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SOCIAL INSTITUTIONS IN CEYLON

FROM

THE 5th CENTURY B.C.

TO

THE 4th CENTURY A.D.

by

HEMARAMA ELLAWALA

oOo

Thesis presented for
the Degree of Ph.D.,
in the University of
London.

1962

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Preface

The history of Ceylon recorded in the Chronicles is mainly confined to the genealogies of kings and accounts of their activities both religious and secular. To understand both the political and cultural developments in Ceylon, it is necessary to learn first the social structure in which they developed. Ours is an attempt to discuss this aspect of history from the 5th century B. C. to the 4th century A. D.

As our sources are limited and owing to the lack of material embodied in them, we have often had to discuss the parallel social systems in India to form a better picture of that of Ceylon. Thus, in a way, ours is a comparative study of the social institutions in Ceylon and those of India of the same period. This, no doubt, is the most fitting approach to our present study, for there is no other country which influenced Ceylon so much as India during our period.

My sense of gratitude and thanks to Professor A. L. Basham and to Dr. J. G. de Casparis for all the help they have given in guiding me in this field of study is beyond verbal expression.

I should also like to take this opportunity of thanking the staff of the Library of the School of Oriental and

African Studies, University of London, for their kind assistance.

I am greatly indebted to Venerable Velivitiye Sorata Nāyaka Thero, the Vice-Chancellor, Vidyodaya University of Ceylon, and Mr. S. F. de Silva, the Director of Education and the then Head of the Department of History and the Dean of the Faculty of Arts, Vidyodaya University, for sponsoring this scheme of training for me.

I extend my sincere thanks to the Asia Foundation, both in Ceylon and California for offering me a Scholarship Grant for my present research in the University of London.

I am also greatly indebted to all the members of the Council of the Vidyodaya University for granting me special study leave to enable me to conduct this piece of research.

I thank Dr. Senarat Paranavitana the Professor and Head of the Department of Archaeology, University of Ceylon, for valuable suggestions and, to Dr. C.E. Godakumbura, Acting Archaeological Commissioner, Government of Ceylon for giving me relevant photographs of ancient monuments in Ceylon.

I express my sincere thanks to my friends Mr. A. W. Kaluaracchi, the Director of Examinations, Vidyodaya University, and Mr. S. L. Kekulawala of the Vidyalankara University of Ceylon for all the help they have given me in various capacities.

Finally my deepest gratitude and sincerest thanks go to my wife, Leelavati Menike Ellawala, for the encouragement she gave me in this research.

H. Ellawala.

School of Oriental and African Studies,
University of London,
September, 1962.

ABSTRACT

This thesis attempts to analyse the Social Institutions of Early Ceylon from the 5th century B.C. to the 4th century A. D. In the first chapter, new light is thrown on the dating of the Sīhalavatthuppakarana, not attempted by earlier scholars (pp. 10-16). The theory of the existence of the Brāhmaṇa caste (pp. 33-38), the interpretation of the word Paṭake (pp. 38-42) occurring in the inscriptions, the theory that prior to Devānampiya Tissa there was in Ceylon a Ksatriya caste and an Abhiṣeka ceremony, the existence of which was doubted by the earlier scholars in this field (pp. 47-63), are the most original features of the 2nd chapter. Chapter III contains a discussion on the Vaiśya caste (pp. 73-75). In this, will be found evidence of an embryonic form of the later division of the Saṅgha into caste groups (pp. 75-78), new interpretations of the words Devakula (pp. 78-83), and Bata (pp. 101-106), new light on the origin of the Lambakanna dynasty (pp. 83-93) and a study of the use of the honorific title Devānampiya by ordinary people (pp. 119-121). This also attempts to answer the question why Asoka had two of his children by his Vaiśya queen ordained into the Saṅgha (pp. 80-82). Chapter IV deals with the Sūdra caste and the despised classes (pp. 141-186), in the discussion of which I

have given a new interpretation (pp. 181-182) to the words Pukkusa and Pupphachaddaka, the meanings of which have been disputed often. Chapter V contains a discussion on family organisation. It shows that there was the joint family system in Ceylon (pp. 200-202) and that succession from brother to brother was preferred to that from father to son (pp. 232-249). Chapter VI attempts to analyse how far early settlements of Ceylon came into existence on a communal basis (pp. 257-314). It also attempts to throw new light on the interpretation of the word Nagaraguttika (pp. 305-307). Chapter VII deals with various occupations and the development of new castes on an occupational basis. (pp. 315-371). In the last chapter, the effect of Buddhism on society is discussed. I have argued here the possibilities of the existence of the worship of Ganapati in Ceylon even before it was known in India (pp. 380-382), and in conclusion it considers how far the Ceylon caste system differed from that of India towards the end of the period under review.

Abbreviations

A.	Āṅguttaranikāya.
AA.	Āṅguttaranikāyaṭṭhakathā.
A. Br.	Aitareya Brāhmaṇa.
AC.	Ancient Ceylon.
AIC.	Müller, Ancient Inscriptions of Ceylon.
AS.	Arthasāstra.
ASCAR	Archaeological Survey of Ceylon Annual Report.
ASWI.	Archaeological Survey of Western India.
ASCM.	Archaeological Survey of Ceylon, Memoirs.
AV.	Attanāgaluvaṃsa.
AVV.	Atharvaveda.
AP.Dh.S.	Apastamba Dharma Sāstra.
BAU.	Bauddhāyana Dharma Sāstra.
Br.Upd.	Bṛhadāraṇyaka Upaniṣad.
CHJ.	Ceylon Historical Journal.
CJSG.	Ceylon Journal of Science Section G.
CLR.	Ceylon Literary Register.
CV.	Cūlavaṃsa.
Dīgha.	Dīghanikāya.
DN.	Dīghanikāya.
Dāṭhā.	Dāṭhāvaṃsa.
Dhātu.	Dhātuvāṃsa.
DhA Dhp. Com. }	Dhammapadaṭṭhakathā.

DhSA.	Dhammasaṅgani Atthakathā.
DPPN.	Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names.
Dv.	Dīpavaṃsa.
EHBC.	Adikaram, Early History of Buddhism in Ceylon.
EI.	Epigraphia Indica.
EZ.	Epigraphia Zeylanica.
EC.	Epigraphia Carnatica.
Fa Hien.	Trns. Legge, A Record of Buddhist Kingdoms.
GAU.	Gautama Dharma Sāstra.
HBC.	Rahula, History of Buddhism in Ceylon.
Hiuen Tsiang.	Beal, Buddhist Records of the Western World.
IA.	Indian Antiquary.
JA.	Jātakatthakathā.
JRAS(CB).	Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society, Ceylon Branch.
JRAS(CB&I).	_____ do _____ Great Britain and Ireland.
JRAS(B).	_____ do _____ Bengal.
M.	Majjhimanikāya.
MA.	Majjhimanikāyatthakathā.
Manu.	Manusmṛti.
MBV.	Mahābodhivaṃsa.
Mv.	Mahāvaṃsa.
MvT.	Mahāvaṃsa Tīkā.
NN.	Nīti Nighaṇḍuwa.
P.T.S.	Pāli Text Society.

Pjv.	Pūjāvaliya.
PLC.	Malalasekara, Pāli Literature of Ceylon.
Rjk.	Rājaratnākaraṇya.
Rjv.	Rājāvaliya.
Rsv.	Rasavāhinī.
RV.	Rg Veda.
S.	Samyuttanikāya.
SA.	Samyuttanikāyaṭṭhakathā.
SAM.	Samyuttanikāya.
SD.	Sāratthadīpanī.
SEB.	Sacred Books of the Buddhists.
Shv.	Sahassavatthu.
Sihv.	Sīhalavatthupparāṇa.
SMV.	Sumaṅgalavilāsinī.
SV.	Sammoḥavinodanī.
SMP.	Samantapāsādikā.
St. Br.	Satapata Brāhmaṇa.
Trns.	Translation.
Th. Com.	Theragāthā Commentary.
UCR.	University of Ceylon Review.
Vsm.	Visuddhimagga.
Viṣṇu. S.	Viṣṇu Smṛti.
Yāj.	Mājñavaikyā Smṛti.

CHAPTER IIntroduction.

As the Kula or family forms the basic unit of a settlement or a village, so does society form the fundamental basis for the development of the political, economic and religious institutions of a country. The social institutions therefore form the background against which the student of history may trace the evolution of other institutions.

Until recently, students of Ceylon history did not focus their attention sufficiently on this aspect, due to the fact that there were no historical records directly dealing with society, owing to the lack of emphasis on it by ancient historians. Unlike other countries in South Asia, in Ceylon we have recorded history from the ancient times to the present day. But these records mainly deal with the political and religious history of the country. References to other aspects of history such as social and economic institutions are very meagre. The purpose of this thesis therefore is to make an attempt to analyse the Social Institutions of Early Ceylon from the 5th century B.C. to the 4th century A.D. on the basis of the historical data available. But, until the

numerous lithic records which are still not deciphered are studied carefully and a careful and systematic archaeological survey is made on the sites of early settlements of this country, this analysis will remain incomplete.

Sources

The sources basic to our present study are divided into two categories, literary and archaeological.

(1). Literary Sources:

(a) The Dīpavamsa.

The Dīpavamsa is the earliest extant attempt at recording Ceylon's Historical Traditions in Pāli. This is ascribed to an unknown author or authors in the 4th century A.D.¹ It is rather a compilation of various traditions than an independent and unified piece of historical writing. Moreover, the Dīpavamsa, being intended for oral recitation, is in Pāli verse. As a literary piece it is considered of no merit.²

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1. Oldenberg, Dv. Intro., p.8-9; Geiger, Dv. & Mv., p.1; Malalasekara, PLC., p.131. It should be noted here that Buddhaghosa's commentary, the Samantapāsādikā which was written in the 5th century A.D. refers to Dv. and quote verses from it. In Vol. I, p.36. reference is made to this as "vuttampi cetam" Dīpavamsa," and quoted the fifteenth verse in the chapter II of the Dv. There is another reference in the same page and quoted the first four verses of the chapter 12 of the Dv. also see Pañcappakaranatthakathā. I, p. 81.
 2. Malalasekara, PLC., p.135

The repetitions and contradictions occurring in this text suggest its heterogeneous nature. From the internal evidence contained in this work, as well as the Mahāvamsa, it is known that these Chronicles are based on early Sinhalese Commentaries and other sources,¹ for both the Dīpvaṃsa and the Mahāvamsa have some verses in common, and much similarity is shown by them as regards the material and its arrangement.² This Chronicle in its present form records the historical traditions from the earliest time up to the reign of Mahāsena. There is no doubt that it is a conglomeration of myths, legends, tales and history and the further we go back in time the more mythical it becomes.³

This Chronicle, however, contains a kernel of historical truth buried in traditions and legends. It is, therefore, of immense value for the reconstruction of the social history of the Island during the period under review.

(b) The Mahāvamsa:

The first part of the Mahāvamsa, which covers the entire period of our present study, was written by Mahānāma, the reputed teacher of the Dīghasanda-Senāpati Pariveṇa, Anuraādhapura,⁴ in the 5th century A.D.

1. Geiger, Dv. & Mv. Trns., ed. by Cumaraswamy (Colombo 1908), p. II.

2. Law, Dv. (Colombo 1957), p. 6.

3. Malalasekara, PLC., p. 134-5.

4. MMT, p. 687.

5. Hc. Vol. I, Pt. i, p. 49

A great deal of similarity can be seen between the Dīpavaṃsa, the historical introduction to the Samantapāsādikā, and the Mahāvamsa. Geiger thinks that Buddhaghosa's historical introduction to the Samantapāsādikā was based on the Dīpavaṃsa.¹ At the very outset of the Mahāvamsa, Mahānāma states that his work was based on a previous work written on the same subject by the ancients. He further says that this ancient work in question was full of repetitions and was unsystematic because it contained unbalanced details.² He does not say in which language the work had been written, but according to the Vamsatthappakāsinī³ it was in Sinhalese. Mahānāma included in his Pāli work the contents of this ancient Sīhalatthakathā Mahāvamsa.⁴ It is thus clear that the Mahāvamsa was not based on the Dīpavaṃsa but on the Sīhalatthakathā Mahāvamsa and traditions on which, most likely, both the Dīpavaṃsa and the historical introduction to the Samantapāsādikā were also based. However, as the Dīpavaṃsa is the earlier work, it is probable that Mahānāma made use of its material.

The Mahāvamsa is considered to be a work of art written in the epic or kāvya style,⁵ and was a Chronicle of the Mahāvihāra, where the most authentic school of Buddhism

1. Geiger, Mv. Trns. Intro., p. XI.

2. Mv. 1.2. "ati vitthārato kvāci, atīva kvāci saṃkhitto".

3. MvT. p. 687.

4. *Ibid.*, p. 42.

5. Geiger, Mv. Trns. pp. 11-16.

is supposed to have flourished from the 3rd century B.C. onwards.¹ The trustworthiness of this Chronicle as a history was at one time much doubted. But the earlier criticisms have been well answered by Geiger.²

On the whole the Mahāvamsa is a trustworthy chronicle. Its author had no intention of hiding the truth, but owing to the fact that he was a Buddhist monk there is no doubt that his interests were one-sided. The main shortcoming is that the Chronicler made no record of many aspects of history which are of great interest to us, because he had no interest in them. Thus as a historical document the Mahāvamsa's failings are many and it contains much that is myth and legend; moreover from its accounts of the period before 250 B.C. even a satisfactory chronology cannot be established.³ But "it would be too rash simply to set aside those ancient legends, for they often contain a kernel of history wrapped up in the tales and the inventions of a pious traditions." ⁴

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1. Other monastic establishments had their own Chronicles which are now lost. See, PLC., p.133.
 2. Mv. Trns., assisted by M.H. Bode (1922), intro., pp. XII-XXVIII.
 3. Mendis, The Chronology of the Early Pāli Chronicles of Ceylon, University of Ceylon Review, Vol. V, No. I, (1927) pp. 39-54.
 4. Geiger, Culture of Ceylon in mediæval Times, Preface, p. XXII.

On the other hand the author of the Mahāvamsa was not biassed in recording events of political importance. For Example, the Tamil invaders during this period were not welcomed by the inhabitants of this country; they were generally considered hostile to both the political and religious advancement of the Island. But when Mahānāma speaks of Sena and Guttika, the two Tamil usurpers ³ and Elāra, ⁴ he says that they ruled righteously.

But the Mahāvamsa's contribution to social history of this period is very small. The names of towns and villages, which are the basic factors of social organisation, occur only incidentally, mainly in connexion with religious affairs. Yet, such references as there are, are of immense value for the reconstruction of the social history of this period, at least on a hypothetical basis.

The Vamsatthappakāsinī :

The Vamsatthappakāsinī, which is popularly known as the Mahāvamsa Tikā, is the Pāli commentary on the first 37 chapters of the Mahāvamsa. The author of this work is traditionally believed to be a monk, also named Mahānāma. But

1. Mv. XX.V.11.

2. Mv. XXI.VV.14,34.

both Geiger ¹ and Malalasekara ² are of the opinion that this Mahānāma is not identical with the author of the Mahāvamsa. The date of this book is assigned to about the 8th or 9th century A.D., some ~~two~~ ^{three} or ~~three~~ ^{four} centuries later than the date of the compilation of the Mahāvamsa. ³ Some of the sources, such as the old Sinhalese Aṭṭhakathās, on which the Mahāvamsa Tikā is based, are as old as those from which the Mahāvamsa derived its information. ⁴ Hence this also is an important source book for the study of the social history of this period.

Pāli Scriptures:

In order to determine the position of the Indian caste system from the Buddhist point of view at the time when the Aryan colonists migrated to this country, and the changes that took place in social outlook in Ceylon after the introduction of Buddhism, evidence from the Pāli Scriptures is incorporated in this discussion wherever necessary.

Pāli Commentaries:

Buddaghosa, the renowned commentator of the Pāli Scriptures rendered the then existing Sinhalese.,

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1. Geiger, Dv. & Mv. p. 32.
 2. PLC.p. 143.
 3. MvT.p. CIX.
 4. PLC.p. 144.

commentaries into Pali in the 5th century A.D. at the Mahāvihāra in Anurādhapura. He states in his introductions to some of his Atthakathās that these commentaries were brought to Ceylon by Mahinda and that they were written down originally in Sinhalese for the benefit of the people of the Island.¹

He describes his method of writing down these commentaries in Pāli, in the introductory verses to the Samantapāsādikā as follows: "In commencing this commentary, having embodied therein the Mahā Atthakathā, without excluding any proper meaning from the discussions contained in the Mahā Paccarī, as also in the famous Kurundī and other commentaries, and including the opinion of the Elders, and casting off the language of the commentaries, condensing detailed accounts, including authoritative decisions, in keeping with the Pāli idiom, I shall start this work".² Thus it is evident that the Sinhalese commentaries, which had been written down in the 3rd century B.C. were handed down in the same language till the 5th century A.D. During this period of eight centuries, these commentaries no doubt accumulated new material of a local nature to illustrate certain doctrinal points, for we have many stories to that effect here and there

1. See, Introductory verses to DA, MA, AA.

2. SMP.I, p.I, verses 8-12.

in the commentaries. Hence these references undoubtedly provide an interesting field of research into the social conditions that prevailed from the 3rd century B.C. to the 5th century A.D.

Not only the commentaries but some of the sub-commentaries also come to our aid in our present study. One such sub-commentary is the Sāratthadīpanī, the commentary on the Samantapāsādikā. This work was written by a Thera named Sāriputta, of the fraternity of Dimbulāgala Mahākāsyapa, during the reign of Parākramabāhu the Great (1153 A. D. ^{1181 A.D.}). Although the date of this work is slightly later than that of the Mahāvamsa Tikā, its contents may seem to be quite old. In the introductory verses the author himself says that the material had been written in Sinhalese by the Ancients (Porāṇehi), and he has only re-arranged it and translated into Pāli.¹ This work provides us with information about Asoka's marriage and his connections with Vidisā, and gives a clue as to why he had two of his children ordained into the Buddhist Order. This work is particularly interesting for us as it establishes that there was an Abhiṣeka ceremony in Ceylon prior to Devānaṃpiya Tissa.

11 Sāratthadīpanī, ed. Devarakkhita Thera, (Colombo 1914), p. I.

The Sīhalavatthupakarana¹

The date of this book is not known. It was written by a monk named Acariya Dhammanandi of the Pattakotti Vihāra in Kaṇṭakasola Pattana.² It is not known whether these places are situated in India or Ceylon. Nor does the book state anything about the nationality of the author.

The word Pattana ^{Pattanam in} both in Pāli and Tamil means a sea-port. In our sources of this period, this word was used to denote sea-ports in South India and Ceylon.³ Further, the word Kaṇṭakasola can be taken as a varying reading for Kaṇṭakacola, for the word 'Sola' in Sinhalese also can mean 'Cola'.⁴ If we accept this etymological possibility, Kaṇṭakasola Pattana may be taken as a sea-port situated in the Cola country in South India, for, according to our sources, there was no sea-port in Ceylon that can be identified with Kaṇṭakasola Pattana.

One of the Nāgārjunikoṇḍa inscriptions of Vīrapurisadatta, ascribed to about the 2nd half of the 3rd century A.D. contains a clear reference to this word Kaṇṭakasola.⁵ According to this inscription there were

1. Buddhadatta Edition, (Colombo, 1959).

2. Sīhāv. pp. 35, 62, 134.

3. See, infra. p.

4. cf. Solīrata in Sinhalese.

5. EI. Vol. XX, p. 22.

various pious foundations at Nāgārjunīkoṇḍa, dedicated by a female devotee named Bodhi Siri to the Sinhalese monks of the Theriya Sect, who were engaged in the propagation of Buddhism in places such as Kashmir, Gandhāra, China, Kirāta, Tosālī, Aparānta, Vaṅga, Vanavāsī, Dāmila, Yavana and Pallūra and the Island of Tambapaṇṇi. Among the other religious foundations enumerated in this inscription, reference to the Sīhalavihāra is particularly interesting. This Sīhalavihāra must have been founded for the accomodation of Sinhalese monks. It contained a shrine with a Bodhi-tree in addition to the residential quarters.

Another important point to be noted in the inscription is the reference to "a stone Mandapa at the eastern gate of the Mahācetiya at Kaṇṭakasola". Evidently this locality Kaṇṭakasola must be identical with "the emporium ^a Kaṇṭkossyla " which Ptolemy mentions¹ immediately after "the mouth of the Maisolos. It follows that the river known to the Greeks under the name Maisolos was the Kistṇa".² Hence it is clear that Kaṇṭakasola Paṭṭana was a sea-port on the Kṛṣṇa river near Nāgārjunīkoṇḍa. Thus the existence of close relations between Ceylon and Nāgārjunīkoṇḍa can be easily accounted for

1. Ptolemy, VII, I.15.

2. E.H. Warmington, The Commerce between the Roman empire and India (Cambridge 1928), p.116.

from the sea-borne trade which was carried on between the ports of Ceylon and Kaṇṭakasola Paṭṭana, the great emporium on the right bank of the Kistna river.¹

Further this inscription clearly states that the construction, development and repairs of these numerous buildings were made by Bodhisiri at the instigation of three Theras, Candamukha, Dhammanandi, and Nāga.² Now according to the Sīhalavatthu, Ācariya Dhammanandi lived in Paṭṭakoṭṭi Vihāra in Kaṇṭakasola Paṭṭana. Hence the Sīhalavihāra referred to in the inscription is no doubt the same as the Paṭṭakoṭṭi Vihāra referred to in the Sīhalavatthu.

In the Sīhalavatthu there are seven stories dealing with events in Saurāṣṭra in Western India, one about Gandhāra, and another connected with the Emperor Asoka. All the other seventy-three stories are about Ceylon. This shows that the author of this book had some connection with Western India also. We have seen earlier that the Sinhalese monks resident at Nāgārjunikoṇḍa were engaged in propagation of Buddhism in various parts of India. One of the places where they carried out their Buddhist activities was Yavana which

1. EI. Vol. XX, p. 10.

2. EI. Vol. XX, p. 22: Imaṃ navakammaṃ tiṃhi navakamhikehi kāritaṃ Candamukha therena ca Dhammanandi Therena ca Nāga therena ca.

may, most probably, be Western India- Saurāṣṭra.¹ It is therefore possible to suppose that Ācariya Dhammanandi engaged in propagation of Buddhism in Saurāṣṭra. The name Sīhalavatthu of this book also suggests that this was written not for the Sinhalese but for the foreigners, otherwise there is no point in naming it thus. Thus it is reasonable to infer that Ācariya Dhammanandi wrote the Sīhalavatthu in India.

Another point worth considering is that this Vihāra was especially meant for the monks of the Theriya Sect in Ceylon. This shows that at the time when this inscription was engraved, the distinction between the Theriya Sect and Dharmaruci or Abhayagiri Sect was well known even in India. According to the Mahāvamsa the Dharmaruci Sect broke away from the Mahāvihāra during the reign of Vaṭṭagāmaṇī Abhaya (103-77 B.C.). Now we know that Ācariya Dhammanandi belonged to the Theriya Sect or the Mahāvihāra School. It is therefore obvious that the date of the Sīhalavatthu was later than that of Vaṭṭagāmaṇī's reign.

Reference is also made invariably in this book to the great famine which occurred during the reign of

1. For Yavanas in Saurāṣṭra, cf. Junāgarh Rock Inscription of Rudradāman I. EI. Vol. VIII, p. 42. ff.

Vaṭṭagāmaṇī Abhaya as the Brāhmaṇatīya corabhaya.¹ The only other work where this word Tīya occurs is the Mahāvamsa. The commentarial literature and both the Sahassavatthu and the Rasavāhinī refer to this clearly as the Brāhmaṇa Tissa corabhaya. This suggests that the date of the Sīhalavatthu was earlier than that of Buddhaghosa's Commentaries. Further, references are made in this book to several kings of Ceylon up to Mahāsena. But no mention is made to a single king that came after that ruler.

Dr. Burgess expressed the opinion that "the inscriptions at Nāgārjunikoṇḍa belong to about the 3rd or the 4th century A.D. but are probably earlier".² Dr. Bühler, while editing them, "places the reign of king Purisadatta in the 3rd century A.D. and before the accession of the Pallavas to the throne of Vengi".³ According to the Ceylon chronology, Mahāsena's reign also falls from the 2nd half of the 3rd century A.D. In consequence of these facts it is reasonable to assign the date of the Sīhalavatthu also to the same period. If this is accepted, the Sīhalavatthu

1. Sihv., pp. 152, 162, 166.

2. J. Burgess, The Buddhist Stūpas of Amarāvātī and Jaggayyapāṭa (London 1887), pp. 110 ff, EI. Vol. XX, p. 21.

3. Ind. Ant., Vol. XI, pp. 256 ff.

goes back to a date earlier even than that of the Dīpavaṃsa. If so, the Sīhalavatthu can also be considered as the earliest extant Pāli work in Ceylon written by a Sinhalese monk.

From the point of view of language and style there does not appear to be any objection to dating this text back to the 3rd century A.D.¹

So far as the contents of this book are concerned a great deal of similarity can be seen between this and the Sahassavatthu. But the style of writing and the poetic expressions in this book are far superior even to those in the Dīpavaṃsa. This book contains 82 stories. The first 27 stories are written in campū style. The next 23 stories are purely in verse and the remaining 27 stories are in prose. A perusal of the style of writing and arrangement of these stories suggest that the author was a great lover of poetry. Although he shows a little weakness in the use of correct idiom and grammar in the prose stories, he exhibits his elegance and cleverness in the correct use of Pāli idiom, poetic expressions and metre in the composition of verses.

1. I intend to deal with other aspects of the date of the Sīhalavatthu with great detail in a separate article.

The Sīhalavatthu thus forms a very valuable source book for our present study, as it embodies a great deal of material which throws some light on the social, economic, and religious conditions in Ceylon during the period under survey.

The Sahassavatthu: ¹

Both the author and the date of this work are uncertain. The author himself informs us that he composed his book with material borrowed from the Sīhalatṭakathā and the traditions of the teachers.² References to the Mahāvamsa³ and to an opinion of the resident monks of the Uttaravihāra (Abhayagiri)⁴ are made in this book. The reference to the Mahāvamsa shows that the Sahassavatthu was later than the 5th century A.D. The Mahāvamsa Tīkā, which belongs approximately to the 9th century A.D., refers to the Sahassavatthu three times.⁵ This shows that the date of the latter was earlier than that of the Mahāvamsa Tīkā.

The author of the Rasavāhinī says that he based his work on a Pāli work written by a Thera named

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1. Buddhadatta's Edition, (Colombo, 1959).
 2. SV., p. I.
 3. *ibid*, pp. 89, 108.
 4. *ibid*, p. 95.
 5. MvT. pp. 451, 452, 607.

Raṭṭhapāla of Guttavaṃka Pariveṇa at Mahāvihāra in Anurādhapura.¹ It is now agreed that the Sahassavatthu was a work belonging not to the Abhayagiri but to the Mahāvihāra.²

Originally it was written in Sinhalese (Dīpabhāṣāya) embodying the stories related by Arahants. Raṭṭhapāla translated it into Pāli. Vedeha, the author of the Rasavāhinī, says that Raṭṭhapāla's work was full of mistakes such as repetitions etc. Hence he corrected these mistakes and re-arranged the text in a more refined language, adding further details wherever necessary and omitting unnecessary repetition.³ Thus it is clear that the Rasavāhinī is only a revision of Raṭṭhapāla's Pāli translation, which was most probably the Sahassavatthu.⁴

The work contain 95 stories dealing with incidents both in India and Ceylon. The stories connected with Ceylon provide us with a good deal of historical information not found in other sources, for example the story of Phussadeva Thera is entirely new, and is not found even in the Rasavāhinī. In the Rasavāhinī too there is a story about

1. Rsv., Pt. I, p. I.

2. PLC., p. 128-129.

3. Rsv., I, Intro., Verses 7-8.

4. For more details see Rahula's HB. Intro., p. XXIX-XXX.

one Phussadeva, but he is the well known paladin of Duṭṭhagāmaṇī. ^h Pussadeva Thera of the Sahassavatthu is the son of Saddhātissa's sister. ¹ This shows that Kākavaṇṇa Tissa had not only two sons but also a daughter, who is not referred to anywhere in our sources. The great famine which occurred during the reign of Vaṭṭagāmaṇī Abhaya is referred to both in the Mahāvamsa ² and the Sīhalavatthu ³ as Brāhmanatīya. But the Sahassavatthu invariably refers to it as Brāhmanatissacorabhaya. ⁴ The commentarial literature also confirms this. ⁵ The Sahassavatthu therefore forms an important source book for our present study.

The Rasavāhinī:

The Rasavāhinī was written in the 14th century A.D. by a Thera named Vedeha who was the author of both the Samantakūṭa Vannanā and the Sīhalasaddalakkhaṇa. But as this was a revision of Raṭṭahapāla's work mentioned above, there is no doubt that the majority of the stories belong to a very early date.

The Rasavāhinī is a collection of 103 stories

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1. SV., p. 115.
 2. Mv., XXXIII. vv. 38-39.
 3. Sihv., pp. 151, 162, 166.
 4. SV., pp. 33, 41, 171, 177, 175, 180.
 5. Majjhima Aṭṭhakathā, I, p. 92; SMV. p. 445-446.

divided into two parts. The first contains 40 stories connected with India while the second consists of 63 stories dealing with incidents in Ceylon. Of them 19 stories are not found in the Sahassavatthu. This shows that Vedeha obtained them from other sources. But the latest king referred to in this is Sirināga, who ruled in Anurādhapura from 249 A.D. to 268 A.D. All the other kings such as Kākavaṇṇatissa, Duṭṭhagāmaṇī, Saddhātissa and Lajjitissa, who are often mentioned here, belonged to pre-Christian centuries. There is therefore no doubt that the material embodied in these stories belonged to a very early date. Hence all these works, the Sīhalavatthu, the Sahassavatthu and the Rasavāhinī, contain material of historical importance which throws new and interesting light on the manners, customs and social conditions of Ceylon during the period under survey. ¹

Foreign notices and accounts:

In the first place, Ceylon was famous for its precious stones and other commodities from early times. Then, after the introduction of Buddhism, it gained a reputation in the Buddhist world as the home of ⁴Theravāda Buddhism. These

1. For more details about Rasavāhinī, see Rāhula: HB. Intro., pp. XXIX-XXX.

are the two main factors which attracted foreign visitors to this country. Of these visitors, the traders passed information about Ceylon on to the historians of their own countries, while the pilgrims left accounts written by themselves. The earlier accounts of the Greeks and the Romans were based on information supplied by sailors.

The two most important records of this category, which are useful for our present study are the anonymous work called *Periplus of the Erythrean Sea*, and the *Geography of Ptolemy*. It is very much doubted whether the writers of these two works obtained their information from first-hand knowledge. Yet, the particular references to sea-ports and commercial goods both of import and export made in these works indicate the state of the commercial and cultural intercourse between Ceylon and foreign countries in this period.

Another important and perhaps the most trustworthy foreign account is the *Travels of the Fa-Hsien*¹ which was written by Fa-Hsien himself, a Chinese monk who visited Ceylon in the beginning of the 5th century A.D. Unlike other accounts, this record contains first-hand information

1. *Travels of Fa-Hsien*, Giles (1923).

gathered by the author himself during the two years of his stay in Ceylon. Although the date of Fa-Hsien falls outside our period of study, his account can be considered as reflecting the condition of Ceylon at least in the preceding century. Hence the usefulness of these foreign accounts for our present study is unquestionable.

(2). Archaeological Sources:

Archaeological sources are broadly divided into three groups, inscriptions, coinage and monuments. Of these inscriptions are the most important for our present study.

(a) Inscriptions:

The inscriptions of this period contain information useful for our study and more trustworthy than other sources because they are contemporaneous and closest to the events. Moreover, they confirm what is given in the chronicles and other sources and sometimes they give us entirely new information which is not found in other sources.

These inscriptions are engraved on natural rocks, pillars, stone slabs and parts of ancient buildings. A few, belonging to the early period, are also carved on lime stone slabs.¹

1. A.M. Hocart, Inscribed Stones, CJS.G.II, p.2.

Over 3000 of these inscriptions, assigned to the period beginning from the 3rd century B.C. to about the 2nd century A.D., are very short and contain records of the donation of caves to the Sangha.¹ They are engraved in Brāhmī script as in India. These are scattered in all parts of the country.² Many of these inscriptions are referred to in Müller's Ancient Inscriptions of Ceylon, Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society, Ceylon Journal of Science and the Archaeological Survey of Ceylon Annual Report. The best edited inscriptions by the most eminent scholars in this field, are published in the Epigraphia Zeylanica. New records are still being discovered and are usually given in the annual reports of the Archaeological Survey of Ceylon.

Most of these inscriptions are left by the kings themselves and their officials, while the rest were left by ordinary people. As they are very short, they usually contain nothing more than the names of the donors and the particular monks to whom the donations were made. In the case of the royal grants, the names of kings their titles and perhaps their genealogies are also normally given. In some

1. ASCAR., for 1905, pp.4554.

2. CJS.G.I.p.86.

cases the date of the grant is given in regnal years.

These inscriptions are particularly significant for the reconstruction of the political history of this period. But the uses of these records for the study of the social history are still greater, for some of the titles occurring in them are honorific while others are occupational. Hence most of these titles serve as an index to determine the rank and the caste to which the donors belonged. The hereditary character of these titles further helps us to understand the types of family organisation which led to the establishment of separate settlements of different communities on an occupational basis. The names of some villages and towns recorded in these inscriptions also testify to this fact. Thus the inscriptions of this period are the most reliable records useful for our purpose.

The aid of Indian inscriptions is also sought wherever necessary to trace the historical development of various institutions in Ceylon and to understand the meaning of certain obscure words occurring in our sources both literary and epigraphic.

(b) Numismatics:

Coins are another important source for the reconstruction of the history of Ceylon. But they are of little

value so far as our period of study is concerned, for very few contemporary coins, whether local or foreign, have come to light so far. They are found in abundance from about the 4th century A.D. onwards. These coins no doubt supplement the literary evidence about Ceylon's commercial contact with foreign countries.

(c) Monuments:

Buildings both religious and secular, towns tanks and different types of early settlements, are often mentioned in our literary and epigraphic records. But most of them are now in a state of ruin. The recent archaeological survey on the site of the ancient city of Anurādhapura has revealed a complete picture of that city exactly in the same way in which it has been described in literary sources.¹

Hence, for a thorough study of many aspects of Ceylon history, a systematic archaeological survey, particularly on the sites of early settlements of Ceylon, is still a long felt need, for until it is done, a complete picture of the early phase of the history of Ceylon will never be revealed. However, the remains of the religious and secular works unearthed and preserved so far by our Archaeologists form a valuable index to the social, economic,

1. See, *infra*, pp. 307-308.

political and religious conditions as well as the cultural attainments of the Sinhalese during our period of study.

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CHAPTER II

Caste System.

In the 5th century B.C., when the Aryans may have started to migrate to Ceylon from India, there is, no doubt that they brought with them their customs and institutions, their ideology concerning social organisation and the superior or inferior position of the various classes. In order to understand Sinhalese Culture, it is, therefore, necessary to examine the evolution of the caste system in Ceylon, noticing where it was different from the Indian caste system, and suggesting the causes of its difference.

Society in pre-Buddhist Ceylon, before the advent of Mahinda, was divided, as in India, into four major divisions: the Brāhmana or ^{the} learned priestly class, the Kṣatriya or the ruling class, the Gahapati (Vaiśya) or the community composed of traders and farmers, and the Sūdra or the class of people who were employed in menial work.

The Brāhmanas:

The Brāhmanas formed the most influential and respected section of Ceylon society in those days. According to the Mahāvamsa ¹ one of the immigrants who came along with Vijaya was ^a Brāhmana named Upatissa who founded Upatissa Gāma

1. Mv., VII, v. 44.

which was for sometime the capital of the Sinhalese Kingdom, and who held the office of domestic chaplain to Vijaya. In the absence of a suitable heir to the throne, he even administered the country from the death of Vijaya¹ until the arrival of Paṇḍuvāsudeva from India. This might indicate that the position he held both in society and administration of the country was an important one.

In Indian society the Purohita or the royal chaplain figured prominently among the Ratnin in the Vedic period,² and he continued to be a member of the Council of Ministers for several centuries. According to the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa³ every king who wants to perform a sacrifice, must have a Purohita, as otherwise the Gods will not accept his offerings. Thus he stood in the relation of a spiritual Preceptor (Guru) to the King.

According to the Jātakas, the Purohita must discharge his duties by performing sacrifices in order to

1. Mv. VIII, v. 4.

2. Ancient Indian Polity, N.N. Law, pp. 87, 170.

3. Aitareya Brāhmaṇa, VII. 24, "Na vai apurūhitasya devā balimaśnuvanti."

drive away the misfortune which accrues to the King through bad dreams,¹ or through sinister omens; apparently the Brāhmaṇas visited the King in the morning,² for this purpose, arms and animals which the King uses had to be consecrated by magic formulae,³ so that their use might bring luck. This shows clearly that the King used to seek the advice of Purohita before he undertook any kind of new venture.

He was not only a spiritual Guru to the King but also his principal adviser in terms of the King's everyday life. A reference in the Sarabhaṅga Jātaka⁴ clearly indicates that the King held the Purohita in very high esteem as his teacher. Thus it is understood that the Purohita is the guiding factor of the King's life both worldly and spiritual. It is said in one of the Jātakas that a King appointed his former teacher to the office of Purohita, and looked upon him as if he was his father and

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1. Jātaka, I, p. 335, Mahāsupina Jātaka: "Atha..... Brāhmaṇa-Purohitā upasamkamitvā".
 2. J., III, p. 43: "Kosalārājā nerayika sattānaṃ saddaṃ suṇī... arunuggamanavelāya Brāhmaṇā āgantvā".
 3. J., II, 46. "So pana hatthimaṅgalakārako ahosi".
 4. J. IV, p. 270: "Rājā ko esoti pucchi. Ahaṃ deva Purohitoti, atha so dvāraṃ vivantivā ito ācariya ehi āha".

and followed his advice.¹

The office of Purohita was, usually, hereditary, and held by the same family for generations.² The hereditary character of this office, therefore, firmly bound the Priest's family with the ruling house. This is referred to in the Susīma Jātaka: "for seven generations, the performance of elephant consecration has been hereditary in our family".³

This position of the Purohita with respect to the King, led necessarily to an intimate personal relation between the two. It is, therefore, quite understandable that the Purohita, occasionally, played an important role both in the fields of politics and judicial administration. He was expected to be well-versed both in Śāstra (military affairs) and Śāstra (religious affairs), as also in political science.⁴

When the King, consecrated for a long

1. J., II, p. 282.

2. J., IV, p. 200: "Tassa Purohitakulam ahivātakarogena vinassi".

3. J., II, p. 47: "Hatthimaṅgalakāraṇaṃ nāma Yāva sattamā Kulaparivaṭṭā amhākaṃ".

4. Ancient Indian Polity, Altekar, p. 121.

sacrificial session, could not direct the administration, it was the Purohita who ^edeputised for him. ¹ The Rāmāyana shows that when the monarchy was in abeyance owing to the absence of a suitable heir to ascend the throne, it was the Purohita ^sVaiṣṭha who carried on the administration. ² This practice may have been just the same in Ceylon, as we have seen in the case of the Purohita Upatissa. ³

It is also evident from the Jātaka that the Purohita took part in the judicial administration. The Kiṇṇanda Jātaka tells of a slandering, corrupt Purohita who when sitting in court, makes unjust judgements. ⁴ The Purohita even enjoyed the power to set aside a wrong judgement given by a Senāpati, on his own accord, ~~without~~ even consulting the king. ⁵ Thus at times he also enjoyed the status of Chief Justice.

But it should be borne in mind that the

1. Ancient Indian Polity, Altekar, p. 121.

2. *ibid.*

3. See, *Supra*, p. 27.

4. J., V, p. I: "Purohito panesa parapittimamsiko lñcā^kkhādako Kūṭavi^hnicchayiko ahosi".

5. J., II, p. 187: "Bodhisatto taṃ aṭṭaṃ paṭivinicchitvā sāmikam neva sāmikam akāsaṃ".

political power of Purohita was purely individual and had its source solely in the personal influence which he obtained over the king through his function as sacrificer and magician. He performed these duties partly owing to his close intimacy with the king and due partly to fulfil his ambition of acquiring as much wealth as he could. A Purohita, discussing the ethics of animal sacrifice with his pupil says in the Mahāsupina Jātaka :¹ " my son, much money will come to us in this way". According to the Susīma Jātaka, the consecration of State elephants always brought the Purohita ten million,² as all implements for consecration and the entire jewellery of the elephants fell to the lot of the performer of the consecration. Thus it is clear that the main object of their discharge of duties in performing sacrifice and magic, was to achieve their self-elevation through wealth.

For this purpose they secured many privileges which were not common to the other members of society. They

1. J., I, p. 343.

2. J., II, p. 46.

enjoyed tax-free lands which produced food-crops by means of the ox and the plough and gangs of servants and serfs, living with the power and splendour of kings.¹ Sometimes the revenues of many villages were assigned to the Brāhmaṇas by royal charter. For this investment of public money what returns did society receive from the average Brāhmaṇa? At most a few couplets of royal eulogy,² the solution of a dream and interpretation of omens,³ or performance of costly sacrifice to propitiate the Gods. Meanwhile he would invest his wealth in various kinds of business pursuits such as agriculture,⁴ trade,⁵ and cattle rearing, and became^a multi-millionaire (Asītikoṭivibhavo).⁶ His daily remuneration from the king amounted to 100 or 500 kahāpanas.⁷ The Arthaśāstra of Kautilya gives the salary of the Purohita as 48,000 panas, probably per month.⁸ Thus wealth and social prestige gave him further powers in state and society.

1. Digha, I, p. 87; Majjhima, II, p. 164.

2. J., V, p. 23: "... catasso satārahā gāthā....tassa nivāsa-gehaṃ dāpetvā"; J., V, p. 485.

3. J., I, p. 272; J., IV, p. 276.

4. J., IV, p. 276.

5. J., V, 471; J., IV, p. 15.

6. J., IV, p. 7; II, p. 272; II, p. 39.

7. Majjhima, II, p. 163; Saṃyutta, I, p. 82.

8. Arthaśāstra, V, III.

It can be seen from the references in the Pāli Chronicles that this practice was much the same in Ceylon society too. The Mahāvamsa refers, after Upatissa, to a group of Brāhmaṇas who were well-versed in mantras and were in an advisory capacity in the royal court.¹ The queen Ummādacittā entrusted prince Paṇḍukābhaya, her son, to a Brāhmaṇa named Paṇḍula who was wealthy and well-versed in the Vedas (Bhogavā Vedapārāgo), to be instructed in royal accomplishments. Having trained him properly in arts and sciences necessary for a king, Paṇḍula gave him one hundred thousand coins in order to enable him to raise an army to fight his enemies (his uncles). Paṇḍukābhaya carried out the instructions of Paṇḍula and appointed Paṇḍula's son, Canda to the office of Purohita in his royal court.²

Among the buildings which were built by Paṇḍukābhaya in Anurādhapura, there was a separate dwelling house for the Brāhmaṇas (Brāhmaṇāvattāma).³ Devānampiyatissa also had a Brāhmaṇa (dviḥja) who was sent in company with the king's nephew Ariṭṭha on an embassy bearing presents to Asoka.⁴

1. Mv., IX, v. 2.

2. Mv., X, vv. 19-26.

3. Mv., X, v. 102.

4. Mv., XI, v. 20.

When the branch of the sacred Bodhi tree was brought to Anurādhapura, one of the halts between that city and the sea-port Jambukōṇapattana, was in the village of a Brāhmaṇa named Tivakka.¹ This Brāhmaṇa is again specially mentioned among the other distinguished personages present on the occasion of the planting of this tree,² and one of the eight places selected for planting the eight Bo-saplings was the village of the Brāhmaṇa Tivakka.³ In the enumeration of the different places passed by the king Devānampiyatissa, in the process of his marking the boundaries of the consecrated area in Anurādhapura, the shrine belonging to a Brāhmaṇa named Dīyavāsa is mentioned both in the Mahābodhivaṃsa⁴ and the Mahāvamsa.⁵ Kākavaṇṇa Tissa also had Brāhmaṇas as house-priests.⁶ There was

1. Mv., XIX, v. 37.

2. Mv., XIX, v. 33.

3. Mv., XIX, v. 60.

4. Mahābodhivaṃsa, p. 136: "Nigrodham aṅganam gantvā Hīyagalla samīpake; dīyavāsa Brāhmaṇassa, devokaṃ pubbadakkhiṇaṃ."

5. Mv., XV, v. 204.

6. Mv., XXII, vv. 46-47.

another Brāhmaṇa named Kuṇḍala in Dvāraṇḍāla village near Mihintale, who was a good friend of Duṭṭhagāmaṇī.¹

Thus it is clear from these references that the Brāhmaṇa was^a highly respected member of society during this period. In India when the popular faith in them declined with the rise of the Upaniṣadic, Jain, and Buddhist movements, the influence of the Purohita as a house priest, must have declined. After the advent of Mahinda, the position of Brāhmaṇas in Ceylon may have been similar as in India. Under these circumstances, some of the Brāhmaṇas in Ceylon may have aspired for political power in order to bring about a revival of Brāhmaṇism. In the first half of the 1st century B.C. when Vaṭṭagāmaṇī Abhaya had ruled scarcely five months, a young Brāhmaṇa named Tissa, raised a revolt in Rohana.² Tissa was such a powerful Brāhmaṇa that Vaṭṭagāmaṇī, at least for the time being, dared not meet him in open battle.³

According to the Sammohavinodanī, the rebel Brāhmaṇa Tissa plundered the ^ddistricts. The monks discussed this question in Council and sent eight theras to Sakka

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1. Mv., XXIII, vv. 24-30.
 2. Mv., XXXIII, vv. 37-41.
 3. Mv., XXXIII, v. 33 ff.

requesting him to ward off the rebel. Sakka, the king of the Devas, replied: "Sirs, it is not possible to ward off the rebel that has risen. May you go abroad. I shall protect you on the sea".¹ This story, though curious, shows the tremendous power wielded by Tissa during this period. The hatred with which Tissa was looked upon by the monks, is well-illustrated by the epithet "Caṇḍāla" sometimes added to his name in literary works of this period where he appears as "Caṇḍāla Tissa".²

There was another Brāhmaṇa named Sirināga who at first became a plunderer and later raised an army and usurped the throne of Anurādhapura.³ He was also such a powerful enemy of Buddhism that when he persisted in digging the treasures of Cetiya, nobody dared point out to him the gravity of his misdeeds.

Once, when a Caṇḍāla was asked to show how

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1. SV., p.445: "Brāhmaṇa Tisso coropi janapadam viddhamseti; saṅgho sannipatitvā coraṃ paṭibāhatūti sakkaṃ santi-kāmaṃ aṭṭha there pessesi....."
 2. Manorathapūraṇī, p.136: "Teneva imasmim dīpe Caṇḍāla Tissa mahābhaye sakko..... Bhikkūnaṃ ārocesu"
 3. Rsv., II, p.8.

to break into a particular cetiya, he refused to do so, as he was an upāsaka. When Śirināga heard his words of praise of the Buddha, it was as if iron spikes were pricking his ears and, he became so furious with anger that he ordered eight Caṇḍālas to be impaled.¹ There is also a reference in the Mahāvamsa, to a Brāhmaṇa named Nīliya, who was anointed King by queen Aṇḍala, after poisoning her previous husband.^{1a}

The earliest Inscriptions of Ceylon too, bear testimony to the presence of Brāhmaṇas in Ceylon just after the introduction of Buddhism. One of the donors of caves at Sāssāruva, in the Kurunegala District, was a Brāhmaṇa named Somadeva, son of Vāsakaṇi.² The owner of a cave at Vāṅgala in the Nuvarakalāviya District is given in the Inscription on the brow of the cave as Viritasana, the son of the Brāhmaṇa Kosika.³

Several other Inscriptions, too, of the period under review furnish us with still more evidence to show that there were Brāhmaṇas who commanded a high social status in Ceylon. The word Bamaṇa occurs in two

1. Rsv., II, p. 8.

1a. Mv., XXXIV.v. 25.

2. JRAS(CB)., Vol. XXI, p. 321.

3. JRASCB., Vol. 31, p. 322.

Inscriptions 1. " Parumaka Suri putaha Parumaka Bamaṇa Dataha"; 2. " Damaguta teraha Bamaṇa puta Mahadataha ".

This word Bamaṇa is no doubt derived from the Sanskrit Brāhmaṇa (Brāhmaṇa > Baṃhaṇa > Bamaṇa). This shows clearly that there were Brāhmaṇas who became Buddhists and played an important role in society, raising themselves to the rank of Parumakas.

Another Inscription records that a cave was denoted by an Upāsaka who was the son of a Nakatika (astrologer). ¹ Yet another Inscription refers to a Parumaka, ² the son of an astrologer who was also a Parumaka.

We will see later ³ that the profession of astrology was mainly in the hands of Brāhmaṇas in Ceylon as in India. Thus it is obvious that the Brāhmaṇa astrologer also enjoyed the equal social status with the Parumakas during this period.

Further, it is to be noted that five other Inscriptions belonging to the period under survey contain eight references to a word ' Patake '. An examination of the

1. CJSg., II. p. 214, No. 674.

2. CJSg., II, p. 214, No. 672

3. See, infra, pp. 354-355.

parallel usage of this term in other sources will help us to understand its meaning in our Inscriptions. Neither Wikramasinha nor Parānavitana says anything about the etymology of this term.¹

According to Indian Literature, both Sanskrit and Pāli, the word Pāṭhaka means "one who recites, one who knows well, one who instructs". In Hindi, too, the word Pāṭhaka means "one who recites", hence the spiritual teacher—the Brāhmaṇa. The word Paṭake in our Inscriptions seems to be, derived from this.

