

# **HISTORY**

**Grade 10**

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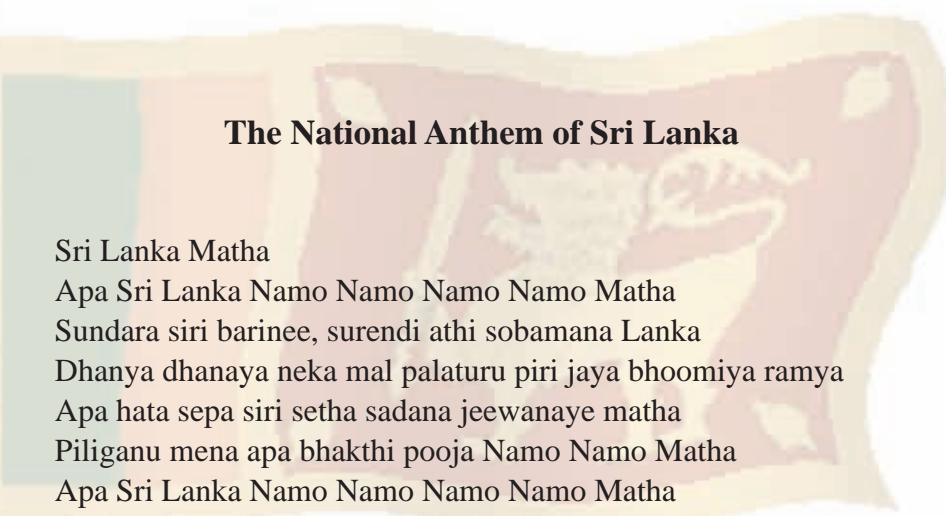
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## The National Anthem of Sri Lanka



Sri Lanka Matha

Apa Sri Lanka Namo Namo Namo Namo Matha

Sundara siri barinee, surendi athi sobamana Lanka

Dhanya dhanaya neka mal palaturu piri jaya bhoomiya ramya

Apa hata sepa siri setha sadana jeewanaye matha

Piliganu mena apa bhakthi pooja Namo Namo Matha

Apa Sri Lanka Namo Namo Namo Namo Matha

Oba we apa vidya

Obamaya apa sathya

Oba we apa shakthi

Apa hada thula bhakthi

Oba apa aloke

Apage anuprane

Oba apa jeevana we

Apa mukthiya oba we

Nava jeevana demine, nithina apa pubudukaran matha

Gnana veerya vadawamina regena yanu mena jaya bhoomi kara

Eka mavakage daru kela bevina

Yamu yamu vee nopama

Prema vada sema bheda durerada

Namo, Namo Matha

Apa Sri Lanka Namo Namo Namo Namo Matha



## **Foreword**

The Educational Publications Department which is entrusted with the responsibility of providing a free textbook to the students by the government fulfills the duty diligently in each year for the student community which exceeds 04 million.

Without limiting to the above mentioned important task, the Educational Publications Department is engaged in producing supplementary reading materials for Advanced Level and other higher examinations. As a result of that process, valuable books with the contribution of subject experts in different fields are sold at a concessionary price.

These supplementary reading materials can be an excellent source of knowledge for those who sit for examinations and for the reading public who is interested in reading different academic books. I would like to compliment the subject experts and the staff of the Educational Publications Department who contributed to produce this book.

I would like to extend my thanks to you who justify the following saying by George R. R. Martin – “A person who reads books lives thousand lives before his death. Those who don't read have only one life”.

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## **Message from the Panel of Editors**

In simple terms, history is the story of how the human generation behaved in the past. What is important in that respect is to focus our attention on how they acted as a common society. Then we see distinctly the numerous continuations that the human society maintained throughout time and changes that occurred in them. The historical implications that are important for a historian can be understood by that.

The strategies employed by the people who lived in ancient societies to maintain their existence safely and in a balanced manner, the philosophy behind it, and all the victories and failures are included in the history. The political projects of the leaders don't solely represent the total history. From the ordinary farmer who fights with the rough earth in the burning sun rays of the dry zone to the kings and ministers and the buddhist clergy who advised them wisely contributed in different levels to create the history of this country. Therefore, it is essential that a student learns the nature of their contribution in the history. It will pave the way to create a pre understanding of the service that he or she can render to the society. This textbook has been compiled based on that standpoint.

We can obtain some kind of an experience by looking into the way our ancestors faced the challenges which are similar to the problems that we face today. A society which is blessed by the virtues in the history does not destroy itself easily. A society becomes weak against new challenges when the immunity created in the society by the historical heritage and perception become weak. The content and the finish have been prepared by the panel of writers and editors with the aim of creating a sensitivity in the hearts of the children about history as an interesting story. We hope that our attempt will be successful.

### ***Very Important***

*The lessons of this textbbok are compiled according to the syllabus of history prepared to be implemented from 2015. The facts in italic in the lessons compiled to create more knowledge and interest whithin the students about thier history, are used to reinforce the relevant subject matter and thus they do not need to be memorized.*

**The Panel of Editors  
25th of May 2014  
At the Educational Publications Department**

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# 1

# Sources of Studying History

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## Introduction

Sources are needed to study history. The sources that help us to study history are diverse. In this unit you will learn the areas such as, introduction to sources, the way how history is built on the information provided by the sources and the benefits of studying history.

Books and documents written at different time periods by the people who lived in the past are considered ‘literary sources’. Relics, monuments, coins, inscriptions and various ruins which are unearthed from archaeological excavations and experiments are called ‘archaeological sources’. Next, let’s discuss the above mentioned two types further using the sources which are helpful to study the history of Sri Lanka.

## 1. Literary Sources

The literary sources, which can be used to study the history of Sri Lanka, can be categorized into two, as, ‘local literary sources’ and ‘foreign literary sources’. The texts, written by Sri Lankans in the form of prose and poetry from time to time about two thousand years ago are considered ‘local literary sources’. Apart from the texts written by Sri Lankans, some books were written by foreigners who were interested in Sri Lanka. Or else, some foreign writers have included information about Sri Lanka in the books they wrote. Thus, the books written by foreign writers mentioning information about Sri Lanka are called ‘foreign literary sources’.

### ▪ Local Literary Sources

Among the local literary sources in Sri Lanka ‘Deepawamsa’ is considered the oldest text. Deepawamsa was written in about 4<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Deepawamsa consists of historical information of this country up to the end of King Mahasen’s ruling period and descriptions of the history of the Buddhist order (Sasana) in this country.

## 1.1 Classification of Sources

History is a subject which studies the past human activities. When we study the history of hundreds and thousands of years back, we find writings and various creations made by people who lived in those ages. They are called ‘sources’ because information about past human activities can be extracted from them. The sources, which belonged to each different age, provide us a good understanding about those eras and their social backgrounds. Thus, when the information taken from those sources are studied logically, the history about people’s lives in each period is formed.

As there are a number of sources which are available to study history, they are mainly divided into two;

1. Literary sources
2. Archaeological sources



*Fig 1.1. Ancient literary and religious information as well as the Wamsakatha have been written on ola leaves. Sri Lanka inherits a tradition of talipots, which belonged to a long period of time.*

But, some historical events have been recorded briefly in Deepawamsa. Repetitions too can be seen in this source. Therefore, Mahawamsa was composed as a historical chronicle with lesser mistakes than Deepawamsa.

Mahawamsa is a text with several parts. The first part of it was written by a Bhikku named ‘Mahanama’ who lived in the ‘Diksanda Seneviya’ Piriwena (monastery). As in Deepawamsa, the first part of Mahawamsa consists of the historical information of this country from the arrival of the Lord Buddha to Sri Lanka up to the end of the ruling time of king Mahasen. This part had been written in about 5<sup>th</sup> or 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D. One can see a certain similarity between the information of Deepawamsa and the first part of Mahawamsa. The reason for this may have been the influence of the early texts such as, Seehala Attakatha Mahawamsa, Uttara Vihara Attakatha and Vinaya Attakatha which were written before these two sources.

After the first part of Mahawamsa was written by Mahanama Thero, some other writers extended Mahawamsa as a continuous text with several parts by including some information about their contemporary time periods from time to time. Therefore, the history of Sri Lanka has been written continuously in Mahawamsa. As there are a limited number of countries of which

the history has been written in one continuous text, Sri Lankans can be proud because the history of this country has been written in one text. Mahawamsa is considered a more credible historical source because some historical events recorded in it have been substantiated by the inscriptions and some other sources.

About four centuries after the writing of Mahawamsa, in Pali, an annotation was compiled in order to interpret it by explaining some areas. That text, which is called the ‘Mahawamsa Teekawa’(annotation of the Mahawamsa), is named as Wansattappakasini. It consists of a lot of information which are not available in some other sources.

Type of Source	Examples
Sandesha Kawya	Mayura, Thisara, Selalihini Sandesha
Prashasthi Kawya	Perakumba Siritha
Hatan Kawya	Seethawaka Hatana, Constantinu Hatana, Ingirisi Hatana

*Table No:1.1 A few ancient literary sources consisting different content from each other*

A number of books, which can be considered to be local literary works, had been written from Anuradhapura era to Kandyan era of the history of this country. The books, considered as Buddhist religious texts such as Bodhiwamsa, Thupawamsa, Dhatuwamsa, Poojawaliya and Saddharmalankaraya, are important to study the history of Rajarata civilization. The Nikaya Sangraha which has been written on the history of the Buddhist order(Sasana) and Rajawaliya which includes political information of the country are important sources of studying history from Gampola to Kotte period. Sandesha Kawya, Prashasthi Kawya and Hatan Kawya are important to study the history between the periods of Kotte and Kandy. Some examples are given in the table No 1.1.

The local books were written during different periods and the reasons which influenced to write

them too are different. The books which had been written from Anuradhapura era to the beginning of Kotte era have had religious objectives. Some books were written a few centuries after the historical incidents, which have been mentioned in the same books. Therefore, when we form our history using the literary sources, we have to pay our attention to the facts given below.

1. The time in which the sources were written
2. The author of the source
3. The author's objectives
4. The way in which facts were obtained for the source

Therefore, you may understand that you have to be clever when you refer to the sources.

### ■ Foreign Sources

As Sri Lanka maintained trade relations with foreign countries from early period of Anuradhapura era, many foreigners who were engaged in trade activities in the Indian Ocean were aware of this country. Therefore, the foreigners, who had written from the period of B.C, have included some information about Sri Lanka in their books. From ancient time there was a good relation between Sri Lanka and India. Therefore, some Indian books have mentioned information about Sri Lanka. Some Tamil books, such as Seelappadikaram, Manimekalai and Padiruppattu written in India too have information about Sri Lanka. Some foreigners tended even to write books with separate information about Sri Lanka after the arrival of the Portuguese in this country in the 16<sup>th</sup> century. When we examine the foreign sources consisting information about Sri Lanka, we can clearly see that there had been writers who came to Sri Lanka and studied and wrote about it as well as writers who didn't visit Sri Lanka but inquired information about Sri Lanka from others and wrote.

### Uses of Literary Sources

1. To prepare the historical chronology.
2. To obtain information about political, economic, and social affairs in each era.
3. To substantiate the information provided by one source with another source.
4. To study the international relations of a country (in this regard foreign sources are very important).

Chinese Sources	Fa-Hsien Thero's travelling accounts (Account on Buddhist Kingdom)
Arabian Sources	Iban Batuta's travelling accounts
Portuguese Sources	Ribeiro's book on Sri Lanka (Ribeiro's Lanka History)
Holland Sources	The book of Phillipus Baldaeus (The Sri Lankan Chronicle of Baldaeus)
English Sources	Robert Knox's book (An Historical Relation of the Island Ceylon- Sinhala translation: Eda Heladiva)

*Table No. 1.2 The records and authors who came to Sri Lanka and wrote about it.*

### 2. Archaeological Sources

Archaeological sources can be divided into a few categories such as epigraphy, coins, ruins, drawings, sculptures and antiquities.

#### Epigraphy

Epigraphy is a word used commonly to introduce writings on stones (Shila), clay slabs, walls, copper plates, golden plates, wood, and on various urns. Writings on stone slabs or rocks are called 'Sellipi / Shilalipi' inscriptions.

#### Inscriptions (Sellipi)

According to the shapes of the stones on which writings have been inscribed, the inscriptions can be categorized as cave inscriptions, rock inscriptions (Giri Lipi), pile inscriptions (Tam Lipi), slab inscriptions (Puwaru Lipi)



*Fig. 1.2. Claudio Ptolemy, a Greek-Roman lived in Alexandria between 90-168 A.D., was a geographer. He drew a map of Sri Lanka.*

and seat inscriptions (Asana Lipi). The oldest inscriptions in this country are named ‘Brahmi inscriptions’ and they were written to record the events such as offering of caves to Bhikku.

These inscriptions are important to understand the history of the ancient society and the expansion of settlements. Writing of inscriptions had continued from the 2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C. to the period of Kandyan kingdom.

After the 2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D. inscriptions were established to write records on various events such as offering premises to temples, administrating temples, informing government laws to people, charge taxes, trading, forgiving convicts, and appreciating the service of some people. Therefore, much information, which is not provided by the literary sources can be discovered from the inscriptions.

### Coins

Coins were used in Sri Lanka from Anuradhapura era. The oldest coins found in this country are called ‘Kahapana’. The names ‘Purana’ and ‘Dharana’ too are used for them. The tusker and Swastika coins, Lakshmi coins and a type of golden coins named ‘Aka’ were used in this country. The copper coins (Thamba Massa) were used during the Polonnaruwa kingdom. The coins needed for the country were produced in the country itself and even the moulds which were used to produce coins have been discovered in excavations. Apart from the local coins, Roman coins, Chinese coins, and Indian coins are found in Sri Lanka. In studying the economic condition, trade, and use of metals, coins are an immensely important source. The study of ancient coins is called ‘numismatics’.

Type of Source	Examples
Greek Sources	Demundo by Aristotle, Indica by Megasthinis, the records of Onesicritus.
Roman Sources	Naturalis Historia by Plini, Approach to Geography by Ptolemy, Sri Lankan Map by Ptolemy
Chinese Sources	The book on records of tours of Hsuan-Tsang Thero
Portuguese Sources	The book about Sri Lanka by Father Fernão de Queiroz

*Table No. 1.3. The authors who have written records about Sri Lanka based on the information obtained from others without seeing the country with their own eyes, and their books.*

## Ancient Ruins

Many ruins such as ancient buildings, stupas, stone pillars, tanks and ponds can be seen in Sri Lanka. Since some places, where ancient people of this country lived are still in wilderness, such ruins exist even in and close to the forestry areas.

These ruins, which are called archaeological monuments, are a very good source to study the history of this country. These ruins help us to gain a clear knowledge on various aspects such as creative ability, technology, building designing or architecture, craftsmanship, ability to conserve the environment and water management of the ancient people.



Fig. No. 1.3. The 'Galpotha inscription', made by King Keerthi Sri Nissankamalla. This is located in Polonnaruwa.



Fig. 1.4. Panakaduwa copper plate, written on the order of king Vijayabahu I. This was granted to an officer named Sithnarubima Budalna with gratitude for his loyalty to the king. This is what was written from its first line to the third; "Swasthi Sirisiriwath Apiriyath Lo Ikuth Gunamulin Uthurath Mulu Dambadiwhi Ankethkula Pamili Kala Okawas Rad Parapuren Bat Keth Usabnat Agamehesun Wu Lakdiw Polo Yohena Parapuren Himi Sirisangabo Vijayabahu Rajapa Wahane". This document is important to study the history of 12<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

Media of Epigraphy	Examples
Inscriptions (Stone)	King Nissankamalla's Galpotha inscription
Walls	The graffiti in Sigiriya
Copper Plates	Panakaduwa Copper Plate of King Vijayabahu I
Golden Plates	Vallipuram golden plate
Wood	Writings on the wooden posts of the Ambekke Devalaya
Clay Slabs	Scripts written on tiles and bricks
Urns	Scripts written on clay pots and begging bowls

Table No.1.4. Different Media of Epigraphy.

Cave Inscriptions	Inscriptions written near the drip ledges of caves
Rock inscriptions	Inscriptions written on rock surfaces or top of the rocks
Pillar Inscriptions	Inscriptions written on arranged stone pillars
Slab Inscriptions	Inscriptions written on arranged stone slabs
Seat Inscriptions	Inscriptions written on stone slabs like altar or pulpit

Table 1.5. The names used to introduce the epigraphy according to the nature of the place where they were written.

## Drawings, Sculpture and Antiquities

Ancient drawings, sculpture and engravings are live evidence that display our culture. Drawings, sculpture, and engravings are helpful to gain information about various aspects of the ancient people such as their clothes, art skills, use of jewellery, using colours, and religious beliefs; for example, the frescos in Sigiriya provide us some information about clothes, jewellery, hair styles and beauty culture of women who lived during ancient times.

The objects which are remaining now, after being created or used by the ancient people can be introduced as antiquities. Antiquities are in the museums, religious places, and various institutions and in care of some people of this country. Many antiquities are discovered in excavations. Antiquities help us to understand many different aspects of the ancient people, such as their abilities, skills, ancient culture, technology, foreign relations and their life style.

You may see that there are diverse sources which can be used to construct the history of Sri Lanka. In constructing the history with the help of the information extracted from a particular source, one has to be shrewd in using that source. Historical sources in Sri Lanka are past reports rather than past events. And also there is a possibility of including the personal likes and dislikes of the authors of these books into the sources. Archaeological sources are mostly considered as contemporary ones to the historical events. Accordingly, if the information mentioned in the literary sources is substantiated by the archaeological sources, that information

can be considered credible. In constructing history regarding a certain historical incident, all sources relevant to that incident should be used. Next, after analyzing the various information received from the sources critically, history should be constructed by using the most credible information. Accordingly, archaeological sources are useful to fill up what lacks in the literary sources, to obtain new information and to substantiate the information mentioned in the literary sources.



Fig. 1.5. This coin ,used in Sri Lanka, has been made of gold. It is called 'medieval golden coins (Madyakalina Ran Kahawanu)'. These coins are a source which helps to study not only the ancient economy but also the technology.

## 1.2 Importance of Learning History

History is a subject which is linked with the study of sources. It could be studied with curiosity too. Therefore, one who studies history naturally tends to read books. Since the reader comes across with diverse facts, ideas, and opinions



Fig. 1.6. The sculpture of Man and the Head of Horse in Isurumuni temple in Anuradhapura. This sculpture is believed to have been created in 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> century A.D. This sculpture represents the gods 'Agni' (Head of Horse) and 'Parjanya'. (Image of man)

in reading books, his or her critical sense gets developed. Therefore, he or she tends to think of anything with a logical mind and this will help him or her to understand the problems properly. When the problems are understood properly, he or she will tend to find solutions to those problems creatively. Therefore, when one learns history, it helps him or her to develop his or her personality. Apart from these, one will gain the benefits given below by studying history.

1. Proper understanding of society and the world in which one lives
2. Constructing future by understanding the present through the past experiences
3. Recognizing the national identity
4. Building up national reconciliation by loving humanity
5. Respecting others' cultures
6. Tolerating different views

### 1.3 Protecting Archaeological Sources

When we consider the long history of Sri Lanka, expansion of ancient population, and the number of people who had lived in this country, what remains here for us as archaeological sources today is only the creations made of long lasting raw materials such as stone, metal and clay; or large scale creations such as tanks and canals. There is a possibility of

these valuable sources getting destroyed due to speedy urbanization, expansion of settlements, constructing roads, constructing buildings, and agricultural activities happening in the country. Today we see historical places, monuments and antiquities because our ancestors had protected them. Therefore, it is a responsibility of the citizens of the country to protect them as the present generation.

There are different types of ancient marks inscribed on the rocky surfaces in various areas in Sri Lanka. Among them various figures such as, Sun and Moon, Palmyra-fan, bow, arrow, conch, ox-hoof, tusker-step, figures of various animals are marks that show the ancient borders of areas; or they are an ancient form of communication as the present road signs. Some people dig out and destroy the places where there are these marks and moonstones, guard stones, stone pillars and other antiquities by misunderstanding that the treasures have been deposited in such places. These activities and other activities like scribbling and drawing pictures in historical places and on the antiquities will pave the way to destroy the antiquities. It is a punishable offence according to the law of the country. Therefore, you should be determined to protect the antiquities as the students who have understood the value of them.

## Important Facts

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- ✓ The things that help learn history are called sources.
- ✓ Sources are divided into two as literary sources and archaeological sources.
- ✓ Books and documents belong to the literary source category and ruins and various antiques are archaeological sources.
- ✓ We can realize how our ancestors faced various experiences by learning history. Through that one can get the knowledge necessary to face the same problems at present.
- ✓ History of a country reflects the identity of the citizens who live in that country.

## Activity

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1. Arrange the various sources you learnt in this lesson as given below.

Source	Type of Source- Literary / Archaeological	Uses for forming history
Deepawamsa		
Mahawamsa		
An Historical Relation of the Island Ceylon (Eda Heladiva)		
Perakumba Siritha		
Sigiriya		
Seethawaka Hatana		
Panakaduwa Copper Plate		
Lanka Map of Ptolemy		
Vallipuram Golden Plate		
VOC coins		

2. Write an article to a newspaper titled "The examples I can take to my life by learning history".

**Diksanda Seneviya Pirivena** (Monastery)– There were several monasteries affiliated to Anuradhapura Maha Vihara. Sunhatha Pirivena, Marugana Pirivena, Phalagga Pirivena were some of them. Diksanda Seneviya Pirivena was another one that belonged to them. Mahanama Thero, who composed Mahawamsa, lived in that temple.

**Fa-Hsien Thero** – Fa-Hsien Thero was a Chinese monk. He came to India on foot in search of Buddhist texts. Fa-Hsien Thero arrived in Sri Lanka in the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D. and stayed in Anuradhapura Maha Vihara for two years. He was born at Wuyang village in Shun- Si province in China. He has mentioned some things existed in Sri Lanka in his travelling accounts.

**Hsuan Tsang** – Hsuan Tsang (602 -664 A.D) was a Chinese monk. He came to India on a pilgrimage. He left China in 629 A.D. and was engaged in his pilgrimage for sixteen years. Meanwhile, he recorded what he saw in Asia. Though he did not come to Sri Lanka, he recorded what he learnt about Sri Lanka when he was in India. Even those information is important to study the history of this country in the 7<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

**Joao Ribeiro** – He was a Portuguese national. In the month of March, 1640 he came to Sri Lanka to serve in the Portuguese army. He reached the rank of captain in his army by staying 18 years in Sri Lanka and serving in the army. In his old age he wrote several books about Sri Lanka by living in Lisbon city in Portugal. Those books are highly important to study the history of Sri Lanka in the 17<sup>th</sup> century.

**Philippus Baldaeus** (1632 – 1672 A.D) – Philippus Balaedius was a Dutch priest. He came to Sri Lanka with the Dutch army.

His duty was to serve the East Indian Trade Company of the Dutch. In addition to his duty, he made records on the social life, language and culture in Sri Lanka. Those records have been published in Dutch and German languages. Baldaeus' records are important to study the Sri Lankan history in the 17<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

**Robert Knox** – Robert Knox (1641 -1720 A.D) was an English naval captain. He came to India by ship with his father when he was 14 years old. In 1658 while he was sailing to Persia, he came adrift to Sri Lanka on 19<sup>th</sup> November 1659 as the mast of their ship was broken due to a tempest. On that occasion Robert Knox along with another sixteen people who were in the ship were arrested by King Rajasinghe II. He spent nineteen years in Sri Lanka as a prisoner and afterwards escaped. He went to Arippu in Mannar and then escaped to Bathavia. In 1680 he went back to England. While he was on his way back, he wrote a book on his experiences in Sri Lanka. That book was published in 1681 by the name of *An Historical Relations of the Island of Ceylon*. The book consists of descriptions and drawings which reflect the Sri Lankan society in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, the time in which he stayed in this country.

**Fernão de Queiroz** – He was a priest of the catholic Jesuit sect. Queiroz was a Portuguese national. In 1688 he wrote a book on Sri Lanka. Its name was *Temporal and Spiritual Conquest of Ceylon*. Queiroz did not come to Sri Lanka. He wrote this book while he was staying in India.

# **2 Ancient Settlements**

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## **Introduction**

Sri Lanka became a human habitation one hundred and twenty five thousand years ago. The Homo Sapiens, who are called the modern man, migrated to this country across the Indian Ocean. From then on, they spread themselves in various parts of this country and adapted themselves to different environmental conditions in those areas. As they lived a considerably long time period in this country, with time their culture too changed. Based on those changes which occurred in their culture, the history of human existence in Sri Lanka has been divided into three stages. The nature of those stages and how they lived during those stages will be described to you in this lesson.

### **2.1 Settlements in the Pre-historic Era**

The period which was before the past that is described by the literary sources is commonly named as ‘the pre-historic era’. Two cultural stages belonged to the pre-historic era of Sri Lanka; the first one was the Stone Age which existed for a long time; the second was the period in which there was more tendency of man towards depending on herbal food, use of metals and the beginning of living in permanent settlements. Among these, the word prehistoric era is used to introduce the Stone Age and the word proto-historic era is used to introduce the second period.

#### **Expansion of Settlements**

Settlements in Sri Lanka were made by the early Homo Sapien man. Homo Sapien expanded his

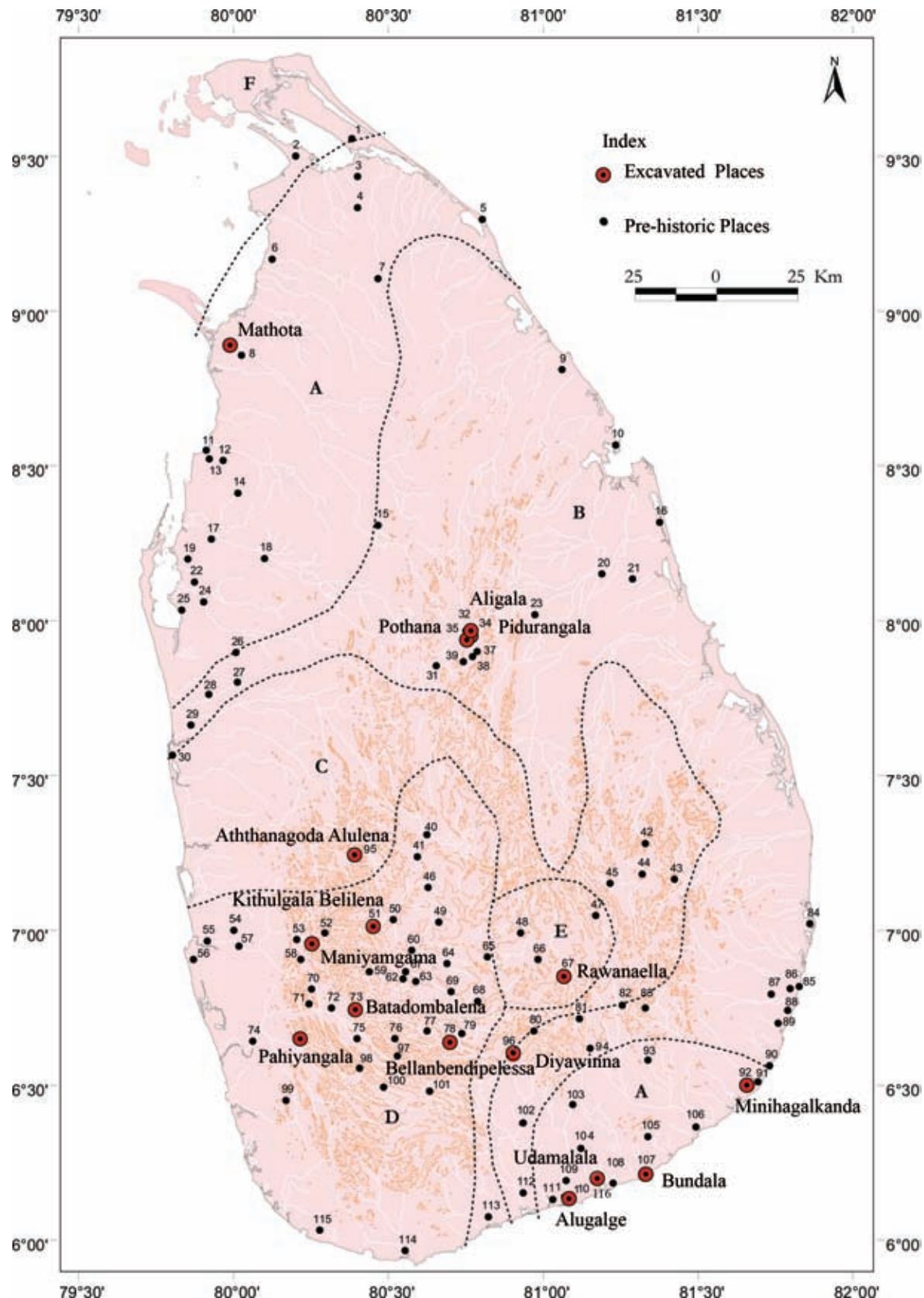
living in a wide geographical area by adapting himself to different climatic zones in this country. Their main dependency method was gathering food by roaming and hunting.

There are many places where evidence, belonging to the Stone Age in Sri Lanka, is found. The first one is Rathnapura and the gem mines located around Rathnapura. The stone tools used by these people who lived in a distant age and the bones of some extinct animals are deposited in the layers of soil mixed with gravel , which is called lode found in the mines about 90 feet deep from the ground level. The gravel layers, which were caused by erosion of mountainous regions due to extremely heavy rainy periods during the Pleistocene geographical era, deposited on the lowlands in this manner.

There is a gravel layer covered with sandy soil mixed with clay in the ground in the semi-arid zone in Sri Lanka. The archaeologists have named it as the Iranamadu formation. The Iranamadu formation was deposited during the short warm periods of the Pleistocene era. Some tools which belonged to the Stone Age are found in this gravel layer too.

#### **The Expansion of Settlements in Different Climate Zones**

The community which belonged to the Stone Age had lived in 6 main environmental zones in Sri Lanka. These environmental zones are (A) Semi-arid zone (B) Lowland dry zone (C) Lowland intermediate dry zone (D) Wet Zone (E) Mountainous dry intermediate zone (F) Arid zone .



Map 2.1 Distribution of the prehistoric places, discovered so far, in Sri Lanka  
 (A) Semi-arid zone (B) Lowland dry zone (C) Lowland intermediate dry zone (D) Wet zone  
 (E) Mountainous dry intermediate zone (F) Arid Zone

**The list of the names of prehistoric places, discovered so far, in Sri Lanka**

1. Elephantpass	30. Chilaw	59. Batathotalena	88. Okanda
2. Punkari	31. Dambulla	60. Dimbula	89. Itikala
3. Paranthan	32. Thammenagala	61. Dikoya	90. Kumana
4. Iranamadu	33. Pidurangala	62. Samanalakanda	91. Udapothana
5. Mulativu	34. Aligala	63. Maskeliya	92. Minihagalkanda
6. Vellankulam	35. Mapagal	64. Norwood	93. Galge
7. Mankulam	36. Pothana	65. Nuwara Eliya	94. Thelulla
8. Murukkan	37. Alakolawewa	66. Bandarawela	95. Aththanagoda Alulena
9. Nachchiyar Wellachchi Maleyi	38. Wewala	67. Rawanaella	96. Diyawinna
10. Trincomalee	39. Kaludiyapokuna	68. Hortan Plains	97. Kahawaththa
11. Kudiramaleyi	40. Kandy	69. Bagawanthalawa	98. Kukulegama
12. Modaragamaru	41. Peradeniya	70. Eheliyagoda	99. Baduraliya
13. Marichchikaddi	42. Danigala	71. Ellawala	100. Kalawana
14. Vilpattu	43. Henebedda	72. Kuruwita	101. Rakwana
15. Anuradhapura	44. Nilgala	73. Batadombalena	102. Alugalge
16. Sannankulli	45. Bibile	74. Kalu Ganga	103. Angunakolapellassa
17. Pomparippu	46. Gampola	75. Rathnapura	104. Walawe Ganga
18. Kala Oya	47. Madolsima	76. Pelmadulla	105. Thissamaharamaya
19. Vanathawillu	48. Welimada	77. Beligalge	106. Yala
20. Kandakadu	49. Pudalu Oya	78. Bellanbendipellassa	107. Boondala
21. Thrikonamadu	50. Nawalpitiya	79. Belihul Oya	108. Hambanthota
22. Arnakallu	51. Kithulgala Belilena	80. Ukgal Kalthota	109. Ambalanthota
23. Polonnaruwa	52. Belilena Athula	81. Alugalge-Thelulla	110. Welipatanwila
24. Palavi	53. Awissawella	82. Buttala	111. Hungama
25. Puttalam	54. Biyagama	83. Okkampitiya	112. Ranna
26. Anamaduwa	55. Kelaniya	84. Pothuvil	113. Tangalle
27. Andigama	56. Colombo	85. Kudumbigala	114. Matara
28. Pallama	57. Malwana	86. Legama	115. Galle
29. Bangadeniya	58. Getaheththha	87. Bambaragasthalawa	116. Udamalala

The differences of annual rainfall levels are considered in deciding these environmental zones. If there is a difference in the rainfall, it directly affects the animals and the plants in that particular area. Therefore, the people in the Stone Age who adapted themselves to different environmental zones had differences in their food consumption and technology. For example the community of the Stone Age who lived in the lowland wet zone used mostly oysters living on the land as their food. Different types of oysters are abundant in the lowland wet zone. But it is not so in the lowland dry zone. In those areas some animals, mostly living in the dry zone like deer and iguana, were hunted.

### Time Periods

Some evidence of the Stone Age has been discovered from the gravel layer belonging to the Iranamadu formation located in the depth of 45 feet from the surface level of the earth in the area called Pathirajawela in Hambanthota district belonging to the Southern Province of Sri

Lanka. When the gravel layer was dated using the scientific analysis, it proved that the gravel layer was 125000 years old. The gravel layer found in the depth of 24 feet from the surface of the ground level in the area of Bundala, Wellegangoda in the same district belongs to a period of 80000 years back. Approximately this Stone Age had existed continuously from before 125000 years up to 1800 B.C. minimum. The dates which substantiate the longevity of the culture have been confirmed with the evidence found in several provinces in Sri Lanka.

Pahiyangala	- 38000 years
Kuruwita Batadombalena	- 28000 years
Kitulgala Belilena	- 15000 years
Bellanbendipelassa	- 12000 years
Attanagoda Alulena	- 10350 years
Maniyamgala	- 7900 years
Sigiriya Pothana	- 5800 years
Sigiriya Aligala	- 5500 years
Udamalala	- 5330 years
Mathota	- 3800 years



Fig 2.1. This cave, located in Pahiyangala, Bulathsinhala in Kaluthara District, was a habitation of the prehistoric men who lived 38000 years ago. This Pahiyangala cave reveals significant information of the prehistoric people who lived in the lowland wet zone in Sri Lanka.

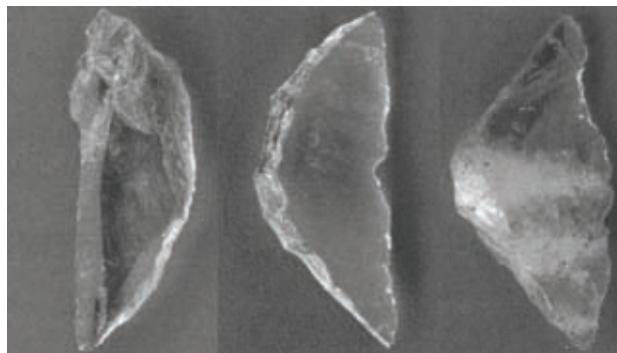


Fig. 2.2 A few stone tools in the geometric shape, which belonged to the middle-stone age in Sri Lanka. They have been made of pure alabaster stone known as 'Bim Weeduru'.

### Key Features of the Settlements

The prehistoric man in Sri Lanka got expanded by undergoing adaptation to environmental conditions different from each other. They preferred to live in places where there were abundant natural resources needed for food. It has been discovered that they had lived in and around the places such as lowland rain forests, dry zone forests, coastal lagoons and creeks, and hill country grasslands. They preferred to live in areas where there was easy availability of water and various types of stones for making their stone tools. They had lived in open areas in dry season and in natural caves during rainy seasons. Given below are several prehistoric outdoor camps and cave habitations, discovered so far.

1. Minihagalkanda, Bundala, Pathirajawela  
(Outdoor camps in the coastal areas)
2. Pahiyangala, Batadombalena, Kithulgala Beli Lena (Lowland wet zone caves)
3. Pothana and Aligala in Sigiriya  
(Lowland dry zone caves)
4. Bellanbendipelessa  
(Outdoor camps in lowland wet zone)
5. Bandarawela, Horton plains  
(Outdoor hunting places in hillside areas)

### Life Style

People of this era lived by hunting and roaming from one place to another and gathering what they could consume as food. Therefore, they spent mostly a nomadic life during the whole year. During heavy rainy seasons they lived in natural caves.

Their population consisted of a collection of small groups. Normally one group comprised of between 15–25 members. The maximum number of members in such a group was believed to be around 50.

It seems that an area of 50 square metres was enough for a family consisted of five members. The area of the place called Church Hill, belonging to the Stone Age found at Bandarawela is 150 square metres. It is assumed that 25 people might have lived in that place. The area of the place, where the community belonging to Stone Age of Bellanbendipelassa lived in 120 square metres. Thirty human skeletons have been discovered from that place.

The nature of the food that the people in that age consumed was decided by the resources available in the environment where they lived. During the dry season they spent their time in camps which they built temporarily in open areas.

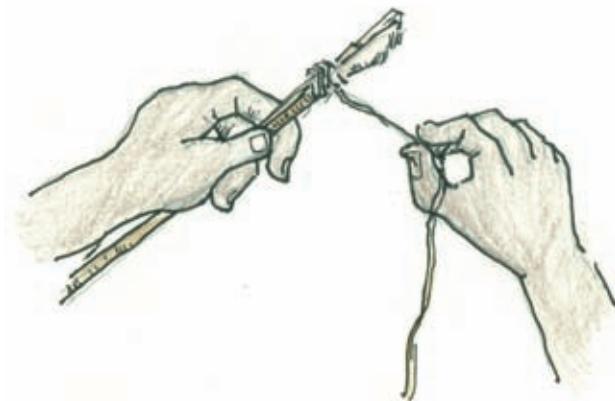
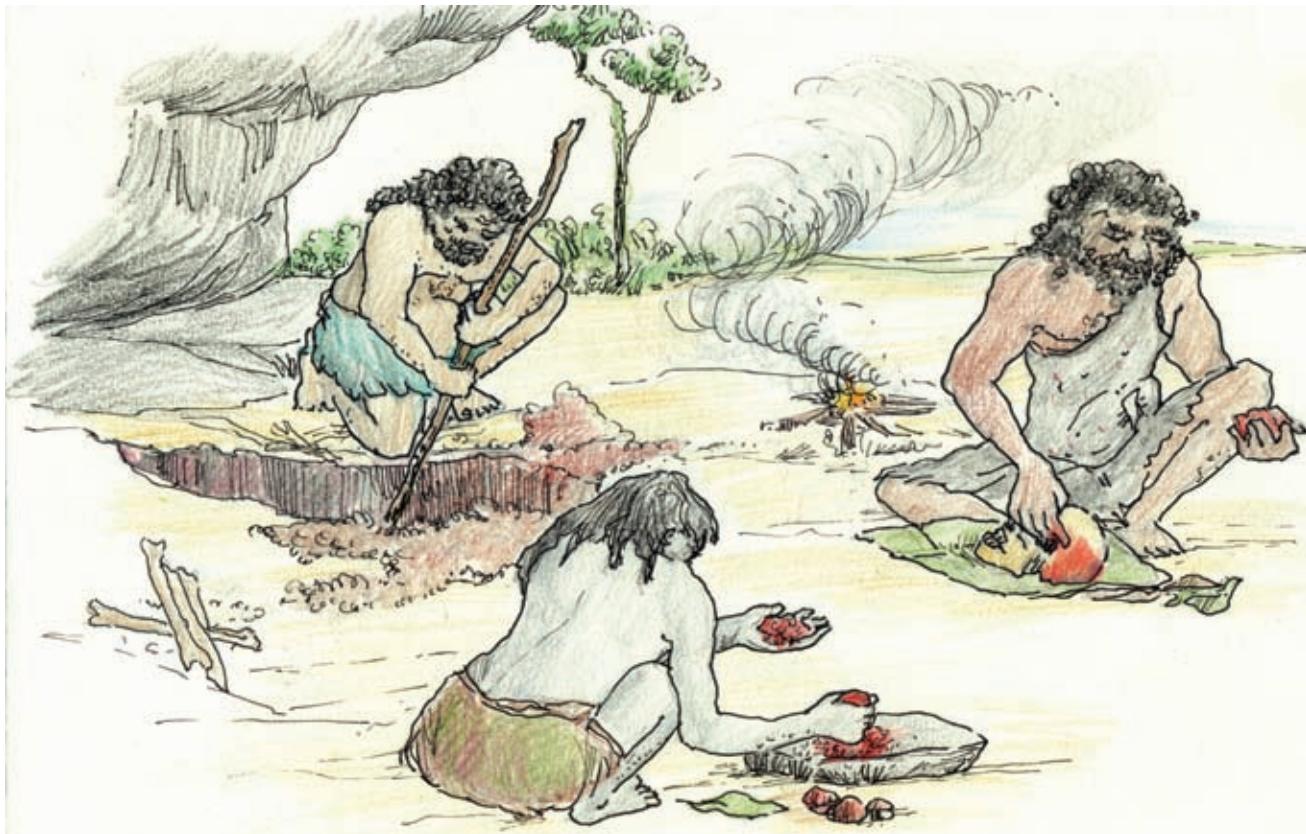


Illustration 2.1. in using small geometrical stone tools, as shown in the above illustration, they were arranged by attaching to a piece of wood or a bone of an animal.



*Illustration 2.2. It was a custom of the prehistoric man to bury the dead body of a family member or a relative, who lived with them, in the same cave in which he or she had lived. Evidence has been found that after some time, they exhumed the skeletons and applied red ochre stones on them and performed a kind of a ritual activity.*

They walked a distance of about 7 kilometres per day searching for food. As they lived a temporary life in caves, on some occasions they buried the dead bodies of their relatives inside the cave itself. On some occasions they had dug a pit with a piece of horn or a stick for the burial. Next, they had placed the dead body in the pit and covered it up with garbage. 12 skeletons were discovered in the cave of Belilena in Kithulgala buried in this manner. In the graveyard of Bellanbendipelessa, which was an open area, there were 30 skeletons which belonged to the Stone Age. 9 skeletons, which belonged to different Ages, were discovered in the cave in Pahiyangala.

### Food Style

Many evidences of the nature of food of the people who lived in the Stone Age are found in

the caves in lowland dry zone and in the caves in wet land. According to the evidences found so far, they had hunted animals such as gaur, buffalo, black bear, wild boar, deer, spotted deer, porcupine, hedgehog, hare, stag, giant squirrel, mongoose, wild fowl, monkey, civet cat and iguana for food. They had caught and eaten fresh water fish which were full of protein. They had caught small fish in natural water pools in lowland wet zone for their food.

To get starch they ate some plant food such as wild breadfruit and wild plantains mainly. Some evidences have been found in the cave 'Belilena' in Kithulgala about seeds of the wild breadfruit which had been baked and eaten 12500 years ago. In addition, some food full of starch such as yams 'Gonala, Katuala', seeds of 'Kithul' and the kernel of 'Dothalu' were eaten. Evidences have been found in a few examined places that food had been eaten after being baked.

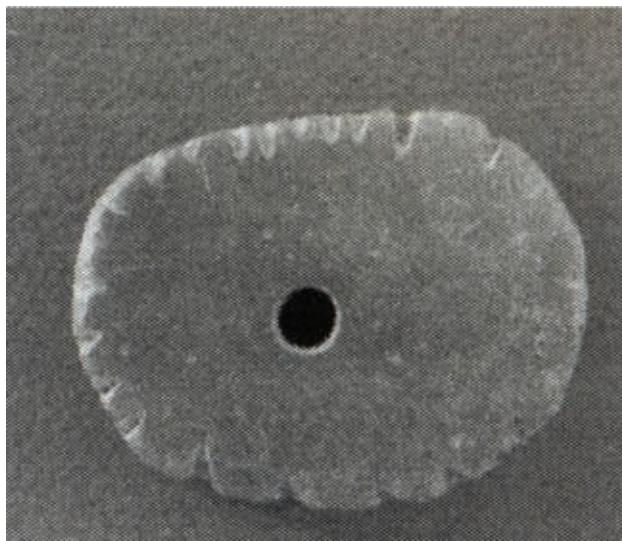


Fig 2.3. A bead found in a pre-historic habitation in Sri Lanka. This has been made of a piece of bone of an animal.

The prehistoric people preferred to eat snails. Specially, they had eaten tree-snails and oysters living in lagoons. The prehistoric people who lived in the inner parts of the country went far to

get salt they needed for their food. The remnants of the lagoon oysters found in Kithulgala Belilena have been identified to be mixed with salt brought from coastal areas.

### Technology

The stone tools are the only proof that exists to know about the technology of this era. But it is difficult to construct a complete idea about the technology of the Stone Age on the basis of gem mines in Rathnapura and the stone tools discovered from the Iranamadu Formation. The reason for this is the unavailability of enough stone tools and the inadequacy of available knowledge on the time of them.

The stone tools in small size, which are called geometric micro stone tools by the archaeologists, help gain a descriptive knowledge on the technology of the Stone Age. These have been named so because the people who attempted to produce these stone tools had given geometric shapes to them.

