religious establishments were autonomous entities with large endowments of land and related revenue .

Most accepted Lord Shiva as the primary deity and the lingam , the universal symbol of Shiva , was consecrated in shrines dedicated to him . The other Hindu gods of the pantheon such as Murugan , Pillaiyar , Kali were also worshipped . At the village level , village deities were popular along with the worship of Kannaki whose veneration was common amongst the Sinhalese in the south as well . Belief in charm and evil spirits existed , just as in the rest of South Asia .

There were many Hindu temples within the Kingdom . Some were of great historic importance , such as the Koneswaram temple in Trincomalee , Ketheeswaram temple in Mannar , Naguleswaram temple in Keerimalai along with hundreds of other temples that were scattered over the region . The ceremonies and festivals were similar to those in modern South India , with some slight changes in emphasis . The Tamil devotional literature of Saiva saints was used in worship . The Hindu New Year falling on the middle of April was more elaborately celebrated and festivals , such as Navarattiri , Deepavali , Sivarattiri , and Thaiponkal , along with marriages , deaths and coming of age ceremonies were part of the daily life .

Until ca . 1550 A.D. , when Cankili I expelled the Buddhists of Jaffna , who were all Sinhalese , and destroyed their many places of worship , Buddhism prevailed in the Jaffna kingdom , among the Sinhalese who had remained in the territory . Some important places of Buddhist worship in the Jaffna kingdom , which are mentioned in the Nampota are : Naga @-@ divayina (Nagadipa , modern Nainativu) , Telipola , Mallagama , Minuvangomu @-@ viharaya and Kadurugoda (modern Kantharodai) , of these only the Buddhist temple at Nagadipa survive today .

= = = Society = = =

Caste structure

The social organization of the people of the Jaffna kingdom was based on a caste system dominated by the agricultural and landed elite , similar to the caste structure of South India . In this way , it resembled the social organization of the Sinhalese kingdoms to the south as well , where the

Govigama caste was dominant and considered lower in status only to the ruling family . The Aryacakravarti kings and their immediate family claimed Brahma @-@ Kshatriya status , meaning Brahmins who took to martial life . Below them were the agriculturists ; the Vellalar and the Madapalli castes who provided most of the Mudaliyars to village headman who owned most of the arable land . Below the Vellalar were the Koviars who were also involved in agriculture . The people of the fishing castes , collectively known as the Karaiyar , were independent of this social structure to which the landed communities were bound . The Chettys were well known as traders and owners of Hindu temples and the Pallar and the Nalavar castes composed of the landless labourers who tilled the land . Other castes composed of traditional barbers , washers , potters and general service providers . People of the Parayar caste lived in segregated settlements and were the untouchables , just as in the modern Tamil Nadu and Kerala regions of south India .

Mercenaries & traders

Mercenaries of various ethnic and caste backgrounds from India , such as the Telugus (known locally as Vadugas) and Malayalees from the Kerala region were employed by the king as soldiers . Muslim traders and sea pirates of Mapilla and Moor ethnicities as well as Sinhalese were in the Kingdom . The kingdom also functioned as a refuge for rebels from the south seeking shelter after failed political coups . According to the earliest historiographical literature of the Kingdom of Jaffna , Vaiyaapaadal , datable to 14th @-@ 15th century CE . , in verse 77 lists the community of Papparavar (Berbers specifically and Africans in general) along with Kuchchiliyar (Gujaratis) and Choanar (Arabs) and places them under the caste category of Pa ? I ? Iuvili who are believed to be cavalrymen of Muslim faith . The caste of Pa ? I ? Iuvili or Pa ? I ? Iuvili is peculiar to Jaffna . A Dutch census taken in 1790 CE in Jaffna records 196 male adults belonging to Pa ? I ? Iuvili caste as taxpayers . That means the identity and profession existed until Dutch times . But , Choanakar , with 492 male adults and probably by this time generally meaning the Muslims , is found mentioned as a separate community in this census .

Laws

During the rule of the Aryacakravarti rulers , the laws governing the society was based on a compromise between a matriarchal system of society that seemed to have had deeper roots overlaid with a patriarchal system of governance . These laws seemed to have existed side by side as customary laws to be interpreted by the local Mudaliars . In some aspects such as in inheritance the similarity to Marumakattayam law of present @-@ day Kerala and Aliyasanatana of modern Tulunadu was noted by later scholars . Further Islamic jurisprudence and Hindu laws of neighboring India also seemed to have had an impact on the customary laws . These customary laws were later codified and put to print during the Dutch colonial rule as Thesavalamai in 1707 . The rule under earlier customs seemed to have been females succeeded females . But when the structure of the society came to be based on patriarchal system , a corresponding rule was recognized , that males succeeded males . Thus , we see the devolution of muthusam (paternal inheritance) was on the sons , and the devolution of the chidenam (dowry or maternal inheritance) was on the females . Just as one dowried sister succeeded another , we had the corresponding rule that if one ? s brother died instate , his properties devolved upon his brothers to the exclusion of his sisters . The reason being that in a patriarchal family each brother formed a family unit , but all the brothers being agnates , when one of them died his property devolved upon his agnates .

= = = Literature = = =

The kings of the dynasty provided patronage to literature and education . Temple schools and traditional gurukulam classes in verandahs (known as Thinnai Pallikoodam in Tamil language) spread basic education in languages such as Tamil language and Sanskrit and religion to the upper classes . During the reign of Jayaveera Singaiariyan rule , a work on medical science (Segarajasekaram) , on astrology (Segarajasekaramalai) and on mathematics (Kanakathikaram) were authored by Karivaiya . During the rule of Kunaveera Singaiariyan , a work on medical sciences , known as Pararajasekaram , was completed . During Singai Pararasasekaran 's rule , an academy for Tamil language propagation on the model of ancient Tamil Sangam 's was established

in Nallur . This academy performed a useful service in collecting and preserving ancient Tamil works in manuscripts form in a library called Saraswathy Mahal . Singai Pararasasekaran 's cousin Arasakesari was credited with translating the Sanskrit classic Raghuvamsa into Tamil . Among other literary works of historic importance compiled before the arrival of European colonizers , Vaiyapatal , written by Vaiyapuri Aiyar , is well known .

= = = Architecture = = =

There were periodic waves of South Indian influence over Sri Lankan art and architecture , though the prolific age of monumental art and architecture seemed to have declined by the 13th century . Temples built by the Tamils of Indian origin from the 10th century belonged to the Madurai variant of Vijayanagar period . A prominent feature of the Madurai style was the ornate and heavily sculptured tower or gopuram over the entrance of temple . None of the important religious constructions of this style within the territory that formed the Jaffna kingdom survived the destructive hostility of the Portuguese .

Nallur , the capital was built with four entrances with gates . There were two main roadways and four temples at the four gateways . The rebuilt temples that exist now do not match their original locations which instead are occupied by churches erected by the Portuguese . The center of the city was Muthirai Santhai (market place) and was surrounded by a square fortification around it . There were courtly buildings for the Kings , Brahmin priests , soldiers and other service providers . The old Nallur Kandaswamy temple functioned as a defensive fort with high walls . In general , the city was laid out like the traditional temple town according to Hindu traditions .