According to the Mahāniddesa, those who read signs and stars are called Lakkhaṇa Pāṭhakā and Nakkhatta Pāṭhakā respectively.² In the Jātakas, "those who know the science of reading the bodily signs are called Angavijjā Pāṭhakā"³ On the strength of this evidence, though it is reasonable to infer that these Pāṭakas were Brāhmaṇas, these references do not state this explicitly.

1. CJS.G., II, pp. 202-204.

2. Mahāniddesa, p. 382. "Lakkhaṇa Pāṭhakā lakkhaṇam ādisanti, Nakkhatta Pāṭhakā nakkhattam ādisanti".

3. J., I, p. 455; II, p. 21.

But a few other references clearly show that these Pātakas were Brāhmaṇas.

A man who had an extremely beautiful daughter, once went to the king and requested him to have her examined by sign readers and take her into his palace, as there was no more suitable match for her than he. The king agreed to this request and sent Brāhmaṇas (Brāhmaṇe pesesi) to examine her. ¹ Then there is also a reference to another Brāhmaṇa who knew the art of reading good and bad swords (asilakkhana pātako Brāhmaṇo). ² The Mahāvamsa also refers to a Brāhmaṇa as "Horāpātaka". ³ Thus it is justifiable to suppose that the word pātaka in our inscriptions may mean "Brāhmaṇa".

In all the references in our inscriptions assigned to the period from the 3rd century B.C. to the 1st century A.D., found in the Kāgalla District, the word pātaka is used in the Magadhi nominative singular form

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1. J., V, p. 211: "Deva mama gehe.....Lakkhanapatake pesetva."
 2. J., I, p. 455.
 3. Mv., XXXV. v. 71.

"pāṭake" ¹ and in combination with the locative singular
 of the name of a village or a city.i.e. Cenagamasi pātake ²
Nilaya Nagarasi pātake, ³ Dasataragamasi pātake, ⁴
Patagamasi pātake ⁵ Upaligamasi pātake ⁶ Amanagamasi
pātake ⁷ Salivayasi pātake, ⁸ and Batasa Nagarasa pātake. ⁹

It is evident from these references that
 these pātakas were the leaders of their respective villages
 or cities referred to above. We have seen earlier ¹⁰ that
 the Brāhmaṇas who migrated to the Island first built
 villages themselves and settled down in them. It is,
 therefore, justifiable to infer that these are the villages
 where the Brāhmaṇa community lived mostly during this period.
 It is to be noted here that eight Brāhmaṇa families were
 sent to Ceylon along with the Sacred Bodhi-Tree by Asoka. ¹¹

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1. Cf. Vanappagumbe yathāphussitagge;Uvāsage.
 2. CJS.G.,II,p.204,No. 621: " Cenagamasi aparapātake ima gama".
 3. ibid. No.620.
 4. ibid. No.619.
 5. ibid.
 6. ibid.p. 203,No. 618.
 7. CJS.G.II.p. 202,No. 615.
 8. ibid, p. 204,No. 620.
 9. ibid. p. 202, No. 615.
 10. See Supra, pp.26-27.
 11. Mv., XIX.v.2.

Most probably these are the eight villages built by them.

The references to the apara (other or secondary) paṭaka of Cenagama, and the ekapaṭaka of Anamagama, suggest that there were often more than one paṭaka in a settlement, and that one of these was looked ^{up} on as superior to the others.

After the advent of Mahinda, the influence of the Brāhmaṇa on society as a house-priest began to decline. But it is, no doubt true that those who embraced Buddhism were absorbed ¹ into the Buddhist lay society, following professions of varied nature, but still tried to retain their status in society and perhaps succeeded to a considerable extent.

The Kṣatriyas.

According to the social set up in Ceylon during this period, the king and the members of the royal family as well as the members of those families which were related to the king in one way or other, formed a class by themselves, equivalent to the Kṣatriyas of Ancient India.

1. Mv., XVII, v. 60: "Tato' patissagāmāca pañca pañca satānica pabbajjam....."

The Kṣatriya is a class of nobles or warriors. Although proofs are wanting of the existence of a group of hereditary military castes under the general name of Kṣatriya, in India during our period, still there is no doubt that there was a class of nobles who cultivated the arts of politics and war and occupied certain high responsible positions of state. With the expansion of the king's family, his kinsmen were absorbed in this class as Commander-in-Chief (Senāpati), Viceroy (Uparāja) and so forth. It was this class of people who were considered as one of the four Varnas or social grades in Ancient India. Gradually they became the ruling class in the state as the representatives of political power, with the king at their head.

In the eyes of the people they were, no doubt, superior to the Brāhmaṇas. But the Brāhmaṇas tried, whenever possible, to place themselves above the Kṣatriyas during the Vedic period. The Gautama Dharma Sūtra¹ claims that the royal authority should avoid interference with the

1. Gautama Dharma Sūtra, I, II: " Rājā vai sarvasyeṣṭe
Brāhmaṇavarjam."

Brāhmaṇas and reminds the king that he can prosper only if supported by the latter. If he does not employ a Brāhmaṇa as Purohita says the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa,¹ "God will not at all accept his offerings". At the time of the Abhiṣeka, the king three times bows before the Brāhmaṇa; he thereby accepts his subordination of the Kṣatriya to the Brāhmaṇa and as long as he does so he will prosper.²

From these references it is clear that the influence of the Purohita over the king was great during the Vedic period. But it does not necessarily mean that, as a class, the Brāhmaṇas were superior to the Kṣatriyas, for there are other references in the Brāhmaṇa Literature itself to show that the king could at his will make himself the lord of the Brāhmaṇas.³ Another passage in the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa⁴ mentions that a king can expel the

1. A.Br.VII, 5, 24 : "Na vai apurohitasya devā balimaśnuvanti".
2. A. Br.VIII, 9 (Sa nṛpaḥ yannamo Brāhmaṇe iti.....
Triskṛtvā Brāhmaṇe namaskaroti. Brāhmaṇa eva tatṣatram
vaśameti tadrāṣṭram samūrdham tadvīravadāha).
3. A.Br. VII, 9, 14 : "Yadā vai rājā kāmāyate atha Brāhmaṇam
jināti".
4. A. Br. VII. 29: "Brāhmaṇaḥ ādāyī āpyāyī avasāyī
yathākāmam prayāyyah."

Purohita as he likes.

According to the Brhadāranyaka Upaniṣad,¹ it is the Kṣatriya or the king who enjoys the highest status in society; the Brāhmaṇa sits lower than and next to him. When Princess Śarmiṣṭhā suspected that Devayānī, the daughter of the Purohita, was assuming an air of superiority, she said to her: "enough of presumptuousness; sitting in a lower place (nīcaih) your father goes on flattering my father both day and night. You are the daughter of him who begs and flatters, I am the daughter of him who donates and is praised".²

In the whole of Buddhist Literature the Kṣatriyas are always assigned the first place in the list of castes. In the Ambaṭṭha Sutta of the Dīgha Nikāya, it is emphatically stated that "the Kṣatriyas are superior, the Brāhmaṇas are inferior".³

Thus the Kṣatriyas of Ancient India formed

1. Br. Upd., I, 4, 10: "tasmā Kṣatrāt param nāsti tasmāt Brāhmaṇaḥ Kṣatriyamadhastāt upāste".
2. Br. Up., I, 72, 9-10: "āsīnaṇca sayānaṇca.....
sutāhaṇ sthūyamāhasyadadatoprati gūhataḥ"
3. Dīgha., I, p. 98: "Khatthiyāva Seṭṭhā hīnā Brāhmaṇa"
p. 99: "Khatthiyo Seṭṭho jana tasmiṇ".

a class by themselves and were conscious of their rank in society. These notions of their rank in society and their customs, probably handed down from ancient times, made marriage within the Jāti the rule and tended to prohibit all impurity arising from mixture with the lower classes and thus led to a specially sharp caste-like division. ¹

When the consciousness of their rank in society grew up, they were very particular as to the purity of their descent through seven generations, both on the father's and the mother's side; and are described as "fair in colour, fine in presence, stately to behold". ² According to one of the Jātakas, the Kṣatriya feels his superiority so much that king Arindama calls Sonaka, the son of a Purohita, a man of low birth (Hīnajaccā). ³ But it should be borne in mind that the Purohita was held in very high esteem by the king simply because he was his Guru both spiritual and worldly.

1. *ibid*, I, p. 115, "Samaṃ khalu bho gotamo abhirūpo daṣṣanīyo pāsādiko paramāya Vanna-pakkharatāya saman-nāgato akkhuddāvakaṃso daṣṣanāya"; *Vinaya*, II, 4, 160.
2. *Social Organisation*. Fick, p. 82.
3. *J.*, V, p. 257.

This was the position of the Kṣatriya in India during the 6th century B.C.

Whatever the ancestry of the legendary Vijaya may be, one thing is certain that he was an Aryan prince come from India. According to the Mahāvamsa,¹ when Vijaya and his band of followers settled down in the Island in the 5th century B.C., his ministers requested him to get himself anointed king of Lankā. But Vijaya did not wish to do so till he obtained a Kṣatriya maiden as his queen from India.

Mention is also made in the Mahāvamsa,² to Paṇḍuvāsudeva who was the son of Vijaya's brother, Sumitta in Siṃhapura, as a Kṣatriya. Although the Mahāvamsa does not say anything about the caste to which Vijaya belonged, the two references mentioned above clearly show that he belonged to the Kṣātriya caste. Then Paṇḍukābhaya³ and his uncles⁴ are also referred to as Kṣatriyas. Similarly

1. Mv. VII, v. 47: "vinā khattiya kaññāya abhisekaṃ mahesiyā."
2. Mv., VIII, vv. 4, 14, 15.
3. Mv., X, vv. 34, 40.
4. Mv., X, v. 30.

Paṇḍukābhaya's son Muṭṣīva and grandson Devānampiya Tissa were Kṣatriyas. ¹

There was another Kṣatriya clan, during the reign of Devānampiya Tissa, at Kājaragāma (modern Kataragama). The representatives of this group of Kṣatriyas were among the distinguished personages who were present at the celebration held in honour of the Bodhi-branch brought from India by Saṅghamittā. ² But there is no evidence to prove that they were in any way related to the royal family then ruling at Anurādhapura. It appears possible that the Kṣatriyas at Kataragama were connected with a stream of immigration to this Island, quite distinct from the main stream whose legend and traditions are the theme of the Chroniclers of Anurādhapura. ³

The Mahāvamsa also states that Devānampiya Tissa's brother, the vice-regent Mahānāga, in order to escape the dangerous consequences of the treachery of

1. Mv., XV, v. 193.

2. Mv., XIX, v. 62.

3. CJSg., II, p. 176.

Devānāpiya Tissa's queen, fled with his family from Anurādhapura to Rohana and established a separate settlement there.¹

There was still another Kṣatriya settlement at Kālaṇiya in the 2nd century B.C. The ruler of this kingdom was Tissa, who was referred to as a Kṣatriya.² Duṭṭhagāmaṇī's mother, the famous Vihāramahādevī, was the daughter of this Tissa.³ Both according to the Pūjāvaliya⁴ and Rājāvaliya,⁵ Yaṭāla Tissa, the son of Devānāpiya Tissa's brother Mahānāga, ruled at Kālaṇiya and built the cetiya there. Kākavaṇṇa Tissa of Mahāgāma, who married the daughter of Tissa at Kālaṇiya, was the grandson of Yaṭāla Tissa who ruled at Kālaṇiya while his son Goṭṭhābhaya ruled at Māgama.⁶ Thus it is clear that the Kṣatriyas of Kālaṇiya were related to the Kṣatriyas of Māgama and the Kṣatriyas of Māgama were

1. Mv. XXII, vv. 2-8.

2. Mv., XXII, v. 13.

3. Mv., XXII, v. 12.

4. Pjv, Edition of 1930, p. 722.

5. Rjv., p. 17.

6. Pjv., p. 729.

related to the Kṣatriyas of Anurādhapura from a very early time.

There was another Kṣatriya settlement called Candanagāma. The representatives of this group of Kṣatriyas also were among the personages who were present at the celebration of the Mahābodhi at Anurādhapura during the reign of Devānampiya Tissa.¹

It is evident from the Mahāvamsa that all the kings from Vijaya up to Ilanāga, were called Kṣatriyas, with the exception of foreign usurpers and the temporary consorts of queen Anulā. It is significant that the Mahāvamsa author was very careful not to designate the kings of the Lambakaṇṇa Dynasty, from Vasabha to Mahāsena, by the term Kṣatriya. But both the Dīpavamsa² and the Attanagaluvaṃsa³ refer to the kings of the Lambakaṇṇa Dynaesty^d also as Kṣatriyas. All these references, undoubtedly, suggest that there was in Ceylon a class of people called Kṣatriyas who were either related to the royal family or belonged to ruling families

1. Mv., XIX, v. 54.

2. Dv., XXII, v. 53.

3. AV., p. 6, 19.

of different origin. We shall have reason to revert to the class affiliations of the Lambakannas in another context.¹

One of the most important elements of the Abhiṣeka of a king in ancient Ceylon was that the king must have a maiden of the Kṣatriya caste as his queen at the time of the Abhiṣeka. This is referred to both in the case of Vijaya² and his successor Paṇḍuvāsudeva.³ This undoubtedly indicates to what an extent the early Sinhalese kings were conscious of their rank in society. Further, the fact that a Kṣatriya maiden performed the Abhiṣeka of Devānampiya Tissa, is highly significant for there is no reference to show that the Abhiṣeka was performed by a Kṣatriya maiden prior to this. According to the Mahāvamsa Tīkā,⁴ there was no Abhiṣeka ceremony in the form in which it was introduced to Ceylon by ^{Asoka} prior to Devānampiya Tissa. As the Kṣatriyas figure most prominently in this Abhiṣeka and it gives an insight into the type of society which prevailed during the 3rd century B.C. in Ceylon, a few words regarding the

1. See, *infra*, p.

2. Mv., VII, v. 47.

3. Mv. IX. v. 17.

4. MvT., p. 305.

Abhiṣeka ceremony may not be out of place here.

According to the Brāhmaṇa Literature Rājasūya is the name given to the Abhiṣeka ceremony.¹ This ceremony divides itself into three parts, preliminary rituals, the Abhiṣeka itself, and post Abhiṣeka ceremonies. The Preliminary rituals mainly consisted of the Ratnin oblations which the king had to offer at the houses of his different ratnins, or ministers and high officials.²

The actual Abhiṣeka followed on the second day. The king was anointed by sprinkling sacred water brought from the holy rivers and seas, while sitting on the throne covered with a tiger skin. The Purohita first performed this ceremony with the proper Vedic mantras invoking the deities Savitr, Indra, Brhaspati, Mitra, and Varuṇa to secure energy and driving power, ruling capacity, eloquence, truth and the capacity to protect the law, respectively. There was no doubt that the representatives of all the three main groups into which Aryan society was divided, took part in the Abhiṣeka ceremony.

1. St. Br., V, 2 & 3; At. Br. VIII, 15.

2. St. Br., V, 3, I.

The Mahābhārata even records that the representatives of the Śūdra and other lower castes also took part in the Abhiṣeka of Yudhiṣṭhira.¹ The association of the representatives of different social groups at the time of the Abhiṣeka may have been intended to convey the general acceptance of the new king by the entire population of the country.

At the time of the Abhiṣeka, it was the king's duty to take an oath by which he bound himself not to do harm to the Brāhmanas² and to abide by the provisions of Dharma.³

After the Abhiṣeka was over, the king went out for a state drive. On his return there was a great festival where a game of dice or a chariot race was displayed.⁴ This was the type of Abhiṣeka ceremony which was known to Ancient India.

When the Vijaya and his band of followers migrated to the Island in the 5th century B.C. there was,

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1. Mbh., 12, 58, 115-6.
 2. A. Br., VIII, 15.
 3. Mbh., 12, 58, 115-6.
 4. St. Br., V, 3.

undoubtedly, at least one Brāhmaṇa,¹ if not many, who was quite conversant with the existing system of the Abhiṣeka ceremony in India. Although the Mahāvamsa does not give a detailed account of this ceremony, it certainly records that after a Kṣatriya maiden was brought from India, Vijaya was anointed king "in full assembly of ministers in accordance with the rules (yathāvidhi).² When the Abhiṣeka was over, there was a great festival (mahāchana) as a part of the Abhiṣeka ceremony.³ These two statements "anointed king in accordance with 'custom', and "a great festival was held", may, perhaps, lead us to suppose that this Abhiṣeka was performed in a similar manner to that in which it was performed in India. According to the Mahāvamsa Paṇḍukābhaya also had an Abhiṣeka ceremony immediately after which he appointed Canda to the status of Purohita.⁴ Paṇḍukābhaya did not solemnise his own Abhiṣeka as some scholars are inclined to think,⁵ for the Mahāvamsa definitely says

1. Mv., VII, v. 44.

2. Mv., VII, v. 71.

3. Mv., VII, v. 71 : Yathāvidhi ca Vijayaṃ sabbe 'maccā samāgatā rajje samabhisiñcimsu karimsu ca mahā chaṇaṃ'.

4. Mv., X, v. 78.

5. History of Buddhism in Ceylon-Rahula, p. 26.
JRASCB. Vol. XXVI, Part.2. p. 119.

that "he caused to perform the Abhiṣeka" (so Abhiṣekaṃ kāresi). The inference can therefore be made that it was not the Kṣatriya maiden who performed the Abhiṣeka ceremony but the Brāhmaṇa Purohita.

But it is very significant that the Kṣatriyas figure more prominently in the Abhiṣeka ceremony of Devānampiya Tissa than the Brāhmaṇas. The following is the account of the Abhiṣeka ceremony given in the Mahāvamsa Tikā.

"In the first place, he who wishes to be duly inaugurated as king should obtain for this purpose three conches (golden and otherwise), water from the Ganges river, and a maiden of the Kṣatriya race. He must himself be ripe for the ceremony (i.e. be over 16 years of age) and be a Kṣatriya of noble lineage, and must sit on a splendid Udumbara chair, well set in the middle of a pavilion made of Udumbara branches, which is itself in the interior of a hall gaily decked for the ceremony of Abhiṣeka.

'First of all, the Kṣatriya maiden of gentle race, clothed in festive attire, taking in both hands a right handed sea chank, filled with Ganges water, and raising it aloft, sprinkles the Abhiṣeka water over his head, and says as follows:-

"Sir, by this ceremony of Abhiṣeka all the people of Kṣatriya race make thee their Mahārāja for their protection. Do thou rule over the land in uprightness, and imbued with the ten royal virtues. Have thou for the Kṣatriya race a heart filled with paternal love and solicitude. Let them (in return) protect, and guard, and cherish thee".

Next the royal chaplain, splendidly attired in a manner befitting his office, taking in both hands a silver chank filled with Ganges water, and raising it aloft, sprinkles water over his head, and says as follows:-

"Sire, by this ceremony of Abhiṣeka all the people of Brāhmin race make thee their Mahārāja for their protection. "(here continues the same form of address as before).

Next, the Gahapati, attired in a fitting manner, in the same way as in the case of both the Kṣatriya maiden and the Purohita, sprinkles the Abhiṣeka water over his head, and says as follows:-

"Sire, by this ceremony of Abhiṣeka all the Gahapatis, for their protection, make thee their Mahārāja (here the form of address continues as before).

Those who address the above form of words pronounce, as it were, a curse upon the king, as if they should say:-

~~I~~ means that thou shouldst rule the land in accordance with these our words. Should it not be so, mayest thy head split in seven pieces".

In this land of Lankā be it known that a Kṣatriya Princess, sent by Asoka, performed the ceremony of Abhiṣeka over the head of Devānampiya Tissa with a right handed chank filled with water from Lake Anṭatta. Previous to this no such ceremony was known in Lankā" ¹.

It is to be noted here that the Sāratthadīpanī, the commentary on Samantapāsādikā, gives an account of the Abhiṣeka ceremony of Devānampiya Tissa in a similar way, but slightly different from what is given in the Mahāvamsa Tikā. ² The closing sentence of this account is as follows:- "It is said that in this Island of Lankā, the Kṣatriya maiden herself anointed king pouring ceremonial water from a right handed chank" (Imasmim pana dīpe.....

1. MvT., p.305.

2. Sāratthadīpanī, Sinhalese edition, 1914, p. 140.

Khattiya kaṇṇāyeva..... (abhiññācīti vadanti)". It is also said that these details mentioned above were given in the Sinhalese Commentary on the Mahāsīhanāda Sutta of the Majjhima Nikāya" (Idam ca yathā vutta abhiseka vidhānam sīhalaṭṭhakathāyampi.....vuttanti vadanti).

In the first place it is evident from this that the author of the Sāratthadīpanī differs from the author of the Mahāvamsa Tikā as to the possibility of Devānampiya Tissa's Abhiṣeka having been performed for the first time only after the sending of the necessaries for the Abhiṣeka by Asoka. He does not seem to have accepted that this was the case, for he says clearly " some say that the Kṣatriya maiden herself (Khattiya Kaṇṇāyeva) performed the Abhiṣeka". He expresses here an air of suspicion as to whether the only Abhiṣeka that Devānampiya Tissa had undergone, was this. It can, therefore, be inferred that there may have been a school of thought which did not maintain the tradition of the Mahāvamsa Tikā. This school, to which the author of Sāratthadīpanī belonged, flourished during the reign of Parākramabāhu the Great (1153 A.D. ^{1186 A.D.}).

Secondly, the Mahāvamsa Tikā says that the details regarding the Abhiṣeka ceremony given here are taken from the commentary on the Cūlasīhanāda Sutta of the Majjhima Nikāya in the Sīhalaṭṭhakathā, whereas the Sāratthadīpanī again disagrees with this tradition and says that "some say that these details are given in the Sinhalese Commentary on the Mahāsī^{ha}nāda Sutta of the Majjhāma Nikāya".

Then again, after describing the Abhiṣeka ceremony, both the Commentators give explanatory remarks which also convey the difference of opinions. Following are the two respective passages:-

The
Mahāvamsa Tikā.

"Imasmiṃ pana dīpe Devānaṃ-
piya Tissassa muddhani Dham-
māsokeneva idha pesita
khattiya kumārī yeva anota-
ttodaka-puṇṇena sāmuddikaṃ
daḍḍiṇāvattaṣaṃkheṇa abhiṣe-
kodakaṃ abhiṣiñcīti vedita-

The
Sāratthadīpanī.

Yadā ha Devānaṃpiya Tisso
Mahārājā attano sahāyassa
Dhammāsoka rañño ito velu-
yaṭṭhiyādayo mahārahe paṇṇ-
ākāre pesesi, tadā sopi te
disvā pasīditvā atiyiya tuṭṭ-
ho imehi atirekataraṃ kiṃ

bham. Tato pubbe pana abh-
 isekagahanam nāma natthi.
 Kevalam navayaṭṭhiyā eva rajj-
 am karimsu. Pacchā pana Devā-
 nappiya Tisso attano sahāy-
 assa, Dhammāsokarañño ito
 rathapaṇatodayaṭṭhādayo mah-
 ārahe paṇṇākāre pesesi. Sopi
 te disvā pasīdigvā ativiya
 tuṭṭho imehi atirekataram kiṃ
 nāma mahaggham paṭipanna-kāram
 sahāyassa me pesessāmīti
 amaccehi saddhiṃ mantetvā laṅ-
 kādīpe abhiseka parihāram pu-
 cchitvā" na aññaṃ abhisekapar-
ihāram nāma athi, kevalam nav-
ayaṭṭhiyā eva kira so rajjam
kāretīti sūtvā sādhu vata me
 sahāyassa abhisekapari-hāram
 pesessāmīti vatvā sāmudd-ika-
 samkhādīni tīni samkhāni gaṃ-
 godakañca aruṇavaṇṇamattikaṃca
 aṭṭhaṭṭha khattiyabrāhmaṇagaha-

nāma mahaggham paṭipanna-kā-
 ram sahāyassa me pesessā-
 mīti amaccehi saddhiṃ mant-
 etvā laṅkādīpe abhisekapa-
 rihāram pucchitvā na tattha
īdiso abhisekaparihāro
atthīti sūtvā sādhu vata
 me sahāyassa abhisekapari-
 hāram pesessāmīti vatvā
 sāmuddikasamkhādīni tīni
 samkhānica gaṃgodakaṃ aru-
 ṇavaṇṇamattikañca aṭṭha
 khattiyabrāhmaṇagahapati
 kāññāyoca suvaṇṇarajataloha
 mattikāmayaghatheca aṭṭha
 hica seṭṭhikulehi saddhiṃ
 aṭṭha amaccakulānicāti
 evaṃ sabbatṭhakaṃ nāma
 idha pesesi." Imehi me
sahāyassa puna abhisekaṃ
karoṭhāti'. Aññañca
 abhisekatthāya bahū paṇṇ-
 ākaram pesesi".

patikaññāyoca aṭṭhaṭṭhameva
 suvaṇṇasajjhalohamattikāmaya
 ghaṭṭheca aṭṭahi khattiyakulehi
 saddhiṃ aṭṭha amaccakulānicāi
 evaṃ sabbaṭṭhakaṃ nāma idha
 pesesi. 'Imehi me sahāyassa
abhisekaṃ karoṭhāti'. Te..
 vattanayena abhisiñciṃsu".

"It should be known that
 in this Island, a Khattiya
 maiden sent by Dhammāsoka pou-
 red the lustral water on the
 head of Devānampiya Tissa from
 a right-spiralled chank produ-
 ced in the sea, and filled with
 water from the lake Anotatta.
Before that there was no such
receiving of the unction. They
wielded the sovereignty merely
by a new staff. Later, however,
 king Devānampiya Tissa sent from
 from here costly presents such

"Dhammāsoka having
 seen the costly presents
 such as the chariot-goad
 staff etc. sent by Devā-
 nampiya Tissa, was highly
 pleased; and, thinking
 'what return presents
 of greater value than
 these shall I send to my
 friend' took counsel with
 his ministers and inquired
 after the Abhiṣeka ceremony,
 having heard that
there was no Abhiṣeka
of this pattern,
 he decided to send
 necessary objects
 for the Abhiṣeka
 ceremony. He, then,
 sent three chanks
 including a sea chank,
 water from the Ganges,

as the charior-goad-staff to his friend king Dhammāsoka. He having seen these presents, was highly pleased; and thinking, 'what return presents of greater value than these shall I send to my friend', took counsel with his ministers and ^{was} required after the Abhiṣeka ceremonies in the Island of Lankā. He heard that there was no Abhiṣeka ceremony there, but that he ruled merely by a new staff. He then said: 'well, then, I shall send to my friend the objects necessary for the Abhiṣeka', and sent here three chanks, including a chank produced in the sea, water from the Ganges, ruddy coloured mud, eight each of Khattiya, Brāhmaṇa, and Gahapati virgins, eight each of gold, silver, bronze, families, eight families of

ruddy coloured mud, eight each of Khattiya, Brāhmaṇ and Gahapati virgins,

eight each of gold, silver, bronze, and earthen pots, eight Khattiya families, eight families of ministers saying:

"Perform the anointment of my friend with these for the second time " He also sent many other presents necessary for the Abhiṣeka".

and earthen pots, eight Khattiya families, eight families of ministers, saying: Perform the anointing of my friend with this." They in due course came here with the presents and anointed Tissa as aforesaid".

It is evident from these two passages that the author of the Mahāvamsa Tīkā differs from the author of the Sāratthadīpanī as to the existence of an Abhiṣeka ceremony prior to Devānampiya Tissa. The Mahāvamsa Tīkā says that "Asoka heard that there was no Abhiṣeka ceremony, but that Devānampiya Tissa rules merely by a new staff", whereas the Sāratthadīpanī says, "having heard that there was no Abhiṣeka ceremony of this pattern (Idiso abhiṣekaparihāro)". The Mahāvamsa Tīkā further states that Asoka after giving all necessaries for the Abhiṣeka said: "Perform the anointing of my friend with these", whereas the Sāratthadīpanī states "Perform the second anointing of my friend with these". From this it appears that the

author of the Mahāvamsa Tikā deliberately omitted comments on the word 'Puna' which occurs in the Mahāvamsa.¹ It is also significant that "ruling by the authority of a new staff" was not familiar to the author of the Sāratthadīpanī.

The date of the Mahāvamsa Tikā has been extensively discussed by both Geiger and Malalasekara. Geiger attributes this work to a period between 1000 and 1250 A. D.², while Malalasekara puts it in the eighth or ninth century A.D.³. Julius de ^aLenaro ^{etc} also assigns this work to the 11th century A.D.⁴

But so far as the date of the Sāratthadīpanī is concerned, there is no dispute whatsoever, for the author himself clearly says in his introductory verses that he composed this work during the reign of Parākramabāhu the great and that he belongs to the School of Dimbulāgala Mahākāśyapa.

Now the important point worth considering here is that if the date of the Mahāvamsa Tikā was earlier

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1. Mv., II, v. 36: "karotha me sahāyassa abhisekaṃ puno iti.
 2. Geiger, Mv., Introduction, p. VIII.
 3. Vamsatthappakāsanī, PTS. Introduction, p. CIX.
 4. Sinhala Sāhitya Lipi, p. 23.

than that of the Sāratthadīpanī, what was the reason for the latter to omit the sentence" rules by a new staff "(nava Vatthiyā eva rajjam kāreti)? And what was the reason for the former to omit any comment on the word 'punābhiṣeka' in the Mahāvamsa ?

A possible explanation of this may be that the author of the Sāratthadīpanī, perhaps writing a little later than the author of the Mahāvamsa Tikā, did not know of the tradition that early Sinhalese kings ruled by the authority of a new staff, but believed that the ruling power could only be invested on kings by a form of Abhiṣeka. This again is supported by the sentences 'that there was no Abhiṣeka of this pattern before and 'Perform the second anointing of my friend'.

The author of the Mahāvamsa Tikā may have omitted any comment on 'Punābhiṣeka's simply because he wanted to give an honourable position to the Abhiṣeka sent by Asoka by giving an impression that there was no Abhiṣeka prior to this.

However, this second Abhiṣeka does not appear to indicate the vassal status of Devanampiya Tissa, for

there is no evidence whatsoever in our sources, whether in India or in Ceylon, to show that he was a feudatory king of Asoka. Further, if he was considered a vassal king, Asoka would never have allowed him to use his imperial title Devānāmpiya by which he was known throughout his empire. Hence this Punābhiseka of Devānāmpiya Tissa does not appear to indicate anything more than his friendship with Asoka.

Another hypothesis is that there may have been two Schools of thought as to the existence of the Abhiṣeka ceremony in Ceylon prior to Devānāmpiya Tissa. One School, as early as the 11th century A.D. may have held that there was an Abhiṣeka, in some form or other, prior to Devānāmpiya Tissa, while the other may have held that the only Abhiṣeka ceremony known to Ceylon was the one which was introduced by Asoka during the reign of Devānāmpiya Tissa.

One thing is certain that if there was an Abhiṣeka ceremony prior to Devānāmpiya Tissa, it was performed by the Purohita, as was the case in India during that period, while the Abhiṣeka of Devānāmpiya Tissa was performed by a Kṣatriya maiden. Another peculiarity in the case of the former, is that although the

representatives of all the four classes of society were present at the time of the ceremony, it was only the Brāhmaṇa who performed the Abhiṣeka in accordance with the rules laid down in the Brāhmaṇic Literature, whereas in the latter, all the three representatives of the Aryan group headed by a member of the Kṣatriya race, performed the Abhiṣeka. Yet another interesting point to be noted ~~to be pointed~~ here is that though the Brāhmaṇa and the Gahapati were given a chance to pour water over the king's head, it ~~was~~ evident from all the available sources,¹ that only the Kṣatriya maiden was essential to perform the Abhiṣeka, for the Brāhmaṇa and the Gahapati were not included in the list of necessities for the ceremony. Then again it is clearly stated that 'it was the Kṣatriya maiden sent by Asoka, who performed the Abhiṣeka of Devānampiya Tissa'.

The possible conclusion, therefore may be that it is true that before Devānampiya Tissa there was no Abhiṣeka ceremony in the form in which it was introduced to Ceylon by Asoka; but undoubtedly the Abhiṣeka ceremony

1. Mv., II, v. 30;
Samantapāsādikā, p. 37; MvT. p. 305.

in some form or other, was known in Ceylon. Most probably the early kings prior to Devānampiya Tissa followed the Hindu form of Abhiṣeka, where Brāhmaṇa was the most important figure, whereas in the case of Devānampiya Tissa's Abhiṣeka a member of the Kṣatriya race figured most prominently.

This conspicuous difference as to the status of the Kṣatriya and the Brāhmaṇa in the case of the two forms of Abhiṣeka ceremony mentioned above, encourages us to suppose that the reaction against the pretensions of the Brāhmaṇas, in which Buddhism and Jainism played a big part, led by the Mauryan period to the use of an Abhiṣeka ceremony in which the purohita played little or no part. We may therefore conclude that from the third century B.C. onwards the Kṣatriyas were the leading social class of Ceylon.

CHAPTER III

The Vaiśyas.

According to the Brāhmanic theory of caste, the last and largest of the three superior castes is the Vaiśya. They are the farmers and the traders.

In the Pāli Literature the term Vessa is mentioned only in passages where the Brāhmanic theory of caste system was discussed.¹ Thus there are no references to prove the real existence of a caste called Vessa.

In the words of Maṇḍ and Kauṭilya, their occupations and duties are "cattle-breeding, distribution of alms, sacrifice, study, trade, lending money at interest, and agriculture."² According to this definition, the majority of the population of Ceylon, came within the category of the Vaiśyas, for agriculture and trade were the chief means of their livelihood which will separately be discussed later.

The Mahāvamsa records that when Vijaya requested the king of Madurā in South India to send maidens

1. Dīgha, I, p. 96; III, p. 82.

2. Manu, I, 90; Cf. Arthasāstra, I, III.

of equal ranks for him as well as for his followers, the king of Madurā is reported to have sent to him one thousand families of eighteen different guilds (Senī), in addition to the number of maidens required by him.¹ In order to understand the social significance attached to this word Senī it is necessary to examine the parallel usage of it in Indian Literature both Sanskrit and Pāli.

The Pāli term Senī is the equivalent of Skt. Śrenī, which means guilds of merchants or craftsmen. According to Medhātithi, the commentator on Manu, Śrenī means "guilds of merchants, artisans, bankers, Brāhmaṇas learned in the four Vedas".² According to Nārada, it means "an assemblage of eminent merchants and by others (it is taken to mean) as a company of artisans".³ Kauṭilya too refers to this term as meaning "guilds of workmen",⁴ and "corporations of agriculture, trade and military . . .

1. Mv., VII, v. 56, 57.

2. Commentary on Manu, Medhātithi, VIII, 41.

3. ibid, Nārada, I, 7.

4. Arthaśāstra, II. 4.

service.¹ The Mañābhārata also refers to this word in the sense of a guild of merchants.²

Although these works slightly differ from one another as to the definition of the term Śrenī, they all include the merchant first in the list in order of preference. It thus seems quite possible that merchants may have been the most distinguished ^{class of} people among the Śrenī. But none of these works refers to the number of Śrenīs as eighteen.

It is only in the Jātaka and the Smṛti Candrikā that eighteen guilds are mentioned. It is interesting to note that the merchant is not included in the list of eighteen guilds in both these works. According to the Jātaka,³ the people who were included in the list are carpenters, artisans, painters and the like. But the Smṛti Candrikā applied the term to the eighteen low castes and crafts like those of the washerman, leather manufacturer, actor, basket and mat-maker, fisherman,

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1. 11.1.

2. Mañābhārata, III, 248, 16.

3. Jātaka, VI, p. 427.

weaver, & c. ¹ Another Jātaka ² refers to two ministers of the king of Kosala as the heads of merchants' guilds (Senī Pamukhā dve mahāmaccā). But when the Jātakas speak of the eighteen guilds, it is quite obvious that the Srenīs were not included in the four major social orders. Whenever the king wanted to raise an army in order to open up a battle with another king, he collected armies from all the four classes and the eighteen guilds. ³

It is evident from these references that originally the word Srenī was used to denote the guild of merchants and when the population increased the people who followed different occupations formed themselves into organised bodies. With the result the number of guilds also increased. This process of development may be seen in three different stages. In the first stage the word Srenī was used to denote the guild of merchants. In the second

1. Local Gov. of Ancient India, Mookerji, Mysore Edition, p.65.

2. Jātaka, II, 12.

3. Jātaka, VI, 22; "Cattāro ca Vanne aṭṭhārasa senyo sabhañca balakāyaṃ sannipāteti".

J. VI, 427: "Vaḍḍhikī-kammāra-kammakāra-cittakārādī nānāsippa-kusalā aṭṭhārasa-seniya ādāya".

SV., p. 466.

stage it was used to denote a class of people who followed occupations of less social recognition, like carpenters, artisans &c. In the third stage it was used to denote people who followed still lower occupations such as washing, basket-making &c. It seems, therefore, reasonable to assume that the guilds sent by the king of Madurā in South India, to Ceylon somewhere in the 5th century B.C., may have belonged to the first category of merchant-guilds (Vaiśya).

References to the word Vessa both in literary and epigraphic records of Ceylon during this period are very few. The people popularly known by the term Vessa or Vaiśya in Indian literature, ~~are~~ generally were included into the group of class of Vaiśyas in the Ceylon records by the terms Parumaka, Bata, Gapati or Gahapati, Kuṭumbika, and Gamika.

In the Mahāvamsa the word Vessa is referred to in connection with a monastery established by Devānampiya Tissa. According to the Mahāvamsa¹ this monastery is called "Vessagiri", and is so called because there were five hundred

1. Mv., XX, v. 15.

monks there, who had belonged to the Vessa class before they entered the Order of the Saṅgha. It is interesting to know why this particular monastery was so named, discriminating it from other monasteries. Does it mean that there was caste distinction among the monks even at such an early date?

There was another monastery in Anurādhapura during the reign of Devānampiya Tissa, called "Issara Samanaka".¹ This monastery was so called because there were five hundred resident monks who belonged to the 'noble class' (Issara), before they entered on monkhood. The term Issara is used in the Mahāvamsa in place of the word Kutumbika in the Rasavāhinī. Saṅgha, the father of Suranimala was referred to in the Mahāvamsa as an Issara,² whereas the same Saṅgha is referred to in the Rasavāhinī as Kutumbika.³ Theraputtābhaya's father is referred to in the Rasavāhinī as Gahapati,⁴ whereas he is referred to in the Mahāvamsa⁵

1. Mv., XX, v. 14.

2. Mv., XXIII, v. 19.

3. Rasavāhinī, II, p. 83.

4. Rasavāhinī, II, p. 93.

5. Mv. XXIII, v. 55.

with an additional title 'Issara' (Issaro Gahapati).

" At this time Vessagiri buildings, most probably, formed, with the neighbouring rock temple Issara Samanaka, part of an extensive monastery which was later repaired by Kassapa I. (479-97 A.D.) " ¹ It is, therefore, reasonable to infer that the monks who came from the families of Issara and Vessa may have been accommodated in the same premises, yet in two different monasteries, probably, in keeping with the social status enjoyed by them prior to their ordination.

According to the Samantapāsādikā ² soon after the arrival of Mahinda, a minister named Ariṭṭha who was a nephew of Devānampiya Tissa, entered the Order with fifty five of his elder and younger brothers. The king built up sixty two cave temples at Cetiyaḡiri and accommodated them there. Then there was another minister named Mahā-Ariṭṭha who was also a nephew of the king and who entered the Order with five hundred followers.³ It seems that there were two Ariṭṭhas

1. EZ., I, p. 31.

2. Samantapāsādikā, p. 40. (Sinh. Ed.)

3. Mv., XIX,v.65; Samantapāsādikā, p. 49.

both of whom were nephews and ministers of the king. But it is clear that Ariṭṭha entered the Order first and lived with his kinsmen at Cetiyagiri, while Mahā-Ariṭṭha entered the Order later and lived somewhere else with his followers. It is to be noted here that there was another cave temple called Ariṭṭha Pabbata¹ which means "the mountain of Ariṭṭha", situated about twenty five miles South East of Anurādhapura. It is most probable that this was the monastery where the Elder Mahā Ariṭṭha and his followers were accommodated. We have already pointed out earlier² that they all belonged to the Kṣatriya class.

The Mahāvamsa also states that one of Devānampiya Tissa's younger brothers, Mattābhaya having delighted in the Teachings of the Buddha, entered the Order with the permission of the king.³ He may have taken residence either in the Mahāvāhāra or in one of the two monasteries meant for the Kṣatriyas.

Mention is also made in the Mahāvamsa to two

1. EZ., I, p. 13.

2. See, Supra, p. 75.

3. Mv., XVII, v. 57.

groups of Brāhmaṇas of five hundred each, who entered on monkhood from the villages Dvāramandala,¹ and Upatissa.² It is most likely that they also may have been accommodated in separate quarters.

As the Community of monks increased in number, the necessity of the establishment of new monasteries may have been unavoidable. In the circumstance when five hundred people of one particular class entered the Order on one particular occasion, the king may have thought of accommodating them in one place, not because they belonged to a particular class of society but for convenience of their proper training and education. But it so happened that these new entrants came in large numbers from different strata of society and at different times. Hence the necessity of housing them in separate places came into vogue, with the result that the monasteries like Arittha Pabbata, Issara Samanaka, Vessagiri, and Cetiyagiri came into existence in addition to the famous Mahāvihāra. Most probably it was this system of monastic establishments

1. Mv., XVII, v. 59.

2. Mv., XVII, v. 60.

that formed a nucleus of the later split among the Saṅgha into caste groups.

The next reference to the word Vessa in the Mahāvamsa is found in connection with the families sent to Ceylon by Asoka along with the Bodhi Tree.¹ To watch over and for the protection of the Bodhi Tree, Asoka, is also said to have sent eighteen families of Dāvḡas (Devakulāni) and eight families each of ministers, Brāhmaṇas and cowherds and eight each of the Taraccha, and Kalinga tribes. The Mahāvamsa also adds to the list, eighteen families of guilds (Senī) such as weavers, potters, Nāgas, Yakkhas &c.²

According to the Samantapāsādikā and its commentary, these families were sent in order to perform certain specific duties towards the Bodhi Tree. For the protection of the Bodhi Tree (Mahābodhi rakkhanatthāya) eighteen Deva families were sent.³ Eight families of ministers were sent for the purpose of organising different

1. Mv., XIX, v. 2.

2. Mv., XIX, v. 3.

3. Samantapāsādikā, p. 47.

rites connected with the Bodhi Tree.¹ Eight Brāhmaṇa families were sent for the purpose of sprinkling water to the Bodhi Tree.² Eight Vessa families were sent in order to arrange the necessary offerings.³ Eight families of cowherds were sent in order to supply the necessary quantity of milk to wash the Bodhi Tree.⁴ Similarly other families also were entrusted certain other duties towards the Bodhi Tree.

A perusal of the duties assigned to different families and their order of preference in the list clearly indicates that the Devakulas are considered to be the most important of all. But it is not clear what is implied by this or to which particular class of society the Devakulas belonged. Some scholars are inclined to think that they belonged to the Kṣatriya caste.⁵

1. SD., p. 154.

2. SD., p. 154.

3. SD., p. 154.

4. SD., p. 164.

5. Early History of Buddhism, Adikaram, p. 55.

Sinhala Anduva, Wimalakitti, p. 224.

According to the Pāli sources,¹ Asoka's queen was the daughter of a Setthi of Vidisā or Vethisa. The Sāratthadīpanī² refers to his name as Deva (Devanāmakassa Setthissa). As we shall see later,³ the Setthi, undoubtedly, belonged to the Vaisya class both in India and Ceylon.

Asoka sent, according to the tradition, eight princes who were the brothers of Asoka's queen. In other words, they were the sons of Deva Setthi of Vedisa city in Avanti.⁴ Both the Pūjāvaliya⁵ and the Mahābodhivaṃsa⁶ state that they belonged to the Kṣatriya class. But if we accept the fact that Asoka's queen belonged to the Vaisya class, there is no doubt that her eight brothers headed by Sumitta also belonged to the same class. In sending

1. Samantapāsādikā, p. 34; Mahābodhivaṃsa, p. 98.

Sāratthadīpanī, p. 130; Mv., XIII, v. 9.

2. SD., p. 130.

3. See, infra, pp. 109-112.

4. MBV., p. 154: "Vedisa deviyā sahodarānam aṭṭhannam khattiya kumārānam aggam Sumitta Bodhiguttābhidhānam".

5. PJV., p. 721.

6. MBV., p. 154.

these eight princes with their families to protect the Bodhi Tree, we may suggest that Asoka also sent ten other families of equal rank to assist them in their functions, thus making the number of Deva families eighteen.

There is no doubt that when Asoka sent the Bodhi Tree, he wanted to send it in the safe custody of highly respected class of people whom he could really trust. It is really significant and very conspicuous that this mission did not consist of at least a single member of Asoka's own clan. The fact that his marriage with a Vaisya girl may not have been approved by his clansmen, particularly by his father Bindusāra. This is also supported by the fact that when he hurried from Ujjayinī to the death-bed of his ^{father} at Pāṭaliputra, he is said to have left on the way his wife and children in his wife's city (Vedisa Nagara), and to have gone alone to Pāṭalīputra. ¹ Even after he became the sole monarch of India, the Queen never thought of going to Pāṭalīputra, which was the stronghold of the Mauryas. ² On the other hand Bindusāra never saw Asoka's children. It is,

1. SD., p. 130.

2. SD., p. 130.

therefore, reasonable to infer that there may have been some kind of misunderstanding or disagreement between him and his clansmen. This family conflict perhaps led the king to get his two children by his Vaisya wife entered into the Buddhist Order. In the absence of his own clansmen to escort Saṅghamittā, his only daughter, the next best suitable people were, no doubt, his Queen's relatives. This may be the reason why Asoka got eight brothers of his Queen to lead the mission to Ceylon with the Bodhi Tree and Saṅghamittā. Even, one of the members of the previous mission led by Mahinda, was a person called Bhaṇḍuka who was the son of Asoka's Queen's sister.¹ It is therefore very reasonable on the part of Asoka to send his brothers-in-law along with Saṅghamittā to Ceylon on this mission. It is, therefore, reasonable to suggest that the eighteen Devakulas sent by Asoka were of the rank of the Vaisya class.

One of the Vessagiri cave inscriptions also refers to this word Deva among other Vaisyas such as Parumakas.²

1. SD., p. 130.

2. EZ., I, p. 19, No. 3; See, Parumaka, p.

Twenty names of persons are mentioned in the inscriptions. Of these twelve are donors, the remaining eight are either the names of their respective fathers or in the case of two out of the five female donors, those of their husbands. All these personages probably belonged to one family, for it was not likely that the caves which stand practically in the same rock could at that time have been owned by persons other than those of one clan. ¹

Another inscription belonging to the 6th century A.D., at Anurādhapura, refers to five persons who donated one hundred Kahāpanas to the Abhayagiri monastery. All of them were the residents of one village. One of them is referred to as Deva. ² It is most likely that these Devas also may have had some connection with the remaining ten out of eighteen Devakulas mentioned above.

It is also interesting to note that according to literary evidence of the 15th century A.D. the rulers of the Lambakanna dynasty, from Vasabha to Mahāsena who ruled

1. EZ., I, p. 18.

2. EZ., IV, p. 141.

the country from the first half of the first century A.D. onwards, originated from the stock of Sumitta, who was one of the eight ^{sons} princes, accompanied the Bodhi Tree. The Sinhalese prose work Saddharma Ratnākara and the two poems Pārakumbā Sirita and Kāvya Sekharaya, all attributed to the 15th century, contain these references. According to these works the Lambakannas were derived from a branch of the Maurya clan to which Asoka belonged. Thus Sumitta also belonged to the same caste as Asoka.¹ This shows clearly that these later writers attempted to give a nobler and more ancient origin to this dynasty by including Sumitta to the clan of Asoka, completely ignoring or not knowing the fact that Sumitta came from a Vaisya family.

According to the Mahāvamsa the Lambakannas appear for the first time in Ceylon History during the reign of Ilanāga (33-43 A.D.).² It is very significant that the Mahāvamsa does not refer to the kings of the Lambakanna

1. Pārakumbāsirita, V, 10: "Dahamso raja...tama kulenev sumituru kumaru samagin kulan dasa aṭa."

2. Mv., XXXV, v. 19.

dynasty as Kṣatriyas, perhaps owing to the fact that the author knew that they were of Vaisya origin. The Dīpavaṃsa refers to only one king of this dynasty, Saṅghabodhi, as a Kṣatriya.¹ The Attanagalu Vamsaya also calls the same king a Kṣatriya, while at the same time referring to all the three princes Saṅgha Tissa, ~~Saṅgha~~ Saṅgha Bodhi and Goṭhābhaya as belonging to Lāmanipakṣaya.²

Paranavitana is inclined to think that the Sinhalese form of "Lāmani" has been used as the equivalent of Pāli "Lekhaka", scribe.³ According to the Mahā - Bodhivaṃsa⁴ and the Pūjāvaliya⁵ Sumitta was given the post of chief scribe or the record keeper of the Bodhi Tree (Jayamahaleṇa). It is evident from these references that at the time Lambakannas first appear in History, they held the position of scribe in the administration.

It is not known how this dynasty originated in

1. DV., XXII, v. 53.

2. Attanagaluvamsaya, p. 6, 19.

3. History of Ceylon, Vol. I, Pt. I, p. 175.

4. MBV., p. 154.

5. PJV., p. 721.

Ceylon. The information regarding this matter, found in our sources ^{are} rather inadequate to form a definite opinion ^{about} of it.