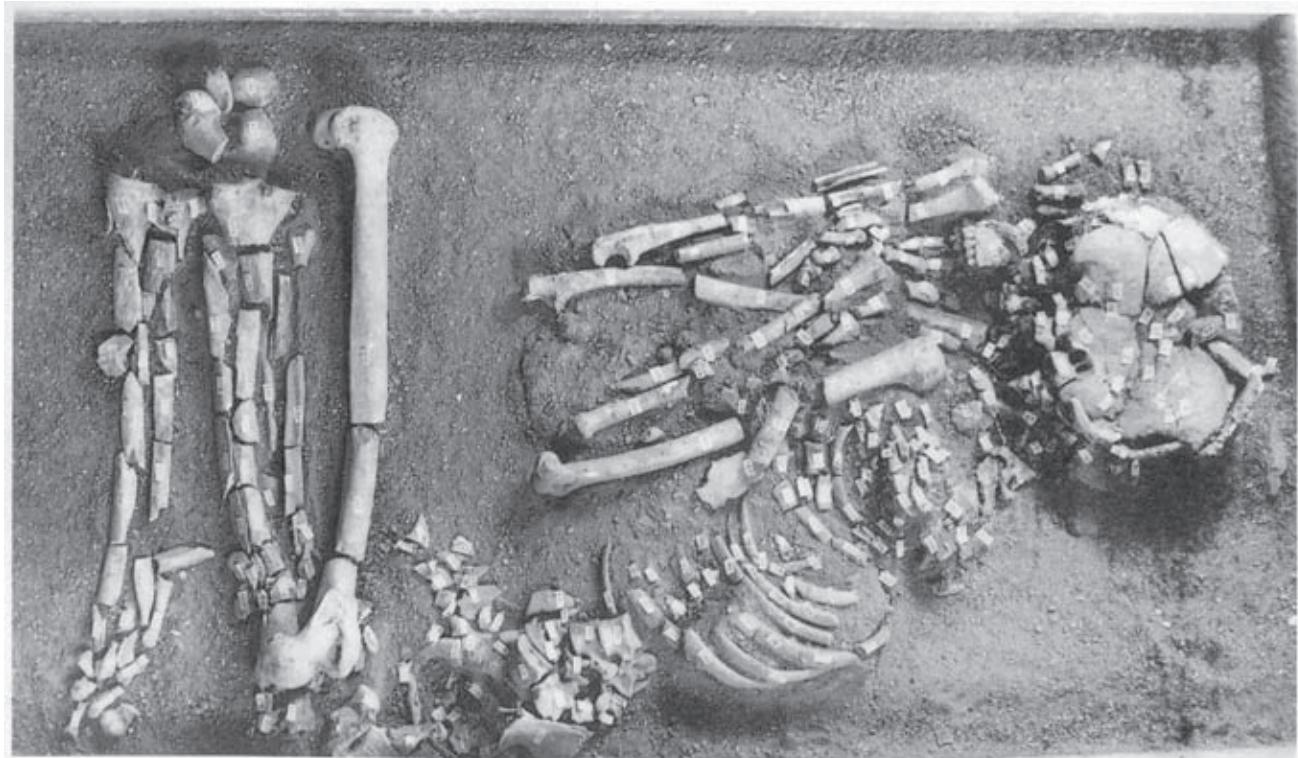


Fig. 2.4. A human skeleton which represents the pre-history in Sri Lanka. This was discovered in the Pothana cave close to Sigiriya. (The photograph is by courtesy of the Postgraduate Institute of Archaeology)

Such a kind of tool is not more than 4.5 cm in length. They had used more quartz and a little of 'Kahanda' stones to make these micro stone tools. As a whole, non-geometric micro stone tools were made mostly. They had been made in a way appropriate to the purposes of hunting animals to cutting, scratching, chopping and digging. Apart from these, some tools such as hammers and grinding stones had been made using granite.

### Nature of People's Physical Body

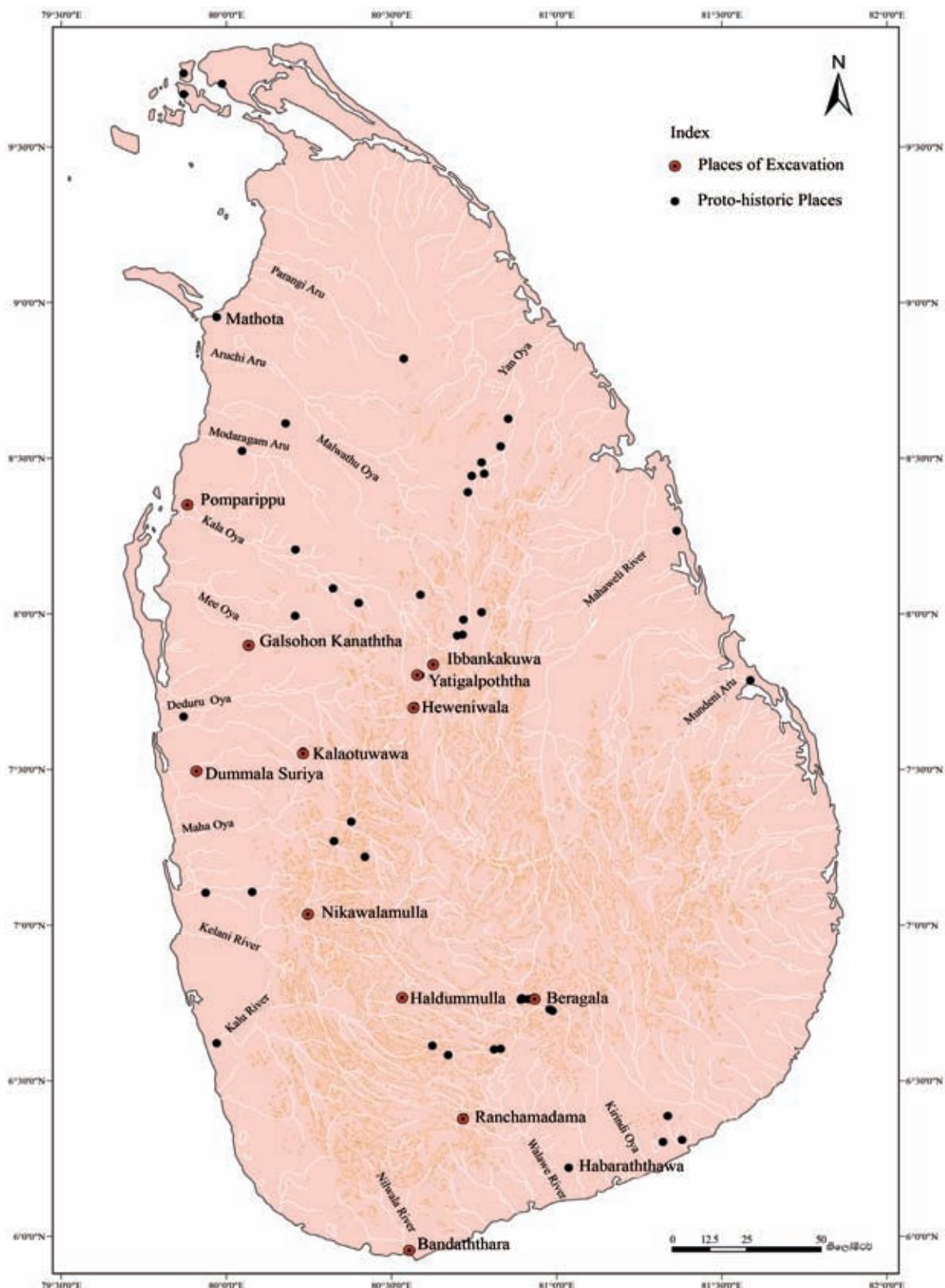
The skeletons discovered so far help us to understand the size or the stature of the people who belonged to the Stone Age. Generally, the height of a grown male was 174 cm. A grown female was not more than 166 cm in height. The teeth of all of them were big in size and they had a wide nose and a chin. The size of the brain of a grown male was 1600 cm<sup>3</sup>. It was 920 cm<sup>3</sup> in a grown female. According to the view of the anthropologists, the maximum lifespan of the prehistoric man may have been about 35-40 years.

### Rituals

Clear information of the rituals that existed in the Stone Age is found at least to a certain extent regarding the burial of dead bodies in that era. A clear instance which reflects an effort taken to do such a task has been discovered in the cave of Rawana Ella close to Badulla. A skull of a man perforated dividing it into two was found in an excavation there. The rough edges and the parts protruded outside the skull had been rubbed, leveled and one side of it painted with red ochre. Several parts of human skeletons, painted with red ochre, have been discovered in the cave in Pahiyangala. These evidences clearly show that the dead bodies had been buried somewhere and kept for some time until they decayed; later the skeletons had been dug out and buried back. The skeletons discovered in the cave called 'Batadomba Lena' in Kuruwita had been curled and buried. Researchers have pointed out that there are a number of cultural and biological similarities between the people who lived in the Stone Age and the aborigines (Vedda community) in Sri Lanka.



Fig. 2.5. This is a pre-historic cemetery. This was discovered in the premises of the Kolambageara Ranchamadama government school in the Rathnapura district of the Sabaragamuwa province. This was discovered during excavations done in 2007. The cemetery had been used around 3350 years ago.



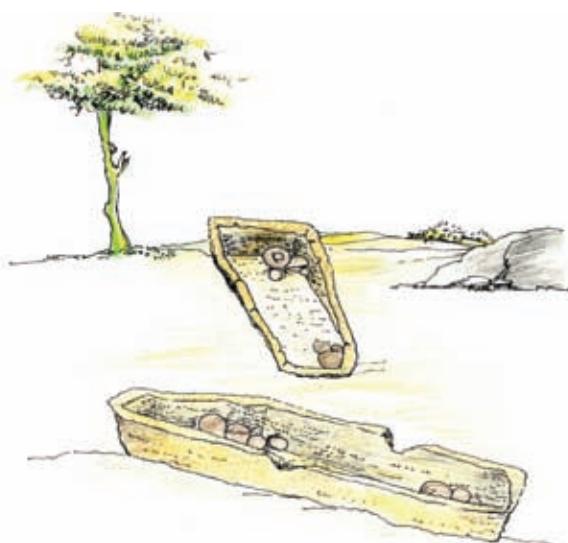
Map 2.2. The distribution of the burial grounds (cemeteries) of megalithic tradition belonging to the proto- historic era.

## Activity 1

Mark the distribution of the expansion of the settlements in the prehistoric era so far discovered in Sri Lanka on a map.

### 2.2 Settlements in Proto-historic Era

The period between the end of the prehistoric era and the beginning of the historic era is named as the proto-historic era. Technologically this was an era of transition. The proto-historic era in Sri Lanka is differentiated from the prehistoric era that existed in Sri Lanka before proto-historic era on the basis of several facts. Some practices such as using burnt pots and following a methodical burial system are prominent among them. Using iron instead of the technology of stone tools existed during the prehistoric era, was started during this period. However, using stone tools was completely given up during the final stage of the proto-historic era. This age is called the proto-historic Iron Age as well as the early Iron Age, as using of iron began in this era. And also the beginning of building permanent settlements and starting agriculture are some more transformations that could be seen in this period.



*Illustration 2.3. Clay urns with remains of burnt dead bodies inside them were deposited in the burial boats made of clay. It was a kind of ritual performed by the people of this country from ancient time.*



*Fig 2.6 In these clay tub burials, used in the proto-historic era to perform rituals for the dead, human skeletons were cremated. Later the remains were deposited after putting them into clay pots. This clay tub burial was discovered in the proto-historic burial ground in Ranchamadama.*

### The Origin of the Proto-historic Era

The knowledge that we possess at present on the transitory period between the beginning of the proto-historic era and the end of the prehistoric era in Sri Lanka is limited. The changes such as dying down of the technology of stone tools, hunting including the subsisting method of gathering food and tendency towards depending on plant food mostly and using iron could not have happened suddenly. On the other hand, there should be a strong cause for such a transformation. Long term geographical changes have influenced such cultural transformations in other countries. Archaeologists and experts on ancient climate have pointed out that a climatic change, which affected the entire South Asian region, had occurred between 7000 – 4500 B.C., which is called the middle of the recent geo-period or Holocene era. That is, at the end of the Ice-Age, a suitable environment was created for

agriculture due to the increase of temperature in the world. Moreover, the population increased considerably and a new social style was created.

The oldest proof about the proto-historic era of Sri Lanka belongs to 2400 B.C. According to the archaeological explorations carried out so far, clearer proof regarding this era has been discovered in the north-eastern part of the Sabaragamuwa province and the south-western part of the Uva province.

The megalithic burials constructed for the dead in this country are a prominent source that can be used to study the culture of proto-historic era of Sri Lanka. Such megalithic burials have been discovered from several areas in the country. (Refer - Map No. 2.2) The burials, which were made out of stone splinters in the shape of squares, were covered with huge stone slabs. Some pots containing human remains had been deposited inside these burials. These are called cist burials. Among those cemeteries Ibbankatuwa megalithic burial located close to Dambulla in the Central province, Galsohonkanaththa burial in Yapahuwa and the Yatigalpoththa burial located close to Galewela have now been excavated. According to their scientific dating,

they belong to a period between 750 and 450 B.C. Proofs about several burial methods which had belonged to the megalithic tradition have been found in Sri Lanka. Among them, some are methods in which the remains were deposited in a clay urn and buried. Those tombs are called 'urn burials'.

Archaeological excavations have been done in two burial grounds, which belong to the proto-historic era, in Beragala and Haldummulla in the Uva province. In these burial grounds the remains have been deposited in a different manner. Instead of a nucleus made out of connecting stone slabs, the method followed there was depositing the clay pots of remains in a tub made out of raw clay in the shape of a boat. Before depositing remains, human skeletons have been cremated in these clay tubs. As a result, these clay tubs were burnt well. That is the reason that has affected them to remain for a long time without perishing.

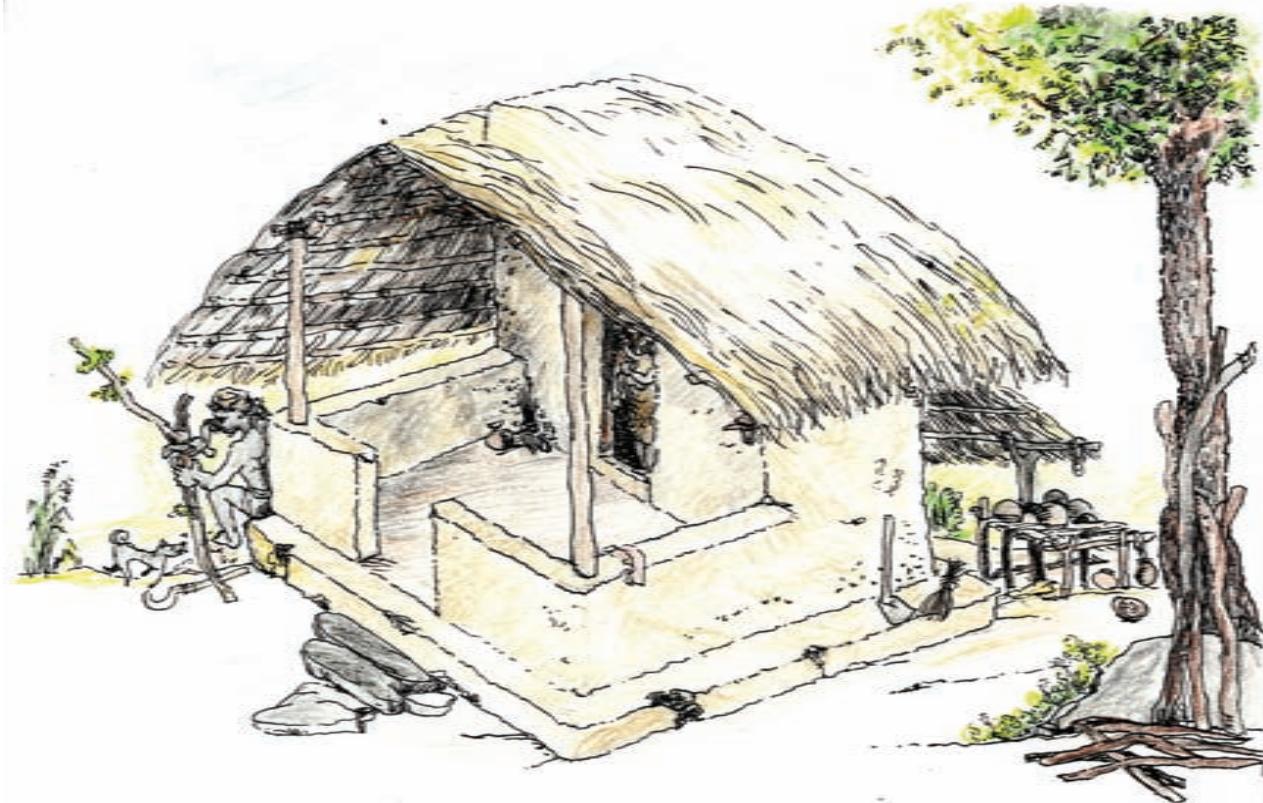


Fig. 2.7 A stone casket - type- tomb found from Ibbankatuwa burial ground, close to Dambulla. Clay pots containing ashes of dead human bodies have been deposited in this burial ground.

## The Nature of the Settlements

The main feature of this era is that the people abandoned their hunting livelihood of pre-historic era and built permanent settlements as well as habitations. The major evidence that reflects this characteristic introduced as sedentism is the remnants of houses that have been discovered so far. Archaeologists were able to find such a house in a village called

Udaranchamadama in Rathnapura district in 2009. That house is 10.20m X 6.80m in size and of rectangular shape. Its front and back had been separated with a wall. The walls of the house were made of wattle and daub and the roof was thatched with something like 'Iluk'.



*Illustration 2.4. A drawing which displays the house that was built in Udaranchamadama in 1129 B.C. This was created according to the foundation discovered in the excavation.*

## Life Style

Still there is no enough evidence to get an idea of the nature of the life style in the proto-historic era of Sri Lanka. So far excavations have only been done in burial grounds, and therefore, the evidences on the general life style during that period are limited. The information gathered in excavations in the residential place in Udaranchamadama assists in getting some idea on this.

In Udaranchamadama a house, which was built around 3000 years ago, was excavated. A number of potsherds were discovered inside the house. Among them there were a lot of painted potsherds. The white background of the outside and the bottom side of the pot had been beautified by painting red lines. In the manner in which lines have symmetrically been painted, it is sure that it was made by using a potter's wheel. Other potsherds of such a pot were found

in an excavation done in a residential place in Haldummulla.

There were several tools in the kitchen of the excavated house. Among them, there were some stone tools and iron tools. As many of the tools of that collection are stone, it seems that using iron tools had been a new experience for them by then. Among the other debris in the kitchen, there remained the bones of animals which were hunted by the inmates of the house for their meals. These bones belong to animals like deer, cattle, wild boar, and giant squirrel. These evidences show that although they got used to an agricultural life style, they did not completely abandon hunting.

Among the other things found in the house, there were a few clay beads, an iron stick used to apply kohl on ladies' eyes, two brown stones (ochre, one yellowish and the other reddish in colour used to colour the body and two grinding stones to



Fig. 2.7. The painted clay pot, dated 1129 B.C., found in the ancient house in Udaranchamadama. This instance clearly shows that Sri Lanka had the technology of making pots from very ancient time. The picture on the right hand side displays the early shape of the same clay pot.

rub on the brown stones. These evidences show that the women who lived during that period were interested in beautifying their body.

## Technology

The beginning of the transformation of metal technology and making clay pots from stone tools used in the prehistoric era took place during the period called as proto-historic era. Since using iron as a metal started, the people of this era had an opportunity to do their day-to-day activities efficiently. As iron was a strong metal, they could do activities such as clearing jungles, digging the ground and ploughing easily. The painted clay pot found in the old house of Udaranchamadama reflects the high technological standard of making clay items that existed in that time. As building houses was started, the technology related to that gradually increased. Specially, setting the foundation in a way that sinking does not happen and building walls levelled to the ground belong to it. A clay bead has been discovered in the excavation in Udaranchamadama house. That shows that the technology of making beads existed in that period. A highly skillful technology is needed to make a bead.

### Activity 2

Mark the distribution of settlements of proto-historic era in Sri Lanka on a map.

### 2.3. The Settlements in Early Historic Era

The information which describes the early settlements in the historical period of Sri Lanka has been mentioned in the historical sources. Though that information is not sufficient to definitely identify the areas where those settlements existed, it provides a considerable assistance to understand the nature of those settlements. The archaeological sources are the evidences that assist us to obtain a definite understanding about the expansion of the ancient settlements in this country and other relevant information.

The early historical period was between 450 B.C. and 300 A.D. The expansion of the small village tanks is the main index that shows in which areas the settlements in this country expanded during this period. There are thousands of such kinds of small village tanks in the form of ruins found around Sri Lanka today. In the historical period majority of the settlements existed mainly close to a tank. The archaeological field explorations have discovered that such kinds of villages were located at one end of the bund of the tank, close to it.

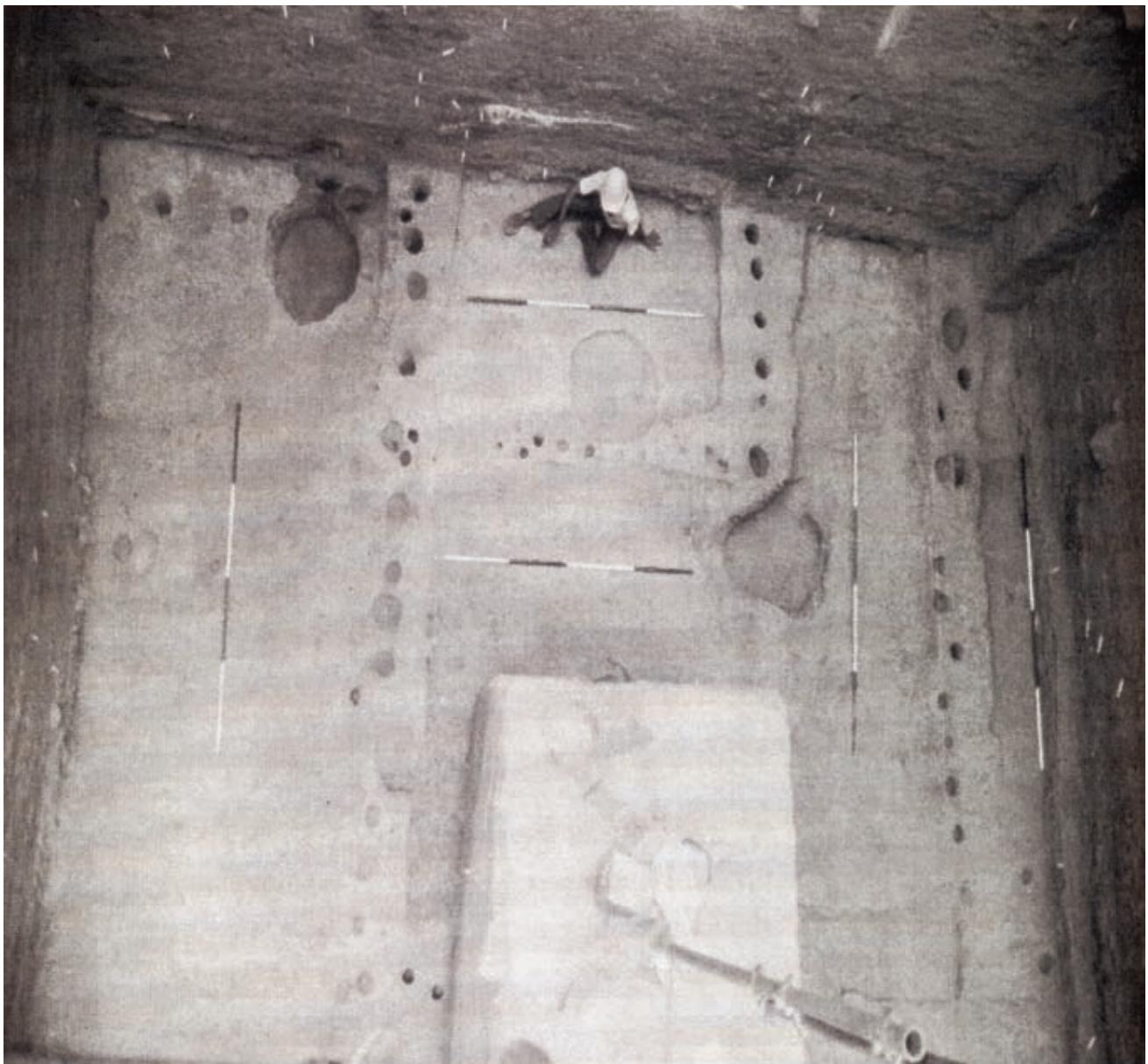


Fig 2.8. Several pits for pillars which belonged to a rectangular foundation of a hut. This was discovered in the excavations made in the old interior city of Anuradhapura. (The photograph is by the courtesy of the Archaeological Department).

### Factors that Influenced the Expansion of Settlements

One of the major factors that affected the expansion of ancient settlements was the geophysical background. The elements such as the rate of annual rainfall, nature of the soil, geo diversity, expansion of natural resources and the drainage etc. are prominent within this factor.

The settlements in the early historical period spread in the areas where there was a dry climatic

condition. The areas where there is an annual rainfall between 1000 – 1250 ml is called the dry zone and the areas where there is an annual rainfall less than 1000 ml is called the arid zone. Though it was difficult to receive sufficient amount of water for agriculture during the entire year, the early settlements expanded in the dry zone because of its fertile soil. The red - brown soil which is spread mostly in the dry zone is extremely good for agriculture. There were two ways in which these areas received water for agricultural activities; the major one



Fig 2.9. Several pits for posts of a circular foundation of a hut, found in an excavation done in the old interior city of Anuradhapura. (The photograph is by the courtesy of the Archaeological Department )

was monsoon rain; the water received from rivers too was considerably useful during the dry seasons. But, when using river water for agricultural activities, tasks such as constructing anicuts across rivers and making canals to carry gathered water to necessary places had to be done. As it was a task which required labour, time, and technology, they tended to save water by constructing tanks.

From the results of the detailed studies on the way how the expansion of settlements occurred in early historical period, it manifests that early settlements in the historical period in this country expanded not in the river valleys, but in the outside areas of them. The main reason for this was that there was not a suitable technology to control the catastrophic annual floods from the rivers. It must have been at the end of the 1<sup>st</sup> century B.C. or during the 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D. when they started controlling floods by constructing anicuts across rivers and taking water to tanks. During the ruling period of king Ilanaga (33 -43 A.D.), who constructed Tissamaharama tank, an anicut was built across the Kirindi river. There is a word 'Avarana' inscribed on the Brahmi inscriptions in two caves in Ganekanda temple

and Gallena temple in Kurunegala district. The meaning of the word 'Awarana' is 'Amuna (anicut)'.

### The Structure and the Nature of Settlements

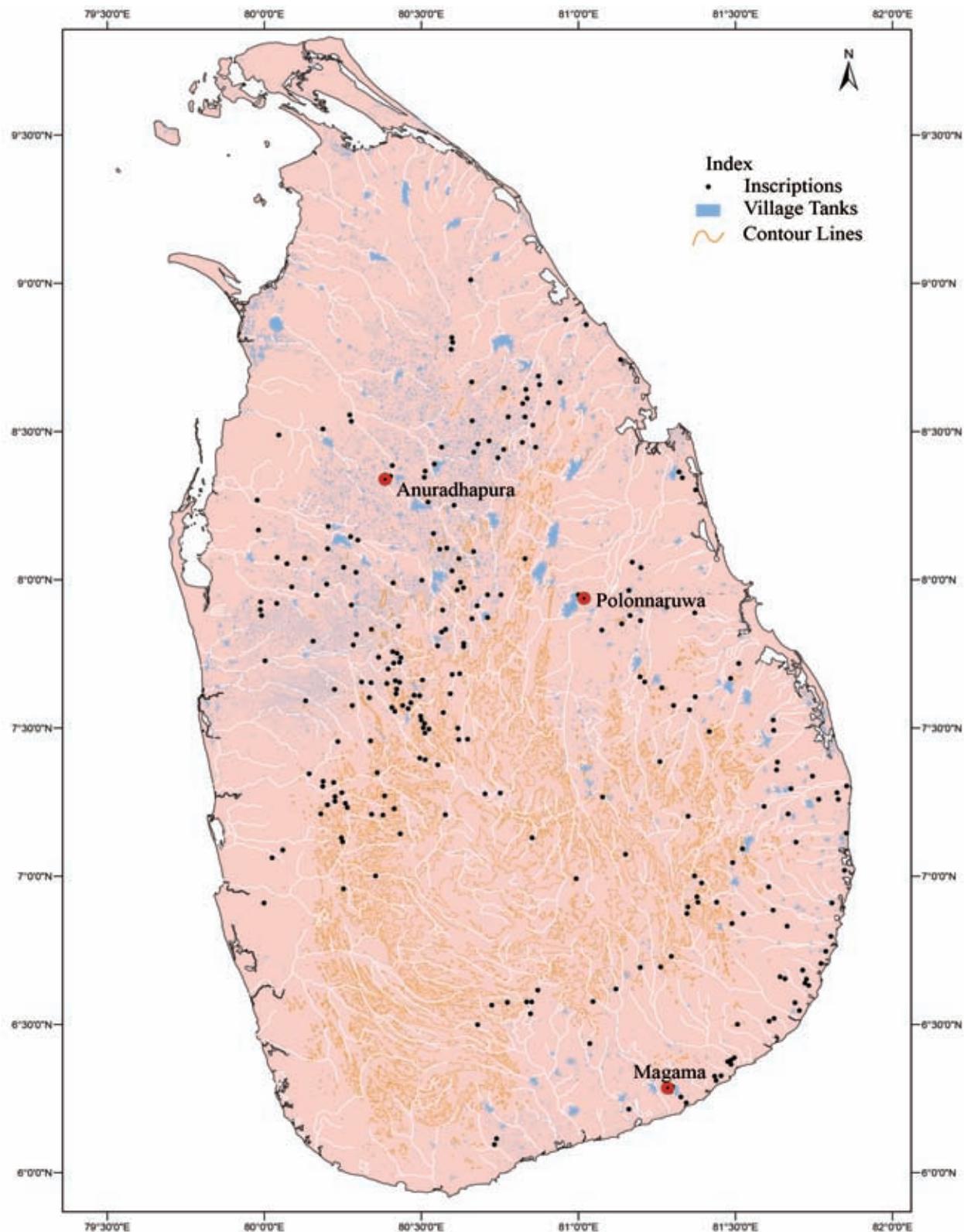
The settlements, which spread in the areas outside the overflowing river valleys by being centralized on small tanks which were fed by rain water, were independent from one another. The settlements which developed themselves around a tank are referred to as 'Vapigama' in literary sources. 'Sumanavapigama', 'Viharavapigama', 'Hundirivapigama', and 'Kadahavapigama' are some of the villages around tanks mentioned in Mahawamsa.

One village was separated from the other by a jungle-belt. Apart from the villages around tanks, there are short descriptions about the villages, independent from one another, in historical sources. Some settlements where different types of professionals lived in have been mentioned in the historical chronicles (Vamsakatha) and the inscriptions in this manner;

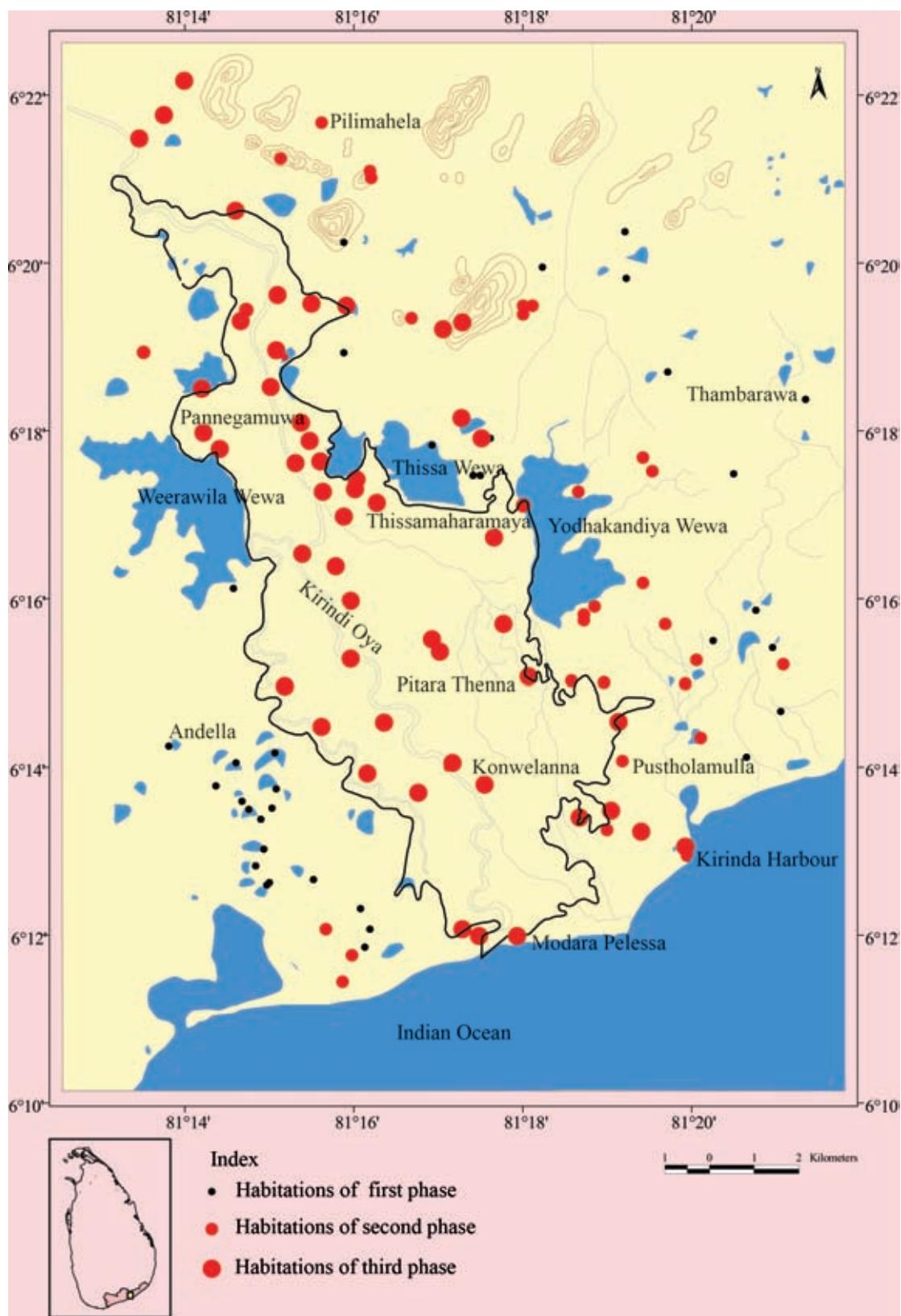
1. Kasikaragama - villages where farmers lived
2. Manikaragama -villages where people worked in gem mines lived
3. Gopalagama - villages where cowherds lived
4. Kewattagama - villages where fishermen lived
5. Kumbhakaragama - villages where potters lived
6. Vadtagama – villages where carpenters lived

Apart from this, there were several villages existed on the basis of tasks.

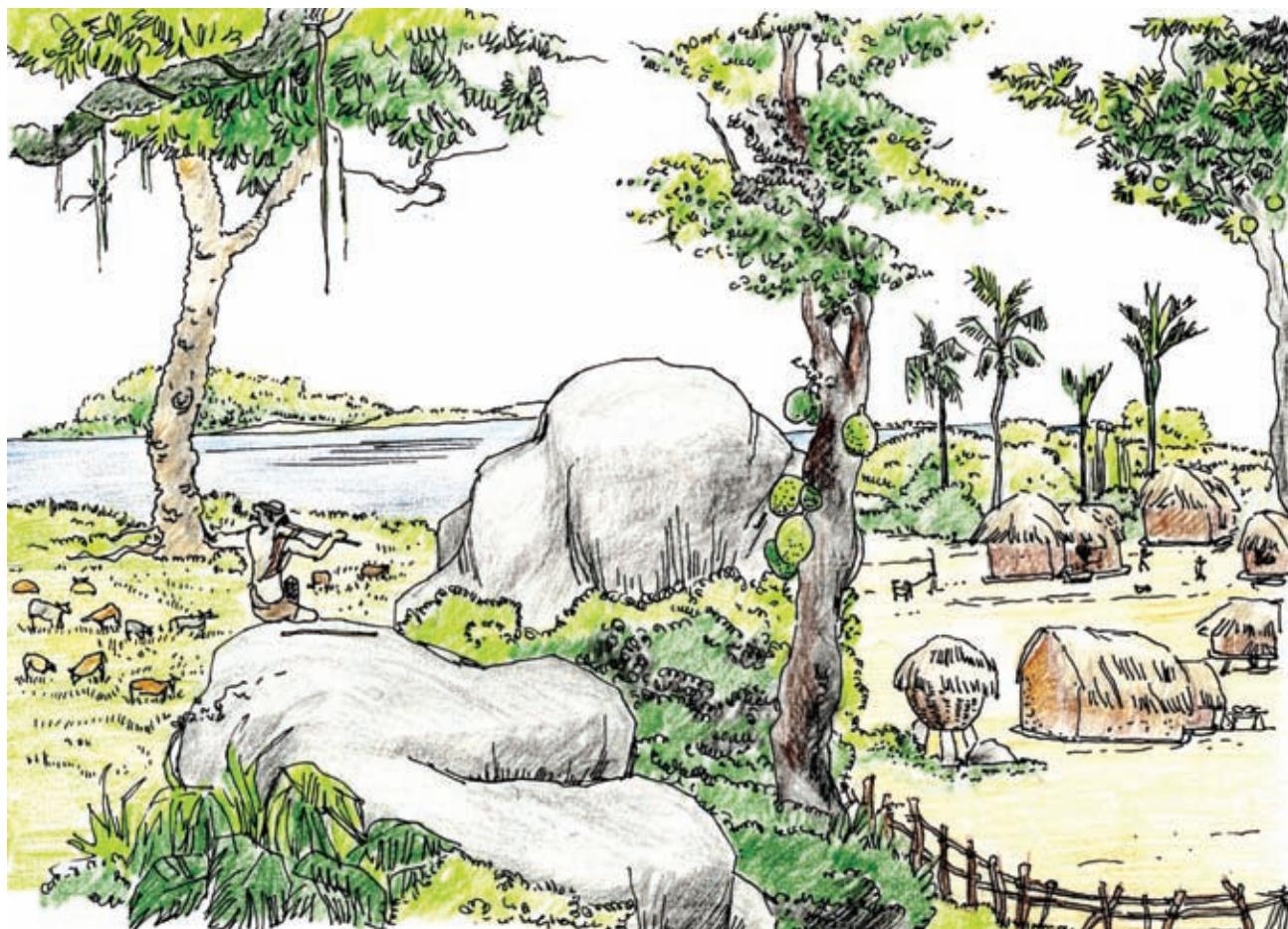
7. Pattanagama - villages situated close to harbours
8. Niyamgam - trading villages
9. Olagam - villages around tanks deserted by people



Map 2.3. This map shows the distribution of the oldest village tanks and the early epigraphs in Sri Lanka. Since there was a close relationship between the village, the tank and the epigraphs, the distribution of the tanks reflects the expansion of ancient settlements.



Map 2.4. A map which displays the distribution of ancient settlements around Kirindi Oya, which flows near Tissamaharamaya, which belongs to Hambantota district. (the dots in the map represents settlements). The settlements which are far away from the river valley belong to the time between 900 and 500 B.C. Those settlements were the first ones originated in the area related to that river. The settlements close to the river spread after implementing a strategy to control the annual flood of Kirindi Oya.



*Illustration 2.5. This is an imaginary drawing of an ancient village in Sri Lanka. Living mutually with nature and the simplicity that was found in people's life style as a result of that are prominent features of the rural life.*

It is difficult to come to a definite conclusion on the size of the ancient settlements. It was based on the abundance of natural resources prevailed in various geographical areas. But, according to the evidence found in the archaeological research carried out so far, a small scale village was normally not more than 0.15 hectares. A medium scale rural settlement was about 2 hectares in size whereas a large scale urban settlement was more than 2 hectares.

Normally there lived 5 or 6 families in a village. Literary sources say that around 30 families lived in some large scale villages. This situation was completely different in urban settlements. It has approximately been calculated that by the 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D. there was a population

around 35000 in the ancient 'Magama' city and the adjacent urban settlements. Literary sources say that some villages were protected by a fence. Those villages were called 'Parikkitta Gam'. The villages which did not have such type of a protection were called 'Aparikkitta Gam'.

To introduce vast urban settlements the name 'Pura (city)' was used. There is a title called 'Pura Kamatha' mentioned in a Brahmi inscription written in a distant time such as in 250 B.C. It referred to the main architect in the city. The word 'Nurupura' was written in the Panakaduwa copper plate which belonged to the period of King Vijayabahu I (1055-1110 A.D.) to introduce Anuradhapura.

The most ancient inscriptions in this country

mention a certain type of settlements called 'Nakara' alias 'Nagara'. Here the word 'Nagara' had been used for a certain settlement that came between city and a village. Taking the commodities produced in the villages for trading in big cities, was coordinated by these intermediate settlements. They were slightly bigger than a village.

There are evidences to prove that the organization and the administration of these settlements were systematic even before the early historical era. A village was a unit consisting of several families. The family was the most important feature of a village. A family was represented by the chief householder. He was known as "Gahapathi" in Brahmi inscriptions. A person who acted on behalf of a group of a few chief householders of a village was called 'Gamika' or 'Gramika' which means 'the chief of the village'. At a later period a panel consisting of ten chief householders was engaged in solving administrative issues in an area joined with ten villages. In inscriptions this panel has been introduced as 'Dasa Gam Eththan'. An inscription at an old Buddhist temple called Kaludiya Pokuna in Dambulla in Matale district says that if there was any problem regarding the supply of 'Dane -Alms giving' in that temple, 'Dasa Gam Eththan' should get together and solve the problem.

Several foundations, which had belonged to ancient rural houses, were discovered in excavations done in Anuradhapura. Their walls were made of wattle and daub and roofs were thatched with leaves. Some houses, among them, were of round shape. Some of the houses had square foundations. The archaeologists have found only pits for the pillars of these houses. Some marks of an ancient house were discovered in a village named Walagampaththuwa in Tissamaharamaya. The floor of that house was

set after digging the ground and then applying clay on its surface afterwards. It has been scientifically proved that the house was used in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century A.D.

You were able to learn the nature of the ancient settlements of this country. You should keep in your mind the way in which they had managed to shape their lives properly and collectively from very ancient time.

### Means of Subsistence

The means of subsistence of the people, who lived in the areas outside the overflowing river valleys, was chena cultivation. Chena crops that grow in dry zones such as Kurakkan, Meneri, sesame, and Thanahal were cultivated in them. Those crops, which had a cluster of short roots and were well sustainable to the drought, were also conducive to be grown in the areas outside the overflowing river valleys. They had tended to construct basic village tanks as the production of food had to be increased in parallel with the increasing population in the settlements. More water was needed for more agriculture. A clear reflection of how the early historical settlements started outside the river valleys entered into river valley settlements can be given from a study, done in Kirindi Oya valley, on old settlements. (Refer map No. 2.4)

#### Activity 3

Write the differences of the fundamental features of settlements in the prehistoric, proto-historic and historic eras in Sri Lanka.

## Important Facts

- ✓ Settlements of Sri Lanka started several hundred thousand years ago. Those who made their early settlements in this country were Homo Sapiens.
- ✓ Early Homo Sapiens lived by adapting themselves to diverse environmental zones. Therefore, they lived in many places in Sri Lanka. They did not reflect any racial identity.
- ✓ The time period in which the early people's culture existed is known as the prehistoric era. During that time their main livelihood was hunting and gathering food by roaming.
- ✓ During that time, they had stone tool technology. They were used to make equipment out of stones such as alabaster and Kahanda for their day-to-day use. The pre-historic era is also known as "Mediaeval Stone Age".
- ✓ There are evidences that the prehistoric people engaged in agriculture later. According to available proofs, that transformation had been complete by 2400 B.C.
- ✓ Making pots, using burial grounds and using iron metal were started during this era. This age is known as proto-historic era.
- ✓ Proto-historic era becomes an important age because the basics which are related to the development of Sri Lankan civilization started in this age. The people of this country started to live in villages during this era.
- ✓ According to Mahawamsa, there was a well organized society in Sri Lanka when Prince Vijaya and his retinue came to this country.

### ***Iranamadu Deposit (Formation)***

*There was an extremely rainy climate in Sri Lanka during the cool periods of the Great Glazier Era. During this time higher places underwent immense soil erosion. The eroded soil from the hilly areas deposited on lowlands. There is a soil belt, settled in this way, stretching 32 kms from the sea coast to the interior parts of the country. This soil layer is known as Iranamadu Deposit (formation). The reason for giving that name to it is that because this soil layer was clearly identified in the area near the tanks in Iranamadu for the first time. The stone tools, used by the prehistoric people, were found in this soil layer.*

### ***The Archaic Homo Sapien***

*Homo Sapien means the present human family. The earliest of this human family originated about five hundred thousand years ago. The term 'Archaic Homo Sapiens', is used to name the earliest of the Homo Sapiens, who lived during the time period between 500000 and 200000 years.*

### ***Micro Stone Tools***

*The small sized stone tools used in the recent period of the prehistoric era are known by this name. The length of a micro stone tool made of alabaster or Kahanda stones is about 1 cm to 7cm. A piece of stone broken out of the above mentioned stone was shaped until it got a sharp edge. After that it was attached to a piece of wood or an animal's bone. Cutting, scratching and drilling were done by using such tools.*

### ***Overflowing Valley***

*Heavy rainy seasons cause floods. On these occasions both banks of the river are submerged with water. The area of either side of the river which goes under water is called overflowing valley. The alluvial brought by the flood water settles in the overflowing valley. Therefore that area is highly fertile. The term 'Delta' is also used to name the overflowing valley.*

# 3 Evolution of Political Power in Sri Lanka

## Introduction

Historical sources say that this country was ruled by many kings and a few queens in the ancient time. Historical sources describe that prince Vijaya who came from India was the first king who ruled this country. He arrived in this country in the 6<sup>th</sup> century B.C.

The archaeological evidences have substantiated that there had been settlements in this country even before the arrival of prince Vijaya. The ancient burial grounds discovered in the areas such as Beragala and Haldummulla have proved that an agricultural society had been in a developing state in this country from 2400 B.C. There must have been a certain ruling system in such a society for it to exist without any chaos. Therefore, the history of evolution of political power in the society of this country belonged to the period before the arrival of prince Vijaya.

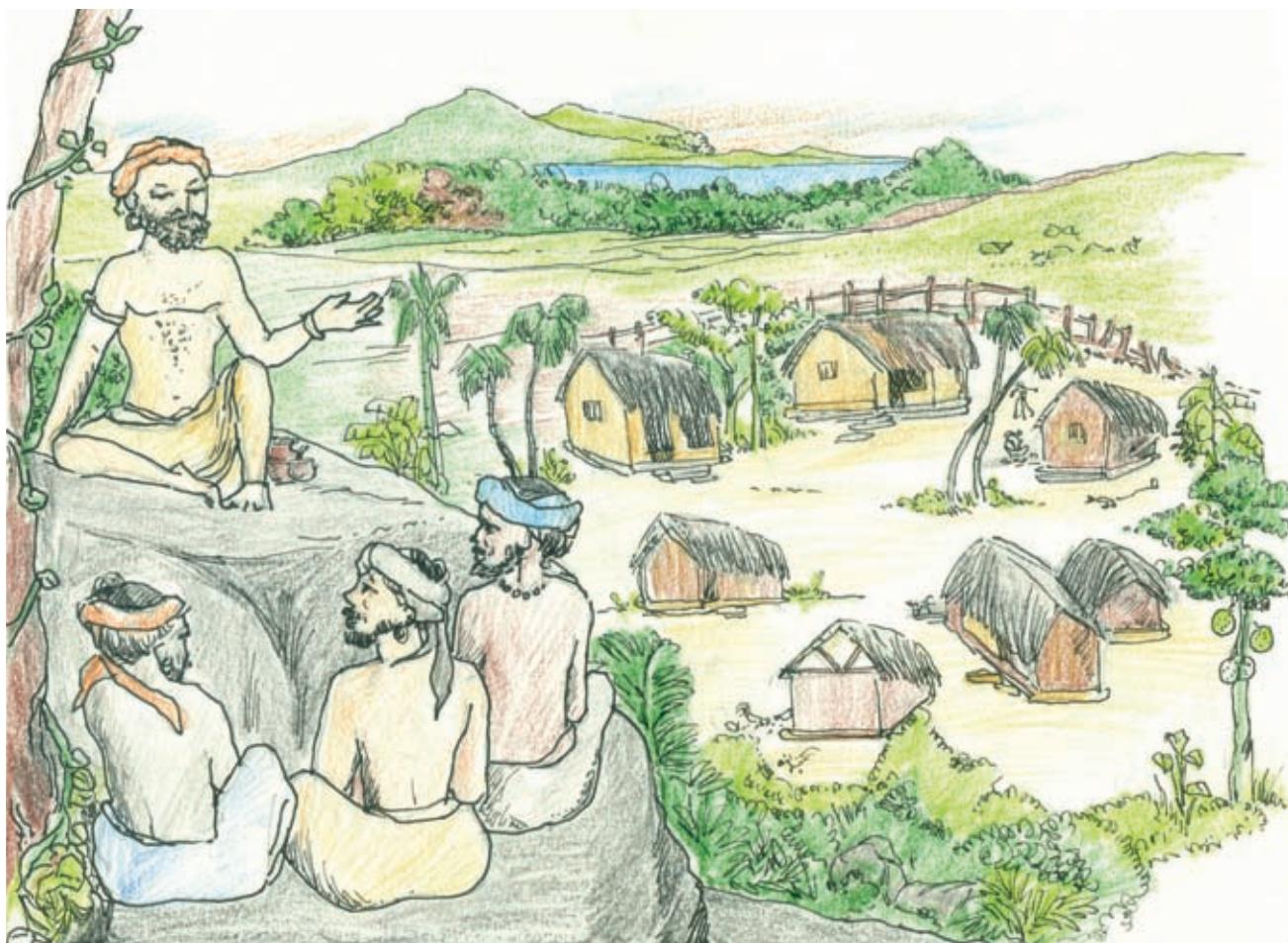
The authority to rule a country is entrusted to a king or a queen by the people of that country. Whoever it is, he or she needs people's consent to rule a country. The history has taught us how some rulers, who ruled the country under people's dislike, did not have the ability to rule the country for a long time. As a ruler had the consent of the majority of people to rule a country, the word 'Mahasmatha – general will' had been used to introduce such a king in the eastern countries in the ancient time. The ruling land reigned by a king or a queen on the people's will (Jana sammathaya) and the various officials who were engaged in ruling and the people is called a state.

