# Sri Lanka

## Toponymy

In antiquity, Sri Lanka was known to travellers by a variety of names. According to the Mahāvaṃsa, the legendary Prince Vijaya named the island Tambapaṇṇĩ ("copper-red hands" or "copper-red earth"), because his followers' hands were reddened by the red soil of the area where he landed.[20][21] In Hindu mythology, the term Lankā ("Island") appears but it is unknown whether it refers to the island. The Tamil term Eelam (Tamil: ஈழம், romanized: īḻam) was used to designate the whole island in Sangam literature.[22][23] The island was known under Chola rule as Mummudi Cholamandalam ("realm of the three crowned Cholas").[24]