It is suggested that the Lambakannas were of totemistic origin, the name implying a hare or a goat because of their long ears.¹ Lambakanna means merely the pendent ear, says Dr. Krishnasvāmi Aiyangar,² and he suggests that it may have been derived from a physical deformity brought about artificially by making holes in the ear-lobes.

According to the Pāṇinī,³ there were certain classes of people who were designated by the terms "Bhinna Karna" and "Chinna Karna", which means "having broken ears" and "having pierced ears" respectively. In the Maitrāyaṇī Samhitā,⁴ also, a reference is made to a class of people called "Chidra Karnyah" which means "those who have pierced ears".

It is, therefore, likely that the people who

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1. Comprehensive History of India, Vol. II, p. 587.
 2. Some Contributions of South India to Indian Culture, p. 86.
 3. Pāṇinī, VI, 3, 115.
 4. Maitrāyaṇī Samhitā, IV, 2, 9.

used to wear large ear-ornaments and were originally known in India as Chidrakarnas may have been better known by the term Lambakarnas in Ceylon at a later date.

As we have seen earlier ¹ the marking of ears of people belonging to certain clans was a regular custom in Indian society. It is twice referred to in the Atharva Veda ², and this mark is termed Laksman ³. This shows that the term Laksman was commonly used to denote the people of certain clans, whose ears were marked with certain specific symbols. It is, therefore, quite probable that when the Lambakarnas, with bored ears as their clan's symbol, appeared in Ceylon, they may have brought their common designation Laksman also with them. The result could have been the Sinhalese term Lämäni (Skt. Laksman > Lämäni) came into vogue to denote the Lambakarnas who were originally the Chidrakarnas. Thus we see that the Sinhalese form Lämäni has no similarity in meaning or formation with the Pāli Lekhaka as Dr. Paranavitana is inclined to think. ⁴

1. See, supra, p. 86.

2. AV., VI, 141, 1, 2; 12, 4, 6.

3. ibid.

4. HC., Vol. I, Pt. p. 175.

It has also been suggested by Krishnaswami Aiyangar that the Lambakannas belonged to the Northern Provinces, apparently to Jaffna, and also that they seem to have been Tamils.¹ This claim he bases on the references in the Mahāvamsa to the effect that the Lambakanna Vasabha had his home in the Northern Provinces (Uttarapassa),² but it should be mentioned here that the Lambakannas were not confined to only one particular part of the country, and that Vasabha himself directed his operations against Subha from Rohana.³ There are also references in the Manorathapūranī⁴ and the Sihalvatthuppakarāṇa⁵ to Lambakannas who lived in Rohana even prior to Vasabha. According to the Manorathapūranī a certain Lambakanna once discussed the qualities of a novice (daharo Bhikkhu) with his colleagues (mittāmccehi saddhim) at the entrance to the royal palace.

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1. Some Contributions of South India to Indian Culture, Intd., p. 10.
 2. Mv., XXXVI, v. 58.
 3. Mv., XXV, v. 69.
 4. Manorathapūranī, Sinhalese Edition, p. 288.
 5. Sihalavatthuppakarāṇa, (Sinh. Ed. Colombo, 1959) p.159.

During the first century B.C. (101-77 B.C.), the Kingdom of Māgama was shifted to Anurādhapura. It is, therefore, obvious that there were Lambakannas in Rohana at least as early as the first century B.C., if not earlier. It is also evident from this reference that although they did not belong to the ruling class, they certainly enjoyed high social status during this period. Later three other Lambakannas are said to have come from Mahiyaṅgaṇa,¹ on the borders of Rohana and Malayaraṭa. This shows that they were scattered all over the country.

In Gūlavamsa, however, there occurs a reference to the Lambakanna, but once again no attempt is made to trace their origin. Parākramabāhu I, is said to have constructed a costly golden maṇḍapa for the Bowl Relic and placed people of the Lambakanna clan, with umbrellas, swords and whisks in their hands, and other peoples of noble families, round the maṇḍapa for its protection. Once again they are mentioned in connection with the consecration of Vīrapāṇḍu as king of Pāṇḍya by Lakṣmīpura, the general of

1. MV., XXVI, v. 58.

Parākramabāhu. It is said that three Lambakanna chiefs were asked to carry out the duties of the Lambakannas (Lambakannadhuram).¹ They had specific functions to perform in connection with royal consecration, and hence were placed in close proximity to the king. A Carnatic inscription assigned to the twelfth century A.D. also contains a reference to a country of the Lambakannas.² These references clearly show that during the eleventh and twelfth centuries, the Lambakannas were found in South India too.

Thus, whatever their origin may be, in Ceylon at least they seem to have formed an important bureaucratic class, occupying high and responsible places in society, and administration, with strong family ties, and scattered all over the country. Their close connection with the royal families is evident from the fact that when Ilanāga went to take his ceremonial bath in Tissa Vāpi, he found that the Lambakannas were not there, and was so enraged that, as a punishment, he ordered them to work at the remaking of a

1. CV., XXIV, vv. 213-214.

2. Ephigraphia Carnatica, VII, p. 158.

road along the bank of the tank, leading to the Mahāthūpa, and set caṇḍālas to supervise them.¹ But by caste they belonged to the Vaisya class.²

The Saddhammarathākara³ states that Ganavāsi is another name for the Lāmāni family. According to this, the Ganavāsi family came to Ceylon along with the Sacred Bodhi tree. The origin of this family which produced some of the greatest figures in the history of Ceylon during the fourteenth century, is similarly given in the Sagama inscription of the reign of the king Bhuvanekabāhu V.⁴ According to the Gampola Rock inscription of the same king there was another family called Mehenavara.⁵ In it as well as in the Sinhalese literature of the Gampola period and after, these families are said to have had their origin from the Princes sent to Ceylon by Asoka along with the Sacred Bodhi Tree, and are considered to be Kṣatriyas. But no Sinhalese

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1. MV., XXXV, vv, 16-18.
 2. See, supra, p. 84.
 3. Colombo Edition of 1923, p. 296.
 4. JRASCB., Vol. 22, p. 264-265.
 5. EZ., IV, p. 303.

king before the Gampola period claimed to ^{have} belonged to either of these families.¹ The originators of the two families were traditionally believed to be brothers of Mahinda's mother, who was a daughter of a merchant of Vidisā.² They were, therefore, Vaisyas, and those who claimed descent from them should appropriately have been described as of the Vaisya class. Thus it is clear that all these three families, the Lambakanna, the Ganavāsi, and the Mehenavara, belonged not to the Kṣatriya class but to the Vaisya class.

It should also be noted here that Vasabha, the founder of the Lambakanna dynasty, is referred to in an inscription of the first century B.C., as a Bata.³ We will discuss later⁴ the possibility of Bata's belonging to the Vaisya class. This is also supported by a reference made by king Nissanka Malla, to a class of people called Govi (P. Gahapati > Gāhāvi > Govi). Here he emphatically states that the kingship in Ceylon should be given to the descendants of the Kālinga Vāmśa only (Vijaya's clan), but not to those who belong to the Govi class, however powerful they may

1. *ibid.*

2. *Mv.*, XIII, vv, 9, 13.

3. *JRASCB*, new series, Vol, II, Pt.II, p.129, No.5. "Bata Vahaba".

4. See, *infra*, pp. 106-107.

be. ¹ The historical evidence reveals that the only family which aspired to the kingship, other than the Kālingas, during this period, was that of the Lambakannas. Hence it is quite possible that ~~Nissanka~~ Nissanka Malla referred to the descendants of the Lambakanna dynasty as belonging to the Govi or Vaisya class.

The Pāli records reveal that Buddhist society in India considered that all kings and other officials of the state belonged to the Kṣatriya caste. ² This may be the reason why the term Kṣatriya was loosely used in Ceylon society also. Another reason may be that there was no powerful Brāhmaṇa element to regulate claims of caste. At a later date anyone who happened to occupy the throne was necessarily a Kṣatriya of either the Solar or the Lunar dynasty. As an example, it may be pointed out that the Nāyakkar Princes who in their South Indian home were content to be good Sūdas had a sudden rise in the caste scale when they crossed Palk's Strait to occupy the Kandyan throne and were looked upon by the haughty Kandyan nobles as Kṣatriyas

1.EZ.,II, p. 162: "Govi kulehi ättan rajalilāvaṭ no pātuva mānā kese balavad vuvada Govi kulehi ätto rajayaṭ balā no gatayuttāha".

2. Dīgha, I, p. 136.

of the Solar race. ¹

The fact that the term Vessa does not occur in the epigraphic records of this period may show that among the people, there was no recognition of the class of Vaiśyas as mentioned in Brāhmanical sources, in place of this, various groups of people are mentioned, some called by names also found in the Pāli canon (e.g. Gahapati, Gamika etc) and others by names of different origin, such as Parumaka, and Bata. This suggests that in our period Brahmanic influence had had no appreciable effect on the social structure, but that certain Buddhist categories of class distinction had begun to take effect. In other words, the rigidity of caste system in Ceylon became less after the advent of Mahinda. This will be discussed in another context.

Parumaka:

Both Wikramasinha ² and Paranavitana ³ are inclined to think that the word Parumaka may be derived from

1. EZ., IV, p. 305.

2. EZ., I, p. 17.

3. EZ., III, p. 123.

the Skt. Pramukha (Pramukha > Paramukha > Parumukha Parumaka) ¹ which means "eminence", "chief" &c. In Tamil too the word "Parumakan" ² means "chief". In the inscriptions of the pre-Christian centuries this word Parumaka occurs very frequently; but there are very few inscriptions where it has been used to denote a king.

The word Parumaka was always used as a special title. In the Vessagiri cave inscription a person called Haruma, the son of Parumaka Palikada is styled simply Upasaka (Parumaka Palikada puta Upasaka Harumasa lene), ³ while in another inscription of the same cave, he is called Parumaka Maha Haruma (Parumaka Palikada puta Parumaka Maha Harumasa lene) ⁴ having probably received the title after his father's death. From this it is evident that this word Parumaka has been used as an honorary title by the people of some social standing.

Sometimes sons of the minister were called Parumakas, for instance, "Mahamata Bamadata puta Parumaka

1. Skt. PRA=PARA in Sinhalese. cf. Praveni=Paraveni.

2. Wimalakitti, Sinhala Anduva, p. 4.

3. EZ., I, p. 19. No. 2.

4. ibid, No. 4.

Bahike, Parumaka Pusagute, Parumake Mite, Parumaka Tise,
etehi karite arita mahagama".¹ As to the individuals
 mentioned in this inscription, we see that Parumaka Bahike
 was the son of Mahamata Bamadata. From this it is obvious
 that the word Putra here refers not only to the first name,
 Parumaka Bahike, but also to the three names following it,
 namely Parumaka Pusagute, Parumaka Mite, and Parumaka Tise
 and that all these four persons were the sons of the minister
 Bamadata.

In another inscription, the son of a Senāpati
 is called Parumaka.² The Senāpati who stands next in rank
 only to the Viceroy is, sometimes, a kinsman of the king.
 This practice is borne out even in literature, for Aritttha
 was the sister's son (bhāgineyya) and the Senāpati of king
 Devānampiya Tissa;³ so also was Vasabha of king Yasalālaka
 Tissa.⁴ In the 5th century, king Dhātusena also appointed

1. EZ., I, p. 152.

2. Prker, AC., p. 432. No. 44.

3. Mv., II. v. 25.

4. Mv., XXXV, v. 59.

his sister's son Senāpati.¹ It is, therefore, obvious that the son of a Senāpati, whose title was Parumaka, was an eminent and honoured person in society.

On the other hand the Sanskrit word Pāramukha was the designation by which the head of a Guild or Corporation was known in ancient times.² The position of the chief of the Guild, is also referred to by the word Senipamukhā in the Jātaka.³ Another Jātaka refers to him as Jetthaka who was an intimate friend of the king.⁴ These two words Pamukha and Jetthaka convey the same meaning "the chief of a Guild". Heads of Guilds (Seniyo) are also called Pamukha (President) and also Jetthaka (elder, elderman).⁵ From this it can be safely inferred that Parumaka was not only an eminent and honoured person but also economically a highly placed person in society.

Another point to be noticed is the use of the

1. *ibid*, XXXVIII, v. 81.

2. Mookerji, *Local Government in Ancient India*, p. 47.

3. *J.*, II, p. 12.

4. *ibid*, III, p. 281.

5. Mookerji, *Local Government in Ancient India*, p. 47.

title Parumaka. It can be seen from its usage in the inscriptions of this period that it is a term applicable to both men and women. A cave given by Anuḍiya, the chief, (Parumaka) to the Saṅgha both present and not present, was referred to in one inscription.¹ Women were referred to as Parumakas in several other inscriptions also.²

The next important point worth bearing in mind is that it can be very well established from the examples mentioned above and from certain others³ that this title was more or less hereditary. Sometimes the wife of a Parumaka was also called Parumaka.⁴

Another inscription refers to a Parumaka who was the son of an Astrologer. (Nakatika) who was himself a Parumaka.⁵ This shows clearly that Astrology and Astronomy were well known branches of learning in this period. Astrology played an important part even in the everyday life of India during this period, as hardly anything of importance was

1. EZ., I. p. 144. No. 2.

2. EZ., I. p. 144. No. 3.; p. 145. No. 8.

3. Parker, AC. p. 427. No. 12; p. 430. No. 34; p. 432. No. 47.
CJSG; II. p. 217. No. 694; p. 214. No. 672; p. 192.
No. 551.

4. CJSG., II. p. 223. No. 732.

5. CJSG., II. p. 214. No. 672.

done without consulting an Astrologer. Almost all the important activities connected with worldly life were conducted at astrologically auspicious moments. This profession during this period, was not opened to everybody. It was a noble profession followed only by Brāhmaṇas. This practice in Ceylon may have been, no doubt, much the same during this period. And it is possible that only the people of the upper stratum of society exercised astrology as may be seen from the above instance. If they were not Brāhmaṇas, they were at least of rank equal to that of Brāhmaṇas.

The title Parumaka was sometimes attached to the names of Buddhist monks too, for instance Parumaka Nagatera, and Parumaka Sumanatera.¹ This title may have been conferred on monks of great eminence if they acquired it after Ordination.² If not it has to be inferred that the title was so honoured by the people, even after joining the Order, some of them used to retain this title.

Lastly, there are a few epigraphic records of

1. AIC., p. 48. No. 83.

2. cf. titles Saṅgha Pāṃokkha, Gaṇācariya, Saṅghatthera.

this period to show that this word Parumaka was also used as a royal title. In one of the inscriptions of Ritigala caves, a reference has been made, to a Parumaka Anuḍiya.¹ Mr. Wikramasinhe identifies² this Parumaka Anuḍi with Anulā, Queen successively of Khallāṭanāga and his younger brother Vaṭṭagāmaṇi. This seems quite possible, for the change of cerebral "ḍ" to cerebral "l" is not uncommon both in Pāli and Sinhalese.³

In two other inscriptions of the same place references were made to the fact that queen Anulā had two sons, Parumaka Utiya⁴ and Parumaka Tisa.⁵ Of them Parumaka Tisa then would be no other than her son Mahācūli Mahātissa who reigned from 77 B.C. to 63 B. C. at Anurādhapura.⁶ Then again in the inscription No. 10,^b of the same cave a son of Parumaka Uti also was referred to as Parumaka. It is quite evident from these instances that royal personages too could use this honorary title Parumaka, during

1. EZ., I. p. 144, No. 2.

2. EZ., I. p. 143.

3. cf. Sodasa=Solasa etc

4. EZ., I. p. 144. No. 3.

5. Ez., I. p. 144. No. 8.

6. EZ., I. p. 143

this period.

Whatever the meaning of this word Parumaka may have been, one thing is certain that the majority of Parumakas referred to in the epigraphic records of this period, were wealthy people of the Vaisya class.

Bata:

Bata is another word, which occurs in the Inscriptions of this period.

This word bata occurs as Bhata in the Bedsa Cave Inscriptions of western India.¹ According to Bühler the word Bhata is derived from the Sanskrit word Bhāṭa which means 'devoted' while Bhagavanlāl Indraji connected it with Skt. Bhaṭṭa 'a warrior'.² Parker is inclined to think that the word bata in Ceylon Inscriptions, is a derivative of Skt. Bhr̥ta 'workman',³ while Wikramasinha prefers to connect it with Skt. Bhrātr̥ 'brother'.⁴ Paranavitana suggests the possibility of its being a derivative

1. ASWI., Vol. IV, p. 89, No. 2.

2. ASWI., No. 10: Cave Inscriptions, p. 26.

3. AC., Parker, p. 426. No. 5.

4. EZ., Vol. I, p. 141.

of Skt. Bhadanta which means 'reverend'. ¹

All these scholars, except Wikramasinhe^c, seem to have overlooked the possibility of its being a derivative of Skt. Bhartr 'lord'. Although Wikramasinhe^c refers to this possibility, ^{he} prefers to connect it with Skt. Bhrātr.

Epigraphic records of this period refer to two alternative terms which convey the same meaning, BHATU and BATA. A perusal of the usage of the term Bata in these Inscriptions does not at all encourage us to accept the possibility of its being a derivative of the Sanskrit word Bhrta (workman), as Parker is inclined to think, for the people of the lower strata of society were never referred to by such words as Raja or Tissa in epigraphic records of Ceylon during this period.

As Paranavitana's interpretation is the latest and as he maintains the possibility of the derivation of this word Bata from the Sanskrit word Bhadanta, it is necessary to examine the parallel usage of this word in Indian Inscriptions which fall within the period of the

Inscriptions under review.

This word Bhadanta occurs in Indian Inscriptions in two different forms, Bhaṇḍanta and Bhayanta, of which the latter is only a variation of the former. A Bhāja Inscription refers to this word as Bhayanta,¹ while a reference is made in one of the Kuḍa Cave Inscription to Bhayata.² Yet another Kuḍa Cave Inscription contains a reference to show that the words Bhaṇḍanta and Bhadata were used side by side to denote 'the monk' : "Siṅghaṃ therānaṃ Bhadata Pasatimitāna Bhadanta Agimitāna ca".³

It is evident from these references that the process of the etymological development of these terms was still in the second stage, i.e. Bhadanta > Bhadata; Bhayanta > Bhayata. In none of these Inscriptions do we find an occurrence of the word in the third stage of its development, i.e. Bhadanta > Bhadata > Bata; Bhayanta > Bhayata > Bata. One of the Ceylon inscriptions also contains reference

1. ASWI., Vol. IV, p. 82.

2. ASWI., Vol. IV, p. 87.

3. ASWI., Vol. IV, p. 85.

to the word Badata which means the reverend¹. This shows clearly that the time has not yet come to effect the third stage of the development of its etymology. The term Bata never occurs in contemporary Indian inscriptions in this form.

In our Inscriptions the words Bhatu and its variation Bata may, therefore, be secondary etymological developments of the Sanskrit word Bhartr, i.e. Bhartr > Bhattu. (cf. Kartr > Kattu and Pramukha > Parumaka, *Bata Gahapati > Gapati).

On the other hand one inscription contains a reference to a person called Bata Nagaraja.² There is not a single epigraphic record either in India or in Ceylon to show that a Buddhist monk was ever named as 'Raja'. It is thus clear that Nagaraja in this Inscription is not a monk. Hence the interpretation of the word Bata as 'reverend' does not seem to be appropriate. Thus it is

1. CJS.G., II, p. 115. No. 468: " Badata mitana mapitā
nagapivata senasene"

2. CJS.G., II, p. 192, No. 552.
2. AS. II, Vol. IV, p. 82.

reasonable to infer that the word Bhatu of which Bata is only a variation, is derived from the Sanskrit word Bhartr , 'lord'.

Another inscriptional record of this period refers to a person called Bata Mahatisa. ¹ Wikramasinhe identifies this Mahatisa with King Mahācāla Mahātissa, the adopted son of Vaṭṭagāmaṇi, owing both to the similarity of the name and to the fact that he lived about this period and took part in the dedication of caves to the Buddhist clergy. ²

Further in another Inscription a person named Sona was referred to as Parumaka, ³ while yet another Inscription of the same place refers to the same person 'Sona' as Bhatu. ⁴ This shows clearly that ~~a~~ same person could be referred to by both Bhatu and Parumaka. We have already mentioned earlier ⁵ that Queen Ānulā had two sons

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1. CJS.G., II, p. 442, No. 57; EZ, Vol. p. 146
 2. EZ., Vol. I. p. 146.
 3. EZ., Vol. I, p. 145, No. 9.
 4. EZ., Vol. I. p. 145, No. 10a.
 5. See, supra, p. 100.

Uttiya and Tissa both of whom were called Parumakas. Of them Tissa was identified with Mahācūla Mahātissa who reigned at Anurādhapura from 16 B. C. to 2 B. C. It is, therefore, justifiable to infer that the person who used the title Bata may have belonged to the rank equal to that of a Parumaka.¹

Then again this Mahācūla Mahātissa is referred to in another Inscription as "Gamani Tissa".² Parker says that this agreed so accurately with the account in the Mahāvamsa³ of Vaṭṭagāmaṇī Abhaya's adoption of the son of his brother, King Khallāṭa Nāga, that it appears to settle the question of the identification of the sovereign called Gamani Tisa, who is thus Mahācūla Mahā Tissa.⁴ There is also a direct reference to king Vasabha as Bata.⁵

We will also see later⁶ that the Parumakas normally belonged to the same class of people in Ceylon society, as the Gamikas i.e. Vaiśya. From the inscriptions it

1. In this particular instance the PARUMAKA is a King, but this term was used to denote ordinary people as well.

(See p.).

2. AC. p. 445, No. 61.

3. Mv., XXXIII, vv. 34-35.

4. AC., p. 445, No. 61.

5. JRASCB., New series, Vol. II, Pt. II, p. 132. No. 5. "Bata Vahaba".

6. See, *infra*, p. 137.

would appear that the Batas also had similar social status as that of the Parumakas. Therefore, we may assume that the Batas in our Inscriptions belonged to the Vaisya class in Ceylon society during this period.

Gapati:

Another word which occurs frequently in Inscriptions of this period is Gapati (= P. Gahapati) meaning "householder or head of a household", and it denotes generally, if not always, a landowner or merchant of high birth and wealth.

Even in Pāli Literature this word Gahapati occurs very frequently to denote a highly respected class of people in society. In the Samyutta he was classed with wealthy Khattiyas and Brahmins as follows:- " This is the case where a man is reborn into a family of high degree, be it of eminent nobles (Khattiyakule vā), or Brahmins (Brāhmanakule vā), or burgess (Gahapatikule vā), having authority, having great treasures, great wealth, ample hoards of gold and silver, ample aids to enjoyment, ample stores of money and corn". ¹

1. SAM., 3,3,1. 3,1, 4; 3,1.7.

According to this the Gahapati is to be classed among the recognised categories of men that mattered in society, as he was mentioned third in the list in descending order of importance assigned by Pāli Texts. Further it shows that the convention of the Aryan descent of Khattiya, Brāhmaṇa and Vessa was maintained even in this period.

The Gahapatis also seem to have distinguished themselves from the ordinary citizens by a certain consciousness of position in society. The son of the Setṭhi Gahapati, Yasa, is called, in the Mahāvagga¹ "Kulaputta", "a son of high birth" and "good family".

It was also the custom in vogue in India during this period that such a Kulaputta must, whenever possible, marry from a family of equal rank. This was referred to in the Jātaka as follows: "When the Bodhisatta came to life as the son of a householder who lived near a village not far from the city and when he came to years, they fetched a

1. Mahāvagga, 1.1.7: "Atha kho Yasassa kulaputtassa mātā pāsādaṃ abhiruhitvā Yasaṃ kulaputtaṃ apassnetī yena setṭhi tenupasaṅkami upasaṅkamitvā setṭhiṃ gahapatime-tadavoca".

young lady (Kuladhītaram) of family from Benares to marry him." ¹ Besides, the Gahapati played an important role even in the royal court. He usually appeared in the third place in the retinue of the King. This can be seen from a passage which refers to the people who were present at the Coronation of the King. ² In the enumeration of castes in Pāli Texts he again appeared very often in the third place after Khattiyas and Brāhmins. ³

Another point to be noticed is that this word Gahapati was generally used in combination with the word Seṭṭhi, as Seṭṭhi Gahapati. ⁴ The term Seṭṭhi means "chief of a guild, treasurer, banker, wealthy merchant." In the Vinaya we see that the Venerable Sudinna's father was a Seṭṭhi Gahapati who was more or less a banker. ⁵ Here is

1. J. II, p. 121.

2. Jātaka, II, p. 241: "Khattiyā amaccāca Brāhmaṇa Gahapati raṭṭhika dovārikādayocā".

3. Cūlavagga, V, p. 24: "Ānanda Khattiyapanditāpi Brāhmaṇa Vinaya, p. 227. panditāpi Gahapatipanditāpi".
Vinaya, II, p. 161; JA. I, p. 218, Dīgha I, p. 336.: "Yadi Khattiyaparisam yadi Brāhmanaparisam yadi Gahapatiparisam yadi Samanaparisam".

4. Mahāvagga, I, 7.7: "Aha Tena kho pana samāhena...tattha (kalanda-kaputto nāma seṭṭhi putto hoti)".

5. Vinaya, I, p. 17.

he is referred to simply as a Setthi. A reference is made to his family as one which had accumulated enormous wealth,¹ while on the previous page he is called Gahapati.

On the other hand this word Setthi was sometimes a title conferred by the King on wealthy citizens. The Mahāvamsa mentions an office called Setthitā to which the King was to appoint.²

Even in Tamil Literature the word "Etthi" conveys the same meaning as the word Setthi in Pāli. V. V. R. Dikshitar observes that the merchants were the wealthiest community in the Tamil land and the King honoured them with titles. Etthi was one such title.³ Swaminatha Aiyar, in his commentary on the Manimekhalai states that the term Etthi is a title that was conferred on the people of the Vaisya caste.⁴ The Madras Tamil Lexicon also explains the term as a "title of distinction conferred on persons of

1. *ibid*, I. p. 17.

2. *Mv.*, XI, vv. 25, 26.

3. *Silappadikaram* Introduction, p. 39.

4. *Manimekhalai* Swaminatha Aiyar Commentary, 1931, p. 47.

the Vaisya caste." ¹ The Jātaka too mentions an office called setthi (Setthitthana) in a city, which was conferred only on such persons as who possessed requisite wealth and talent. ² Anāthapiṇḍika himself is referred to by the name Mahāsetthi in the Jātakas. ³

The office of the Setthi seems to have been permanently occupied by a Gahapati. Nowhere is it mentioned that a member of another class, such as, a rich Brahmin held this position. A reference is made to a Setthi Gahapati in the Vinaya as a very rich person who was helpful to ordinary people as well as to the King: " Then occurred to the inhabitants of Rājagaha thus: This Setthi Gahapati is very helpful to both the king and to the inhabitants of Rajagaha; Hence let us request the king to issue an order to the royal physician, Jīvaka, to treat him for his illness. Then on recovery, the Setthi Gahapati gave 2,00,000

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1. Madras Tamil Lexicon.
2. J., I. p. 120-122.
3. J., I, p. 95; pp. 231-232.

kahāpanas to both the king and the physician". ¹

From this we learn that both the King and the ordinary citizens had tried to give him the best possible treatment to get him recovered from his illness, simply because he was very helpful to them. If he had not been recognised as such a wealthy person neither would he have been given the services of the royal physician for his illness nor could he have given a medical fee of 2,00,000 kahāpanas to the Doctor as well as to the King. Thus we see from the above instance that the term Setthi was used as an honorific title for which wealthy Gahapatis were eligible in Indian society.

Besides there are few references where we find that this term Gahapati alone was used to denote a wealthy citizen. In the Samyutta Anāthapindika is referred to simply as a Gahapati. ² Though he is simply called Gahapati he is the best known and most liberal of the Buddha's lay supporters. Sometimes he is also referred to as a Setthi

1. Vinaya, VIII, 1. 9,3.

2. Samyutta, 2.2, 10;10;1;8. "Anāthapindikogahapati āyasmante Sāriputte abhippasanno hoti".

and Mahāsetṭhi.¹

In combination with the Gahapati Putta (cp. Kulaputtā) the term Gahapati meant to include the members of the Gahapati rank, clansmen, especially in address. So used by the Buddha in enumerating the people as "Gahapati vā Gahapatiputto vā aññatarasmim vā kule paccājāto",² and "Gahapati vā Gahapatāniyo vā".³

As regards occupations the Gahapati engaged himself in all recognised trades. Most frequently he was referred to as a Setṭhi, as may be seen from references mentioned above. Sometimes he was referred to as a kassaka, "farmer",⁴ and dārukammika "carpenter".⁵ The wealth and comfortable livelihood of a Gahapati is evident from an expression like "kalyāṇabhattiko Gahapati", a man accustomed to good food"⁶ Sometimes he followed the occupation of

1. Jātaka, I. p. 95, 231-232.

2. Dgha, I. p. 62.

3. A., II, p. 57

4. Anguttara, I. p. 239: "Tinimāni..kassakassa gahapatissa karanīyāni".

5. ibid, III, p. 391 : "Athakho dārukammika gahapati...."

6. Vinaya, II, p. 77: "Kalyāṇabhattiko Gahapati āyasmantā dabbena mallaputtana dhammiyā kathāya sandassito".

the weaver, as can be seen in the following passage,
 "How can the venerable Upananda, the son^{of} the Sakyans, before
 being invited, going to the house of a householder who is
 a weaver, put forward a consideration with regard to robe-
 material".¹

It is evident from the above reference that
 the merchant (Setthi) attained at a very early time to a
 position of high social importance. This was chiefly due
 to his possession of great wealth derived from various trades.
 He seems to have been the principal representative of the
 Gahapati class. Thus we see that both Gahapati and Setthi
 are more or less identical in their functions. They are the
 people who made religious endowments and benefactions in
 India from a very early period. This can be clearly seen
 from the early Epigraphical records which refer to the
 grants of caves to the Buddhist Clergy.

A Buddhist Cave Inscription at Mahad contains a
 reference to a cave grant made by Gahapati Setthi.² Another
 Inscription refers to a Setthi the son of a Gahapati who

1. SBB., Vol. XI, Pt. II, p. 67.

2. ASWI., Vol. II, p. 88, No. 2: "Sidham Gahapatisa setthisa".

donated a cave to the Saṅgha.¹ Yet another Inscription at Edsa furnishes a reference to a gift of a *Cetiyaḡa* by the President of a Guild, who was a Gahapati.² Another Inscription of the same place referred to both father and son as Gahapatis.³

Some of the Sanchi Stūpa Inscriptions also contain records of grants made by Gahapatis.⁴ Several other Inscriptions of the same place referred to donors as Seṭṭhis.⁵

In a Karle Buddhist Cave Inscriptions we find that the establishment of a cave-dwelling by the Seṭṭhi Bhūtapāla from Vejayanti.⁶

The practice of endowments to the Buddhist

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1. *ibid*, Vol. II, p. 89, No. 3: "Gahapatputasa seṭṭisa".
 2. *ibid*, Vol. IV, p. 93, No. 4: "Virasenakasa Gahapati pamughasa".
 3. *ibid*, Vol. IV, p. 95, No. 8.: "Sayiti Gahapatiṭutasa".
 4. *EI*. Vol. II, p. 88, No. 24; p. 99, No. 23; *ASWI.*, Vol. IV. p. 371, No. 36.
 5. *EI*. Vol. II, p. 98, No. II; p. 100, No. 35; Vol. II, p. 88 , No. 25. *ASWI.*, Vol. IV, p. 102, No. 47; p. 106, No. 85; p. 372, No. 40; p. 374, No. 167; p. 387, No. 285.
 6. *EI*, Vol. VII, p. 48: "Vejayantito seṭṭhina".

Clergy was very similar in Ceylon during this period. It was but natural that the newly converted people of Lankā should follow the same religious customs which were followed by the Indian Buddhists of the same period. It may, therefore, be justifiable to infer that the Gahapatis mentioned in the Inscriptional records of Ceylon, some under the same category as the donors in Indian Inscriptions of the same period. It may again be very reasonably assumed that it was those munificent endowments and support rendered to Buddhism in its early stages by the people of the upper strata of society like Parumakas, Gapatis etc. that paved the way for its popularity and propagation among the people at large.

Gapatis may be placed in between Parumakas and Gamikas in order of frequency in the Inscriptions of Ceylon. It is also evident from one Inscription that this title was hereditary: "Cave of the two female householders, Cittaguttā and Cudā, the daughters of Anuradi, the householder".¹ But this hereditary character alone does not encourage us to infer that the people of this

1. AC., p. 437, No. 50. cf. ASWI, Vol. IV, p. 95, No. 8.

Gahapati class formed themselves in to a well defined caste in the real sense of the word, for we have already seen that Gahapatis used to follow different occupations.

An Inscription also refers to "Gapati rupadaka" which means Gapati, the Sculptor.¹ Another point to be noticed is that this term Gapati was applicable to women as well: "Gapati vasali puta Mahasumanasa."²

There are two other Inscriptions where two additional titles were referred to along with the title Gapati: "Dame devanapi Gapati visakaha",³ "Dame devanupi Gapati siva".⁴ A careful examination of these two titles is, therefore, necessary here to make an attempt to understand the special significance attached to them.

The word Dame may be derived from Pāli Dhamma which means "Righteous", and Devanapi and Devanupi may be the

1. CJS.G., II. p. 214, No. 671.

2. AC. 428, No. 18.
ibid, p. 437, No. 50.
CJS.G., II, p. 195. No. 571.

3. AC., p. 429, No. 25.

4. AC., p. 430, No. 32.

equivalents of Pāli Devānāmpiya which, means "beloved of Gods". The word Dame seems to be a purely religious title.

The title Devānāmpiya occurs in the Inscriptional records as a special royal title. This title was used by kings in India even before Asoka. This can be seen from Asoka's Rock Edict VIII; "Atikrā^{ta} antaram Devānāmpriya vihara yatra nama nikramimsu".¹ Barua interpreted this term Devānāmpriya as "Kings" of the past. Except in one Inscription² all the other inscriptions refer to Asoka by the term Devānāmpriya or Devānāmpriya Priyadarśī. In the Nagarjuni Hill Cave Inscription³ a reference was made to Asoka's grandson Daśaratha with the title Devānāmpriya. It is thus clear that this title Devānāmpriya was used by Indian Kings from a very early date.

Dr. Rahula says⁴ that the assumption appears justifiable that when Devānāmpriya Priyadarśī (Asoka) sent his

1. Inscriptions of Asoka, II, p. 189.

2. 'Devānāmpiyasa Asokasa' Select Inscriptions Vol. I. p. 49n .

3. Select Inscriptions Vol. I, p. 79.

4. HEC., p. 27.

gifts along with the Spiritual Message to Tissa of Lankā, he also conferred upon his friend the title of Devānampiya as a mark of imperial recognition, for no King in Ceylon before Devānampiyatissa seems to have used this title. It can be established from the Inscriptional records dating from the 3rd century B. C. to the 3rd century A. D. that there were several Kings who used this term as an honorific title, namely Saddhātissa 77-59 B. C.,¹ Lajjitissa 59-49 B. C.,² Vattagāmaṇi Abhaya 28-16 B. C.,³ Vankanāsikatissa 174-177 A. D.,⁴ Gajabāhuka Gāmaṇi 177-199 A. D.,⁵ and Mahallakanāga 199-205 A. D.⁶

Though this title was used to denote a King from Devānampiyatissa to Mahallakanāga it can be well inferred from the two Inscriptions mentioned above that the usage

1. ~~Ep.~~ ~~XX.~~ Vol, I, p. 142.

2. *ibid.*

3. *ibid.*

4. *ibid.*

5. *ibid.*

6. *ibid.*

of this term which was originally only a royal title gradually underwent a change in that towards the ^{end} of the 2nd century A.D. , it was made to apply to others as well, and that the term was used by ordinary, yet well to do people in society as a title. It is probable, to begin with, that this title was conferred on other members of the royal family.

A recent discovery of another Inscription at the Southern Gateway of the Ruwanweli Dāgāba also indicates that people who were not Kings used this term as an honorific title. This Inscription reads: "Lonama jitanaka Devapi Upasika Tisaya datu ni jane" (The Relic enshrinement of the female devotee tissā nāgā the beloved of the God, the daughter of Lonama),¹ however, it is certain that the persons referred to in the first two Inscriptions mentioned above belong to the category of Gahapatis.

Thus it may be assumed that the people of the Gahapati class of Ceylon Inscriptions during the period under survey had more or less the social status of the Vaisya class

1. Silālekhanasangrahaya, Wimalakitti, Pt. II, p. 53.

of the Indian caste system.

Kuṭumbika:

The term Kudibika(=Skt. & P. Kuṭumbika) 'householder', found in an inscription of about the first century B.C. must have denoted a person of the same standing as a Gahapati.¹ The Jātakas frequently refer to this word Kuṭumbika to denote a rich landowner with a wealth of 800 million.² The Kuṭumbika Sujāta of Banaras lodges in his park five hundred ascetics.³ They were not only rich landowners, but also traders and money lenders. In one story a Kuṭumbika is always seen going by a cart to distant villages to collect debts, sometimes accompanied by his wife.⁴ Another Jātaka refers to a Kuṭumbika who once lent a villager one thousand Kahāpaṇas.⁵

Matrimonial alliances with such a Kuṭumbika family appear to have been considered suitable by the rich and

1. History of Ceylon, Vol. I, Pt. p. 237.
2. J., IV, p. 370.
3. J., V, p. 465.
4. J., II, p. 341; III, p. 107; IV, p. 45.
5. J., II, p. 388.

aristocratic families in India during this period. A leading citizen seeks the daughter of a Kuṭumbika living in a village for his son.¹ Even the Bodhisatta was once reborn in a Kuṭumbika family and earned his living by dealing in corn.²

The literary records of Ceylon reveal that the position of a Kuṭumbika in Ceylon society was more or less the same as in Indian society. Both the Mahāvamsa and the Rasavāhinī refer to the Kuṭumbika very frequently. During the reign of Kākavaṇṇa Tissa of Rohana there was a very rich Kuṭumbika named Saṅgha in Khaṇḍaka vāṭhi village.³ Then there was another Kuṭumbika named Tissa in Hundari Vāpi village in the same District.⁴

Other famous Kuṭumbikas of Rohana during this period were Nāga of Niṭhilaveṭhika,⁵ Rohana Gahapati of

1. J., I, p. 196.

2. J., II, p. 267.

3. Mv. XXIII, v. 19; Rsv; II, p. 33.

4. XXIII, v. 45; Rsv; II, p. 186.

5. Mv., XXIII, v. 49; Rsv., II, p. 87.

Kittigāma, ¹ Kumāra of Kappakandara, ² Vasabha of
Kutumbiyangana, ³ Abhaya of Mahindadoni, ⁴ Uppala of Kapittha,⁵
and Matta of Vāpi.⁶

Mention is also made to a few Kuṭumbikas who lived, during the reign of Duṭṭhagāmaṇī, in the country to the north of the Mahavāli and the Kālani rivers. The Rasavāhinī speaks of a very rich Kuṭumbika named DattMa in the Northern Province (Uttara Passa), ⁷ and an Issara ⁸ in the city of Mahela near Anurādhapura. ⁹ There was still another Issara in the Village of Veni in Rājaraṭṭha.¹⁰

These references suggest that the Kuṭumbikas lived in Rohana also during the reign of Kākavaṇṇa Tissa, for

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1. *ibid*, XXIII, v. 55; *ibid*, II, p. 93.
 2. *ibid*, XXIII, v. 64; *ibid*, II, p. 96.
 3. *ibid*, XXIII, v. 68; *ibid*, II, p. 97.
 4. *ibid*, XXIII, v. 78; *ibid*, II, p. 99.
 5. *Mv.* XXIII, v. 82.; *Tsv.* II, p. 101.
 6. *ibid*, XXIII, v. 90; *ibid*, II, p. 102.
 7. *Rsv.*, II, p. 191.
 8. See. p. 74 for identification of Issara and Kuṭumbika.
 9. *Rsv.* II, p. 166.
 10. *Rsv.*, II, p. 145.

there is no reference to show that they lived in other parts of the country. It is, therefore, interesting to examine why we find them in Rohana alone during his reign.

The history of Rohana goes as far back as that of Anurādhapura during the reign of Devānampiya Tissa. It was Devānampiya Tissa's younger brother, Mahānāga, who fled to Rohana with his family in order to escape the dangerous situation created by Devānampiya Tissa's queen, ^{AKA} established his capital at Mahāgāma, and ruled over the whole of Rohana for the first time in the history of Ceylon. ¹

But it should be borne in mind that at the time Mahānāga fled to Rohana, there was in Kataragama a Kṣatriya family the representatives of which attended the ceremony of planting the Bodhi Tree at Anurādhapura. ² "We are not told of the reaction of the Kataragama Kṣatriyas to Mahānāga's arrival, but two ruling houses cannot exist so close to each other for long without coming into conflict". ³

1. Mv., XXII, vv. 2-8.

2. Mv., XIX, v. 54.

3. HC., Vol. I. Pt. I. p. 146.

This inference is supported by the fact that according to the Samantapāsādikā there was a king named Mahānāga who went abroad with his brother and became the sole monarch of Rohana after his return.¹ According to the Mahāvamsa there was only one other king by the name Mahānāga before the time of Buddhaghosa, and that was Mahādāthika Mahānāga. There was no need for him to go abroad, for there was no dispute whatsoever as to his right to the throne." On the other hand it is possible that when Mahānāga, the brother of Devānampiya Tissa, fled to Rohana he had to fight with the then ruling Prince or chieftain there. Probably having been once defeated, he was forced to seek refuge abroad as he could not return to Anurādhapura, from which he had already fled."²

However, the hostility between these two families may have continued till the reign of Goṭhābhaya the grandson of Mahānāga, who, according to the Dhātuvamsa, slew ten-

1. Snp. II, p. 473.

2. Early History of Buddhism in Ceylon, Adikaram, p. 61.

brother- kings of Kataragama. ¹ This is also evident from an epigraphic record found about thrity miles east of Kataragama. ²

From Goṭhābhaya onwards there was no political revalry in Rohana. The political stability which was thus brought about by Goṭhābhaya, was strengthened by Kākavaṇṇa Tissa's matrimonial alliance with the Kingdom of Kālaniya. ³

According to the Dhātuvamsa , there was a ruling Prince named Siva at Seru in the District of Baticaloa. ⁴ It further says that Kākavaṇṇa Tissa's brother-in-law, Prince Abhaya, who lived in Girinuvara having fallen out with the Prince Duṭṭhagāmaṇī owing to a dispute regarding their clans, went to his friend Siva at Seru with his family and lived in the city called Soma. This clearly indicates that these two families were not on good terms with the royal family in Rohana.

Kākavaṇṇa Tissa, having realised the importance

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1. Dhātu. , p. 23-4.
 2. CJS.G., II, p. 99-100.
 3. Mv., XXII, vv. 13-22.
 4. Dhātu., p. 32-33.

of becoming friendly with these two families in order to bring about the political unification of the entire region to the south of Mahavāli, built a Dāgāba at Seru with the permission of the ruler there. Thus the ruler of Rohana succeeded in unifying the entire portion of Ceylon to the South of the Kālani and the Mahavāli rivers by peaceful means, and made Mahāgāma its Capital.

It is evident from this that there was no serious political unrest in Rohana from the 3rd century B.C. onwards. When a country is free from foreign invasions and internal disputes of a serious nature, it is but natural that the country's economy would prosper to a very high degree.

On the other hand, the political upheavals in Anurādhapura, which were largely brought about by foreign invasions tended in every way to diminish the prosperity of the people. In addition to this there was a famine called Akkhakkhāyika in Anurādhapura during the 2nd century B. C.¹ In the circumstances, though Anurādhapura was far more prosperous than Rohana from the 3rd century B. C. to the

1. Mv., Trans., p. 222. note. 6. "The famine was so severe that during it Akkha nuts which at other times were used as dice, were eaten, and hence it was called Akkhakkhāyika".

to the 2nd half of the 2nd century B.C., Rohana was more prosperous than Anurādhapura during the first half of the 2nd century B. C.

According to the Sammohavinodanī, there were ~~twelve~~ thousand Bhikkhus residing at Tissamahārāma and when the Brāhmaṇa Tissa famine broke out in the reign of Vaṭṭagāmanī there was grain in the Vihāra to last for three years.¹ In the monastery of Cittala Pabbata, too, there were twelve thousand Bhikkhus during the same Brāhmaṇa Tissa famine.² This clearly indicates how prosperous Rohana was during this period. It is, therefore, not a surprise to see more Kuṭumbikas in Rohana than in other parts of the country during this period.

It is also interesting to note that one of the paladins of Duṭṭhagāmaṇī, Phussadeva, is referred as a Parumaka in an epigraphic record belonging to the first century

1. SV., p. 445. " Brāhmaṇa Tissa bhaye kira Cittalapabbate dvādasā Bhikkhu sahaṣṣāni paṭivasanti. Tatā Tissamahāvihāre. Dvīsupi Mahāvihāresu tinnaṃ vassānaṃ ekarattameva vaṭṭaṃ mahā mūsikādayo khādimsu".
2. SV., p. 445.

B. C. ¹ According to both the Mahāvamsa and the Rasavāhinī he was the son of a Kuṭumbika named Uppala. ²

The paladin Velusumana is also referred to as a Parumaka in another inscription assigned to the same period, ³ whereas, according to the literary evidence, he was a Kuṭumbika Putta (son of a Kuṭumbika) ⁴

This shows that the Kuṭumbikas in Ceylon society were more or less identical with the Parumakas. We have seen earlier ⁵ that the Parumakas belonged to the Vaiśya class. It is, therefore, justifiable to conclude that the Kuṭumbikas in Ceylon during this period belonged to the same class of people as the Parumakas- the Vaiśya.

Gamika:

Another word which occurs in the Inscriptions is Gamika (=P. Gāmikā) which normally means 'the head of the

1. JRASCB. New series, Vol. II, Pt. II, p. 132, No. 56,57,60.
2. Mv., XXIII, v. 82; Rsv., II, p. 101.
3. JRASCB. New series, Vol. II, Pt. II, P. 132, No. 54.
4. Mv., XXIII, v. 68; Rsv. II, p. 97.
5. See supra, p. 101.

village'. Almost in the same sense as Gāmika is the word Gāmaṇī used in ancient Indian Pāli Literature. The word Grāmaṇī which occurs frequently in Vedic Literature, is usually taken to mean 'the head of the village'.¹

The villages were the real centres of social life and important units of the economic structure of a country from ancient times. It is, therefore, no doubt that the village headman was the most important figure in the village. But the Grāmaṇī, in Vedic times, seems to have been a more important personage than the village headman is at present, for he is included among the eight Vīras (heroes or friend of the King) who are expected to be present at the Rāḍ Yajña celebration. This celebration was intended to restore a deposed King to his Kingdom or procure the allegiance of refractory subjects to a reigning King.² The other Vīras are the Royal Chaplain (Purohita), the Queen (Mahisī), the Herald (Sūta).^{3a} the Chamberlain (Kṣatr), and the

1. Ancient Indian Pol^y, Altekar, , p. 171.

2. Ancient Indian Pol^y, Law N.N., p. 87.

3a. The interpretation of Eggeling und Rau (Staat und Gesellschaft im alten Indien, Wiesbaden, 1957, p. 108-9).

Collector General (Sangrahitr).¹

Then again he was included into the twelve Ratnins of the King.² Before the Gonsecration ceremony took place it was the custom of the King to go to the house of each of the twelve Ratnins to ascertain his faithfulness to the King. Here he is mentioned in the 6th place in order of importance. In the process of the same Rājāsūya Ceremony where the passing round of the Sacrificial Sword is mentioned 'Grāmanī' appeared again in the 5th place just after Sthapati (Governor of a District).³ Thus it is evident that Grāmanī was one of the most important officials of the King and a very influential and prominent figure. It seems from this that the Vedic Grāmanī was something more than mere village headman. It appears that the Grāma in Vedic times was not a settled village, but a nomadic horde

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1. This is the generally accepted interpretation based on the commentary. Recently Wilhelm Rau has given good reason to believe that the term refers to a charioteer (Rau:

p. 109-10)

2. ^{Ancient Indian Polity,} ~~ibid~~, p. 170.

3. Ancient Indian Polity, Law, p. 175.

within the larger tribe. ¹ The Grāmanī would thus be an important leader subordinate to the King. ² It appears that this sense of the word, rather than that of a mere village headman, was carried to Ceylon.

Dr. Altekar says that there was normally only one headman for each village. His post was usually hereditary. By caste he was normally a non-Brāhmin. He was the leader of the village militia since the Vedic age, and therefore he may have often belonged to the Kṣatriya caste. Sometimes a Vaiśya too aspired for and obtained the office. The Taittirīya Saṃhitā ³ shows that the office of the Grāmanī was often the goal of the ambition of a Vaiśya. ⁴

It is also evident from the Pāli Literature that these two terms Gāmika and Gāmaṇi were used side by side to denote the headman of the village. According to the Vinaya ⁵ King Bimbisāra of Magadha, who was the ruler of eighty

1. Eggeling and Rau, p. 51-55.

2. Eggeling and Rau, p. 56-57.

3. Taittirīya Saṃhitā, II, 5.4.4.

4. Ancient Indian Polity, Altekar, p. 172.

5. Vinaya, I, p. 179: "Athakho Māgadho Senīyo Bimbisāro tāni asītiṃ Gāmika saḥassāni ditthadhammike atthe anusāsitvā uyyojesi".

thousand villages, was in the habit of meeting all the 80,000 village headmen, (Gāmika) now and then, in an assembly in order to instruct them with regard to worldly affairs.

From this it is obvious that the Gāmika was the head of only one village and was not the head of several villages as some scholars are inclined to think,¹ definitely during the 6th century B. C. if not earlier.