### 3.1 Pre-state Era

According to the interpretation given above, the foundation of a state in the Sri Lankan history developed at a later time. It has been described in the next parts of this lesson. Here, the attention has been paid to explain the nature of the ruling system that existed in Sri Lanka before it became a state. That period is called pre-state era.

There was no one definite ruler to rule this country during the pre-state period. Instead, a group of wealthy chieftains dominated their power over small areas. At the beginning of writing inscriptions in this country these chieftains were introduced in them by the name of 'Parumaka'. The word 'Parumaka' is derived from the Sanskrit word 'Pramukha'. Its meaning is 'main'. They were given the power to rule a large or a small area based on the power they possessed as a result of their wealth.

There is an inscription, which assists us to show that the Parumakas had a certain provincial power, in Kothgalakanda in the Kandalama area close to Dambulla. That inscription belongs to 250 B.C. A Parumaka who offered a cave to the bikkus has been introduced as "Thota Bojaka". Its meaning is "Theerthaya Anubhava Karanna". "Theerthaya" means 'the port'. The word "anubhava kirima" was used in ancient language to mean "collect taxes and enjoy properties". It can only be done by a person who has a ruling power. It is clear that the Parumaka mentioned in the Kandalama inscription was one who ruled that area. Therefore, he had the ability to offer a cave to the Buddhist monks. By examining



*Illustration No. 3.1. One among the householders in a village was appointed as the chief of the village. He was called 'Gamika'. The activities between each village were coordinated by the Gamikas.*

how the Parumakas came into being, we can easily understand the way in which the political power of this country evolved. In order to understand that, the ancient rural society in this country and its operation should be meticulously studied.

### Householders

At least by 900 B.C. the rural settlements of this country had spread in many areas in the dry zone. These villages consisted of several families. Perhaps between 1 to 30 families lived in those villages. In the ancient time the word 'Kula' was used to mean a family. The chief of all these families was called 'Gruhapathi'. In the inscriptions made in 250 B.C and later, the word 'Gahapathi' was used for them. An inscription

in which there is important information regarding that was discovered in the area called Periyapulyankulama. It says that "a householder who was engaged in metal trade, had cleaned a cave and offered it to the Bhikkus for their comfort". Those householders offered themselves in common activities in a village representing each family. In simple terms, the householders meant chiefs of the families.

### The Gamikas

The ancient inscriptions as well as the annotations have mentioned a group of people called 'Gramika' or 'Gamika'. They were the chiefs of the ancient villages. The ancient villages existed separately. A belt of jungle area separated one village from the other. Because of this separation the people who lived in each village

thought about the villages as ‘our village (the village where they live)’, neighbouring village (adjoining village) and the outside villages (the villages existed far away). The one, who acted representing each village in the affairs between villages such as marriages, exchanging goods, as well as solving problems, was named as Gramika. Its meaning is the chief of the village.

A chief, to represent a village, was selected among the householders. In the selection, the priority may have been given to the wealth and the possessions of the householders. The Jathaka-Attakathawa tells us a story of borrowing a bag of paddy by a poor man, who lived in an ancient village, from the Gamika in the same village on the promise that he would return it on the following season. It reveals that Gamikas were rich enough even to help others.

To control a group properly, the person who has won the common trust of that group should provide the leadership to it. Our ancient villagers had acted to appoint the richest and the most powerful person as the chief of the village in the

*Map. 3.1. The tanks in the villages were connected through canals in order to widen the use of small tanks which obtained rain water. The word ‘prolapsed-tanks’ is used to introduce that kind of a tank-system. The people in the dry zone of Sri Lanka use the word ‘Ellangawa’ to name it. This map shows that kind of a ‘prolapsed tank existed in Hambantota district.*



agreement of the householders instead of taking decisions by all the householders in the village getting together. Buddhagosha Thero has mentioned in Samantha Pasadika that the Gamika was one who was appointed among the householders themselves.

Providing leadership to the common activities in the village was especially important among the tasks done by the Gamikas. Maintaining the tank of the village and distribution of water from it was prominent among his tasks. It is clear that a ruling power was built around him as a result of solving problems in villages, giving leadership to the activities and the wealth he possessed.

As the chiefs of those villages acted mutually with each other, they were able to maintain the peace and the co-existence between the villages. An evidence to prove this was discovered in a cave in the area called Korawkgala belonging to the ancient Buddhist temple situated in Sithulpawwa in Hambanthota district. Three people had participated in cleaning that cave and offering it to the Bhikkus; they were Gamika Siva, Gamika Sumana, and Gamika Thidana. These three people must have been the chiefs of the neighbouring villages adjacent to Sithulpawwa. The origin of such chiefs of villages was a decisive milestone in developing the political power of this country.

### The Parumakas

We mentioned earlier that a group of chieftains called Parumakas was important regarding the development of the political power in the society of this country in the ancient time. Here, it is important to find how such kind of a class of chieftains emerged and how power was claimed by them.

The notion of all the scholars, who have studied about this fact, is that there was a relationship between the emergence of the chieftains and the maintenance of ancient tanks. Certainly, how

did that happen?

In about 900 B.C. the settlements spread in the dry zone mainly around small tanks. These tanks received water from rain. Normally, the water in those tanks was enough for 10 or 15 families who lived in a village for their day-to-day needs for a short time period. In annual dry seasons the water in those tanks ran dry. We can say that the people might have faced difficulties in such times by the experiences faced at present by the people of the dry zone.

The problem of not having adequate rain water collected in the tanks arose not only due to the dry climatic condition. With the passing of time more water was needed due to the increase of population in villages. Since they had to cultivate more lands in order to produce more food for the increasing population, collecting more water

was essential for them. Our ancient villagers, who faced such difficulties a number of times, followed a successful method to address those challenges: they constructed a system of tanks by connecting a few tanks, which existed closely, through canals. There were two objectives in it; the first one was conserving water by carrying water to a tank situated below from a tank situated up when it overflowed during the rainy season; the second was increasing the dampness of either side of the land of a canal by sending water constantly through the canal between the two tanks. They were able to cultivate crops easily by increasing the dampness in such a manner. Even today the ruins of such tank systems could be seen in the dry zone. The word 'prolapsed tanks' is used to name such kind of a tank system. People in the dry zone call it 'Ellangawa'. The origin of tank – systems was not merely a process of connecting a few tanks;

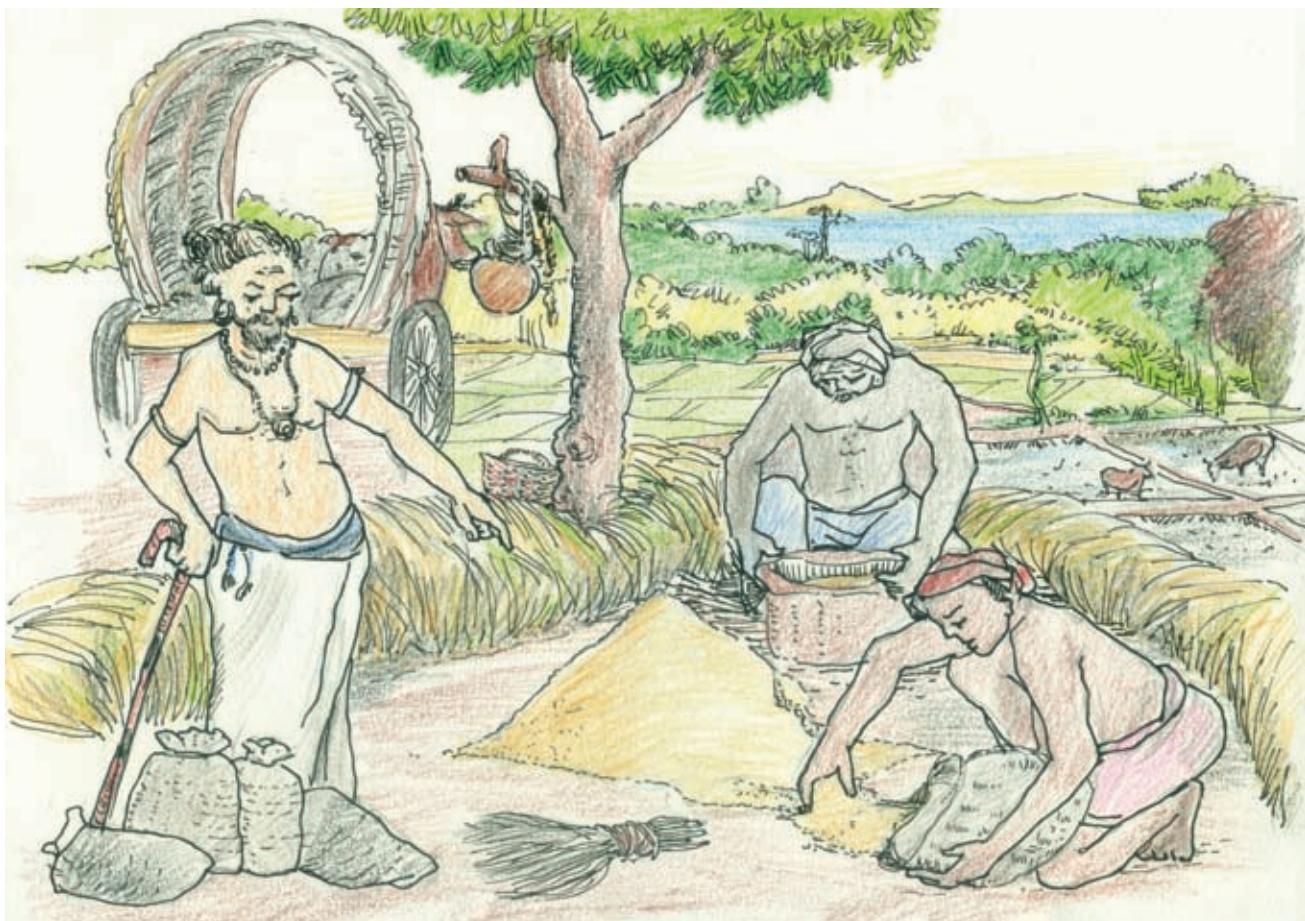


Fig. 3.1. The Ibbankatuwa burial ground (cemetery) in Dambulla was used between 700 and 450 B.C. The burial grounds like these were used by the influential people like the Parumakas.

something important was happening behind it. Earlier we mentioned that the villages were situated separately in the dry zone. Further, we said that there was a tank in each and every village. In constructing tank systems they connected such independent tanks with each other according to the contour lines of water flowing. Therefore, it was natural for the chiefs of the villages to discuss and there emerged the need of taking important decisions regarding connecting tanks in their villages. When the most ancient inscriptions are read meticulously, it can be seen that the most powerful person among the Gamikas had acted to represent all villages of the tank – system. This person was called by the name of 'Parumaka'. Since the Parumakas had the power to take decisions on behalf of the welfare of the people who lived in several villages belonging to the tank- system, they were considered to be a group of important

chieftains in the then society.

Even today ruins of hundreds of such tank – systems could be seen in the plains in the dry zone. It is clear that there was a Parumaka for each tank – system during the time they were used. There is information on hundreds of such Parumakas in inscriptions. Not only men, but also women too were engaged in provincial administration on some occasions. Such women were called in the name of 'Parumakalu'. As a whole, all of them were people who ruled the small land units in the areas where settlement had spread in the dry zone. Accordingly, the evolution of political power in Sri Lanka started as a divided system. The best word that can be used to name such a method is 'decentralized ruling'.



*Illustration 3.2 The chiefs of the Gamikas were called Parumakas. They had the right to collect taxes. The Parumakas symbolize an important beginning of developing the political power in a later time.*



*Fig 3.2. This necklace which was discovered in the Ibbankatuwa burial ground belonged to the period between 700 and 450 B.C. This is a bead necklace and some of the beads in this were imported ones. The luxury of the growing rich Parumakas is reflected by this.*

In this manner, the Prumakas who exercised the provincial ruling in this country were so powerful that sometimes they went to the extent of introducing themselves in the term of 'King'. An ancient inscription in the area called Embul Ambe in Matale district mentions a provincial ruler called Pochani Raja which means 'the king of the eastern region'. Pochani means 'Pracheena

(oriental)'. There is another note about such another provincial king named 'Duhathara Raja' in a cave in the ancient Buddhist temple called Yatahalena in Kegalle.

The word 'king' gives the meaning of 'one who makes others happy'. Therefore, the word 'king' is used to refer to 'one who works for the people's welfare diligently and make them happy. As the Parumakas acted in such a manner, later they were named thus. The origin of a generation of brave kings, who ruled Sri Lanka, occurred in such a background.

### Growth of Kingship

The growth of kingship means centralizing the power which was decentralized.

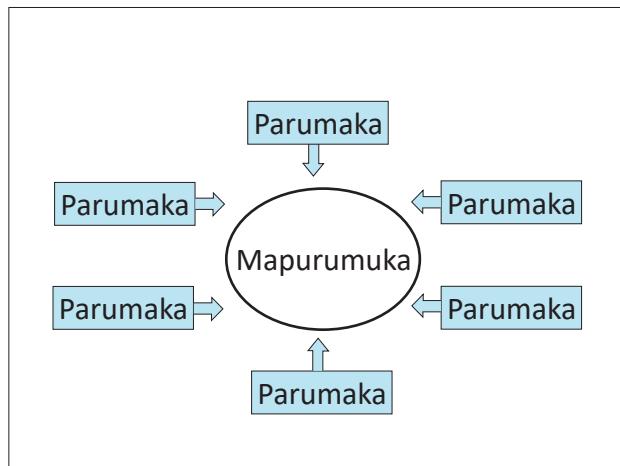
Centralizing political power in a country means a country being united. This means that power comes under one person. When the power is centralized, the concept of state is created. Its ruling head is the king and he has a specific territory under his ruling.

According to historical sources, the first king who ruled this country was King Pandukabhaya. According to the description given in Mahawamsa, king Pandukabhaya,

1. ascended to kingship by fighting several provincial rulers (his uncles) and captured those areas.
2. selected Anuradhapura as his ruling centre and built up the city of Anuradhapura.
3. marked the rural borders during his tenth year after the accession to kingship.

The need of centralizing the political power was gradually emerging by the ruling period of king Devanampiyatissa. One of the main reasons that influenced this was the trade affairs growing in the Indian Ocean. It was not only because of the geographical location of Sri Lanka, which was

situated in the middle of the sea trade route that connected western countries with the eastern countries, that it became an important to the international traders. Gems, tuskers, and spices that Sri Lanka possessed had become attractive commodities for them. In joining this emerging international trade, the need of working as an independent country arose. Therefore, the then powerful provincial rulers had understood the need of bringing the country into a unitary rule.



*King Dutugemunu managed to establish a centralized ruling by combining the Parumakas who were enjoying a decentralized power.*

Mahawamsa says that king Devanampiyatissa had invited the Kshastriyan (the clan of trade) in Katharagama and Chandanagama to participate in the ceremony of planting the Sri Maha Bodhi. Not only that, we know the king took steps to plant a branch of Sri Maha Bodhi in various parts of the country. By this act it becomes clear that the king had thought of the need of building affability among the regional rulers. Holding coronation of King Devanampiyatissa again by using the five insignia of royalty sent by the powerful emperor king Ashoka who ruled India and using the title 'Devanampiya' of emperor Ashoka, arrival of Mihindu thero bringing Buddhism to Sri Lanka are facts that reflect the nature of relationships maintained with the countries in the Indian oceanic region.

King Dutugemunu was another pioneer in the process of centralizing the decentralized political power of Sri Lanka. The king received the support of the Parumakas for that. Examples to prove this can be seen in the inscriptions belonging to his ruling period.

The army generals who extended their support to King Dutugemunu to unite the country had worked as Parumakas before they were given the above mentioned posts. The names of the army generals such as Velusumana, Pussadeva, Theraputtabhaya, and Nandimithra were mentioned in the inscriptions as Parumakas. Several such inscriptions can be seen in the caves in Situlpawwa. King Dutugemunu obtained the support of such Parumakas and centralized the power, which was decentralized so far. The regional chieftains, who were the Parumakas during the time when the power decentralized, became persons who held different posts after the power was centralized. The names of Parumaka Pussadeva, Parumaka Velusumana, Parumaka Therputtabhaya later became Senapathi Parumaka Pussadeva, Senapathi Parumaka Velusumana and Senapathi Parumaka Teraputtabhaya. These changed names could be seen in contemporary inscriptions.



*Fig. 3.3. This photograph displays some clay stamps used in the ancient time. There was not anything marked on them when they were discovered. Stamps like these were used by government officers. These three stamps were discovered in the place where there was the old urban hall in Tissamaharamaya.*

Further, the inscriptions provide us information about the treasurers, cashiers, and storehouse keepers who held the post of Parumaka earlier. According to literary sources, King Dutugemunu was the first king to unite the whole country.

King Dutugemunu took a very effective step to centralize the power in ancient Sri Lanka. Historical sources say that a Sri Lankan ambassador had been to Rome and brought glass beads with him when he returned during the ruling time of king Bhathikabhaya.

King Wasabha made the centralization of the political power more successful. During his time Sri Lanka was ruled as one unit. The inscriptions established by king Wasabha had spread in a wide area in this country. Further, separating administrative districts (asthana) and appointing ministers to administer each district too were done during his ruling time. It has been written in the golden plate, 'Wallipuram' that the Jaffna area was ruled by a minister named Srishigiri appointed by the king in his time. During that time Jaffna peninsula was known as Nagadeepaya (Nakadiva).



Fig. 3.4. A clay stamp discovered in the place where the ancient Magama city was located in Tissamaharama. Several symbols used by the then royals in Ruhunu are marked here.

Sri Lanka could stand as an independent country before the world because of its centralized political power.



Fig 3.5. The statue of King Bhathikabhaya, who performed a great Pooja to Ruwanweliseya. This statue can be seen in the premises of Ruwanweliseya even today.

### 3.2 The Concept of State

The king, created by the centralized political power, is an extremely powerful person. Therefore, the king had appeared before the people in a majestic form. The rulers thought their duty was developing the country economically, providing security to the countrymen, and enhancing spiritual development of the people.

Providing security on the occasions of threats from foreign enemies, developing the economy by constructing irrigation and enhancing people's spirituality by building religious places

were some examples. The history provides evidence to prove how even kings such as Elara and Nishshankamalla, who had foreign origin, acted in the above described way and won the trust of the people.

Different concepts about kingship developed according to the actions of the king and the way that they attempted to appear. Accordingly, concepts like Devathwa, Bodhisathwa, Parvatharaja, Veerathwa, and Chakravarthi were applied to the kings.

Most frequently the king appeared either as a Bodhisathwa or as a god. The king Kutakanna Abhaya, who made the inscription in a rock in Dambulla temple, has introduced him by the name of 'Nareshvara' (Naraisera). Its meaning is god Eeshwara for humans.

King Mahasen was worshipped as God of Minneri due to his service of developing the economy by constructing irrigation works. Even today there are Devalas in the dry zone dedicated for God Mahasen.

King Kashayapa I appeared as Kuwera. The name 'Alakapaya Maha Raja' had been used to call him. The meaning of it is 'Alakamandadhipathi – Maha Raja'. 'Alakamanda' is the living place of the god 'Kuwera' who is in charge of wealth. Literary sources say that 'Alakamanda' was a huge rock. The rulers in ancient Asia followed the method of appearing in the concept of 'Parvatharaja'.

The king, appearing as a Bodhisathwa was another instance. The king showed, on one hand, that he was bound with responsibility to rule the country in a just and fair manner for the benefit of the people and, on the other hand, it reflected that the people should trust and respect the king.

Another view that the kings of this country held was the concept of 'Chakravarthi'. Chakravarthi is a concept which conveys the meaning of 'dominating the whole world'. That

word belongs to the Sanskrit language and in Sinhala it is used as 'Sakvithi'. Some rulers in this country had used this word to show their identity in the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries A.D. Specially, king Nishshankamalla used the line "Kalinga Chakravarthi Swaminwahanse" to introduce himself in his inscriptions.

Though there were various terms about the kingship, all of those concepts were used to show the superiority of the king. When such type of nobleness is applied to the ruler, the people expected him to be exemplary. It is natural for him to be persuaded to act as that. That is how the conceptual background was created, which is essential for a righteous ruling.

### Inheritance of Kingship

When we study how the kingship was inherited in ancient Sri Lanka, it seems it passed from brother to brother or from father to son.

After the demise of king Devanampiyatissa, his brothers ascended to the kingship. After king Dutugemunu, his brother Saddhatissa became the king. When the kingship was given to a brother, the eldest among the younger brothers of the king was given power. When it was not so, history provides evidence to the fact that there were conflicts for the kingship.

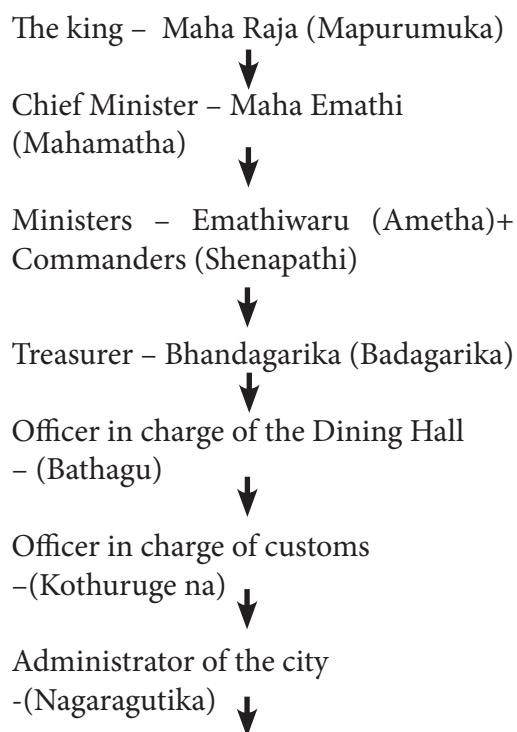
What was frequent was passing the kingship from father to son. After king Kawantissa, prince Dutugemunu became the king; after king Vasabha, his son prince Vankanasikatissa became the king. In this way passing kingship from father to son can be seen throughout the history of Sri Lanka. Either king's elder son or the consort's elder son became the heir. There are evidences that there were conflicts when it was not so. We know that king Kashyapa usurped the kingship from his father, king Dhatusena. The king had to do so because prince Mugalan, who was the son of then king's consort, was the real heir to the throne. The mother of prince Kashyapa was

a second queen of king Dhathusena. Apart from this, there were occasions when the kingship went to the brother of the king's consort and the son of the king's sister. It happened so when there was no real heir as described above.

## Statecraft

During the time when the political power was decentralized many of the Parumakas were combined together and built the state. The king acted as the head of all the Parumakas. Therefore, the word 'Mahaparumaka' or 'Mapurumuka' was used to name the king. We earlier mentioned how some powerful Parumakas used the name 'king' before the power was centralized. But, after the centralization of political power in the country, the word 'Maha Raja' was used to name the ruler of the country.

By referring to the most ancient inscriptions of this country, we can fairly understand the structure of the officials, who belonged to the state administration which developed after the centralization of the power in Sri Lanka.



Architect of the city (Nagara Wudika)  
+  
Officer in charge of the horses (Asa Adeka)  
+  
Officer in charge of tuskers (Hathi Adeka)  
+  
Officer in charge of dramas (Nata Adeka)  
+  
Officer in charge of making coins (Rupa Adeka)  
+  
Officer in charge of trades (Pana Adeka)  
+  
Officer in charge of archives (Kanapedika)

This kind of official structure provided a good assistance to the administration of the country. Common people were ones who benefited much from this.

### 3.3. Great Kings Who Ruled This Country

From the facts discussed so far, you must have understood how the development of the political power in Sri Lanka was influenced by a socio – economic process. Specially, the rulers who, had understood that they needed an efficient centralized ruling more than a decentralized one if they wanted to gain the due benefits from international trade affairs afoot in the Indian Ocean during the latter part of the 1<sup>st</sup> century B.C, took necessary steps for that. In this part it is expected to discuss the policies and contributions of the rulers who ruled this country, in parallel to the development of political power in Sri Lanka, citing several kings as examples.

#### King Dutugemunu

King Dutugemunu, who is highlighted in the historical sources, was a ruler who rendered a great service to organize the political power in this country properly. The king understood the need of saving Mathota international harbour, which earned a good income because of the

trade affairs which was prospering in the Indian Ocean during his time, from the then king Elara who had usurped the power in Anuradhapura and uniting the country. The way that prince Dutugemunu acted for that purpose according to the advice and the plans of King Kavantissa, his father, was a landmark in the political history of this country. Prince Dutugemunu was the first to provide leadership to the first organized fighting movement in the history of this country. The statement that he made about his fight against King Elara, which he would do, not because that he wanted to enjoy comforts and the facilities of a king but because for the benefit of the Buddhism clearly shows how the ruler entered to the political process based on a common purpose on behalf of the country. After the battle, the king ordered his subjects to respect his defeated rival's tomb, which shows his statesmanship.

As we have explained in the part 'growth of kingship' of this lesson, the most important contribution that King Dutugemunu made to the process of development of political power in this country was managing to combine the Parumakas who had possessed the decentralized provincial power by then. At the end he possessed a great power after being anointed as the king (Maha Raja) of the country. Though he was so powerful, his redressing attitudes towards the people reflect that he could realize his prime responsibility which was to work for the welfare of the people. The best example for this is that during the construction period of Ruwanweli Stupa the king ordered to run alms halls (Dan Sel) at the four gates of the Stupa and make payments for everyone who had participated in its construction works. King Dutugemunu should be admired not merely for his service to Buddhism of this country. Taking initiatives to organize the decentralized political power in Sri Lanka is also a prominent feature among his tasks.

## King Vasabha

King Vasabha, who was the first ruler of the lineage (dynasty) of Lambhakarna, was a prominent character among the rulers of this country. The procedure that the king followed to regulate and to organize the internal administration of the country properly was exemplary. There are a number of inscriptions that he has established around the country. According to the information in them, the king tried to divide the country into provinces and regulate the administration. And also, inscriptions say that the process of collecting taxes of the state was made systematic during the king's time.

The details of the historical sources reveal that King Vasabha pioneered in constructing large scale tanks in this country for the first time. The Wamsakatha (chronicles) say that the king had constructed sixteen large scale tanks. The king tended to execute such kind of construction as there was a great demand for the grains produced in this country in South India because there was a dearth of food in the valley of Krishna river in South India. The immediate decision king Vasabha took to invest the public money on constructing new reservoirs can be analyzed as a far-sighted and a productive decision to address an international and regional need emerged at the time.

The way that king Vasabha acted to reconstruct the Buddhist temples and Stupas in this country is not second to any other ruler's task. A number of inscriptions mention the financial support the king provided to reconstruct the decayed places in Buddhist temples and to supply facilities to the Bhikkus.

We should understand that the decisions that the king made to make the lives of the people better in the country by taking steps needed to increase the local income and using the income earned in that manner to develop the irrigation of the country are exemplary.

## King Vijayabahu I

King Vijayabahu I is another prominent and a great ruler who belongs to the history of this country. The king acted to suppress the power of Chola through a war movement planned in a very intelligent manner during a period in which Sri Lanka was under the Chola ruling for a long time after the growth of power of the Chola kings in South India.

The King was called Keerthi in his childhood and grew in Ruhuna area. The royal family including prince Keerthi and his parents were given protection by a public officer who lived in Ruhuna. He was Sithnarubima Budhal Na by name. He was a security officer. An interesting description of the way that Budhal Na provided protection to the royal family is included in the Panakaduwa copper plate which had been got written by king Vijayabahu I.

All the steps taken by king Vijayabahu I to act against the powerful Chola kings was an effective fruitful procedure followed to protect the existence of the whole territory in the country. The concepts of freedom of territory in any country and continuity are called territorial integrity. The protection of the territorial integrity of a country by a ruler is a prime responsibility of him for the citizens.

The king, who united the country by defeating the Chola rulers through a fighting movement, took much pain to develop the country. He acted immediately to renovate the Buddhist temples which were not maintained properly during the period of the Chola ruling. The king took a very important step to strengthen the economy of the country; that is, making Polonnaruwa his ruling centre instead of Anuradhapura. The king took such a step because the international trade based on the Western areas of India by then had been transferred to the Eastern Indian region. With that transferring, what was very important for Sri Lanka was to organize the administration

in a way in which maintaining the relationships with Eastern region of India could take place easily. Though ex-rulers had paid their attention on this before, king Vijayabahu I was the one who acted practically regarding the matter. One of the main reasons that appear to have affected to select Polonnaruwa as the ruling centre was the Trincomalee harbour, which was named Gokanna Thiththa during that period, was located facing the Eastern part of the South Indian ocean and he understood that controlling of the trade affairs of that harbour could be done easily from the Polonnaruwa ruling centre.

The way king Vijayabahu I acted as a ruler influenced much on the history of Sri Lanka during the Polonnaruwa period. The sovereignty of this country, which was preserved until it was threatened by the Europeans, was a result of the intelligence and great ideas of the rulers of that time.

### Activity 1

Describe the persons who were introduced by the names given below.

1. Gruhapathi
2. Gamika
3. Parumaka
4. Raja

### Activity 2

Write a short description about the prominent kings who ruled the country during Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa periods.

## Important Facts

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- ✓ At the early stages the political power in Sri Lanka was in a decentralized nature. The chieftains who were powerful provincially handled the ruling power.
- ✓ Those who were engaged in ruling affairs at the village level were called Gamikas and those who ruled a wide area consisted of several villages were named as Parumakas. Gamikas represented the householders who were in charge of several houses in a village. The word Gahapathi was used to name them.
- ✓ A political body is needed to control power which is necessary to handle the conflicts and other complexities in a society, which are caused due to the facts such as life competition caused by emergence of various social requirements in line with development of settlements. The political power in the ancient society of Sri Lanka developed based on such needs.
- ✓ The process of centralizing the political power, which had been decentralized in this country, was initiated by king Dutugemunu. That task, initiated by king Dutugemunu for a political purpose for the first in the history of this country, was accomplished by King Vasabha, who was a member of the Lambhakarna lineage.
- ✓ Centralizing the power means the ruling power of the country goes to one hand of one ruler. There a group of officers are appointed to run the administration of the country. The word state is used to name the king, the officers, the rules and regulations imposed by them and the institutions which put them into practice.

- ✓ In running the rule of the country, the rulers appeared in different types of concepts. Most of the time they attempted to appear as a god.

**Pancha Kakudha Bhanda** – *Pancha Kakudha Bhanda means the five items which are considered to provide prosperity when they are used. The Walividunava, Mirivedi Sangala (a pair of slippers), Magul Kaduva (king's sword), Sesatha (Parasol), Nalal Patiya (the strap tied on the forehead) belong to it. Kings used them in their coronations. Mahawamsa says that king Devanampiyatissa held his second coronation using the Pancha Kakudha Bhanda sent by emperor Ashoka.*

**The title Devanapiya** – *Indian emperor Ashoka used the title Devanapiya (Devanampriya) meant 'adorable to God'. King Tissa, who ruled this country in the contemporary period of emperor Ashoka, used this title and called himself Devanampiyatissa.*

**Alakamandava** – *Literary texts describe that Alakamandava is the dwelling place of the 'Kuvera' who is in charge of wealth. Accordingly, it is one of the prosperous cities which belongs to the island 'Uthurukuru' where gods live.*

# 4

# The Ancient Society of Sri Lanka

## Introduction

The majority who live in any society at any given time is the general public. Rulers, government officers, religious leaders and other chieftains are a minority among the people. History is the past that reflects the activities of all of them. Though that is the truth, many of the historical source descriptions have presented information paying more attention to the minority that we mentioned secondly. Therefore, the knowledge of information about the ancient general public is limited. If we need to understand the history of this country better, it is necessary to learn the information of lives of the general public who lived during the ancient time. In this lesson you will have an opportunity to learn all this with more information.

### 4.1 The Nature of Ruling

The historical sources say that kings ruled our country in the ancient times. The inscriptions mention very important information about the procedure of the statesmanship followed in ruling the country.

There are three institutions which handle the ruling of any country. They are called the legislature, the executive and the judiciary. The government means these three institutions. The legislature is the institution which makes laws in a country. As it is done by the parliament of our country today, in the ancient time it was done by the king's court. The executive is the institution which implements laws. The government officers

are engaged in that process. The judiciary provides the justice to the countrymen by preventing the damage caused to the society due to breach of law.

In the ancient time there were an executive as well as a judiciary in our country. The executive acted as the legislature too. There was not an independent body as a separate legislature, because then there was monarchism in this country. The inscriptions written in 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D. had used the word 'Ekthensamiya' to name the executive and the legislature. In an inscription in the place called Buddhannehela there is a note which could be put into words such as "Apa methuwak dena awud wathhimiyen wahansege wadala ekthensamiyen". The word 'Ekthensamiya' is formed from the words 'Eka asthana' and 'Samya'. The word 'Eka asthana' means 'king's court' and 'Samya' means 'agreement'. Hence, the word 'Ekthen Samiya' gives us the meaning 'agreement of the king's court'. The inscription Buddhannehela was established to make a statement of an offering of a land. The phrase of the inscription mentions that the offering was made with the agreement of the king's court and due to the decree of the king. The phrase "Wath himiyan wadala" means the "king's decree". The word 'Wathimi' is a similar word to king.

According to the inscriptions that belong to the 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D., the officers, who came to grant the land of the government to the Buddhist temples, had represented a place called 'sabhava – the council'. As mentioned in one of the inscriptions found in Anuradhapura district the officers named Udaya in Meningamuva and Sena



in Nikawella had come representing the council (Sabhawa) to offer a plot of land called Kerelegama to the nunnery called Mahindarama. It goes like this in the inscription, "Sabhayen a meningamu udahi isa nikaweli senu isa".

Here the word 'Sabhawa' means the judiciary existed then. It is a legal act to bequeath land of the government to another. Therefore, the participation of the officers, representing the judiciary, in such occasions was essential. On such occasions demarcating the borders of the given land and documenting the conditions that should be followed in enjoying the land must have been the duty of the officers.

In the literary sources the word 'Mahale' has been used in several places instead of the word 'Sabhawa'. That was how the old Sinhala word 'Maha Lekhaka - great writer' was written. It is similar to the meaning 'Maha Lekam - general secretary'. The duty of the secretaries of the government was to document all governmental affairs and take necessary steps to preserve them. An inscription found in Medirigiriya mentions about such a general secretary. The inscription says that a general secretary (Mahale Kasba) called Kashyapa had come to offer a land to a Padhanaghara called Eth Wehera in Medirigiriya and to do the legal affairs of it under the decree of King Sena II.

When Anuradhapura was the capital of the country, it was the ruling centre too. The king ruled the country from the capital. It is clear that as there were no transportation and communication facilities like today, therefore handling the administrative affairs of the remote areas from Anuradhapura was difficult. There are facts that can be seen in literary sources about separate administrative units related to the government for provincial administration because of the above reason. An example which can be given for that is the golden plate - 'Vallipuram' written in King Vasabha's ruling period. It has been mentioned in the document that a minister called Rishigiri, who ruled Nagadeepa during king Vasabha's ruling period, built a

*Fig.4.1. Several symbols in an inscription written in the 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Here, the mark 'Vatapatha (fan)' indicates the sceptre which symbolizes royalty; the mark 'Wela (creeper)' indicates the swan. The swan symbolizes the purity of the given allowance. The crescent mark at the top symbolizes that this allowance persists until the sun and the moon exist. The marks of the dog and crow symbolize that those who disturbed this allowance would be born as those animals in their next birth.*

temple called Piyangukatissa there. This clearly shows the manner in which the officers of the central government had been appointed to rule the outer areas.

Apart from these, there were independent councils, which were at lower levels to administer each area. In the inscriptions, those independent councils, which existed in 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D., have been introduced as 'Dasagam Ettan'. The heads of them had participated in the administrative affairs at a minor scale, representing ten villages. An inscription situated in an old temple called Kaludiya Pokuna in Matale district says that if there was a problem regarding offering alms to the temple, Dasagam Ettan should gather and solve the problem.

In administration, the rulers of the country acted for the welfare of the people. They not only offered grants to the temples, but also acted for the betterment of the countrymen. Especially, the rulers frequently paid their attention to uplift the health facilities of the general public, which was essential to them. The word 'Vejjasala' has been used in ancient literary sources. That word means 'hospitals'. The inscriptions made in the 2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C. mention about doctors who were called 'Veja'.

King Buddhadasa (340 – 368 A.D) was a ruler who made a great effort to build hospitals. King Mahinda V (982 – 1029 A.D) acted to provide everything required to the hospitals in various provinces in the country then. During the reign of king Kashyapa IV (898 -914 A.D) a dangerous fever spread in and around Anuradhapura. Historical sources say that the king who realized that those patients could not be treated under the facilities available in the hospital existed then, built a special hospital for that. For that the word 'Upasagaraganasa' was used in the sources.

King Upatissa I (365-406 A.D.) built maternal hospitals for the needs of the pregnant women. Those hospitals were named as 'Paswantinama Sala'. That word means 'the halls built for the

delivery'. In the inscriptions those buildings were named as 'Thimbirige'. From an ancient time, there was the tradition of building maternal hospitals in this country. There was a type of halls called 'Sottisala' during king Pandukabhaya's reign. The annotative texts describe that the name 'Sottisala' was used by Brahmins for the places where religious activities were performed and to name the maternity hospitals.

The intelligent kings, who ruled our country maintained mutual relations with their neighbouring countries as well as with distant countries. The countries with which relations were maintained, changed from time to time. Relations were maintained with Asian countries including India and Araby since a very long time and with some European countries since several centuries from the recent past. Inscriptions in the South India mention that King Gajabahu I (114-136 A.D.), who was a reputed ruler from the 'Lambhakarna' lineage had arrived in 'Chera' state in South India to participate in a ceremony where a 'Pattini' Devala was declared open.

Perhaps the purpose of this journey might have been to strengthen the mutuality of statesmanship between two countries.

Mahawamsa mentions that king Bhatikabhaya (23B.C-7A.D.) had sent ambassadors to 'Romanuka Desha'. Here 'Romanuka Desha' means Rome. The purpose of this mission was to fetch glass pebbles for a Pooja performed at Ruwanweli Seya.

In the 8<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup> centuries A. D. the rulers of this country built a close relation with China. During that time ambassadors from this country went to China. In the ruling period of king Aggabodhi VI these relations were very strong. During that time twenty foreign missions went to China. The success in trading was the basic background of the relations built with China and it made a cultural influence too.

Sri Lanka had marital relations with neighbouring countries. This reflects another way that Sri Lanka maintained its foreign relations. Specially, there is information in the Wamsakatha about marital relations that our rulers had with powerful Indian states such as Kalinga, and Pandya. King Vijayabahu I (1070-1110) married a Kalinga princess named Thilokasundari and the king's sister princess Miththa married a Pandyan prince. It seems that the fundamental purpose of these marital relations was to maintain the political power with stability through relationships.

Though there were differences in languages and religions, acting with trust with the neighbouring countries were one of the prominent features of the foreign policy of our rulers. The best example for this is that King Vijayabahu I appointed the Veleikkara army for defense of the Polonnaruwa Temple Tooth. Veleikkara force was a mercenary army which came from Southern India and served in Sri Lanka for payments.

After the 10<sup>th</sup> century A.D., our kings had a mutual relationship with Arabian countries. The purpose of that must have been giving Sri Lankan contribution stably for the trade affairs done by the Arabian traders in the Indian Ocean. As it is mentioned by the Arabian historian Al – Balasuri, who lived in the 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D., the king of ‘Ruby Island’ (Sri Lanka was called by this name) had exchanged gifts with the Islamic king.

If it is summarized, the main purposes of the ruling in this country were creating a peaceful co-existence among the countrymen, providing their welfare and protecting the territorial integrity for preserving the motherland and future longevity of the countrymen. In parallel to them, it seems that they have acted with a farsighted vision to work in a mutual understanding with the neighbouring countries.

## 4.2 Economy

The majority of the people lived in villages. In comparison to the present condition, those villagers' lives were shaped up in a very simple way. Most of their occupation was agriculture. Some were engaged in Chena cultivation whereas the others were engaged in paddy cultivation. They reared animals for living. Apart from these, some, who were engaged in different occupations, lived in villages completely separated for themselves.

### 4.2.1 Farming/ Agriculture

The main livelihood of the villagers who lived in the ancient Sri Lanka was farming. Animal husbandry or rearing animals was also done in line with the agricultural activities. Agriculture was done in two ways; one was muddy agriculture alias paddy cultivation; second was Chena cultivation. The historical and archaeological sources substantiate that the Chena cultivation was the oldest out of these two. The term ‘Hena’ (Chena) used in ancient time has been mentioned as ‘Sehen’ in Buthsarana, the literary text, ‘Sen’ in Ummagga Jathaka, and ‘Pitibim’ in inscriptions.

**Chena Cultivation** – ‘Hena’ or Chena cultivation is an inland cultivation. A suitable land for ‘Hena or Chena’ is prepared for growing grains and vegetables after choosing a plot of land from a jungle area, clearing it by cutting small, trees, undergrowth and thorny bushes in it and burning them after they dried. In this process the farmers would not cut big trees. Before setting fire to the cleared jungle area, the owner of the Chena shouts out in order to chase away animals from that area.



Fig. 4.2. A scene of a newly arranged Chena (Nawadeli Hena)

A new chena, which has been cleared by setting fire to it, is called as 'Nawa Deli Hena'. Those Chenas are fertile. The term 'Nawadeli Sena' has been mentioned in 'Saddharma Rathnawaliya' too. In some parts of Sri Lanka, a different meaning is given to the term 'Nawa Deli Hena'. It says the term 'Nawa Deli Hena' is used for Chenas where the nine plants namely, finger millet (Kurakkan), Kollu, Undu, green gram(Mun), Corn (Iringu), millet (Thanahal), dill seeds (Asamodagam) and Amu have sprouted in lush. The villagers in Anuradhapura use the term 'Kanaththa' to name the Chenas which are prepared to start cultivation again after giving it up for some time. The normal method practised in Chena cultivation was abandoning a certain Chena after cultivating it for once or twice. As it is abandoned for some time, it grows wild again. Therefore, old Chena cultivation did not do any harm to the environment.

The seeds such as Undu, Ma, Green gram (Mun), finger millet (Kurakkan), Corn (Iringu), Sesame

thala, amu, mustard (Aba), dill (Duru), and millet (Thanahal) as well as vegetables such as Karabatu, Thiththabatu, Brinjal (Vambatu), ash pumkin (Alu puhul) and pumpkin (Wattakka) were cultivated in Chenas. Al vee (a type of paddy), yams, Uk Gas (sugar cane) and Kapu (cotton) were cultivated in Chenas separated for them. During that time the cultivation of sugar cane and cotton was rich enough to produce jaggery and clothes needed for the country. The Wamsakatha mention that there were labourers engaged in sugar cane industry. Our ancestors were able to produce jaggery needed within the country itself for a long time. The scholars point out that until the 16<sup>th</sup> century A.D., sugar was not imported to this country.

As a Chena is cultivated in a place which is away from farmers' houses, they stay temporarily in a hut built in the Chena until it is harvested. The fence, which is normally made out of sticks around the Chena to protect its crops from the



*Illustration 4.1 A Chena is a beautiful scene. The hut, which was built for the farmer to stay at night to protect the Chena from wild animals, the fence made with sticks around the Chena are things that can mostly be seen.*

wild animals, is called 'Dandu Weta'. The small hut built at the top of a tall tree in the Chena is called 'Pela'. It was in this 'Pela' that the farmers stayed sleeplessly at night to protect the crops in their Chenas from wild animals.

During the times of some kings, taxes were charged for cultivating Chenas. Two types of such taxes, 'Kethi Ada', 'Ketu Kanaba Aya' have been mentioned in inscriptions. The inscriptions say that King Nissankamalla (1187-1196 A.D), who ruled in Polonnaruwa, abolished those two types of taxes.

Since there was not much population in ancient time, Chena cultivation was enough to meet the needs of their lives. Muddy or paddy cultivation was started in order to produce more food required for the increasing population.

**Paddy Cultivation** – In inscriptions the places where paddy was cultivated have been introduced as 'Kumbura' and 'Ketha'. Sometimes the word 'Kumbura' may have been used to introduce the small space which was used for paddy cultivation. The term 'Ketha' has derived from the Sanskrit word 'Kshesthra'. It meant 'considerably big fields'.

Mostly the paddy cultivation was done by using irrigation. During monsoon seasons, rain water was reserved in tanks. Then the water was carried to paddy fields through canals. Twice a year paddy was cultivated. The seasons in which paddy was cultivated were introduced in the name of 'Kanna'. The two 'Kannas' (seasons) in which paddy was cultivated were called 'Maha Kannaya' and 'Yala Kannaya'. Apart from these, another one introduced as 'Meda Kannaya' is found in inscriptions. It came between 'Yala

Kanna' and 'Maha Kanna' and also depended on the abundance of water.

The main need of the dry zone to maintain paddy cultivation successfully was to supply sufficient water. Gathering rain water and taking water through canal to paddy fields by putting a barrier across the natural rivers were the two strategies followed. The tradition of making tanks developed in this country as a strategy to face the need of preserving water. The statement uttered by king Parakramabahu the Great (1153 – 1186 A.D.) as "Not a single drop of water that falls from the sky should be sent to the sea without properly using it" shows how the ruler saw the importance of preserving water.

Unlike at present, farmers in the past were conscious of doing various customs in the paddy cultivation. It provided them with much assistance to be engaged in their livelihoods by being close to the nature.

**Animal Husbandry** – Apart from agricultural activities, there was animal husbandry too. Rearing cattle was the major activity in it. The inscriptions mention Gopalagams, which were reserved for those who were engaged in cattle rearing. What was taken from cattle was very helpful for food. Mee kiri (milk or curd), Githel (ghee), Wendaru (butter), were prominent among them. There is a word "Kirigeri" in an inscription, made by king Kashyapa IV, in the Colombo Museum. What it means is the cattle reared for getting milk. A nice carving of a woman who gets milk from a cow has been engraved on the rock 'Mahameru', which was settled in the ancient Stupa of the temple named Nagapabba in Sigiriya.

Apart from cattle, chicken and goats were reared in houses. There is an inscription, written in the 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D., at the hospital in Padhanagara at Ethvehera temple in Medirigiriya, Polonnaruwa. It is mentioned in the inscription that for needs of the patients only the flesh of naturally died chicken and goats should be used.

## 4.2.2 Industries

You learned in previous lessons that from very ancient time the metal industry of Sri Lanka was highly developed. There is some information about artisans who worked in their industries using iron. Among them, blacksmiths were prominent. The name 'Kabara' was used to introduce them in inscriptions. That is how the word 'Kammara' was written in old Sinhala. The blacksmiths were very essential and important to the villagers. He was the one who made pruning knife (Keththa), mammoty (Udella), and plough (Nagula) for them. In an inscription in a place called Muthugalla in Polonnaruwa, there is a reference about a blacksmith named Majjima.

Apart from this, there were artisans who were engaged in their industries using copper (Thabakara) and tin metal at that time. The word 'Thuladhara' had been used to introduce goldsmiths in ancient documents. In some of the books they have been described by the name of 'Swarnakara'. An inscription found in the place called Mandagala in Hambantota district, there is a reference about a goldsmith named Thuladara Sumana. Things such as bead and badges, made of types of half gems and gems, found in old cities such as Anuradhapura and Magama from the archaeological excavations reflect the nature of the gem industry existed in the society of this country. The artisans who were engaged in such affairs were called 'Manikara'.

Another industry, which existed in the ancient society of this country, was the art of carving on tusks. An inscription situated close to Vegiriya Devalaya mentions a craftsman of tusks named 'Datika Sumana'. The term 'Datika' comes from the word 'Danthika'.

Earthenware was the most useful ones for the ordinary people, who lived in those days, for their day-to-day activities. A large number of remnants of such earthenware have been discovered in archaeological excavations. Making earthenware

was a well organized industry at that time. Even the inscriptions written more than 2250 years ago mention about those who were engaged in pottery. Then they were named ‘Kumbhakara’ (Kubakara).

In an inscription in a place named ‘Veherakema’ in Hambanthota district a word named ‘Thathvaya’ appears. This term is a combination of the two words ‘Thanthu Vaya’. Its meaning is ‘one who spins strings’. Spinning strings is related to weaving clothes. Historical sources say that weaving clothes was an industry that existed in our country from ancient time. The reference of the spinners of strings mentioned in the Veherakema inscription is an obvious evidence that proves the cloth weaving industry existed at that time.

By mentioning information about artisans who were engaged in different types of industries such as these occupations in our history, it appears that the ancient society of our country was well organized. All these artisans made a contribution out of their knowledge and labour to run the society well.

#### 4.2.3. Trading

In ancient time there were only a few number of cities. According to sources, Anuradhapura and Magama were prominent among them. To call them the word ‘Pura’ has been used. The rich lived in big cities. There were both local and foreign traders in those cities. At the southern gate in Anuradhapura, there was a bazaar called ‘Kalusumana’.

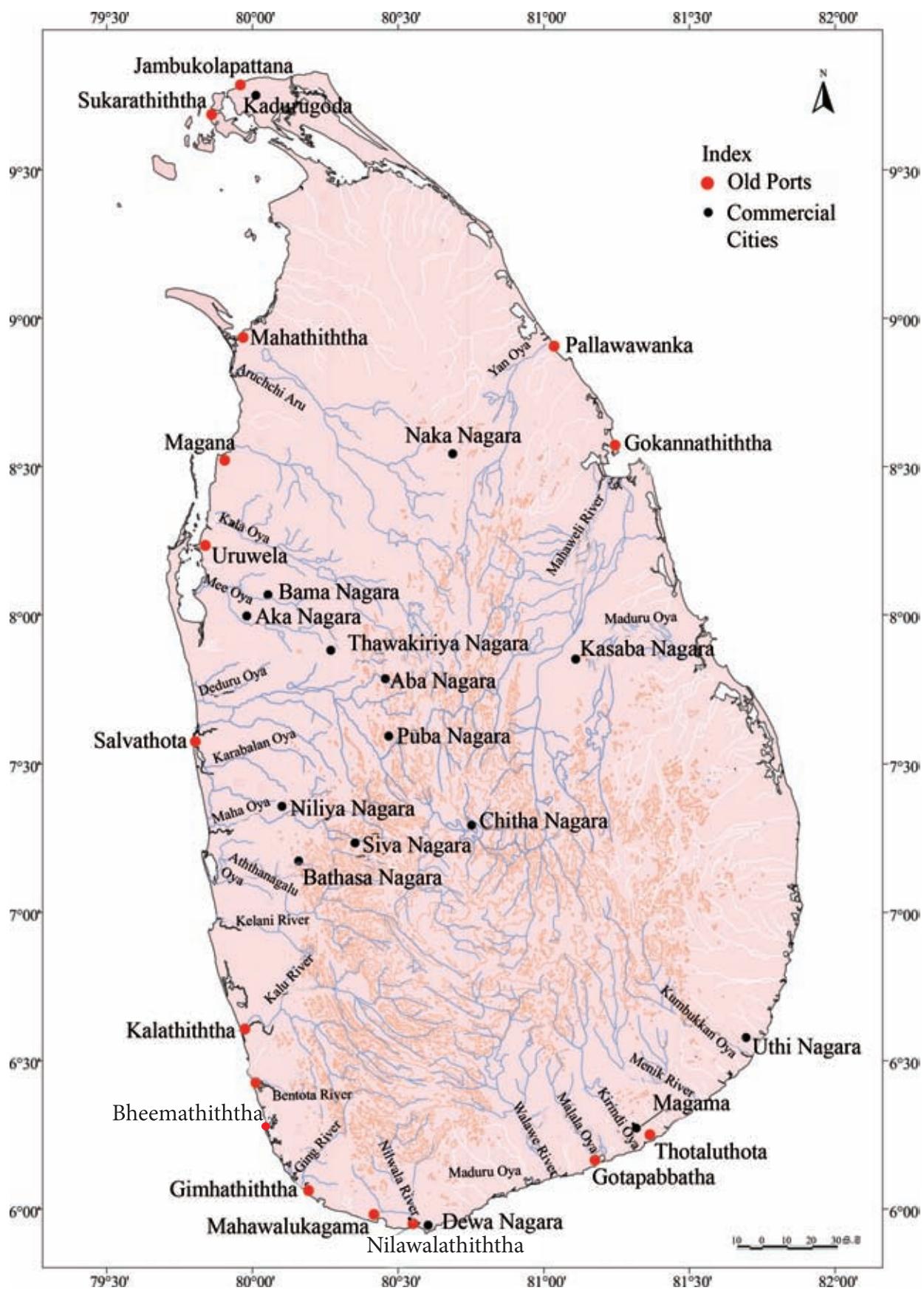
Trade was a major occupation in our country during ancient time. Trade activities were maintained locally as well as with foreign countries. An inscription in the western water park of Sigiriya mentions about a person called ‘Abala Wapara’. That is the way how ‘sour business’ was written in old Sinhala language. It is a ‘tamarind trader’ that was introduced

thus. That inscription had been written 2250 years ago. Except for a small group, others worked by organizing themselves collectively. That kind of organization was addressed by the name ‘Poogaya’. In some places the word ‘Niyamasthana’ has been used for that.

Those who were engaged in trade were called ‘Wanija’ or ‘Vapara’ in those days. The word ‘Vapara’ was the old Sinhala term of ‘Vyaparika – business’. These traders were the rich in the ancient society. They had even offered caves for Bhikkus to stay. An inscription in the place called ‘Mandagala’ in Hambanthota district mentions that a trader called ‘Sumanā’ had offered such a cave. Another inscription was found in a place named ‘Weherakema’. That inscription includes a description about an offering of a cave to the Bhikkus by an organization of those who did their trading by weaving clothes.

There were markets for selling commodities in trade cities and villages. Literary sources mention that one Suranimala, who came to Anuradhapura from Mahagrama, bought perfumes at a shop. The information in the inscription of King Udaya IV (946-954 A.D.) points out the way how ancient markets were administered in an organized way.

The best example that can be given for this is the description given in the Soraborawewa inscription about Hopitigama market. It includes the laws imposed by the king on its administration. There is a law mentioned in it which commands that taxes should be charged only from the carts which come to the market, but not from the carts which go passing the market. A law has imposed stating that betel should only be sold keeping in a hut covered from the sun. It was done in order to prevent selling dried betel to people. There were no trading affairs on poya days then. A fine was charged from those who did their business on poya days. Those who did trading on poya days at the Hopitigama market, had to supply oil to light lamps at the Mahiyanganaya temple as a fine.



Map 4.1 Old commercial cities and ports

The Tamil inscriptions, found in Sri Lanka, which belonged to the period from the 11<sup>th</sup> century to the 13<sup>th</sup> century A.D., mention that there were several South Indian trade organizations afoot in this country during the same time. Nanadesi, Valagngniyar, and Ayinurwur are some of them. A metal stamp, which belonged to the trade organization named Nanadesi, was discovered in Hambantota.

There is enough evidence to prove that there were a considerable number of foreign traders in this country in the early period. In an inscription in a place named Bowaththegala in Southern Province, there is a term “Kajoba Maha Pugiyai”. It is about a big trade organization of the Cambodians. The Cambodians were traders who came here from Afghanistan.

From ancient time our country played a significant role in international trade affairs. One reason that affected for this was Sri Lanka was located in the middle of the Indian Ocean. The contribution that Sri Lanka made as an exchanging center in the East-West trading in the ancient time cannot be belittled.

One of the specific factors that contributed Anuradhapura to develop as a city was international trading. In the West Mathota harbour was located where as Gokkannathiththa, known as Trincomalee harbour today, was situated in the East. Apart from these, the actions of small harbours situated on the western and eastern coasts made a direct influence on the emerging urbanization of Anuradhapura. Bringing Sri Maha Bodhi from the small harbour named Jambakolapattana situated in the Northern coast and bringing the Tooth Relic from the small anchorage port called Lankapattana situated in the Eastern coast by prince Dantha and princess Hemamala to this country are examples for this.

#### ★ Teachers

Teaching profession too was another occupation

existed in ancient Sri Lanka. In ancient documents the word ‘Acharya’ has been used to introduce teachers. Not only those who taught crafts, but also those who excelled in education, were named as ‘Acharya’. These Acharyas were good at different types of crafts. The inscriptions mention information about teachers who trained taming tuskers (Hasthi Acharya), going on horseback (Ashwa Acharya) and shooting with the bow (Dunu Acharya).

#### ★ Doctors

To run a society well, the citizens who belong to it must be healthy. The service of the doctors is very important for that. In the Anuradhapura period medical profession held a high recognition. The word ‘Veja’ was used to introduce doctors in inscriptions. In the 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D. some doctors had been named as ‘Maha Vedana’. Such a term was used to name the chief doctor or surgeon.

#### ★ Lawyers (Legal Advisers /Experts)

2000 years ago there lived professionals who were conversant with law. It seems that mostly they gave the required instruction to the king to achieve justice. Such people who knew about law were called by the name of ‘Vohara’. It derives from the word ‘Wyavahara’ in Sanskrit language. This name was given to the persons who were proficient in the accepted practices of justice and goodness in the contemporary society.

#### ★ Different Artisans

The persons, who were engaged in different types of industries and artistic occupations, lived in the society of this country during ancient time. The sources mention that there were dancers, painters and poets among these artists. In an inscription, found in an old temple in Medagama in Kurunegala district, inscribed 2200 years ago, there is a reference about a dancer named Tissa. Introduction of the wife of this dancer as a Parumaka is an important fact here. It gives us a

clear idea that dancing had been considered as an important occupation in the society. The words 'Chithakara' and 'Lapana' were used to introduce the painters. The first name had derived from the word 'Chithrakara' and the second had derived from the word 'Lepana'. In Sanskrit language the word 'Lepana' is used to give the meaning 'applying'. Since applying colours create paints, the word 'Lepana' had been used to name the painters. In an inscription in the place named Nattukanda, there is a reference to a person called 'Lapana Tissa'.

In our country there were highly talented poets. The word 'Kavi' itself had been used to name them. The son of above mentioned Lapana Tissa had been introduced as a poet in the same inscription. His name was Sanjaya.

## 4.3 Culture

### 4.3.1 Religion

From the time when Arahath Mahinda Thero arrived here in the 3<sup>rd</sup> century B.C and preached Buddhism, it had continually been the main religion of this country. Apart from this, with the arrival of Indian traders and others from India, Hindu religion too spread in this country. Christian religion and Islamic religion were introduced to Sri Lanka at recent times when it is compared to the spread of Buddhism. It was as a result of spread of trade in the Mediterranean region after the 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D. and in Western countries centered trade after the 16<sup>th</sup> century A.D. in Eastern countries.

Soon after the arrival of Arahath Mahinda Thero and his followers, Buddhism and the rituals related to it spread rapidly in the society of this country. As there were no suitable monasteries for the daily increasing number of Bhikkus to



*Illustration 4.2. The Bhikkus stayed in the cave monasteries, offered by the Buddhist followers and devotees, from early time of the introduction of Buddhism to this country. Temples and shrines were constructed much later.*

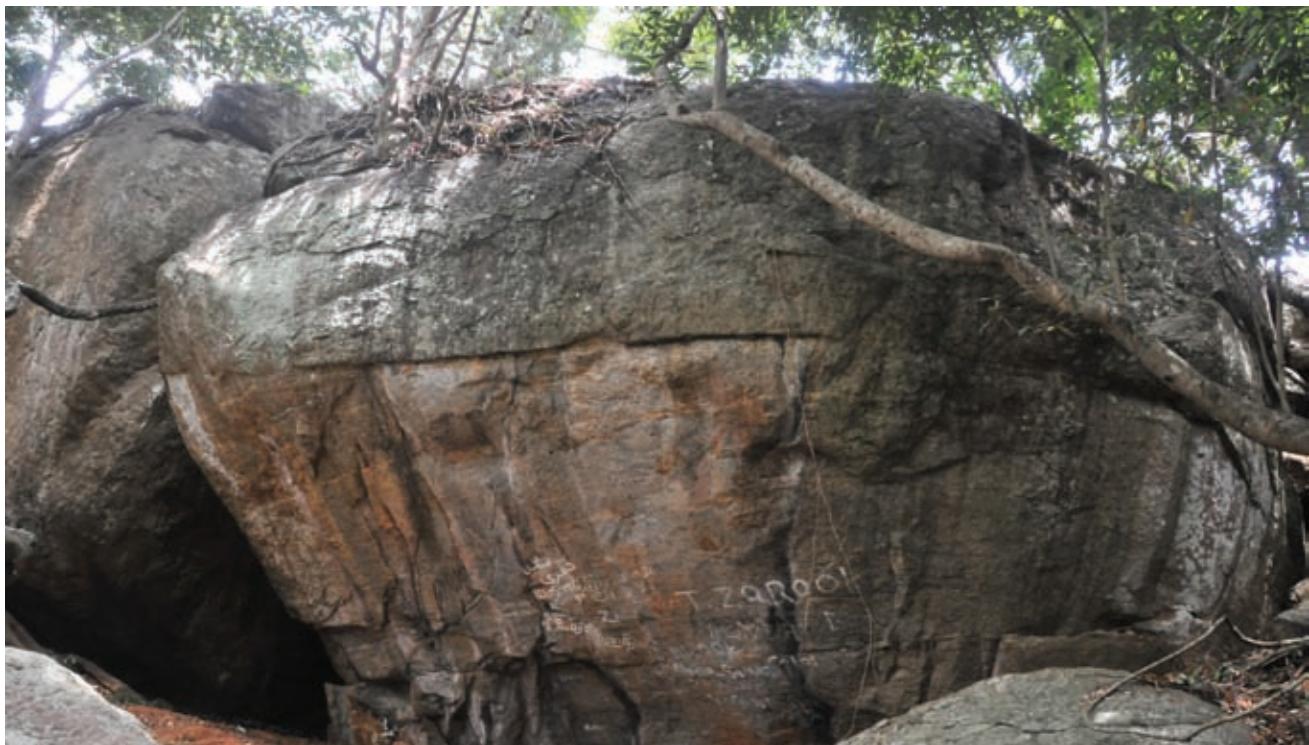


Fig 4.3. In the same period when Arahat Mahinda Thero arrived in this country the caves like these were offered to the Buddhist monks by virtuous devotees. In some of the drip ledges engraved on such caves, there are inscriptions with the names of those who offered them.

stay, natural caves were cleaned and offered them to Bhikkus. More than 1600 caves offered in such a way to Bhikkus can be seen in different parts of the country.

A suitable cave was found, cleaned, made a drip ledge in order to prevent water from coming inside during the rainy season and offered them to Bhikkus. In some caves the details of those who offered them have been engraved under the drip ledge on the rock. Those days Brahmi letters were used for that. Those inscriptions have been written in old Sinhala language named ‘Sinhala Prakrutha’. You, who participate in school educational trips, will have the opportunity to visit such caves, in which drip ledges and inscriptions are engraved, in places such as Mihintale, Ritigala, Vessagiriya and Sigiriya. Given below here is an inscription in a cave in Mihintale.

Inscription- Parumaka Gutha Putha Parumaka Sumanaha Lene Agatha Anagatha Chathudisha Sagasa.

Meaning- This cave was offered to the Sanga (the Bhikkus), both who are present and not present from the four directions, by Chief Sumana, a son of chief Guptha.

Apart from caves and temples, sources mention about certain buildings introduced in the name of ‘Pannasala’. That means houses made of clay and wattle and thatched with reeds and leaves. The Bhikkus stayed in such places, before temples and monasteries were built with bricks and granite. The word ‘Pansala’ we use today has derived from the term ‘Pannasala’.

Several Bhikkus lived in ancient Buddhist monasteries. The Bhikkus who lived under the chief monk were called “Anthewasika Bhikkus-disciples monks”. An inscription engraved in a cave in Mahaelagamuwa in Anuradhapura mentions about a person who was called ‘Athewasika Pussa’. During those days the chief monks were addressed in the name of ‘Thera’. In inscriptions the student monks who lived in association with those chief monks have been

named as ‘Sadivihariya’ or ‘Saddi Viharika’. The meaning of that term is ‘one who lives close by’.

Until the Thripitaka (three scriptures) was documented during the ruling time of king Valagamba, Dhamma had been preserved by oral tradition. There were monks who had kept a part of the Thripitaka in their memory. They were named as ‘Bhanakavaru’. The monks, who had memorized the scriptures that belong to the doctrine, were called by the name of the particular scripture. For example the monks who had memorized the Deega Nikaya were called Deega Bhanaka and those who had memorized the Sanyuktha Nikaya were called Sanyuktha Bhanaka.

Inviting the monks to stay in the temples during the rainy season (Vas Visima) and holding ceremonies for offering robes (Katina Uthsava) were venerable customs among the people who lived during those days. In an inscription in the place called Helambagala in Kurunegala district the term ‘Vasavasika’ appears. Its meaning is ‘Vassavasika’ or ‘stayed inside during the rainy season’. In an inscription in Kothalakimbiyawa in the same district the words ‘Vasavasika Sahataka’ could be seen. That is how the two terms ‘Vassavasika Sataka’ have been written in Sinhala Prakrit language. Its meaning is ‘Katina Cheewaraya - the woven robe’. It says that cousins of a monk called ‘Uththiya’ offered a ‘Katina Cheewaraya – the woven robe’. Both of these inscriptions belong to a period of 2200 years ago.

#### 4.3.2 Other Religions

There is evidence that Brahmin groups lived in and around Anuradhapura city during the time when Buddhism was rooted in the society of this country. They were Hindu devotees. Mahawamsatika, which described that there was a type of buildings, mentioned in Mahawamsa, in the name of Sottisala, points out that the places where the Brahmins performed



Fig.4.4. A cross engraved on a stone post in Anuradhapura. This belongs to a time after the Portuguese came to this country.

their religious activities too were called by that name. And also, that book, which describes the word ‘Sivikasala’, points out that it meant the places where the ‘Shiva Lingas’ (phallus of god Siva) were established. Those ‘Pooja’ performed for the God Siva is well-known among the Hindu devotees. As South India is located close to Sri Lanka and there prevailed regular trade relations between the two countries, ideas of the Hindu religion were brought here. The oldest inscriptions of this country mention about the Tamil traders who came to Sri Lanka for trading. They have been introduced as ‘Dameda’ in those inscriptions. That is how the term ‘Dravida’ was written in Sinhala Prakrit language. By the 7<sup>th</sup> century A.D.



Fig.4.5 This is an inscription, which belonged to the Arabs, inscribed on a tombstone. This is a letter inscribed in Cufic scripts.



Fig.4.6 An ancient Shiva Devala in Polonnaruwa.

There lived a considerable number of Tamil people close to the main harbours of this country. Thirukethishwaram Hindu temple built close to the harbour of Mathota and Koneshwaram temple built nearby the old harbour Gokannatitta, which was in Trincomalee were places worshipped by the Tamil people who lived there during that time.

An old stone plate, with a cross engraved on it, has been discovered in Anuradhapura. That cross belongs to a catholic sect named Nestorians. Later the traders who held the ideas of the Nestorian sect, which developed centred on Persia, migrated to

Sri Lanka through the trade routes. The traveller Cosmos Indicopleetus, who belonged to the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D. has mentioned about a group of Persian traders who lived in Anuradhapura.

The scholars are of the view that the stone post with the Nestorian cross found in Anuradhapura was made after the arrival of the Portuguese to this country.

There are evidences that the ideas belonging to Islam religion prevailed in Sri Lanka in the period after the 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D. In the 'Quitab – Al- Musliqbal – Mamalik, the oldest Arabic geographical book discovered so far, has mentioned Sri Lanka as 'Sarandib'. 'Sarandib' was the way that the Arabs pronounced the term

'Sinhaladweepa'. This book was written in or around 845 A.D. There was a mutual relation between Sri Lanka and Arab from ancient time. It was a relation which went beyond mere trade relations. The book 'Ajayib Al- Hind, written by a person called Iban Shahriar in 953 A.D. mentions that when Prophet Mohammed, the

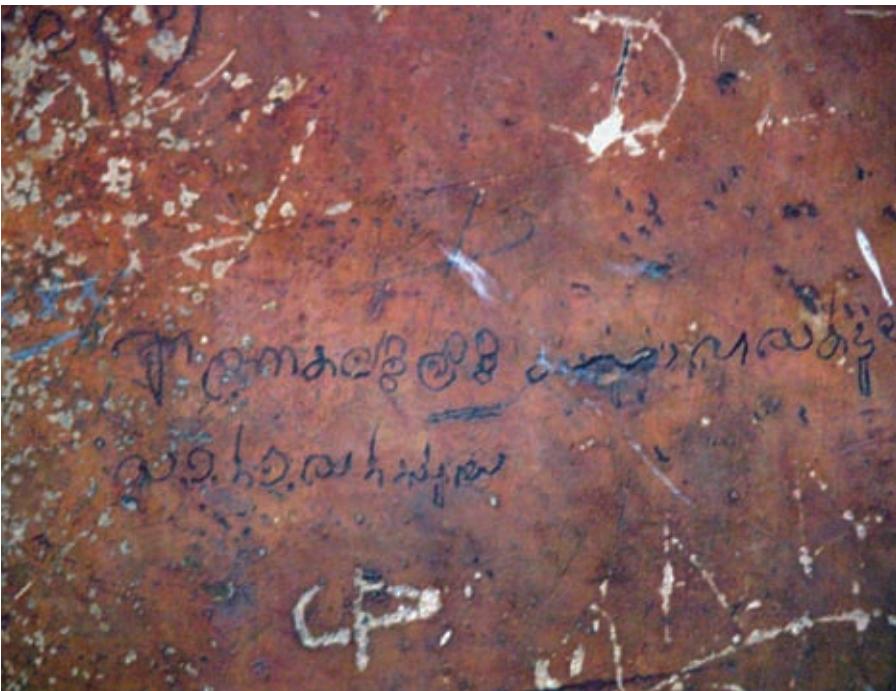


Fig 4.7 A graffiti written on the mirror wall in Sigiriya. The scripts in this belong to the 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D. It begins with two words 'Konanathalmi Leemi'. Its meaning is 'I am Konanathal. I wrote this.'



Fig. 4.8 Sigiri nymphs painted on the walls of Sigiriya Rock: These paintings depict the nature of art prevailed in the royal palace in the 5<sup>th</sup> century. Scholars say that these paintings represent Meghalatha, thunder clouds and Vijjulatha, lightning.

leader of Islamic religion, was alive, a group of people from Sarandib had arrived in Arab to get a clear idea of his doctrine. The Muslim commercial domination, started by the Abbasseede centred on Bhagdad, spread in Asia between 751 – 1258 A.D. The Arabic historian Al – Bhalasuri who lived in the 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D., has mentioned that the Sri Lankan rulers had taken proper measures to manage the international trade affairs well.

#### 4.3.3 Education

There was an organized method to acquire knowledge and publicize it in this country from ancient time. At the early stages knowledge was passed from generation to generation through exercise and listening to someone. When we study the similarities of the styles and finishing

of the clay pots containing burnt human remains and the clay tub burials built in several places since 4400 year ago, it is very obvious that the knowledge on the technology that was needed to make those things had been gathered in an organized manner.

As it was mentioned early in this lesson, the group which is named as ‘Achariya’ in the oldest inscriptions in our country is teachers. The things taught by those teachers were mentioned in the places where they had been introduced. They have been introduced as “Dhanu Achariya”, “Hathi Achariya”, and “Asa Achariya”. They were the teachers who taught archery, the art of controlling tuskers, and the art of controlling horses respectively.

After Buddhism was rooted in this country, Buddhist temples and monasteries became the

main educational centres. The scholarly monks who stayed in them were fully conversant not only with the languages such as Sinhala, Pali, Sanskrit, and Prakrit, but also with the Buddhist doctrine. From ancient time they were the teachers in this country.

There was a sense of respect regarding giving education and receiving education in our ancient society. The poem mentioned in the Lokopakaraya is a fine example for that. It is given below.

Ru Siri Yowun Guna – Nena Siyallen Noadu Vee muth

Nodathoth Silpa Satha – Suvanda Nethi Kele Mala Sama We

The poem says that though someone is young, wise and pleasant in appearance, he or she is similar to a wild flower without fragrance if he or she has no proper education.

#### 4.3.4 Literature and Appreciation

Works of literature belonging to the era of Rajarata Civilization are written in either one of the three languages, Pali, Sanskrit and Sinhala. Dipawamsa, Abhidhammappadeepika and Saratha deepani are examples for the books written in Pali. Books such as Janakiharanaya, Balawabodhaya and Anuruddhasathakaya are written in Sanskrit. Siyabaslakara, Sasadawatha and Muwadewdawatha are examples for the books written in Sinhala.

A poem written by such a poet 2000 years ago could be seen inscribed in a rock in Kirinda temple. It's a free verse which could be read to a rhythm. Both the poem and its translation are given below.

The poem inscribed in the stone.

Apirimithe Lokahi – Budha same nathi  
Athana parama dulabe – savanuthe pathe  
Anuthare sathe – Maha sarane  
Lokachaka Budha nama sayabu – Megalahi  
Vihare  
Naka Uvaraja nama – Budha sarana gathe  
Michaditika Bidiya – yahamaga parayana Bhuthe

Its translation:

This world is unlimited – no blessing equal to the Buddha  
He is everywhere – being equal to him is rare  
It's a great blessing – not second to anyone  
He is omniscient – is an eye to the globe

Give up being a heathen – select the best path  
In this temple – vice king Naga entered the Buddhist order.

Nearly 600 poems composed during the Anuradhapura period could be seen even today on the mirror wall in Sigiriya. The sense of inspiration of those poems is very high.

The poets of our country in the ancient time, who were disciplined with Buddhist teachings, composed poems based on the experience gained from working with the nature constantly. Hence, the theme of most of the poems was impermanence. Such an attractive poem has been written in an inscription, which belonged to the 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D, found in the premises of Abhayagiri temple. The techniques such as similes used in that poem create a very sensitive and subtle aesthetic sense in the reader. The poem says that life is like a 'Vara' flower caught in a wildfire.

You will be able to understand easily the nature of aesthetic thoughts of the ancient Sri Lankans by reading, understanding and appreciating the Sigiri graffiti given below.

Viju Rakbo Pavijjan Lee Me gee  
Nelen Vee Piripatha  
Nalala Kehe Pitih Huna

Maladama Gene Visira  
Biyapath Ve Apa Beyanda Negiye  
Translation:

The song is written  
By Vajra Aggabodhi monk  
When climbing this rock  
We were disturbed by the wind  
The tuff of hair on the forehead  
Fell on the nape due to the wind  
Flower garland worn on the neck was scattered  
It made us frightened.

As our ancestors were engaged in farming and animal husbandry from a long period of time they were able to live closely with the nature. Therefore, they had a simple but deep understanding about the beauty and the uncertainty of the nature. As those ideas were further developed by the teachings of Buddhism, a dispassionate taste was developed in the ancient society.

#### 4.3.5 Ethnic Co-existence

There are evidences to prove that there lived people, who belonged to different cultures in the cities of our country from the ancient time. The inscriptions point out that apart from the native Sinhala people, there were groups of people, belonging to other cultures and beliefs in other religions, who came here for trading , among the urban community. Among them there were traders who came from South India, the Ionians who came from the Greek and Macedonian regions, the Cambodians who came from the Afganistan region, and the Jawakans who came from the Malayan peninsula.

Though there was much diversity among the aforementioned nationals, they had never tried to fight with each other. An inscription found in Abhayagiri Vihara in Anuradhapura mentions about a Tamil monk. It was written around 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D. The ancient people of this country did not use to look at other nationals

with suspicion. Instead, they worked and lived with them amicably. An ancient inscription found in Ampara mentions about a Tamil man who was married to a Sinhalese woman. The archaeologists were able to discover a street in Anuradhapura where several Tamil families had lived.

The merchants, who migrated from various countries in the region around the Indian Ocean, lived in ancient cities in Sri Lanka. However, it seems that most of them had come from South India. There was a special post in the king's court named as 'Demala Adhikari' by the 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D. His task must have been to look into the matters regarding the welfare of the Tamil people who lived in and around Anuradhapura. A person named "Demel Adhikari Pandiradh" has been mentioned in an inscription of king Kashyapa IV which is in the National Museum of Colombo. Among this Tamil community, most of them were soldiers who served as the mercenary soldiers in the army in our country. The oldest kings who sought the assistance of the South Indian mercenary soldiers were king Ilanaga (33 -43 A.D) and King Abhayanaga (231 – 240 A.D.) They, who came from Kerala, were called 'Agampadi Senawa'. The Wamsakatha say that King Vijayabahu I had assigned the duty of providing defence to the Dalada Maligawa (Temple of Tooth) to Welayikkars force. The Welayikkars were the group of Agampadi who came here from Kerala.

In the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> centuries A.D. a group of merchants named 'Nanadesin' who were engaged in trade affairs in this country were a company who had a South Indian origin. A bronze cachet which belonged to them has been discovered in Hambanthota. An inscription, written during the reign of queen Lilawathi, found in Anuradhapura, mentions about a customs barrier which had belonged to the group of merchants called 'Nanadesin'. According to the historical records, these merchants had been engaged in their activities peacefully and the rulers too had

provided much assistance for their welfare and protection.

Our citizens used to work amicably not only with the Tamils, but also with the Arabs who were Muslims. The Sri Pada (Adam's Peak) mountain, which was consecrated with the touch of the foot of the Lord Buddha, is a sacred epitome of the Buddhists of this country. From the 9<sup>th</sup> century it was worshipped by the Muslims based on the belief that it is the Adam's Peak. It has been recorded that in 850 A.D. a merchant and a traveller called 'Sulaiman' had arrived to worship Sri Pada. None of them were disturbed by the government or the citizens. Therefore, Sri Pada is venerated by all four religions.

In the ancient time, the rulers and the citizens of this country often thought how they could work with all with co-existence for the betterment of the country. Every occasion when the protection of the stability of Buddhism and the unity of the country were not threatened, that co-existence was well preserved. We should always remember that the way the Sinhala Buddhist people, who lived in this country, acted to tolerate other nationals and religions is exemplary.

## Important Facts

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- ✓ The ruling affairs in ancient Sri Lanka were done by three institutions namely executive, legislature, and judiciary. The king and the public officers acted on behalf of the king belonged to the executive. The king's court made decisions through discussions.
- ✓ Our ancient rulers always followed a flexible foreign policy.
- ✓ There lived people who were engaged in different professions in our ancient society. All of them made a great contribution to the society to make it more efficient and make the people's lives easier through that.
- ✓ From ancient time agriculture and animal husbandry was the main livelihood of the majority of people in this country.
- ✓ Ancient Sri Lankans had a high level of aesthetic and literary appreciation. There are evidences to prove that their creative ability and talents were at a high level.
- ✓ Buddhism in this country in ancient time was a profound philosophy and also it included various activities which reflected people's faith and piety. There was a mutual, intimate and respectable relationship with the Buddhist monks and people.
- ✓ Apart from Buddhism, other religious thoughts too spread in the society in this country from time to time. Based on the facts such as Sri Lanka was an island and participated actively in the trade affairs in the Indian Ocean, other religious thoughts spread in this country.
- ✓ Living mutually with other ethnic groups belonging to other cultures was a special characteristic in the history of our country.

### Activity 1

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Write an article to a newspaper including the administrative organization of the ancient society of Sri Lanka, religion, and literature.

### Activity 2

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Make a booklet including questions and answers on the ancient society of Sri Lanka.

**Padhanaghara** – These were ancient buildings used by the Buddhist monks to be engaged in deep meditations. The Padhanaghara were built by connecting two buildings, with a moat around it, with a small bridge. The Perimiyamkulam inscription, made by king Vasabha, mentions a Padhanaghara named Sudassana. Such Padhanaghara can be seen in places like Ritigala, Manakanda, and Anuradhapura. The word “Dvithwa Vedika Godanegily (Bi-platform buildings)” is also used to name ‘Padhanaghara’.

**Poogaya** – The meaning of the Sanskrit word ‘Pooga’ is a council or a panel consisting of some people. The word ‘Pooga’ has been written in ancient inscriptions to introduce ‘the council of the merchants’. The word ‘Niyamasthana (Niyamathana)’ too has been used in the inscriptions with the same meaning.

**Cufic Arab Letters** – The word ‘Cufic’ means the original form of various Arab scripts. That script style got developed centering the Kuffa city in Iraq in the seventh century A.D. Cufic letters were used to copy the sacred Quran which is the religious text of the Muslim devotees. Several tombstones written with these scripts have been discovered in Sri Lanka too.

# 5 The Ancient Science and Technology in Sri Lanka

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## Introduction

Science is understanding and interpreting the elements that affect the function of the nature. It is a process based on experience. Though it was not discussed in the sense of science, many ancient societies had realized the fundamentals of nature and used them in their day-to-day activities. Even in the historical society of Sri Lanka, scientific ideas were in use. In this lesson, we expect to explain the nature of such ideas and the way that they were used practically and to emphasize the scientific nature of our historical heritage through them.

### 5.1 Early Stages of Scientific Ideas

By identifying what Sri Lankans did from ancient time, we can realize the nature of the vision, which was the background of those work. When some of such activities are examined carefully, it is clear that some of such things had been done thinking scientifically. When working with nature, being knowledgeable on its fundamentals, is necessary. The success of the activities from making a tomb to constructing huge irrigation systems depends on understanding fundamentals of the nature correctly, which is needed to keep them for a longtime. In this chapter we will discuss the scientific ideas that existed in Sri Lanka and the nature of the technical approaches which were followed to put those scientific ideas into practice.

We have seen that when something is thrown

up, it falls down. It is a characteristic of the nature. There is a fundamental which affects that characteristic. Scientists introduce it as gravitation. Scientists have proved through experiments that everything is attracted in a certain space limit on earth. If someone wants to find its truth, he or she can experiment and substantiate it. That is the nature of science. The normal order, which is followed in doing something scientifically, is understanding the fundamentals in nature correctly and substantiating them by examining. After examining, what needs to work practically, using the fundamentals of the nature, is technology. It is a fundamental in physics that the different types of energies in nature cannot be destroyed, but they can be transformed to other energies. Accordingly, transforming electric power into kinetic power and making an electric fan is a technical substitute.

Some of the instances, which reflect how the ancient Sri Lankans had acted to apply the fundamentals of nature after having understood them, belonged to the prehistoric era. 28000 years ago symmetrical stone tools were made up of alabaster named 'ground-glass'. Those symmetrical stone tools reflect the then prevailed organized technology to shape up those hard stone. This technology with which tools are made after removing stone splinters by using much power is called pressure slating.

The early stages of applied science were reflected in the prehistoric age and it became matured in the proto-historic age that came next. Given below are some instances which describe the nature of the scientific ideas that prevailed during that age.

## **Clay Tub Burials**

Clay Tub burials were made to cremate the dead people. They were made up in the shape of a huge basin or a boat using raw clay. After selecting the appropriate clay type, the walls of the tomb were built with a minimum height and a suitable thickness. They had thought of keeping the balance of the walls of the tomb by building them perpendicular to the ground. Not only in the tomb, but also the walls of the house, found in Udaranchamadama, have been built perpendicularly.

It's a fundamental of physics that when any object is perpendicular to earth in that manner, the pressure of those objects created on earth is neutralized. Those who built them had thought to minimize the harm to the walls by building them so. You may have seen that even today the masons use a plummet in building walls.

Though the burials, made up of raw clay, were not dried and burnt, when the skeleton was cremated, it had burnt well.

When the skeletons in a tomb, which belonged to 1350 B.C, were cremated, a clay tube had been fixed in order to get air inside it. It was in a recent time about the 18<sup>th</sup> century that the modern science propositioned that oxygen is essential for the process of burning. But the people of this country had understood that fundamental three thousand and two hundred fifty years ago. (More information on this regard has been explained in the lesson 'Settlements'.)

## **The Technology of Building Houses**

Though the archaeologists assume that the prehistoric people who lived in clear areas such as Bellanbendipelassa had lived in a kind of huts, no evidence has been discovered regarding that. It is found that the prehistoric man had shown his ability in arranging the place, where he wanted

to live, appropriately. This is displayed by parts of a stone parapet discovered in the excavation of Kithulgala Belilena. The archaeologists assume that it must have been used to hold a cover made of leaves of trees.

Clear evidences of building houses in Sri Lanka could be found in the proto-historic era. Archaeologists managed to discover ruins of such a house built in 1129 B.C. That house is in the village called Udaranchamadama in Rathnapura district. Its floor has been made up of reinforcing it by strewing strong pieces of stone and applying clay on it. Its wall had been made of clay and wattle. This was revealed by discovering some burnt pieces of the wall. There was a wall in the middle of the house to separate it as the front part and the rear part of the house. The holes of its wooden doorframe were found in excavations. For building a house with a roof on a foundation in this way needs technological knowledge.

## **Making Earthenware (Clay pots)**

Our country practised the technology of making earthenware (pottery) from ancient time. Clear evidence in this regard can be seen in the proto-historic era. During those days a simple machine called 'Sakaporuwa' (potter's wheel) was used to make clay pots. 'Sakaporuwa' (potter's wheel) is a round board which can be rotated. If the earthenware needs to be made with a good finishing, the clay should be seasoned and prepared well. It needs a good knowledge of several steps such as finding the suitable type of clay, seasoning them, making a stove to burn them and burning the raw earthenware at an appropriate temperature. Some clay pots, which belonged to the proto-historic era, had been found. Their interior is in black colour and the exterior is in red colour. The term 'Kaalaraktha Varna Meti Bandun' (black-red colour clay pots) is used to name them. Before the clay pot is burnt, it is filled with chaff and kept upside down in the stove. Afterwards, when it is burnt in the stove,

it gets red colour outside and black inside. Inside of it turns dark because it does not get enough oxygen to be burnt since it is filled with chaff. This technology of burning clay pots disappeared after 300 B.C. In addition, there was the technology of polishing and colouring the outside of the clay pot after it was burnt. The best example for this is the coloured clay pot discovered in the ancient house in Udaranchamadama. It had a white background with lines painted in orange colour. The natural red colour brown stones had been used to colour them. Before this clay pot was made, clay was dissolved in water and kept until the tiny particles were deposited. Next, very clean clay particles, as alluvial was used to make this clay pot. This method is very similar to the one used at present day to make porcelain ware. Since our people used earthenware abundantly in ancient time, the technology, which was needed to make them in a standard way, advanced from the proto-historic era.

### Activity 1

Prepare an article for a newspaper on the title scientific knowledge and the technical skills of our ancestors referring to the lesson "the early stages of Applied Science."

## 5.2 The Maturity of Scientific Usage

### 5.2.1 Water Management

Since the oldest settlements in our country had distributed in the dry zone, the major challenge that those people had to face was collecting sufficient water for agricultural activities and their day-to-day needs. The need of constructing tanks, ponds and canals arose on this ground. The term 'water management' is the most suitable one to name any strategy used to gather water. We can understand the nature of the marvellous knowledge of our scientists and engineers who lived in the ancient time by looking at activities that they have done for water management.

*Constructing large tanks* – One of the great

activities in our historical age was making large tanks. These large tanks were built based on multiple-facts such as making agricultural activities successful, controlling floods, and meeting the needs of the urban people. Constructing large scale tanks is a technical attempt with a very complex scientific knowledge. Some names of the large scale tanks constructed during the Anuradhapura era have been given below. After understanding their magnitude, you will easily realize the fact that how much of scientific knowledge is needed to construct and maintain such tanks after they are filled with water.

<i>Kawdulla Tank</i>	(2537 hectares)
<i>Minneriya Tank</i>	(2550 hectares)
<i>Hurulu Wewa</i>	(2125 hectares)
<i>Kala Wewa</i>	(2125 hectares)
<i>Padaviya Tank</i>	(2357 hectares)

Major factors that should be paid attention in constructing such large scale tanks are keeping the gathered water for a long time by controlling the pressure caused by its colossal capacity of gathered water and controlling the power caused by its extremely destructive pressure when the water is taken out for use.

*Tank bund* – It is essential to construct the tank bund strongly if it needs to hold a huge water capacity in it. When such a thing is practically done, what is important is taking steps needed to prevent the tank bund from sinking when it is constructed. What our ancient engineers had followed for this is that constructing the tank bund on a naturally established rock. After finding such a rock located between two natural hills, the tank bund was built connecting the hills from either side. As the tank bund is connected to two natural hills, it provided some assistance to the strength of the tank bund. The bund of the 'Yodha Wewa' is about seven miles in length



Fig. 5.1 In the place where foreign engineers recommended to construct the sluice gate of the present day Maduru Oya dam, a sluice gate which had been built hundreds years ago, was discovered. These are the ruins of that sluice gate.

and its height is 44 feet. You can understand how strong an artificially built soil bund should be, if it is to hold the pressure caused by its magnitude of water after the tank is filled.

The robustness is essential if the stability of the tank bund needs to be protected. To maintain this situation a systematic methodology has been applied when the tank bund was built. To understand this technology the archaeologists examined the tank bund of Sigiri Mahawewa tank by excavating it. What was seen here was that the tank bund had been constructed of several soil layers. It had been made of several thoroughly beaten layers such as, a layer of clay, soil, gravel and clay (Kirimet) layer, kept one on one. Even today you may have seen soil layers being beaten in constructing roads to prevent them from sinking. Though today we have machines to do those things, in ancient time animals may have been used to do so. The historical sources say that elephants were used to beat soil layers in constructing the foundation of the Ruwanweli Seya.

**Ralapanawa** – When a tank is filled with water, waves occur on its surface. It happens so because of the wind and motion of the water. The structure that is built to prevent the harm of eroding the

tank bund due to the power caused by water waves is known as Ralapanawa. The Ralapanawa is made by keeping stones on the interior slope of the tank bund. Realizing the power caused by water waves and using a method to prevent it was a result of the scientific thought of our ancestors.

**Sluice-** Releasing water from tanks in which magnitude of water contains, is a task that should be done carefully. In parallel to the distribution of water filled area in a tank, the height of its bund, which is holding water, also increases. Then, the height of the water level also increases. An extreme pressure is created due to the height of water. When releasing water out of such a place, one has to be highly careful because there is a possibility of turning it to be disastrous every time.

It seems that the engineers who lived in our country in the ancient time had thought of this well. The structure that they built to take water out of the large scale tanks is known as 'Sorowwa' (sluice). The sluice was built at a specific level on the tank bund using huge pieces of stones. In the Wessagiriya inscription made by king Mahinda IV, the two words 'Mohol Naga' could be seen. It says that 'having set the stick which controls the water in the sluice'. The sluice was built using

pieces of stones in a way in which it began from the area where water is filled in the tank bund and going under the tank bund or piercing it. A slab of stone, connected to the sluice vertically, was used to release water. Water was released by moving it. These slabs were known as 'Diyaketa Pahana'. In the Wessagiri inscription there is a reference as " Sathar Riyanak Diyat Hindavu Diya Keta Pahan". It means that a stone slab, which was connected to a sluice to control water, was of a four Riyans (a unit of measurement )in height.

**Bisokotuwa (sluice gate)** - Bisokotuwa (sluice gate) is also a one part of the sluice. It means the rectangular space made of stones, from which water flows out from the tank. When it is looked from above, it looks like a square. There are more than one sluice made in tanks with a high bund. Its purpose is to take water out with least pressure level after releasing water at different pressure levels. The mud sluice is at the bottom level of a tank bund. This structure called the mud sluice was used to remove alluvial collected after a rainy season.

To build a sluice and to utilize it, a scientific knowledge is essential. Specially, what related to it is the understanding of the behaviour of the water well. That characteristic is known as the 'clearness of water'. That is why it is important to learn about sluices under the title of 'the ancient science of our country'.

**Canals** - Making anicuts across rivers, gathering water and taking the gathered water to tanks was a technicality, related to water management, which prevailed in our country from ancient time. There is a reference about an officer named 'Adika' in an inscription which belongs to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C. He was a one who engaged himself in constructing canals.

Constructing Elahera Ela barricading the Amban River, which was a tributary of the Mahaweli River, was a huge canal built in ancient time.

Water was carried through this to the tanks such as Minneriya, Giritale, Kawudulla and Kantale. There was another canal built barricading the Mahaveli River in Minipe area to carry water up to Polonnaruwa.

Another section related to the water management in our country in ancient time was the ponds dug and made for the use of monks who stayed in temples and monasteries. Kuttam Pokuna, Kumara Pokuna, Eth Pokuna and Nelum Pokuna were examples for this.