The maintenance of peace and order and the administration of justice were in the hands of the village headman.² In Post-Vedic India the Grāmika was the head of the village administration, in contrast to Vedic Grāmanī who was primarily a tribal military leader. The Grāmika was assisted by elderly men of the village in his administration.³ Jātakas inform us that Gāmanīs transacted their business

1. AI. Polity, Law, p. 88: "It is not clear whether he is the headman of a particular village, in which case his importance would be considerably diminished. It is probable that he is the head of all village headmen".
2. Vinaya, II, p. 296: "Tena kho pana samayena Mañicūlako Gāmanī tassaṃ parisāyaṃ nisinnō hoti, atha kho āvuso mañicūlako Gāmanī taṃ parisāṃ etadaṃvoca".
3. Kuṇāla Jātaka.

themselves. These Jātakas do not refer to the existence of any village Councils or Committee by which the administration was carried on in the villages. But if the village headman acted unreasonably or against the established customs of the locality or realm, the village elders could set the matter right by pointing out his mistakes to the headman. There is a reference in the Jātaka to a cancellation of the order of a headman who prohibited the sale of strong drinks and slaughter of animals, when the villagers pointed out to him how these were time honoured customs of the village.¹

It is also evident from the Pāli Literature that the word Gāmaṇī was used as an honorific title by some persons of social standing. In the Samyutta this was used as a title in addition to personal names such as Canda, Yodhājīva, Hatthārōdha, Asibandhaka Putta, and Rāsiya.² But it is worthy of notice that this word was not used to denote a king anywhere in Ancient Indian Literature.

It is only in the Pāli Chronicles of Ceylon that

1. Pāṇīya Jātaka.

2. Samyutta, IV, pp. 305-330.

this title appears for the first time as part of the personal name of some of the kings belonging to the pre-Christian and early Christian centuries.

According to the Mahāvamsa, the first Sinhalese king whose name included the title Gāmaṇī was Dīghagāmaṇī the father of Paṇḍukābhaya.¹ The next King who used this title was the celebrated Duṭṭhagāmaṇī Abhaya (C. 101-77 B. C.).² The Mahāvamsa author here explains that Prince Gāmaṇī was so called because he was the Lord of Mahāgāma. After Duṭṭhagāmaṇī this title forms part of the names, as given in the Chronicles, of Vaṭṭagāmaṇī Abhaya (C. 44-17 B. C.),³ Amaṇḍagāmaṇī Abhaya (C. 79-89 A. D.),⁴ and Gajabāhukagāmaṇī (C. 173-195 A. D.).⁵

1. Mv., IX, v. 13: "Dīghāyussa kumārassa tanayo Dīghagāmaṇī Sutvā ummādacittam tam Tassa jāto kutūhalaṃ".

2. Mv., XXII, v. 71: "Mahāgāme nāyakattam Pitunāmāñña attano Ubho katvāna ekajjam Gāmaṇī Abhaya iti".

3. Mv., XXXIII, v. 34: "Tassa rañño kaṇiṭṭhotu Vaṭṭagāmaṇī nāmako Tam duṭṭhasenāpatikaṃ hantvā rajjamakārayii".

4. Mv., XXXV, v. 1. "Āmaṇḍgāmanyabhaya mahādāṭhika accaye Navavassāṇaṭṭhamāse rajjam kāresi tam suto".

5. Mv., XXXV, v. 115: "Vaṅkanāsikatissassa accaye kārayī sutp rajjam bāvisavassāni Gajabāhukagāmaṇī".

Though it is evident from the above references that the word Gāmaṇī was used as a part of personal name, the early Sinhalese epigraphic records reveal that it was also used as a title. An Inscriptional record at Mihintale¹ refers to Uttiya as "Gamani" Uti Maharaja," thus proving that the title Gāmaṇī was used by Kings who reigned long before Duṭṭhagāmaṇī. The King Uttiya was the younger brother and successor of Devānampiyatissa, the contemporary of Asoka.

After Uttiya the title was used by the King Saddhātissa as "Devanapiya Maharaja Gamani Tisa." ² It is, therefore, justifiable to infer that this word may have been used as a title by many other Kings, too.

There are a number of Inscriptions which refer to the reigning King by the title Gāmaṇī Abhaya alone, without any other particulars which enable us to identify him with any King mentioned in the Chronicles. ³ The Inscriptions at Bovattegala show that the title Gāmaṇī was used also by Princes who ruled the South-Eastern part of the Island and

1. ARASC., for 1933, p. 14.

2. EZ., I, p. 142.

3. CJS.G., II, pp. 25, 197, 215, 218.

who appear to be identical with the Kṣatriyas of Kājaagāma¹ mentioned in the Mahāvamsa. Thus it is clear that any ruling Prince was eligible to bear this title Gāmaṇī, during our period of survey.

But so far as Ceylon is concerned the word Gamika is not identical with Gāmaṇī. Gamika in Sinhalese exclusively refers to a village headman. Although Altekar² is inclined to think that the village headman may often have belonged to the Kṣatriya caste, the Grāmaṇī is referred to in the Taittirīya Brāhmaṇa as belonging to the Vaiśya caste; ³ moreover the Kṣatriya was always referred to as Rājanya or Rājā in Vedic Literature and the Grāmaṇī is never mentioned as such. Thus in the Vedic times and in the time of the redaction of the Pāli Canon Gāmaṇī was essentially a Vaiśya title and does not appear to have been borne by a Kṣatriya. ⁴

A King named Gāmaṇī is the hero of the Gāmaṇī

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1. CJS.G., II, pp. 99 and 175-6.
 2. Ancient Indian Polity-Altekar, p. 172.
 3. History and Culture of Indian People Vol.I, p. 431.
 4. JRAS of Great Britain and Ireland 1936, p. 446.

Jātaka.¹ In the Jātaka Pāli,² however, there is nothing to show that Gāmaṇī was the name of the King. It is only in the Commentary, written in Ceylon in the fifth century A.D., that King Gāmaṇī is mentioned.

It is therefore reasonable to infer that the Gamikas of the Sinhalese Inscriptions, who would only be considered identical with Gāmaṇis in India in post-Vedic times, belonged to the Vaiśya class in Ceylon society during this period, while the Gāmaṇis were much more important persons, usually nobles or members of royal families.

This title Gamika was more or less hereditary.³ This leads us to infer that Gamikas were not elected during this period. This hereditary character also shows that they were conscious of their class(=Vaiśya) in society. It is also worthy of note that in one Inscription⁴ both

1. J., I. p. 136.

2. J., I. p. 136: "Api ataramānānaṃ Phalāsāva samijjhati vipakkabrahmacariyosmi evaṃ jānāhi Gāmaṇī".

3. CJSg; II. 125.No.519: "Gamika mitapala puta gamika naga".
 ibid. p. 127. No. 530: "Gamika Siva puta Gamika Kantisaha".
 ibid. p. 206. No. 630: "Gamika Tisa puta Gamika Maliya".
 ibid. p. 226. No. 752: " Gamika Anodi puta Gamika Rakiya lāne".

4. AC., P.440, No55: "Barata Mahatisaya kape. Parumaka Naga Gamiya detake".

titles Parumaka and Gamiya (=Gamika) were used by one and the same person, Naga.

Another Inscription refers to a joint grant by Parumaka and a Gamika.¹ It is quite reasonable to assume from this that there was not much difference between Parumakas and Gamikas in status. Hence it is not far wrong to assume that Parumakas also may have belonged to the same class of people as the Gamikas, i.e. the Vaisyas, for all respectable householders of the village, who took part in the village administration in the Tamil country, were known as Perumakkāl (the chief of the village).²

According to the Inscriptional records, the village headman had one subordinate officer called Badagarika (Treasurer).³ This shows that the collection of the Government revenue was another important duty

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1. CJSG., II. p. 225, No. 744: "Gamika Sivasa Parumaka
Sivasa ca."
 2. Ancient Indian Polity, Altekar, p. 174.
 3. CJSG., II, p. 127, No. 532: "Gamika Kaṇṭhisaha
Badagarika Anuraḍḍaha lene". cf. Skt: Bhāṇḍāgārika.

of the village headman, in addition to his duty of maintenance of peace and order in the village.

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CHAPTER IV

The Sūdras.

The class of people who were employed in menial work in Ceylon society during the period under review may have corresponded to the Sūdra class in Indian society during the same period. In order to understand the position of the Sūdras in Ceylon, it is necessary to examine their position in Indian society during the period in which the Aryans may have started to migrate to Ceylon.

According to the Dharmasūtras, the duty of the Sūdra was to serve the three higher varnas, and thus to maintain his dependents. ¹ Gautama declared that the Sūdra could live by practising mechanical arts, if he could not maintain himself by serving others. ² Kauṭilya also states that although the chief means of livelihood of a Sūdra is the service to others, he can maintain himself by following the professions of artisans, dancers, actors etc. ³ which are probably independent occupations meant for

1. Āp. Dh.S. I, I. 1-7; Gau. Dh.S. 10,54-57.

2. Gau. Dh.S. 10,53-55; 10, 60.

3. Arthaśāstra, 1-3.

the Śūdra who is not at the service of the twice-born. Thus it seems that a section of the Śūdra community worked as weavers, woodworkers, smiths, leather-workers, potters, painters etc.¹

A passage in Majjhima Nikāya describes the classification of the means of livelihood of the four varṇas. According to this, the Brāhmaṇa lives on charities, the Kṣatriya on the use of the bow and the arrow the Vaiśya on agriculture and tending of cattle, and the Śūdra on the use of the sickle and carrying-pole.²

It can be inferred from this that the Śūdra was employed not only as domestic servant but also as slave and labourer. A passage in the Dīgha Nikāya³ defines the position of the Śūdra as Suddo vā Sudda-dāso/vā which means "the Śūdra or ^{the} Śūdra slave". According to this definition it is clear that the Śūdra was more or less identical with the Dāsa (slave) during this period. The Brāhmanical theory

1. Sharma, Śūdras in Ancient India, p. 88.

2. Majjhima, II, p. 180.

3. Dīgha., I, p. 104.

that the Sūdra was meant for the service of the three higher varṇas is broadly reflected in the employment of slaves and labourers by the Brāhmaṇas,¹ the Kṣatriyas,² and the Setṭhis and Gahapatis.³ Thus it is evident that the Sūdra population in Ancient India from circa 6th century B. C. to circa 3rd century B. C. consisted of domestic servants, slaves, labourers, artisans, and the aboriginal people.⁴

It is significant that the word Sūdra does not occur either in the literary or in the epigraphic records of Ceylon during this period. The Mahāvamsa records that one thousand families of eighteen guilds were sent to Ceylon by Paṇḍu, the king of Maḍḍurā, during the reign of the legendary Vijaya.⁵ Although the Mahāvamsa reference does not give an insight into the social status of these

1. J. IV, p. 15; Majjhima, II, p. 186.

2. J., V, p. 413.

3. Vinaya, I, p. 243, 272; II, p. 154.

4. For details see: Sūdra in Ancient India by Sharma; Social and Rural Economy in Northern India by Bose; Social Organisation by Fick.

5. Mv., VII, v. 57.

families of different guilds, the references in the Jātaka and the Smṛti literature of the later period clearly state that the social status of those who belonged to the eighteen guilds was certainly lower than that of the Vaiśyas.

According to ^{the} Jātaka, ¹ the people who were included in the list of eighteen guilds are carpenters, artisans, painters and the like. The Smṛti Candrikā applies this word Śreṇi (guild) to eighteen low-castes such as those of the washerman, leather-manufacturer, actor, basket-and mat-maker, fisherman, weaver &c. ² Thus the reference in the Mahāvamsa to the word "eighteen" undoubtedly speaks of the eighteen types of low-castes which come under the category of Sūdras.

The Mahāvamsa also contains a reference to a list of families sent to Ceylon by Asoka along with the Bodhi Tree. ³ According to the order of preference

1. J., VI, p. 427.

2. Mookerji, ^{Local} Got. in Ancient India, p. 65.

3. Mv. 19, 1-3.

mentioned in this list, mention is made to the families of cowherds (Gopaka), umbrella-bearers (Taraccha), the weavers (Pesakāra), the potters (Kumbhakāra), and all other guilds, immediately after the word Vessa. This shows that these people were placed in the fourth place in the scale of social gradation, assigning them to the category of Sūdras.

Blacksmiths and coppersmiths are not expressly mentioned in early sources, but it is evident that weapons and numerous tools of iron and steel were made and that the Lohapāsāda was roofed with sheets of copper. The supposition that there were blacksmiths during this period is supported by the reference to the word Dasāddhāyudha-sannaddho ^{1a} which means 'equipped with five kinds of weapons' ^{1b} namely sword, bow, battle-axe, spear and shield.

There are direct references to goldsmiths and jewellers. The word Taladhara (Tulādhāra), which means

1a. Mv. XXV. 82.

1b. Clough, Sinh. Dict. S.V.

goldsmith, occurs in the Vessagiri inscription,¹ while there are several pre-Christian inscriptions which contain records of donations by jewellers (manikāra).²

A weaver (Pehekara) is mentioned in one epigraphic record of the 1st century B. C. and in another inscription of the same period a tank named Pehera Vavi occurs.³ Both the Mahāvamsa and the Sīhalavatthupparāṇa refer to weavers often.⁴ References are not wanting in inscriptions to show that there were potters (Kubala), too, during this period.⁵ Kumbalagāma was a village in Rohana,⁶ and Kumbhasela Vihāra ascribed to the early ruler of Rohana, Goṭhābhaya,⁷ Kulālitissa Vihāra⁸ Kumbalatissa Pabbata,⁹ and Kuba Vehara,¹⁰ took their

1. EZ., I, 18: Taladara Naga.

2. CJS.G., II, p. 203, No. 617: Adikaya Utaraha duve kahapana
Manikar puta.

3. JRASCB., Vol. V, New series, p. 76.

4. Mv., XIX, v. 3. Sihv., p. 1, 2.

5. JRASCB., ibid.

6. Sahassavatthu, p. 85.

7. Dhātuvamsa, p. 31.

8. Mv., XXXVI, v. 327.

9. University of Ceylon Review, I. p. 62.

10. JRASCB., No. 73, p. 55

names either from being founded by potters or from being situated in a potters' village.

Both literary and epigraphic records of this period furnish us with evidence to show that there were painters (Cittakāra). According to the Visuddhimagga there was a monk named Cittagutta who lived in a cave adorned with beautiful paintings but was so absorbed in meditation and religious practices that the works of art which surrounded him in his own dwelling went unnoticed by him. ¹ The Mahāvamsa speaks of a Cittasālā (painting hall) in Anurādhapura in the 3rd century B.C. ² The walls of the Mahāthūpa were decorated with a variety of paintings depicting events in the life of the Buddha and scenes connected with the building of the Thūpa. ³ An inscription of the 1st century B. C. also contains a reference to a word Citākara (painter). ⁴

There are no direct references to leather-

1. Visuddhimagga, I, p. 28.

2. Mv., XX, v. 53.

3. ibid, XXX, vv, 78-88.

4. JRASCB., Vol. V. New series, p. 72.

workers as such, but there are references to the use of leather in drums and footwear. "Hidas were used to protect the backs of war elephants against flame and molten pitch, and when the Mahāthūpa was under construction its foundations were consolidated by elephants whose feet were bound with leather".¹ An inscription of the 2nd or 1st century B. C, contains a reference to a word Rupadaka.² This, no doubt, suggests that there were sculptors during this period. In the circumstances it is reasonable to conclude that most of the low-caste people in the list of eighteen guilds mentioned above were in Ceylon during the period under survey.

The Abhidhānappadīpikā, the earliest known Pāli Lexicon of Ceylon, also refers to five kinds of servants : Taraacā^h (umbrella-bearers), Tantavāya (weavers), Rajaka (washerman), Nahāpita (barber) and Gammakāya (leather-worker).³ This work was written by Moggallāna in the reign

1. Mv. (Geiger-Trns), XXIII, v. 86; XXV, v. 36.

2. CJSg., II, p. 214, No. 671. It is to be noted that Rupadaka in Ceylon was not considered as belonging to low-caste: cf. "Gapati Rupadaka"

3. Abhidhānappadīpikā, v. 295.

of Parākramabāhu the Great.¹ Although it belongs to a later period, there is no doubt that the author had followed the tradition handed down from the Mahāvihāra monks of Anurādhapura, for we have seen earlier² that the craftsmen mentioned were considered as low-caste people during the period under survey.

The Mahāvamsa reports that Mahādāṭhika Mahānāga³ ordered barbers (Nahāpitas) to work continually at the four gates during the Giribhaṇḍa Pūjā.⁴ The Mahāvamsa also refers to two kinds of fishermen: Bālisikā who catch fish with bait⁵ and Kevaṭṭā who catch them with nets.⁶ Both commentaries of the Anguttara and the Majjhima also contain references to a class of people who followed fishing as a profession.⁷

1. History of Pāli Literature, Law, Vol. II, p. 637.
2. See, supra, p. 142.
3. Mv. XXXIV, 84.
4. ~~EEV~~ Vol. I, p. 58-65; Sīhalavatthupparāṇa, p. 1,2. II; Mv., XIX, v. 3.
5. Mv., XXII, v. 62.
6. Mv., 28, 32.
7. Anguttara Aṭṭhakathā, p. 367.
Majjhima Aṭṭhakathā, p. 1008.

In Ceylon, slaves (dāsa) were normally employed in the capacity of domestic servants and labourers. The word Dāsa is used in the R̥g Veda, in the sense of enemies of the Āryans.¹ Thus it seems that the conqueror in those early days treated the conquered as his slaves. This was no doubt the usual practice in India even during the post-Vedic period.

A reference in the Vinaya to one of the three types of slaves is made as Karamārānīta.² In the Mahāsutasoma Jātaka, Sutasoma expresses his fear and doubt whether Brahmadatta the king of Bārānasi would enslave the captured princes.³

It is significant that although prisoners of war were the first to be considered as slaves, they appear last in the list of slaves enumerated in the Vinaya. This clearly suggests that the idea of slavery had undergone a great deal of change in course of time and had developed into a permanent institution in Indian society

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1. Bose, Social and Rural Economy of Northern India, p. 407.
 2. Vinaya, I, 2.1.
 3. Jātaka, v. p. 456. ff.

during the post-Vedic period.

According to the Vinaya there were three categories of slaves. Those that are born in the house (Antojāta), those that are bought with money (Dhanakkīta), and those that are captured in the war (Karamarānīta).¹

The Manusmṛti speaks of seven kinds of slaves: Dhajāhṛta (those who are captured in war,), Bhaktadāsa (those who serve in return for maintenance), Grhaja (those who are born in the house), Kṛita (those who are bought), Dātrima (those who are received as gifts), Paitrika (those who are inherited from the father) and the Dandadāsa (those who are made slaves by way of punishment).²

A comparison of these two lists shows that the first six in the latter are only variations of those in the former. The only addition to the former from the latter seems to be the seventh category i.e., Dandadāsa. It is strange, as Fick has rightly pointed out³ that this

1. Vinaya, I, 2.I.

2. Manu, VIII, 415.

3. Fick, Social Organisation, p. 30.

category was not included in the list of slaves referred to in the Vinaya, as we have references to show that there were slaves who lost their freedom as punishment. In the Kulāvaka Jātaka a reference is made to a village headman (gāmabhojaka) who has spoken ill of the inhabitants of the village before the king, and is condemned to the position of a slave of the villages.¹ Similarly ministers,² Brāhmaṇas, Kṣatriyas, and men of high birth might be reduced to slavery.³ Thus it is evident that there were four types of slaves in India during this period.

According to the Nīti Nighandu, the institution of slavery was sent to Ceylon in the same form in which it was in India, during the 5th century B. C. It states that "now the origin of slavery is as follows: King Paṇḍuvas of India sent a Princess as queen to king Vijaya, the first king of Laṅkā, and 700 maidens of different castes, and male and female slaves, and thenceforward slavery was a

1. J. I. p. 100; Tañca tesañca neva dāsaṃ katvā.

2. J. VI, p. 389. "Porāṇakā amaccā dāse katvā adāsi".

3. Sharma, Sūdra in Ancient India, p. 92.

established in Lanka".¹

According to both the Samantapāsādikā² and the Nīti Nighaṇḍu³ there were four kinds of slaves in Ceylon: Antojāta., Dhanakkīta, Karamarānīta, and Sāmandāsavyopagata.

The first category consisted of slaves who have been born and bred in the same family for generations. The second category of slaves are those purchased from their parents or their masters. The third category are those stolen from a foreign country, captives taken in war by kings, and women who, having been expelled from their families for losing their caste, have become the property of the king. The fourth category consists of those who for their livelihood or for their protection, of their own accord, agree for a certain sum to become slaves; who steal the property of others; or burn the house or granary of others and cause damage; the person who borrows

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1. Nīti Nighaṇḍu, p. 7.
 2. Samantapāsādikā, III, p. 177.
 3. Nīti Nighaṇḍu, p. 7.

money is unable to pay the principal and the interest, and thus becomes the slave of the creditor".¹

In the Mahāvamsa the word Dāsa occurs for the first time in the description of the reign of Paṇḍuvāsudeva. According to this record the royal chaplain predicted that the son of Paṇḍuvāsudeva's daughter would one day destroy his uncles. She ^{was} therefore, made to live in a well protected chamber built upon a single pillar (Ekathūnikagehe) and a female slave (Dāsī) was kept inside the chamber to watch over her.²

In the same text there is a reference to a slave (Dāsa) named Kālavela who was put to death by the brothers of Ummāda Citta, when they discovered that he was in Gāmaṇi's service.³ Then again a reference is made to a slave-woman who helped Ummāda Citta to get her baby son exchanged for a baby girl who was born about the same time to another woman.⁴

1. *ibid.*

2. *Mv.*, IX, vv. 2-4, 15, 16, 19.

3. *Mv.*, IX, v. 22.

4. *ibid.*, IX, v. 24; X, vv. 1-3, 85.

In the Rasavāhinī a reference is made to a woman named Nāgā in Nāgadīpa, who became a slave of a certain family, in return for a loan of sixty kahāpanas.¹ Later she borrowed another sixty kahāpanas from her master on agreement that she would, in addition, be a night slave (ratti dāsī=a servant woman engaged in night duties) as well. Thus she continued her life as a slave till she was made free by the king.² Another story tells how both husband and wife became slaves to a rich family for a similar reason, during the reign of king Saddhā Tissa.³ Poverty among the poorer classes was so acute during this period that sometimes parents were compelled to sell or mortgage their children for a few kahāpanas. According to the Rasavāhinī one such man mortgaged his daughter to a rich family for twelve kahāpanas.⁴ while a son was mortgaged by his parents for eight kahāpanas.⁵ Manorathapūranī

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1. Rasavāhinī, II, p. 17.
 2. ibid, II, p. 19.
 3. ibid, II, p. 31.
 4. ibid, II, p. 143.
 5. Rasavāhinī, II, p. 32.

speaks of another instance of the mortgage of a girl by her parents for twelve kahāpanas.¹

References to captives in war who were treated as slaves do not occur frequently in our sources, but the Rasavāhinī furnishes us with evidence to show that this type of slave was known in Ceylon during this period. According to this Velusumana promised Elāra to bring Kākavanna Tissa as a captive and make him his slave (dāsa), when Velusumana visited the former under the disguise of a spy.²

Besides the types of slaves mentioned above, kings, nobles, and rich people used to obtain the services of other types of slaves. Once when a famine was broke out in Rājarattha, a son of an Issara (=kuṭumbika) ordered his slaves and hirelings (dāsa kammakare) to go to the country of Malaya (the central hills of Ceylon) and collect paddy.³

1. Manorathapūranī, p. 277.

2. Rsv, II, p. 62 : " Kākavanna Tissaṃ bandhītvā ānetvā tava dāsaṃ karomi."

3. ibid, II, p. 145.

According to the Sīhalavātthu, king Saddhā Tissa is said to have given to a female devotee one hundred each of both male and female slaves. It further says that this gift was made in order to honour her by raising her status to rank equal to that of his daughter.¹ It is clear from this that there were a large number of slaves assigned to each member of the royal household.

The slaves were employed not only in royal households, the families of the nobles and other rich householders, but also in the monasteries. We learn from the Samantapāsādikā that kings donated slaves to monasteries.²

The acceptance of male and female slaves is not in keeping with the rules of discipline of the Bhikkhus.³ But when the Order of monks and the number of monasteries grew in number, the custom of employing slaves in monasteries came in-to vogue. This was not uncommon even in India during

1. Sīhalavātthupakkaraṇa, p. 96.

2. SMp., III, p. 177: "Vihāresu rājūhi ārāmika dāsā nāma dinnā honti."

3. Dīgha, I, p. 49½

during this period. We learn from a Jātaka that the Buddhist monasteries maintained slaves and servants who begged alms on behalf of their monks, or served as gardeners or went on shopping errands. ¹

The Kārle and Nāsik cave inscriptions show the types of magnificent endowments made to the monasteries by Śaka Princes. The Kuṣāṇa inscriptions from Mathurā also tell the same story. ² It is reported in Pāli literature how the Buddhist monasteries are so often found overflowing with gain and honour (lābha sakkāra), like ^{the} five rivers. ³ This, no doubt, was the type of monastic life adopted by the monks in Ceylon, too, during this period.

However, as this custom of accepting slaves by monks came into existence, the commentators may have tried to justify such acceptance by interpreting it to suit the injunctions of the Buddha. This is evident from the Majjhima Commentary, which states that it is true that it is ^{im}proper to accept slaves, but it is proper to accept

1. Jātaka, III, p. 49.

2. EI., 21, 10.

3. J.I, p. 449; II, p. 415; III, p. 126.

them in the form of Kappiyakāra (one who undertakes the responsibility of providing monks with their needs) and Arāṃikas (attendants and servants of the monastery).¹

By whatever names they were designated, it is beyond doubt that there were actual slaves in monasteries, for the Samantapāsādikā emphatically states that they should not be ordained.² It is to be noted here that the Buddha has prohibited this not because there is any caste distinction but because they are not free from encumbrances.³ A 1st century inscription records a donation by a man and a woman who were slaves.⁴

The gift of slaves to monasteries⁵ and individuals⁶ clearly shows that these people could be given to others like personal property. There are references

1. Majjhima ⁰Ām. p. 404: "Dāsa⁰vasena tesam paṭiggahanam na vaṭṭati kappiyakārakam dammi ārāṃmikam dammī⁰ti evaṃ vutte pana vaṭṭati".

2. SP., III, p. 177.

3. Mahāvagga, I, p. 84, ff.

4. EZ., IV, p. 135, N, I: "Dasi Anula dini Dasa kalaca."

5. EZ., IV, p. 135, No, I;

6. Sīhalavatthu, p. 96.

to show that this was exactly the case in Indian society during this period.¹ Thus it is evident that the master was free to sell or give his slaves as he liked, and even had the right to chastise his slaves and punish them in whatever way he liked.²

But it is evident from the references cited above that the slaves in Ceylon society were generally treated rather^{as} adopted dependents or as faithful domestic servants than as menials. They were employed as guardians³ and the personal attendants of the members of the royal household⁴ and sometimes they were entrusted with secret missions of high responsibility.⁵

It is reasonable to assume that this mild treatment of slaves was much favoured in Ceylon owing to the influence of Buddhism from 3rd century B. C. onwards.

1. Jātaka, I, p. 341; V, p. 223; VI, p. 138.

2. J.I, p. 451: Tāletvā bandhitvā.....

3. Mv., IX, vv. 2-4.

4. Sihalavatthu, p. 96.

5. Mv., IX, vv. 15,16,19.

The code of treatment of a slave by a master and of duties and relations between the two are referred to in the Sigālovāda Sutta of the Dīgha Nikāya.¹ According to this discourse the Āryan master assigns his slaves and servants work according to their strength (yathābalaṃ kammantaṃsaṃvidhānena), supplies them with food and wages (bhattaṃvetanānupadānena), tends them in sickness (gilānāpātthānena), shares with them unusual delicacies (acchariyānaṃ rasānaṃ saṃvibhāgena), and grants leave at times (samaye vossaggena). According to the Sutta-Saṅghaṭṭhakathā, constant relaxation should be accorded to them so that they need not work all day, and special leave with extra food and adornments should be supplied with.² As Professor Basham has rightly pointed out 'if read in terms of rights rather than of duties, they seem to imply the employee's right to fair wages and conditions, regular

1. Dīgha, III, p. 182, ff.

2. Sutta-Saṅghaṭṭhakathā, p. 59: "Aphāsu kāle kammaṃ akkṛitvā sappāyaṃbhesajjādīni datvā paṭṭajagganena. Nicca samaye ca kāla samaye ca Vossajjanena. Chananakkahatṭa. kilādisu alāṅkāraṃbhaṇḍāṃ khādanīyaṃbhojanīyādīni datvā."

holidays, and free medical attention'.¹ The slaves and servants should, in return, discharge their duties towards their master in five ways: They rise before him, lie down to rest after him; they are content with what is given to them; they do their work well; they carry about his praise and good fame.²

On the other hand the Samantapāsādikā specifically states that the kings gave slaves to monasteries,³ for the donation of slaves to monasteries was considered as meritorious. This religious sentiment attached to the rendering of services to monks by way of a slave or a servant were so popular that even kings offered themselves to the Saṅgha as slaves. Devānampiya Tissa is reported to have assumed the role of a gatekeeper for three days to honour the Bodhi Tree immediately after it was brought to Ceylon.⁴ Mahādāṭhika Mahānāga (1st century A. D.) offered himself, his queen, his two sons, his state elephant and

1. Sources of Indian Traditions, p. 116.

2. Dīgha, III, p. 182, ff.

3. SMp., III, p. 177; Mv., IX, v. 44, 15, 22; X, v. 19.

4. Mv., XIX, v. 32.

his state horse to the Saṅgha, and then redeemed himself and the rest by giving to the Order of Monks various suitable gifts worth six hundred thousand and to the Order of Nuns things worth one hundred thousand.¹ A noble son of the Lambakanna family, once having listened to a discourse, offered to the Saṅgha his valuable ornaments, his chariot and oxen, his children and wife, and finally himself saying 'I am also your slave.'²

This shows that these slaves were not actual slaves in the real sense of the word. They were free men of high social status. Offering services to the Saṅgha in the form of a slave or a servant became such a popular meritorious act that the kings, nobles and other rich people used to offer more and more slaves to the monasteries towards the 6th and 7th centuries A.D.³

Thus it would not be ^mimproper to point out that although the word dāsa is generally translated as 'slave' ^mand implied menial services by a person to another,

1. Mv., XXXIV., vv. 86-88.

2. Sihv, p. 159.

3. EZ., IV, p. 139-140.

the evidence is not wanting to show that the people of Ceylon did not understand it as it was commonly understood by the Hindu law-makers.

Although there is no direct evidence to prove that the slave-trade was known to early Ceylon, the donors making dedication of slaves to the monastic establishments and the price paid to them in order to make them free, may lead us to infer that the slave trade was in existence at least in a modified form.

A number of instances have been recorded in inscriptions of the 6th century A. D.¹ as to how the slaves were freed by others by paying money to those monasteries. We have seen earlier² that the slaves were freed by those who could afford to pay their prices, during the period prior to 4th century A. D. In other words a slave could be bought by anybody. In a way this is tantamount to the slave trade in Ceylon. The special feature of this slave trade was that the buyer did not buy slaves in order to derive any

1. *ibid*, IV, p. 132-133.

2. See, *supra*, p. 113.

material benefit such as to enjoy their services as slaves and to earn money by selling them to others, but to enjoy the spiritual happiness only by making them free. The price for redeeming a temple slave is not fixed. It depended upon the degree of wealth and charity of the redeemer.¹

It is also interesting to note that when the slaves were given, it was generally the custom to give away them with land and cattle (khetta vatthu gava mahisa dāsi dāsa). This shows that these slaves may have been mainly employed for agricultural purposes, assigning them various functions in accordance with their skill and ability. But it does not necessarily mean that they were employed in agricultural operations alone. They may have been employed in other arts and crafts as well, for the purposes of construction buildings, monasteries, cetiyas, and tanks in the capacity of stone-cutters, masons, carpenters, goldsmiths, jewellers, painters and sculptors, etc.

The Pāli chronicles refer to the history of the founding of eight settlements by the first colonists from

1. See, supra, pp. 162-163.

India. ¹ The Mahāvamsa Tikā says that these settlements were opened up in areas where water was easily available. ² There are also references to show that where there was no river water available, large reservoirs were built by Anurādha and Paṇḍukābhaya in order to make settlements easily habitable. ³ This clearly suggests that agriculture was the chief means of livelihood of those early settlers.

Besides this, both the literary and epigraphic records reveal that cetiyas, cave temples, steps and pillars were constructed in large numbers during this period. But none of these records speaks of how the donors employed labour for them. There is no doubt that the services of the Sūdra class were obtained for these activities.

The small farmers may have carried on their agricultural operations single-handed or with the co-operation of the members of his family. But the rich landowners could not have cultivated their big estates without

1. Mv., VII, vv. 43-47.

2. MV, Tikā, p. 261: "Tasmiṃ tasmiṃ sampannacsālilāsaye abhinippadesse ^āgme nivesayum."

3. Mv., IX, vv. 85, 88.

employing labourers to a considerable degree.

The Mahāvamsa records that Paṇḍukābhaya's uncle Girikaṇḍa Siva cultivated an area of 100 karisas.¹ According to Rhys Davids, 100 karisas is equal to 400 acres.² Duṭṭhagāmaṇi not only commissioned his brother Tissa to bring under cultivation vast tracts of land in Dīghavāpi,³ he himself promoted agricultural operations on a grand scale in Rohana.⁴ The Rasavāhinī also speaks of a certain rich man named Dubbuṭṭhi Tissa who employed many hundreds of people to celebrate a harvest festival.⁵ Another person named Danta got his lands cultivated by others.⁶

It can be inferred from these references that the hired labourers, too, may have been employed in agricultural work of varied nature such as ploughing, field-watching, harvesting, tending and grazing cattle and

1. Mv., X, vv. 29-31.

2. Ancient Coins and Measures of Ceylon in the International Numismata Orientalia (London 1877), p. 14.

3. Rsv., II, p. 69.

4. Rsv., II, p. 69.

5. Rsv., II, p. 166.

6. Rsv., II, p. 196.

dairy production.

For the construction of manasteries, cetiyas, cave temples, pillars, steps and tanks, too, no doubt, labourers were obtained. It is also evident from an inscriptional record of the 3rd centry A. D. ¹ that hired labour was paid by the employer. According to this three hundred Dama Kahāpanas were donated for the purpose of cutting a flight of steps leading to a Stūpa at Murutānge in the Dambadeni Hat Pattu.

Thus we see that the Sūdra class of people in Ceylon during this period consisted of domestic servants, artisans, barbers, fishermen, washermen, slaves and hired labourers.

The Untouchables.

In addition to the four social groups which we have discussed in previous chapters, there were five categories of people who were assigned a position still

1. CJS.G., II, p. 22, No. 381.

lower than that of the Sūdra in the social scale. They are Candāla, the Vena, the Nesāda, the Pukkusa, and the Rathakāra. They are also called Hinā jāti (people of low birth). ¹

The Candāla

The position of the candāla class in Ceylon was the same as in India during this period. They were employed to perform the lowest and most unclean types of work, such as to cleanse streets and sewers, to carry the dead, and to watch cemeteries.

The son of Sūdra by a Brāhmaṇa woman, according to the Sutra literature, is branded as a candāla. ² References as to the origin of the candāla are not to be found in Pāli sources as in the Sūtra literature, but they certainly explain their social standing in Indian society.

1. J., 2. 1. Majjhima, I. p. 93, 96, 129; Anguttara, II p. 85.

2. Dau. Dh. S. 1,9,17,7.

A Jātaka describes the caṇḍālas as the lowest men on earth.¹ Contact with the wind that touched a caṇḍāla's body was regarded as pollution.²

The very sight of a caṇḍāla was capable of bringing evil consequences.³ A Jātaka speaks of the daughter of a Seṭṭhi of Banāras, seeing a caṇḍāla, washing her eyes w which were contaminated by a mere glance at him.⁴ Food and drinks if seen by them, were not to be taken by the members of the higher varṇas.⁵ If a member of the higher varṇas, partakes of food of caṇḍāla, even without knowledge, he will be excommunicated and degraded to the level of a caṇḍāla. It is reported that sixteen thousand Brāhmaṇas lost their caste because they unknowingly took food which had been polluted by contact with the rem^anants of a caṇḍāla's meal.⁶

1. J., IV., p. 397.

2. J., III, p. 233.

3. J., IV, p. 376.

4. ibid. "Apassitabbayuttakaṃ passimhāti gandhodakena akkhīni dhovitvā".

5. J., IV., p. 390.

6. J., IV., p. 386.

Another Jātaka speaks of a Brāhmaṇa who ate the remnants of the meal of a caṇḍāla through hunger and committed suicide in order to avoid the contempt of his people.¹ Caṇḍālas were not even permitted to enter the inner city. If they violated this restriction they were to be beaten without any mercy.²

They were assigned certain despised professions which they had to follow hereditarily. According to the Silavīmamasa Jātaka a caṇḍāla is engaged in removing corpses (chēva chaddaka caṇḍāla).³ Milinda speaks of a caṇḍāla who is a corpse-burner (chavadāhaka).⁴ The caṇḍālas were also sometimes engaged in sweeping the streets.⁵

In the Jātaka, he is also employed in whipping criminals and cutting off their limbs.⁶ It is, therefore,

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1. J., II, p. 82-84.
 2. J., IV, p. 376, 391.
 3. J., III, p. 195.
 4. Milinda, p. 331.
 5. J., IV, 390.
 6. J., III, p. 41, 179.

reasonable to assume that he was employed as executioner as well, for both the Viṣṇusmṛti and the Mahābhārata state that a caṇḍāla must live by executing criminals sentenced to death. ¹

The Mahāvamsa speaks of five hundred caṇḍālas who were employed as scavengers for cleaning the city of Anurādhapura, two hundred for cleaning the sewers, one hundred and fifty for taking dead bodies away to the cemeteries and one hundred and fifty as watchmen especially of cemeteries. ² For these caṇḍālas there was a separate village called Gaṇḍālagāma to the North-West of the general cemetery. ³ They also had a separate cemetery for themselves called Nica Susāna (despised cemetery), situated to the North-East of the Gaṇḍālagāma. ⁴ Both the Mahāvamsa and the Rasavāhinī contain records to show that even in other parts of the country the caṇḍāla community lived in villages exclusively meant for them. ⁵

1. Viṣṇu. S. 16, 11; Mahābhārata, X. 45.11ff.

2. Mv., X, vv. 91-92.

3. Mv., X, v. 93; Mahābodhivamsa, p. 84.

4. Mv., X., v. 94.

5. Mv., XXXVII, v. 140; Rsv., II. p. 117, 119.

Sometimes the king had the power to degrade any person to the position of a caṇḍāla or even to a position lower than that of a caṇḍāla as a punishment. The Mahāvamsa records that when king Il/anāga having found that the Lambakannas were not present on the occasion of his ceremonial bath at Tissa Vāpi, he ordered them to work at the remaking of a road leading to the Mahāthūpa, and set caṇḍālas to supervise them.¹ Such treatment would reduce them to Caṇḍāla status. They were presumably allowed after some time to regain their old status by purification ceremonies. According to the Sammohavinodanī king Bhātiya (38-68 A. D.) is said to have degraded certain people who had eaten beef (gomamsa) to the position of scavengers in his palace premises.²

The Rasavāhinī speaks of a caṇḍāla named Bahula and his seven sons who lived in a village meant for caṇḍālas (helloligāme) near Anurādhapura.³ Both the Mahāvamsa and the Rasavāhinī refer to the story of the Prince Sāli, the son of Dutthagāmanī who preferred marriage

1. Mv., XXXV, vv. 16-18.

2. Sammohavinodanī, p. 310.

3. Rsv., II, p. 7.

with a caṇḍāla girl, the daughter of the leader of a caṇḍāla village, to the ancestral throne.¹ It is also reported that when the news of Prince Sāli's courtship with this caṇḍāla girl spread, not only the king but also the entire country got excited and tried to persuade him to change his mind, but it was without success. Hence he was deprived of his rights to the throne.²

This sentiment of contempt towards the caṇḍālas, both politically and socially, is also evident from other sources. The Visuddhimagga states that a monk who is not virtuous is looked down upon by gods and men in the same way as a caṇḍāla boy who undertakes the responsibility of the administration of a country.³ A deep sentiment of contempt towards the caṇḍālas is expressed again in the Visuddhimagga in the following simile: "As a golden swan takes pleasure in the seven rivers, but takes no pleasure at all in a cesspit at the gate of a caṇḍāla village".⁴

1. Mv., XXXIII, v. 2; Rsv., II, p. 117.

2. Mv., XXXIII, v. 3.

3. Visuddhimagga, p. 54.

4. Visuddhimagga, p. 650.

It is clear that a cesspit is a bad enough place. The cesspit at the gate of a caṇḍāla village is still worse, and a most unfitting and contemptible place for such a swan to live in. This clearly shows the degree of contempt attached to everything connected with the word caṇḍāla.

According to the Sammohavinodanī there was a person called Brāhmaṇa Tissa during the reign of Vaṭṭagāmaṇī. He was such a powerful political aspirant that he raised a revolt in Rohaṇa. Consequently there was a period of great disaster in Ceylon, which lasted for twelve years.¹ He was very unpopular, particularly among the monks, and the hatred with which he was looked upon by them is well illustrated by the epithet caṇḍāla added to his name. The Anguttara commentary names this disaster Candāla-Tissabhaya instead of the term Brāhmaṇa Tissabhaya.² This shows that there could be no greater dishonour to a Brāhmaṇa than to be called a caṇḍāla!

It is reported in the Mahāvamsa that to the

1. Sammohavinodanī, p. 445-6.

2. Manorathapūraṇī, I. p. 92.

North of the Nīca Susāna of the caṇḍālas in Anurādhapura, a line of huts was built for the huntsmen (vyādha) who were aborigines and whose position was probably similar to or lower than that of the caṇḍāla. ¹

And
But wherever the word vyādha is used in the chronicles, the professional Sinhalese hunters are never meant, but aboriginal tribesmen. ² Paṇḍukābhaya also provided a place for the vyādha deva (deity of the vyādhas), in Anurādhapura. ³

These aboriginal people were also called the Pulindas. ⁴ According to the Mahāvamsa they were the descendents of the children of Vijaya by Kuṇḍini. This shows that there were two branches of huntsmen, i.e. Vyādhas (ordinary aborigines) and Pulindas (reputed descendents of Vijaya by Kuṇḍini), who had identical functions and places in society. The fact that these Vyādhas were accommodated in a place to the North of the Nīca Susāna of the caṇḍālas,

1. Mv., X, v. 95.

2. Geiger, Culture of Ceylon in Mediaeval Times, p. 104.

3. Mv., X, v. 89.

4. Mv., VII, vv. 60-68.

shows that their status was equal to, if not lower than that of the caṇḍālas.

The Pāli chronicles of Ceylon speak of Vijaya's sexual relations with an aboriginal woman called Kuveṇi. She bore a son and a daughter by him. When afterwards she was discarded by Vijaya, and returned to her relatives, she was killed by them, but her children fled to Malaya, the mountainous region of central Ceylon. When they grew up, the elder brother took the younger sister for his wife and they lived there under the protection of the king. Thus they became the ancestors of the Pulinda tribe. ¹

The word Pulinda is a term for an uncivilised tribe in India. According to the Aitareya Brāhmaṇa the Pulindas were included in the category of outcastes such as Dasyus and Antas. ² Kautilya also states that in the new settlements, aboriginal tribes such as the Vāgurikas, the Śabaras, the Pulindas, and the Caṇḍālas were entrusted with the work of internal defence. ³

2. Aṅ., Br. 7, 18.

3. ArthacŚāstra, II, I.

It is evident from this that the Pulindas were classed with the Caṇḍālas in India during this period. But it appears that it may not have been the same in Ceylon, for it is clear from the legendary story referred to above that the Pulindas were thought to have originated from the intermarriage of the first Aryan colonists with aboriginal women. This is supported by an inscriptional record attributed to ^{the} 3rd or ^{the} 4th century A.D. The inscription runs as follows "Hail! the stone cut by Siddhattha, king Abhaya, the Pulinda, having caused it to be done." ¹

A reference is also made in an inscription to a person called Milaka Pusa. ² In another inscription a person is referred to as Milaka Tisa. ³ The word Milaka is the derivative of the Pāli Milakkha equivalent to the Sanskrit word Mleccha which, according to the Arthasāstra, means the savage tribes inhabiting the frontiers. ⁴ According

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1. Parker, Ancient Ceylon, p. 99: "Sidha raja Pulida Abhaya naka re sidhata kapagala."
 2. JRASCB., New series, II, p. 131, No. 31.
 3. JRASCB., 36, p. 60.
 4. Aarthasāstra, 7, 10, 14; 12, 4.

to the Sīhalavatthu they lived in separate villages, following the profession of executing people sentenced to death. ¹

In the Sahassavatthu the Milakkha is referred to as savages living in the hilly country (Milakkha - Malayavāsī). ² He earns his living by hunting (so pana ludda manusso). ³ A reference is also made to a Milakkha - Manusso (savage man) living near the cave named Amara situated in the hilly country (Malayaratttha). ⁴ The Rasavāhinī refers to the same person as a Nesāda (hunter). ⁵ There is, therefore, no doubt that the Mlecchas were savage tribes whose professions were similar to the Caṇḍala's.

Besides, this, the word Mleccha is also used to denote non-Āryan invaders. ⁶ It is possible that the class of people who were designated by the term Milaka were either

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1. Sīhalavatthu, p. 136: Milakkhudese...coraghātake.
 2. Sahassavatthu, p. 78.
 3. *ibid*, p. 77.
 4. *ibid*, p. 79.
 5. *Rsv.*, II.p. 57.
 6. Bose, *Social and Rural Economy of Northern India*, p.

the aboriginal people whom the pioneer Āryan colonists found here when they first arrived in the Island, or those who belonged to the non-Āryan stock who migrated to Ceylon from South India. However, these references to Milaka Pusa and Milaka Tisa suggest that they became fully Āryanised after the advent of Mahinda and adopted even Āryan names like Phussa and Tissa.

Side by side with these Mlecchas, there were also professional hunters (Nesādas).¹ The Rasavāhinī speaks of separate settlements of hunters as Nesādagāma.² The commentarial literature also bears testimony to the existence of hunters who ultimately entered the Order of the Saṅgha.³ According to this, a well known thera named Sona was the son of a hunter. It is also reported both in the Manorathapūranī and the Rasavāhinī that most of ^{the} Nesādas in Ceylon finally became monks and a few of them even attained Arahantship.⁴ The Rasavāhinī also speaks of

See, Supp. I, 232.

1. Rsv., II.p.1,132.

2. Rsv., II.p. 56.

3. Manorathapūranī p. 255; Sumangalavilāsinī, p. 887; SV.p.309

4. Manorathapūranī, p. 21, ff; Rsv., II. p. 132,147.

the wife of a hunter, who became a nun and attained Arahantship.¹ It is evident from this that the position of the Nesāda in Ceylon was not similar to that of the Caṇḍāla. They may have been included in the category of Caṇḍālas so long as they followed hunting, which represents the lowest stage of human culture, as a profession. But in Indian society their status was exactly identical with the Caṇḍāla's.

Although the words Pukkusa, Vena and Rathakāra are not referred to in our sources during the period under review, it is interesting to examine their counterparts in Ceylon.

Bose says that as even the very word Pukkusa is subjected to a wide range of variants in Indian literature, nothing can be definitely said about the origin or the occupation of these people.² Yet, it is evident from all the available sources that the Pukkusas were included in the Caṇḍāla group in Indian society. According to the Pāli sources,

1. Rsv., II.p. 148.

2. Bose, *Social and Rural Economy of Northern India*, p. 445.

the Pukkusa is called Pupphachaddaka or Pukkusa which is used to denote the removers of faded flowers from temples.¹ Hence those who remove faded flowers and clean temples and palaces are called Pupphachaddaka or Pukkusa. But references are not wanting in Pāli Literature to show that the word Puppha is also used to denote "menses, blood".² In the Milinda, the word Pupphavatī is used to denote a menstrous woman.³ In the Samantapāsādikā, Buddhaghosa commenting on "Puppham'sā uppajji", says that Puppham means the blood discharged during the period of menses ("Pupphamti utukāle uppannalohitassa nāmaṃ").⁴ In the circumstances if we take Pupphachaddaka to mean the one who removes and cleans the blood-stained clothes, he is no other than the washerman.

As Fick has rightly pointed out, the removers of faded flowers did not constitute a separate class of people in society.⁵ But it is to be admitted that the washermen undoubtedly formed a class by themselves. They are included in the group of eighteen low-castes and hence are considered as Sūdras.⁶ It is therefore

reasonable to

1.J., III, p. 195.

2.J., V, p. 331.

3.Milinda, 2. 126.

4.SMP. Vol.I, p.147.

5.Fick, Social Organisation, p. 206.

6. See, supra, p. 144.

infer that originally the Pupphachaddaka was not the ordinary washerman, but the washerman who was meant for cleaning the blood-stained clothes of women. But there are no references to show that either the remover of faded flowers or the washerman was classed with the Candālas in Ceylon society. In contemporary Ceylon only certain low class washermen are willing to undertake the cleansing of this and similar articles.

It is also most likely that the Venas and the Rathakāras were considered as Sūdras in Ceylon, but not as outcastes. The word is explained in the Jātaka commentary as Taccchikā (carpenter's wife).¹ In the Petavatthu Atthakathā the word Veṇa is used to denote a class of people working on willows and reeds.² We have seen earlier that the carpenters and the basket-and mat-makers belonged to the Sūdra class in Ceylon society.³

In the Jātaka verses the word Rathakāra is used to denote the leather-worker (cammakāra).⁴ The commentary

1. J., V, p. 306.

2. Petavatthu Atthakathā, p. 175; "Veṇimvāti Veṇacjātikā vilīvaackārā naḷakārā".

3. See supra, p. 144.

4. J., IV, p. 172: "Rathakāro va cammassa Parikantaṃ upāhanam".

on the Petavatthu also explains Rathakāra as Gammakāra.¹

Thus it is clear that the Rathakāras also belonged to the Sūdra group,² but not to the Caṇḍālas as was the case in India.

It is also interesting to note that no Caṇḍālas are referred to in the inscriptions of this period. The donors referred to in them are either the Kṣatriyas,³ the Brāhmanas,⁴ the Vaiśyas,⁵ or the Sūdras.⁶ Now the question arises as to why they were not included among the donors in our inscriptions. Is it because they could not afford to donate owing to the poverty or because they were not Buddhist?

On the whole the Caṇḍālas could not have been

1. Petavatthu Aṭṭhakathā, III.1,13.

2. See, supra, p. 144.

3. See, supra, pp. 47-51.

4. See, supra, pp. 37-42.

5. See, supra, pp. 94-100.

6. See, supra, p. 168.

economically well up, for they were normally not permitted to follow any profession other than the type of menial work assigned to them by the society.¹ But the literary sources furnish us with evidence to show that there were well-to-do Caṇḍālas who could afford to make the type of donations made by others. The Rasavāhinī speaks of the headman of a Caṇḍāla village, who was an artisan.² Thus it is clear that there were at least ^a few fairly rich Caṇḍālas who could donate to the Saṅgha if they were permitted to do so.

There is no doubt that they were normally Buddhists. The Rasavāhinī again refers to a Caṇḍāla called Bahula and his seven sons who were Upāsakas.³ The term Upāsaka is exclusively used in our sources to denote the devout lay Buddhist.⁴ It is therefore clear that neither poverty nor religion stood on their way to obstruct any

1. Mv., X, vv. 91-92.

2. Rsv., II. p. 118.

3. Rsv., II. p. 7-8.

4. See, *infra*, pp. 392-398.

donations to the Saṅgha. Hence the possible answer to the absence of Caṇḍālas in inscriptions would be that they were not permitted to appear among other donors owing to their caste.

oOo

CHAPTER.VFamily Organisation.

From what we have discussed in the previous chapters, it is evident that society in Ceylon was split up into a great number of families (kula). As the family has generally formed the basic unit of society throughout the history of human civilisation, it plays an important role in the social structure of any country in the world. Hence, before we discuss the pattern of family life in Ceylon during the period under survey, it is necessary to examine the type of family life in India, particularly in the North Eastern and the North Western parts of India from whence the pioneer Aryan colonists may have started to migrate to this country somewhere in the 5th century B.C. ¹

The real family life of an individual begins with his marriage, on which the continuance of the family system rests. Marriage therefore had to be regulated according to orthodox family traditions in Indian society.

According to these traditions, "regarding the

1. Geiger, Culture of Ceylon in Mediaeval Times, p. 49

age of marriage of a girl or a boy, there is a great variety of opinion among the Hindu writers; and it is extremely difficult to say anything specific and uniform about their general opinion".¹ But all these writers agree upon one point, viz. that the bride must be younger by three or more years than the husband.² According to the Buddhist sources the boy's age at the time of marriage is generally given as sixteen (Solasavassakāla).³ But it seems probable at least in the case of the Kṣatriyas and the Brāhmaṇas and all those who left their homes for education at that age,⁴ that twenty or so was the age of marriage, for girls are sometimes seen to have been married at the age of sixteen. In the Asilakkhana Jātaka⁵ reference is made to a princess who was given in marriage when she was sixteen years old. The commentary on ^{the} Dhammapada⁶ refers to a beautiful daughter

1. Prābhu, Hindu Social Organisation, p. 182.

2. Gau., IV; Yāj., I, 52; Manu, III, 4, 12; Ap. II, 6, 13, 1. The Kāmaūtra of Vātsūyana also says that the bride must be at least three years younger than the bridegroom (Kām., III, 1, 2.) "Tarivarṣāt prabhriti nyūnavayasāṃ".

3. J., VI, pp. 72, 363.

4. J., II, p. 277; III, p. 122; IV, p. 237; V, pp. 127, 210.

5. Asilakkhana J., (No. 126).

6. Dhṛp. Com., II, p. 217.

of a seṭṭhi of Rājagaha, named Kuṇḍalakesī, who remained unmarried till the age of sixteen. This is said to be the age at which women normally start to think of men in terms of matrimony. ¹

Cousins were normally considered the most fitting partners in matrimony. King Ajātasattu married Vajirā the daughter of his father's sister, ² The Commentary on Dhammapada refers to a householder of Magadha named Magha, who married his maternal uncle's daughter named Sujātā. ³ It further states that Ānanda tried to marry his father's sister's daughter named Uppalavannā. ⁴ References to the marriage of cousins in the Jātakas too are not wanting. ⁵ This form of cousin marriage, i.e. marriage with the daughter of the mother's brother or the son of the father's sister, was usual and even looked on as desirable.

In terms of the method of consecrating a marriage union there were eight forms of marriages among the

1. Dhp. Com., II, p. 217.

2. Mahāvagga, VIII, 1, 2, 3.

3. Dhp. Com., II, p. 265.

4. Dhp. Comm., II, p. 49.

5. J., I. p. 457; II, p. 327; VI, p. 486.

Hindus: ¹ They are: The Brāhma, the Daiva, the Āṛṣa, the Prājāpatya, the Āsura, the Gāndharva, the Rākṣasa, and the Paiśāca forms.

The Brāhma form is the gift of a daughter by the father, after decking her with ornaments, to a man learned in the Vedas and of a good character, whom the bride's father himself invites.

The Daiva form, involves the gift of the daughter as above, to a priest who duly officiates at a sacrifice, during the course of its performance.

The Āṛṣa form is the type of marriage wherein the father gives his daughter in marriage to the bridegroom, after receiving a cow and a bull, or two pairs of these from the bridegroom in accordance with the requirements of Dharma and not in any sense with the intention of selling ^{his} child.

The Prājāpatya form is that in which the father makes a gift of the daughter, by addressing the couple with the following words: " May both of you perform together your

1. Manu, II, 27-37: Yaj. I, 58.

Dharma", and with due honour to the bridegroom.

In the four forms mentioned above, the important point to be noted is that it is the father or the guardian who makes the gift (dāna) of the bride to the bridegroom. But in the Āsūra form, the bridegroom has to give money to the father or the guardian of the bride, and thus, in a sense, purchases the bride.

The Gāndharva form, is that in which the mutual love and consent of the bride and bridegroom is the only condition required to bring about the union. Neither the father nor the guardian need have a hand in bringing about the marriage. But such a marriage may be subsequently consecrated by going through the sacred rites of vivāha.

The Rākṣasa form, is described as "the forcible abduction of a maiden from her home, while she cries and weeps, after her kinsmen have been slain or wounded and their houses broken. " It is the capture of the bride by force.

The Paisāca form is oneⁱⁿ which the man seduces, by stealth, a girl who is sleeping, intoxicated, or disordered

in intellect.

According to the Buddhist sources, all these forms of marriage were broadly included in three forms:- Marriage arranged by guardians of both parties, Svayamvara marriage, and Gāndharva marriage.

The most approved and the commonest form of marriage was that arranged by the guardians of both parties between two families of the same caste and equal rank. The first four forms of marriage current among the Hindus may be safely included in this form.

The most important factor to be considered before the settlement of marriage was the equality of birth of the parties concerned. The Dhammapada Commentary,¹ speaks of how a seṭṭhi of Sāvatti considered the equality of birth before he agreed to the proposal sent by the seṭṭhi of Sākata for the marriage of his daughter with ^{the latter's} his son. The Babbu Jātaka² furnishes us with a reference to a girl of Sāvatti, Kāpā who was given in marriage to a person of

1. Dhp. Com., I. p. 390.

2. J., I. p. 477.

equal rank in another village. The Nakkhatta Jātaka speaks of a young man in the neighbourhood of Sāvatti, who proposes to marry a young girl belonging to the same caste.¹ Reference is made in the Therīgāthā Commentary to a marriage of a girl named Isidāsī, the daughter of a wealthy merchant, with a merchant's son of equal position.² Similarly a Senāpati of the king of Surattā (N.W. India) got his daughter married to a family of equal status.³

Not only the rich and the nobility but also the ordinary common man was very particular about equality of social rank in contracting a marriage. The Commentary on Vimānavatthu tells us how careful an Upāsaka of Sāvatti was to get his daughter married to a person of equal rank.⁴ Thus it is evident that all the members of different strata of society commonly considered equality of social rank as the primary factor for the settlement of marriage.

Evidence is not wanting to show that the Svayamvara form of marriage was also in vogue in this period.

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1. J., I. p. 257.
 2. Th. Com., p. 260.
 3. Petavatthu, p. 244-257.
 4. Vimānavatthu. Com., p. 128.

But it is to be noted that this form of marriage was practised only among the royal families. ¹ The Gāndharva form of marriage was also known but was not as common as the arranged form of marriage. The primary consideration for the settlement of this form of marriage was the mutual love and consent of the marriage partners, irrespective of the equality of castes to which they belonged. ²

Marriage in this period was usually monogamic; polygamy was not unknown but was limited mainly to the richer class and the nobility. The only reference to the existence of polyandry in Buddhist literature occurs in the Kunāla Jātaka where we find that princess Kanhā was allowed to marry five suitors selected by her in a Svayamvara assembly. ³ The usual custom was that a woman could not marry more than one husband at a time. Hence this appears to be an exception. But polygamy was quite common among the rich and the nobility. According to the Yājñavalkya Smṛti, the three upper classes were allowed to marry four, three and two wives respectively if they could afford to maintain them. ⁴ The Sūdra was confined

1. Dhṛ. Com., I. pp. 278-279; J., V. 426.

2. J., I. p. 133.

3. J., V. p. 426.

4. Yāj., I. 57.

to one wife. According to the Dhammapada Commentary a certain Gahapati named Magha of Magadha had four wives, Nandā, Cittā, Sudhammā and Sujātā.¹ King Bimbisāra had five hundred wives² and king Okkāka had five queens.³

Divorce may have not been much favoured, but it was not unknown to the Pāli literature. According to the Therīgāthā Commentary, Isidāsī was sent away twice by her two former husbands on the ground that she was not agreeable to them. Reference is also made to the possibility of remarriage of women during this period,⁴ though it was not favoured in Hindu society.⁵

The family comprised the patriarch, his wife (or wives), his unmarried daughters, and his sons with their wives and children. Children were no doubt naturally the happy corner of the household, though of course to a Hindu father a daughter has not been, for economic reasons, a great blessing as the son who has been considered fit to save

1. Dh. Com., I. p. 269.

2. Mahāvagga, VIII, I, 15.

3. Sumaṅgalā Vilāsinī, p. 258.

4. J., I. p. 307.

5. Prabhu, Hindu Social Organisation, p. 195.

his father from hell, and to support him in old age. But once a daughter is born, natural affection cannot be denied. Thus a boy and a girl received equal care and affection from their parents in Indian society. It is therefore reasonable to infer that this may have been the type of family life which the Āryan colonists of Ceylon were familiar with.

References are made to the word Kula (family) in the inscriptional records assigned to the period under review. The inscription of Kuṭukanna Tissa who was the son of Mahācūli Mahā Tissa, and who deposed Anulā, shows that he belonged to the Devanapiya Kula.¹ This seems to imply that the kings of Anūrādhapura considered themselves members of the family of Devānampiya Tissa. The word Kula is also frequently accompanied by the word Gahapati. One inscription refers to "the work of the family of the householder named Siva (Gapati Siva Kulasa)."² Still another inscription contains a reference to "the cave of the family of the ascetic Sumana, the householder".³ Yet another inscription refers to a cave of the family of Anurāda, which was donated to the

1. EZ., II, p. 156: Devanapiya Kulahi Macudikaha Puta.

2. AC., p. 430, No. 32.

3. *ibid*, p. 423, No. 4.

Saṅgha. ¹

Even the ordinary people who did not bear any special title, are referred to as having their families. One of the Vessagiri cave inscriptions refers to one such person as follows: "The cave of Sonutara, son of Sumana and descendent of the family of Sonutara". ² Further according to the genealogies given in the inscriptions it can be well established that the titles or offices such as Parumuka, ³ Bata, ⁴ Gapati, ⁵ and Gamika, ⁶ were hereditary. This hereditary character of these titles itself shows that the family organisation was well established in Ceylon during this period.

References are made frequently to the word Kula in combination with the word Geha and sometimes with the word mahā. Thus when it is used in a compound as Kulageha or Mahākula it always means not an ordinary family but a well-to-do and perhaps an aristocratic family. Nandimitta, who was one of the paladins of Duṭṭhagāmaṇī, was born in

1. CJS.G., II. p. 125, No. 522.

2. EZ., I. p. 20.

3. See, supra, pp. 95-96.

4. See, supra, pp. 104-107.

5. See, supra, pp. 116-117.

6. See, supra, p. 138.

a Kulageha (noble family) of which the daily income is said to have been one thousand (coins) (Sahassuppādāna kulagehe).¹ The Sahassavatthu refers to another kulageha which commanded the services of slaves.² An ordinary family, as we know, could not afford the services of slaves. It is therefore obvious that the word Kulageha is used in our literary sources to denote well-to-do families.

Sometimes we come across references to great families (Mahākula) which appear to be quite distinct from ordinary families. The Sahassavatthu speaks of one of the ministers of Duṭṭhagāmaṇī, named Cūlūpaṭṭhāka Tissa, who was reborn in a great family (Mahākula) in the Northern Province.³ According to the same work Kākavaṇṇa Tissa had a son named Dīghābhaya by another wife. He is said to have been established a guard over the frontier line on the Southern bank of the Mahavāligamga against the Tamils in the North. He selected able men from great families (Mahākulas) and kept each of them at different strategic points of every

1. Sahassavatthu, p. 27.

2. ibid, p. 32.

3. ibid, p. 49.

two yojanas to protect the frontier. ¹ The Rasavāhinī speaks of another paladin named Dāthāsena who was born in a great family (Mahākula) in Rohana during the reign of Kākavaṇṇa Tissa. ² The term seems to have been confined to upper class families.

On the other hand the single word Kula as it occurs in our literary sources denotes the ordinary family. ³ A reference is also made to a person named Maṇḍagutta who was born in a certain family (Ekassa kulassa gehe) ⁴ He was so poor that when there was no other means of paying back a loan, ^{he} and his wife became slaves of another family. This shows that the Kula in which he was born was quite distinct from the Kulagehas and the Mahākulas.

There were sometimes leading families after which the entire village was named. A reference is made to a Chagāma Kula in the village of Chagāma in Rohana. The story goes on to say that this Kula was in possession of a Bodhi-Tree with a well arranged courtyard around it. It is said

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1. Sahassavatthu, p. 92.
 2. Rsv., II, p. 104.
 3. Sahassavatthu, p. 188.

that the inhabitants of the village used to come over there for worship. This may lead us to believe that the family which could afford to maintain a place of public worship in its premises, may have enjoyed the privileges of the leading family in the village.

According to the epigraphic records of this period, the family in Ceylon comprised a husband ¹ his wife, ² sons, ³ and daughters. ⁴ One inscription refers to a cave built by an aunt, father's sister (matulaniya). ⁵ Another inscription of the same place refers to sisters of the uncle (matula baginiyana) ⁶. The Vessagiri cave inscriptions record twenty names of persons. ⁷ "Of these twelve are donors, the remaining eight are either the names of their respective father's or in the case of two out of the five female donors those of their husbands; all these personages probably belonged to one family, for it was not likely that the caves which

1. AC., p. 446, No. 67.

2. *ibid*, p. 430, No. 37; p. 450, No. 76; p. 420; p. 429. No. 26, 29.

3. *ibid*, 427, No. 11, 12; p. 428, No. 18, 19, 20, 21; p. No. 27, 29.

4. *ibid*, p. 420, p. 437, No. 50; p. 452, No. 79; p. 454, No. 82.

5. AC., p. 427, No. 13.

6. AC., p. 428, No. 14.

7. EZ., I. pp. 18-21.

stand practically in the same flock could at that time have been owned by persons other than those of one clan. This was certainly the case in regard to six of them, namely:- Parumaka Palikada, ¹ his wife Cita, ² his father-in-law Sirikita, ³ his son Haruma, ⁴ his daughter-in-law Tisa, ⁵ and his grandson Anikaṭa Sona. ⁶

The inscriptions in the Kuḍā Situlpahuwa area give us the information that a family of a Gahapati consisted of father named Yasopala, his son named Sona, his daughter Uti, and his son-in-law named Ataguta. ⁷ Four other inscriptions found in the same area supply us with information about a Gamika family comprising three brothers, all of whom bore the title Gamika, named Siva, Sumana, and Sadona, Siva's son, the village headman Kaboja and his daughter named Sumana. ⁸ This shows that this family even consisted of grand-children. Still another three inscriptions refer to

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1. EZ., I. p. 19, No. 2a & b.
 2. EZ., I. p. 19, No. 2b.
 3. *ibid.*
 4. *ibid.*, No. 2a.
 5. *ibid.*, No. 6.
 6. EZ., I. p. 18, No. 1.
 7. JRASCB., Vol. II. New series, p. 130, No. 17, 18.
 8. JRASCB., Vol. II. New series, p. 131, No. 27-30.

a Parumaka family which contained even great-grand-children. According to these inscriptions Velusumana had a son named Parumaka Velu and a grand-son named Parumaka Pusadeva.¹ Parumaka Pusadeva had a son named Parumaka Abaya² and a daughter named Anuradi who was married to a prince named Pusadeva.³ Thus all these references lead us⁴ to the conclusion that the joint family system, as the case was in India, was in existence in Ceylon society also during this period.

The system of marriage in Ceylon society too was generally not very different from what was in India during the same period. Marriage arranged by guardians of both parties was the usual form as in India. The equality of caste was the primary consideration.

Vijaya did not agree to get himself consecrated king till he obtained a girl of equal rank to be his queen.⁴ Consequently his marriage was arranged by his ministers with a Kṣatriya girl who was the daughter of Pandu in the kingdom

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1. JRASCB., II. New series, p. 132, No. 54.
 2. ibid, No. 55.
 3. ibid, No. 56.
 4. Mv., VII, v. 47.

of Madura in South India. ¹ King Paṇḍu also sent suitable (yathāraha) girls, after due consideration with his ministers, ² to be wedded to Vijaya's ministers. ³ The Mahāvamsa also tells us how Paṇḍuvāsudeva refused to get himself consecrated king till he obtained a suitable girl as his queen. ⁴ Accordingly his marriage too was arranged by one of his ministers ⁵ with Bhaddakaccānā. ⁶

The Rasavāhinī refers to a marriage of a person named Tissa with a village girl named Sumanā. When Sumanā expressed her desire to get married to Tissa, her parents did not give their consent till they ^{were} satisfied as to the equality of family and the lineage of Tissa (Kulavamsam - Pucchitvā). ⁷ This shows that even among the ordinary people equality of birth was considered the most important factor for a marriage settlement. But it is to be noted that Prince Sāli married a girl of the Caṇḍāla caste, ⁸ which was quite

1. Mv., VII, v. 50.

2. ibid, VII, v. 52.

3. ibid, VII, v. 57.

4. ibid. VIII, v. 17.

5. ibid, VIII, v. 26.

6. ibid, VIII, v. 28.

7. Rsv., II, p. 35.

8. Mv., XXXIII, vv. 2-3; Rsv., II. p. 14-22.

unusual not only in Ceylon but also in India. Although Duṭṭhagāmaṇī at first opposed this marriage vehemently and agreed later,¹ the fact that the Prince was deprived of the rightful ownership of his ancestral throne of Anurādhapura,² proves that this type of marriage was not favoured at all^{by} the society.

On the other hand, the marriage of cousins was most desired owing to political, social and economic reasons. This practice was quite common from the royalty to the ordinary common man.

Cittā, daughter of king Paṇḍuvāsudeva, was so very beautiful that anybody seeing her would run mad. Hence Cittā was called Ummāda Cittā. Being afraid of a prophecy that Cittā's son would kill her brothers for the throne, the princes kept their only sister in a chamber having but one pillar and the entry to the chamber lay through the king's sleeping apartment. Cittā had only one serving-woman. One day she saw her maternal uncle's son named Dṛghagāmaṇī and fell in

1. Rsv., p. 19-20.

2. Mv., XXXIII, v. 3.

love with him at first sight. With the help of the maid, Gāmaṇī used to get into the princess's chamber without the knowledge of others every night and had a happy union with her. Matters went on this way for some time till Cittā was discovered to be with child. The serving woman informed the queen, who having questioned her daughter, brought the matter to the notice of the king. The king in consultation with his sons gave Cittā in marriage with her lover who was her maternal uncle's son.¹ Paṇḍukābhaya married his mother's brother's daughter named Suvannapālī and made her his queen.² This may have been the usual practice current among the nobility and the ordinary people also.

On the other hand, an epigraphic record assigned to the second half of the third century B. C.³ speaks of a marriage of a daughter with her uncle, which was quite an unusual practice in Ceylon society. King Uttiya was the brother of Mahānāga, the ruler of Rohana. The inscription in question, records that "Abi Anuradi, the wife of king Uttiya and daughter of king Nāga".⁴ The Mahāvamsa records that king

1. Mv., IX, vv. 13-20.

2. *ibid.*, X, v. 78.

3. AC., p. 420.

4. *ibid.*; Raja Naga jita Raja Uti jaya Abhi Anuradhi.

Vasabha married his uncle's widow named Mettā.¹ But there is no doubt that these were exceptions mainly confined to few members of the royalty.

There are no instances of the Svayamvara form of marriage during any period of Ceylon history. But there is evidence to show that the Gāndharva form of marriage was in existence, though, of course, not as frequent as of arranged form of marriage. The Mahāvamsa refers to Vijaya's marriage with Kuveni who wasted no time to obtain the prior consent of her parents to it.² Similarly Dīghagāmanī³ and Paṇḍukābhaya⁴ contracted their marriages through the mutual love of the parties concerned.

According to the Rasavāhinī a certain merchant of Mahātittthapaṭṭana to the North of Anurādhapura went to the South to sell his goods and there he met a girl named Hemā. They fell in love at first sight and were married without obtaining prior consent from their parents.⁵ Similarly a young

1. Mv., XXV, v. 70.

2. Mv., VII, v. 29.

3. ibid, IX, vv. 13-20.

4. ibid, X, v. 78.

5. Rsv., II, p. 136.

man and a girl who lived in the Mahāvāluka street in the city of Anurādhapura fell in love with each other and got married.¹ Kākavaṇṇa Tissa's marriage too was not arranged by anybody, but took place through mutual consent.²

Marriage during this period was normally monogamous. But among the nobility and the rich polygamy also was in practice, as was the ~~case~~ in India. An inscription assigned to the period from the 3rd century B. C. to the 1st century A. D. refers to a person called an Ordika who was the officer in charge of the harem of prince Siva.³ This shows that even the princes used to maintain their own harems during this period. If that was the case with princes there was no shadow of doubt that kings too had their harems. Both the Mahāvamsa⁴ and the Sahassavatthu⁵ speak of another wife (Aññā Bhariyā) of Kākavaṇṇa Tissa of Rohaṇa. The Mahāvamsa also refers to two wives of Vaṭṭagāmaṇī Abhaya.⁶ His first and the chief queen was Anulādevī, the mother of Mahācūli Mahā

1. Rsv., II. p. 49.

2. Mv., XXII, v. 22; Rsv., II. p. 59.

3. CJSQ, II. p. 204. No. 620.

4. Mv., XXIII, v. 17.

5. Sahassavatthu, p. 92.

6. Mv. XXXIII, v. 48.

Tissa.¹ The second queen was Somā Devī² who was taken away to India by one of the seven Tamils invaded Ceylon during Vaṭṭagāmaṇī's time³ and who was restored to her position when Vaṭṭagāmaṇī defeated the Tamils.⁴

There is reason to believe that king Devānampiya Tissa also had a harem, for it is said in the Mahāvamsa⁵ that when all the female members of his royal household (Sabbā Antepuritthiyo) heard of the arrival of Mahinda, they expressed their desire to see him. King Tissa made suitable arrangements in the inner city and invited Mahānāga's harem of five hundred ladies headed by Anulā Devī also to the assembly to listen Mahinda.⁶

Among the nobility too polygamy may have been in practice. In one of the Vessagiriya inscriptions, a reference is made to "the wife of the father of Anikaṭa Soṇa, named Tisa".⁷ It is obvious from this that Tisa was not Anikaṭa's mother. Therefore, "this expression seems to

1. Mv., XXXIII, vv. 35-36.

2. ibid, XXXIII, v. 47.

3. ibid, XXXIII, v. 57.

4. ibid, XXXIII, v. 85.

5. Mv., XIV, v. 46.

6. ibid, XIV, vv. 56-57.

7. EZ., I. p. 18. No. 1.

indicate either that Anikata Sona's father had many wives or that he married a second time. It might also indicate a custom (still in vogue) for a wife to speak of her husband as the father of her child, thus avoiding the use of his name as a mark of respect."¹ Thus it is obvious that polygamy was quite common among the royalty and the richer class of people during this period.

But there is no evidence to show that polyandry was in vogue among the Sinhalese in this period. While man enjoyed the privilege of marrying more than one woman at a time, woman was debarred from having more than one husband. But when the husband was dead, the widow was allowed to remarry. The Mahāvamsa furnishes us with an instance of widow remarriage.² In it we read that king Khallāṭa Nāga was overpowered by the commander of his troops, named Kammahāratthaka. The commander was killed by the king's brother, named Vaṭṭa-gāmanī. The latter began to rule the kingdom, took his nephew, Mahācūlika, as his son and made his elder

1. EZ., 4. ff.

2. Mv., XXXIII, vv. 33-36.

brother's wife, Anulā Devī his queen. The Mahāvamsa also speaks of another Anulā, the wife of Cōra Nāga, who remarried five times, poisoning her husbands one after the other.¹

The position of women during this period was generally satisfactory. Our sources furnish us with evidence to show that from the earliest times women were allowed considerable freedom and independence in Ceylon society. Women were allowed to go about freely without being accompanied by any male member of their families, and they even enjoyed the freedom of choosing their life-partners as they desired within the limits of the caste regulations. The Valāhassa Jātaka² relates that there were aboriginal Vāddā women,³ called ^aYakkhas, who lived in Sirīsavatthu in the Island of Lankā. They were in the habit of going to the sea-coast in order to meet merchants. Once they met five hundred ship-wrecked merchants on the shore and the chief of the Yakkhinīs took the leading merchant to Sirīsavatthu and married him. According to the Mahāvamsa, Kuvenī was freely enjoying her

1. Mv., XXXIV, vv. 15-27.

2. J., II. p. 89-91.

3. AC., p. 422.

leisure in the open air and when she met Vijaya she treated the honourable guest right royally and gave her consent to become the wife of this stranger on her own accord. ¹

For the royal reception accorded to the Buddhist mission headed by Mahinda in the 3rd century B. C., king Devānampiya Tissa invited five hundred ladies of the royal household of his brother, Mahānāga, headed by his chief queen Anulādevī. ² She arrived there with other ladies and having saluted and made offerings to the theras placed herself respectfully at their side. ³ In the afternoon on the same day when Mahinda was about to preach in the royal garden, "innumerable females of the first rank assembled there, crowding the entire royal garden and ranged themselves near the theras". ⁴ According to the Dīpavamsa, "noble women and maidens, the daughters-in-law and daughters of noble families, crowded together in order to see the Thera. While he exchanged greethings (Sammodanto) with them night had fallen". ⁵ It is evident from this that women were given their freedom.

1. Mv., VII, vv. 11-29.

2. *ibid*, XIV, v. 56.

3. *ibid*, XIV, v. 57.

4. *ibid.*, XV, vv. 3-5.

5. DV., XIII, vv. 14-15.

to attend public functions and were honoured by giving their due rights in the society.

Women played an important role even in the field of politics when the country was in danger. Duṭṭhagāmaṇī, before he declared war against Elāra, consulted his mother Vihāramahādevī about war preparations. Purely on her advice he had thirty two fortresses built along the frontier line and established dummy kings exactly like himself in front of each fortress to deceive the enemy.¹ Even at the age of twelve² she volunteered to be cast adrift on the sea in expiation of her father and saved the country from danger.³ References to women rulers are also found in the Mahāvamsa. Queen Anulā herself reigned for four months in Anurādhapura.⁴ Sivalī, the daughter of Amaṇḍagāmaṇī and younger sister of Cūlābhaya reigned for four months.⁵

In the inscriptional records assigned to this period, women appear fairly often as donors of caves. Among these donors there were female Devanupiyas,⁶ Parumak-

1. Mv., XXV, vv. 55-56.

2. Rsv., II. p. 58.

3. Mv., XXII, vv. 13-21; Rsv., II. p. 58.

4. Mv., XXXIV. v. 27.

5. *ibid*, XXXV, vv. 12-14.

6. See, *supra*, pp. 119-121.

as,¹ and Upasakas.² However there were no women recorded among the Gamikas and Gahapatis, nor among the ministers and officials. There were several Princesses and queens. They are usually mentioned in the inscriptions as the wives or daughters of men.³ This evidence does not show exactly whether women had the equal footing with men or whether they had been placed in a lower position. However it is obvious that they were given complete freedom in religious matters. Thus it is reasonable to infer that their place in society might not have been degenerated to such an extent as that of the Indian women during this period.

Good household wives are always devoted to their husbands. According to both the Rasavāhinī⁴ and the Sahassavatthu,⁵ there was a merchant named Nandi in Mahātitttha (modern Māntoṭa near Mannar). He went abroad on a business mission leaving his wife behind and did not return for three years. Once one of the ministers of the king (Saddhā Tissa?) of Laṅkā, went on his official circuit and happened to see the

1. See, supra, pp. 95-96.

2. See, infra, p. 397.

3. ASCAR., 1911-12, p. 94, No. 5; CJSG, II. p. 124, No. 516; p. 128, No.

4. Rsv., II. p. 139.

5. Sahassavatthu, p. 145.

wife of the merchant Nandi. He offered her a thousand (coins) through a servant woman and asked her to come and take pleasure with him. As she was so devoted to her husband she refused the proposal. The minister tried to persuade her for the fourth time, offering her eight thousand (coins); yet she refused his request.

On the other hand, references are not wanting to show that there were bad and wicked wives as well. According to the Mahāvamsa the queen of Devānampiya Tissa coveted the kingship for her son and went so far as to take the life of her husband's younger brother, the vice-regent named Mahānāga by offering a poisonous mango which, unfortunately for the lady and fortunately for Mahānāga, was eaten by the little son of the queen with a fatal result.¹ The queen of king Tissa of Kalyāṇi intrigued with her husband's younger brother named Ayya Uttika. The liaison was discovered by the king. Ayya Uttika fled from the kingdom but nothing is mentioned about any punishment inflicted on the queen by the king.² The queen of Vohāraka Tissa intrigued with ~~her~~ husband's younger brother known as Abhayanāga who in course of time slew the king and

1. Mv., XXII, vv. 2-5.

2. *ibid*, XXII, vv. 13-14; Rsv., II. p. 57.

himself became king with his elder brother's wife as his queen. ¹ Anulā, an infamous queen, fell in love successively with a palace guard, a city carpenter, a wood-carrier and the Purohita, misconducted herself with each of them, and caused in turn, the death of each of them by poison. ²

Children were no doubt much loved. There is no instance to show that the birth of a girl was unfavoured in Ceylon society. Both girls and boys received equal care and affection from their parents. The parents even desired to have children of both sexes equally. Once Vihāra Mahā Devī went to Tissa Mahā Vihāra to listen to a discourse at the conclusion of which the Thera advised her thus: "You are enjoying this great prosperity as you have accumulated merits in your previous births. It is therefore your duty to do the same in this life too". ³ Then the queen said, "Venerable Sir, what prosperity would there be for those who have no children?". ⁴

The Rasavāhinī also refers to the same incident, but the queen's reply there differs from that in the Mahāvamsa.

1. Mv., XXXVI, vv. 42, 51.

2. *ibid*, XXXIV, vv. 15-27.

3. *ibid*, XXII, v. 32.

4. *ibid*, XXII, v. 33.

Here she says, "what prosperity would there be for those who have neither a daughter nor a son (dhītā vā putto vā natthi).¹

It is evident from this that parents normally desired both girls and boys equally, but there was no doubt that they preferred a son to a daughter for economic, political and social reasons.

The Mahāvamsa says that Vihāramahā Devi requested a novice (Sāmanera) at the Kōṭapabbata Vihāra to make an aspiration to be reborn in her womb for the sake of the upliftment of the Sāsana (Patthehi mama puttakam).² Both the Rasavāhinī³ and the Sahassavatthu⁴ refer to a son obtained by an Upāsikā through prayers. The Sahassavatthu emphatically states how she ignored her only son who was born to her on account of her prayers (attanā Pattetvā laddham), even after having seen that he was bitten by a serpent. It is evident from these inferences that prayers for getting children, particularly sons, were not uncommon in Ceylon society during this period. Even nowadays ^amay ^apilgrimage is undertaken to places like Kataragama by Sinhalese women for the purpose of having a male child.⁵

1. Rsv., II. p. 59.

2. Mv., XXII, v. 35.

3. Rsv., II. p. 3.

4. SV., p. 7.

5. J. M. Seneviratna, Ceylon Antiquary and Literary Register, Vol. V. p. 92.

On the birth of a child, friends and relatives came with presents to the parents.¹ Villagers were happy when a son was born to one of the families in their village.² There was a day fixed for naming the child.³ Twelve thousand monks were invited to participate in the naming ceremony of Prince Duṭṭhagāmaṇī,⁴ instead of inviting Brāhmaṇas as was the case in Hindu society. This shows that after the advent of Mahinda even the domestic ceremonies were remodelled in the Buddhist way.

Regarding the general education of a child during this period we have very little information. But there is reason to suppose that even prior to the advent of Mahinda, the general standard of education may have been fairly satisfactory. In the Mahāvamsa we read that Vijaya in the 5th century B. C. dispatched a letter to the king of Madura requesting him to send suitable girls for him and his band of followers.⁵ Then again he sent another letter to his brother

1. Sahassavatthu, p. 83.

2. Rsv. II. p. 97; SV. p. 83.

3. Mv., XXII, v. 65; Rsv. II. p. 98; SV., p. 83.

4. Mv., VII, v. 51.

Sumitta asking him to send one of his kinsmen to succeed him.¹

Reference is also made in the Mahāvamsa to a letter sent by king Abhaya to prince Paṇḍukābhaya asking him not¹⁵ to cross the Mahavāli Ganga.² The Mahāvamsa also speaks of some Brāhmaṇa teachers during this period. There was a Brāhmaṇa named Paṇḍula who was well-versed in the Vedas (Veda Pārāgo). Paṇḍukābhaya was entrusted to him by his mother to be trained in the arts and sciences necessary for a king. Paṇḍula put him into the same tutorial class in which his son Canda was educated and gave a complete training both in arts and sciences.³ It appears from this that Paṇḍula played an important role of the leading teacher whose duty it was to train the children of the royal household and of the nobility. He may also have been considered as the head of the leading educational institution of the day. We have seen earlier⁴ that there lived many other Brāhmaṇas in Ceylon prior to the advent of Mahinda. There is no doubt that many of these Brāhmaṇas engaged in educational activities for the

1. My., VIII, vv. 3,7.

2. *ibid*, X, v.48.

3. *ibid*, X, vv. 19-23.

4. See, *supra*, pp. 33-34.

benefit of the common man in addition to their other activities of varied nature. It is evident from these references that various branches of learning were known in Ceylon during the pre-Christian centuries.

After the advent of Mahinda in the 3rd century B. C. Buddhism became the dominant religion in the Island. Monasteries were built by kings and princes throughout the country for monks who started teaching the Buddha Dhamma. The result was the gradual improvement in literary and religious education of the people. Regarding the Buddhist system of education in India, it is believed that "Buddhist education and learning centred round monasteries as Vedic culture centred round the sacrifice. The Buddhist world did not offer any educational opportunities apart from or independently of its monasteries. All education, sacred as well as secular, was in the hands of monks. They had the monopoly of learning and of the leisure to impart it. They were the only custodians and bearers of the Buddhist culture".¹ The same was no doubt the general system of education in Ceylon after Buddhism became

1. R. K. Mookerji, Ancient Indian Education, p. 394.

the dominant religion in the 3rd century B. C.

References to people who could read and write well are made frequently in the Mahāvamsa. Prince Uttiya, a grandson of king Uttiya sent a secret letter to his brother's queen by a man disguised as a Buddhist monk.¹ Mention is also made of letters which passed between Prince Duṭṭhagāmaṇī and a Brāhmaṇa named Kuṇḍala of Dvāramaṇḍala near Cetiyagiri. Again there is a reference to a "golden plate (Sovannapattam-lekham) caused to be inscribed by king Devānampiya Tissa under the instructions of Mahinda, which Duṭṭhagāmaṇī found in his palace at Anurādhapura.² In the Pūjāvaliya it is stated that in each lecture hall king Duṭṭhagāmaṇī caused to be placed a priceless canopy, a pulpit, a carpet, and a Bana book.³ The Mahāvamsa also speaks of another important record of Duṭṭhagāmaṇī, named "Puñña Potthaka", register of meritorious deeds", which he kept and which he made his secretary read publicly at his death-bed.⁴

It is therefore most probable that registers were kept by kings and others and to this class of written

1. Mv., XXII, v. 15.

2. Mv., XXVII, vv. 2-6.

3. PūjV. Ch. 34. p. 723,

4. Mv., XXXII, v. 25.

historical documents the Sīhalaṭṭhakathā Mahāvamsa,¹ so often referred to in the Mahāvamsa Tikā evidently belonged. There was no doubt that these documents furnished materials for the composition, in later days, of the two Chronicles of Ceylon, the Dīpavamsa and the Mahāvamsa.

Both the Mahāvamsa² and the Nikāya Saṅgraha³ speak of the writing down of the Pāli Scriptures and the Commentaries during the reign of Vaṭṭagāmaṇī Abhaya (88-76 B. C.) at Aloka Vihāra near Matale. It is most likely that manuscripts of this edition were made available in the Mahā Vihāra and other monasteries in the Island.

It is evident from these references that there was a written literature at least of religious nature, both Pāli and Sinhalese, in Ceylon after Vaṭṭagāmaṇī Abhaya. It is true that there is not^a single reference in our sources to any written work until about 80 B. C., but there is every reason to suppose that a written literature must have existed at least a century or two before, if not still earlier.⁴

1. Oldenberg's Dīpavamsa, Introduction, p. 4.

2. Mv., XXXIII, vv. 102-103.

3. Nikāya Saṅgraha, p. 11.

4. Catalogue of Sinh. MSS. in British Museum, Introduction, p. XI.

Thus it is obvious that the art of writing was well developed during this period. This is also corroborated by the discovery of thousands of cave inscriptions, assigned to this period, at different places of worship throughout the country. These epigraphic records themselves indicate the general standard of education among the people of different social standing from the king to the slave. ¹

From these references it is very difficult to establish the extent of literacy among the laity. But there is no doubt that the literacy among the people who lived in the neighbourhood of the monasteries was generally satisfactory, for a passage in the Majjhima Commentary refers to literacy among the villagers in remote areas. It says that when a circular is sent out by the king to a remote province (Paccanta Janapada), those who cannot read get someone else to read for them. ² The term Paccanta in this context no doubt indicates the criterion on the illiterate areas in the country. On the contrary it shows that the people in urban areas were sufficiently educated to read and understand when such

1. See, NP. 157.

2. MA., p. 157.

a circular was sent to them.

It is to be borne in mind that even after the advent of Mahinda the education of the country was not entirely in the hands of monks. The Brāhmaṇas were still carrying their educational activities. The Samantapāsādikā refers to an incident where king Bhātiya appointed a minister Dīghākārāyaṇa, a Brāhmaṇa who was a great scholar versed in various languages (Pandita bhāsantara kusalo), to decide on a textual and a doctrinal point over which the Mahāvihāra and the Abhayagiri maintained conflicting views.¹ According to the Mahāvamsa when the Vaitulya doctrine was introduced to Ceylon by heretics during the reign of Vohāraka Tissa, the Abhayagiri Fraternity accepted it as orthodox. Hence the minister Kapila was appointed by the king to hold an inquiry and purify the Dhamma by eliminating the Vaitulya doctrine.² The Mahāvamsa also records that during the reign of Mahāsena, the minister of justice (Vinicchaya Mahāmacca) expelled Tissa Theṇ from the Order of monks after an inquiry made according to the

1. SMP., (SBE), p. 418.

2. Mv., XXXVI, v. 41.

Vinaya into certain charges of defeatism (Antima Vatthu= Pārā-
likā) against him. ¹

Twenty years after the death of Mahāsena, his second son Jetṭha Tissa established an Institution (Sippāyatana) and taught the art of ivory carving to ⁿmay people. ² It is therefore reasonable to infer from this that similar institutions may have been established by previous kings to impart the secular education on various branches of arts and crafts. Some of these arts were handed down in families from father to son. Even military arts such as archery and sword^smanship were sometimes handed down from father to son. Phussadeva, one of Duṭṭagāmaṇī's ten paladins, was trained in archery by his own father. It is said that this art was handed down in their family (Vamsāgataṃ). ³

The general standard of female education also may not have been far behind that of men during this period. According to the Mahāvamsa all the women in the royal household of Devānampiya Tissa, in addition to the five hundred women headed by Anulādevī, the queen of Mahā^aṅgā were proficient

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1. Mv., XXXVII, vv. 38-39.
 2. Mv., XXXVII, vv. 100-101.
 3. ibid, XXXIII, v. 85.

enough to understand the language in which Mahinda preached on the second day of his arrival in Ceylon. ¹ In the Dīpavamsa too it is clearly stated that Mahinda had a friendly discussion (Sammodamānā) with innumerable ladies who gathered round him in the royal garden, in the afternoon on the same day. ² This shows clearly that they also knew the language of Mahinda. We have seen earlier that Prince Uttiya sent a secret letter to the queen of his brother, Tissa of Kalyāṇī. ³ It is evident from this that she was able to read and write well.

Numerous names of female donors appear in the inscriptions of this period. As these female donors ⁴ belonged to different strata of society from queens ⁴ to slave women, ⁵ it is justifiable to suppose that the women who lived in the urban areas where these inscriptions were engraved had a fairly good education both religious and secular. There is no doubt that the learned Buddhist nuns were their teachers in the same way as the monks were the teachers of men.

1. Mv., XIV, vv. 54, 56, 57.

2. Dv., XIII, vv. 14-15.

3. Mv., XXII, v. 15.

4. See, supra, p. 100.

5. See, supra, p. 159.

Apart from religious and general education, women were given a special training in cookery which is considered an essential attainment of a woman. The Rasavāhinī refers to a daughter of the chief minister of Kākavāṇṇa Tissa of Rohana, who was given special training, both practical and theoretical, in the art of cookery (Sūpaṣṣattha).¹ From this we may infer that women were trained not only in cookery, but also they may have been given a thorough training in entire household management. There were ladies who were well-versed even in warfare and political science.²

The relationship between parents and children was one of love and affection. This sentiment was so great particularly on the part of parents that when a child did something which even brings great dishonour to his family, parents would naturally pardon him for his offences purely due to their love towards him. We know how prince Sāli determined to marry a Caṇḍāla girl not only against the wish of his father but also of the entire country, and how king Duṭṭhagāmaṇī made an attempt in vain to get him to change his determination, and how he was finally reconciled with his son,

1. Rsv., II. p. 45.

2. Mv., XXV., v. 55; XXXIV, v. 27; XXXV, vv. 12-14.

approving of his marriage out of paternal love.¹

On the other hand children also loved their parents in a similar way. According to the Sīhalavatthu² there was a poor tailor in Anurādhapura. It is said that he divided his body into two with a carpenter's marking thread (Kālasuttana) wishing that half of his body should work for his own support and the other half for that of his parents. Thus whatever he earned in the forenoon, he spent on alms for the Bhikkhus and he maintained his parents with whatever he earned in the afternoon.

Parents were held in very high esteem by the children and the children were trained from their childhood to be obedient to their parents. According to the Rasavāhinī Kākavanna Tissa once fell out with one of his chief ministers named Saṅgha. The minister fled to the hilly country with his wife and only daughter who was very beautiful. When they went half way, the parents feared of being recognised by others owing to the attraction of their daughter's beauty, and decided to leave the daughter on the high way. Having decided

1. Mv., XXXIII, v. 3; Rsv., II. pp. 114-122.

2. SV., p. 1.

thus, they asked the daughter to wait at a certain place while they brought food from the neighbouring village and went away. Seven days elapsed, yet the parents did not return. Meanwhile many people who passed that way requested the girl to go along with them. She refused them all saying, "those who do not abide by the advice of their parents will meet with disaster in this life and will be reborn in a lower state after death".¹ But it is to be noted that the relationship between husband and wife is stronger than that between parents and children. The same story in the Rasavāhinī relates that when the minister suggested to his wife that they should leave their daughter, the wife replied, " please do whatever you like; I shall not object to it (aham te manam na dhindāmi)."²

All these references will show us how strong was the family tie which brought forth harmony and happiness of the family life in Ceylon society during this period.

On the other hand the father too, as the head of the family in Ceylon society, may have wielded very wide powers over the members of his family. In Indian society of

1. Rsv., II. p. 47.

2. ibid, II. p. 46.

the same period the father exercised absolute authority in dealing with the members of his family. "He could pledge, sell, amputate and even kill any person under his potestas for an offence committed by him. Some Vedic legends also show that the father could blind or sell a guilty son by virtue of his patriarchal authority."¹ But there is no doubt that this was not exactly the same in Ceylon society, particularly after the advent of Mahinda, for in a Buddhist society the duties of all the members of every household were regulated according to the code of social ethics as laid down by the Buddha. In the Sigālovāda Sutta of the Dīgha Nikāya we find that the father should treat his children in "restraining them from vice, exhorting them to virtue, training them to a profession, contracting suitable marriages for them and in due time handing over their inheritance".²

But we have instances to show that owing to poverty or fear, the father exercised his powers to mortgage, sell, discard or even to kill his children as he liked.

1. Altekar, Ancient Indian Polity, p. 18.

2. Dialogues of the Buddha, III. p. 181.

According to the Rasavāhinī¹ there was a poor man named Nakulā in Rohaṇa during the reign of Kākavaṇṇa Tissa. It is reported that he was once compelled by his acute poverty to mortgage his only daughter for twelve Kahāpanas. The Anguttara Commentary also refers to another man who mortgaged his daughter for twelve Kahāpanas². During the reign of Saddhā Tissa a certain poor farmer of Anurādhapura mortgaged his daughter to a rich family for eight Kahāpanas.³ When the famous famine (Brāhmanṭīya?) broke out in the reign of Vaṭṭagāmaṇī, both the father and the mother with their mutual consent obtained a loan of twelve Kahāpanas from a rich family by giving their daughter to serve them as a slave.⁴ Not only daughters but also sons were mortgaged by their parents when they faced financial difficulties. During the reign of Saddhā Tissa, a person called Muddhagutta of Rohaṇa mortgaged his son to a rich family for eight Kahāpanas.⁵

The Sīhalvatthu speaks of a poor man who sold his eldest son for a cow and lived happily afterwards.⁶ Once

1. Rsv., II. p. 143.

2. AA. (Hevāvitāraṇa Edition), p. 277.

3. Sīhala-Vatthu, p. 121.

4. ibid, p. 141.

5. Rsv., II. p. 32.

6. Sīhala-Vatthu, p. 89.

when a famine broke out in Nāgadīpa, as there was no other means of maintaining themselves, the parents sold their daughter to a Kuṭumbika family for forty Kahāpanas and lived comfortably. ¹

Through fear also sometimes fathers did not hesitate to put their children into insecure and dangerous positions. Tissa of Kalyāṇī, according to our sources, did not even consult his ministers in casting his only daughter Devī to the sea in expiation of his sacrilege the slaying of the chief monk of Kalyāṇī. ² One of the chief ministers of Kākavaṇṇa Tissa also abandoned his only daughter on the highway exposing her to all kinds of obvious dangers for a beautiful girl of her position. ³ Although the minister sought ~~the~~ consent of his wife for his merciless action against this innocent girl, it is clear from his wife's expression that she could not object to it (manam na bhindāmi), and that the minister had the freedom to exercise his absolute authority in this matter. Sometimes owing to the acute poverty people have gone to the extent of even killing their children. The Sahassaṭṭatthu speaks of how a certain person was tempted to

1. Sīhalaṭṭatthu, p.147.

2. Mv., XXII, vv. 20-21; Rsv., II. p. 58.

3. Rsv., II. p. 46.

kill his only son as he could not afford to give alms.¹

Although these references show us the extent to which a father could exercise his powers over the members of his family, there is no doubt that he discharged as far as possible, his duties towards them in accordance with the code of social ethics as laid down in the Sigālovāda Sutta of the Dīgha Nikāya.²

Regarding the right of inheritance it is difficult to say what actual practice was customary during this period. But there is no doubt that the practice in the succession of kings will throw at least some light on the subject.

According to the Jātakas, kingship in India was hereditary in the family (Kulasantakam rajjam) during this period.³ Normally the eldest son succeeded his father on the throne,⁴ whilst the second son became the Viceroy (Uparāja). According to the Anguttara Nikāya the eldest son of a king is generally appointed Uparāja.⁵ The office of

1. Sahassa-Vatthu, p. 36.

2. Dialogue of the Buddha, III, p. 181.

3. J., I. p. 395; II. p. 116; IV. p. 124.

4. J., I. p. 127; II. p. 87, 212.

5. Anguttara Nikāya, III, p. 154.

Uparāja usually goes to the heir to the throne. According to the Mahāvamsa, Vijaya, who was the eldest son of king Sīhabāhu, was anointed Uparāja.¹ Paṇḍuvāsudeva, the second king of Ceylon, made his eldest son Abhaya Uparāja.² This usual practice of succession was changed either in the case of a king who died without leaving any issue or in the case of the eldest son who had no children at the time of his succession, but with at least one younger brother.