There used to be a technology in our country from ancient time to keep the standard and coolness of water in personal using. Specially, there is brackish water in the dry zones such as Anuradhapura. Therefore, it is natural for someone to invent techniques to protect the due standard of water. A major procedure is that they followed a systematic method in digging wells for drinking water. Large sized clay pots were put into the well and covered the walls of the well with them. These wells are known as 'Uraketa Lin'. Such 'Uraketa Lin' (wells) have been discovered in several places in the dry zone.

**Water Fountains in Sigiriya** -The fountains which can be seen in the Western park of Sigiriya are one of the greatest creations. Four fountains have been created on either side of the entrance-avenues that stretch across the Western water park, towards the Sigiriya rock. The reason for creating four fountains was the need of making a certain change in the water- stream level which goes up out of them. The method in which these fountains have been made is simple as well as efficient. The basic theory followed there is lifting water abruptly, which pours down from an approximate height of 600 feet through a system of gutters to the flat land, by using pressure. By fixing a splinter of stone with round shaped holes in the place where the pressure is created, the water is thrown up in a beautiful way. The method that has been used to change the height of the water stream due to the

water pressure generated naturally is to change the diameter of the holes in the stone splinter, which has been fixed to the place where pressure is created. The water stream goes up more due to the high pressure created by the hole with a small diameter and the water stream goes up only a little as comparatively a lesser pressure is given by the hole with a bigger diameter. The system of gutters in the Sigiriya water park have been made spirally in a way which makes water flow for a long distance in a low slope by allowing the alluvial, which mixes with water when water flows down from the top of the Sigiriya rock, to sink down with the help of natural gravitation power. Stone splinters have been kept in several places in the gutters to remove the alluvial which gathers in the rainy season. When heavy rains fall in Sigiriya, one can see water fountains work automatically even today.

### 5.2.2 Architecture

Many details of the ancient architecture are found when the ruins in Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa kingdoms are examined. That displays to us how different artisans in the ancient time had made great architectural creations. You will study some of the best architectural creations here.

**Architecture** – Many architectural creations such as Buddhist constructions, Stupas, Bodhigharas, Pilimageval, shrines, monasteries, alms halls, meditating cells, palaces, fortresses, and hospitals found from Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa eras could be seen.

Those evidences show us that there were buildings from the ancient time in this country. Very advanced scientific knowledge and a training on technology would need to put that scientific knowledge into practice in constructing the buildings found in Anuradhapura such as Jethvanaramaya, Abhayagiriya, Ruwanweli Seya, and several storeyed Lovamahapaya. For example

Ruwanweli Seya and the other Stupas, built in Anuradhapura in the North Central dry zone in Sri Lanka which gets heavy monsoon rains, may be vulnerable to lightning strikes at any time. But, there are neither historical nor archaeological evidences to prove that they were struck by lightning. The reason for this is that the ancient engineers had acted to provide the scientific application to those buildings to protect them from such accidents. It is taught in physics that lightning occurs when static electricity passes between clouds containing two contradictory electric charges. Such extremely powerful current comes to the earth through a tall object with electric conduction. When the electricity passes in that manner, the object is destroyed by burning. You will learn more details of this process in your science lesson.

At present even some houses have lightning conductor to get protection from lightning. When Ruwanweli Seya was built, the engineers, who built it, did not forget to fix a lightning conductor. In historical sources that tool is introduced in the name of 'Vajra chumbata'. 'Vajra' is the lightning which is an electric current generated naturally. The word 'Chumbata' has derived from the word 'chumbaka' (magnetic). Its meaning is 'Kandama'. In Sinhalese language 'Kandama' means 'attract' or 'cling'. Therefore, using the word 'Vajra chumbata' to name the structure made at the top of Ruwanweli Seya to attract lightning is appropriate. The electricity created by lightning is known as 'static electricity'. It is taught in physics.

### The Foundation of Ruwanweli Seya

Ruwanweli Seya was constructed by king Dutugemunu. It was the biggest Stupa constructed by that time. An adequately long description on an ancient construction has only been written about Ruwanweli Seya. Specially, a vivid and a descriptive explanation has been given in the historical sources about how the foundation of this great Stupa was made. According to it, first



Fig. 5.2. There was a road system stretching from Anuradhapura at that time. The road engineers of that time built bridges out of granites to cross the Malvathu Oya flowing across Anuradhapura. It clearly shows that they had known the basic scientific theory of constructing bridges. These are the present ruins of a stone bridge built so.

the earth of the place, where the Stupa was due to be built, had been dug in seven Riyanas (cubits) deep. Secondly, using strong men lime stones were brought, put them into the pit, broken them into pieces, poured water and trampled them well using tuskers wearing shoes made of animal skin. Thirdly, a type of clay named Wendaru was laid among those stones to reinforce them. Fourthly, another layer of stones and a layer of gravel were laid on it respectively. A layer of crystal was laid on the gravel layer. A type of clay named 'Navaneetha' was smeared on that stone layer. Next, an iron net smeared with wood apple gum dissolved with a chemical fluid was laid upon it. Finally, the stones named 'Ransiriya' soaked with sesame oil were laid upon it.

When we pay our attention to this description, we can understand that the foundation of Ruwanweli Seya has been made according to a similar method of the modern concrete

technology. Such kind of strong base has been laid because it is a must that the heaviness of the mammoth stupa made of bricks is sustained for a long time without any damage. This example clearly reflects the way that our engineers thought and acted in making a huge construction and the scientific thought relevant to it two thousand and two hundred years ago.

### Urban Park Designing

There was an advanced knowledge of constructing buildings and designing parks in our ancient society. The best example that can be given for this is the city plan of Sigiriya and its park complex. Sigiriya is a great city centre which was built in the 5<sup>th</sup> century A.D. It has been built centreing a huge rock which stands alone. The Sigiriya rock is 200 metres in height from its surrounding valley. The extent of the top of the rock, on which ruins of a palace



Fig. 5.3. The technology of melting iron has been mastered by the artisans of our country from ancient time. Archaeologists have discovered a number of furnaces which were used to melt iron. The figure on left shows such a ruined and old iron furnace, discovered in the Samanala Wewa area which belongs to the Sabaragamuwa province. It was operated with the help of natural wind power. The figure on the right shows such a new furnace made by the archaeologists (rights of the photograph belongs to Julian Julef).

could be seen, is approximately three hectares. The eastern and western royal accesses located focusing on the rock are of 40 hectares and 90 hectares respectively. The brick walls which have been constructed around the city complex for its security is approximately 10 kilometres. Apart from this, the entire length of the moats made around the Sigiriya rock is 8 kilometres. All of these things have been built according to a properly planned mathematical structure.

### Hygiene and Medicinal Method

Sri Lanka has a considerable history of medicine. Mahawamsa mentions the maternity houses (Sivikasala) which had been built in Anuradhapura during the ruling period of king Pandukabhaya. The Wamsakatha mention that king Dutugemunu had built eighteen hospitals. We earlier mentioned the details mentioned in the inscriptions about doctors who worked in those hospitals in this book.

Some ancient rulers of our country had mastered the medicine. Or else they extended their fullest support to widen the practice of medicine. In 1982 the archaeologists were able to find some significant evidences regarding this. They were found when the ancient land, called Alahana Pirivena situated in Polonnaruwa, with ruins,

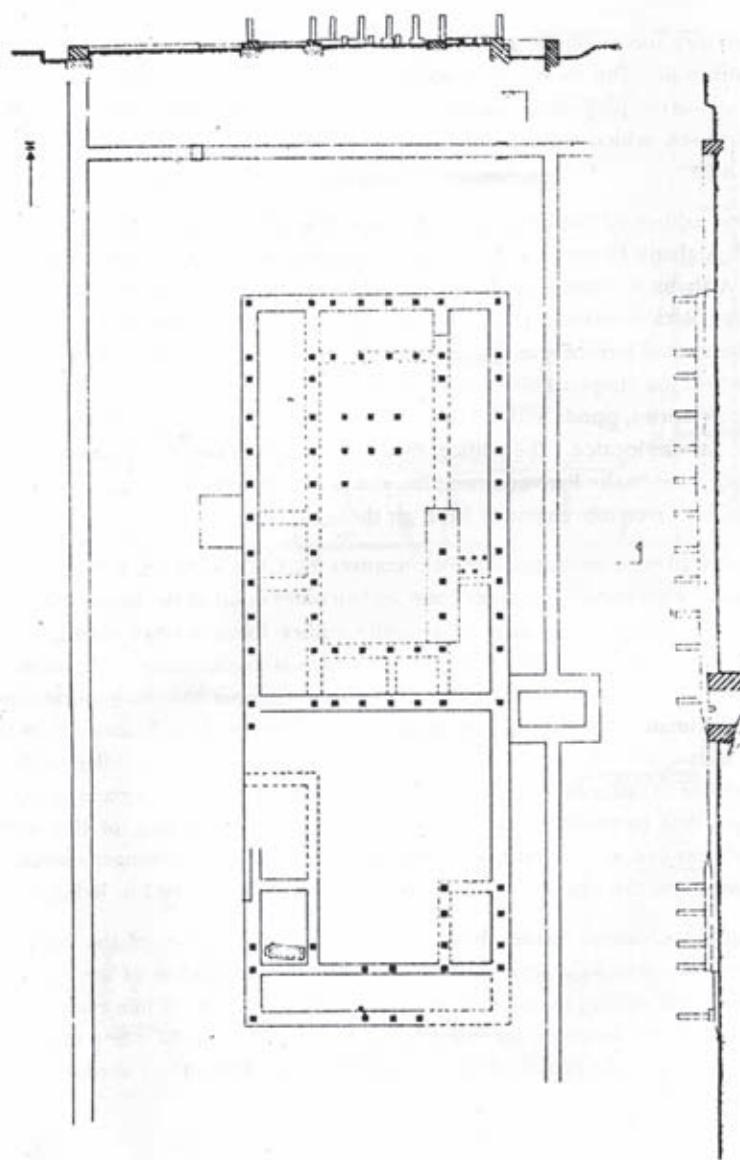
was excavated. In that place ruins of an ancient hospital emerged.

There was a hospital building of 147.5 feet in width and 109.2 feet in length. The instruments which were used for complex surgeries too were there among the things discovered from the place. Those relics show us that our ancient indigenous medicine was much advanced.

Apart from this, information has been discovered on medicinal texts, herbal boats, allocating lands for indigenous doctors, growing herbal gardens.

We can understand that ancient people had acquired a good understanding about waste management from the remaining ruins of lavatories.

The lavatory systems used in the palaces were prepared to send the waste to a very deep pit. It seems that they had acted to emit the waste in a manner in which no any harm was done to the environment. A gutter for unclean water too has been discovered from the ruins in Polonnaruwa. Special tubes were fixed in bathing ponds to pump the polluted water out. Mahawamsa mentions that there were seven lavatories built in comparison to the buildings at the Alahana monastery (Pirivena). Accordingly, it is clear that in designing ancient buildings, the hygiene of their users had been paid much attention to.



*Plan 5.1 The foundation plan of the Alahana Pirivena in Polonnaruwa. This hospital was used from the time of King Parakramabahu I.*

### The Ancient Iron Leaching Technology

From very ancient time our ancestors knew the iron leaching technology well. The archaeologists were able to discover a piece of iron- slag from a tomb dated in 2400 B.C. in Beragala in the Uva province. It is a piece of evidence which reflects that the iron was melted in those days.

There are two instances which assist us to understand the nature of iron leaching technology in Sri Lanka. The first one among them is the iron melting furnaces found in the

Samanala Wewa area in Balangoda in the Sabaragamuwa province. The second one is the ancient iron furnaces discovered in the Alakolawewa, Dehigaha Elakanda area close to Sigiriya which belongs to the Central province. The natural stones abundant with iron have to be heated much to leach iron from them. Iron melts at 1538 degree Celsius. There should be an efficient technology to get an excessive-temperature. Iron leaching in Samanala Wewa has been done in third century B.C. The natural wind power has been used to inflame the furnaces used for melting. The furnaces built in a mountain-face would flame for nearly about 12 hours without extinguishing with the help of the wind blowing between the hills. Even today during the monsoon time the wind, which blows across that area in the evening, continues until the dawn of next day. The natural stones with iron that were put into the furnaces after breaking them into pieces would be inflamed by placing cinders on them with the help of the natural wind power in the evening which would blow until the following dawn. By the following morning iron would be leached from the stones. The stones, which were used in Samanala Wewa to leach iron, are the types introduced in the

terms 'Limonite' and 'Hematite' in chemistry. To inflame those furnaces, they had used the cinders taken by burning the trees called 'Maran'. Even now these trees can be seen in this province. The term 'Yakada Maran' too is used to name these trees.

The wind power to inflame the furnaces in Dehigahaelakanda area has been provided with the help of bellows. From 180 B.C. to 200 A.D. iron leaching had been done there.



Fig. 5.4. A few pairs of metal scissors, found in excavations, among the ruins of the hospital buildings in Alahana Pirivena in Polonnaruwa. These were used for hospital surgeries.

**Minor Industries** – Apart from this, making various jewellery, clay industry, gem industry and forging industry were under minor industries. The golden jewellery found in the excavations in Jethawanaya can be taken as the best example for the technology of making various jewellery. It is a part of a pendant as small as a paddy seed. There had been 21 flowery carvings on it. It may be a challenge to the modern goldsmith. And also, the coloured roof tiles discovered in Abhayagiriya excavations reflect the advancement of the ancient clay industry in this country.

When we examined the instruments such as various types of arms and defense items found so far, it seems that there was a vast advancement in the forging industry.

### 5.2.3. Local Rituals

Though Buddhism was famous among people, at the time, they tended to do other practices (Yathukarma) too. Performing Poojas for various provincial gods was prominent among them. Apart from this, a simple practice called “Kempahan” was performed to solve day- to-day problems. What they do normally here is that performing a Pooja by lighting one votive lamp

or several lamps with a certain oil (Mee or Sesame). This method was followed by our ancient people to prevent the threat of insects to their crops or to cure some diseases infected to cattle.

In 2009 the archaeologists managed to find significant information about the Poojas performed for gods in the ancient time. They discovered some ruins of an ancient Devala in the excavations carried out in the area named Galpaya in Rathnapura district. Clay pots were kept upside down in a circle of about 6 feet diameter. There were marks of a fire of its inside space. There were a clay water pot and a jaw of an ox. The archaeologists were able to find holes of posts which belonged to a hut which had been built to cover everything. In later analysis, it was revealed that the place had been used to perform ‘Kirimadu Shantikarmaya’. It is performed for cattle’s protection. According to scientific dating, that Devala had belonged to third century A.D. Performing the ‘Kirimadu Shantikarmaya’ for the protection of cattle is done even today in the provinces of Uva and Sabaragamuwa.

### 5.2.4. Indigenous Knowledge

**Measure and Calculation** - There was knowledge, in our ancient society, relevant to the fundamentals that existed in the nature by understanding them from such an old time. One indicator which shows that there exists scientific knowledge in a certain society is that there is a methodology to measure the physical situations which belong to the nature. Our ancient measurements can be introduced as examples for them.

**Measuring the space** - Our ancient people needed to measure the space when they used land for farming. Therefore, suitable measurements for that were prepared with the help of farming.



*Illustration 5.1. A drawing made by an artist to show the way the ancient Devalaya, which was found in Galpaya, must have existed at its early stages.*

They used the measurements such as, Kiriya, Amuna, Karisaya, Pela. A field of one Karisa means a place where one Karisa of paddy can be sown. One Karisa is equal to four Amunas. One Amuna is equal to two acres field. Having a multiple link in measurements in this way is an advanced mathematical feature. The fact that should be taken into consideration here is that to measure the space the ancient people of this country had used units which are used to measure the volume. Look at the cycle given below.

<i>Laha 40</i>	=	<i>Pela 1</i>
<i>Pela 12</i>	=	<i>Kuruni 12</i>
<i>Kuruni 44</i>	=	<i>Amunu 1</i>
<i>Amunu 1</i>	=	<i>Karisa 0.25</i>

There is a description of a land which has a reference that one Karisa was offered to a Stupa built in that area, in an inscription, got written by king Bathikabhaya, found in a place called Dunumadalakanda in the Anuradhapura district. An inscription, which was established by King Kootatakannabhaya, found in the area named Horiwila in Anuradhapura, says that a plot of land of eight Karisa was offered to a temple named Tissa in that area.

There was a methodical system of measurements to measure the length in the ancient time. The smallest one of that was the atom. It was a small one. To measure short distances, there were measurements such as Angulaya and Viyatha. A



Fig. 5.5. The ruins of an ancient Devalaya, discovered in a place named Pallebadde Galpaya in Sabaragamuwa province. This was buried in four feet deep from the ground level. The place, has been identified as a place where 'Kirimadu Yagaya' was performed. This belonged to the second century A.D.

Viyatha consists of 9 inches. Small measurements were essential in constructing buildings and making statues. The measurements like Gawwa, Yoduna and Usaba were used to measure long distances. King Nissankamalla ordered to erect posts to mark every distance of Gawwa. It is very similar to present day Kilometer posts. Those stone posts were named as Gawuthakanu. Two of such Gawuthakanu posts have been discovered in areas named Katugahagalge and Weligaththa in the Southern province. It seems that this measuring system had been used commonly in ancient eastern countries. Try to understand its mathematics by reading the cycle given below.

<i>Paramanu</i> 36	=	<i>Anu</i> 1
<i>Anu</i> 36	=	<i>Thijjari</i> 1
<i>Thajjari</i> 36	=	<i>Ratharenu</i> 1
<i>Ratharenu</i> 36	=	<i>Likkha</i> 1
<i>Likkha</i> 7	=	<i>Ukha</i> 1
<i>Ukkha</i> 7	=	<i>Dhannamasa</i> 1
<i>Dhannamasa</i> 7	=	<i>Angula</i>
<i>Angula</i> 12	=	<i>Viyath</i> 1

## Measuring the weight

There were methodical units to measure the weight too. Specially, in trade affairs measuring the weight of some commodities was needed. According to the pillar inscription of Soraborawewa, it was prohibited to use weights, scales and measuring units which were not approved by the government. Try to understand the nature of the measuring system used in the ancient time by reading the cycle given below.

<i>Veeha</i> 4	=	<i>Gunja</i> 1
<i>Gunja</i> 2	=	<i>Masaka</i> 1
<i>Masaka</i> 2.5	=	<i>Aka</i> 1
<i>Aka</i> 8	=	<i>Dharana</i> 1
<i>Dharana</i> 5	=	<i>Swarna</i> 1
<i>Swarna</i> 2	=	<i>Pala</i> 1

We are well aware of the fact that we need digits to mark the measurements. Present day we use digits introduced by the Arabs.

Therefore, they are called Arab numbers. But there was an old digit system in our country. The numbers ranged from one to ten can be seen in ancient inscriptions. The way they were written has been given in the chart 5.1.

## Measuring Time

Measuring time is very important for a society based on agriculture. Sowing seeds and reaping the harvest should be done according to the correct time. The sources provide us sufficient evidence to understand the methods used to measure time by our ancient people. The term 'Varshaya' was used to measure a long time period. It was based on a method of months according to the lunar cycle. Thirty days time, fifteen days from new-moon day to the full-moon day and another fifteen days from the full-moon day to new-moon day, was considered a month. These

			40	၄	
2	=		50	၂	၂
3	☰		60	၃	
4	၄		70	၄	၄
5	၅		100	၁	၁
6	၆		200	၂	
7	၇		300	၃	
8	၈		400	၄	၄
9	၉		400c	၃၄	
10	၁၀		14	၁၄	၁၄
			24	၂	၂
			510	၅၁၀	

Chart 5.1 Several numerical figures that could be seen in ancient inscriptions in Sri Lanka.

two parts were introduced as 'Purapakshaya' and 'Awapakshaya' respectively. The terms Duruthu, Navam, Medin, were used to name the months of thirty days time.

The eastern term 'Vasa' or 'Havajara' has been used to name a time period of twelve months in the inscriptions. The term 'Vasa' from the Sanskrit word 'Varsha' and the term 'Havajara' from the Sanskrit word 'Sanvasthara' were derived. The present term 'Avurudu' has derived from the ancient term 'Havajara' (Havajara > Havurudu > Avurudu). The term 'Thithiya' was used to mean a day. The word 'Thatha' has been mentioned in an inscription, established

by king Abhaya, found in the place called Rajagala in present day Batticaloa district. It means 'Thithiya'. A day is made of Muhurthas (moments). The term 'Mohotha (moment)' has derived from the term 'Muhurtha'.

Scientific thoughts are needed in using measurements and numbers. We can understand that our ancestors had thought scientifically to understand the complex elements in the world. Several scientific experiences of Sri Lankans, who lived in the ancient time, have been explained in this lesson by means of such mathematical concepts.

#### Dedigama Elephant Lamp (Eth Pahana)

The place Punkagama, where king Parakramabahu I (1153 -1186 A.D) was born, is presently known as Dedigama. It is in Kegalle district. A stupa has been built in memory of his birth. It is known as Dedigama Suthighara Stupa. In 1951 this Stupa was excavated by the archaeologists. They were able to find a bronze lamp from the Stupa. This lamp consists of two human figures sitting on a tusker. The tusker is holding a sugar cane in its trunk. The special feature

of this lamp is that it has been made to pour the oil into the abdomen of the tusker. It is the storehouse of oil. The oil trickles to the lamp through the genital organ of the tusker. When the oil level of the lamp dwindles by burning, spontaneously the oil stored inside the abdomen of the tusker trickles to the lamp. A scientific theory has been followed here. It belongs to the non-motile hydrology. Here, the oil regulation occurs automatically. Dedigama Suthighara bronze elephant oil lamp is an obvious example to substantiate the knowledge that the ancient Sri Lankan engineers had on fundamentals of complex physics.



*Fig. 5.6 This elephant lamp made of bronze was discovered from Kotawehera, Deldigama in Kegalle District. The oil in the lamp is filled into the stomach of the elephant image. When the oil level decreases, the principle of static hydrology has been used to refill oil. This shows the knowledge possessed by ancient craftsmen about the principles related to Physics.*

### Important Facts

- ✓ The two terms ‘science’ and ‘technology’ mean realizing the fundamentals prevailing in nature and creating strategies to act accordingly.
- ✓ Our ancient people had invented the measurements for measuring space, time and mass.
- ✓ Our ancestors acted to make their activities easy by applying the scientific fundamentals practically.
- ✓ The science invented by the Easterners is as important as the science got developed in Western countries. For example, the ancient scientific ideas which prevailed in China influenced the entire world. The sluice gate technology in Sri Lanka spread in the South Asia.

✓ The rituals and customs prevailing among our villagers were invented by themselves to solve their problems. It is another system of knowledge.

### **Activity 2**

1. Write an essay on the scientific knowledge and technical skills of our ancestors.
2. Explain the instances which reflect the local identity through science and technology used in the proto-historic era.

**Sigiriya Water Park** – The ruins in the Western part of the Sigiriya rock reflect its water park. This park has been built according to a symmetrical plan. The things which can be seen on one side can be seen on the other side as well in the park. The part in its western end has been introduced in the name of ‘Kshudra Jala Udyanaya’, which means ‘minor water park’. The reason why the entire Western part of Sigiriya Park is named as Water Park is that the things such as ponds, water ditches, and beautiful water fountains had been built there.

**Kirimadu Yagaya** – This is a performance of ‘Shantikarma’ done wishing for the security of cattle and success of agricultural activities commonly. It is done primarily on an indigenous god named ‘Mangara’. This is a practice common to Sabargamuwa province.

**Diyaketa Pahana** – It was a stone post connected to the sluice of ancient tanks. Water is released out by moving this stone post. The inscriptions mention that several such stone posts were connected to the sluices in some large scale tanks.

# 6

# Historical Knowledge and Its Practical Application

## Introduction

Any society exists in a balanced manner based on knowledge. This knowledge is formed related to the culture that is created when he or she lives according to the natural environment which belongs to that society. Therefore, in world spread societies, knowledge systems, which are different from each other, could be seen. All these knowledge systems corroborate with the sustainable existence and the production efficiency of the society to which it belongs. There may be diverse aspects to the structure about the knowledge which is made up by a society. The criteria which are necessary to organize one's society, beliefs and criteria for practical steps which are necessary to formalize economic exchanges are some of them. Such knowledge structures produced by a historical society give experiences even to a present day society. That is known as the cultural heritage. This lesson has been compiled with a view of forming the basic foundation to create a citizen who has a historical consciousness by generating sensitivity in the student about six selected concepts that belong to the historical cultural heritage in Sri Lanka. These concepts comprise of the ancient social organization in Sri Lanka, law and tradition, finance and exchange, protecting the environment, representation of women, and local food.

sustainability of a particular society. It is a sociological concept. Anything becomes successful when it is organized. Society is no exception. When the social organization is unstable, its law, ethics and values get destroyed. As a result, that society becomes disharmonious.

In the historical era, the intelligent and efficient rulers who ruled our country, constantly dedicated themselves to well organize the society of our country. Having an order in personal relationships is one of the major characteristics in a social organization. It is called hierarchy. There is a social hierarchy in a society. If it is a hierarchy in which the power goes down from up, it is called a vertical hierarchy. The order such as king, ministers, government officers, arranged in top down order is a good example for that.

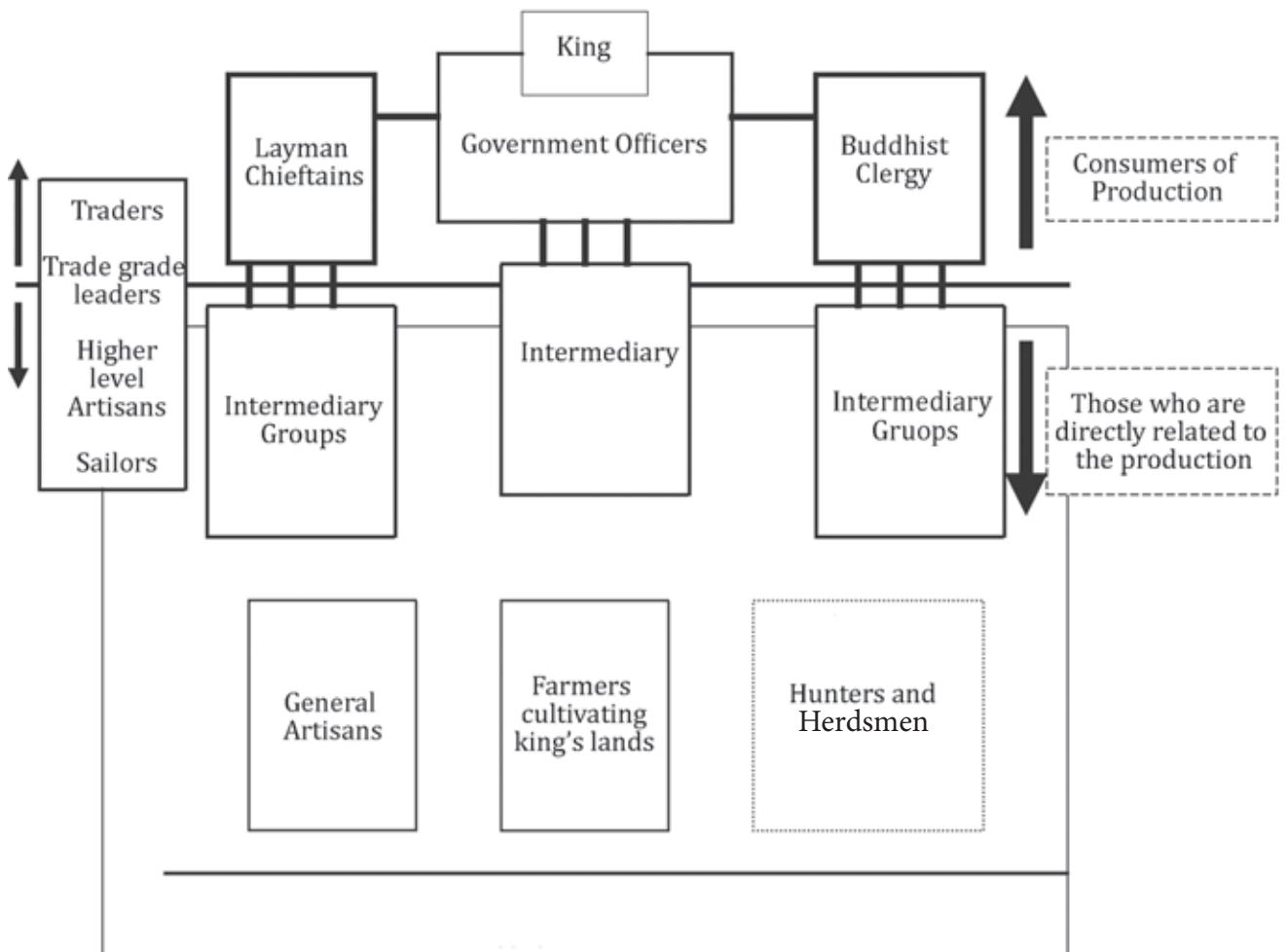
There are also structures with similar power in the society. In various institutions, the officers are equal. Such a structure is called a horizontal hierarchy. Ministers, army generals, treasurers are similar in power. Study chart 6.1 to understand the social organization which existed in ancient Sri Lanka.

The king is at the top of this social hierarchy. It was accepted that the king should be highly virtuous and an heir to the throne from the lineage. Therefore, the king was noble. We have described in the third chapter that the word 'Nara Isera' had been inscribed in an inscription, which belonged to king Kootakkannatissa, in the Dambulla temple to show that the king was an "Eshwara" to the countrymen.

Those who worked close to the king were royal officers. The term "Radkol Samdaru" had been used to name such officers. Its meaning is "Raja

## 6.1 Social Organization in the Historical Era

Social organization means the nature of the relationships between the people and groups of that society which helps to maintain the



*Chart 6.1. A chart which shows the social organization that existed in ancient Sri Lanka. (The extract is from an essay of professor Senaka Bandaranayake, published in 2013)*

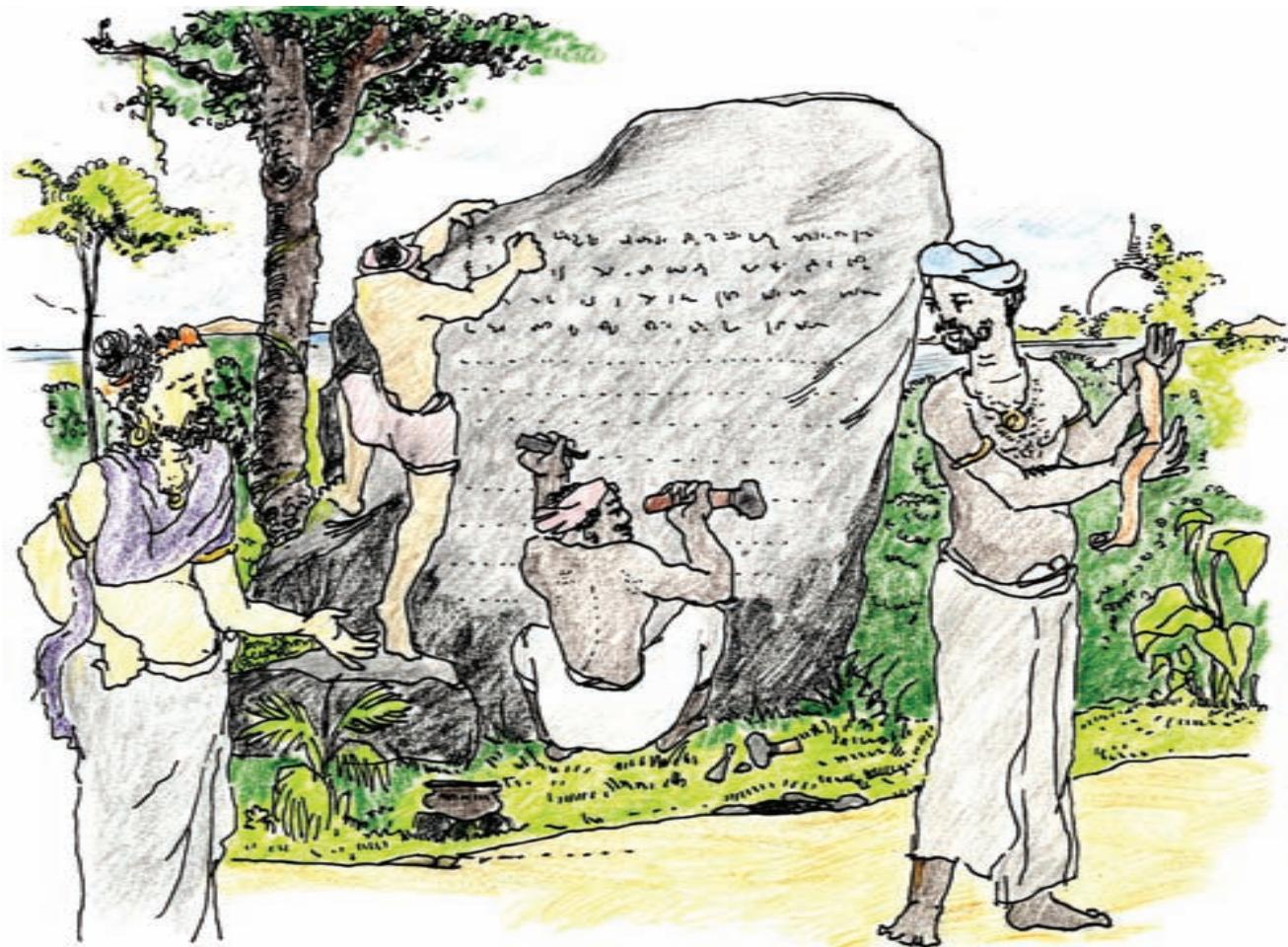
Kula Swami Daru". The term "Radala" had been derived from this word by the Kandyan kingdom. (RajaKula > Radkol > Radol >Radala).

The Buddhist clergy was at a top position in the social organization, as they advised the government. Sometimes they participated in the affairs of country ruling. The kings acted to hand over the authority to the Buddhist temples to collect taxes from the tanks in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries A.D.

The rich merchants, naval captains, doctors, and teachers were considered to be the chieftains of the society from ancient time. None of them participated in animal husbandry or farming.

The people of the country were below these chieftains. The inscriptions call them as "Kudeen". There were farmers, shepherds, potters, gem cutters, blacksmiths, fishermen and people engaged in other work were among them. The whole society depended on the food produced by the farmers.

The relationship between the general public in the country and the chieftains in top positions existed through mediators such as traders and government officers. The inscriptions mention about the government officers who travelled in the villages from time to time. On these journeys, the villagers had informed their problems to those officers who later informed those problems



*Illustration 6.1 Sri Lankan kings got the things such as money given to the temples and information relevant to the law written on rocks. It meant the long lasting feature of those writing.*

to the government officers of higher ranks and they informed them to the king.

Slaves were at the lowest level of the society. Their duty was to be engaged in various activities. They did not have the freedom, which was enjoyed by the others in the society. There were two types of slaves those days. One group of them were slaves from lineage. They were named as 'Anwayathadasa'. There were mercenary slaves too those days. The term 'Dhanankeethadasa' was used to name them.

The king did the things which were needed to maintain better relationships and protect the welfare of each group in this social organization. Our intelligent kings had known that a society could be protected from disruption by protecting the bonds between each and every institution.

At present the term social cohesion is used to describe this concept. Therefore, they always tried to rule the country righteously.

## 6.2 Law and Tradition

The common principles formed by a society are very important to run a society. Those common principles later become the law. The principles which are formed by a society are of two types. Some of them are systems of written laws. Other social acceptances are traditional.

The law and tradition control the anti-social behaviours of people for the benefit of the society. To protect the goodness of the society our intelligent rulers acted in accordance with law and tradition from ancient time.

Our kings acted with good understanding to make laws, implement those laws and to supervise those laws when they are used practically. In the 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D this country was ruled by a royal lineage which belonged to the dynasty called 'Manawamma'. The inscriptions inscribed by those kings, mention about law institutions of that time. In those inscriptions the two words 'Wadala' and 'Sabhawa' are found. In legal activities officers from Wadala and Sabhawa engaged in them. Here the word 'Wadala' means the 'legislature', which is the parliament. In ancient time it was the king's court.

In those inscriptions the word 'Sabhawa' means the 'judiciary'. The laws imposed in a country are implemented by the judiciary. Other inscriptions corroborate that there was a methodical judicial system in our country in the ancient time.

The laws are monitored among the people by the security officers. They implement the powers of the executive. The term 'Mekapper' has been used in the inscriptions of the 9<sup>th</sup> century to introduce such officers. It had derived from the Tamil word 'Mayikappar'. Its meaning is "security officer". The term 'Dandanayaka' too was used to name such officers. The Panakaduwa copper plate, which was made during the time of king Vijayabahu I, mentions that one 'Dandanayaka' named Sithnarubima Buddhanayake who had provided protection to king Vijayabahu I during the time when the king had adversities from enemies.

The evidence, which assists us to know about the nature of the laws that belonged to the most ancient history of our country, is rare. However, at least the ancient inscriptions help us to have a certain understanding of them. Among them the inscriptions of this country, which belonged to the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> centuries A.D., mention the laws regarding the irrigation, administration and charging taxes for using lands of the state. One sixth of the production had to be paid to the government as tax.

Main types of taxes charged under the tax law:

- Dakapathi (Sanskrit: Udkapraphi) – the tax paid for using tank water.
- Bojakapathi (Sanskrit: Bhojakapraphi) – the tax paid for cultivating the lands of the king.
- Mataramajibaka

(Sanskrit: Mathrikamathsyabaga) – the tax paid for catching fish in water courses.

At times the government charged commodities as taxes. An inscription, which belonged to the 9<sup>th</sup> century, mentions that one nut out of ten of the harvest should be paid to the government as tax.

Apart from agricultural activities, the tax law was relevant to several other sections. When the commodities were imported from foreign countries, custom fees were charged at the harbour. An inscription, which belonged to the 1<sup>st</sup> century A.D., found at an ancient Buddhist temple in Godawaya in the Hambanthota district, mentions that a custom fee charged by a fort which was situated close to the temple was offered to the temple.

There was a judicial system to administer punishments not only to those who violated the tax laws imposed in this manner but also to those who breached other laws imposed for securing the social justice. An inscription made by king Gajabahu I, in Situlpawwa, mentions about such a high court. The inscription describes that the fines charged by the Great Hall of Justice in the area (Mahavinichahi Labanaka Watithi) were offered to the monks in the Sithulpawwa temple by the king for their provisions.

Our intelligent kings constantly acted to protect the natural quality of the environment. Therefore, they were interested in imposing laws which were necessary to protect animals, vegetation, water and soil which belong to the natural environment.



*Fig 6.1 One of the oldest coins used in Sri Lanka. They were known as Hasebu coins. They were produced in India. Those coins were brought to this country by Indian merchants.*

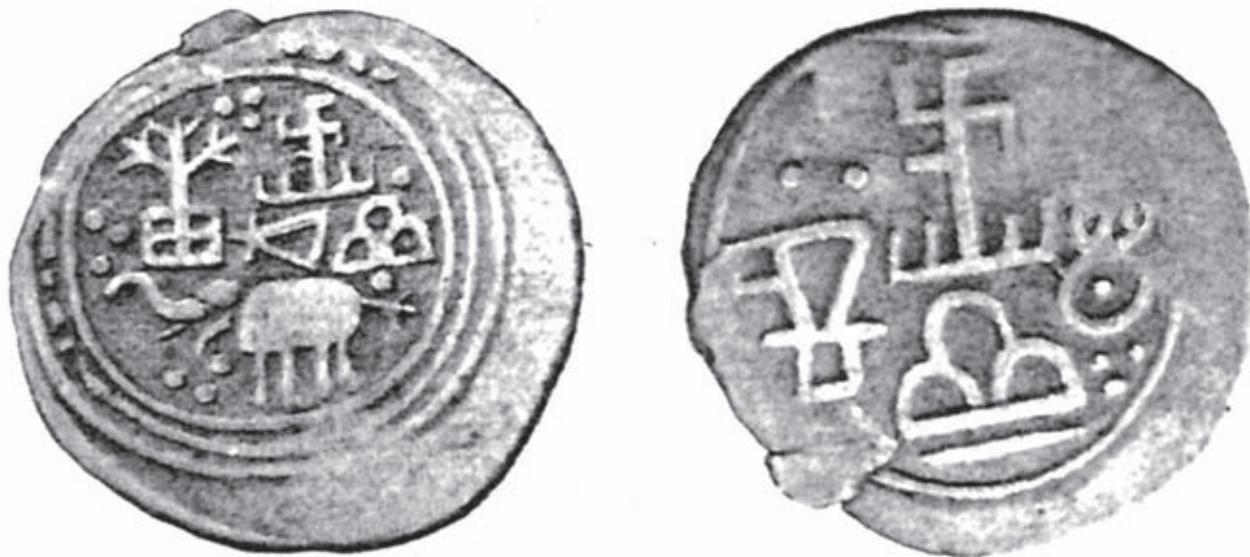
The Kondawattawan inscription, which belonged to the 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D., mentions a law of charging a fine of five Kalan from those who did not plough their lands at the proper time. This law was imposed because when a land is ploughed in the rainy season, soil erosion occurs.

The rulers had imposed various types of laws in order to protect the policies regarding maintaining agricultural activities properly. A law regarding this could be seen in an inscription in Wessagiriya. It says that the grains, except Sihineti paddy, green gram (Mun) should not be sown in the paddy fields. This inscription belonged to king Mahinda IV.

Trading was one of the important professions in the ancient society. Our intelligent kings took steps to impose the laws which were necessary to run the trade inside the country properly. The Badulla inscription is a source which helps

us to understand the nature of those laws that existed in the 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D. in this country. This is known as the Sorabora Wewa inscription. It was made by king Uday III (946 -954 A.D.). This inscription describes the laws which were imposed by the king preventing some frauds afoot in a government market situated in a place called Hopitigamuwa. The king stepped into the market while he was on his way to the Mahiyanganaya temple. Given below are some of the laws in the above mentioned inscription;

- Taxes should be charged from those who are engaged in business in the Hopitigama trade area; taxes should not be charged from the passers-by.
- Twice the amount of taxes should be charged from those who do their business without showing to the officers.
- The unstandardized Madatiya weighing units should not be used in scaling goods in business.



*Fig. 6.2. This is known as the Elephant and Swastika coin. This coin too was used in ancient Sri Lanka.*

- Aricanuts and betel should only be sold by keeping them in the huts made for them.
- An oil tax should be charged from those who were engaged in trading during poya days.

By examining the rules and regulations in the Sorabora Wewa inscription, we can understand the nature of the civil laws which were relevant to the internal trading of this country during the time in which the above mentioned inscription was made.

For the first time a law which said “no animal should be killed” was imposed by King Amandagamini Abhaya (19-29 A.D.). It was known as ‘Maghatha Law’. The Mihinthala inscription , made by King Mihindu IV (956 -972 A.D), mentions that a law was imposed to give the death sentence to those who kill buffalos, ox and cows, and goats. King Nissankamalla (1187- 1196 A.D) imposed a law stating that the birds living in reservoirs should not be killed.

Our kings were very strict regarding the criminal law. The Wewalkaetiya inscription, made by king Mihindu IV (956-972 A.D.), provides us with descriptions on this. It describes the punishments that should be given for the crimes such as stealing and murders. Death sentence by hanging is the punishment for murder. It further says that when cattle thieves are caught, the cattle should be given back to the owner and the seal on the skin of the cattle should be marked on the foreheads of the thieves with a heated iron. The responsibility of catching the hiding criminals were given to the villagers who lived in the same villages in which the criminals too lived. The villagers had to pay a tax to the government until they caught the hiding criminals. It was known as ‘Gruhadanda’.

Criminals were punished as an example to the people of the society to emphasize that they should not commit crimes. That was the foundation of our law. At present Roman –Dutch

law is practised in Sri Lanka. It was introduced to our country a long time later.

### 6.3 Finance and Exchange

Here, the exchange means the process of interchanging with an economic purpose. According to the information in the historical sources, the barter system was used in economic affairs in the most ancient era in this country. The archaeologists believe that the circular shells made of clay, discovered from archaeological excavations, may have been used for exchange in economic affairs.

The usage of coins in this country was started in about 250 B.C. Those are a type of silver coins brought to this country by the merchants from the North India. The archaeologists name them as 'Hasebu coins'.

Various symbols were engraved on these coins which were round, square and rectangular shapes. Those coins were brought to this country by the merchants who arrived here from India.

These 'Hasebu' coins have been named as 'Kahapana' in the ancient inscriptions and 'Kahawanu' in literature. This term derived from the word 'Karshapana' in the Sanskrit language.

There is evidence that an independent coin was produced in this country either in the last half of the first century of B.C or in the first half of the first century of A.D. The coin on which the figures of an elephant and a Swastika were engraved, which had been discovered from archaeological excavations, is an example for this. Afterwards, many kings had issued coins during their ruling periods. There was a separate officer performing the duty of moulding coins. He was named as 'Rupa Adyaksha (Picto-director). This name appears in the inscriptions, belonging to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C., as 'Rupadaka'. Above mentioned (Fig. 6.2) is a picture of a coin used in this country.

In the past, metal weight too was used as a value in exchange activities in this country. A piece of gold-metal was discovered in an excavation at the Abhayagiri temple in Anuradhapura. On



Fig.6.3. These colourful beads were found in ancient Magama city. These relics reflect that the women who lived in those days preferred to wear jewellery made up of such beads.

it the words ‘Ran Devisi Kalanday’ have been engraved. Those letters belonged either to the 8<sup>th</sup> or 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D. ‘Kalandā’ is a unit used to measure weight. An inscription, discovered in Wessagiriya, which belonged to the 10<sup>th</sup> century A.D., mentions that king Kashyapa IV (898 -914 A.D.) had offered 200 Ran Kalan (Golden Pieces of Kalan) to Buddhist monks who stayed in a temple called Veerankura.

Coin, of which the origin is related to foreign countries, are found in various places in Sri Lanka. Among them what most abundant are Roman coins. Foreign coins were used in this country, considering the value according to their metal weight. Most of the Roman coins discovered by now have been made of copper. In ancient time, customs were charged in the harbours in our country. When the foreigners bring their commodities to this country, they paid taxes in the money of their country. On those occasions, the metal weight of the coins was considered. Apart from the Roman coins, Chinese coins, Arabic coins and British coins were used in Sri Lanka. The coins that we have seen with the English letters V.O.C belonged to the Dutch trade company called East India Trade Company.

This clearly shows how in the ancient time Sri Lanka practically applied the usage which was essential in economic affairs to be successful.

#### 6.4 Representation of Women

In the ancient time the Sri Lankan society thought about women with respect and treated them with high regard. The facts regarding that can

be substantiated through literary sources as well as archaeological sources. Women were given the opportunity to rule the country. This reflects the respect and the trust that our ancient society had placed on women. An inscription, found near the old Stupa named Neelagiri situated at a place called Lahugala, mentions a great queen named Chula Seewali. Queen Leelawathi ruled the country three times.