Vijaya invited his brother Sumitta to succeed him because he had no legitimate son to follow him after his death.³ As Sumitta was too old, he sent his youngest son Paṇḍuvāsudeva to succeed Vijaya.⁴ Paṇḍuvāsudeva was succeeded by his eldest son Abhaya.⁵ But his line of succession was broken by Paṇḍukābhaya who captured the kingdom by defeating his uncle.⁶ After this for two generations, from Paṇḍukābhaya to Devānampiya Tissa, the throne of Anurādhapura was handed down from father to son. Paṇḍukābhaya⁷

1. Mv., VI., v. 38.

2. Mv., IX, vv. 12, 14.

3. Mv., VIII, v. 2.

4. ibid, VIII, vv. 10, 17.

5. ibid, X, v. 52.

6. ibid, X, v. 78.

7. ibid, XI, v. 4.

Muṭasiva¹ Devānampiya Tissa. It is to be noted here that Devānampiya Tissa was not the eldest son of Muṭasiva. The question as to why he succeeded his father instead of his elder brother is not explained anywhere in our sources. Perhaps Abhaya died before his father or was set aside owing to some disqualifications.²

On the other hand, when Devānampiya Tissa ascended the throne of Anurādhapura it is most likely that he had no children, or if he had, his child may have been an infant. Thus circumstances may have forced him to appoint his younger brother Mahānāga to the office of Uparāja.³ The queen of Devānampiya Tissa knew of Mahānāga's legal rights to the throne of Anurādhapura by virtue of his office of Uparāja. This may have been the reason why she plotted against Mahānāga to kill him with poison,⁴ in order to see her son succeeded Devanampiya Tissa. This shows that she had no fear of the other brothers of Devanampiya Tissa because they had no claim to the throne by virtue of their offices. But when Mahānāga

1. Mv., XII. v. 7.

2. HC., Vol. 1. Pt. I. p. 133.

3. Mv., XIV, v. 56.

4. Mv., XXII, vv. 3-5.

fled to Rohana ¹ after discovering the treacherous plot of his brother's queen, Uttiya, Devanampiya Tissa's second brother, became the heir to the throne. ² Uttiya was succeeded, in turn according to seniority, by his brothers Mahāsiva, ³ Sūra Tissa, ⁴ and Asela, ⁵ one after the other.

When these brothers succeeded one after the other, this practice may have set a precedent in the law of succession in the royal family of Anurādhapura, deviating from the usual practice of succession from father to son, which existed earlier.

But this earlier practice was followed by the rulers of the kingdom of Rohana for four generations from Mahānāga to Duṭṭhagāmaṇī. Saddhā Tissa succeeded his brother Duṭṭhagāmaṇī not because he had any claim to the throne of Anurādhapura, but because he was the only person left behind in his family to succeed Duṭṭhagāmaṇī, as the latter's son prince Sāli was disqualified owing to his marriage with a

1. Mv., XXII, v. 6.

2. *ibid*, XX, v. 29.

3. *ibid*, XXI, v. 1.

4. *ibid*, XXI, v. 3.

5. *ibid*, XXI, v. 12.

caṇḍāla girl.¹ Both from the Mahāvamsa² and the Rasavāhinī³ it is clear that prince Sāli was the legitimate heir to the throne because he held the office of Yuvarāja. According to the Rasavāhinī, even after he was disqualified to the throne Duṭṭhagāmaṇī, at his death-bed, tried to persuade him to succeed him after his death (tāta mamaccayena imaṃ rajjaṃ paṭipajjāhi).⁴ Yet prince Sāli refused to do so in order to honour the tradition of his clan. The tradition of his clan was that a Kṣatriya prince could marry either a Kṣatriya girl or a Brāhmaṇa girl only (Rājakaññaṃ vā Brāhmaṇakaññaṃ vā).⁵ Hence Saddhā Tissa ascended the throne (So tam na icchi. Athassa accayena Saddhā Tissa kumāro vjā ahosi).⁶ Thus this practice of the law of succession from father to son was changed again in the kingdom of Anurādhapura. This can be seen from the genealogical table given below:

1. Mv., XXXIII, v. 3.

2. ibid, "So rajjaṃ neva kāmaya".

3. Rsv., II, p. 116: "Aparabhāge rājakumārassa yuvarājaṭṭhānaṃ datvā".

4. Rsv., II, p. 122.

5. Rsv., II, p. 119.

6. Rsv., II, p. 122.

Sinhāhu.

Ruler of an Indian Principality named Iṣṭa,

capital Śhāpura.

Vijaya,
Colonizer of Ceylon,
reigned at Tambapaṇṇi-nagara.

Sumitta=d. of king Madda.

son.

Panḍuvāsudeva
= Bhadrakaccāṇa
at Upatissa gāma.

Abhaya,
reigned at
Upatissa gāma

Tissa

Girikaṇḍasiva 7 others. d. Ummāda C.
= Dīgha Gāṇṇi

Sons.

Daughter
Suvannapālī

= Paṇḍukābhaya.

Muṣṣiva
reigned at A. Pura.

Abhaya
eldest
son.

D. P. Tissa
2nd son
reigned at

Mahānāga
3rd son
fled to
Māgaha.

Uttiya
4th son
reigned

Mattabhaya
5th son

Mitta
6th son.

Mahāsiva
7th son,

reigned at A. P. reigned at

Sura Tissa
8th son

Aśeṣa
9th son,

Kṛṣṇa
10th

Anulā
1st D.

Sivālī
2nd D.

(250-210B.C.)

Yajñajyaka Tissa
Ruler of Rohaṇa,
capital of Māgaha

Yatthālayaka Tissa
Ruler of Rohana,
capital of Māgama

Gōthābhaya
Ruler of Rohana
capital Māgama

Kākavaṇṇa Tissa = Vihāra Devī

Duttha Gāmaṇī Abhaya
reigned at A. Pura
(161-137 B.C.)

Saddhā Tissa
reigned at A. Pura.
(137-119 B.C.)

Prince Sāli = Asokamālā

Lajji Tissa
reigned at
A. Pura
(119-109 B.C.)

Thūlathanaka
reigned at A.
Pura. for one
month and 10
days only
(119 B.C.)

Khallāta = Anulā
Nāga, at
A. Pura,
(109-103 B.C.)

VatthG.A. = S.D.
reigned at A.P.
for 5 months
in 103 B.C. and
again 77-89 B.C.

Mahācūli Mahā Tissa
adopted son of
V.G. Abhaya
at A.P. (77-63 B.C.)

Cora N. = Anula
at A.P. 48-44 B.C.)
(63-51 B.C.)

Kudā Tissa
eldest son
at A.P. (51-48 B.C.)

Kālakanni Tissa
at A.P. (44-22 B.C.)

Bhātika Abhaya
eldest son at
A.P. (B.C. 22-7 A.C.)

Mahādātika M. Nāga
at A.P. (7-19 A.C.)

Amaṇḍa Gāmaṇī A.
eldest son at
A.P. (19-29 A.C.)

Daughter(?)

Kaṇirajānu Tissa
at A.P. (29-32 A.C.)

Amaṇḍa-gāmaṇī A. eldest son at A.P. (19-29 A.C.)	Daughter(?)	Kanirajānu Tissa at A.P. (29-32 A.C.)
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Cūla Abhaya at A.P. (32-33 A.C.)	Sivalī at A.P. (33 A.C.)	Iḍa Nāga at A.P. (33-43 A.C.)
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Candamukha Siva at A.P. (43-52 A.C.)	Yasalālaka Tissa at A.P. (52-60 A.C.)
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Lambakanna Dynasty.

Datta (a janitor)

Subha (a messenger)
usurped the sovereignty
and reigned at A.P.
(60-67 A.C.)

Queen Mahāmattā

Vasabha=Q. Mettā
of the Lambakanna
clan), and reigned
at A.P. (67-111 A.C.)

= Vanṅkanāsika Tissa
reigned at A.P.
(111-114 A.C.)

Gajabāhuka Gāmaṇī
reigned at A.P.
(114-136 A.C.)

Mahallaka Nāga
(maternal cousin of
Gajabāhu), reigned
at A.P. (136-143 A.C.)

Mahallaka Nāga
(maternal cousin of
Gajabāhu), reigned
at A.P. (136-143 A.C.)

Bhātika Tissa
reigned at A.P.
(143-167 A.C.)

Kaṇiṭṭha Tissa
reigned at A.P.
(167-182 A.C.)

Khujja Tissa
reigned at A.P.
(186-187 A.C.)

Kudā Nāga =Queen
reigned at
A.P. (187-189 A.C.)

Siri
Nāga
at A.P.
(189-209
A.C.)

Vohārika Tissa
reigned at A.P.
(209-231 A.D.)

Abhaya Nāga
reigned at
A.P. (231-
240 A.C.)

Sirināga II
reigned at
A.P. (240-242 A.C.)

Vijaya Kumāra
reigned at A.P.
(242-243 A.C.)

Saṅgha Tissa
(of Lambakanna
clan), reigned
at A. Pura.
(243-247 A.C.)

Saṅghabodhi
reigned at
A. Pura.
(247-249 A.C.)

Goṭhābhaya
reigned at
A. Pura.
(249-262 A.C.)

Saṅgha Tissa
(of Lambakanna
clan), reigned
at A. Pura
(243-247 A.C.)

Saṅghabodhi
reigned at
A. Pura.
(247-249 A.C.)

Gothābhaya
reigned at
A. Pura.
(249-262 A.C.)

Jetṭha Tissa
reigned at A. Pura.
(263-273 A.C.)

Mahāsena
reigned at
A. Pura. (274-
301 A.C.)

(1)

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1. The Chronology is given as in History of Ceylon, Vol. II.
Pt. II. p. 843.

Thus the above discussion will show us clearly that the law of succession which was generally accepted by the majority of ruling families during our period, was not from father to son as M. B. Ariyapala has suggested,¹ but from generation to generation as Geiger has rightly pointed out in reference to the later period.²

On the other hand, this genealogical table further reveals that there were two traditions of the law of succession in Ceylon during this period: They are, the Anurādhapura tradition and the Rohana tradition. The Anurādhapura tradition is that in which all the sons in the second generation enjoyed equal rights to ascend the throne in accordance with their seniority, in turn, after the death of their father. This tradition started in the kingdom of Anurādhapura, just after the death of Paṇḍuvāsudeva and continued to the mediaeval times, except in one instance which occurred during the period between Paṇḍukābhaya and Muṭasiva.

The Rohana tradition is that in which the succession went from father to son. This tradition started from Mahānāga in the kingdom of Rohana and continued for four

11. Ariyapala, M.B., *Society in Mediaeval Ceylon*, p. 53.

2. Geiger, *Culture of Ceylon in Mediaeval Times*, p. 114.

generations up to Duṭṭhagāmaṇī without a break. But suspicion has been expressed by Parānavitana¹ as to this law of succession from father to son in the kingdom of Rohaṇa, on the strength of a cave inscription found at Kusalānakanda in the Batticaloa District".¹ This record he says, which is the earliest form of the Brāhmī script, gives the following genealogy: "Uparāja Naga, his son Rāja Abhaya, his son Gamaṇī Tissa". Thus he makes an attempt to identify these three as Mahānāga, Goṭhābhaya and Kākavaṇṇa Tissa. If this identification is to be accepted Goṭhābhaya has to be taken as the son the Mahānāga himself, and not of Yaṭṭhālaya Tissa, son of Mahānāga.² Goṭhābhaya, thus, has to be taken as a brother and not a son of Yaṭṭhālaya Tissa, as stated in the Mahāvamsa.³ Parānavitana had based this hypothesis on the possible interpretation of the word Bata as "brother". But we have seen earlier⁴ that Bata should be interpreted not as 'brother' but as 'lord'. Hence it is difficult to accept his view about the genealogy of the kingdom of Rohaṇa, and therefore we are inclined to uphold the genealogy as given in the Mahāvamsa.

1. HC., Vol., I. Pt. II p. 153.

2. ibid, p. 154.

3. Mv., XXII, vv. 7-11.

4. See, supra, p. 105.

This shows that the kingdom of Rohaṇa followed this tradition very strictly. It is interesting to speculate why the kingdom of Rohaṇa was so particular in observing this tradition. It appears that the rulers of Rohaṇa were more concerned about the political stability of the kingdom than the individual interest, for there was another rival ruling family in Rohaṇa called the Kṣatriyas of Kājaragāma. We have seen earlier ¹ the political rivalry which took place between the Kṣatriyas of Kājaragāma and the Kṣatriyas of Rohaṇa (Mahāgāma), and how the former was defeated by the latter.

On the other hand Mahānāga himself was well aware of the danger that could fall on the kingdom as well as on the political aspirants, when the right of succession was left open to all the sons in the second generation. It is therefore likely that he may have laid down a law that only the eldest son could succeed his father after the latter's death, because he was aware of the political upheavals which took place in the kingdom of Anurādhapura which maintained the first tradition of succession to the throne as mentioned above.

It may also be possible that when Mahānāga fled

1. See, *supra*, pp. 124-126.

to India,¹ he saw the stability of the kingdoms he visited, which followed the law of succession from father to son, and therefore he adopted the same law to ensure the stability of the kingdom created by him in Rohana.

It is also possible that the Kṣatriyas of Kājaragāma, as quite a distinct stream of immigration from that of the Anurādhapura Kṣatriyas, brought with them the law of succession from father to son from some part of India from where they migrated to Ceylon. It is thus possible that the Rohana tradition of succession from father to son, was adopted from the Kṣatriyas of Kājaragāma. If that was the case, Mahānāga may have thought of adopting this law of succession in his family in order to avoid possible political conflicts and to ensure the political stability of his kingdom.

Another possibility is that the Rohana dynasty always produced only one son in all the four generations, which is most unlikely. However, it is certain that at this time the kingdom of Rohana was far more stable than that of Anurādhapura both politically and economically.

Although Saddhā Tissa belonged to the Rohana

1. See, *supra*, p. 125.

dynasty, he ascended the throne at Anurādhapura. Hence his sons normally had to abide by the tradition of Anurādhapura kingdom and they succeeded one after the other. Thence forward almost all the kings of Anurādhapura followed the same tradition when the political situation was normal.

Even though it is difficult to say with any degree of certainty what actual practice was customary so far as the right of inheritance among the ordinary people was concerned during this period, on the analogy of the two traditions of royal succession discussed above we are inclined to suppose that the right of inheritance among the ordinary people also may not have been very different from that of the royal families. In other words, the people who lived in that part of the country to the South of Mahavāli Gaṅga and Kālāṇi Gaṅga normally followed the Rohana tradition of succession, while those who lived to the North of these rivers followed the Anurādhapura tradition.

But it should be remembered that before the Rohana tradition became popular in the South, the joint family system was commonly followed both by the Southern and the Northern people during the 3rd and the 2nd centuries B. C.,

according to the epigraphical records of this period.¹ This shows that the Anurādhapura tradition of succession was followed even by ordinary people throughout the country, at least in the early pre-Christian centuries if not earlier. But when the Rohana tradition became more popular in the South, towards the 1st century B.C., even the ordinary people in that part of the country may have naturally preferred succession from father to son to succession from brother to brother, which was the current practice in the North in all the families, including the royal household.

But on the other hand, after about the 1st century B. C., while the royal families followed the Anurādhapura tradition more and more regularly as time progressed,² it is reasonable to infer that ordinary families both in the North and the South increasingly followed the law of succession from father to son, for we have references in the Niti Nighandaya to the order of succession among the ordinary families in that period. According to this work the order of succession was as follows: "If the husband has no descendants, adopted children, parents, grandfather or grandmother, or brothers &c. descending

1. See, supra, pp. 200-201.

2. See, supra, pp. 237-241.

from them, or any relation worthy of preserving his name and lands, all his lands and other property will devolve on the wife".¹ This text, though comparatively modern, contains laws and social customs transmitted orally from a much earlier period, and may represent practices which began in this period. It is obvious from this that the immediate successors to the father's property were his children and not his brothers. Brothers came in the fifth place in the order of succession.

When there was more than one child, the property was divided equally among them. The Niti Nighanduva also says that "if a man with a wife and children dies intestate, in their absence, the movable property of the estate should be divided into equal portions; a portion for each child and a similar portion for the wife. In some instances the lands only will be divided among the children, all the movable property being inherited by the wife!"² The brothers had the right of inheritance only when there were no children of the deceased.³

Among the children, daughters were not entitled to equal shares with their brothers. The children, at their

1. Niti Nighanduva, p. 28.

2. NN., p. 28.

3. ibid, p. 32.

father's death, were entitled by right of paternal inheritance to their father's lands. The brothers however, may marry off all their unmarried sisters to other men in the Diga form of marriage ~~Nisa~~ after the father's death and so obtained possession of all the father's lands. ¹ This shows that normally sons were entitled to the paternal property and not daughters. This is also referred to in the Nīti Nighanduva in the following words: "If the parents have several children and one of the daughters has been married in Diga by her father, or after his death, by her mother or brothers, she loses her right to inherit the paternal lands." ²

This system of right of inheritance was no doubt traditionally handed down from generation to generation for many centuries prior to the mediaeval period of Ceylon history. ³ It is therefore reasonable to suppose that this system of right of inheritance was in existence even during the period under survey at least in a nucleated form if not in the same form in which we find it in the mediaeval period.

The references to the customs concerning the

1. NN. p. 36-37.

2. *ibid*, p. 36.

3. *ibid*, p. 1.

disposal of the dead in Ceylon are far too meagre to decide what actual practice was customary during this period. But the few stray references in literary sources assigned to this period throw at least some light on this aspect of society.

There were three forms by which the disposal of the dead was carried out, viz., post-cremation burials, cremation, and the exposure of dead bodies uncremated and unburied. Of these three post-cremation burial may have been the most respected. References are not wanting to show that this form was meant for Buddhist monks and kings only. The Mahāvamsa refers to the post-cremation burial of Mahinda's relics in a cetiya.¹ Similarly, the relics of Saṅghamittā were buried in a thūpa after she was cremated.² When Elāra was killed in battle, Duṭṭhagāmaṇī paid him due respect, had his body cremated and built a cetiya for his ashes.³ Although the references to the cremation of Duṭṭhagāmaṇī⁴ do not show us exactly what was done with his ashes, we have every reason to suppose that they also were deposited in a cetiya, for this form of disposal of the dead was the usual practice among prominent people in Indian Buddhist society of the same period.

1. Mv., XX, vv. 44-45.

2. *ibid*, XX, v. 54.

3. *ibid*, XV, v. 73.

4. *ibid*, XXXII, v. 80.

The Buddha himself is said to have caused cetiyas to be built, depositing in them relics of several of his disciples who were Arahants, such as Sāriputta and Moggallāna.¹ It may be noted here that four kinds of people are mentioned as being worthy of memorial thūpas enshrining their relics, namely a Buddha a Pacceka Buddha, a sāvaka and a Cakkavatti king.² Ceylon society being predominantly Buddhist, there is no doubt that the same custom of disposal of the dead with regard to Buddhist monks and kings was adopted during this period.

The Mahāvamsa also contains references showing how the funeral rites of such personages were conducted. When Mahinda passed away, king Uttiya, who was overpowered by great sorrow, after paying due homage, having sprinkled scented oil on the corpse, deposited it in a gold plated coffin (sovanna doni) and placed it in a palanquin beautifully decorated with gold. Then the body was taken in a state procession consisting of four-fold armies in addition to various other processions from different parts of the country, through all the highly decorated streets of Anurādhapura to

1. Dhā. III. 83; Sum. Vil, II. p. 554.

2. Dīgha. II. p. 142

The Mahāvihāra, where it was placed on a specially prepared dais called Pañhamahamālaka and homage was paid to it for seven days after having decorated the area, ¹ around the Mahāvihāra as a mark of respect for the Elder. On the seventh day the body was cremated on a pyre composed of scented woods, and afterwards a cetiya was built over the ashes on the same spot. ²

In the case of Elāra, Duṭṭhagāmaṇī ordered all the people who lived within the area of one yojana to assemble, paid him respect worthy of a king and, having cremated the body, deposited Elāra's ashes in a newly built cetiya. ³ This reference does not give us any idea about the exact order of the state funeral procession. But probably this procession was conducted in the same way as that of Jetṭha Tissa's father. According to the Mahāvamsa "after his father's death Jetṭha Tissa became king. To punish the hostile ministers who would not go in procession with him, at the performing of the king's funeral rites, the king himself preceded forth, and placing his youngest ~~brother~~ at the head and then the body following close behind, and then the ministers, whilst he

1. Area of 300 yojanas in extent.

2, Mv., 25, 70-75.

3. Mv., XXV, vv. 70-73.

himself was at the end (of the procession), he, when his younger brother and the body were gone forth, had the gate closed immediately behind them, and he commanded that the treasonous ministers be slain and (their bodies) impaled on stakes round about his father's pyre".¹

Cremation without depositing the ashes in a cetiya formed the second form of disposal of the dead. It is possible that this form was meant for middle-class people of all social groups, who could afford the expense of a funeral pyre. This is evident from a story in the Rasavāhinī, which refers to a cemetery in Mātota (modern Mannar) where cremation was to be seen side by side with dead bodies cast there unburied and uncremated.²

The third form was the exposure of corpses to beasts and birds in cemeteries. These cemeteries were named as Amakasusāna.³ It is quite likely that this method was followed by the ordinary poor man who could not afford a funeral pyre. The burial of dead bodies without cremation seems to

1. Mv., XXXVI, vv. 118-121.

2. Rsv., II. p. 142.

3. Rsv., II. p. 6.

have been totally absent in Ceylon during this period.

There is no reference to show that coffins were used to carry dead bodies, as far as the middle-class and the poorer class of people were concerned. Corpses were normally carried by four people in a small bed covered with a cloth. The Mahāvamsa speaks of how Tissa was carried away from a monastery by four novices in order to give Duṭṭhagāmaṇī the impression that they were carrying a dead monk. (Mata-bhikkhuniyāmena).¹ It is obvious from this that this was the usual way of carrying the dead bodies those of clergy and laity who enjoyed less social prestige and honour.

There were also cemeteries which belonged to different social groups. The Mahāvamsa refers to a cemetery named Isibhūmaṅga exclusively meant for monks from an area extending for three yojanas around Anurādhapura.² The cemetery where the members of the royal family of Anurādhapura were cremated is referred to as Rājamālaka.³ It seems that there were also many other cemeteries belonging to other people of different social standing, for we have references to 150

1. Mv., XXIV., v. 43.

2. *ibid.*, XX, vv. 47-48.

3. *ibid.*, XXII, v. 80.

Caṇḍālas who were assigned the duty of removing the dead bodies (Mata-nīhārake) to the cemeteries and to another 150 as the watchers of cemeteries. ¹ Further we have reference to a Nīca Susāna situated to the North East of the city of Anurādhapura, exclusively meant for Caṇḍālas. ² This shows that even the cemeteries were categorised in accordance with the social ranks of the people in Ceylon during this period.

According to the Sahassavatthu another important funeral custom was for the relatives of the dead to bring presents ³ to the new head of the family. This custom may have come into vogue for economic reasons. Hence it is reasonable to infer that it was followed by the poorer people only. It is still followed, but only the poorer classes.

Another very important practice which is strikingly observed even to-day was that when a funeral procession was to pass by a cetiya, beating of drum was to be stopped until the procession passed the premises of the cetiya. ⁴ This

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1. Mv., X, v. 92.
 2. ibid, X, v. 94.
 3. Sahassavatthu, p. 36.
 4. Mv., XXV. v. 74.

may have been the same in the case of a procession passing by a cemetery, for even to-day, this custom is very widely observed in Ceylon.

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CHAPTER VI

Earliest Settlements.

The joint family was the earliest unit of settlement in Ceylon. A group of houses comprising a number of such large families formed a Gāma or village. Before we discuss the formation of village, it is necessary to examine the problem of the earliest Āryan migration to this country.

The origin of the early settlers of Ceylon, as in the history of many nations, is shrouded in myth and legend. But the legendary story given in the Chronicles, as Geiger¹ and Basham² have pointed out, may possibly contain a germ of truth which may help towards a solution of the problem.

On the basis of the possible identification of the place-names given in the legend and the comparative linguistic studies of the Sinhalese language, historians generally support the theory that the early settlers of Ceylon were of the Āryan group and came from North India.³

The Mahāvamsa contains references to the names

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1. Geiger, Culture of Ceylon in Mediaeval ^{Times} ~~Nations~~, p. 49.
 2. A.L.Basham, Prince Vijaya and the Āryan Colonisation of Ceylon, CHJ. Vol. I, No. 3., (1952), p. 6.
 3. Mendis, Early History of Ceylon (1954), p.6.
Codrington, A Short History of Ceylon, (London 1939).
Rapson, Chap. XXV. in the Cambridge History of India, Vol. I.

of kingdoms in North India, such as Vanga,¹ Kaliṅga,² and Magadha.³ These ancient names of kingdoms are confused by other place-names referred to in the Chronicles, such as Uṭṭala,⁴ Suppāraka,⁵ and Sīhapura.⁶ Although these place-names are differently identified in terms of different regions, it is obvious that they did exist in North India either towards the West or towards the East. It is also obvious that the Mahāvamsa contains more place-names in North East India than the Dīpavamsa. But the omission in the Mahāvamsa of the ancient port of Bhārukaccha, given in the Dīpavamsa,⁷ is significant. Perhaps, the author of the Mahāvamsa wanted to connect the genealogies of Sinhalese kings with that of the Buddhist dynasties in North India. It is also possible that the author of the Mahāvamsa was aware of more place-names in India and tried to connect them with the legend.

So far as the problem of the original home of

1. Mv., VI, v. 1-2; Dv., IX, v. 2.

2. Mv., VI, vv. 1-2;

3. Mv., VII, v. 4.

4. Mv., VII, v. 5; Dv., IX, v. 5.

5. Mv., XII, v. 46; Dv., IX, v. 16.

6. Mv., VII, v. 35; Dv., IX, v. 4.

7. Dv., IX, v. 26.

the Aryan pioneers in Ceylon is concerned, historians are divided in their opinion on many points. One school of thought maintains that these people came from Western India, possibly from Gujarat.¹ The second school believes that they came from Eastern India possibly from the lower Gangetic plain.²

The Eastern School maintains that Lāla or Lāṭa³ of the Chronicles is identical with the ancient name of Rāḍha in West Bengal and Suppāraka with the modern Singur in the Serampur subdivision of Hoogly, and has tried to locate the original home of Aryans in Eastern India.⁴ This region is also considered as belonging to the kingdom of Kalinga (Orissa) or Magadha (South Bihar).⁵

The Western School had identified Lāla or Lāṭa with a region of ancient Gujarat, especially on the authority of Ptolemy,⁶ and Siṃhapura with Sihor in Kathiawar.⁷ Lāṭa has

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1. Geiger, Culture of Ceylon in Mediaeval ~~India~~ ^{Times}, p. 49.
Basham, CHJ., Vol. I. No. 3. p. 169.
Paranavitana, HC. Vol. I. Pt. 1, pp. 82-94.
 2. Majumdar, The History of Bengal, Vol. I. p. 125.
Ray, Lāla a note, JRAS (Bengal) new Series, Vol. XVIII. p. 436.
Siddhārta, JRASCB. Vol. XXXIII. pp. 123-150.
 3. DV., IX, v. 5; MvVI, vv. 4-5.
 4. Majumdar, History of Bengal, Vol. I. p. 125.
 5. Ray, 'Lāla a note, JRAS (Bengal) New Series, Vol. XVIII, p. 436.
 6. HC., Vol. I. Pt., I, p. 91.
 7. ~~India~~; Sandesara, Ceylon in the Literature and Traditions of Gujarat, CHJ. II. p. 8-13.

also been located in lower Sind by one authority.¹

Professor Basham in his examination of the problem of the early Aryan colonists in Ceylon² brings out evidence to show that the weight of the Western theory is greater than that of the Eastern theory. He says that the ~~fact~~ fact that the frequent occurrence of the word Gāmanī in the early inscriptions of Ceylon shows that the original settlers came from the West, for it was ⁱⁿ the Western India that the term was widely used in the pre-Buddhist period.³ Further he says that 'the frequent substitution of "ha" for Indo-Aryan "Sa", which exists in the Sinhalese language to this day suggests a Western source, and even reminds us of the Iranian dialects where the mutation is regular'.⁴ He also finds striking points of contact between early Ceylon and North-Western India, in the use of the epithet Mahārāja as applied to kings and in the importance of the king's brother in the affairs of the kingdom. Further he says that the brother-to-brother succession which was frequent, if not regular in the Island, can only be paralleled in India by the succession of the Śaka rulers of Ujjain.⁵

1. Hugh Neville, Taprobanian, Vol. I, p. 57.

2. CHJ. Vol. I. No. 3. pp. 163-171.

3. *ibid*, p. 169.

4. ~~ibid~~ Vol. I. No. 3. p. 169.

5. *ibid*, p. 170.

We have seen in the previous chapter ¹ how the law of succession from brother-to-brother was frequent in the early period and how it became regular ~~more~~ towards the mediaeval period. The fact that the absence of this law of succession in Eastern India of the same period also suggests the closer connection of the early kings of Ceylon with those of the Western India where this system was followed at least by the Śaka rulers of Ujjain, if not by all the ruling families. This problem, however, will remain controversial until a comprehensive study of place-names and a linguistic analysis and comparison of the ancient element of the Sinhalese Language with similar languages in North India are undertaken. This is really wanting, for linguists again are divided on the basis of their studies on this problem. ²

A tentative solution may be arrived at on the basis of other considerations also. It is believed that navigation in the Indian ocean originated in the coastal regions of the Arabian sea. ³ Very early in the history of Eastern

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1. See, *supra*, pp. 237-241.
 2. Geiger, *A Grammar of the Sinhalese Language*, Preface, p. XI. Siddhārtha, JRASCB. Vol. XXXIII. pp. 123-150. Indian Antiquary, Vol. XII. pp. 33-70.
 3. Admiral Ballard, *Rulers of the Indian Ocean*, p. 1. Panikkar, *India and the Indian Ocean*, p. 23.

navigation, the coastline of Western India may have been known to some of the seafaring people. The Āryans probably learnt the art of seamanship from the navigators in the Arabian sea. Evidence in support of this view can be adduced from the account of the coming of Vijaya given in the Chronicles. According to these works Vijaya on his way to Ceylon touched at Suppāraka, an important port along the Western coast of India.¹ According to the Dīpavamsa he next stopped at Bhārukaccha (Broach) at the mouth of the Narmadā river, for three months before he sailed for his destination.² According to the Tīrthakalpa, a Jaina work, there was in Ceylon a king named Candragupta. Once when he was with his daughter Sudarsanā in the royal court there arrived a merchant from Bhārukacchā. Sudarsanā accompanied this merchant to Bhārukacchā at a later date on a pilgrimage in a fleet of seven hundred ships belonging to the latter.³ We also read of traders coasting round India from Bhārukacchā to Suvarṇabhūmi⁴ touching at a port of Ceylon

1. DV., IX, vv. 15-16; MV., VII, v. 46.

2. DV., IX, v. 26.

3. Archaeological Survey of India Annual Report. (1905-6) p. 144.

4. J., III., p. 1881.

on the way.¹ It is also evident from this that this route of navigation was known to early Aryans both in India and Ceylon from a very early date.

That the pioneer Aryan colonists came from Western India may also be confirmed by another argument. By the time the Aryans began to migrate to Ceylon (traditionally c. 500 B.C.), Eastern India was not fully Aryanised.² Bengal remained in this period outside the pale of Aryan influence.³ If the early settlers were Aryans, as is generally accepted, they could not, originally have come from a non-aryanised part of India.

Thus, though it is possible to establish that the earliest Aryan colonists came from Western India, the conflicting evidence in the Chronicles suggests that there were at least two major streams of immigrants from India— one came from the North-West of India led by Vijaya, which was later followed by the other coming from ^{the} North-East of India.⁴

Consideration of the ancient name Tambapanni in

1. J., II, p. 127.

2. Fick, Social Organisation in N.E. India, p. 13.

3. Basham, CHJ. Vol. I. No.3. p. 163-171.

4. Geiger, Culture of ^{Ceylon in} Mediaeval ^{Times} Ceylon, p. 49.

Ceylon, and the river of a similar name in South India has led to a suggestion of an early migration from that region.¹ This may rather be doubted because South India was outside the pale of Aryan culture during this period. But until a study correlated with many branches of scientific investigation on the movement of early tribal groups in India is undertaken the routes followed by particular peoples in history will remain only probabilities.

Whatever the original home of these Aryans may have been, according to the Chronicles, no sooner than they migrated to this country, than they settled down in eight different places as the first step in their colonisation movement. "Here and there did Viyaya's ministers found villages. Anurādhagāma was built by a man of that name near the Kadamba river (Malavatu Oya). The Chaplain Upatissa built Upatissagāma on the bank of the Gambhīra river, to the North of Anurādhagāma. Three other ministers built, each for himself, Ujjain, Uruvela and the city of Vijita.² The place where Rāma settled is called Rāmagāma, the settlements of Uruvela and Anurādha are called

1. Müller, Ancient Inscriptions of Ceylon, Vol.I.p.23.

2. Mv., VII, vv. 43-45.

by their names, and the settlement of Vijita, Dīghāyu and Rohana are named Vijitagāma, Dīghāyu and Rohana. Anurādha built a tank and when he had built a palace to the South of this, he took up his abode there.¹

According to the Mahāvamsa Tikā these Āryans opened up all these settlements in areas where water was easily available.² Thus the settlements were expanded from this initial base, possibly along the course of rivers and streams in the Northern part of the Dry Zone. But the actual extent of this settlement cannot be established from this account. On the basis of the tradition, it appears that sometime after the first colonization the area of settlement extended up to and beyond the Mahavāligāṅga in the East and the foothills of the Central Highlands in the South.

Settlements in other parts of the Island, probably independent of the region discussed above, existed, especially in the area to the South of Mahavāligāṅga.

According to the Mahāvamsa it was the Kṣatriyas of Kājaragāma and of Candanagāma who opened up settlements in

1. Mv., IX, vv. 9-11.

2. MvT., p. 261.

this area.¹ These Southern settlements may have been established along the four rivers, Kumbukkan Oya, Mānikgaṅga, Kirindi Oya and Valavgaṅga.

A third region of settlement was confined to the lower basin of the Kālaniganga in the West.² This settlement may not have been extensive, but the attraction of the pioneers into this region may have been the Gem District in the upper Kālaniganga.³ The settlers in this region may have belonged to another stream of immigration independent of the other two streams.

Thus it can be inferred that there were several streams of immigration from different parts of India, spread over an extensive period of time. We have discussed already the main regions of settlement, according to historical sources. But the full authenticity of this account is doubtful, for it is confused by a number of traditions unskillfully blended. It is therefore difficult to ascertain the types and the chara-

1. Mv., XIX, vv. 54-55.

2. Mendis, Early History of Ceylon, p. 24.

3. Vadia and Fernando, Gem and semi-precious Stones in Ceylon, Record of the Department of Minerology in Ceylon, Professional Paper, No. 2. (1944) p. 15.

cteristics of these settlements from the Chronicles. But the names of these settlements ending in Gāma, signifying village settlement, as the Grāma in ancient India, possibly give us a clue as to their nature.

Grāma in ancient India consisted of group of ~~families~~ united by ties of kindred. According to the Kaṁkhāvitaranī a place which consists of at least one or two houses is called a Grāma.¹ According to the Vinaya² a place which consists of at least one or two houses, whether occupied by people or deserted, is called a Grāma. There were Grāmas both fortified (Prīkkhitta) and unfortified (aparkkhitta). It further says that a place where caravan traders lived at least for four months and afterwards deserted is called a Grāma.

But according to the Jātakas the average Grāma consisted of families numbering from thirty to a thousand.³ The village proper was enclosed by a wall or stockade with gates (gāmadvāra).⁴ Villages were generally situated in the midst of cultivated fields and jungles. Beyond the enclosure lay the arable land of the village (Gāmakkhetta) which was itself protected

1. Kaṁkhāvitaranī, p. 26.

2. Vinaya, II. p. 46.

3½ J., I. p. 199; J. III. p. 281.

4. J., I. p. 239; II, p. 76, 135; II, p. 9.

from pests, beasts and birds by fences ¹ and snares. ² This Gāmakkhetta was made up of individual holdings separated from one another by channels dug for co-operative irrigation. ³ A holding was generally small enough to be maintained by the family owning it, sometimes with the help of a hired labourer. ⁴

Beyond the arable land of the village lay its common grazing ground or pastures ⁵ for its herds of cattle ⁶ and goats ⁷ whether belonging to the king ⁸ or the commoner. ⁹ The villages ended in the uncleared jungles which were the sources of its firewood and litter. ¹⁰

In short, the following extract from the Jātaka ¹¹ furnishes us with information as to how a village in ancient India was built up by the communal labour of its inhabitants:

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1. J., I. 215.
 2. J., I. p. 145, 154.
 3. J., I. p. 336; IV, p. 167; V, p. 412.
 4. J., I. p. 277; III, p. 162; IV, p. 167.
 5. J., I. p. 388.
 6. *ibid*, III, p. 149; IV, p. 326.
 7. *ibid*, III, p. 40.
 8. *ibid*, I. p. 240.
 9. *ibid*, I. p. 194, 388.
 10. *ibid*, I. p. 317; V, p. 103.
 11. *ibid*, I. p. 199.

"In the village there were just thirty families, and one day the men were standing in the middle of the village transacting the affairs of the village. They doing good work, always in the company of the Bodhisatta, used to get up early and sally forth, with knives and axes and clubs in their hands. With their clubs they used to roll out of the way all stones that lay on the four highways and other roads of the village; the trees that would strike against the axles of chariots, they cut down; rough places they made smooth; causeways they built; they dug water tanks and built the hall; they showed charity and kept the commandments. In this wise did the body of the villagers generally abide by the Bodhisatta's teaching and keep the commandments".

The villages in ancient India were of three kinds: the ordinary agricultural village or mixed type, the special and suburban village or industrial type and the border village or frontier type. The first type consisted of those villages which were occupied by men of all castes and occupations and some of which were destined, in course of time, to grow into towns. The special and the suburban type was occupied solely

by particular communities, and some of them specialised in a particular branch of industry.¹

Thus there came to exist villages inhabited solely by people of different castes or social groups, such as villages of Brāhmanas,² Caṇḍālas,³ hunters,⁴ robbers,⁵ carpenters,⁶ smiths,⁷ potters⁸ and weavers.⁹ The existence and growth of such caste-villages in the suburban areas were partly due to the policy of segregation adopted by the higher castes or the king with regard to the people of the lower castes such as the Caṇḍālas, who were not allowed to live within the walls of the city.¹⁰

The third type, the Border Villages (paccantagāma), were situated in the frontier areas. These villages being far away from the centre of administration of the country, were normally inhabited by uncultured and unruly people such as robbers and bandits.¹¹

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1. Sathosh Kumar Das, Economic History of Ancient India, (Calcutta 1944), p. 186.
 2. J., I, 368; III, p. 293, IV, p. 276.
 3. ibid, IV, p. 200, 376, 390; VI, p. 156.
 4. ibid, II, p. 36; IV, p. 413; V, p. 337; VI, p. 71.
 5. ibid, IV, p. 430.
 6. ibid, II, p. 18, 405; IV, p. 159, 207, 344.
 7. ibid, III, p. 281.
 8. ibid, III, p. 376.
 9. ibid, I, p. 356.
 10. ibid, IV, p. 200, 376, 390; VI, p. 156.
 11. J., VI, p. 220.

Larger than the Kula and Gāma was a 'townlet' or Nagaraka of which the example cited is the famous Kusinārā the place of the Buddha's death. ¹ Nigama is also the term for a townlet, as in the expression Gāma Nigama frequently found in Pāli literature. R. K. Mookerji says that there was of course no hard and fast line between the Gāma and the Nigama, village, and town. ² But according to the Vinayattha Mañjūsā Nigama is a market place which was not protected by a parapet wall. ³ Hence Nigama was a settlement of merchants. ⁴ On the other hand when we look at the terms applied to denote different political divisions frequently found in Pāli literature such as Gāma Nigama Rājadhāni, it is obvious that Nigama was considered a higher unity than Gāma both in size and importance. Thus it is evident that there was a clear difference between the Gāma and the Nigama.

1. Dīgha., II, p. 146.

2. Mookerji, Hindu Civilisation, p. 299-300.

3. The source is a later Tikā, not available in London
Wimalakitti, Sinhalese Govt. p. 25.

4. SBE., XIV. pp. 176-177.

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Some of these Gāmas and Nigamas gradually developed into towns. According to the Jayaddisa Jātaka a certain king made a settlement on a certain mountain, cultivated the area by clearing the jungles, and bringing a thousand families with much treasure, founded a big village. This village in course of time grew into a town, Cullakammāsa by name. ¹ According to another Jātaka story the town of Kammāssadhamma also grew out of a village. ²

Some of the towns were fortresses in the midst of a collection of villages and these fortresses grew into towns. The Mahāparinibbāna Sutta of the Dīgha Nikāya ³ speaks of how Ajātasattu of Magadha built a fortress at Pāṭalīgrāma to check the advance ^{of} the Vajjis. This village and the fortress grew up into the town of Pāṭaliputra in the course of two generations. ⁴

These cities in ancient India were surrounded by walls and defended by a moat or even three moats, a water-moat, a mud-moat and dry-moat. ⁵ In the Pandara Jātaka it is

1. J., V, pp. 35.

2. J., V, p. 511.

3. Dīgha, Vol. II. p.

4. V.A. Smith, Early History of India, 4th edition, p. 39.

5. J., No. 546, Vol. VI, pp. 400-410.

said that one should keep a secret carefully guarded in his mind just as a city is strongly guarded by being girt round by deep moats. ¹ Another Jātaka refers to how a city was well-guarded by a parapet wall. ² The city of Kusāvati was surrounded by seven ramparts with four gates. ³

The inner city was divided into different wards or steets specially meant for people of different castes and occupations. From the Jātakas we learn of the ivory-worker's street (dantavīthi), ⁴ the street for washermen (rajakavīthi) ⁵ the weavers' place ⁶ and the Vaisya quarter ⁷ in Benares, and of the florists' quarter (upphalavīthi) ⁸ and cooks' quarter ⁹ in Sāvattthi. Thus we see how people were segregated according to their castes and occupations in the cities in ancient India. We have, therefore, every reason to believe that when the pioneer Aryan colonists migrated to Ceylon they also brought

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1. J., V, pp. 81-82.
 2. J., No. 538.
 3. Dīgha., Sinhalese edition, p. 105.
 4. J., pp. 320.
 5. *ibid*, IV, p. 81.
 6. *ibid*, I. p. 356.
 7. J., No. 547.
 8. J., IV, p. 82.
 9. J. No. 315. Paṇcuppanna Vatthu.

with them the knowledge of the types and the characteristics^{sti} of Indian village and urban settlements.

The movement which was started by pioneer Aryan colonists¹ somewhere in the 5th century B.C. continued unabated. When the population increased both owing to the new immigrants from India and the local increase, the establishment of new settlements became still more necessary. An epigraphic record of the 1st or 2nd century A.D. indicates that four brothers jointly founded a village called Ariṭa : "The sons of the Mahamata Bamadata (namely) His Eminence Bahika, His Eminence Pusaguta, His Eminence Mita and His Eminence Tisa- by these (Chieftains) was founded the great village Ariṭa".² Thus people began to build up villages wherever suitable in order to earn a comfortable living.

Place-names referred to in our sources both literary and epigraphic suggest that there were two forms of settlement, the village settlement (gāma) and the urban settlement (nagara or pura).

The Village Settlement:

The habitations of the people in the early stage of

1. See, Supra, p. 257.

2. EZ., I. p. 152

colonisation may have been the many hundreds of caves to be found on hills, mountains and rocks. The inscriptions above the drip-line on ⁿmay such caves refer to their being given to Buddhist monks. ¹ These inscriptions reveal that the caves were owned by people of different social standing both male and female such as Parumakas, Batas, Gamanis, Gamika^s, Gapatis, and Upasakas. Some of these caves belonged to particular families including even grand-children. ² This might suggest that not only ordinary people but also nobles owned caves converted into houses. The fact that the donors of caves, belonging to different strata of society, were in a position to donate their cave dwellings to the monks as soon as Buddhism came into Ceylon, encourages us to suppose that the custom of living in cave dwellings had already been changed to house-dwellings in villages. In other words, village life in Ceylon was fully developed by the time Buddhism was introduced in the 3rd century B.C.

This is supported by the word gama which occurs very frequently in both literary and epigraphic records assigned to this period. A cave inscription at Lunagala in Kāgalla

1. EZ., I. pp. 10-39.

2. See. *Sepm.* p. 201.

District refers to a village called Amana belonging to a Paṭaka (Brāhmaṇa).¹ Another inscription at Yaṭahaleṇa in the same district contains a reference to another village named Upali.² Yet another inscription of the same place speaks of a village called Dusatar.³ Three more villages, Nilaya, Saṭivaya and Cema are referred to in still another inscription found at Yaṭahaleṇa.⁴ It is evident from this that by the time these records were inscribed the system of village settlement was fully developed in Ceylon.

Many names of villages occurring in the historical records may give a clue to their origin. A number of village names ending in -Vapi such as Sumanavāpi--Gāma,⁵ Pelivāpikagāma,⁶ Vihāravāpīgāma,⁷ Hundarivāpi Gāma⁸ and Kadahavapigama,⁹ suggest that there were 'tank villages' which were founded after

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1. CJS.G., II, p. 202, No. 615. For the interpretation of the term paṭaka see p. , above.
 2. ibid, p. 203, No. 618.
 3. ibid, p. 203, No. 619.
 4. ibid, p. 204. No. 620.
 5. Mv., XXVIII, v. 18.
 6. ibid, XXVIII, v. 39.
 7. ibid, XXIII, v. 90; Rsv., II, p. 102.
 8. Mv., XXIII, v. 45; Rsv., II, p. 86.
 9. EZ., III, p. 215

the building of tanks. These names further suggest that the construction of tanks preceded the village settlements. The Mahāvamsa speaks of how Vasabha, one of the paladins of Duṭṭhagāmaṇī, made a settlement habitable by building a tank with the help of other villagers.¹

According to the Mahāvamsa Tīkā, the availability of water was considered the most important factor for opening up a new settlement.² Where there was no river water easily available, large reservoirs were built in order to make the settlement habitable. Thus Anurādha³ and Paṇḍukābhaya⁴ are considered to have started building tanks for the first time in the history of Ceylon. Thus the construction of tanks was the first step towards the opening up of village settlements in the second stage of the Aryan colonisation movement. It is therefore reasonable to suppose that all the 'tank villages' referred to above came into existence in this phase of colonisation.

Thus the village tank was the most important

1. Mv., XXIII, vv. 92-93.

2. MvT. p. 261.

3. Mv., IX, v. II.

4. *ibid*, X, vv. 85, 88.

feature of the ancient village in Ceylon particularly in the Dry Zone areas. 'A village tank was nothing but a shallow sheet of water varying in size from two to three acres to more than one hundred, but commonly from twenty to fifty in area. On the low side of the tank a stretch of paddy fields, a couple of hundred of yards, a quarter of a mile, or half a mile long, or even more could be seen.' ¹

Such stretches of paddy fields are referred to in the inscriptions by the words kubara, keta and viya. In the Riṭṭigala Inscription reference is made to the dedication of kubara and keta. ² The Maha Situlpahuva Rock Inscription too refers to the donation of kubara and keta, ³ for the maintenance of monks at Cittalāpabbata Monastery. The Thūpārāma Slab Inscription of Gajabāhu I, refers to the word 'uta viya' which denotes the paddy field. ⁴ Of these three, the word Kubara is nothing but present day Kumbura (field). Viya is equivalent to the word kubara as in the expression uta-kubara occurring in the Jetavanārāma Slab Inscription of Mulu Tisa. ⁵

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1. Parker, Village Folk Tales of Ceylon, Vol. I. p. 6.
 2. EZ., I, p. 148, No. 6.
 3. JRASCB. New Series, Vol. II. Pt. III. p. 13.
 4. EZ., III, p. 116.
 5. EZ., III. p. 117.

Normally the word keta (P=Khetta) also means an ordinary field, just as kubara. But khetta in Pāli generally means a stretch of paddy fields. According to the Rasavāhinī there was a khetta in Rohaṇa, of five hundred karīsa (about 1400 acres).¹ The Mahāvamsa reports that Girikaṇḍa Siva cultivated a khetta of one hundred Karīsa (about 800 acres).² According to the Rock Inscription at Situalpahuva a keta was donated by a king for the maintenance of monks at Cittāla Pabbata Monastery.³ It is also reported that there were twelve thousand resident monks in this monastery during this period.⁴ It is therefore quite likely that the keta given to this monastery is not an ordinary kubara, but a large area of paddy fields.

In some of these villages the lake (Vilake) served the purpose of the village tank. There is a reference to such a lake (Vilake) in the Majjimagama near Cittalapabbata.⁵

According to Arrian of the 1st century A.D. the houses in Indian villages were built of perishable material

1. Rsv., II. p. 37.

2. Mv. X. 29-31.

3. JRASCB. New Series, Vol. II, Pt. II, p. 133. No. 63.

4. Sammohavinodanī, p. 445.

5. JRASCB. New Series, Vol. II, Pt. II, p. 133. No. 64.

like wood and reeds. ¹ Pliny, writing on the same period refers to the moderate height of houses in Ceylon. ² The latter account was based on information gathered from Ambassadors from Ceylon, who went to Rome during the time of Claudius (41-54 A.D.).