When it is considered in common, the ancient women in this country were not oppressed with strict social bonds. There is no evidence in the literary sources which state that women had hindrances to do their activities freely. The Rasawahini, an old literary text, mentions a description of a woman who lived alone for three years until her husband returned from a foreign country where he did his trade affairs. Women were paid a special respect since the responsibility they held as mothers. The Rasawahini mentions, once, the Bhikkus said to Queen Vihara Maha Devi 'you possess wealth and a luxurious life because you had done meritorious deeds in your previous birth'. Vihara Maha Devi, in replying, said that there was no happiness or luxury in life without sons and daughters.

Being married was considered a social mission that should be fulfilled by women. A girl when reached sixteen years old was qualified to get married. The girls had to spend their time under protection of their parents until they were old enough to get married. The source named Sahassawathuppkaranaya mentions that it was the responsibility of the parents to make their daughters master cookery. Saddharmalankaraya describes that prince Saliya's wife,

Ashokamala won the hearts of everyone in the king's palace by making delicious food. Dampiyaatuwagatapadya says that the women who were clever at cookery were introduced by the special respected name as 'Madhupachika'. At times the name 'Madhurahaththarasa' too was used. Its meaning is 'having the ability of delicious cooking'.

Apart from the royal families, there was no impediment for women in the general society to possess leadership. In about the 2<sup>nd</sup> century B.C. there were leaders by the name of 'Parumaka' who were related to the provincial ruling of this country. An inscription, discovered at a place called Brahmanayagama in Anuradhapura district, mentions a woman called Parumakalu

Samana. It says that she is the wife of the Parumaka named Nadika. Here, the name Parumakalu is the feminine noun of the word Parumaka. That inscription is a good piece of evidence to prove that women had also participated in the then provincial ruling. The names of female devotees, who played a major role in offering caves to Buddhist monks, have been inscribed in those caves. A rock inscription, found at the place called Kokebe in Anuradhapura district, which had belonged to the 2<sup>nd</sup> century A.D, mentions a name of a woman as Thalatha Lakshmi. It further mentions that she offered a half of her family property to a Buddhist temple during the time of king Bhathiytissa. The women who lived then had the freedom to support religion by spending their wealth.

Archaeological evidence discovered in archaeological excavations are necessary to substantiate the ideas such as these found in literary sources about the women who lived in the ancient Sri Lanka. A metal stick, which was used by a woman to colour her eye lashes in the distant history of 1129 B.C, was discovered in an old house at a place named Udaranchamadama in Rathnapura district. Not only that there were a few red and yellow brown stones scrubbed on something strongly and a clay bead. These brown



*Fig 6.4. This drawing displays a group of people eating delicious food. This was drawn in the 19<sup>th</sup> century A.D. This can be seen in the Mulkirigala temple.*



Fig 6.6. Our ancestors paid great attention to the environment. They always attempted to protect the environment. This drawing displays the liveliness of the environment. This picture, which was drawn in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, is in the Kelani temple.

stones were used to colour their skin. It reveals that women, who lived three thousand years ago spent their time to increase their beauty. Many factors related to women's jewellery have been discovered in archaeological excavations. There is a grave, which belonged to the time period between 700 -450 B.C., in Ibbankatuwa close to Dambulla. An attractive necklace was discovered in excavating it. Some beads in that necklace have been imported from India.

The women, who lived in this country in ancient time, were respected as a sister and a mother by the society. There is no evidence to prove that she had lived a depressed life under one's oppression or suppression. Since the ancient time our society respected the freedom of women.

## 6.5 Local Food

From ancient time the people of this country consumed things which grew in the country. Evidence has been discovered on wild breadfruit and Atikesel which were consumed by the prehistoric people who lived in the Beligala cave 10500 years ago.

In the historical era paddy and Kurakkan were profusely used for food. Apart from these, Undu, green gram (Mun), sesame (Thala), marrow (Mae), Amu, Menari, Kongu, Waru, Yawa were also eaten. The historical books of Sri Lanka mention seven types of grain, which were used as food by ancient people. They are namely Sali, Veehi, Kedesha, Varaka, Kangu, Duma and Yawa.

The Thonigala inscription, made by king Keerthi Sri Meghavarnabhaya (301 -328 A.D.), mentions

Paddy, Undu, Mun (green gram) and Thala (sesame). Saddharmarathnawaliya mentions that the meat of peacock cooked in ghee and El rice (El Hal) was one of the most favourite foods among the chieftains in Sri Lanka in the 12<sup>th</sup> century A.D.

Pala Maluwa and Kadi Embula with Niwudu rice was a most frequent meal of poor people in that time. Kady Embula is made of stale rice powder. Ancient Sri Lankans had a habit of drinking various types of gruels (Kenda). The words 'Yagu' or 'Hambu' had been used in old books, instead of the word 'Kenda (gruel)'.

A food named 'Athsunu' made of fried grain powder had been mentioned in old books. 'Thala (sesame)' was eaten as a dessert. The Thonigala inscription mentions that one had offered 'Thala (sesame)' as a dessert to a Bhikku. Dampiyaatuwagatapadaya mentions a food named 'Thila Sangulika'. This may be 'Thala Gul' (sweet balls made of sesame mixed with treacle or sugar with pieces of juggery).

In addition to different types of grain, various kinds of yams had a significant place among food in the ancient time. Old books mention kinds of yams such as Wel Ala, Kukulala, Katu Ala, Kondola, Bathala (sweet potato). The word 'Sondala' can be seen in Saddharmalankaraya.

There were Wetakolu, Thampala, Weraniya Dalu, Kara Kola, Lunuwila Kola, Labu (pumpkin), Puhul (pumpkin), Karabatu, Kekiri (melon), Thibbatu, Nelambu Ala, Murunga (drumsticks), among the vegetables used then. There is a description in Saddharmarathnawaliya as "Labu, Puhul, Sondala, Wetakolu, aadi wu siyaluma liya

jathihu katu ethi rukaya”.

Apart from the three methods of cooking Bedum (frying), Mellum (cook in a half way, specially kinds of leaves cut into small pieces) and Hodda (gravy), vegetables were cooked in three ways. Those are Anama, Embula, and Niyambalawa. Curries, cooked without gravy and can be eaten taking by hand, is called Niyambalawa.

Various types of spices (Kulu Badu) were used to make curries tasty in Sri Lanka in ancient time. They were called ‘Katuka Bhanda’. Present day women use the word ‘Thuna Paha (curry powder)’ instead of ‘Kulu Badu (spices)’ commonly. That word means three special types and another five types. The first three types mentioned are Lunu (salt), Duru (dill) and Miris (chilly). The other five are Sudu Duru (dill), Kalu Duru (dill), Koththamalli (coriander), Aba (mustard) and Uluhal. In some areas Asamodagam (dill seeds) and Sathakuppa were used instead of Aba (mustard) and Uluhal. Apart from this, various types of sours were used to make food tasty. Dehi (lemon), Dodam (orange), Goraka, Nasnaran, Gadadehi were used. The word ‘Karambembiya’ in old books means ‘Karapincha (curry leaves).

The oils which were used to cook food were commonly named as ‘Kana thel’. Its meaning is ‘the oil for eating’. Among them Dunthel and Githel (ghee) were major ones. ‘Polthel (coconut oil)’ was used less.

Consuming milk was common even among villagers. The name ‘Kirigeri’ can be seen in the inscriptions of the 9<sup>th</sup> century used for the cows in villages. The word ‘Dee Kiri’ too has been used in the inscriptions. It is clear that it was a custom

of the people to eat curd. It is mentioned in Poojawaliya that a father says “Mage Duwaniyata Kiri Kannata Sarak Banakuth Dunamana Wedayi – (Shouldn’t I give a couple of cattle for my daughter to eat curd?)” at the moment when his daughter was about to leave her house on her marriage day.

Having various types of Kenda (gruel) was a custom of our country from very ancient time. It is an easily digestible food. Instead of the word ‘Kenda (gruel)’ the three words ‘Ambu’, ‘Hambu’ and ‘Kaadi’ have been used in our old books. When rice was boiled with salt mixed water, it was called ‘Diya Kenda’. The type of ‘Kenda’, which was made by mixing one portion of rice with six portions of water for patients, was called ‘Yawagu’. This was named as ‘Ulu Kenda’ as well. Today we call it ‘Lunu Kenda’. Various types of ‘Kenda’ (gruel) were made mixing various types of medicines for different kinds of illnesses. Saddharmarathnawaliya mentions a kind of very sweet gruel in the name of ‘Rasa Ulu Kenda’. It was cooked in milk without water, using bee honey and ghee. When it came to the right temperature, orange juice was mixed. Ancient people of this country drank Kenda as the first meal of the day. Those types of Kenda cooked mixing the leaves with medicinal quality were known as ‘Embulhambu’ or ‘Embul Kenda’.

There was animal meat consuming too. People in the ancient time used to eat meat of animals living on land as well as kinds of fish. The tax, which was charged for catching fish in the water channels that led from tanks to paddy fields, was called ‘Mathrika Mathsya Bhagaya’ then. Here, ‘Mathrika’ was small water channels.

In the ancient time Sri Lankans were very attentive to their food. It seems that they had paid much attention to food and health because they had to be healthy and strong in activities of agriculture and animal husbandry. They never consumed artificial food. They used to consume natural things by preparing them without harming their nutritional value. It is a good example for us who live at present.

## 6.6. Protecting the Environment

If the members in any society need to maintain their society in a desirable manner they should protect their environment. We have to face numerous adversaries if the environment is destroyed. There is the danger of getting shortage of water due to cutting trees. Crops may be less productive due to infertility of soil as a result of soil erosion. All these bad results have to be borne up by ourselves.

Our ancient rulers who were constantly conscious of the importance of protecting the environment, acted to impose laws on that. In the Anuradhapura plate inscription, made by king Mihindu IV, an order had been given forbidding clearing forests on high lands. There is a possibility of eroding soil and land slides due to clearing the forest on high lands. On the other hand it is a direct cause

for drying water sources. There is an inscription, made by king Udaya III (935 – 938 A.D.), at a place called Buddhannehela in Anuradhapura. In that inscription there is a note as “Wal Wala Dandupath Nokapanu Isa”. Its meaning is that trees in the forests should not be cut. According to the rules in the Kondawattawan inscription, made by king Kashyapa V, government officers had been ordered to act according to the rules and regulations imposed by the government in managing trees and woods.

Rules and regulations regarding things such as protecting wild animals and soil protection can be seen in our ancient inscriptions. When we review all these facts, it is obvious that we had an organized procedure to protect the environment in ancient time.

What you should realize from the facts that we have discussed so far in this lesson, is that respectable citizens had lived in our country in the past. You should take as an example the way they, who had been settling in this country continuously for thousands years, applied their knowledge which was gathered through their life experiences and lived without being second to any nation in the world.

## Important Facts

- ✓ Our ancient society was systematically organized. As it was formed in a way in which the power went down from the top, it urged each other in the society to perform their responsibilities properly.
- ✓ The rulers in this country in the ancient time acted to implement law and justice for the well-being of the society. From ancient time our ancestors were well aware of law and they tended to act according to the law.
- ✓ Ancient Sri Lankans had acted to handle the economic affairs efficiently. As a medium of economic exchange, they started the use of metal coins. There was a special officer called 'Roopadaka' to keep the standard of moulding metal coins.
- ✓ There was a deep attention given to the respect and the identity of women in the ancient Sri Lankan society. Since she had many admirable qualities, she was adored by the society. Our ancient society had selected women to rule the country too.
- ✓ Our ancestors were healthy enough to build a great civilization because their food habits were properly organized. That food, which had a local flavour, can be used even today to spend a healthy life style.
- ✓ Since our ancestors were farmers, they maintained a good relationship with the natural environment. Instead of destroying animals and trees, there were even laws to deal with them in an eco-friendly manner.

## Activity

1. Describe how the tasks assigned to each group in the social hierarchy contributed to build a better society.
2. Point out the examples that the present society could take from the ancient social organization.
3. Describe how the old law and tradition assisted to build a better society.
4. Point out how the environmental conservation methods used in the past can be applied to the present.
5. Point out the examples that can be taken from the food habits of the past to prevent being victims to diseases.
6. Point out the good relationships which existed between each groups in the social hierarchy which contributed to preserve the old society.

**Urbanization** – The word urbanization is used to name the process in which a village transfers itself into a city. It is a complex process. In comparison to a city, a village is a small human settlement. A village is formed when a limited community gathers into a small space. Family bonds based on relationships are a major feature in a village. A city is a human settlement, which consists of a considerably big population. The people, who live in it, maintain their relations based on their professions. A village turns to be a city when the capitalists are generated due to increasing production of the village. The predominant features in the settlements, where wealthy people live, are engaging in local and foreign trade affairs, mastery in craftsmanship, having a ruling structure and using a script system.

**Social Stratification** – Social stratification simply means the differences in any society according to their wealth. Proletariats middle class, capitalist class are the stratas in a society.

# Decline of Ancient Cities in the Dry Zone and Origin of New Kingdoms in South West

## Introduction

The city of Anuradhapura which had belonged to the North Central dry zone and the city of Magama which had belonged to the Southern dry zone continued to be wonderful cities for a long time. The historical sources have described the background of the origin of those cities. For example Mahawamsa mentions that the place which was called Anuradhamagrama was transformed as the city of Anuradhapura by King Pandukabhaya. Historical sources provide an accurate description of the development of a previous village as a city. Certainly, a rural settlement develops as a city.

The transformation of a rural settlement to an urban settlement is a very long and a gradual process. Certainly, what happens there is the life style of the people transforms from a rural form to an urban form. It happens as a result of a long process. On one hand, the internal economic development of the country affects that process directly. On the other hand, trade relations with foreign countries too affect that process decisively. This lesson will describe the origin of ancient cities and the decline of them.

B.C. That does not mean by then the things such as walls, moats, and streets, which were essentials for a city, had been constructed. A population with a life condition which is needed for a city could be seen.

You learnt in the second lesson that there is evidence, which goes back to 2400 B.C., that reflects that the proto-historical community who lived in this country abandoned their nomadic hunting life style and got used to an agricultural life style. The major change that occurred as they got used to agriculture was that they started to stay in one place for a long time. This was the basic reason for the origin of the most ancient villages in this country.

Those who lived in these basic villages were engaged in agriculture and animal husbandry as their livelihood. They engaged in hunting too. Due to agriculture and animal husbandry their food safety was ensured. Unless those people, who were engaged in those two occupations, had not been affected by natural disasters such as droughts, floods, and epidemics among animals, their life could have been more peaceful and co-existent.

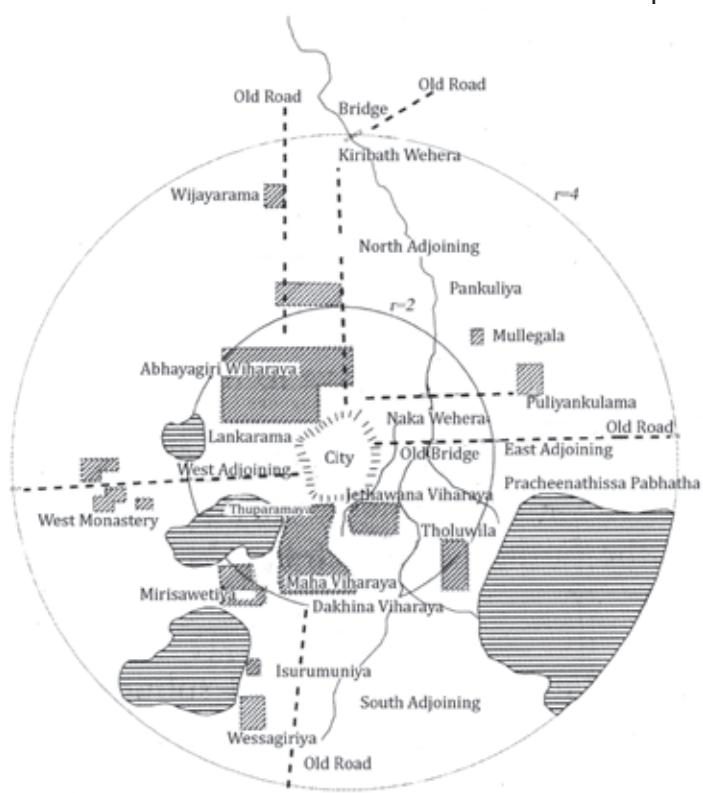
There were signs of making a clear change among those who lived then due to their engagement in agriculture for a long time. It depended on a number of facts such as the nature of agricultural land and the skill each individual showed in managing the agricultural activities.

The farmers who cultivated lands where the soil was fertile and water was easily available had a good harvest and those who cultivated in infertile

## 7.1 Background of the Urban Life

The first urbanization in Sri Lanka is reflected by Anuradhapura which belongs to the North Central dry zone and ancient Magama city which had belonged to Southern and South-eastern part of Sri Lanka. There were basic signs of development in these two cities by about 450

lands perhaps could have a harvest which was hardly enough for a year's consumption. Those, who reaped a rich harvest, had an excess of grain remaining in the granaries after consuming during the whole year. This remaining grain is introduced in the special name 'Athirikthaya' – surplus. When there is an economic surplus in a society and a group of owners of surplus is a highly transformative situation. In this way, there is an example that shows that there lived a surplus owners in the ancient society of this country in 'Jathakaatta Katha'. As it mentions, one villager, who didn't have enough food as he had not received the harvest from his seasonal crop, borrowed a bag of paddy from the village leader on the promise that he would give it back on the following season.



*Plan no. 7.1. A sketch which displays a plan of the ancient Anuradhapura city.*

This story in the 'Jathkaatta Katha' is a good clue that projects the transformation happening in the ancient society of our country. It gives us an idea of the villager who became poor due to the failure of his farming and the surplus owners

who could help poor farmers.

As the surplus owner described in the above source was a village leader, there is an important fact that we should understand. That is , the major reason that affected him to be a village leader was that he was economically rich. There is information in the inscriptions about the same type of provincial leaders introduced as 'Parumaka' and 'Batha'. We learnt about 'Parumakas' in the third chapter.

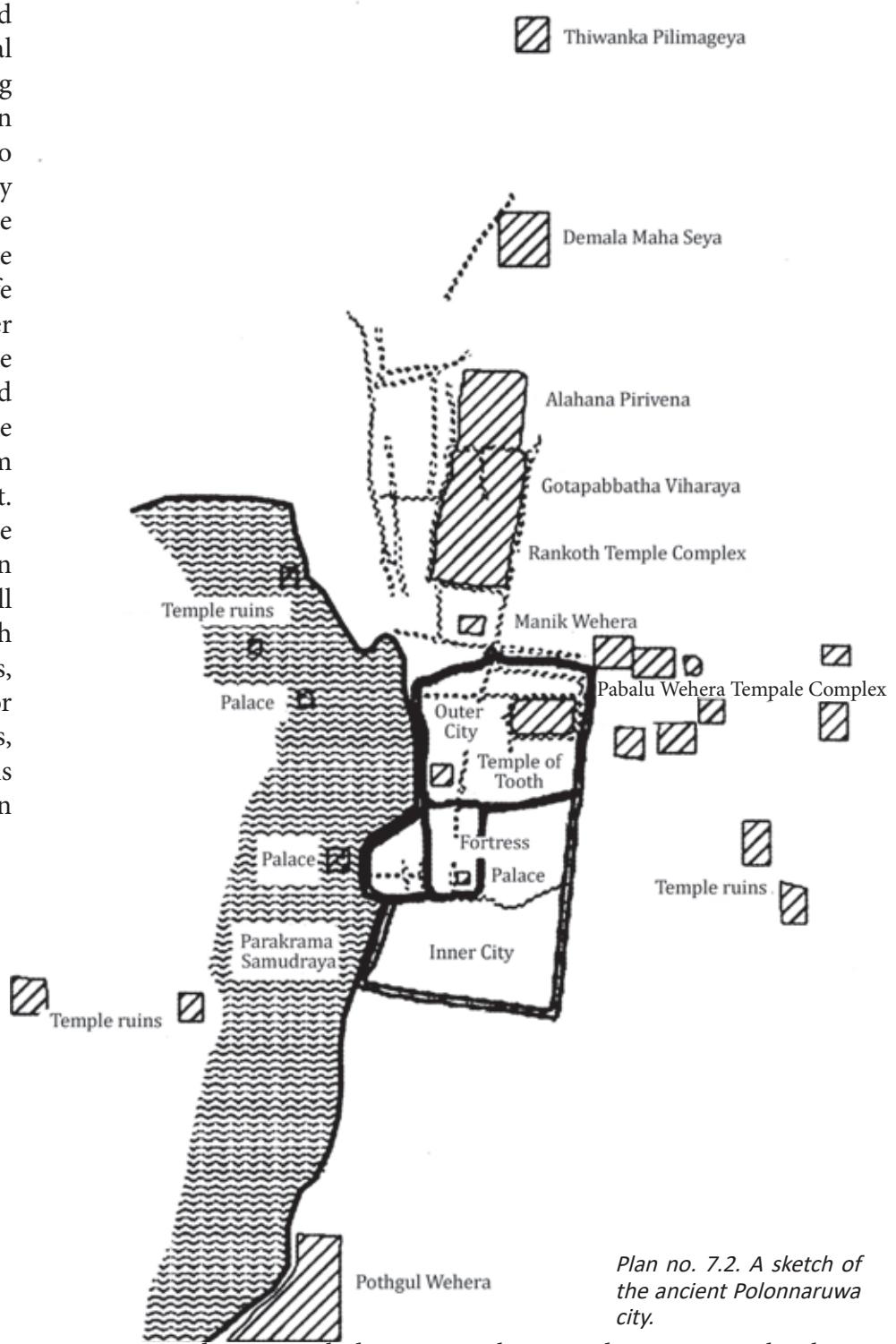
The division as rich and poor, which occurs in the society based on the economic capability of people, is introduced as the origin of social stratification. One of the most important processes that based the origin of cities was this separation of the society in to strata.

## 7.2 The First Urbanization

By 450 B.C. the social stratification of our country had become complete to a certain extent. Early inscriptions substantiate that there were a large number of chieftains who owned production surplus, spread in the dry zone by that time. The number of the persons introduced by the name of 'Parumaka' in the inscriptions so far is numerous. These chieftains had been organized as families. One of the strategies that these families used to show and keep their power and prestige was using articles imported from foreign countries. Some articles such as imported earthenware and beads have been discovered from excavations done in the ancient cities such as Anuradhapura and Tissamaharama. These things were exchanged as a result of joining the foreign trade.

As Sri Lanka participated actively in the international trade activities operating then in the Indian Ocean, an immense wealth came into the country. The minority who was the owners of the production surplus were able to live a luxurious life as they were free from other external problems. Since the influx of income needed to be administered, the requirement of a mechanism of administration was felt. The groups who became the chieftains due to possession of surplus gathered in a well planned settlement. Such a settlement with markets, religious buildings for offerings, aesthetic parks, defensive moats, and tanks is called a city. The description in Mahawamsa about how King Pandukabhaya planned Anuradhapura city proves that ancient Anuradhapura city was such a planned one with a finish.

Anuradhapura continued to be the capital of the Island for nearly 1400 years due to its self sufficiency with food and animal products produced by the village



*Plan no. 7.2. A sketch of the ancient Polonnaruwa city.*

farmers and their efficient engagement in industries including iron industry and irrigation technology for a long time. Magama city which was in the Southern province was like a mirror which reflected the cultural advancement of that province.

After the 6<sup>th</sup> century A.D., the international trade operating in the Indian Ocean fell into the hands of Arab traders. The Western part of the Indian Ocean, which was the geographical centre of the international trade affairs in the Indian Ocean, was widened and the South-eastern Asia and the



Fig. 7.1. Thuparama Stupa in a ruined and overgrown state. After the downfall of the Anuradhapura kingdom, all of such monuments were ruined. This photograph was taken before the reconstructions of the recent time.

Southern China were annexed to it. After the 9<sup>th</sup> century A.D., the trade in the Indian Ocean was centering on the Eastern part of the Indian Ocean. Our farsighted rulers had understood the needs of activating the ports in the Eastern coast, administering the income which came into the country through those ports, preventing the threats to the security of the country from different people who entered the country through those places and basing a city very close to the coastal area for ruling if Sri Lanka wanted to obtain the benefits provided by this transformation. It seems that this situation had influenced directly King Vijayabahu I to select Polonnaruwa as his ruling centre.

When we examine the social background and the international relations existed during the

time of king Parakramabahu I, who succeeded king Vijayabahu I, it is clear to what extent the South-eastern Asian trade relations had affected the political, religious and economic affairs of Sri Lanka during that time. As Mahawamsa mentions, several kings, who succeeded King Vijayabahu I, had married royal women from Asian countries such as, Burma and Cambodia. The South-East Asian characteristics could prominently be seen in some of the art works created in this country during the period considered as the Polonnaruwa era, for example in some architectural creations and Buddha statues. The Buddha statues in Polonnaruwa Gal Viharaya and the building introduced as the Polonnaruwa Sathmal Prasada are two best examples for it.

### 7.3 Downfall of Polonnaruwa

During the time when King Mihindu V was the last ruler of the Anuradhapura kingdom it collapsed due to Chola invasions and afterwards King Vijayabahu I liberated the country from the Cholas and united the country by making Polonnaruwa his capital. The political turmoil which prevailed after the demise of King Vijayabahu I due to the internal problems was ended and the country was reunited by King Parakramabahu I. He developed the capital Polonnaruwa further and made this country prosperous again by reconstructing the irrigation system. But, it seems that the Polonnaruwa kingdom fell into a track of gradual decline due to the political disorders emerged after the demise of King Parakramabahu I. After King Parakramabahu I, only King Nissankamalla carried out a strong ruling for nine years. There were several reasons for the gradual decline and the downfall of the Polonnaruwa kingdom.

#### 1. Weak rulers came to power.

During a period of 29 years from the year 1186 in which King Parakramabahu I's demise took place and to the year 1215 in which the downfall of Polonnaruwa kingdom occurred, 12 rulers came to power from time to time. Among them, except for the 9 years' ruling period of King Nissankamalla, the ruling periods of all the others' were limited to very brief time periods. This clearly shows that those rulers could not



Fig. 7.2. The way Polonnaruwa Lankathilaka image house looked before its recent reconstructions. After the downfall of Polonnaruwa kingdom, the monuments such as this went wild (The photograph belongs to the Times Studio).

build a political stability. It caused the decline of the Polonnaruwa kingdom.

#### 2. Power struggle between the Pandyan and Kalinga clans

After the death of King Vijayabahu I, the fights between the Pandyan and Kalinga clans who were in this country aggravated. As a result, the people who supported the Pandyan clan tried to bring Pandyan leaders to power. In the same way those who supported the Kalinga clan attempted to bring their leaders to power. As a result of this, the

Kalingas , after the death of king Nissankamalla, who belonged to their clan, brought several Kalinga members such as, king Nissankamalla's nephew (his sister's son) Chodanga, his brother Sahasamalla, his wife Kalyanawathi to power. The Pandians brought queen Leelawathi, the wife of king Parakramabahu I, to power thrice. Thus, the struggle between the Pandians and the Kalingas was a reason for the decline of the Polonnaruwa kingdom.

### 3. Economic Deterioration

Since weak rulers came to power after the death of King Nissankamalla and as they could not build a political stability, it seems that the tanks and anicuts were not maintained properly. As there were political disorder at this time, provincial ruling too may have been paralyzed. This led to a decline in agriculture and trade. This led to a complete economic paralysis.

### 4. Invasion of Kalinga Magha

The immediate reason that affected the decline of the Polonnaruwa kingdom was the invasion of Kalinga Magha. When Magha invaded this country with a huge army in 1215, Sri Lankans could not face them due to the disordered political situation that prevailed in the country. As a result of that, the city of Polonnaruwa and a number of areas in Rajarata went under Magha's army. When we consider the destruction, and the outcomes of the invasion of Magha, it made a great influence not only on the capital of Polonnaruwa, but also on the Rajarata civilization, which had a history of not less than one thousand and five hundred years.

This is a part from Mahawamsa, which describes the destruction caused by Magha: "People were tied, tortured and made them beggars by looting their wealth; statues were broken down, temples were robbed; devotees were attacked; children were beaten (..by the invaders)." Thus, due to the destructive activities of the enemies, there was

no security for the lives and properties of the Rajarata people.

Its result was that the oppressed monks and the people migrated to Ruhuna, Malaya Rata (upcountry) or Maya rata for protection. Therefore, many areas in Rajarata were devoid of people. Some parts freed from the central ruling became rural areas. The religious places such as, Ruwanweli Seya, Abhayagiriya, and Jethawanaramaya, which were worshipped daily, were gradually went into wilderness. Many populated cities in Anuradhapura became ruins.

The reasons for the decline of the ancient cities :

- Invasions of the enemies
- Downfall of the central ruling
- Lack of security
- Paralysis of the trade and transport affairs
- Migration of people to other areas

### 7.4 The Second Urbanization

When the prosperous cities existing in the dry zone declined, several cities, especially outside the dry zone, emerged in the South-eastern areas in no time. The emergence of these cities is a result of another process of urbanization. Operating several ruling centres due to decentralization of political power, growth of new harbours, reflecting a new intelligence awakening due to the rebirth of literature provide a sufficient base to introduce this process as a second urbanization. Another important trend that should be taken into consideration regarding the advancement of urbanization during this time is setting up of new trade relations network and widening of commercial activities with that.

When we compare the cities originated in the second urbanization process with the great cities that existed in the previous era, the main feature that could be seen is that the plans of

the cities developed in the second urbanization had freed from the geometric structures of the previous ones. Even in the size, they were not as large as the Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa ones. The scholars point out the reason for that is the decentralization of power after the second urbanization.

### Dambadeniya

The period from the downfall of the Polonnaruwa kingdom in 1215 A.D to the establishment of the Dambadeniya kingdom in 1232 A.D was a chaotic time in this country. Mahawamsa mentions that in this difficult time when the capital was in the hands of the enemies, some local leaders had protected both the country and Buddhism from the enemies by building inaccessible places in safe areas. Subha Senevi who protected the area from enemies by building an inaccessible place in the Yapahuwa rock, the duke Buwanekabahu who prevented enemies from entering Ruhuna by making a citadel at the top of the Govindamalaya mountain, and Sankha Senevi who had built a citadel in the rock in Gandeniya close to Mahiyangana area were prominent among them.

Though they took much pains to act for the security of the country, none had a hope of going beyond their own purpose, which was defending their own ruling area, and uniting the country suppressing the enemy. It seems only one person acted with this purpose. He was a chieftain named Vijayabahu III. He lived in Dambadeniya. He ruled making Dambadeniya as his ruling centre in between 1232-1236. During this time Dambadeniya got developed consisting of all that needed for a city.

King Vijayabahu III established the Dambadeniya kingdom in 1232. His relationship with the old royal family in Anuradhapura is not clear. The sources mention that this king was a Wanni Nayaka- provincial leader earlier. Wanni means

a kind of provincial ruling unit originated after the downfall of the Rajarata civilization. In this way, it seems that king Vijayabahu III too was a provincial leader at first, gradually became powerful, dispelled the enemies who were in Maya Rata and built Dambadeniya as his ruling centre. When Polonnaruwa was surrendered by enemies, the Bhikkus protected the tooth relic and the bowl relic. They took those sacred objects to Kothmale and protected them. King Vijayabahu III came to know of this and took steps to bring them to Dambadeniya. He built a Dalada Maligawa at Beligala and deposited them in it. This task of the king added an importance to the Dambadeniya Kingdom as the people considered that the possession of the tooth relic was the legal receipt of kingship. King Vijayabahu III performed a number of religious and national activities such as building Dambadeniya Visesundararamaya, reconstructing Kelani temple, making a Sanga amendment by holding the Upasampada festival again and taking steps to rewrite the books in disuse. His ruling time was 4 years and he died in 1236.

### King Parakramabahu II(1236 A.D. – 1270 A.D.)

King Vijayabahu III had two sons namely Parakramabahu and Buvanekabahu. After his death, his elder son, Parakramabahu became the king of Dambadeniya in 1236. He is named as king Parakramabahu II. King Parakramabahu II had a good education in his childhood. He had his education from the Bhikkus led by Sangharakkhitha Thero when his father was living and later became an educated erudite. He was offered the scholarly title Kalikala Sahithya Sarwagna Panditha. The great books he composed remain even today.

By the time king Parakramabahu II attained the kingship, the country was not freed from the clutches of the enemies. And also he had to face a new invader. He had a number of challenges before him, including bringing the life style of the countrymen to normalcy and acting for

the betterment of religion and education. However, the king was able to overcome all these challenges since he was educated and intelligent.

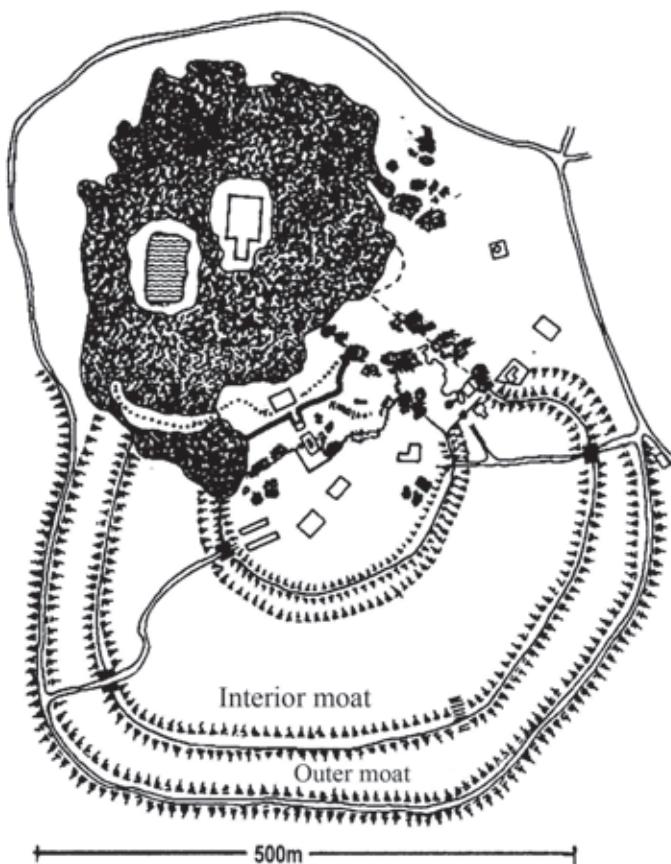
When King Parakramabahu II was getting ready to fight with Kalinga Magha that is in the 11<sup>th</sup> year of his ruling (1247 A.D.), a Javaka invader named Chandrabhanu landed in this country with a large group of soldiers. Though all the invasions came to Sri Lanka from India so far, Chandrabhanu arrived from the Northern part of the Malaya peninsula in the South- East Asia. As that area was a Buddhist country then, the purpose of Chandrabhanu may have been to possess the sacred Buddhist relics. In 1247 A.D. Chandrabhanu's army was repulsed by the Sri Lankan army led by king Parakramabahu II.

The greatest challenge that King Parakramabahu II had to face was to liberate the country from Magha's ruling. Magha ruled the areas in Rajarata for

about 40 years and had reinforced the security by building citadels around the area. Therefore, a decisive attack had to be made on Magha. According to a plan of the king, the army was directed to besiege Polonnaruwa city from the eastern and western sides. Magha's soldiers, in the surrounding citadels, had gathered to Polonnaruwa to face the king's army. Magha's army had had a debacle at the attack launched by the king's army. It is believed that this decisive battle took place in around 1255 A.D. Liberating the country from Magha was a great achievement of the king.

Chandrabhanu, who fled after suffering a defeat in the previous battle with the army of the king, had invaded Sri Lanka once again in about 1261 A.D. by obtaining mercenary soldiers from India. Chandrabhanu, who came with a large army, besieged Yapahuwa and threatened the king to hand over the state, the tooth relic and the bowl relic. Once again there

*Plan No. 7.3. A sketch of the plan of the ancient Yapahuwa city.*



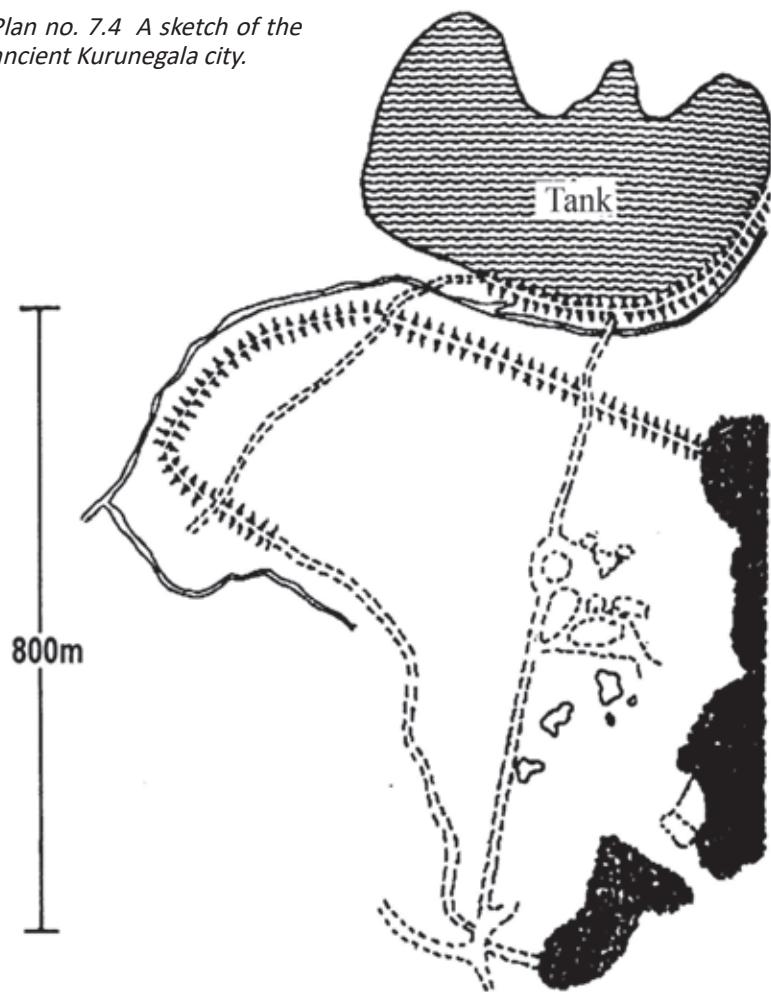
was a great battle between the king's army and the army of Chandrabhanu. In this battle king Parakramabahu II had the support from the Pandyan Empire. In this battle, the enemies were defeated and the invader Chandrabhanu too was killed. King Parakramabahu II saved the country from the enemies and at the same time he took steps to use the minister named Deva Pathiraja to develop the economic, religious and educational sectors.

### Yapahuwa

As king Parakramabahu II passed away in about 1270 A.D, his son prince Vijayabahu attained the kingship. He is named as Vijayabahu IV. The name Bosath Vijayabahu too was used for him. His reign was limited only for two years. He died due to a military coup. After that, prince Buvanekabahu, who was the brother of king Vijayabahu IV, overcame the conspirators and

became the king in about 1272. He is named as king Buvanekabahu I. He faced a number of problems. As soon as he became the king, a group of provincial leaders rebelled against him. During the same time several south Indian forces invaded Sri Lanka. One invasion was led by an army general named Kalingarayara. Another platoon was led by one army general named Chodanga. The king faced all these adversaries successfully and spent a few years in Dambadeniya. Later the king selected Yapahuwa, since it was a safer place, as his capital. King Buvanekabahu I was very interested in having trade relations with foreign countries. It is reported that a group of ambassadors sent by the king to the Sultan in Egypt to discuss to develop trade relations with Egypt had been welcomed in Cairo in the month of April in 1283. After some time of that event, king Buvanekabahu I died in 1284.

*Plan no. 7.4 A sketch of the ancient Kurunegala city.*



It seems after the demise of king Buvanekabahu, a dispute was started among prince Parakramabahu, the son of Bosath Vijayabahu and prince Buvanekabahu II, the son of king Buvanekabahu I about the kingship. During this time a provincial leader from the South India named Arya Chackrawarthi had arrived in Sri Lanka with a Pandya army, attacked the Yapahuwa citadel, took the tooth relic to South India and handed it over to King Kulashkara, who was the Pandyan king. Later the son of king Bosath Vijayabahu, prince Parakramabahu went to India, met king Kulashkara, discussed with him and brought the tooth relic back. He went to Polonnaruwa and started his ruling. This king is named as Parakramabahu III. His ruling period started in 1287 A.D. But, prince Buvanekabahu II besieged Polonnaruwa, defeated the king and took back the tooth relic to Kurunegala in about

1293. He made Kurunegala his capital.

### Kurunegala

The first ruler who established the Kurunegala kingdom was king Buvanekabahu II. His ruling time was 9 years from 1293 A.D. After the death of king Buvanekabahu II, his son, prince Parakramabahu acceded to the kingship in Kurunegala. Since he was the fourth Parakramabahu we meet in the history of this country, he is named as Parakramabahu IV. According to the Tamil poetry Sarajothimaleyi, he became the king in 1302 A.D.

Much service was done to the uplifting of Buddhism as well as education during the Kurunegala ruling period. One of the most prominent services done during

this era was translating the Jataka story book, which was in Pali language until then, into Sinhala. The texts like Dalada Siritha, Sinhala Bodhiwamsa, Anagatha Wamsaya, and Dalada Poojavaliya were written during this period. It is mentioned that after king Parakramabahu IV, the two kings named Buvanekabahu III or Vanni Buvanekabahu and Vijayabahu V or Savulu Vijayabahu ruled Kurunegala respectively. Much information has not been disclosed about the activities of these kings. However, folklores mention that king Buvanekabahu III constructed the Kurunegala tank.

### Gampola Kingdom

The Gampola kingdom was established by king Buvanekabahu IV in 1341. He is believed to be a son of King Savulu Vijayabahu, who was the last ruler of the Kurunegala kingdom. King Buvanekabahu IV had another brother and he maintained his ruling by building a kingdom in Dedigama at the same time period as Parakramabahu V. When the Gampola kingdom started, there were two other kingdoms except for Dedigama. There was a kingdom in Jaffna under Aryachakravarthi dynasty and another one in Rayigama under Alakeshwara lineage. Therefore, the Gampola kingdom had to face many challenges.

There were several special characteristics of the Gampola ruling period. There were two respectable-families having connections with the Royal family, which was one characteristic. Senadhilankara Senevirath family in Gampola was one. Senadhilankara Senevi Dedigama had married a sister of King Parakramabahu III and the one who became the king in Gampola in the name of Vikramabahu was a son of them. The second respectable family was the Alakeshwara family in Rayigama. The prominent figure in this family was Nissanka Alakeshwara.

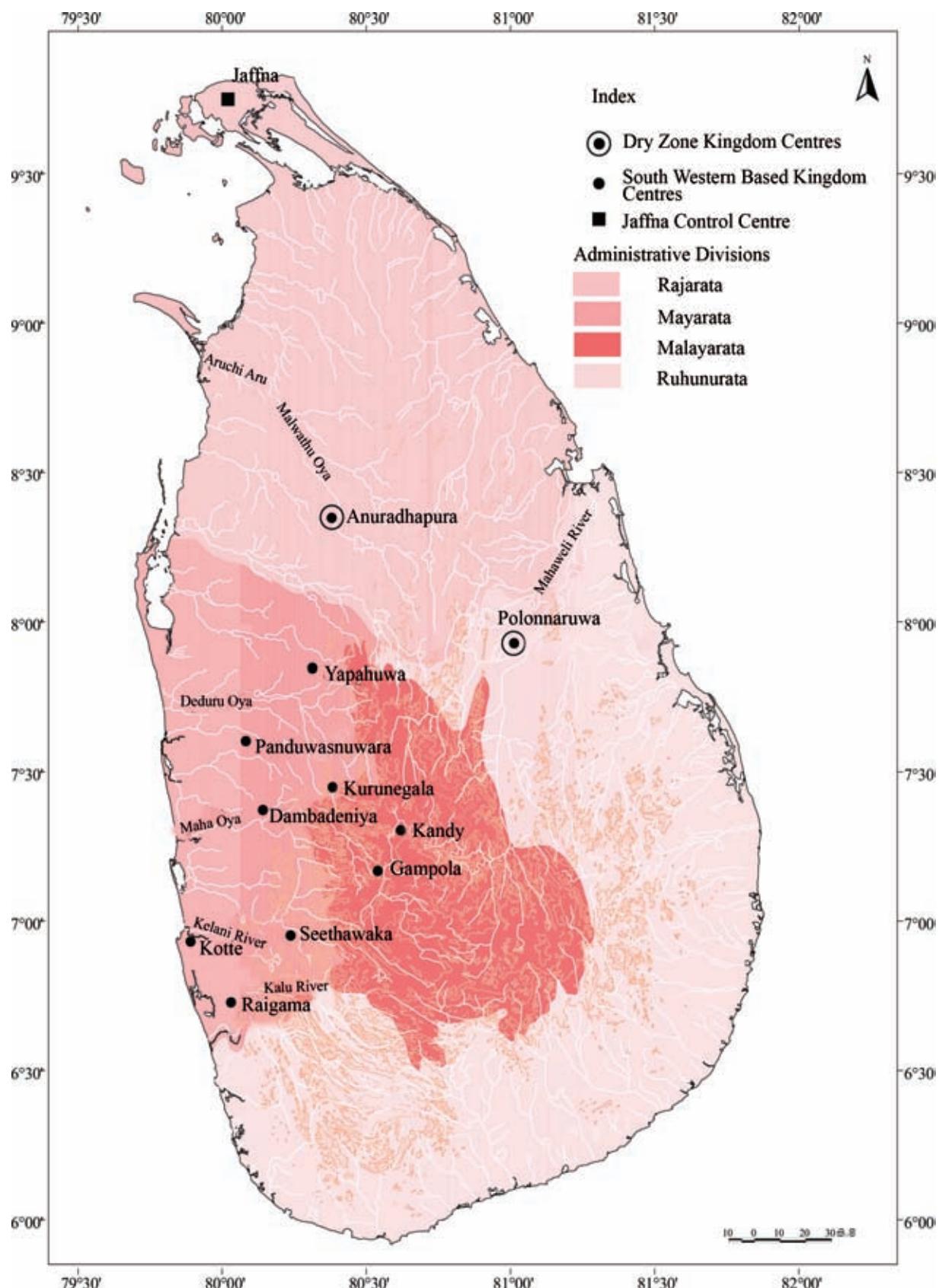
In the Gampola period, kingship did not pass to son from father or from brother to brother. It was the old system. The system which was practised in Gampola period was passing kingship from

uncle to nephew or to a son of a sister of the ex-king. This was a mother-central system (matriarchy) more than a father-central system (patriarchy).

One significant fact was that one Arab traveller named Iban Batuta came to Sri Lanka during the Gampola period and he recorded what he witnessed and heard. Iban Batuta, who came to Jaffna in 1344, had journeyed to Adam's Peak (Sri Pada) by gaining assistance from the Jaffna ruler, Arya Chakravarthi. Batuta mentions a ruler named Alakonar who possessed a white elephant (tusker). That Alakonar was a one of the Alagakkonara lineage.

It is mentioned by the ruling period of Gampola Vikramabahu III the officers of Aryachakravarthi in the North had come to Gampola and collected taxes from some areas. This was a blow not only to the independence of the Gampola kingdom but also to its economy. Therefore, the chief minister of the King, Nissanka Alakeshwara, built a fortress in Kotte and had punished the tax officers of the King Aryachakravarthi. When Aryachakravarthi, who was angry with this treatment, invaded Gampola kingdom, his army was defeated by the Alakeshwara's army. Though the actions followed by Nissanka Alakeshwara made the Gampola kingdom strong, it seems with time there were disputes among the Alakeshwara family itself.