These villages were defended ³ at least by fences against the wild beasts, because the forest was situated beyond the village boundary. ⁴ There is no doubt that these forest belts were the common property of the whole village for all the villagers collected their firewood ^{and} other produce from them. Further these uncleared jungles were used as common grazing grounds or pastures for the herds of cattle belonging to the respective villages situated close to them. ⁵ The residential quarters of monks were generally situated within the village but near the village boundary (Gāma^mta senāsana). ⁶ Sometimes ascetic monks used to live in the jungles near the villages. ⁷

1. Mc. Crindle, Ancient India as Described by Megasthenes and Arrian, p. 174.

2. *ibid*, p. 105.

3. Kaṅkhāvitaraṇī, see, *supra*, p.

4. Rsv., II, p. 5.

5. *ibid*, II, p. 5.

6. *ibid*, II, p. 5.

7. *ibid*.

where it was convenient for them to go on their daily begging round in the adjoining village and meditate quietly.

Generally an ordinary village may have comprised a few families belonging to one particular caste or occupation. Thus some villages grew up on a communal basis and were named after the particular community or caste.

Both literary and epigraphic sources assigned to this period contain references to such villages. According to the Mahāvamsa there was a Brāhmaṇa village called Upatissa Gāma which was founded by Upatissa, the Purohita of Vijaya, on the bank of the Gambhīra river ~~vata~~, ¹ to the North of Anurādhagāma. There was another Brāhmaṇa village called Paṇḍulagāma to the South of Anurādhapura. ² These references indicate that Brāhmaṇas arrived in Ceylon with the first Āryan settlers. ³

Both the Mahāvamsa ⁴ and the Sāratthadīpanī ⁵ speak of another village belonging to a Brāhmaṇa named Tivakka, situated on the way to Anurādhapura from Jambukolapaṭṭāna. This

1. Mv., VII, v. 44.

2. ibid, X, v. 20.

3. See, supra, p. 33ff

4. Mv., XIX, v. 36.

5. Sāratthadīpanī, p. 157.

village is again referred to both in the Mahāvamsa ¹ and the Samantapāsādikā ² as one of the eight leading villages where one of the eight Bo-saplings was planted during the reign of Devānampiya Tissa. ³ Dvāra¹²maṇḍagāma, where the famous Brāhmaṇa Kuṇḍala lived, was situated near Cetiya Pabbata. ⁴ Epigraphic records, too, bear testimony to the existence of a village, mainly occupied by the people of Brāhmaṇa caste. ⁵ According to an account given in the Mahāvamsa king Mahāsena, having destroyed all the Hindu temples in a Brāhmaṇa village called Kalanda Brāhmaṇa Gāma, built three vihāras, Gokaṇṇa, Erakāpilla and Migagāma. ⁶

In Rohana there were two Kṣatriya villages, Kājaragāma ⁷ and Candanagāma, ⁸ during the reign of Devānampiya Tissa. According to the Hatthavanagalla vihāra vamsa there was another Kṣatriya village near Mahiyaṅgāma, where a Kṣatriya named Selābhaya the father of Saṅghabodhi ⁹ used to live.

1. Mv., XIX, v. 60.

2. Samantapāsādikā, I, p. 100.

3. Mv., XXIII, v. 23.

4. See, supra p. 77.

5. Mv., XXXVII, vv. 40-41.

6. ibid, XIX, v. 53.

7. ibid.

8. Hatthavanagalla vihāra vamsa, p. 2.

Although there are no direct references to the Kṣatriya villages in the North, there is every reason to suppose that there were at least a few villages mainly occupied by the people of Kṣatriya caste, who were connected to the royal household at Anurādhapura.

Similarly there were certain villages occupied by Caṇḍālas alone. Both the Mahāvamsa¹ and the Mahābodhivamsa² refer to a Caṇḍāla Gāma situated to the North-West of the general cemetery in Anurādhapura. During the reign of Paṇḍukābhaya there were in this village one thousand Caṇḍālas who served the city of Anurādhapura in different capacities.³ According to the Rasavāhinī there was another Caṇḍāla village close to the Dakkhina Cetiya in Anurādhapura during the reign of Sirināga, a Brāhmaṇa usurper.⁴ The same work refers to another Caṇḍāla village in Anurādhapura during the reign of Duṭṭhagāmaṇī.⁵

References are not wanting to show that there were villages occupied entirely by certain groups of people who followed different occupations. The Mahāvamsa Tikā refers to a

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1. Mv., X.v. 93.
 2. Mahābodhivamsa, p. 84.
 3. Mv., X. vv. 91-92.
 4. Rsv., II, p. 7.
 5. ibid, II, p. 117.

Kumbhakāragāma (Potter's village) situated to the South of Anurādhapura during the reign of Duṭṭhagāmaṇī.¹ According to the Sahassavatthu, Velusumana went to this particular village and obtained a large pot in order to take water from the Tissa-vāpi.² According to a story given in the Visuddhimagga³ this village continued as the settlement of potters even up to the time of Buddhaghosa. The story refers to a monk of the Thūpārāma was seen going out from the Southern gate of Anurādhapura and taking the road towards Kumbhakāragāma. As this account agrees with that of the Mahāvamsa Tīkā, there is no doubt that both works refer to the same village. It is therefore justifiable to suppose that this village was occupied purely by potters and continued as the supply centre of pots to the city of Anurādhapura for many centuries. The Mahāvamsa also refers to another village of potters, where a Tamil was the leader.⁴ The Sīhalavatthu speaks of a Kumbhakāragāma in Rohana during the reign of Sadda Tissa.⁵

The Mahāvamsa Tīkā states that Asokamālā, the

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1. MvT., p. 483.
 2. Sahassavatthu, p. 85.
 3. VSM.pp. 66-67.
 4. Mv., XXV. v. 14.
 5. Sīhalavatthu, p. 12.

queen of Prince Sāli, in her previous birth was the daughter of the leading carpenter of a Vaddhakīgāma situated in the Western side of the city of Anurādhapura.¹ The word Vaddhakī seems to have been used as a common name to denote different groups of people connected with architectural work such as brick-making etc., for we have references in the Mahāvamsa to both Itthaka-vaddhakī² and Itthakavaddhakīgāma.³ The Vaddhakīgāma may have been meant for all the craftsmen collectively known as Vaddakis, irrespective of their work.

The Vessagiriya Rock Inscription of Sirināga II, refers to a tank of a village of jewellers (Manikāragama).⁴ According to the Mahāvamsa, Candamukha Siva, the son of Ilanāga, built a tank in the Manikāragāma and donated it to the Issarassamaṇa Monastery.⁵ The Sīhalavatthu speaks of a village of smiths (Kannikāarakagāma) and a village of agriculturists (Kasikammakāarakagāma).⁶ There was an industrial village (Kamman-tagāma) in Anurādhapura, which belonged to Mitta, the commander-in-chief of Elāra.⁷

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1. MvT., p. 606.
 2. Mv., XXX. v. 5.
 3. ibid, XXXV, v. 109.
 4. EZ., IV, p. 222.
 5. Mv., XXXV, vv. 46-47.
 6. Sīhalavatthu, p. 12.
 7. Mv., XXIII, v. 4.

It is recorded in the Rasavāhinī that there was a village of cowherds (Gopālagāma) situated near a certain large village.¹ This shows that even the cowherds formed themselves into a separate community and tried to lead a segregated life. Dr. Rāhula thinks that Dvāramāṇḍala, a village near Mihintale, was mainly composed of Gopālakas.² But according to the account given in the Mahāvamsa³ it is not possible to arrive at such a conclusion. The Mahāvamsa says that when Paṇḍukābhaya was twelve years of age, his uncles, having come to know that the former was still alive, issued an order to kill all the Gopālakas living in that village. This does not necessarily mean that all the inhabitants of that village were cowherds. It seems quite possible that when boys were about twelve, if they were not given education, they usually helped their parents or the other villagers by looking after the cattle, because cattle-rearing was one of the main sources of income in the past in those nucleated villages. Children of this age, unlike those of later times, had no schools to attend. Even today, in remote villages, while the elderly people go to the field children of twelve years or so,

1. Rsv., II, p. 22.

2. Early History of Buddhism in Ceylon, p. 22.

3. Mv., X. vv. 12-17.

who do not attend schools, look after the herds of cattle either belonging to their own families or to other families of high social status.

Dvāramāṇḍala was one of the few fairly well developed villages during the reign of Devānaṃpiya Tissa. When Mattābhaya, the younger brother of Devānaṃpiya Tissa, entered the Order of monks after listening to a discourse preached by Mahinda, he was followed by five hundred each from the villages, Cetārigāma, Dvāramāṇḍala, Vihirabīja, Gallakapīṭha and Upatissa.¹ It is quite unlikely that people of low social prestige such as Gopālakas had the courage to follow Mattābhaya at a time so soon after the arrival of Mahinda, when the caste system was well established in society, for we know that Devānaṃpiya Tissa invited particularly ladies of noble families to listen to the first sermon of Mahinda at Mahāmeghavana.² The Mahāvamsa also contains a reference to a wealthy Brāhmaṇa named Kuṇḍala.³ It is very unlikely that such a person, receiving royal recognition⁴ should live in a village mainly composed of low caste people like Gopālakas. The only reasonable interpretation, therefore,

1. Mv., XVII, vv. 57-60.

2. DV., XIII, v. 14.

3. Mv., XXIII, vv. 23-24.

4. Mv., XXIII, vv. 23-24.

would be that Dvāramāṇḍala was not a Gopālakagāma, but a mixed village. Our sources also furnish us with information as to the existence of fishing villages (kevaṭṭagāma) during this period.¹ Thus there were two types of villages, ^{that} ~~at~~ composed of people of different social grades and ^{that} ~~at~~ mainly occupied by people of one particular caste or occupation.

The frequent occurrence of the words Gamani and Gamika in a large number of epigraphic records of this period suggests that the village system was well organised at least from the 3rd century B.C. onwards. We have seen earlier² that unlike in India, these two words have been used in Ceylon to denote two different groups of people in the field of administration. But the Ceylon Gamika, however, was the same as the Indian Gāmika, village headman. The information that can be gathered from our sources regarding the functions and powers exercised by the Gamika in Ceylon is very meagre.

An epigraphic record assigned to about the 1st century A.D. found at Nuvarakanda in the Devamedī Hatpattu, Kurunāgala District, contains a reference to 'Gamika Kanatisaha Badakarika Anurada Nene', the cave of Anurada, the treasurer of the village headman Kanatisa.³ The fact that the village

1. Rsv.II, p. 107: Mahājallikaṃ nāma Kevaṭṭagāmaṃ

2. See, supra, p. 137.

3. CJSg, II, p. 127. No. 532.

headman employed a treasurer shows that one of his main functions was to collect the revenue from the village on behalf of the king. This is corroborated by another reference in the Jetavanā-rāma Inscription of Mūlu Tisa (c 229-247 A.D.),¹ to "Bojiya - Patiya" (Skt. Bhojika Prāptika), 'the income accruing the Gāmabhojaka, village headman.' Reference to the village headman by the word "bhojika" is also found in an inscription assigned to the 3rd century B.C.² According to the Rasavāhinī³ and the Sahassavatthu⁴ Velusumana is said to have ^{been} brought up by the headman of the village called Gīri (Giribhojaka). It is evident from this that the word Gāmabhojaka was used as a synonym of Gamika to denote one and the same person, the village headman.

Gamika or Gāmabhojaka was the head of the village administration. It is evident from the Jātaka commentary that the Gāmabhojaka exercised both judicial and executive powers over the affairs of the village. Thus one Gāmabhojaka prohibited the killing of animals within his jurisdiction and stopped the sale of intoxicating drinks.⁵ Another Gāmabhojaka fined a fisherman's wife for stirring up a quarrel and she was tied up

1. EZ., I, p. 152-159.

2. Parker, AC., p. 253.

3. Rsv., II, p. 98.

4. SV., p. 83.

5. J., IV, p. 115.

and beaten to make her pay the fine.¹ Not only did he maintain peace and order in the village, but also he acted as the guardian of the villagers. Once when crops failed in a village owing to famine, the headman distributed food to the village on promise of receiving a share of their next crops.²

Although he enjoyed substantial power over village administration, he had to exercise ^{it} in accordance with the existing customs and traditions of the villagers. In other words he had no powers to abuse the rights of the villagers. As we have seen earlier,³ the village headman had to bow down to the common opinion of the village elders in matters of imposing new laws regarding the village affairs. This encourages us to suppose that there was a democratic form of administration, at least in nucleus, in these villages. As the Jātakatṭhakathā written in Sinhalese was handed down from generation to generation for nearly nine centuries before it was translated into Pāli, it is reasonable to believe that this system of village administration and the functions and powers of the Gāmahojaka, depicted in it, may have been known to the early Sinhalese in Ceylon during our period of survey.

1. J., I. p. 483.

2. J., II, p. 134.

3. See, supra, p. 124.

The

Urban Settlement:

When the village settlements grew in number, some of them gradually developed into towns or cities (nagam or pura) during this period. It is difficult to say precisely under what circumstances these villages formed themselves into towns. But there is no doubt that the ever increasing population, closer contact with foreign countries both cultural and commercial, and the rapid development in political and religious activities were important factors which led to the growth of urban settlement. Thus it can be inferred that some of these settlements grew up as commercial centres in the neighbourhood of sea-ports while others grew up as political and religious centres in the interior.

Ptolemy's Geography ¹ of the second century A.D. gives a reasonable account of the trade and marts of the time in Ceylon. This work refers to the existence of eleven towns and the marts in the Island. ²In the previous century Pliny refers ³ to the existence of five hundred towns in Ceylon. This no doubt is an exaggeration, though the information was obtained from ambassadors from Ceylon to Rome.

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1. The Geography of Claudius Ptolemy, ed. and trans. E.L. Stevenson (New York 1932), pp. 158-159.
 2. *ibid*, p. 158.
 3. Pliny VI.22.

The Ceylon Chronicles and other literary sources often refer to a number of ports of which Mahā Tittha was considered the most ancient. When the king of Paṇḍu sent wives for Vijaya and his followers along with one thousand families of eighteen guilds to Ceylon, they landed at Mahātittha (now Mantai).¹ According to another manuscript of the Mahāvamsa,² by the time they arrived in Ceylon the neighbourhood of this port was a village settlement, for it was then called Mahātittha Paṭṭanaḡgāma. Seven days after the cremation of Elāra, Bhalluka, his nephew, disembarked at Mahātittha with a powerful army of sixty thousand soldiers, proceeded towards Anurādhapura and encamped in the Kolambahālaka village.³ During the reign of Vaṭṭagāmaṇī Abhaya, seven Tamils from South India landed at Mahātittha with strong forces and marched towards Anurādhapura.⁴ It is to be noted here that the omission of the word Gāma in this reference which simply mentions the word Mahātittha is very significant. This probably means that the characteristics of an ordinary village had disappeared from this place by this time.

1. Mv., VII, v. 58.

2. Mv., Buddhaddatta Edition, p. 48.D.58.

3. Mv., XXV, vv. 79-80.

4. *ibid*, XXXIII, v. 39.

In other words, it had developed into an urban settlement.

Through this famous sea-port cultural relations between India and Ceylon were strengthened. During the reign of Vaṭṭagāmaṇī Abhaya, when the Brāhmaṇa Tissa famine was over, the Bhikkhus who went to India disembarked on their return journey at Mahātittha.¹ According to the Sahassavatthu, a group of pilgrim monks went to India, taking ship from Mahātittha.² References are not wanting to show that commercial relationships with foreign countries also developed largely through this port. According to the Rasavāhinī, there was a merchant named Nandi, in Mahātittha, who carried on export and import trade with foreign countries by means of a fleet of ships.³ The Sahassavatthu speaks of another resident merchant of Mahātittha, who went to the interior of the country to sell his goods and ^{returned} after a while.⁴ It is obvious from this that Mahātittha had grown up into a well developed commercial centre during this period.

The Mahāvamsa Tīkā states that Vasabha built the Kohāla tank near Mahātitthapattana.⁵ No doubt he built this tank

1. Sammohavinodanī, I, p. 448.

2. Sahassavatthu, p. 36.

3. Rsv., II, p. 139.

4. Sahassavatthu, p. 126.

5. MvT., p. 653.

to meet the ever-growing needs of an increasing population of this place. The fact that Mahā^{ti}ttthapattana was thickly populated during this period can also be adduced from another reference. According to the Rasavāhinī there was a common cemetery for the entire city by the name Mahātittha Susāna, where many burning funeral pyres and unburied corpses cast on it could be seen every day.¹ Thus we can see how the village Mahātitthapattanagāma gradually developed into a famous commercial centre inhabited mainly by merchants.

There is also sufficient evidence to show that this commercial centre before long became one of the most important provincial administrative centres in Ceylon. The Rasavāhinī refers to a minister named Siva who was appointed Governor of this place.²

The Mannar Kaccari Pillar Inscription also refers to an officer who was in charge of this port as Mahaputa laddan.³ It is evident from this that the political importance was attached to this place as late as the 9th century A.D.

The Rasavāhinī also records the splendour of Mahātittha as follows: "At that time the king appointed one of

1. Rsv., II, p. 142.

2. ibid, p. 139.

3. EZ., III, p. 113.

his ministers, named Siva as the Governor of Mahātittha. The minister having got all the streets properly cleaned and decorated beautifully and having caused flags and banners to fly on the buildings, mounted on a beautifully decorated chariot accompanied by a powerful army of soldiers, and made a state drive along the streets encircling the entire Mahāpaṭṭana." ¹ From this it is obvious that Mahātitthapattana had developed into status of a city with well arranged streets. There were in this city storied buildings with attractive balconies (alankatapāsāda). ² This also shows that many of the inhabitants of this city were rich people, mostly belonging to the merchant class.

The Rasavāhinī also reports how the wife of the merchant referred to above, having decked herself with all kinds of precious ornaments, watched the state drive of the newly appointed Governor, from the balcony of her house with a retinue of female slaves. ³ This undoubtedly shows the status and the comforts enjoyed by the average citizen of this town. Thus we can see that the place had all the necessary characteristics of

1. Rsv., II, p. 139.

2. *ibid.*

3. *ibid.*

a city.

But it is to be noted that Mahātitttha is not referred to anywhere in our sources as Nagara or Pura. It is referred to as Mahātittthapaṭṭana. According to the Jātakas the word Paṭṭana means 'town, city or port'.¹ In Tamil too Pattanam means town,² and the word is probably originally dravidian. It is therefore most likely that Mahātittthapaṭṭana was an urban settlement mainly occupied by Tamils, for other wise the several waves of Tamil invasion referred to above³ could not have landed here so freely as they did.

Literary and epigraphic records also bear testimony to this fact. According to the Dāthāvamsa there was a Hindu shrine at this place during the reign of Śrī Meghavarṇa (352-379 A.D.).⁴ The Inscription on the stone canoe at Anurādhapura assigned to the last quarter of the 10th century A.D.,⁵ refers to the word 'Mahavutu' (probably derived from Mahāpaṭṭana) as another name for Mahātitttha, the modern Tirukētisvaram near Mannar.⁶ This inscription states that "we

1. J., I. p. 121; IV. p. 16, 137; V. p. 75.

2. Carter, Sin. Eng. Dictionary, p. 349.

3. See supra, p. 292.

4. Dāthāvamsa, Canto 5. V. I. p. 35. "Paṭṭanaṃ otaritvā Devālaye pativasinsu manobhirāme.

5. M. E. Z. III. p. 132.

6. Ceylon Antiquary, Vol. X. p. 133. cf: "Rājaratnākar, p. 50, "Ikbiti Sumitrādī Rājakumāravarun nāvgāvū nāv ekaviṭama mahavaṭupatun tota vatuyeya".

all of us, who receive rations at this Mahāpāli, have given our shares of rice for the new works being carried out at the Stūpa of the Jetavana Monastery. Those who violate this shall take (upon themselves) the sins committed by (all) the inhabitants of the Island. (They also) shall incur the sins committed by a killer of goats at Mahavuṇṇu (Mahātittha)" ¹ Another inscription at Kataragama assigned to the first quarter of the 10th century A.D. ² refers to this sea-port as Mahavoṭi. This inscription states that "the householders in this village shall not be impressed for service. Getaḍ should not be levied. Should this command be infringed by any they shall take upon themselves the sins committed by a killer of cows at Mahavoṭi!" ³ From these imprecations it is obvious that Mahātittha was considered, at this time, to be a place of unusual sanctity and a sin committed there very heinous. It seems to have been held as a sacred place rather by the Hindus than by the Buddhists. ⁴ Thus we see how the village settlement of Mahātittha gradually grew into a commercial and administrative centre and a sacred place of the Hindus in course of time.

1. EZ., III, p. 133.

2. *ibid*, III, p. 222.

3. *ibid*, p. 225.

4. *ibid*, p. 235.

Jambukola in Jaffna Peninsula also was another important port with foreign connections, especially with the port of Tāmalitti in Bengal. ¹ The branch of the Bodhi Tree was brought by ship to this port and from there was taken to Anurādhapura. ² Devānaṃpiya Tissa's first goodwill mission to Asoka, headed by his nephew Mahā Ariṭṭha embarked from Jambukola and landed at Tāmalitti in seven days. ³ They also returned after five months by the same route with Asoka's gift of second Abhiśeka for Devānaṃpiya Tissa. ⁴

Devānaṃpiya Tissa's second deputation also, led by one of his ministers, Ariṭṭha by name, sailed from Jambukolapaṭṭana⁵ and disembarked at Tāmalitti. The Mahāvamsa Tikā also refers to this place as Jambukolapaṭṭana. ⁶ There was a highroad from the Northern gate of Anurādhapura to Jambukolapaṭṭana. ⁷ It is evident from these references that there was an important commercial town in the neighbourhood of this sea-port during this period.

All this evidence shows us that from the 3rd century

1. Mv., XIX, v. 6.

2. ibid, XIX, vv. 22, 38; SMP., I, p. 98.

3. ibid, XI, vv. 20-23.

4. ibid., XI, vv. 28-38.

5. ibid., XVIII, v. 7.

6. MvT. p. 402.

7. Mv., XIX, v. 24.

B.C. onwards Jambukolapaṭṭana became more important than any other port so far as the cultural and commercial relations with Northern India¹ concerned. It is also reasonable to infer that not only the area adjoining Jambukolapaṭṭana developed into a well organised commercial town, but also it was occupied mainly by Buddhists, for this was considered an important place of Buddhism during this period.

According to the Sammohavinodanī, during the the Brāhmaṇa² Tissa famine, when the Bhikkhus wanted to go over to India, they assembled at Nāgadīpa and took ship at Jambukolapaṭṭana. ¹ Further according to the Samantapāsādikā, when the Thera Tissadatta came from India to Ceylon, he too disembarked at the same port. ² Both the Mahāvamsa ³ and the Samantapāsādikā ⁴ inform us that there was a monastic centre in this city called Jambukola Vihāra. This Vihāra was so well known among the Buddhists as a pilgrim centre that even the people from Yonaraṭṭha came to worship the Cetiya in this Vihāra. ⁵ According to both the Rasavāṇinī ⁶ and the Sahassavatthu, ⁷ there

1. Sammohavinodanī, p. 446.

2. SMP., (Sin. ed.) II, p. 377.

3. Mv., XX, v. 25.

4. SMP., (Sin. ed.) II, p. 377.

5. SMP. II, p. 377.

6. Rsv., II, p. 38.

7. Sahassavatthu, p. 56.

were many hundreds of resident monks in Nāgadīpa. It should also be noted here that one of the eight Bo-saplings sprung up from the seeds of the sacred Boḍhi Tree was planted here.¹ All this evidence shows how this place grew up into a commercial centre and a sacred city of Buddhism.

Some of the other ports and trading centres in the coastal regions around the Island also undoubtedly formed important urban settlements. An epigraphic record assigned to about the 2nd century A.D., found on a rock in a ruined monastery near the seashore at Goḍavāya in the Māgampattu, Hambantota District, refers to a grant made to the monastery by a king named Gamaṇi Abaya, of the customs duties from the sea-port of Goḍapavata.² Thus it is probable that the first urban settlements of Ceylon grew up along the sea coast as commercial centres.

Village settlements, when transformed for political purposes into administrative centres, were called Pura or Nagara; thus Anurādhagāma,³ Tambapaṇṇi, and Upatissagāma later became Anurādhapura,⁴ Tambapaṇṇi Nagara⁵ and Upatissa Nagara.⁶ Thus

1. Mv., XIX, v. 59.

2. CJSg., II, p. 197. No. 586.

3. Mv., VII, vv. 43-45.

4. DV., IX, v. 35.

5. *ibid*, IX, v. 34.

6. *ibid*, IX, v. 36.

the administrative centres formed important urban settlements during the period under survey. It is strange that the Chronicles do not mention any provincial urban settlements where petty rulers exercised their administrative functions. But some of the pre-Christian cave inscriptions contain references to the existence of such settlements in different parts of the country.

Reference is made to a town called Nilaya (Nālaya-Nagarasi) in an inscription assigned to the period from the 3rd century B.C. to the 1st century A.D., found at Yaṭahalena Vihāra in the Kāgalla District.¹ Another inscription of the same period found at Lenagala Vihāra in the same District refers to a town named Batasa (Batasa Nagarasi).² An inscription assigned to about the 2nd century A.D., found at Āndāgala Vihāra in the Kurunāgala District, refers to a city called Ratavahanaka and a monastery of the same name.³ A provincial ruler by the name of Rocinara (one who was born of Rocinagara) is mentioned in another inscription near Teldeniya.⁴ Still another inscription speaks of a local ruler, of Mahiyaṅgana named Siva.⁵

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1. CJS.G., II, p. 204. No. 620.
 2. CJS.G., II, p. 204. No. 615.
 3. CJS.G., II, p. 212. No. 662.
 4. ASCAR., for 1935, p. 110.
 5. ASCAR., for 1952, p. G33.

Yet another inscription ascribed to 2nd 1st c. B.C., found at Bovattegala, in the extreme South of Ceylon, contains a reference to a ruling family of ten brothers (Dasabhātikarājā).¹ The names of these settlements ending with the word Nagara and other places where ruling families used to live, no doubt, were small administrative centres spread all throughout the country though it is difficult to ascertain their actual formation.

According to the Chronicles there were two urban settlements during the legendary period of Ceylon history. Of these two, Tambapaṇṇi was the first town where Vijaya resided and governed his kingdom.² The Dīpavaṃsa states that this town of Tam - bapaṇṇi was built by Vijaya on the most excellent river-bank, in the South, with suburbs all round.³ The second town was Upatissa Nagara. This was built by the Purohita Upatissa, and had well arranged markets, opulent, prosperous, extensive, beautiful and charming.⁴ After the death of Vijaya, the capital of Ceylon was transferred from Tambapaṇṇi to Upatissa Nagara⁵ and continued there up to the time of Paṇḍukābhaya. It was the

1. CJS.G., II, p. 99-100.

2. DV., IX, v. 31; Mv., VII, v. 39.

3. *ibid*, IX, v. 34.

4. *ibid*, IX, v. 36.

5. *ibid*, IX, vv. 4-5.

Prince Paṇḍukābhaya who built the city of Anurādhapura ¹ on the site of Anurādhagāma founded by Anurādha. ²

Of all the settlements referred to above no city has such a wealth of information in the Chronicles as Anurādhapura. This flourished for nearly nine centuries after Christ in all its splendour, but was chiefly a religious and administrative centre.

Paṇḍukābhaya in building up this city first of all fortified it by a parapet wall with four gates (dvāra), the outside of which he laid out four suburbs (dvāragāma). ³ He also built near the Western gate a tank called Abhayavāpi, a common cemetery (Mahāsusāna), a place of execution (Aghātanam) and a chapel for a goddess named the "Western Queen" and established the banyan tree of the Vessavaṇa and the palmyra tree of the Vyādhadeva. Separate places were also set for the Yonas and for the great sacrifices. ⁴ Different classes of people were allocated different quarters outside the city. It appears that the municipal organisation of this city was highly advanced. There were five hundred scavengers of the Caṇḍāla class, two hundred for cleaning the sewers one hundred and fifty for removing dead

1. Mv., X., v. 76.

2. *ibid*, VII. v. 43.

3. *ibid*. X, v. 88.

4. *ibid*. X, vv. 88-90.

bodies from the city and another one hundred and fifty as cemetery watchers. ¹

All these Caṇḍālas were settled in a separate village to the North-West of the common cemetery. ² To the North-East of this village, a cemetery called Nīcasusāna was established exclusively for the Caṇḍālas. ³

To the North of this cemetery, in between two rocky mountains, residential quarters were built for the hunters. ⁴ In the area between this place and the Gāmaṇī tank a hermitage was built for the ascetics of various denominations. ⁵ A residence for Nigṇaṇṭha Jotiya was built to the North of Nīcasusāna. ⁶ In this locality another Nigṇaṇṭha named Giri and many other recluses were also settled and Nigṇaṇṭha Kumbhaṇḍa was provided with a separate hermitage. ⁷ The locality to the West of this and to the East of the hunters' quarters, was allocated for five hundred families of heretical beliefs. ⁸ He also built

1. Mv., X.vv.91-92.

2. ibid, X.v. 93.

3. ibid.X.v.94.

4. ibid,X,v.95.

5. ibid, X.96.

6. ibid.v. 97.

7. ibid.vv.98-99.

8. ibid.v. 100.

a hermitage for Paribbājakas between Jotiya's temple and the Gāmaṇī tank,¹ and residences for Ājīvakas and Brāhmaṇas were also built there.² Here and there in this city he also built Sivikāsālā³ and Sotthisālā.⁴

To the East of the city he built a suitable dwelling for the Yakkha Kālavela and another for Cittarāja below the Abhaya tank.⁵ The Yakkhiṇī named Valavāmukhī who used to live near the Southern gate of the city, was provided with a permanent residence inside the city near the king's palace.⁶ Having thus organised the city, he appointed his uncle Abhaya to the post of guardian of the city (nagaraguttika).⁷

According to the Mahāvamsa the Nagaraguttika was the person who was in charge of the administration of the city during the night (ratti rajjam).⁸ The Mahāvamsa Tīkā also states that the Nagaraguttika is the person whose duty it was to protect and administer (rakkhāvaranagutti) the city during the night.⁹ Dr. Rāhula thinks that ^{he} was perhaps the ^{to} prototype of

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1. Mv., v. 101.
 2. ibid. v. 102.
 3. See, Anga, p. 374.
 4. See, Anga, p. 374.
 5. Mv., X.v. 84.
 6. ibid., X, vv. 85-86.
 7. ibid. v. 8.
 8. ibid.
 9. MvT., p. 293.

the mayor of later times.¹ But this interpretation does not seem to be quite correct.

The Chavaka Jātaka² speaks of a Nagaraguttika³ who was only a town sentinel. According to the Kanavera Jātaka when a dangerous robber made the city unsafe, the residents went to the king with the request that he would arrest the great robber (mahācoram), upon which the king charged his Nagaraguttika with the arrest and execution of this man. In the Sulasā Jātaka, the person who arrested the thief who broke into the houses in the night was a Nagaraguttika.⁴ According to the Bandhanāgāra - Jātaka, it was the Nagaraguttika who arrested the Bodhisatta who was trying to escape at midnight from his house (atha imam - Nagaraguttikā aggaheṣum).⁵ In this reference the plural form Nagaraguttikā is very significant. This clearly shows that there were more than one Nagaraguttika to watch over the city during the night. In the past, as today, there could not have been more than one mayor of any city whatever its extent. Further it was not the duty of the mayor to catch robbers in the night. The

1. Rāhula, Early History of Buddhism in Ceylon. p. 17.

2. J., III, p. 30.

3. ibid, III, p. 59.

4. ibid, III, p. 436.

5. J ., II, p. 140.

Milindapañha also says that the meditative monk should keep himself awake during the whole night by standing, sitting and walking in the same way as the Nagaraguttika does.¹ Further, the Atthasālinī explains the term Nagaraguttika as follows: "Nagaraguttika is the person who having sat in the centre of the city where four roads meet, examines all those who enter the city during the night as to whether they are outsiders or the inhabitants of the city."² These references prove that Nagaraguttika's functions in no way resembled those of the mayor of later times. It is therefore most probable that the Nagaraguttika was an officer whose duties resembled those of a modern police officer of high rank.³

The plan of the city of Knurādhapura cannot be ascertained from the account given in the Mahāvamsa alone. But this can be seen clearly from archaeological excavations⁴ and the description given in the Mahāvamsa.⁵ According to the Mahāvamsa it was Devānaṃpiya Tissa who planned this city, allocating different sites for religious buildings of varied nature.⁶ Thus he developed it predominantly as a religious

1. Milinda, p.345.

2. Atthasālinī, Samuddesakathā Vaṇṇanā, 'Cittam'.

3. P.T.S. Dictionary.

4. Memoirs of the Archaeological Survey of Ceylon Vol.I.&III.

5. Mv., XX, vv.10-28.

6. ibid.

centre.

Archaeological evidence shows two sections of the city, the inner Citadel (Antopura) and the outer city (Bahinagara or Bahipura). The area of the inner Citadel contained the king's palace and probably residential quarters of other officers. All these buildings were constructed of wood or bricks, laid in mud. No durable buildings have been excavated in this city. There were four gates, facing the cardinal directions, and connected by four main roads,¹ perhaps leading to four great sea-ports, Mahātitttha in the North-West, Jambukolapattana in the North, Gonagāmapattana (on the Eastern coast) and the sea-port at the mouth of Mahākandara river (probably in the North).²

The monasteries and other religious buildings were situated to the North and South of the Citadel.³ The ruins of the Mahāvihāra, the famous centre of Buddhist learning with an international repute, can be seen in the South. The remains of the buildings of Uttaravihāra, the famous rival school of Buddhism, was situated to the North of the Citadel. The ruins of the four Dvāragāmas⁴ at the entrance to the four gates of

1. Mv., XV, vv. 1, 3, 11; XVI. v. 4; IX, v. 24.

2. Rāhula, Early History of Buddhism in Ceylon, p. 21.

3. Memoirs of Archaeological Survey of Ceylon, Vol. 1. pp. 8-27.

4. Dāṭhāvamsa, ch. v. p. 36.

the city also can be seen in this site. In these Dvāragāmas there were four market places (Niyama=P.Nigama). The Tonigala Rock Inscription of Srī Meghavarṇa, the son of Mahāsena, informs us that there was a market town called Kalahumana in the North of the area included within the city of Anurādhapura.¹ Parānavitāna also says that "an unpublished rock inscription at Labuāṭabān-digala, which begins " Nakarahi pajimapasahi Mahatubaka niyam-atanhi" shows that a similar market town named Mahatubaka existed in the East. Perhaps, there were such Nigamas, in the west and the South of the municipal area."²

The archaeological evidence is not inconsistent with the literary, and shows that the plan of this city which was by traditions established by Paṇḍukābhaya in an area of sixteen yojanas in circumference,³ was not altered either by Devānaṃpiya Tissa or by any other subsequent ruler. The only thing they did was the addition of some magnificent monuments to the city. For example, Duṭṭha Gāmaṇī/built Ruvanvāli Dāgāba and Lovāpāsāda;⁴ In the North of the city, Abhayagiri was built by

1. EZ., III, p. 181.

2. *ibid.*

3. Rājaraṭnākaraṇḍa, (Colombo 1907). p. 5.

4. Mv., Chap. 30; & 31.

5. Mv., XXXIII, v. 82.

6. Mv., XXXVII, v. 33.

Vaṭṭagāmanī (88-77 B.C.).¹ Mahāsena (274-302 A.D.) built the Jetavanārāma to the North of the city.² Thus the evolution of Anurādhagāma into Anurādhapura took place both as the capital of the Island and a religious city and it continued to flourish in its full splendour during our period of survey.

Closely connected with the administrative centres, particularly with the capital city, was the fortress towns. When the kingdom of Anurādhapura fell into the hands of Elāra (2nd - century B.C.),³ it appears that he built defensive fortresses at every strategic point to protect his kingdom from the Sinhalese rulers operating from Māgama. Both according to the Mahāvamsa⁴ and the Rasavāhinī⁵ there were twenty four fortresses constructed along the Mahavāligaṅga. These fortresses were, no doubt, merely outposts. In between these and Anurādhapura there was a real fortress town called Vijitapura.

This city was surrounded by a strong parapet wall of eighteen cubits in height,⁶ and defended by three moats (tiparikham) a dry-moat, a mud-moat and a water-moat.⁷ There

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1. Mv., XXXIII, v. 82.
 2. Mv., XXXVII, v. 33.
 3. Mv., XXI, vv. 13-14.
 4. ibid, XXV, vv. 7-15.
 5. Rsv., II, p. 71.
 6. Mv., XXV, v. 28; Rsv., II, p. 72.
 7. Mv., XXV, v. 28. Rsv. II, p. 72.

were four gates, ¹ which were made out of wrought iron, difficult for enemies to destroy. ² Above the four gates there were four gopuras (a tower like structure) where hundreds of soldiers guarded the fortress day and night. ³

In the area between Vijātapura and Anurādhapura there was another fortress town called Mahela Nagara. ⁴ According to the Rasavāhinī, this city also was defended by a parapet wall sixteen cubits in height and by three moats, as was in the case of Vijitapura. In addition to the Gopuras, there were Attālas in this city. ⁵ Attālaka was the gate-structure projecting from the wall right and left of the actual gateway, manned in case of emergency by soldiers who could defend the entrance from both sides. ⁶ This fortress, unlike Vijitapura, had only one gate, made of iron. ⁷ The fact that it took for four months to destroy each of these cities, ⁸ shows how strongly fortified they were during the reign of Elāra. In the area between Mahela Nagara and Anurādhapura there were 32 other fortresses of similar

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1. Mv. XXIV.v. 27,
 2. ibid, XXV.v. 28.
 3. ibid, XXV.v. 30; Rsv. II.p.72.
 4. ibid,XXV,v.48;Rsv.,II.p.105.
 5. Rsv.,II.p.105.
 6. Geiger, Culture of Ceylon in Mediaeval Times,p,58.
 7. Mv.,XXV.v.49.
 8. ibid.,XXV,v.47,49;Rsv.II.p.73.

strength. ¹ Our sources do not furnish us with any detailed information about these. But the Rasavāhinī says that on the day Duṭṭhagāmaṇī capture^d Anurādhapura, Dāṭhāsena, one of the paladins of the former, destroyed thirty two fortresses lying between two mountains. ² It is evident from this that they were not the fortresses of the kind of Vijitapura or Mahelanagara, but mere check points situated between Mahela Nagara and Anurādhapura.

During this period Māgama was another important urban settlement situated in the Southern kingdom of Rohaṇa. According to the Mahāvamsa it was Mahānāga, the younger brother of Devānaṃpiya Tissa, who established this settlement in the 3rd century B.C. ³ This was the capital of the Rōhāṇa kingdom for four generations up to Kākavaṇṇa Tissa. From this centre of administration, Kākavaṇṇa Tissa extended his sway as far as Dīghavāpi in the North-East and Kalyāṇī in the West, ⁴ and brought it to the supreme position in the South.

The plan of this city also may have been similar to that of Anurādhapura, for Mahānāga at the time of his flight was the Uparāja and may have been well acquainted with the arrangements of the city of Anurādhapura. It is reasonable to suppose

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1. Mv., XXV.v. 75; Rsv., II.p.106.
 2. Rsv.II.p. 106.
 3. Mv., XXII,v.8.
 4. HC.Vol.I.Pt.I,p.148-150.

that he built this city on the same pattern. According to the Sīhalavatthu there was a well-known Cetiya near the Western gate (paccimadvāra) of Mahāgāma.¹ This suggests that this city also had well arranged streets for people of different social grades. The Sahassavatthu speaks of a Maṅgalavīthi (auspicious street) in this city.² This was probably the street leading to the palace, and where the residential quarters of Government officials were situated. A section of this city was known as Rājagāma (Royal village) where Kākavaṇṇa Tissa used to give alms to thousands of monks every day.³ The Sīhalavatthu also speaks of a Mahāvihāra in Mahāgāma, where there were twelve thousand resident monks.⁴ It is most likely that this was the monastery situated in the Rājagāma referred to in the Sahassavatthu. Perhaps it was situated in the Royal village (Rājagāma) not far from the palace.

We have seen earlier⁵ that most of the kuṭumbikas of Rohana, at that time, lived in Mahāgāma. Thus it can be well inferred that the average inhabitants of this city were generally well-to-do people both economically and socially. People of low

1. Sīhalavatthu, p. 104.

2. Sv., p. 53.

3. SV., p. 80.

4. SI^hV., p. 165.

5. See, supra, pp. 123-124.

social prestige may generally have been forbidden to reside inside the city. The Sīhalavatthu tells us of a goldsmith who lived outside the city of Mahāgāma.¹ On the whole the people of Rohaṇa and particularly those of Mahāgāma were noted for their piety.

There were a few other places in the Southern kingdom which assumed the characteristics of urban settlements owing to the political activities of the local rulers who lived there for a short period. The most noted of such settlements were Kalyāṇī, Giri Nagara, and Seru.²

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1. ^hSI_hV., p.107.

2. HC.Vol.I.Pt.I.p.148.

CHAPTER VIIOccupations.

As the social stratifications of early Ceylon was based on occupations, the professional life of the people during this period must be discussed. This is dealt with under (a) Agriculture and cattle-rearing, (b) trade, (c) intellectual professions, (d) military occupations (e) and cottage industries and crafts.

The fact that the early Aryan colonists who came from India opened up new settlements in areas where river water was easily available ¹ is clear evidence to show that they were agricultural people. When the ever increasing population began to spread throughout the country, storages of water became an urgent necessity, particularly in areas where was no river water easily available. This primary need was met with by the building of tanks in large numbers by kings and nobles. ² The Mahāvamsa incidentally refers to the construction of such tanks by particular kings. ³ A few inscriptional records of the period also refer to some of these tanks. ⁴ The names of a few villages also imply that they were located near tanks. ⁵

1. MvT. p. 261.

2. See, Angira, p. 316.

3. Mv., XXXIV, vv. 32-33; XXXV, vv. 5, 94; XXXVI, vv. 3-6; XXXVI, v. 130; XXXVII, vv. 47-50.

4. EZ., I, p. 66-74, No. 6; 208-211, No. 18; 252-256, No. 22.

5. See, supra, p. 276.

The evolution of the system of irrigation during this period will not be discussed here.¹ But in order to understand the importance attached to agricultural activities, at least the foremost tank builders of the period are worth mentioning.

Three kings of this period are well known as tank-builders. Saddhātissa is credited with the construction of 18 tanks.² These are not referred to by name. But according to the Pūjāvaliya it was Saddhātissa who built the famous Padaviya Vāva.³ The next king known as a tank-builder was Vasabha. According to the Mahāvamsa he built eleven tanks and twelve canals.⁴ The Pūjāvaliya refers to the number of tanks built by Vasabha as sixteen, all of which are named.⁵ The Rājāvaliya agrees with the Pūjāvaliya only with regard to the names, but it gives the grand total as twelve.⁶ Whatever the discrepancies that occur in these sources as to their exact number, it is certain that Vasabha built many tanks.

By far the most important tank-builder of this period was Mahāsena, to whom is ascribed the construction of 16

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1. For a detail account of the irrigation system in early Ceylon, see, JRAS. (CB) New Series, Vol. VII. pp. 43-52.
 2. Rjv., p. 44.
 3. Pjv., p. 723.
 4. Mv., XXXV. vv. 84-94.
 5. Pjv., p. 239.
 6. Rjv., p. 33-34.

tanks and a canal.¹ The Pūjāvaliya also speaks of 16 tanks and a canal,² while the Rājāvaliya³ and the Rājaratnākara⁴ contain references to seventeen tanks. Of all his works Minneriya is the most famous and extensive.

An idea of the extent of paddy land to the North of Mahavāligāṅga may be gained from the land brought under cultivation after the completion of the Minneriya tank alone. The Pūjāvaliya refers to the cultivation of 20,000 karīsas of land (about 80,000 acres) under this scheme of irrigation.⁵ This is no doubt an exaggeration. According to modern calculation the irrigation capacity of this tank is not more than 4,000 acres.⁶ We have seen above⁷ that many other tanks, similar in size, are also known to have functioned during this period. The inscriptions of the 1st, 2nd and 3rd centuries name nearly 150 tanks and canals which are not mentioned in the Chronicles.⁸ The total area brought under cultivation, undoubtedly, would then be very considerable. This is also confirmed by inscriptions recording

1. Mv., XXXVII, vv. 47-50.

2. Pjv., p. 296.

3. Rjv. p. 37.

4. Rjk. p. 26.

5. Pjv., p. 296.

6. JRAS (CB), New Series, Vol. VII, p. 500.

7. See, supra, p. 316.

8. JRAS (CB), New Series, Vol. VII, p. 49.

donations of paddy lands to the monasteries. ¹

Not only in the North but also in the Southern kingdom of Rohaṇa, the cultivation of paddy was in prosperous condition. According to the Sammohavinodanī there were twelve thousand resident monks each at Tissamahā Vihāra and the Cittapabbata monastery. When the Brāhmaṇatissa famine broke out during the reign of Vaṭṭagāmaṇī Abhaya, there was grain in those monasteries to last for three years. ² This ~~alone~~ ^{alone} shows how prosperous paddy cultivation was in Rohaṇa during the period under survey.

Thus by the end of the 3rd century A.D., the greater part of the Dry Zone areas both in the North-Central and the South-Eastern parts of Ceylon were brought under wet paddy cultivation. This shows clearly that the inhabitants of this country depended on agriculture as their main source of livelihood.

According to the Mahāvamsa, Girikaṇḍa Siva, Paṇḍukābhaya's uncle, cultivated an area of 100 karīsas (about 800-acres). ³ Suvannapālī, the beautiful daughter of Girikaṇḍa Siva, went herself to the field in a palanquin with her retinue, carrying food for her father and the reapers. ⁴ This shows that agriculture

1. EZ., I. pp. 252-256, No. 22.

2. SNV., p. 445.

3. Mv., X, v. 30.

4. ibid, X, vv. 30-31.

was considered a most honourable and important occupation. Not only in times of peace but also in times of emergency the members of the royal families took part in agricultural activities. ¹

According to the Rasavāhinī Duṭṭhagāmaṇī, just before declaring war against Elāra, organised a food production campaign on a large scale wherever possible. While he himself cultivated in Rohana, he sent his brother Saddhātissa to carry out agricultural activities in Dīghavāpi. ²

Agriculture was looked on as honourable not only by the members of the royal families but also by the nobles. According to the Rasavāhinī Mahānelā, one of the paladins of Duṭṭhagāmaṇī, was born in a family of great wealth. When he was trying to spend his time without doing any professional work, his parents told him that he would not maintain the dignity of his family unless he followed an occupation either in agriculture or in trade. ³

Kings and nobles celebrated both the harvest festival and the sowing festival on a grand scale. When Girikaṇḍa Śiva held the harvest festival, his beautiful young daughter also participated in it with her retinue. ⁴ When ^a wealthy Kuṭumbika of

1. Rsv., II, p. 113.

2. *ibid*, II, p. 69.

3. Rsv., II, p. 113.

4. Mv., X, vv. 30-31.

Mahela Nagara near Anurādhapura held a sowing festival (vappa-maṅgala), hee invited hundreds of people to celebrate the occasion.¹ At this festival ploughing was done with the help of pure white oxen (sabba seta balivadde) washed with turmeric water.² Festoons of shell-fish were tied round their necks and their horns were decorated with sheaths of gold and silver. The people, who were decked with beautiful clothes and ornaments, after lending a hand with the ploughing, enjoyed the festive meal. The women, who remained at the farmer's house enjoyed themselves in a similar manner.³

Ploughing with oxen was the usual form of wet paddy cultivation.⁴ Only oxen were made use of for the purpose of ploughing. There is not, so far as I have seen, a single reference to show that either buffaloes or cows were used for ploughing during this period.

The Sīhalavatthu speaks of an agricultural labourer (kasikammakāraka) who went to a certain famous blacksmith in Anurādhapura to get his agricultural equipment (kasiparikk-hārāni) made.⁵ Although this does not specifically say what

1. Rsv.II.p. 166.

2. Water mixed with turmeric powder is considered capable of purifying dirt of any nature even to-day.

3. ~~RSM.~~ II.p. 166.

4. *ibid.*

5. Sihv. p. 26.

these tools were, the fact that he went to a blacksmith undoubtedly proves that he used ploughshares etc.