In the last period of the Gampola kingdom, there was a Chinese invasion in Sri Lanka. An army general named Chen Ho sent by the Chinese emperor called Yung Lo landed in this country in the years of 1405, 1409, and 1411. When he came to this country in 1409, the then Rayigama ruler Veera Alakeshwara had not welcomed Chen Ho properly. Therefore, he had offered the offerings he had brought to the Devundara Devala and left after making an inscription written in Chinese, Persian and Tamil languages. That inscription is known as the Trilingual letter in Galle. Afterwards general Chen Ho, who came to this country back in 1411 with a large army



Map 7.1 The distribution of ancient kingdoms in Sri Lanka.

and fought against the army of Alakeshvara and captured him along with some others as prisoners, and went back to China.

Several buildings, constructed during the Gampola ruling period still remain and Lankathilaka and Gadaladeni temples built by king Buvanekabahu IV are prominent among them.

### Kotte Kingdom

We mentioned above that minister Nissanka Alakeshvara built a strong fortress in Kotte during the Gampola ruling period. But, the Kotte kingdom was established by king Parakramabahu VI. His father was one Jayamahalena. His mother was Sunethra Devi. Since there were adversaries during the last part of the Gampola ruling period, prince Parakramabahu had to live in hiding. Here, Veedagama Thero provided him protection. Afterwards, in 1412 prince Parakramabahu came to power in Rayigama with the courtesy of Veedagama Thero. After three years' time in 1415 he came to Kotte, which was famous as a safe place, and held his coronation. From then on he ruled the country for a long time until 1467. These are prominent in King Parakramabahu's service.

- Bringing Wanni areas under the Kotte kingdom.
- Winning Jaffna by sending the army under prince Sapumal.
- Suppressing the rebellion raised by Count Jothiya, who was the provincial ruler of Uda Rata.
- Uniting the country under the Kotte kingdom and making the country prosperous.
- Making a great contribution to the enhancement of country's education and literature.

As there was not an heir to the throne after king Parakramabahu VI's demise, the son of

his daughter, Ulakudaya Deviya, acceded to the throne in the name of Jayabahu. But his ruling time was short. Prince Sapumal, who was assigned to rule Jaffna by King Parakramabahu VI after capturing Jaffna, came with an army, besieged Kotte capital and usurped power by assassinating king Jayabahu. He became the king in the name of Buvanekabahu VI in 1469. At the beginning of his ruling a rebellion named Pasyodun Rata Sinhala Peraliya or Sinhala Sange started. This rebellion was suppressed by prince Ambulugala under the guidance of King Buvanekabahu. The king forgave the rebel leaders including Kekulandala Siriwardana Pathiraja. The inscription made for this is known as 'Abhayadana Shilalipiya' or 'Dedigama Inscription'.

After the demise of king Buvanekabahu VI, one of his sons named Panditha Parakramabahu came to power. He was known as Parkaramabahu VII and his ruling time was not a long one. Prince Ambulgala, who was in charge of ruling affairs in Sathara Koralaya, came, dethroned Panditha Parakramabahu and became the king in the name of Veera Parakramabahu VIII. It is believed that he came to power in 1490 A.D. The Portuguese arrived in this country during his ruling time in 1505.

### **Jaffna and the Vanniyars**

The ruling unit, which started in the Jaffna area after the downfall of Rajarata civilization, is known as the Jaffna kingdom. There are no contemporary sources to study the beginning and the history of this kingdom and the most famous book which assists to study its history is Yalpana Vayipava Maleyi. But it was written in the 18<sup>th</sup> century. Apart from these, the Tamil texts such as Kayilaya Maleyi and Shegarashashekara Maleyi are also important.

The founder of the Jaffna kingdom was Vijay Kulanki Arya Chakravarthi. There is a description in the Yalpana Vayipava Maleyi text about twelve rulers such as Kulashekara,

Vikkirama, Varodaya, Marthanda from the ruling time of Arya Chakravarthi to the arrival of Portuguese. The royal dynasty who ruled Jaffna was named as Arya Chakravarthis. It seems when Iban Batuta came to this country in 1344, the Arya Chakravarthis had a strong ruling. We mentioned earlier how minister Nishshanka Alakesvara acted against the representatives of Arya Chakravarthi, who collected taxes in the areas belonging to the Gampola kingdom. During the Kotte period King Parakramabahu VI sent prince Sapumal and brought Jaffna under the Kotte kingdom. After king Parakramabahu VI, the ruling over the Jaffna area loosened from the grip of Kotte. From then on we will discuss the information of the Jaffna kingdom until it surrendered to the Portuguese in the tenth lesson.

### The Vanniyars

After the downfall of Rajarata civilization, small ruling units called Vanni emerged in the areas with low population density, such as East, North central and North Western. The provincial rulers in these units were known as the Vanniyars. According to Poojavaliya Vijayabahu III who established the Dambadeniya kingdom was a Vanni leader at first. The contemporary sources say that there were eighteen such Vanni areas by the time when king Parakramabahu VI started his ruling. Though the Vanniyars enjoyed some independence during the time when the central government was weak, during the ruling periods of King Parakramabahu II and king Parakramabahu VI the Vanni areas were under the main kingdom. There is information that there were Vanniyars in the Eastern area during the Kandyan kingdom. But they were under the Kandyan king.

#### **7.4.1. Economic Style**

The people, who migrated to the wet zone after the collapse of the Rajarata civilization, had to adjust themselves to a new geographical

environment. Origin of kingdoms in the areas where there were ghats and non existence of the capital at one place for a long time are special features of this. As the wet zone received a good rainfall, it seems that they did not pay much attention to construct huge tanks and irrigation systems. They tended to use rainwater for the agricultural activities. Even during this time, their main livelihood was agriculture. The main cultivation was paddy and Chena cultivation was done in areas which lacked water.

Gradually they tended to a commercial economy. The surplus of the crops grown for food was sold. The reason for this was that the international trade relations got more developed.

Cinnamon, which grew in the forest areas in the wet zone, was a main trade crop during this time. The surplus of the crops such as aricanuts, cardamom, nutmeg and pepper was exported. Apart from these, trade items such as pearls, gems, tuskers and tusks were exported.

Sri Lanka had trade relations with India, Arab, China, Persia and Egypt. International trade was under the monopoly of king.

The rich trade that existed in ancient Sri Lanka has been mentioned in literary, archaeological sources as well as in tourist records. The archaeological evidences found in Dedigama reveal that porcelain has been imported from China. The ola leaves called Kurunegala description mentions that there were bazaars related to internal trade. The Arab traveller named Iban Batuta, who came to Sri Lanka in 1344 A.D., has mentioned in his records that there was a rich trading in harbours in the Western coasts.

#### **7.4.2 Religion**

During the second urbanization period Buddhism grew as further as the main religion. The kings from Dambadeni to Kotte periods acted to build palaces for the sacred Tooth relic

and construct many temples and monasteries. There are proofs that the people of this time had a great devotion and belief in god. They believed in the gods such as Upulwan, Vibheeshana, Skandakumar and Saman and constructed Devalas for the gods. There is a reference to the gods Upulwan and Vibhishana in Sandesha Kavyas.

There is information that there was a Shiva Devala adjacent to Sri Jayawardhanpura in the fifteenth century. It is believed that it must have been constructed for Siva devotees.

The Munneshvaram temple in Chilaw was a sacred religious place for the Hindus during this time.

There were sacred Islamic religious places in seaport areas where the Muslim devotees resided and engaged in their international trade affairs.

#### 7.4.3 Arts and Architecture

A lot of architecture could be seen in the cities, which were created from Yapahuwa period to Kotte period. It is a special feature that these creations have been influenced by the South Indian architecture.

It is believed that the steps in the Yapahuwa kingdom and creations of its posts have had the Pandyan and Cambodian influences. It could clearly be noticed that the contemporary South Indian architectural styles had influenced the Pilimageya (Idol-house) at the Gadaladeniya temple which belonged to the Gampola period.

Another feature that could be seen in these periods is constructing Devals connecting to the Pilimageyas (Idol-houses).

One example for this is that a Devala has been built for God Upulvan connecting to the Gadaladeniya Pilimageya. Devalas have been built connecting to Lankathilaka Pilimageya

too. Having Devalas in the idol-houses is a proof that displays that the Hindu and Mahayana ideas influenced the architecture.

The Embekke Devala, which was constructed by king Wickramabahu III during the Gampola period is a valuable construction with wood carvings. Its magnificence is displayed by its posts with beautiful wood carvings and its wooden roof.

There are a lot of evidences to prove that there was a great revival in language and literature during the second urbanization. Learned monks, kings' sponsoring, and having a number of educational centres influenced the advancement of literature.

During the ruling period of King Parakramabahu II in Dambadeniya, many literary texts were written. He was given the honorary title Kalikala Sahithya Sarvagna Panditha. Several literary texts were written by him. It is accepted that Kawsilumina, one of the great Sinhalese literary works, was written by King Parakramabahu II. Saddharmarathnawaliya written by Dharmasena Thero, and Poojawaliya written by Mayurapada Parivenadhipathi Buddhaputhra Thero were two significant prose texts written during the Dambadeniya period. Sidath Sangarawa on Sinhalese grammar, Elusandes Lakuna on prosody too belonged to this period. Dambadeni Kathikavatha, which consists of the disciplinary rules of the monks, Kandawuru Siritha, which describes the daily routine of king Parakramabahu II and the valuable medicinal text name Yogarnvaya written by Buddha Puthra Thero were written during the Dambadeniya period. There are several important texts written in Pali language during this time. Vishuddhi Marga Sannasa, Samanthakuta Varnana, Rasavahini, Sara Sangrahaya, the medicinal book named Bhessajja Manjusa, Hathvanagalla Vihara Vansaya and Thupavamsa are examples for that.

During Kurunegala period the Sinhalese prose literature was further advanced. Translating

Pansiya Panas Jataka Potha into Sinhala, Dalada Siritha, Dalda Poojavaliya, and Sinhala Bodhi Vamsa were written during this period.

Writing Sandesha Kavya started during the Gampola period. Mayura Sandesha and Thisara Sandesha are considered as the oldest Sandesha Kavyas. Pali texts such as Parami Shathakaya, Jeenabodhavali, Balavathara and Saddharmalankaraya too were written during this period.

The Kotte period was the golden age of Sinhalese literature. The period of Perakumba VI made a great service to the literature. King Parakramabahu VI was a great ruler as well as a pedant. There were a number of learned people who contributed to the advancement of literature.

Thotagamuve Sri Rahula Thero, Keragala Vanarathana Thero, Irugalthilaka Piriven Thero were learned monks who nurtured the literature.

Perakumba Siritha, Kavyashekaraya, Budugunalankaraya, Loweda Sangarava, Guttilla Kavya, Hansa, Parevi, Gira, Selalihini Sandesha Kavayas were written by these literati.

Another important feature is that the texts like Bhakthi Kavya, Shilo Kavya, Hatan Kavya, Prashasthi Kavya, Upadesha Kavya, Kosha Grantha, directed the literature to different aspects. Sanskrit texts too were written and Bhakthi Shathakaya is an example for that.

A number of Buddhist educational centres came into being during this time. King Parakramabahu VI built Pepilayane Sunethradevi Pirivena in memory of his mother. The Buddhist centers such as Keragala Padmavathi Pirivena, Devinuvvara Irugalkulathilaka Pirivena, Veedagama Ghunananda Pirivena did a great service to the advancement of literature.

## Important Facts

- ✓ One of the main factors that affected to transfer the ancient kingdoms in Sri Lanka was changing of the city centres. The situations arose in the country and the transformations occurred in the international trade too affected that situation.
- ✓ The process of origin of cities in the ancient time of this country can be analyzed through two processes named the first urbanization and the second urbanization. There are distinct differences in the cities which emerged from these two processes.
- ✓ Those urbanizing processes and series of activities that took place centred on the cities should be understood through the socio-political background on which those processes originated.
- ✓ After the downfall of Polonnaruwa kingdom, several other kingdoms namely, Dambadeniya, Yapahuwa, Kurunegala, Gampola and Kotte came into being. The Jaffna kingdom had started in Jaffna.
- ✓ There was a great revival in educational and literary spheres during the Kotte period.

## Activity

1. Mention the reasons for the origin and downfall of the ancient Sri Lankan cities.
2. Mark the places given below on a map of Sri Lanka.

Anuradhapura	Gampola	Yapahuwa
Polonnaruwa	Kotte	Dambadeniya
Kurunegala		

## Introduction

After the collapse of the Kotte and the Seethawaka kingdoms, it was the responsibility of the Kandyan kingdom to protect the independence of the country. Until 1815 the kings and the people of that kingdom fulfilled this responsibility completely by facing numerous challenges never faced by any kingdom that prevailed in this country. In this unit you will learn about the beginning of the Kandyan kingdom, which was the last kingdom in Sri Lanka, its expansion, its administration and its social and economic patterns.

### 8.1 Beginning and Expansion

The Kandyan kingdom was known by various names such as Senkadagala Nuwara, Udarata Rajadhaniya, Kande Nuwara, Mahanuwara Rajadhaniya.

The capital of the Kanda Udarata Rajadhaniya was Kandy (Mahanuwara). It is a naturally protected location. The city of Kandy is protected by the river of Mahaweli. It is very difficult to access this city due to the ghats such as Balana and Hunnasgiriya. Further, the Kandyan kingdom consists of a balmy climate and a fertile land.

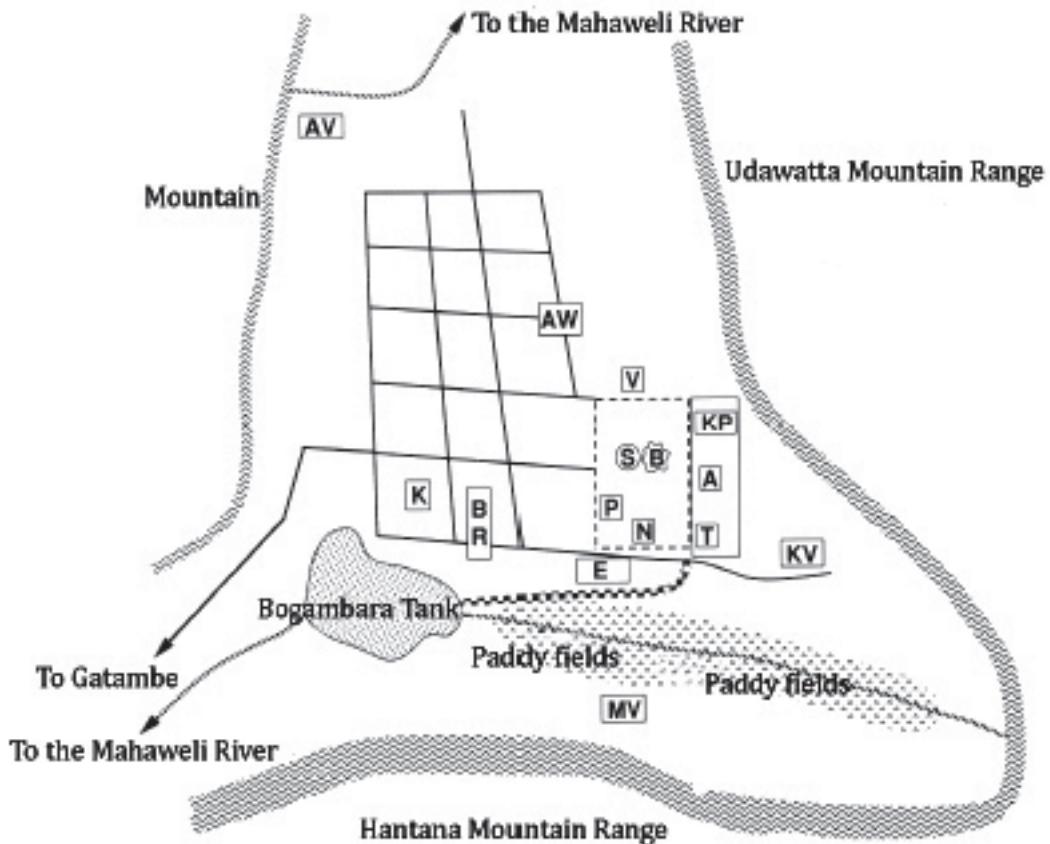
King Senasammatha Vickramabahu made Kandy an independent kingdom for the first time. It was a provincial ruling unit under the Kotte kingdom during the ruling period of king Parakramabahu VI. Therefore, King Senasammatha Vickramabahu is considered as the founder of the Kandyan kingdom.

The successor of king Senasammatha Vickramabahu was his son, Jayaweera Bandara (1511-1551). He ruled the kingdom, for a long time. He was a friend of king Mayadunne, who was the ruler of Seethawaka. In the incident “Vijayaba Kollaya” that took place against king Vijayabahu VI, who was the then ruler of Kotte, king Jayaweera Bandara supported king Mayadunne.

After King Jayaweera Bandara, his son Karaliyedde Bandara acceded to the throne of Kandy. He maintained a friendly policy with the Portuguese. The Kandyan chieftains were unhappy about this policy of Karaliyadde Bandara. Therefore, they supported the Seethawaka ruler, king Rajasinghe. Peradeniya Veerasundara Bandara, who was a chieftain of Kandy, assisted king Rajasinghe I to invade Kandy. Karaliyadde Bandara, who could not face this invasion, fled to the Portuguese with his daughter Kusumasana Devi and his son in law, Yamasinghe Bandara. Kusumasana Devi was baptized in the name of Dona Kathirina and Yamasinghe Bandara as Don Philip.

King Rajasinghe I, who captured Kandy in 1580, ruled the areas in Kandy from Seethawaka. But, king Rajasinghe I suspected Veerasundara Bandara and tactfully killed him. After this incident, the son of Veerasundara Bandara fled to the Portuguese and was baptized in the name of Don Juan of Austria.

The Kandyan chieftains were dissatisfied with the policies of king Seethawaka Rajasinghe on Kandy. As a result, the Portuguese, who took the advantage from this opportunity, sent Yamasinghe Bandara who was under their care to Kandy and established a ruling, which was loyal to the Portuguese, with the help of some Kandyan chieftains. On the occasion when the



*Plan 8.1. A map of the plan of old Kandy city. T-the Temple of Tooth A-Magul Maduwa N-Natha Devalaya P-Paththini Deva-laya V-Vishnu Devalaya K-Katharagama Devalaya AV-Asgiri Temple AW-Adhikaram Manor House MV-Malwaththa Temple S-Sthupa B-Sacred Bo Tree KV-Kumaruppe Street BR-The House of King's Army Brigade KP-King's Palace*

Portuguese sent Yamasinhe Bandara to Kandy, they sent Konappu Bandara, who was the son of Veerasundara Bandara, too with the army who went for his protection. As Yamasinhe Bandara, who was a puppet of the Portuguese, died in a short time, the Portuguese attempted to make the youngest son of Yamasinhe Bandara the king of Kandy. But it was unsuccessful due to Konappu Bandara. Konappu Bandara, who got the support of the Kandyans, captured the power of Kandy against the Portuguese and became the king in the name of Vimaladharmasooriya I. Due to this brave action of Konappu Bandara, the possibility of a Portuguese ruling in the Kandyan kingdom was prevented.

### King Vimaladharmasooriya I (1592 – 1604)

King Vimaladharmasooriya I, who became the king after Yamasinhe Bandara, was the son of Weerasundara Bandara. He was the beginner of a new dynasty in Kandy. After king Vimaladharmasooriya I came to power, there were several challenges faced by him.

1. Not having a legal royal inheritance.
2. Had to liberate the Kandyan kingdom from the clutches of the Portuguese.
3. Protecting the Kandyan kingdom from Seethawaka influences.
4. Had to rebuild the declined Buddha Sasana.
5. Had to enhance the economic affairs of the Kandyan kingdom.

- ♦ King Vimaladharmasooriya I took several steps to establish his legal right to the Kandyan kingdom.

1. Establishing his right by marrying Kusumasana Devi who had a legal right to the Kandyan kingdom.
2. Abandoning Roman Catholic religion and embracing Buddhism.
3. Getting a Buddhist name as Vimaladharmasooriya.
4. Bringing the Sacred Tooth Relic, which was hidden in the temple of Delgamu, to Kandy.

- ♦ **The king defeated king Rajasinghe I with the help of the Kandyans in order to protect the country from the influences of the kingdom of Seethawaka.**

- ♦ **There were several steps that the king took to save the Kandyan kingdom from the clutches of the Portuguese.**

1. Defeating the Portuguese completely in the battle of Danthure in 1594 A.D.
2. Supporting the rebellions against the Portuguese, organized by the people of low-country.
3. Try to get the assistance of the Dutch to expel the Portuguese.

- ♦ **King Vimaladharmasooriya took several steps to rebuild the declined Buddhism.**

1. Bringing Upasampada from Mianmar.
2. Renovating old temples such as Lankathilaka, Ridee Viharaya and Gadaladeniya.

- ♦ **The king took several measures for the economic development of the Kandyan kingdom.**

1. Taking actions to develop agriculture.
2. Encourage to enhance the cotton cultivation.
3. Developing the iron and steel industries in Kotmale and Walapane.
4. Take steps to develop nitre industry in the Kandyan kingdom.

King Vimaladharmasooriya I, who attempted to develop the kingdom of Kandy in this way, died in 1604 A.D. after being infected with a sudden fever.



*Fig. 8.1. A drawing of King Rajasinghe II. This was drawn by the British national named Robert Knox, who stayed in this country.*

## King Senarath (1604- 1635 A.D)

When king Vimaladharma sooriya I passed away, his sons were at a very young age. Therefore, a cousin brother of King Vimaladharma sooriya I named prince Senarath became the king of Kandy in 1604. There were several challenges that he had to face.

1. Establishing his royal inheritance in the Kandyan kingdom.
2. Minimizing the threats that came from the Portuguese against the Kandyan kingdom.

During the early period of the King Senarath's ruling, he married Kusumasana Devi (Dona Kathirina) and established his kingship.

Queen Kusumasana Devi had two sons from King Vimaladharma sooriya I and one son from king Senarath. Among them, the cleverer one was Prince Maha Asthana (Prince Rajasinghe II). In order to avoid the competition between the princes for the kingship, king Senarath divided the Kandyan kingdom into three parts and gave each one to each prince. Accordingly, Uva area was given to prince Kumarasinghe; Matale area was given to prince Vijepala; Kandy area was given to prince Rajasinghe.

Prince Maha Asthana alias Rajasinghe II assisted his father to protect the Kandyan kingdom from the Portuguese. He was a great warrior and he annihilated the Portuguese in the battle of Uva-Randeniwala in 1630. Further, he attacked and paralyzed the Portuguese villages on the borders in Kandy.

## King Rajasinghe II (1635- 1687 A.D.)

Prince Rajasinghe acceded to the throne of Kandy as Rajasinghe II with the demise of king Senarath in 1635. He faced several challenges during his ruling time.

1. Preventing the attacks of the Portuguese to the Kandyan kingdom.
2. Expelling the Portuguese from this country.
3. Minimizing the threats to the Kandyan kingdom from the chieftains.
4. Liberating the Kandyan kingdom from the Dutch influence.

The king had acted to suppress the attacks from the Portuguese to the Kandyan kingdom since his father's ruling period. He defeated the Portuguese completely in Uva-Randeniwala battle as well as in the Gannoruwa battle in 1638.

The king needed the assistance of a naval army to expel the Portuguese from this country. King Rajasinghe II acted to get assistance from the Dutch for that purpose. King Rajasinghe II managed to expel the Portuguese from this country by getting the support of the Dutch in 1658. Even though the Portuguese was expelled from the country, unexpectedly the Dutch established their power in the Portuguese areas. The Dutch, who established their power in a number of coastal areas, attempted constantly to expand their ruling area from 1658. The Dutch captured several areas in Kandy during the years between 1665 and 1668. King Rajasinghe II, who stayed silent during that time, launched a number of powerful attacks during the years between 1670 and 1675 and liberated many areas that the Dutch had possessed. Therefore, the Dutch, who realized the power of the Kandyan kingdom, attempted to be peaceful with the Kandyan kings from then on.

Establishing power by the Dutch in the coastal areas was an impediment to the purpose of king Rajasinghe II to become the king of the whole country. However, when the Portuguese was expelled from the country, the king managed to capture more areas that had belonged to the Portuguese. The ports such as Kalpitiya, Chilaw, Trincomalee and Batticaloa had belonged to the Kandyan kingdom then.



Fig. 8.2. A rare photograph which displays the Kandyan pageant and the nature of the streets of the Kandy city in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.

King Rajasinghe II, who made a great contribution to the expansion of power of the Kandyan kingdom, ruled more than 50 years and passed away in 1687.

#### King Vimaladharmasooriya II (1687-1707A.D)

After king Rajasinghe II, his son Vimaladharmasooriya II became the king. He was not as clever as his father. Therefore, it seemed that the Kandyan chieftains strengthened their power during this king's time.

He acted peacefully with Dutch after he became the king. Though he was not a clever ruler, he was able to protect the areas where the power had been expanded in the Kandyan kingdom.

By the time of King Vimaladharmasooriya II, the higher ordinance (Upasampada) of the Kandyan kingdom was in a state of decline once again. Therefore, the king took measures to bring the higher ordinance from Burma into this country once again. There is information to state that the Dutch assisted the king for that purpose. It is recorded that he had renovated the Temple of Tooth. King Vimaladharamasooriya II passed away in 1707 A.D.

#### King Sri Veera Parakrama NarendraSinghe (1707 – 1739 A.D.)

Sri Veera Parakrama NarendraSinghe, who was the son of Vimaladharmasooriya II, acceded to the throne of the Kandyan kingdom in 1707.

The weakness of the king was that he did not have a good knowledge on administration. The result of this was that the Kandyan chieftains strengthened their power further.

This king, as his father, married a South Indian princess. They did not have children from this marriage. The result of this was that the queen's brother inherited the kingship, following the South Indian tradition.

### **Nayakkar Dynasty**

#### **King Sri Vijaya Rajasinghe (1739 -1747 A.D.)**

King Sri Veera Parakrama Narendrasinghe passed away in year 1739, without leaving an heir to the throne. In this case, in accordance with the South Indian tradition, the queen's brother prince Sri Vijaya Rajasinghe became the king of the Kandyan kingdom. The new royal dynasty, which was started with this king, is known as the Nayakkar dynasty. The major challenge that King Sri Vijaya Rajasinghe faced was the strengthened power of the chieftains of the Kandyan council of the palace. To ameliorate this situation the king appointed his relatives to the council.

Even though this king, who had embraced Buddhism and grown in the association of the Buddhist Bhikkus, acted to bring higher ordinance from Burma according to the instructions given by Weliwita Saranankara Thero, his effort was not successful.

King Sri Vijaya Rajasinghe, who married a South Indian princess, passed away in 1747 without leaving a royal heir as he did not have children.

#### **King Keerthi Sri Rajasinghe (1747 -1781 A.D)**

After the death of king Sri Vijaya Rajasinghe, his wife's brother Keerthi Sri Rajasinghe acceded to the throne of the Kandyan kingdom in 1747. It has been recorded that since Keerthi Sri Rajasinghe

was at a very young age as 16 years old when he came to power, his father Narenappa Nayakkar interfered in the affairs of the ruling.

When king Keerthi Sri Rajasinghe came to power, Buddhism in this country was of a very decaying state. Therefore, according to the instructions of Weliwita Saranankara Thero, the king acted to create a Buddhist revival in the country. Following are the several steps taken by the king for that.

- ◆ Establishing higher ordinance again by sending messengers to Thailand by the king and accompanying the Bhikkus led by Upali Thero. With this the beginning of the present day Siyam sect took place.
- ◆ Renovating the temples in upcountry as well as in low country.
- ◆ Granting the post of Sangaraja to Saranankara Thero and assisting the Thero to create a Buddhist revival.
- ◆ During the years between 1760 and 1765 the good relationship between the Dutch and Kandy collapsed. As a result, there were a few fights between the two sides. Those conflicts ended when the king and the Dutch signed a peace pact between them in 1766. King Keerthi Sri Rajasinghe too passed away without leaving an heir to the Kandyan throne.

#### **King Rajadhirajasinghe (1781-1798 A.D)**

After the death of king Keerthi Sri Rajasinghe, his brother became the king of Kandy in the name of Rajadhirajasinghe. By this time disputes were developing between the Kandyan chieftains and the Nayakkar kings.

An important event that took place during his ruling time was seizing the coastal areas of Sri Lanka by the English in 1796. King Rajadhi rajasinghe too passed away without a successor in 1798.

## King Sri Vickrama Rajasinghe (1798-1815 A.D.)

After king Rajadhirajasinghe's death, prince Kannasami was made the king as Sri Vickrama Rajasinghe in 1798, according to the need of the then Maha Adikaram, Pilimathalawwe. This king started gradually to be obedient to his Nayakkar relatives, as a result the relationships between the Kandyan chieftains and the king were disrupted. Though the English invaded Kandy in 1803, the king managed to defeat the English with the support of the Kandyans. However, during the last few years of the king's ruling time he acted cruelly. Therefore the relationship between the king and the people was disturbed. Thus, the English, who acted tactfully, sent their army to Kandy and arrested the king in the month of February in 1815. In accordance with the accord signed between the Kandyan chieftains and the English in the month of March in 1815, the English possessed the Kandyan kingdom. King Sri Vickrama Rajasinghe, who was in the English custody, was deported to Vellor by the English king.

## **8.2 The Administrative Structure of the Kandyan Kingdom**

The highest position of the administrative hierarchy of the Kandyan kingdom was held by the king. There were two Adikarams for the king's assistance. Politically, they were second only to the king. There was a royal council to discuss the important affairs of the kingdom. Adikarams, Disawes, Maha Lekams, and Badde Lekams participated in this council, which was headed by the king. The administration of the kingdom had been divided into several sections. Service in the palace (Maha Vasala Sevaya) was under the direct rule of the king; the provincial ruling structure (Rata Wasama) was afoot through Maha Adikarams, and under the supervision of the king; Maha Badda alias tax structure which was under the relevant sectional heads and administration of temples and Devalas were the major administrative sections.

### **King's Power :**

- The king was the one who possessed the highest power in the country.
- Maintaining the peace in the country and providing protection were the king's major tasks.
- The king was expected to act in accordance with the tradition and customs.
- The king held the authority as the highest court in the country and had the power to order death sentence to a convict.
- The king held the priority in executing all political, economic and administrative affairs in the country.

### **Adikarams**

The areas given below were administered by the relevant Adikaram.

Maha Adikaram	Devana (second) Adikaram
Hath Koralaya	Hathara Koralaya
Uva	Thun Koralaya
Matale	Sabaragamuwa
Walapane	Uva Palatha
Binthenna	Udu Nuwara, Yati Nuwara, Thumpane
Wellassa	Kothmale, Bulathgama
Nuwara Kalawiya	

There were two posts of Adikarams. Maha Adikaram was called Pallegampaha Adikaram and Devana Adikaram was called Udagampaha Adikaram.

The messengers who brought the decrees or messages of Adikarams to provincial officers

were called 'Katupulle Messengers'. Their official symbol was a silver ringed cane, the top part of which was bent.

### **Mahawasala alias the Officers in the Palace**

Their duty was to run the affairs of the palace by maintaining the pride and grandeur of the kingship. Providing food and drinks to the people in the palace, providing clothes, jewellery, and furniture to the palace were their duties. These officers were under the direct supervision of the king. Many Nilames and Muhandirams had been in charge of those sections in the palace. Gajanayaka Nilame (the officer who looked into the affairs of the tuskers), Maha Lekam (chief secretary), Maha Gabada Nilame, Diya wadana Nilame, Halu Wadana Nilame, Bath Wadana Nilame, As Panthiye Muhandiram, Kavikara Maduve Muhandiram are examples to the officers in the king's palace.

### **Ratawasam alias Provincial Ruling**

The Kandyan (Udarata) kingdom consists of 21 areas named Rata and Disawa. The areas, which were close to Kandy, such as Udu Nuwara, Yati Nuwara, Thumpane, Harispattuwa, Dumbara, Hewaheta, Kothmale, Uda Bulathgama, Patha Bulathgama, were known as Rata. Hathara Koralaya, Hath Koralaya, Uva, Sabaragamuwa, Mathale, Walapane were some of the 12 Disawes. The officers who were in charge of the Ratases were called Rate Rala or Rate Mahathwaru. Liyana Rala, Undiya Rala and other minor officers were under them. The officers who were in charge of the Disawas were called Disawa. The unit of Disawa was divided into Koralas and Koralas were divided into Pattus. The officer in charge of a Koralaya was called Korale. In a Koralaya there were Muhandiramas who were in charge of each caste. Under them there were Vidanes who were in charge of each village.

### **Badde Sanvidhanaya (Badde Structure)**

Apart from the politically existed provincial organization network, the artisans or the castes in a Disawa had been categorized separately according to their tasks. Though the Badde Sanvidhanya (structure) was afoot separately at first, it came under Disawa during the last period of the Kandyan kingdom. Following are some examples for the Badde Sanvidhanaya.

Madige Badda (transport affairs)

Kuruwe Badda (catching tuskers)

Badahela Badda (pottery)

Rada Badda (washing clothes)

Handa Badda (weaving clothes)

### **Administrative Affairs of Temples and Devalas**

The administration of temples and monasteries were mainly under Mahanayaka and Anu Nayaka Theros. The activities in the Dalada Maligawa were done through Diya Wadana Nilame. There were people who provided their official labour for the maintenance of temples and Dewalas, organization of various types of Pooja and affairs of the procession (Perahera).

### **Judicial Affairs**

- The king possessed the highest judicial power.
- Every officer possessed a judicial power according to their posts.
- Only the king had the sole authority to hear some cases.

**There were several cases heard only by the king.**

Cases regarding important leaders

Cases regarding temples and monks

Cases regarding riots

Cases regarding treason

Cases regarding conspiracies / coups

**Some of the punishments administered to the convicts at that time.**

Beating

Expelling to gypsy groups

Fining

Drowning

Keeping in the *Dandu Kanda*

Banishing

Cutting hair

Whipping

Killing by trampling upon by elephants

Thrashing with Ipala

Imprisoning

### **8.3 Economic System**

**It was an agricultural economy that existed during the Kandyan kingdom.**

- It was a consumer based one.
- The economy was a self-sufficient one.
- Since there were many hilly areas, lands for paddy cultivation were limited.
- Though the Kandyan possessed the same administration as in ancient Raja Rata and Ruhun areas, agriculture was limited due to the decline of irrigation.
- In the precipices on the steeps of the mountains paddy cultivation was done.
- A large quantity of land in the Kandyan kingdom was used for Chena cultivation.
- Grains such as Kurakkan, Amu, maize, wheat and yams and sweet potatoes were cultivated.
- Jak, bread fruit, pepper, cardamom, aricanuts, vegetables and fruits were grown in home gardens.
- Iron, wood, metal, lacquer and reed industry were in a developed state.
- Animal husbandry too was done for agriculture and getting milk.
- Food needs were satisfied by supplementary crops.



*Fig. 8.3. A family in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, who were engaged in the industry of weaving mats.*

#### 8.4 Social Organization

- It was accepted that the owner of all land in the country was the king.
- The lands in the Kandyan kingdom were divided into several parts based on the ownership and enjoyment.

**Gabadagama** – The lands allocated for the use of king's palace

**Nindagam** - The lands granted to the aristocrats for their service

**Viharagam** - The lands offered to the temples

**Devalagam** - The lands offered to the Devalas

**Paravenigam (Nindagam)** - The lands enjoyed by the villagers for generations.

People supplied some service or a specific amount of items to the king for the lands they enjoyed.

The countrymen's service system was called 'Rajakariya'.

- ◆ It was a rural society that existed in the Kandyan kingdom.
  - Village was self-sufficient.
  - Its social relations were based on the caste system.
  - Each caste had its own economic activities.
  - Marriages were based on the caste system.

There were three type of marriages known as 'Deega Vivahaya (the bridegroom accompanied the bride to his house), Binna Vivahaya (the bridegroom stays permanently in the house of

the bride after the marriage), Eka Geyi Kema (one bride was brought for two male persons in the same family)'.

- All the activities in the Kandyan kingdom was done according to the barter system.

- Family was the main social unit.

- The prominent feature of the society was virtue.

- Temple was the centre connected with the lives of the villagers.

*King Sri Vijaya Rajasinghe*

(1739-1747 A.D.)

*King Keerthi Sri Rajasinghe*

(1747-1781 A.D.)

*King Rajadhirajasinghe*

(1781-1798 A.D)

*King Sri Vickrama Rajasinghe*

(1798-1815 A.D)

### ***The Rulers of the Kandyan Kingdom***

*King Senasammatha Vikramabahu*

(1469-1511 A.D.)

*King Jayaweera Bandara*

(1511-1551 A.D.)

*King Karaliyadde Bandara*

(1551-1581 A.D)

*King Rajasinghe I*

(1581- 1591 A.D)

*King Vimaladharma sooriya I*

(1592 -1604 A.D)

*King Senarath*

(1604-1635 A.D)

*King Rajasinghe II*

(1635-1687 A.D)

*King Vimaladharma sooriya II*

(1687-1707 A.D)

*King Veera Parakrama Narendra singhe*

(1707-1739 A.D)

### **Important Facts**

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✓ Kandyan era was the last kingdom in Sri Lanka. During this period the rulers had to work with three European nations namely the Portuguese, the Dutch, and the English.

✓ During this time, our kings acted tactfully by taking much pains to protect the unity of the country.

✓ The then society had been organized based on various groups.

✓ Some of the kings, who ruled the Kandyan kingdom, had belonged to a South Indian dynasty known as Nayakkar.

✓ In 1815 the Kandyan kingdom was bestowed to the king of England through a document called 'Udarata Accord' signed by the then governor of Sri Lanka Robert Brownrig along with English officers and the Kandyan Sinhala chieftains. It seems the main cause for the downfall of the kandyan kingdom.

## Activity

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1. Explain with examples how the rulers of the Kandyan kingdom became great.
2. Describe how the administrative organization of the Kandyan kingdom contributed to its socio-economic efficiency.
3. Write an article for a newspaper about the social organization of the Kandyan kingdom.

# 9

# Renaissance

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## Introduction

The word Renaissance means rebirth. The historians use this word to mean the wide transformation that took place in the fields of art and science from the 14<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> centuries A.D. in Europe.

The period in which ancient Greek and Roman civilizations existed is called the Pristine age in the history of Europe. The period of around thousand years that followed the downfall of ancient Rome civilization in the 5<sup>th</sup> century is called the mediaeval period in Europe. Once again an interest grew in studying literature, art and philosophy that existed in the ancient Greek and Roman civilizations in the latter part of the mediaeval era in Europe. As a result of it, the European society experienced a broad transformation as the Europeans utilized the art styles that were used in the ancient Greek and Roman civilizations once again and tended to study literature and philosophy in depth. By this, the above mentioned ancient civilizations were revived. It is called the Renaissance. Due to the transformations that occurred during the Renaissance in every field, the mediaeval period died out and the modern era of the European history started.

## 9.1 The Reasons for the Renaissance

- ♦ Surrendering the city of Constantinople by the Turks

Constantinople, which was a very advanced trade city during the final part of the mediaeval era, attracted the attention of the scholars. The Greek and Roman literature books were stored in libraries in the city of Contantinople and a number of Greek and Roman scholars were engaged in studying there. But, the Islamic Turks surrendered this city in 1453 A.D. and therefore, the Roman Catholic scholars found it difficult to stay in the city any longer. Therefore, these scholars fled to other European countries with those books and propagated the Greek and Roman literature and languages in those cities. As a result, the Greek and Roman cultures revived.

- ♦ Growth in Trade and Origin of a New Group of Rich

There was a growth of trade and commercial affairs between the Eastern and Western countries in the 12<sup>th</sup> century A.D. Therefore, a new group of rich people originated in the cities like Venice and Genoa in Italy with the money they earned from trade, production and bank affairs. Since these wealthy people did not depend on the ancient feudal nobles, they had a free mind to pay their attention to artistic work and also a financial power to support it. As there were a number of small kingdoms in Italy then, the wealthy people who live in them offered to support artistic affairs. It was a predominant reason for the origin of the Renaissance from Italy. The family called Medici who lived in the



Fig 9.1 A drawing, which displays two divine children, painted in the Sistine church by Michael Angelo.

city of Florence in Italy is a good example for a rich family who supported the artistic affairs.

#### ♦ Intellectual Revival

After the decline of the Roman civilization, subjects like Theology, Philosophy, and Law were the main subjects in the education system centred in the religious institutions. But, since new subjects such as Ancient Literature, dramas, Phonetics and History were taught in the new educational centres which started after the 12<sup>th</sup> century, there was a new group of scholars by the time of Renaissance. Another reason that caused the intellectual revival of the Europeans was the printing industry. After the invention of the printing machine by Gutenberg in 1454, printing shops were started in a number of areas in Italy. Therefore printed books were abundant and much interest grew in Greek and Roman literature and drama.

#### ▪ Criticism of the Domination of the Church

By the mediaeval era, both the Pope and the church had a great power. Therefore, the religion had affected many aspects of human life to a great extent. Some of the priests in the Catholic council had tended to a more worldly life. As a result of the revival of thinking in the Renaissance, some weaknesses in the Catholic council were criticized. John Wyklip in England, John Huss in Bohemia, Irasmus in France and Martin Luther in Germany were prominent among such critics.

#### How the Renaissance Transformed Europe

The Renaissance affected much to transform the course of Europe. It transformed every section such as academic, political, economic and scientific.

## Academic Renaissance

The Academic Renaissance means the revival that took place in the fields of language, literature, arts, sculpture, and architecture in Europe in the 15<sup>th</sup> century.

### The Revival of Language and Literature

The languages used in the mediaeval period were tribal languages. Latin language was used in the affairs of religion and law to a certain extent. Greek language had the state of a dead language. However, since studying the books written in Greek and Latin languages increased during the Renaissance, there was a revival in those languages. This was an important thing that happened in the Academic Renaissance. And also, learning Latin and Greek languages became a fashion. Therefore, the provincial languages used so far went into disuse.

There was a revival in literature after the studying of books written in Greek and Latin languages. Specially, there was a great interest in Greek dramas. A number of authors, who made a great service to literature, emerged during this time. Dante, Petrach, Baccasio in Italy, Sir Thomas Moor, Francis Bacon and William Shakespeare in England and Irasmus in France were prominent. They wrote a number of books. Divine Commedia written by Alguri Dante and the Sonnets for Lora written by Petrach can be taken as examples.

### Humanism

Humanism or considering man as noble was a prominent feature in the Renaissance. In the mediaeval period everything was based on religion and therefore, everything happened within a religious framework. But, with



Fig 9.2 A drawing, which displays how Galileo Galili examined the space through his telescope. Scientific inventions was a prominent feature in the European Renaissance.

humanism Europe started to look at everything critically. Humanistic subjects were taught instead of theological subjects. For example, subjects like literature, history, art, law and ethics were taught. Therefore, many authors who had the Greek and Roman influence and tended to humanism, emerged in this period.

### Arts and Crafts

#### Transformations that took place in the fields of Arts and Crafts

All the craftsmen were organized in grades in the mediaeval period. Therefore, the creations of the mediaeval period were called by grades. Another special feature was that arts and crafts had religious characteristics. The reasons for that

were that only the church had the strength to support the arts and the mediaeval thinking had been built upon religious teachings. Therefore the artists were not independent enough to make creations according to their talents. But, during the Renaissance everything changed. The rich, who appreciated worldly pleasure, offered to support the artists during the Renaissance. As individualism was appreciated during the Renaissance, the artists started making their creations independently by showing their talents. They started to produce the artworks by the names of artists, which had been introduced by the grades so far. Therefore, a number of artworks, which displayed worldly pleasure instead of religious thoughts, were produced.

### **Paintings**

Paintings, among other arts and crafts, had a broad transformation during the Renaissance. The city of Florence was a centre which produced a new art of painting. As the creations were made giving priority to the worldly pleasure, paintings and sculptures in this period displayed nude and half nude figures. So far the personalities related to religion like Jesus Christ and Mother Mary were the subjects of paintings. But in the Renaissance the figures of wealthy people were drawn. Leonardo Da Vinci, Micheal Angelo, Raphael, Masekshio, and Botta Chelli were important painters in this period.

Leonardo Da Vinci was clever at many fields in addition to painting. He was a poet, a musician, a scientist and a practical engineer. His paintings such as Monalisa and last supper of Jesus Christ have been considered as great masterpieces even at present. Michael Angelo was also a great painter as well as a sculptor and an architect. The paintings which he drew on the ceiling of the Sistine church displays the greatness of his paintings. The painting 'Last Judgement' and "The Painting of Adam" drawn in the Sistine church itself are important among his paintings.

### **Sculpture**

Sculpture too had an important place among the arts and crafts during the Renaissance. Sculpturing in alabaster was a prominent feature at that time. Michael Angelo was a great sculptor. He has sculptured Lorenzo Medici of the Medici family out of alabaster. The statues of Pieta, Moses, and David are among his other creations.

### **Architecture**

There were significant changes in architecture during the Renaissance. The special feature of the architecture in the mediaeval period was high roofs in the shape of pointed cone and pillars in the shape of pyramids. Instead, the main features in the architecture during the Renaissance were the circular archs, high pillars and half round domes according to the Roman architecture. Even luxurious castles were constructed imitating the Romans.

The buildings such as Saint Peter's Basilica church, and Seat Church in Florence are among the constructions which reflect their architecture. Michael Anjelo, Leonardo Da Vinci and Raphael were talented architects in the Renaissance period.

### **Scientific Advancement**

Another significant feature of the Renaissance was the advancement of science. The scholars, who were influenced by the Greek books, tended to experiment scientifically without being confined to one field. They observed everything including the earth, the sun, the moon and the stars. As a result, they put forward novel ideas on the universe. And also there was advancement in science too.

### **Novel ideas on the Universe**

#### **Nicholas Copernicus (Polish)**

He discovered that the earth is round and the other planets rotate around the earth. Since he



*Fig. 9.3. The transformations of the Renaissance influenced many spheres. Architecture and sculpture is one of them. This photograph shows a residential building which was built according to the style in Renaissance period in France.*

made a great service to science, he is known as the father of modern astronomy.

#### **Isaac Newton (England)**

He discovered the law of gravitation.

#### **Johannes Kepler (German)**

He confirmed the propositions put forwarded by Copernicus and he further discovered that the planets in the solar system go round it.

#### **Galileo Galili (Italy)**

He invented the telescope. He observed the objects in the sky with the help of his telescope

and discovered that there are craters on the moon and sub planets around Jupiter. He is known as the father of experiment.

#### **Advancement in Medicine**

There was a revival in the medicine during this period.

#### **William Harvey (English)**

He discovered significant information regarding the blood circulation system in the human body.

#### **Paracelsus (Swiss)**

He experimented on the causes for diseases and

remedies for them. He made a great influence on the modern pharmacology and the methods of treating illnesses.

### **Michael Certes (Swiss)**

He discovered information on the process of spreading blood throughout the body after being purified by lungs after coming into it from the heart and going out through the right side of the heart.

### **Johannes Gutenberg (German)**

The German national Johannes Gutenberg invented the printing machine.

### **The Political Revival**

During the feudal period ruling of each region was assigned to provincial rulers. The land-owning aristocrats acted as provincial rulers. As they acted independently, they enjoyed more powers than the king in the administrative affairs. As the people then lived were under each provincial ruler, they just thought of themselves as the people of their own province but did not act as one nation in one country.

The origination of national states during the Renaissance was the most significant transformation experienced in the field of politics. The separate provincial states were united under one king. Therefore, the king was significant in administrative affairs and all powers centered on the king.

A middle class originated with the growth of trade affairs in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. The middle class was those who became rich by earning money from the trade by then. Traders, bankers, ship-owners, and caravan owners belonged to the middle class. When the middle class became more powerful in the society, the land-owning aristocrats started to lose the powers and the rights that they enjoyed so far. The kings in the national states

obtained the assistance of these middle class representatives in the administrative affairs. The middle class gained the royal assistance for their trade affairs.

### **Economic Revival**

A broad transformation occurred in Europe during the Renaissance. The self sufficient economy in the mediaeval age declined and a growth of trading happened in this period. After the national states originated in Europe, the governments extended their direct support to widen the trade affairs. For that, national trade policies and national tax policies were implemented in the European countries. Further, as a result of explorations, new sea routes were discovered and it helped the Europeans to travel to the East and the American continent. Therefore, they could take the trade commodities and items such as, spices, gold, silver, pearls, gems, elephants, and tusks to Europe. Through this their trading developed.

With the widening of trade affairs, the usage of currency increased. Using monetary notes and coins spread. As it was difficult and insecure in taking money to distant areas for transactions, exchange of cheques and banking system started during the Renaissance. Further, the banks supplied loan facilities to businessmen for their commercial affairs.

### **Discovery of New Trade Routes**

With the capture of the city of Constantinople by the Turks in 1453 A.D, the trade affairs in the East and West of the Europeans were disturbed. All trade routes by sea and land came under the Turks' empire. Therefore, the Europeans tended to find new sea routes to reach Asia to gain Asian commodities.

By this time a conducive background to explore new sea routes was setting in Europe. That is,

- The compass, which could be used for the safety of navel journeys, had been invented.
- The fact that the world is round had been discovered during the Renaissance.
- Proper understanding had been provided on the world by Ptolemy's world map.
- National states sponsored for this journey.

The first two countries which were interested in the purpose of exploration were Portugal and Spain. Prince Henry in Portugal (Henry the Navigator) extended a huge support to the explorative affairs.

Bertholamiudus who attempted to find a sea route from Portugal to the East and was caught in a tempest in the South cape in Africa, named it the Tempest Cape and sailed back to his country. Later the king of Portugal renamed it as Cape of Good Luck.

Vasco de Gama, who sailed in the same route travelled by Bertholamiudus, reached the Calicut harbour in India. This was the first sea route to Asia, discovered by the Europeans.

Christopher Columbus was able to discover West Indies under the auspices of Ferdinand and the queen Isabella in Spain. Amerigo Vespuchi discovered America (The New World). Ferdinand Magellan discovered Philippines and Cabe brothers discovered Canada.

### **The Global Trend in the Renaissance**

The Renaissance first started in the city of Florence in Italy. Afterwards it spread in the other regions in Italy and then throughout the Europe. Europeans started travelling to discover new countries as a result of the explorations in the Renaissance. As a result of it, Europeans spread their power in the Asian, African, and

American continents. Therefore, some countries in the above mentioned continents were colonies of several European countries for about four and half centuries beginning from the 16<sup>th</sup> century. Therefore, new relations developed with Europe and other countries in the world commercially, socially, culturally as well as politically. As a result of these relations, printing industry spread over the world. Through this, European thinking and its literature spread in other countries. Sons and daughters of the rich in the colonies migrated to European countries for their education. The Europeans propagated their religion in colonies under them. Further, as a result of constructing churches and other buildings in their colonies, they received the architecture and arts and crafts of the Europeans. Due to the relations between the Europe and other countries the world inherited scientific knowledge and technology of Europe. By this, the Renaissance became a global trend.

### **9.2 The Influence of the Renaissance on Sri Lanka**

The influence of the Renaissance, which took place in Europe, reached Sri Lanka with the arrival of Portuguese, Dutch and English nations. Since the Kandyan kingdom was independent during the period in which these nations ruled in the coastal areas, they could not make a broad change in the society of this country. However, after the conquest of the Kandyan kingdom by the British in 1815, Sri Lanka remained a colony of the British until 1948. Therefore, a number of broad transformations took place in this country not only politically but also socially and culturally during that time.

#### **Political Changes**

By the 19<sup>th</sup> century Europe had experienced a broad thinking transformation as a result of the Renaissance, religious reforms, advancement in printing, rise of capitalism and industrial

revolution. Accordingly, we consider that the transformations, which took place in this country during the British ruling, occurred due to this novel thinking. Though there was a traditional system of king's ruling until the Kandyan kingdom was surrendered, that ruling system ended after Sri Lanka became a colony. This country received a parliamentary government system due to governmental reforms introduced by the English. During the British rule, the then existed provincial ruling of this country too underwent a change. They introduced a new administrative system and a class of new administrative officers instead of the traditional leaders such as Adikarams, Disawes, Mohottalas, and Koralas in the Kandyan kingdom. Further, the ancient legal system which existed in this country too went into disuse. During the Dutch ruling, the Roman and Dutch law had also been introduced to this country. During the British ruling, they established a legal system, which accorded with the fundamentals of the European legal system, and a court system for justice in this country.

### Economic Changes

The cities close to the Mediterranean Sea such as Venice, Genova, and Constantinople were prominent in the European trade affairs during the mediaeval period. However, after the Renaissance the countries close to the Atlantic sea such as Portugal, Spain, France, Holland and England were more important in the European trade affairs.

With the arrival of European nations to this country, direct trade relations started between Sri Lanka and Europe. The Dutch cultivated cinnamon in this country aiming at trading and the British cultivated trade items such as coffee, cocoa, cinchona, tea and rubber. As this country got accustomed to a commercial economic pattern under the Europeans, the rural self sufficient economy, which had existed so far in this country, collapsed. Due to the

economic reforms implemented by the English, there started an import and export economy in the country. As a result, even food items were imported to Sri Lanka. Apart from this, spreading the usage of money, starting a railway and a road system, beginning of trade cities such as Colombo, Galle and Trincomalee and a new middle class which earned money from the new means are examples for other transformations which took place economically in this country.

### Social and Cultural Transformations

The introduction of the printing industry to Sri Lanka was another effect of the Renaissance to this country. Though the printing industry was first introduced to this country by the Dutch, it became more popular during the British ruling. With the advancement of the printing, due to publication of books, magazines and newspapers, the knowledge of the society increased. Through that, this country inherited the European thinking as well as its literature. Some Sri Lankans migrated to European countries for education and returned to the country. In this way too Sri Lanka acquired the Western thinking.

Europeans came to Sri Lanka in a period in which the unity of Christianity in Europe had collapsed. The religious revolution which took place in 1517 in Europe was the cause for that. The Portuguese propagated the Roman Catholic religion around coastal areas in this country and the Dutch propagated their cult in this country. Through this the religious sects in Europe were propagated in this country. The European education system was propagated in this country due to the education which was implemented in this country during the Dutch and the British ruling; further, as the Europeans constructed churches and other buildings in this country, Sri Lanka received the architecture then practised in Europe.

## Important Facts

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- ✓ The broad transformation that took place in the fields of arts and science in Europe between the 14<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> centuries is known as the Renaissance.
- ✓ There were many reasons for the Renaissance in Europe.
- ✓ The Renaissance first started in the city of Florence in Italy.
- ✓ Due to the transformations that occurred in the sections of arts and science in the Renaissance, human thinking underwent a great change.
- ✓ Due to travelling in search of new trade routes during the Renaissance period, new relations between Europe and other countries developed.

### Activity

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Explain how the Renaissance in Europe influenced the political, economic and cultural sections in Sri Lanka.

# 10 Sri Lanka and the Western World

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## Introduction

The Europeans paid their attention to Eastern countries as a result of the new revival in the trade centred on the Southern Europe from the beginning of the second millennium A.D. The purpose of it was to use the resources in those countries for trade.

Some specialties can be seen in the way Sri Lanka, which had a long history in connection with the trading in the Indian Ocean, acted with the European nations. There was a series of remonstrance in the relations between Sri Lanka and the Western world in this period since the political motives emerged more than the commercial purposes. A series of reactions between the remonstrances of the natives against the domination of the foreigners could be seen in this period. It is expected to discuss those facts in this lesson.

### 10.1 Arrival of the Portuguese in Asia

There were three main routes through which Asia and Europe continued their trade relations from the distant past.

1. The Silk Route which led from the city of Constantinople through Persia, the Central Asia to China.
2. The route which led from Constantinople to Egypt through the Mediterranean Sea, Red Sea to the Indian Ocean.
3. The route which led from Constantinople through Bagdad, the Persian Gulf to the Western coast of India.

They used ships in the sea and the caravans on land to transport the commodities when they made their trade relations. By the mediaeval period, the monopoly of trades in Asia was in the hands of the Muslims. The Muslims made a great profit by collecting the commodities including spices in Asia and selling them to Europeans. As all three trade routes above mentioned had connected with the city of Constantinople, that city which was under the European Christian believers, had become the main centre of the East and West trading. But, when this city was captured by the Turks who followed the Islam religion in 1453, it was a great blow to the traditional trading between Asia and Europe.

The European Christians suffered a great loss, due to the capture of the city of Constantinople (present day Istanbul) by the Muslims. The Muslims who captured the city created many difficulties to the Europeans by increasing the prices of Asian spices, creating a dearth of commodities and not supplying the commodities in time. As the Europeans had got used to consume Asian spices for a long time, there was a great demand for the spices including cinnamon and pepper. The Europeans faced a challenge in finding new routes to reach Asia since all the aforementioned trade routes were under the Islamic followers. In this effort, the Portuguese acted as pioneers.

The motherland of the Portuguese was Portugal. Portugal is a country situated in the Iberian Peninsula in South-West Europe. And also Portugal is located facing the Atlantic Ocean. Therefore, the Portuguese had to run their foreign relations through sea routes. As a result, they showed a great competence in sea affairs from the distant past. Prince Henry alias the Henry the Navigator, who lived in Portugal in



Fig.10.1. The Dutch symbol which has been carved in an old building in Colombo.

the 15<sup>th</sup> century, was very interested in explorative affairs.

He ran a naval school in Portugal and taught subjects such as naval craft, mapping and astronomy in that. Because of these reasons, the Portuguese were in the forefront more than other Europeans in the effort of finding a new sea route to Asia. With the arrival of the Portuguese national Vasco De Gama to Calicut in 1498 after travelling round Africa, the European domination over Asia started. After the arrival of the Portuguese to Asia, other Europeans such as, the Dutch, the English, and the French too arrived in Asia and spread their power over various regions. Thus, the Europeans extended their power over Asia for about 450 years from the beginning of the 16<sup>th</sup> century.

The Europeans came to Asia with several

objectives. Gaining economic benefits, propagating their religion and winning the international reputation were major among them. The objectives of the arrival of the Europeans to Asia had differences according to the political and economic changes that took place in Europe during the period from the 16<sup>th</sup> century to the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

The major objectives of the arrival of the Portuguese to Asia were gaining economic benefits and propagating Roman Catholic religion. Their purpose was to defeat the Muslims and take over the trade monopoly in Asia since the Muslims had the trade monopoly, when they arrived in Asia. The Portuguese knew that they could gain a huge profit by that. After the arrival of Vasco De Gama to Calicut, the statement they made that “we arrived here in search of the Christians and spices” clearly shows their

economic and religious purposes. The second Portuguese group, who came to India after Vasco De Gama, had been given instructions by Portugal to establish a store house for storing commodities and to get permission from the ruler of Calicut for five priests to come and preach sermons. This clearly shows that the Portuguese had the purpose of propagating their religion in the areas where they would spread their power.

## 10.2 The Political Condition in Sri Lanka when the Portuguese arrived in Sri Lanka

There was a commercial and military importance to Sri Lanka in the Asian affairs of the Europeans as Sri Lanka was a significant centre situated close to the sea trade routes in the Indian Ocean. The Portuguese, who had recognized this country as Seilan, knew that this country produced cinnamon of good standard. Therefore, the Portuguese paid their attention to Sri Lanka within a short time period after they had come to India. In the month of March in 1505, the king of Portugal sent Francisco De Almeida appointing him as the viceroy in East. Finding Seilan (Sri Lanka) was one among the instructions that had been given to Almeida by the Portuguese ruler. His purpose was achieved when Lorenzo De Almeida, a son of Francisco De Almeida, reached this country accidentally after being caught in a tempest.

When Lorenzo De Almeida arrived in this country in 1505, there was a conducive background set for a foreign invasion as there was not a political unity in Sri Lanka. Though king Parakramabahu VI had united the country and created a political stability by establishing Kotte Kingdom, that unity collapsed after a certain time of his demise. Therefore, when the Portuguese arrived, there were two more kingdoms named Udarata and Jaffna in addition to Kotte kingdom. The Portuguese, who came to Sri Lanka, first built their relationships with the kingdom of Kotte. It is said that when the Portuguese came to Colombo, their

representatives were accompanied to meet the king through a road consisted of many bends. This tact was used by the representatives of the king in order to pretend them that there was a great distance between Colombo and Kotte. With this incident a proverb has come into usage as “Parangiya Kotte Giya Wage” (like the Portuguese went to Kotte).

The division of the kingdom of Kotte, which was the largest kingdom when the Portuguese arrived in this country, into three parts with the incident called ‘Vijayaba Kollaya’ which took place in 1521, made easy for the Portuguese to spread their power. After King Veera Parakramabahu VIII, one of his sons, prince Vijayabahu VI became the king. King Vijayabahu had three sons named respectively prince Buvanekabahu, prince Mayadunne and prince Rayigam Bandara from his first marriage. A conflict arose as there was an attempt to confer the future kingship to another prince called Devaraja without conferring it to three prince-brothers. The three princes heard that they were going to lose the inheritance of kingship. Then they attempted to capture the ruling power by coming to Kotte after taking support from the then ruler of Udarata, King Jayaweera Bandara. In this attempt a person called Salman killed king Vijayabahu. This incident, which occurred in attempting to usurp the ruling power from king Vijayabahu VI in 1521, is known as the ‘Vijayaba Kollaya’. After the ‘Vijayaba Kollaya’ incident, the three kings divided the kingdom of Kotte into three parts among them and ruled. Accordingly, Buvanekabahu VII came into power as the ruler of Kotte. Prince Mayadunne was the ruler of Seethawaka area and prince Rayigam Bandara was the ruler of Rayigama area. In this way, when the kingdom of Kotte was divided into three parts, it provided the Portuguese, who were expecting to spread their power in this country, a great advantage.

## **Expansion of the Portuguese Power in the Coastal Areas in Sri Lanka**

Before long after the division of Kotte kingdom into three parts, disputes started between king Buvanekabahu VII and king Mayadunne. The issues regarding the inheritance of future kingship of Kotte and attempting to take over several areas, which belonged to the Kotte kingdom, by king Mayadunne were the causes for these disputes. Though king Buvanekabahu had a daughter named Samudradevi, he did not have a son to be conferred the future kingship of Kotte. Veediya Bandara, who was known as a great warrior at that time, had married Princess Samudradevi and they had two sons named Vijayapala and Dharmapala. King Buvanekabahu's expectation was to confer the future kingship to his daughter's son prince Dharmapala. King Mayadunne, who had future expectations to be the king of Kotte, did not like this decision of king Buvanekabahu at all. King Mayadunne, who played a major role in the incident of 'Vijayaba Kollaya' was a great warrior and he had the ability to get the support of king Jayaweera Bandara, who was the ruler of Udarata. King Buvanekabahu, who had feared of an attack on the Kotte kingdom from king Mayadunne, called the Portuguese for his protection. As a result of the disputes between the kingdoms Kotte and Seethawaka, the Portuguese, who entered the capital as the protectors in this way, implemented a tactful campaign to extend their power by intervening in all affairs of the kingdom.

Since there was a competition for trading between the Portuguese and the Muslims, the Muslims did not wish to see the construction of fortresses by the Portuguese in this country. The Portuguese, who took the maximum advantage from the given opportunity, persuaded king Buvanekabahu to take actions against the Muslims in the kingdom of Kotte. Therefore, the Muslims, who lived in the coastal areas, supported king Mayadunne. At the request of the Sri Lankan Muslims, Samorin, the ruler of Calicut in India offered to

provide the naval support to king Mayadunne to attack the Portuguese. Though king Mayadunne launched several attacks against the Portuguese with the support of Samorin, those attacks were not successful due to the naval power and their weaponry power.

There were several fights between Kotte and Seethawaka kingdoms when king Buvanekabahu was alive. In these conflicts, the Portuguese fought for the protection of the Kotte kingdom and the military expenses of the Portuguese had to be paid by the king. Though king Buvakebahu gained the support of the Portuguese, he did not act as a puppet-ruler of them. Though the Portuguese attempted to convert the king to Roman Catholic religion, the king refused it. Therefore, with time disputes between the king and the Portuguese aggravated. Apart from religious reasons, some economic reasons such as, selling their commodities at a very high price to the people in Kotte by the Portuguese and buying Kotte products at a very low price too affected. These disagreements ended when king Buvanekabahu was shot dead by a Portuguese soldier. As it was reported by the author named Kutho, the king's assassination occurred on 29<sup>th</sup> December 1550.

When king Buvanekabahu was alive, he made a statue of prince Dharmapala, his grandson, and sent it to Portugal for coronation. By doing that the king Buvanekabahu had provided him necessary protection. Therefore, after the demise of king Buvanekabahu, prince Dharmapala became the ruler of Kotte amidst the protection of the Portuguese. Since king Dharmapala became a puppet-ruler under the Portuguese, embraced Catholic religion, allowed the Portuguese to propagate their religion in his kingdom, did not take action to prevent the harassments and injustices done to his people in Kotte by the Portuguese, the king did not get the support of the people. Therefore, even the sacred Tooth Relic was taken to Seethawaka for its protection. Though king Dharamapala was on the throne from 1551 to 1597 as a nominal

king, the Portuguese was the real rulers in the kingdom of Kotte. As king Dharamapala assigned his kingship to the Portuguese from a deed of gift, the Portuguese had a legal right to rule Kotte after the king's death.

### Veediye Bandara

Veediye Bandara, who had married Princess Samudradevi, who was the daughter of king Buvanekabahu, was a great warrior. During the very beginning of the ruling of king Dharmapala, his son, he arose against the Portuguese due to looting of the Kotte palace and various injustices done to Kotte people by the Portuguese. Therefore, he was arrested and imprisoned in the Colombo fort by the Portuguese. But, the wife of Veediye Bandara made a tunnel which led to the cell where he was detained and freed him. Afterwards he fled to Pelenda area in Pas Yodun Koralaya and started a fight against the Portuguese by building a fort there. The people of Kotte, who were despondent of the Portuguese, supported Veediye Bandara. The Portuguese suffered many losses due to the attacks of Veediye Bandara. Further, Veediye Bandara's actions were a great nuisance to the rulers of Seethawaka. Therefore, king Mayadunne and the Portuguese combined and invaded the fort of Pelenda and defeated Veediye Bandara. Veediye Bandara, who had fled to Kanda Udarata afterwards, was killed in a conflict later in Jaffna.

### Kingdom of Seethawaka

Mayadunne, who was the ruler of Seethawaka, continued a policy against the Portuguese from the very beginning of that kingdom. When the power of the Portuguese developed in the kingdom of Kotte, king Mayadunne tended to fight both with the Portuguese and the rulers of Kotte. Therefore, the attacks of Mayadunne were increased after king Dharmapala became the ruler of Kotte. As prince Tikiri Bandara, the son of king Mayadunne offered to give the leadership to the Seethawaka army as a great warrior, the army was more strengthened in about 1555. In

1557 Mayadunne launched an attack on the city of Kotte using all his power. But the Seethawaka army could not enter the city due to the attacks of the artillery guns of the Portuguese. Later Mayadunne followed a policy of attacking the areas away from Kotte from time to time.

The Seethawaka rulers, who abstained from massive attacks after the unsuccessful effort of besieging and attacking the city of Kotte, launched an onset to attack both Kotte and Colombo fort at once. In this, there was a horrendous fight between the Sinhala army led by prince Tikiri and the Portuguese in the paddy field in Mulleriyawa. The Portuguese suffered a debacle in this fight which lasted for a whole day. It is reported that around 1600 Portuguese soldiers were killed in this fight. This is one of the biggest battle losses of Portuguese in an Asian country.

Due to the occasional attacks from Seethawaka on the city of Kotte, King Dharmapala abandoned the city and shifted to the Colombo fort around 1565. And also, in about 1581 king Mayadunne died and prince Tikiri acceded to the throne of Seethawaka in the name of 'Rajasighe'. No sooner he became the king, he repulsed the then ruler of Kandy, Karaliyedde Bandara, and annexed the Kandyan kingdom to Seethawaka. Accordingly, king Rajasinghe was able to confine the Portuguese power to the Colombo fort and a few other areas by about 1582. Therefore, many areas of the Kotte kingdom, kingdom of Rayigama and the whole Kandyan kingdom were under the Seethawaka kingdom.

King Rajasinghe attempted to besiege and repulse the Portuguese from this country twice. But, king's effort was unsuccessful due to the weaponry power of the Portuguese and the support they had from Gowa, which was the east headquarters of the Portuguese. Though in 1587 king Rajasinghe attempted to enter the Colombo fort by digging a canal to send the water of Bere tank to the sea in his second siege, it too was abortive. One of the reasons for these

fights to be unsuccessful was that Seethawaka kingdom did not have adequate naval strength. King Rajasinghe, who was on a constant battle with the Portuguese, died of being wounded by pricking a bamboo thorn in the Pethangoda garden on his way back to Seethawaka after being defeated in a battle with the king of the Kandyan kingdom, Wimaladharmasooriya. Afterwards, the kingdom Seethawaka collapsed. There were many reasons that caused the collapse of the Seethawaka kingdom; engaging of the Seethawaka rulers in a constant battle, following anti-Buddhist policy by king Rajasinghe in his later time, killing Veerasundara Bandara, who assisted King Rajasinghe to surrender the Kandy kingdom and therefore, getting less support from the Kandyans, acceding of Konappu Bandara, who was the son of Veerasundara Bandara, to the Kandyan throne, having no proper heir to the Seethawaka kingdom were some of them. However, the attempt of the Portuguese to extend their power in this country was limited due to the patriotic fight against the Portuguese by the Seethawaka rulers.

The Portuguese, who became stronger again during the period of decline of Seethawaka kingdom, established their power in many coastal areas in this country by capturing the areas of the kingdoms of Kotte and Rayigama and some of the areas which were under Seethawaka after the collapse of Seethawaka.

## Jaffna Kingdom

The Jaffna kingdom, which started after the downfall of Rajarata civilization, was ruled by a dynasty called Arya Chakrawarthi. King Pararajasekaram, who belonged to that dynasty, was ruling Jaffna during the period in which the Portuguese came to this country. The Portuguese did not pay much attention to Jaffna during the first decade after their arrival to this country because Jaffna did not produce trade items such as cinnamon and pepper. In 1519 a prince

named Sankili captured the power of Jaffna and ruled the area until 1561.

There started conflicts between King Sankili and the Portuguese because the trading ships of the Portuguese were disturbed and the king acted against their attempt to spread Catholic religion in the areas in Jaffna during the king Sankili's ruling period. Accordingly, the Portuguese invaded Jaffna against the king in 1543. But, the battle was prevented as king Sankili agreed to pay the ransom without going to a battle with them.

After coming to a peaceful agreement with the ruler of Jaffna, the Portuguese acted to propagate Catholic religion in the areas of Jaffna. As the Hindu priests rose against this, king Sankili disturbed the Portuguese affairs of propagating their religion in the Mannar area. King Sankili went to the area of Mannar with his army and ordered all the people, who had embraced Catholic religion, to embrace their traditional religion. He administered severe punishments to those who did not obey his order. As it was an impediment to spread Catholic religion in Mannar area, the Missionary priests requested the Portuguese to dethrone the Jaffna ruler. Therefore, king Sankili came to an alliance with Seethawaka Mayadunne in 1548. When Veedeye Bandara, who was an anti-Portuguese, fled to Jaffna, king Sankili welcomed him. But nothing of these was successful.

In 1560 the Portuguese invaded Jaffna again, king Sankili had to abandon the capital and flee. Afterwards, though he protected his power once again on the strict conditions of the Portuguese, at this time the Portuguese captured Mannar and built a fortress there. The deprivation of Jaffna was a great loss to the Jaffna ruler. As a result of it, he not only lost a considerable land, but also the income that Jaffna received by diving for pearls in the Mannar area. Further, the Portuguese had the opportunity to intervene in the political affairs of Jaffna from Mannar.

In 1561 a prince named Puvirajapandaram

dethroned king Sankili and captured the power. Hereafter, a struggle started among the heirs for the throne of Jaffna. In this effort, since some sought the assistance of the Portuguese, the Portuguese could bring those who were in favour of the Portuguese to power. Even some of those rulers acted against the Portuguese when they had the opportunity, the Portuguese invaded Jaffna once again and appointed a person called Edirimannasinhama, who was loyal to them, to the throne of Jaffna. Though he ruled obediently to the Portuguese, several times he allowed king Senarath, who was the ruler of the Kandyan kingdom, to maintain trade relations with South India through Jaffna sea. With the death of the Jaffna ruler in 1617, once again power-struggles started. As a result of it, one prince Sankili Kumara, who was a member of the royal family, captured the power. The Portuguese never tolerated the occasional supports of the Jaffna rulers to the Kandyan king for his trade affairs and his relations with South India. Accordingly, a Portuguese army under the leadership of Philip De Olivera seized Jaffna in 1621. Afterwards, though there were some rebellions against the Portuguese, the Portuguese suppressed them and established their power by in Jaffna 1621. The following facts caused the collapse of the Jaffna kingdom; the division of Jaffna people due to the power-struggles of the heirs to the throne of Jaffna, there was not an adequate army for its rulers, and Jaffna was not naturally protected as the Kandyan kingdom.

### **The Attempts of the Portuguese to expand Their Power in the Kandyan Kingdom**

Since the Portuguese had spread their power in many parts of the low-country after the collapse of Seethawaka kingdom, the Kandyan kingdom was held responsible of protecting the independence of the country. The Kandyan kingdom was able to keep that responsibility by facing various challenges from the Portuguese,

Dutch and the English until 1815. Here, let's consider the attempts of the Portuguese to extend their power in the areas in Kandy and the actions that the Kandyan people took against them.

The attempts to extend their power in the Kandyan kingdom alias Udarata kingdom was started by the Portuguese during the same time in which they were interfering in the political affairs of Kotte. We described in the eighth chapter how the Portuguese attempted to spread their power in the Kandyan kingdom even before king Wimaladharmasooriya came to power in the kingdom.

### **The Battle of Danthure**

The Portuguese was never pleased with acceding Konappu Bandara, who was well aware of warfare and other strategies of the Portuguese by staying under them for a certain period of time, to the throne of Kandyan kingdom in the name of Vimaladharmasooriya I. Therefore, the Portuguese attempted to accompany Kusumasana Devi (Dona Kathirina), who was in the care of the Portuguese and was the daughter of Karaliyadde Bandara, to Kandy and bring her to power. By doing this they tried to establish a ruling which was loyal to them. In the invasion made under the leadership of Captain General Gero Lopes De Susa, they made Kusumasana Devi the queen of Kandy in 1594. But the Kandyans, who hesitated to accept one appointed by the foreigners as the queen, supported the king Vimaladharmasooriya I. Pero Lopes De Susa had to withdraw with his army. In October in 1594 there was a great battle between the Portuguese army and the Kandyans. The whole Portuguese battalion was destroyed in this battle and even Pero Lopes De Susa, who led this invasion, too was killed. Kusumasana Devi was arrested by the Kandyans in the battle and afterwards king Vimaladharmasooriya I wedded her. As a result of this marriage, a new

dynasty started in Kandy. The attempts, which the Portuguese made to establish a ruling which was loyal to them, were unsuccessful with a great debacle. Military manoeuvres of king Vimaladharmasooriya I, support of the Kandyans to the king, and rejoining the army, which went from low country to assist the Portuguese, to the king in Kandy caused the victory of king Vimaladharmasooriya I.

### The Battle of Balana

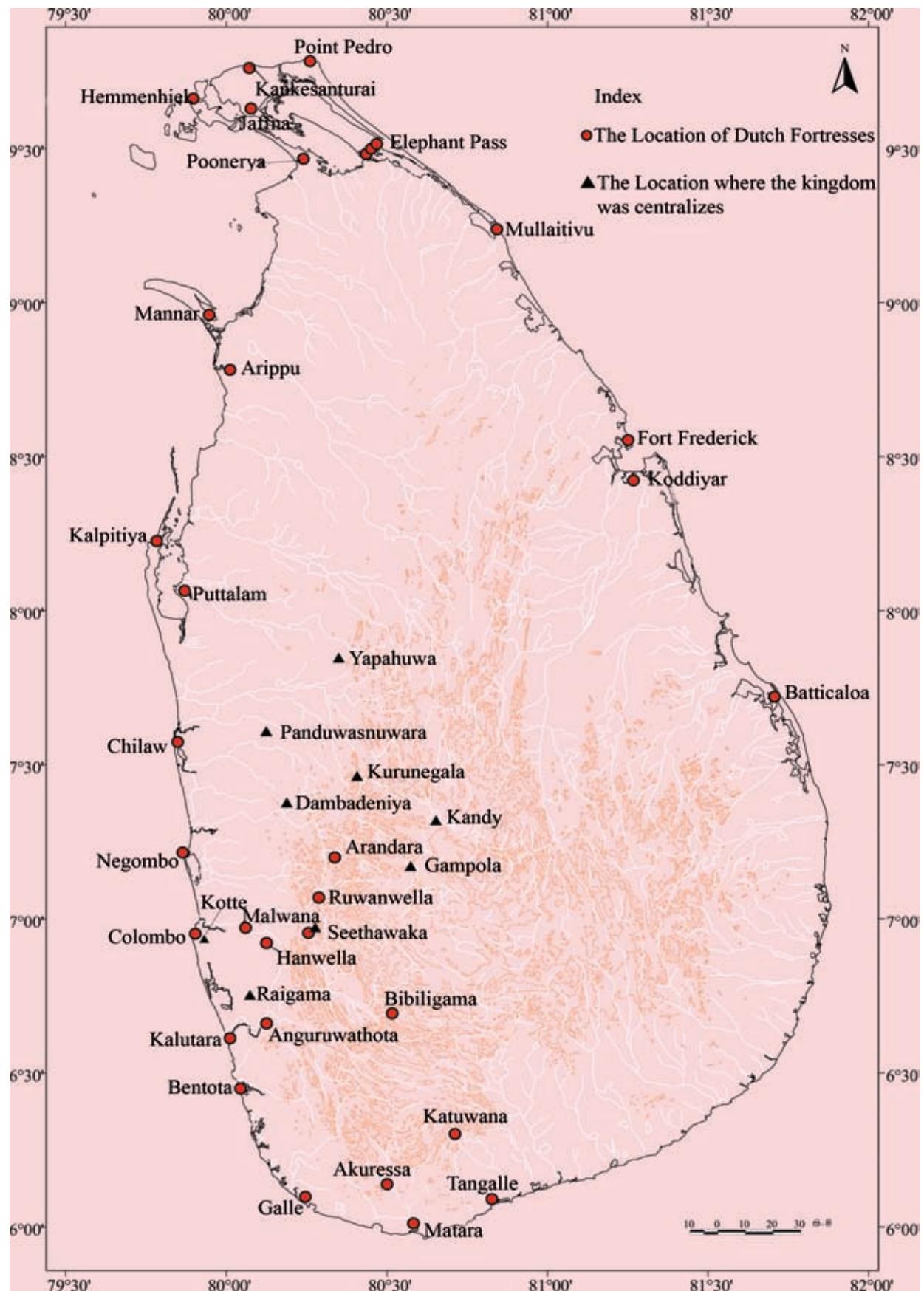
After the death of Pero Lopes De Susa, Don Geranimo De Asavedu was sent here by making him the Captain General by the Portuguese. With the defeat of the Portuguese in Danthure, a rebellion sprang in the areas in the low country under the leadership of Edirille Rala. King Vimaladharmasooriya I supported this rebellion. Therefore, the Portuguese defeated the rebels by killing the leaders of the rebellion and setting fire to the villages and property. Afterwards Asavedu prepared for a battle with Kandy. In 1602 Asavedu, who brought an additional army from Gowa, invaded Kandy with a battalion of thousand soldiers. But the Portuguese army reached only the Balana pass. In this place, the Kandyans, who besieged the Portuguese in accordance with a manoeuvre of king Vimaladharmasooriya I, launched a horrendous attack on the Portuguese. The people from the low-country who had gone to support the Portuguese, joined the king's party at this time too. A considerable number of Portuguese soldiers were killed due to the attack of the Kandyans and their weapons were arrested by the Kandyans. With this defeat Asavedu withdrew to Colombo through Malwana. After the unsuccessful invasion of Asavedu, the Portuguese followed a policy of attacking the Kandyans and their villages from time to time instead of invading Kandy using a big army. Therefore, king Senarath, who became the Kandyan ruler after the death of king Vimaladharmasooriya, entered into a peace agreement with the Portuguese in 1617. But it did not work properly.

### The Battle of Randeniwala

As the Portuguese Captain General Constantinu De Sa invaded Kandy via Uva area, the Battle of Randeniwala started. Constantinu De Sa led this invasion with about 600 Portuguese soldiers and another battalion of about 4500 mercenary army in the month of July 1630. The Portuguese captured the city of Badulla and destroyed it. The Kandyan king Senarath had come to Badulla with his army and started attacking the Portuguese. Prince Maha Asthana (later he became the king of Kandy in the name of Rajasinghe II), who was a son of king Senarath, provided the leadership to the Kandyan army. When the Kandyan army besieged the Portuguese, the Mudalis who had gone from the low country to support the Portuguese, rejoined the king. As a result of this, the Kandyan army became stronger and the Portuguese was helpless due to the attacks of the Kandyans. Therefore they withdrew to Randeniwala which was close to Wellawaya. In this the Kandyans encircled the Portuguese and attacked them resulting in killing about 350 Portuguese soldiers. Another group of soldiers were arrested. Even Captain General Constantinu De Sa was killed in the battle. This invasion was not done suddenly by the Portuguese. They had planned it for about two years. But all the plans of the Portuguese went awry in the face of the manoeuvres of the Kandyans.

### The Battle of Gannoruwa

In the month of March in 1638, Kandy was once again invaded by the then Captain General Diago De Melo in Sri Lanka. The Portuguese, who went with about one thousand of the Portuguese soldiers and other thousands of mercenary soldiers, entered the city of Kandy without any difficulty. King Rajasinghe, who had come to the throne after king Senarath, abandoned the city tactically. Afterwards, the Kandyan army encircled the Portuguese at the right time. There was a horrendous battle between the two parties in Gannoruwa. However, the Portuguese



Map 10.1 The distribution of the Dutch Fortresses in Sri Lanka.

suffered a debacle in this battle too due the usual attacks of the Kandyans. Even Diago De Melo, who led the battle, was killed. There are records about the number of the Portuguese soldiers left. Everyone of them mentions that only less than one hundred Portuguese soldiers were left. And also, it was the last invasion of the Portuguese led to capture the Kandyan kingdom.

There are reasons which affected the failure of the invasions of the Portuguese and protection of the Kandyan kingdom further.

- The frequent support of the Kandyan people to the king.
- The people from low - country, who went to support the Portuguese in the invasions, rejoined the king.
- The warfare of the Kandyan people and the strategies of the kings.
- The natural location of the Kandyan kingdom.

### 10.3 Sri Lanka and the Dutch

Holland is the motherland of the Dutch. After about a century of the Portuguese arrival to Asia, the Dutch started to come to Asia by finding the sea routes of the Portuguese. In early period, various trade companies in Holland had come to Asia and since there was a competition among the Holland trade companies, the Dutch could not establish a strong power in Asia. Therefore, in 1602 several Holland companies got together and established East Holland Trade Company alias VOC Company. From then on the political and commercial affairs in Asia for the Dutch were conducted by the VOC Company. As the prime purpose of a trade company is to make profits, it is clear that the main objective of the Dutch to come to Asia was to gain economic benefits.

The Dutch, who came to Asia, made their centre in Batavia on the Island of Java and started their power in the east. Before long after the arrival of the Dutch to Asia, they paid their attention

to Sri Lanka, which had trade items such as, cinnamon and pepper of good standard. As the kings of Kandy, who were suffering from the struggles from the Portuguese, wished to build relations with the Dutch, they could know more information about Sri Lanka by coming to this country.

In 1602, Jorris Van Spilbergeon, a representative of the Dutch came to Sri Lanka and met king Wimaladharmasooriya I. Afterwards another representative named Sibil De Vert came. But these missions did not give any successful results. The successful relationships were started between the Dutch and the Kandyan rulers during the time of king Rajasinghe II. The purpose of king Rajasinghe II was to expel the Portuguese from this country because they always fought with Kandy. Since he did not have enough naval power to do that, he thought of getting assistance of the Dutch.

As a result of the letters which exchanged between king Rajasinghe II and the Dutch and the missions, the Dutch agreed to assist to expel the Portuguese from the country. According to an agreement between the Lankan representatives and the Dutch naval commanding officer Westworld, both sides got together and attacked the Portuguese fort in Batticaloa in 1638. But, the Portuguese in the fort surrendered before it turned to be a disastrous battle. Therefore, king Rajasinghe II, who was overjoyed with this, entered into a bond with the Dutch.

### The Fundamental Facts of the 1638 Kandy-Dutch Agreement

1. The Dutch agreed to assist the Kandyan king to expel the Portuguese from this country.
2. The king agreed to pay the money which was spent by the Dutch by the trade items. (cinnamon, pepper, etc.)
3. The Dutch had the right of monopoly of the Kandyan trade items except for the tuskers.
4. Occupation of the Dutch army in the forts retrieved from the Portuguese if the king agreed.

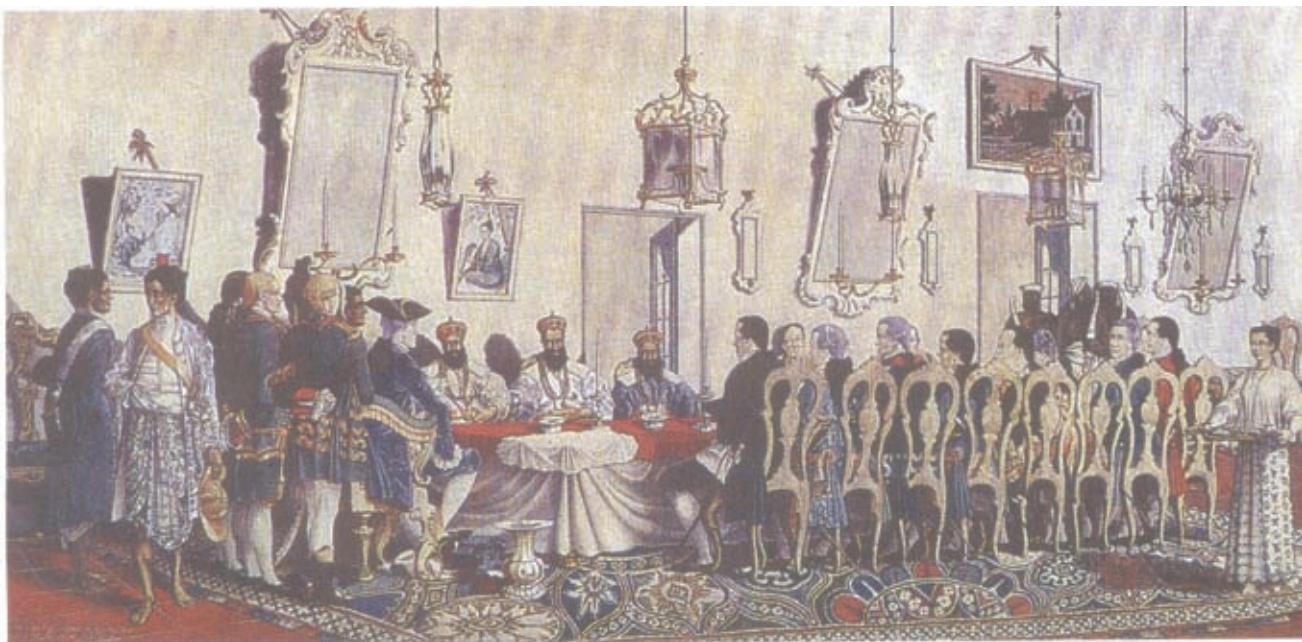


Fig: 10.2 The meeting between the Kandyan leaders and the Dutch.

It took 20 more years to expel the Portuguese from the country since the seizure of the Batticaloa fort in 1638. During this time the the Portuguese forts in Trincomalee, Negombo, Galle, Kalutara, Colombo, Mannar and Jaffna were captured by the Dutch and the Sri Lankan army. Thus, this combination was able to expel the Portuguese from Sri Lanka by 1658. According to the bond signed between the king and the Dutch, occupying the Dutch army in the forts captured from the Portuguese should have been done according to the king's agreement. But, the Dutch, who forgot that sentence in the bond, avoided handing over the forts which located in the areas advantageous for them. Therefore, this damaged the goodwill between the king and the Dutch.

King Rajasinghe II brought the Dutch to this country in order to achieve two objectives.

1. Expelling the Portuguese from Sri Lanka with the support of the Dutch.
2. Making Sri Lanka an independent and free country by annexing the areas which were under the Portuguese.

Though the king was able to achieve the first objective out of these two, he could not achieve the second one as the Dutch had spread their power in many areas which were saved from the Portuguese. Therefore, the king implemented a strategy by attacking the Dutch and minimizing the number of areas that they could take. Due to this strategy of the king, by 1658 the Dutch was able to gain only a lesser quantity of land than the Portuguese had possessed.

King Rajasinghe II was one who gave a new significance to the Kandyan kingdom after king Vimaladharmasooriya I. The king claimed that he was the emperor of Sri Lanka in exchanging letters with the Dutch. The Dutch too had accepted the king as "Thrisinaladeeshvara" even nominally in such exchange of letters. When the king wrote letters to the Dutch he used the phrases such as " Mata Hithawath Landesi Jathiya (Dear Dutch who serve me)" and the Dutch too used the phrases such as " Oba Vahanseta Suvacha Keekaru Sevaka (the most obedient servant to you, Lord)" when they wrote to the king. The Dutch launched a series of attacks and seized several areas that belonged to the Kandyan kingdom during the time between 1665 and 1668. But due to a series

of attacks launched by king Rajasinghe II during the period between 1670 and 1675, the Dutch lost a number of areas that they had possessed. Therefore, the Dutch, who realized that fighting with the Kandyans would cause their destruction, attempted to avoid fighting with the Kandyans for about a hundred of years after 1670.

- Prominent features of the Dutch Policy regarding the Kandyan Kingdom

I. The Dutch tried to avoid the conflicts that could bring losses to the Dutch Trading Company and acted peacefully with the Kandyan Kingdom.

II. Giving gifts to the king to win his goodwill, sending representatives to meet the king, exchanging letters with the king. The Dutch expected to obtain the cinnamon grown in Kandy by winning the goodwill of the king through all these activities.

III. Providing the ships for the king's religious activities such as bringing the higher order.

The Dutch provided the ships to king Vimaladharamasooriya I, King Vijaya Rajasinghe, king Keerthi Sri Rajasinghe for such activities.

- The Dutch's policy of getting maximum economic benefits

I. The Dutch impeded the king's relations with the other foreigners as much as possible.

II. Closing the city boundaries between up country and low country when disputes started with the king.

III. The Dutch tried to develop the paddy cultivation in some of the areas in the low country. By doing this, the Dutch expected to minimize their expenses to import rice from foreign countries.

IV. Getting people to grow cinnamon and taking action to preserve cinnamon cultivation. The Dutch implemented this policy because they could make a huge profit from selling cinnamon.

V. The Dutch took steps to grow sugar cane, coffee and cotton etc, which brought them profits.

### **The Conflicts between the Kandyan Kingdom and the Dutch**

The low-country people, who had been oppressed until then by the time of King Keerthi Sri Rajasinghe, requested the Kandyan king to intervene for them. In latter part of 1760 the rebellions arose against the Dutch in Negombo and Matara. The king sent an army to the low country area and the army made several instant attacks and captured several places including Katuwana fort and Matara fort. Later, the Dutch recaptured these places.

In 1764 the Dutch invaded Kandy using 6 brigades led by the Dutch governor Barron Van Ek. But none of these brigades could reach Kandy. The Kandyans defeated these brigades launching their usual attacks.

In 1765 the Dutch invaded Kandy once again. The Dutch managed to enter the city of Kandy by facing the attacks of the Kandyans. As king Keerthi Sri Rajasinghe agreed to have a peaceful condition, the Dutch presented a series of conditions advantageous for them. But the king did not like to accept the unreasonable conditions of the Dutch. As a result, the Dutch, who robbed the city, stayed there more than one month. But, they abandoned Kandy and went back to Colombo because of the lack of food, diseases, and rainy season.

Due to the invasion, threats of the Dutch and the suffering of people from the prolonged war for years king Keerthi Sri Rajasinghe signed a peace pact with the Dutch in 1766. The Kandyan kingdom lost one coastal area due to the peace pact. This was a blow to the traditional trading in Kandy. The pact acknowledged the Dutch's right to the areas which they had possessed in Sri Lanka. A number of sentences in the peace pact gave more advantages to the Dutch. Therefore,

though the Kandyans held some discussions to make the pact lenient, the Dutch did not agree with it. Finally, the Kandyans tended not to make it work practically.

### Important Facts

- ✓ Though the Europeans came to Asia on various purposes such as getting economic benefits and promulgating the religion, their purposes changed with the transformations that took place in Europe.
- ✓ Since there was no political unity in Sri Lanka when the Portuguese arrived, it helped them to expand their power.
- ✓ As king Dharmapala, who was the ruler of Kotte, was loyal to the Portuguese, first the Portuguese power was spread in the Kotte kingdom.
- ✓ During the 16<sup>th</sup> century the rulers in the Kandyan kingdom were engaged in a strong fight against the Portuguese.
- ✓ Several battles started between the Portuguese and the Kandyans as the Portuguese attempted to spread their power in the Kandyan kingdom.
- ✓ The rulers in the Kandyan kingdom obtained the support of the Dutch to expel the Portuguese from the country.
- ✓ There were various types of conflicts between the Dutch and the Kandyan kings.

### Activity

1. One reason that assisted the Portuguese to capture the kingdoms of Kotte and Jaffna was the internal conflicts that existed in those kingdoms. Referring to this explain how the disunity of a country leads to its destruction.
2. Describe the then existed political situation in Sri Lanka during the period of the Portuguese arrival.

Given below are several sources among various documents that were used to extract the facts consisting in this text book. Mainly it is for the convenience of the teachers and assisting the student more and if necessary, it can be used as a guide by the parents or other adults. However, this does not mean that these sources should definitely be referred by the student. This includes only the resources published so far.

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