Rice was the main crop produced from agriculture. Our sources frequently refer to rice as sāli. This term in modern Ceylon is used only for a particular type of rice, but in early literature it seems to imply rice of any kind. According to the Sīhalavatthu, king Saddhātissa in ^sdisguise worked as a labourer in a Sālikkhetta and offered alms to the monks from the paddy he obtained from the farmer. ¹ The Mahāvamsa also tells us how Mahācūli Mahātissa gave alms in a similar manner after working in a sālikkhetta as a labourer. ² The Rasavāhinī also refers to a large field of sāli rice which belonged to a kuṭumbika who lived in a village to the North of Mahavāligāṅga(Uttarapasse). ³ Another paddy field of 500 karīsas, which belonged to a wealthy man named Canda Suriya in Rohana is also referred to in the same work. ⁴

According to the Tonigala Inscription there were three seasons of harvest or crop during the year. They were known as "Pitṭadahasā, Akalahasā and Madahasā." ⁵ These three seasons of crop can be seen even today in the villages of the

1. Sihy., p. 32.

2. Mv., XXXIV, v. 3.

3. Rsv. II, p. 191.

4. Rsv. II, p. 36.

5. EZ., III, p. 177.

North-Central Province where fields are irrigated by means of tanks and do not depend on the uncertain rainfall. Of the names of the three crops occurring in this inscription, two can be identified with their modern equivalents. Akala is the crop now known as Yala. The Yala crop is sown at the time of the South-West monsoon which, for these parts of Ceylon, brings only a small quantity of rain. The principal harvest of the year in all parts of Ceylon is now known as Māha and is sown during the North-East monsoon. The name corresponding to this in the present inscription is Pitāda. Parānavitana also says that "there is no doubt that this word pitāda stands for Māha as its being first mentioned points to it as the principal harvest of the year. The third crop called Made in this inscription is still known as māda (middle) and is so called because it intervenes between the two major harvests. It is the least important of the three; and in many a year when the tanks are not full ^{is} altogether neglected. This crop is not known in many districts of Ceylon, including the greater part of the low country, where the cultivation of paddy depends entirely on the rainfall".¹

Although the Chronicles do not refer to hēna cultivation there is no doubt that this form cultivation was known in ancient Ceylon. An area of forest is cleared

1. EZ., III, p. 185.

by felling the trees and burning the shrubs, and is sown with dry corn, such as gingelly (tila), beans (māsa) and etc.¹

References to the sesamum oil, which was used both as a medicine² and food,³ show us that gingelly was a common crop produced from hēna cultivation. The Mahāvamsa also reports that sesamum oil was extensively used in order to make the concrete foundation of the Mahāthūpa still harder and more solid.⁴ According to the Sīhalavatthu a person named Tissa of Anurādhapura used frequently to offer sesamum oil to the Sa^gṇha in large quantities during the reign of king Sa^dhātissa.⁵

Another important crop produced by hēna cultivation was beans (māsa). Both the Mahāvamsa⁶ and the Rasavāhinī inform us that the six brothers of Goṭhayimbara went to the forest and cut down the trees in order to lay out a beanfield (māsakkhetta). The Rasavāhinī also refers to a large beanfield in a village called Brahmacula in the Southern Province of Ceylon. According to this^s story it appears that this beanfield was the common property of all the villagers and beans were possibly the main crop cultivated in this village.⁸ According to another story in

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1. Sihv., p. 97,98.
 2. Mv., XXXIV, v. 56; Rsv., II, p. 153.
 3. Rsv., II, p. 166, 183.
 4. Mv., 29,12.
 5. Siy.p.3.
 6. Mv., 23,51.
 7. Rsv., II, p. 87.
 8. ibid, p. 40-41.

the same work, there were two kinds of beans, the rājamāsa (white beans) and the kālamāsa (black beans) ¹ A provincial chief named Vilasa of the Kadalisa village was very famous for his wealth in paddy, beans and other kinds of grain. Once the king (Saddhātissa?), in order to test his wealth, ordered him to send paddy and beans to the palace. The latter sent 500 cart-loads each of sāli paddy, rājamāsa and kālamāsa. ² This is probably an exaggeration; but there is no doubt that beans were an extensively cultivated crop .

Green peas (mugga) also were another favourite crop of the villagers. ³ Millet (kangu) was cultivated in dry land. ⁴ Various kinds of fruits such as pumpkin (lābuja) and ash-pumpkin (P= kumbhanda= S. puhu) were grown in hēnas as well as in home gardens. The Mahāvamsa records that Aṇḍagāmaṇī Abhaya started growing such fruits everywhere as part of a drive to increase the food supply in his kingdom. ⁵ The Mahāvamsa also refers to a heap of pumpkins (lābu) in comparison with the heap of heads of the enemies of Paṇḍukābhaya. ⁶ According

1. Rsv., p. 131.

2. *ibid.*

3. *ibid.*, II, p. 131.

4. Mv., XXXII, v. 30.

5. Mv., XXXV, vv. 6-7.

6. Mv., X, v. 72.

to the Sihavattthu there was^a a field of pumpkin (lābuja khetta) belonging to a peasant named Kambuddha during the reign of Saddhātissa.¹

From ~~an~~ incidental references in the Mahāvamsa it appears that arecanut palm also was cultivated.² Even though Dr. Rāhula says that "it is strange that we do not hear often enough about coconut plantation during this period",³ a reference to both coconut and palmyra plantation, particularly in Rohaṇa, can be adduced from the Mahāvamsa itself. The Mahāvamsa tells us how Theraputtābhaya used to pluck fruits by striking coconut and palmyra trees with an iron rod 38 inches in circumference and sixteen cubits in length when he was twelve years of age.⁴ The Rasavāhinī also refers to a large coconut estate which belonged to the Kappakandara Vihāra in Rohaṇa.⁵

A reference to a sugar-mill⁶ also shows that sugar-cane also was cultivated and the fact that weaving was extensively known in Ceylon during this period⁷ shows that there was some cotton plantation. Although we do not come across references to

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1. Sihv., p. 97-98.
 2. Mv., XXVI, v. 47.
 3. History of Buddhism in Ceylon, 239.
 4. Mv., XXIII, vv. 58-59.
 5. Rsv., II, p. 94.
 6. Mv., XXXIV, vv. 4-5.
 7. See, ~~Supra~~ pp. 362-363.

many crops cultivated in highlands, it is indeed possible, that a greater variety of crops was cultivated both in permanent garden-lands and hēna-lands, for we have inscriptional references to trees and shrubs, coconut trees, betel, oranges, plantains, jack (Bulat doḍam kel kos) and fruits of other kinds which were considered important towards the end of the Anurādhapura period.¹

According to the Mahāvamsa chewing of betel with pieces of dried arecanut and with a little powdered lime (cunna) was a widespread custom in Ceylon.² The Sahasavatthu also contains a reference to this custom during the reign of Kākavaṇṇa Tissa.³ Betel was the last compulsory item to be offered to the monks at an alms giving ceremony even at that time.⁴ Hence there is no doubt that betel also was grown widely.

Spice commodities such as black pepper (marīca), ginger (singivera), turmeric (haliddi) and the like also were grown here and there. The Mahāvamsa records how Duṭṭhagāmaṇī ate black pepper without offering a portion of it to the Saṅgha,

1. EZ. I, p. 113-120.

2. Mv., XXXV, vv. 62-64.

3. SHV. p. 80.

4. *ibid.*

and in expiation built a cetiya called Maricavaṭṭi.¹ Both the Mahāvamsa² and the Rasavāhinī³ refer to the hilly districts (Malaya) as the place where turmeric and ginger were grown in abundance.⁴ The Sahassavatthu also refers to turmeric as an important commodity. Garlic (lasuna) was another widely cultivated crop.⁵ Thus we see that wet paddy cultivation, dry cultivation, and hēna cultivation were carried out effectively, in order to meet with the demand of the ever increasing population.

In spite of development in agriculture there occurred several famines in Ceylon during this period, due to political upheavals or to severe drought or both. During the reign of Duṭṭhagāmaṇī there occurred a famine called Akkhakkhāyika.⁶ We have seen earlier⁷ the reason why this famine was so named. The Mahāvamsa Tīkā further says that according to the Commentaries this was called the Pāsānachātaka famine,⁸ (the famine which led the people to eat stones). The second famine occurred during the

1. Mv., XXV.v. 114; XXVI,vv.16-17.

2. Mv., XXVII,v. 21.

3. Rsv., II, p. 145, 166.

4. SHV., p. 80.

5. *ibid.*

6. Mv., XXXII,v. 29.

7. See, *supra*, p. 127.

8. MvT., p. 593.

reign of Vaṭṭagāmaṇī Abhaya.¹ This broke out because of a revolt raised by a Brāhmaṇa named Tīya, and hence it was called Brāhmanatīya famine. According to the Pāli Commentaries, this was the most severe famine ever experienced in Ceylon. It became so acute that people even ate human flesh (manussā manussa maṃsam khādantā).² According to the Rasavāhinī this famine lasted for twelve years, during which period there was no rain.³

During the reign of Muḍḍanāga there was another famine called the Ekanālika.⁴ There was yet another during the reign of Siri Saṅghabodhi,⁵ owing to a severe drought. But a statement of Hiuen Tsiang in the 7th century A.D. helps us to visualise the general conditions of agriculture when the country was free from such troubles as those mentioned above. He says "that the soil is rich and fertile; the climate is hot; the ground is regularly cultivated; flowers and fruits are produced in abundance."⁶

Animal Husbandry:

Rearing of cattle also formed an important occupation in ancient Ceylon as it did in India, for it is obvious that cattle must play an important role in^a country where wet

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1. Mv., XXXIII, vv. 37-40.
 2. Rsv., II, p.15.
 3. ibid, 14.
 4. Mv., XXXVI, v. 20.
 5. ibid, XXVI, v. 74.
 6. Hiuen Tsiang, Book, X.p.235.

paddy cultivation is practised. On the other hand this was an important source of the country's economy. Hence cattle were reared for two purposes, milk and agriculture.

Milk-rice (pāyāsa) was one of the most common meals offered to the Saṅgha during this period. Kākavanna Tissa, on the occasion of the naming ceremony of Duṭṭhagāmaṇī, invited twelve thousand monks and offered them milk-rice (pāyāsa).¹ Duṭṭhagāmaṇī established 44 refectories to serve monks every day with milk-rice mixed with honey.² When Vasabha fled and took refuge in the Mahāvihāra, it is said that he was fed by the monks there with milk-rice.³

The price of an ordinary cow normally ranged between 8 and 12 kahāpanas.⁴ Clarified butter, ghee and curd were prepared from milk. Butter and ghee were frequently offered to the monks both as food⁵ and medicine.⁶ They were sometimes used as cooking oil⁷ and for offering lightings in shrines. Duṭṭhagāmaṇī offered butter for the purpose of lighting a thousand lamps every day at twelve such places.⁸

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1. Mv., XXII, vv. 65-70.
 2. ibid, XXXII, v. 39.
 3. ibid, XXXV, v. 65.
 4. Rsv., II, p. 32; AA., p. 277.
 5. Mv., XXII, v. 45.
 6. Rsv., II, p. 176.
 7. Mv., XXXII, v. 40.
 8. ibid. XXII, v. 37.

While milk, butter, ghee and curd were obtained from cows, bulls were used for ploughing the fields and for transport. We have seen earlier ¹ how the ploughing was done with the help of oxen. Once a wealthy provincial chief is said to have sent to the king various kinds of grain in one thousand five hundred cart-loads drawn by three thousand oxen. ² According to the Rasavāhaṇī when prince Sāli was appointed Uparāja, the people of the hilly districts (malaya) brought him various kinds of presents loaded on one hundred carts pulled by two hundred oxen. ³ Merchants too transported their goods by means of carts pulled by oxen. ⁴ ~~The~~ Cattle rearing was carried on such a large scale in Ceylon during this period that there were separate villages for cowherds, as we have seen in the previous chapter. ⁵ Thus it is clear that ~~the~~ animal husbandry formed an important occupation.

But it is to be noted that we do not come across a single reference to show that ~~the~~ Cattle were reared in Ceylon for meat. As we have seen earlier, ⁶ during the reign of Bhātiya, beef-eating was totally forbidden among the high caste people.

1. See, supra, p. 320.

2. Rsv., II, p. 131.

3. Rsv., II, p. 116-117.

4. Mv., XXVIII, v. 21; Sihv., p. 15.

5. See, supra, p. 236 ff

6. See, supra, p. 173.

Those who used to eat beef were considered Candālas.¹ Dr. Malalasekara states² that Bhātiya summoned the butchers and lowered their social status to that of the scavengers (candālas) and that later he married the daughter of a butcher. But according to the Sammohavinodanī these were not butchers (goghātakas), but merely beef-eaters (gomamsa khādake).³ But there is no doubt that when beef-eating was prohibited the prohibition of killing cattle was also included in the injunction.

On the other hand it is noteworthy that Ceylon, being predominantly a Buddhist country particularly after the advent of Mahinda, adhered to the custom of eating the flesh of other animals. This was not looked down upon in high class society. According to the Mahāvamsa, roast meat was a special delicacy in the pre-Buddhist society in Ceylon.⁴ Often the meat was roasted over a glowing embers and such a preparation was called āṅgāra-mamsa. Even after the advent of Mahinda the eating of flesh of other animals seems to have been widely in vogue.⁵ Not only people themselves ate meat, but also they often offered it to the monks.⁶ Meat was a compulsory dish in a royal meal.⁷

1. SNV., p. 440.

2. Dictionary of Pāli Proper Names, Vol. II, p. 371.

3. SNV., p. 440.

4. Mv., X, vv. 14-16.

5. Rsv., II, p. 78, 115.

6. *ibid*, p. 124, 128.

7. *ibid*, p. 120.

Frequent references are made to the eating of venison (migamamsa), ¹ wild-boar (sūkaramamsa), ² peacock (mayūramamsa), ³ hare (sasamamsa), ⁴ parrot (sukamamsa), ⁵ and snipe (vattakamamsa), ⁶ Of these various kinds of meat, the flesh of the peacock was considered the most delicious and rare. ⁷

Trade.

The Mercantile profession also was considered as respectable as agriculture and cattle-rearing in early Ceylon. The convention that the people of the Vaisya class should normally follow either agriculture or trade as their occupations ⁸ shows how far they were caste-minded when they had to decide over a means of livelihood. Sometimes they followed trade side by side with agriculture.

An inscriptional record assigned to the period about the 1st century B.C., found in the Koravakgala area in the Yāla District, refers to one such man named Siva (Kasaka ca vani ca-Sivasa). ⁹ The Rasavāhinī also refers to a wealthy farmer who was engaged in foreign trade in addition to his agricultural activities. ¹⁰ It is evident from this that only those who

1. Rsv., p. 78.

2. ibid., p. 115, 132.

3. ibid, p. 27, 132.

4. ibid, p. 128.

5. ibid, p. 132.

6. ibid. p. 132.

7. ibid, p. 127.

8. ibid., II, p. 36.

9. JRASCB., Vol. II. New Series, P. 132, No. 59.

10. Rsv., II. p. 191-192.

were economically well established could carry out trading activities of this kind. Hence it is obvious that the merchants in Ceylon at this period were not as numerous as agriculturists.

According to the Valāhassa Jātaka, even before the Anyans migrated to this country, the Yakkhiṇīs (which term presumably implies the female aborigines) who lived in Sirīsavatthu in the Island of Laṅkā, used to lure into their city merchants shipwrecked on the coast between Kalyāṇi (Kālaṇiya) and Nāgādīpa (Jaffna Peninsula). On one occasion they captured ~~five hundred~~ five hundred merchants and the chief Yakkhiṇī took the chief of the merchants for her husband.¹ According to the Divyāvadāna Vijaya is also said to have belonged to a family of merchants.² Pliny informs us that four envoys were sent by the Sinhalese king of the day to Emperor Claudius, in the company of a freedman of Annius Plocamus, who being caught by the North winds while sailing round Arabia, drifted to a sea-port in Ceylon, and was treated with consideration when brought before the king.³ According to Sir Mortimer Wheeler⁴ recent discoveries of Latin and Greek inscriptions containing the name of Annius Plocamus in the Eastern Desert of Egypt, indicate that the embassy of the king of Ceylon to Rome must be assigned to a date considerably earlier than the

1. J., II, p. 89-91.

2. Divyāvadāna, Ed. Cowell, E.B. & Neill, p. 523.

3. Pliny, VI. 84-91.

4. Mortimer Wheeler, Rome Beyond the Imperial frontiers, London, 1954, p.128.

reign of Claudius. It is, therefore quite probable that the trade mission sent by Bhātika Abhaya is the same as the one referred to by Pliny, for the Mahāvamsa Tīkā tells us that Bhātika Abhaya sent envoys to the country of Romanukha, and obtained large quantities of coral with which he had a net made to adorn the Mahāthūpa at Anurādhapura.¹ Coral was, and is, a well known product of the Mediterranean, and the name, Romanukha as C.W. Nicholas has pointed out can easily be explained as formed by the addition of the pleonastic suffix -ka to the Latin 'Romanus'. Nicholas further argues that according to the traditional chronology, Bhātika Abhaya reigned from 22 B.C. to 7 A. D. which period falls within the principate of Augustus, and the inscription mentioning Annius Plocamus referred to above is dated in the 35th year of a Caesar who can be no other than Augustus.² Thus it is quite likely that Ceylon had commercial intercourse with distant countries in the West also.

The existence of a large number of ports in Ceylon³ also indicates the importance of the export and import trade at this period. Of the ports, Mahātīttha was the most important, and we have seen in the previous chapter how Mahātīttha gradually grew up into a commercial town.⁴ The archaeological survey too

1. MvT., p. 630.

2. HC. Vol. Pt. I. p. 225.

3. See, supra, p. 292 ff

4. See, supra, p. 292 ff

has revealed the remains of Hindu temples, Tamil pottery and other signs of the settlement of foreign people there. ¹ The Rasavāhinī speaks of a very rich export and import merchant of Mahātittha, who regularly went abroad for trade with a fleet of cargo boats. ² The personal name 'Samuda' or 'Hamuda' (meaning - Ocean) found in epigraphic records of the early pre-Christian centuries also suggests that sea-faring was held in esteem by the Sinhalese of this period. ³ The king's officers were stationed at the principal sea-ports to collect customs. An inscription assigned to the 1st century. A.D., found at Goḍvāya near Hambantota contains a reference to customs duties levied by such officers. ⁴

Further, the discovery of a terrace inscribed with the names of Tamil Gahapatis (dameda gahapatiṭkana) also shows the importance of the foreign trade of this period. Parānavitana says that this inscription proves that the stone terrace was the common property of the Tamil house-holders of ancient Anurādhapura, and was probably used as their assembly hall. The surface of this terrace contains, in one line, seven short records which tell us that that portion of the platform immediately above

1. ASCAR, for 1950, p. G.15.

2. Rsv., II, p. 139 ff.

3. ASCAR, 1911, 12, p. 99.

4. CJS.G., II, p. 197. No. 586.

each record was the seat of a particular individual among the Tamil householders. The names of some of these householders are: Kubira, Tisa, Kubira Sujata, Saga, Naseta and Kārava. The last named is described as a ship~~captain~~^{captain}. The difference in level at the surface of the various compartments of the platform was probably intended to indicate the difference in rank and social status of the individuals whose seats were on them. If so, it is interesting to note that the ship^{captain} (navika) occupied the highest seat.¹ This inscription has been assigned to a date between the 3rd century B.C. and the 1st century A.D. Hence the word navika no doubt proves that the foreign trade between South India and Ceylon was well established during this period.

Ceylon traded not only with India and other countries in the West, but also with the Eastern countries. Ceylon's commercial intercourse with China too was of early origin. The Sinhalese Ambassadors who went to Rome during the reign of Bhātika Abhaya in the 1st century A.D. are said to have stated that there was commerce between Ceylon and China.² The relationship between Ceylon and China both cultural and commercial was more and more strengthened towards the 4th century A. D. Fa Hien who visited Ceylon during the 1st quarter of the 5th century A. D.,

1. JRASCB. Vol. XXV. No. 93. p. 54-55.

2. Pliny, VI, p. 22.

after spending two years, sailed for Java in a large merchant - vessel on which there were 200 people. ¹ The Samantāpāsādikā refers to voyages between Mahātitttha and Suvannabhūmi (Burma). ² The Rasavāhinī also ~~refers~~ ^{records} that a merchant named Dantakuṭumbika of Anurādhapura went to Suvannabhūmi for trade. ³ According to the Mahāvamsa there was in the village called Dvāramaṇḍala near Mihintale a Brāhmaṇa named Kuṇḍala who was also an import merchant. ⁴ From all these statements it is clear that the commercial relationship of Ceylon with foreign countries both Eastern and Western in general and with India in particular was considerably advanced during this period.

Exports:

Among the commodities exported from Ceylon, precious stones, pearls, elephants, textiles, ivory and tortoise-shell were considered most profitable.

Precious Stones:

Ceylon was famous for its precious stones from the early pre-Christian centuries. Kauṭilya mentions Ceylon as a gem producing country. ⁵ Reference is made in the Mahābhārata to Vibhīṣaṇa,

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1. HC. Vol. I. Pt. I. p. 18.
Giles, The Travels of Fa-Hsin, 1959, p. 78.
 2. SMP., p. 808.
 3. Rsv., II, p. 192.
 4. Mv., XXIII, vv.23-24.
 5. Arthasāstra, Trns. Sāmasāstri, p. 83.

the king of Ceylon, who sent as tributes to King Yudhiṣṭhira, gems and pearls of very high quality in abundance.¹ According to the Maṇimekhalai Ceylon was known as Ratnadvīpa (the Island of gems).² In the 7th century A.D. Hiuen Tsiang also referred to Ceylon by the same name.³ According to the Mahāvamsa Vijaya's ministers sent many presents including most valuable gems and pearls to the king of Madurā in order to obtain suitable maidens for Vijaya and for themselves.⁴ The Mahāvamsa also reports that Devānampiya Tissa sent Asoka various types of precious stones such as sapphire (indanīla), cat's-eye (veluriya), ruby (lohitāṅka) and etc. as presents.⁵ This shows that these three kinds of gems were considered the most valuable of all. There was another group of seven gems (sattaratana) which are less valuable than the former group.⁶ References to the words manikaya (jeweller)⁷ and manikaragama (village of jewellers)⁸ in the epigraphic records of this period also indicated that Ceylon produced gems abundantly. It may, therefore, be inferred that precious stones played an important role in the country's

1. Mahābhārata, Trns. Vol. II. p. 92-93.

2. Maṇimekhalai, Kṛṣṇasvāmi Iyenger, Canto XI. V. 21-26.

3. Si-Yu-Ki, Buddhist Records of the Western world, Beal, p. 235.

4. Mv., VII, vv. 49-50.

5. Mv., XI, v. 16.

6. ibid, XXVII, v. 37.

7. CJSg, II, p. 203. No. 617.

8. EZ., IV. p. 218-222, No. 27.

export trade, particularly with India for according to the Mahāvamsa, when Devānampiya Tissa sent precious stones to Asoka, the latter confessed that those precious stones of Ceylon were not available in India (ratanāni idisāni ettha natthi).¹

An epigraphic record of Mysore assigned to the 10th or 11th century, refers to some Mysore merchant princes, one of whom was Dāmodara Setṭhi's brother who was skilled in testing all manner of gems and who belonged to a Malayala family.² Although this record does not fall within the period under review, it leads us to infer that there were such reputed gem merchants in South India at a very much earlier date than this. According to the Periplus of the Erythrean Sea, with the discovery of the Monsoon by Hippalus in the middle of the 1st century, or possibly earlier, Roman merchants frequently visited the ports of South India, from where they obtained commodities from Ceylon.³

From the above discussion it is clear that India was not a gem-producing country; yet there were very famous gem-merchants there. On the other hand, Ceylon was famous in the then known world as the Island of gems and the Roman mariners

1. Mv., XI, v. 25.

2. Epigraphia Carnatica, Vol. 5. I. Trns. p. 157. No. AK. 108.
Nānā retna parīksaye-embud abu tanna.

3. Periplus of the Erythrean Sea, pp. 227-230.

obtained Ceylonese commodities from South India^v merchants.

Precious stones were no doubt among these.

Pearls:

Ceylon was famous not only for gems but also for its pearls from the earliest times, for mention is made in the Mahāvamsa to pearls among other presents sent to the king of Madurā by Vijaya's ministers ¹ and to Asoka by Devānampiya Tissa. ² Kautilya also referred to a variety of pearls from a place which, according to the commentary, is a river near the village Mayūra in the Island of Siṃhala. ³ The fact that the pearl fishery was one of the main sources of income during this period can also be adduced from Fa-hien's statement about the pearl fishery in Ceylon in the 1st quarter of the 5th century A.D. ⁴ According to the Mahāvamsa eight varieties of pearls were miraculously found on the sea-shore on the day of Devānampiya Tissa's accession to the throne of Anurādhapura. ⁵ These were: horse-pearls (hayamuttā), elephant-pearls (gajamuttā), waggon-pearls (rathamuttā), myrobalan-pearls (āmālakamuttā), bracelet-pearls (valayamuttā), ring-pearls (aṇḍu-
vethakāmuttā), kakudha fruit-pearls (kakudhaphalāmuttā) and

1. Mv., VII, vv. 49-50.

2. *ibid*, XI, v. 16.

3. Arthasāstra, Trans. p. 83.

4. CHJ. Vol. II, Nos. 1 & 2, p. 15.

5. Mv., XI, vv. 14-15.

common pearls (pākatikāmuttā). According to the Mahāvamsa Tikā the first two of these were very special kinds which contain the figures of horse and elephant (assarūpa hatthirūpa santhānā - muttā). ¹ Leaving aside the miraculous side of the story, this shows at least that the people at this time had a fair knowledge about the various types of pearls. Pearls as big as myrobalan fruit are also said to have been found on the shore near the port Uruvela (Uruvelapattana) ² during the reign of Duṭṭhagāmaṇī. The discovery of large pearls on the sea-shore on auspicious occasions seems to be purely legendary, since there is no reliable evidence of pearls even of the small size being found thus. The passages in question, however, point to the productivity in pearls of the seas around Ceylon.

The Mahāvamsa also reports that Duṭṭhagāmaṇī decorated the assembly hall of the Lohapāsāda with festoons of pearls all round. ³ Duṭṭhagāmaṇī also enshrined heaps of gold, precious stones, pearls and diamonds at the four corners of the relic-chamber of the Mahāthūpa. ⁴ Bhātika Abhaya is said to have managed to get one hundred cart-loads of pearls reduced to powder,

1. MvT., p. 301: The commentator's explanation is probably incorrect, but the fact that pearls were classified thus is clear evidence of their commercial importance.

2. Mv., XXVIII, v. 36.

3. *ibid*, XXVII, v. 31.

4. *ibid*, XXX, v. 95.

which was mixed with lime and used for white-washing the Mahāthūpa.¹ Mahādāṭhika Mahānāga decorated the Ambatthala Mahāthūpa hanging festoons of pearls all round.² There is therefore no doubt that the foreign merchants were also attracted to this country by the availability of pearls of various types.

Elephants:

According to Megasthenes Ceylon exported elephants to India as early as the 3rd century B.C. He says that "Ceylon had herds of elephants which are there very numerous and of the largest size. These elephants more powerful than those of the mainland and in appearance larger and may be pronounced to be in every way more intelligent. The Islanders export them to the mainland opposite in boats which they construct for this traffic from wood supplied by the thickets of the Island, and they dispose of their cargoes to the king of Kalinga".³ It is also most likely that not only elephants but also ivory and various kinds of ivory goods were exported from Ceylon. There was in Anurādhapura a wealthy merchant named Dantakāra Kuṭṭumbika in the village called Dantakāragāma.⁴ The fact that the village was called Dantakāra and the richest man of the village bore the name of the

1. Mv., XXXIV, v. 46.

2. ibid, XXXIV, v. 74.

3. Mc Crindle: Ancient India as described by Megasthenes and Arrian, p. 173-175.

4. Sahassavatthu, p. 191-192.

village suggests that it was mainly composed of ivory carvers. It is therefore quite likely that when he sailed to Suvaṇṇabhūmi for trade, he took ivory and ivory goods made by the fellow-inhabitants of his village. According to the Mahāvamsa, Mahāsena's younger brother, Jetṭha Tissa, was an expert in the art of ivory carving and he established a school to teach it to those who were interested in it. At the request of his father, he himself carried out several difficult works of this art. Among his works a chair of state studded here and there with beautiful ivory carving and a charming figure representing a Bodhisatva are specially mentioned. ¹ Thus it is possible that, as well as elephants, ivory and ivory goods also were exported to foreign countries.

Textiles:

As we ~~shall~~ ^{later} ~~have~~ ^{seen} ~~earlier~~ ² there are references to weaving and weavers in ancient Ceylon. The Periplus of the Erythrean Sea states that Ceylon produced muslins. ³ The Prākṛit work, Tīrthakalpa contains reference to a merchant of Ceylon who exported a large quantity of cloths to Bhārukaccha by ship. ⁴ The Rājataranginī, the Kaśmir Chronicle, records that a cloth manufactured in Ceylon was worn by a certain queen of that country. ⁵

1. Mv., XXXVII, vv. 100-103.

2. See, ~~Supra~~, pp. 362-363.

3. Periplus of the Erythrean Sea, p. 47.

4. Archaeological Survey of India. Annual Report (1905-6) p. 144.

5. Rājataranginī, Saṅgā, I, VV, 294-297.

When Duṭṭhagāmaṇī lay on his death-bed he expressed his desire to see the construction of the Mahāthūpa completed¹ before he breathed his last. As there was hardly any time to complete the actual work, Saddhātissa, in a moment, covered the entire structure of the proposed Tūpa with cloths to give an appearance of the completed Tūpa and showed it to Duṭṭhagāmaṇī.¹ Further, thousands of monks were offered the ticīvara (three kinds of robes^e) by kings, nobles and even by commoners. It is evident from these references that weaving was an advanced industry and cloth was available in abundance. Textiles, formed one of the commodities exported from Ceylon. We find no reference to the manufacture of silk cloths in Ceylon at this period, or of any cloth other than cotton.

According to Strabo, tortoise-shell was another important export from Ceylon.² We have seen in the previous chapter³ that Ceylon produced a variety of spices such as ginger, turmeric, pepper etc. and other crops such as coconut, arecanut, sesamum, etc. It is therefore reasonable to suppose that these commodities also may have formed items in the country's export-trade at least in small quantities, among the other more important items discussed above.

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1. Mv., XXXII, vv. 2-3.
 2. Strabo, Geography, p. 271.
 3. See, supra, p. 326.

Import-Trade:

Somewhere in the middle of the 1st century A.D. the Graeco-Roman merchants obtained Ceylon goods from South India.¹ To pay for the commodities, these merchants brought gold and silver, copper, glass, coral, semi-precious stones of various kinds, earthenware of superior quality, wines and horses.² It is therefore most probably that these commodities were imported to Ceylon from South India.

Horses may have formed one of the most important items in the import trade. The earliest reference to horse-merchants from abroad can be seen in the Mahāvamsa. During the reign of Sūratissa there were in Anurādhapura two Tamil usurpers, Sena and Guttika, who were the sons of a horse-merchant of South India, who used to import horses to Ceylon.³ Frequent references to the cavalry in the permanent army force in the Sinhalese kingdom during this period⁴ and the fact that horses were not found locally show that they were brought to Ceylon from abroad. According to the Rasavāhinī Velusumana, one of the paladins of Duṭṭhagāmaṇī, had a Saindhava horse.⁵ This word Saindhava suggests that they were of a breed originally brought from the Indus (Sindhu) valley. Horses were also imported from Persia and the king of

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1. Periplus of the Erytreaean Sea, p. 227-230.
 2. Periplus of the Erythraean Sea, p. 44-45.
 3. Mv., XXI, v. 10.
 4. Mv., XVIII, v. 29; Rsv., II, p. 66.
 5. Rsv., II, p. 98.

the Island prized them so much that the traders who brought them were at one time exempted from the usual taxes. ¹

According to the Mahāvamsa Tīkā ² there was a famous merchant named Kuṇḍala who imported camphor, sandalwood etc. from abroad during the reign of Duṭṭhagāmaṇī. ³ According to the Rasavāhinī this merchant sent Duṭṭhagāmaṇī 500 valuable clothes of various colours, various kinds of perfumes such as Camphor, sandals, aloe-woods (Agaru) etc., medicinal goods and various types of bedding material. Silk was another imported article. The Rasavāhinī tells us how Goṭhayimbara celebrated the victory of Duṭṭhagāmaṇī by organising a drinking party on a very elaborate scale. The story goes on to say that he decorated the drinking pavillion with silk curtains (paṭṭasānī). ⁴ Procopius who lived in the 6th century A.D., informs us that how difficult it was for the Byzantines to buy silk from Ceylon owing to the heavy demand of the Persian merchants, and hence they had to buy silk directly from Indian merchants who imported silk to Ceylon. ⁵ According to Cosmas, in the 6th century A.D., ports in Ceylon were crowded with ships coming from India, Persia, Ethiopia and

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1. Ancient India as described in classical Literature, p. 165.
 2. MvT., p. 449.
 3. The Mahāvamsa itself only gives a general term. The explanation of the Tīkā may be based upon later information.
 4. Rsv., II, p. 89.
 5. Procopius, Persian Wars, Trns. Bk. I. Ch. XX, Section. 9-13.

etc.¹ Thus it seems that Ceylon's trade with the West both export and import increased in quantity from the times of the Embassy to Rome down to the 6th century, unlike the trade of India, which was at its height when that of Ceylon was just beginning.

Internal Trade:

Side by side with foreign trade, internal trade also developed during this period. The word Vanija or Vanica occurs among the names of other donors in early Brāhmī inscriptions. An inscription assigned to the period between the 1st century B.C. and the 1st century A.D., at Vilbā Vihāra in the Kurunāgala District refers to one such merchant who donated a cave to the Saṅgha.² According to another inscription of the 1st or 2nd century B.C. found at Bambaragastalāva, there was a Parumaka who was a merchant.³ C.W. Nicholas suggests that this merchant may have been the president of a local merchants' guild,⁴ This suggestion does not seem to be quite acceptable, for we have seen earlier⁵ that the word Parumaka has been used in epigraphic records of this period not as an official title but as an honorific.

1. Christian Topography, Ed. Mc. Grindle, p. 365.

2. CJSB., II, p. 212. No. 661.

3. Sir Paul Peris's Felicitation Volume (Colombo 1956), p. 61.

4. JRASCB. Vol. V. Pt. I. New Series, p. 71.

5. See, supra, p. 95.

This merchant, therefore, may either have belonged to a family of nobles, for it was also considered that the merchants' profession was one of the two most respectable occupations that a man of a noble family normally should follow,¹ or have been the leading merchant of the place, rather than the president of a local merchants' guild.

On the other hand, if there were such organised merchants' guilds, they would have been in existence rather in the neighbourhood of sea-ports than in the interior. But there is no epigraphic record which contains references either to a merchant or to a merchants' guild in those areas at this time. Even in the literary sources refer only to leading merchants at sea-ports² but not to any such guilds. Hence it is most unlikely that such guilds existed in the interior as early as the 1st. or the 2nd. century B. C.

But on the other hand, the word Puka (P=Pūga) occurring in another inscription³ cannot simply be ignored. This reference no doubt shows that there were corporations or guilds of some kind in this period. But we are again in difficulty in deciding whether they were the guilds of artisans, agriculturists or

1. Rsv., II, p. 36.

2. See, supra, p. 295.

3. ASCAR., 1932, p. 9.

merchants i.e. the craft-guild, trade or merchant-guild, because side by side with the word Srenī, the term Pūga also is used by some of the ancient Indian political thinkers to denote various types of guilds and corporations.¹ It is thus evident that there were leading merchants who enjoyed a high social status during this period. One such merchant was Kuṇḍala, who was also a Brāhmaṇa.² These references show us that the people belonging to higher classes in society such as the Brāhmaṇas, the nobles and the Vaiśyas considered the profession in trade as an honourable occupation.

The local merchants used to go to distant parts of the country in ox-wagons to fetch the produce of those areas. We have seen earlier how merchants went on frequently such business trips to the hilly districts (malaya) in search of ginger, turmeric, pepper etc.³ Similarly the merchants from the commercial towns in the neighbourhood of sea-ports used to go to the interior to fetch local produce in exchange for foreign goods.⁴ ^{The} Rasavāhinī refers to one such merchant of Mahātittha Paṭṭana, who traded in the area to the West of Anurādhapura.

The trading centres (niyama=nigama) in the capital and

1. Local Govt. in Ancient India, Mookerji, p. 34.

2. See, supra, p. 287.

3. See, supra p. 326.

4. Rsv., II, p. 136.

and other cities are referred to both in the epigraphic and literary sources. We have seen earlier that there were four such trading centres outside the four gates of Anurādhapura.¹ There were market places not only on the outskirts of the city but also in the inner city. The Dīpavamsa refers to one such market (antarāpana) in the city of Upatissagāma.² Even in the capital city, there were such market places³ in addition to the four trading centres outside the city gates. It appears from this that the above four trading centres were public market-places while the shops (āpana) within the city were meant for the people of the privileged classes. It is recorded in the Mahāvamsa that when Suranimāla went to Anurādhapura to meet Kuṇḍala, the merchant, he went shopping within the city and bought perfumes from such a shop.⁴

As the majority of the population consisted of peasant-cultivators, there was no doubt that barter played an important role in internal trade. But there are enough references to show that coins were also widely used. The Samantapāsādikā refers to an incident where the queen of Vasabha (127-171 A.D.) offered

1. See, supra p. 309.

2. DV., IX, v. 36.

3. Mv., XXIII, v. 29.

4. ibid, XXIII, vv. 28-29.

to a monk 300 kahāpaṇas along with three robes.¹ The Rasavāhinī refers to several incidents where the kahāpaṇa was used as the medium of transactions.² But with regard to the trading activities in the rural areas, barter may have played a more important role than money.

The Intellectual Professions:

There were a few intellectual professions such as teaching, astrology and medicine, in Ceylon during this period. A perusal of the stray references occurring both in the literary and the epigraphic sources will show us that these professions were mainly in the hands of the Brāhmaṇas, at least in the pre-Buddhist period.

Teachers:

We have seen earlier that there were Purohitas who were the advisers of kings in matters both worldly and spiritual.³ They also served as the teachers of the royal families and also possibly of the families of nobles.

The Brāhmaṇa Paṇḍula who was well-versed in the Vedas was the teacher of Paṇḍukābhaya.⁴ He seems to have been a reputed

1. SMP., p. 337.

2. Rsv., II, p. 9; 118 ff; 143 ff.

3. See, supra, p. 27 ff

4. Mv., X, v. 20.

teacher of the day, for it is reported that his normal charge for a complete course of studies necessary for an heir-apparent was one thousand coins.¹ The fact that he is said to have given one hundred thousand coins to Paṇḍukābhaya in order to raise an army, after the completion of his course of studies,² indicates that Paṇḍula was one of the richest men in Anurādhapura. We have also seen earlier³ that some of the epigraphic records of this period contain references to the Brāhmaṇa teachers (Patake). Another inscription of the 1st century B.C. records the name of the donor who is a teacher (Parasatisa acariya).⁴ From this it is not quite clear whether this teacher was a Brāhmaṇa or not. But as the above references prove beyond doubt that the teaching profession was mainly in the hands of the Brāhmaṇas, it may be inferred that this Parasatisa also belonged to the same class. Further, as this inscription records a donation by the teacher in question, it is also clear that teachers normally enjoyed a high status, both economically and socially.

On the other hand, in the period when the Brāhmaṇas were the custodians of knowledge and wisdom, it is difficult to determine whether the educational facilities were available to

1. Mv., X, v. 19.

2. ibid, X, v. 24.

3. See, supra, p. 41.

4. JRASCB. NS. Vol. II. p. 129. No. 3.

the ordinary people, particularly the Sūdras and other low-castes. But there is no doubt that the door of education as well as that of the educational profession in arts and various branches of science was opened to everybody, irrespective of his class in society, after the introduction of Buddhism in the 3rd century B.C., for we have a clear reference to a family of Caṇḍālas who were the experts in architecture, particularly in the art of construction of Cetiya.¹ It is reported that once they refused to teach a powerful political usurper the art of breaking a certain Cetiya. This shows that these Caṇḍālas had followed two professions, the construction of Cetiya and teaching that branch of science to others. An epigraphic record refers to a teacher of archery (danu acariya).² Phussadeva's father was another famous teacher of archery.³

The most remarkable change that took place in the teaching profession was that from the 3rd century B. C. onward the place of the Brāhmaṇa teacher in pre-Buddhist society was occupied by the Buddhist monks. But it is to be noted that unlike the Brāhmaṇas the Buddhist monks did not carry out the educational

1. Rsv., II, p. 7.

2. Ceylon Historical Journal Vol. V. p. 223. No. 15.

3. Rsv., II, p. 101.

activities as a means of livelihood but as social and spiritual service.

Astrologers:

We have seen earlier ¹ that many of the astrologers of this period also belonged to the community of Brāhmaṇas. An astrologer (nakatika) is referred to in an inscription assigned to the pre-Christian centuries, found at Periyakaḍu Vihāra. ² In this inscription both the astrologer and his son are called Parumakas. C. W. Nicholas is inclined to think that the astrologers formed guilds of their own and the Parumaka nakatika of this inscription was therefore the president of his guild. ³ But from what we have discussed in a previous chapter, it is clear that the word Parumaka was rather an honorific than an official title. ⁴ On the other hand it is difficult to suppose that the astrologers formed guilds in the same way as the merchants, because astrology was considered neither a business pursuit nor a craft. Further it was and is an occupation open only to an educationally privileged few. Therefore, the second inscription of the same place (Periyakaḍu Vihāra) ⁵ which refers simply to a

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1. See, supra. p. 38ff
 2. CJSB., II. p. 214.
 3. JRASCB. NS. Vol. V. p. 75.
 4. See supra, p. 95.
 5. JRASCB., NS. Vol. V, p. 75.

nakatika can mean an ordinary astrologer, while the Parumaka - nakatika in the former was a leading astrologer. However, it is obvious from these references that the astrologers also enjoyed a high social status during this period. The Rasavāhinī also states that astrologers predicted a famine during the reign of Duṭṭhagāmaṇī. ¹

Physicians:

Physicians also undoubtedly occupied a high position in society. Two inscriptions from Magulmahāvihāra and Piccadeniya contain references to donations by physicians (veja). ² The physician referred to in the latter was a Brāhmaṇa who was both king's physician and teacher. It should be noted that ancient medical books in India were written in Sanskrit and the Brāhmaṇas were the chief masters of this language. Hence it is justifiable to infer that the medical profession was mainly in the hands Brāhmaṇas. There is another reference to an Upasaka Veja in an inscription of the 1st century from Rājāṇḍagane. ³

References to physicians are not wanting in the literary sources also in this period. According to the Mahāvamsa, Duṭṭhagāmaṇī established eighteen hospitals in various parts of the country, fully equipped with qualified physicians and other

1. Rsv., II, p. 113.

2. CJS.G., II, p. 26; U.C.R., VII, p. 241. No. 4. Note. 32.

3. JRASCB. NS. Vol. V., p. 74.

medical facilities. ¹ Buddhadāsa, the grandson of Mahāsaena, was renowned as a great physician, and various miraculous cures were attributed to him, even snakes seeking his assistance. A jewel which he is said to have received from a snake in gratitude for a cure, he placed in the stone-image in the Abhayagiri Vihāra. It is said that he appointed a royal physician for every ten villages, and established hospitals for the crippled and the dumb and also for animals. ² This shows that not only the Brāhmaṇas but also the nobles practised medicine as time went on. Further when the field of education gradually changed from the hands of the Brāhmaṇas to those of the Buddhist monks, after the 3rd century B. C., some of the Buddhist monks too became proficient in medicine.

According to the Samantapāsādikā, once when the queen of Vasabha fell ill, her attendant went to the elder Mahāpaduma for treatment. The queen, after her recovery, offered the elder three robes and 300 kaḥāpanas as a mark of gratitude (ācariya-bhāga). ³ This shows clearly that there were some monks who were experts in medicine. But it is to be noted that according to the Dīghanikāya, the monks are instructed not to practise medicine ⁴

1. Mv., XXXII, v. 38.

2. Mv., XXXVII, vv. 105 ff.

3. SMP., p. 237.

4. DN., I, p. 9; 54.

because it is considered asecular science (tiracchāna vijjā). But according to the Samantapāsādikā, this condemnation was modified in such a way that the monks could treat their fellow-monks, certain very close relations, such as parents, and some others intimately connected with them in their monastic life.¹ If a layman requests a monk to treat a patient or prepare some medicine, the request should not be complied with. The laymen should know the 'proper' way of consulting a monk. If a layman were to inquire from a monk as to what should be given for a certain ailment, then it is proper to tell him. The Samantapāsādikā further says that if a man says to a monk: 'Sir, my mother is ill; please prescribe^s some medicine', he should not be given any prescription. But monks may start a conversation among themselves about what they gave to a certain monk when he was suffering from a similar illness. If the man listens to the conversation and treats his mother accordingly there is nothing wrong.² When the attendant of the queen of Vasabha went to the elder Mahāpaduma for medicine, he started a conversation with other monks in exactly the same way as described above. This shows quite clearly that the monks of this period did not practise medicine as a profession but as a

1. SMP., p. 335-336.

2. ibid, p. 336-337.

service, within the scope of the rules of discipline. But this relaxation in the rules at the commentarial stage, no doubt encouraged some of the monks in later times to devote a good deal of their life for medical practice. Besides this, there were a few other professions which can be included in the category of intellectual occupations, such as scribed (lekhaka) and store-keeper (kotagarika). The Mahāvamsa refers to lekhakadhītikā who was the queen of Mahāsena.¹ Three pre-Christian inscriptions at Maha Ālagamuva refer to persons who were store-keepers.²

Military Occupations:

Frequent references to the four-fold army and the five weapons in the Mahāvamsa are evidence of the professional military life.³

The army no doubt played the most important role so far as both the internal and the external defence of the country was concerned. It was, therefore, necessary as far as possible, for the king to appoint those who were closely connected with the royal family to the high posts in the army. In ancient times, the commander of the army (senāpati) held a prominent position in the state. According to the Arthasāstra, in India too, the Senāpati was the highest commander of the whole army and ranked

1. Mv., VII, v. 16; XVIII, v. 29; XXV, v. 81.

2. Mv., XXXVII, v. 26.

3. JRASCB. NS. Vol. V, p. 74.

with the heir-apparent and the Purohita in respect of Salary.¹
The position of the Senāpati in Ceylon too was no doubt the same as that of the Senāpati in India of the same period.

Aritṭha was the sister's son and the Senāpati of Devānampiya Tissa.² Yasalālaka Tissa's commander-in-chief was the uncle of Vasabha who was a Lambakaṇṇa.³ An inscription of the 2nd century B. C. also refers to Senāpati who was a Parumaka.⁴ There is another reference to a Parumaka who was the son of a Senāpati.⁵

Other high officials of the army too seem to have mainly belonged to the class of nobles. According to both the Mahāvamsa⁶ and the Rasavāhinī,⁷ all the ten paladins of Duṭṭhagāmaṇī were the sons of Kuṭumbikas. These Kuṭumbikas enjoyed high social status equivalent to that of the nobles. Of the ten paladins, Nandimitta was the nephew of Mitta, the commander-in-chief of Eḷāra.⁸ According to the Rasavāhinī, Goṭhayimbara was in the habit of sitting on a chair of height equal to that of Duṭṭhagāmaṇī (rañṇā saddhim saṃsaṃdanto nisīdi).⁹ Thus it is clear that all

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1. Arthaśāstra, V, 3, p. 247; Śāmasāstry's Trns. p. 307.
 2. Mv., XI, v. 25.
 3. ibid, XXXV, v. 59.
 4. JRASCB. NS. Vol. II. p. 130. No. 21.
 5. Parker, AC., p. 432. No. 44.
 6. Mv., Ch. 23.
 7. Rsv., II, p. 78-114.
 8. Mv., XXIII, vv. 4, 8; Rsv., II, p. 79.
 9. Rsv., II, p. 94-95.

the army commanders and other high officers of the army normally belonged to the class of nobles.

Even when ordinary soldiers were recruited to the army, special care was taken to select them from the noble families (mahākula) as far as possible. When Dīghāyu, another son of Kākavaṇṇa Tissa, was entrusted with the frontier guard against Elāra along the Mahavāligāṅga he raised an army of soldiers purely from the noble families.¹ But it is hardly likely that the entire army was recruited from noble families alone, for there could not have been such a large number of nobles in Ceylon during any period of Ceylon history. Yet, there are certainly no references to show that soldiers were recruited from low-caste communities. Therefore it is reasonable to suppose that while all the higher ranks in the four-fold army belonged to the class of nobility, the ordinary soldiers may often have ^{belonged} to the class of Gahapatis.

Archers and swordsmen formed the main body of the army. Phussadeva, one of the paladins of Duṭṭhagāmaṇī was renowned for archery and he was also an expert in fighting with bow and arrow on horse and elephant.²

Epigraphic records of this period also contain references

1. Rsv., II, p. 84.

2. Rsv., II, p. 101.

to archery. They are mentioned in two inscriptions of the pre-Christian centuries, found at Haṇḍagala and Nuvarakanda. ¹ Danu-
acariya referred to in the Nuvarakanda inscription indicates that there were experts in archery, who trained others also in that art. Another inscription at Roṭṭakulam near Potuvil refers to Danuga Sumanaha. ²

Three other paladins of Duṭṭhagāmaṇī, Nandimitta, ³ Suranimala ⁴ and Dāṭhāsena ⁵ were expert swordsmen, while Velusumana was a famous fighter on horse back, ⁶ and probably was the commander of the cavalry. Labhiyavasābha was a famous fighter on elephants, ⁷ and was probably the commander of the elephant force.

Cottage industries and crafts.

Cottage industries and crafts were normally followed by those of the non-agricultural population whose social status was lower than that of the Vaiśyas. Weaving, pottery-making, and sugar-milling were the best known cottage industries of this period. According to the Sumaṅgalavilcāsini these were generally

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1. Ceylon Historical Journal, Vol. V., p. 223. No. 15.
 2. JRASCB. NS. Vol. V, p. 74.
 3. Rsv., II, p. 79.
 4. ibid, II, p. 83.
 5. ibid, II, p. 105.
 6. ibid, II, p. 98.
 7. ibid, II, p. 103.

considered as low occupations (hīna sippa) .¹ This means that those who followed them also were considered as low-caste people.

Weaving;

We have seen earlier² that the manufacture of cotton cloth was in an advanced condition in Ceylon during this period. This can also be established from the fact that cotton cloths formed one of the most important articles of the country's foreign trade.³ There is therefore no doubt that weaving was an important cottage industry.

Among the families sent to Ceylon by Asoka along with the Sacred Bodhi Tree mention is made in the Mahāvamsa of those of weavers.⁴ According to the Chronicles, weaving was wide spread among the inhabitants of this country as early as even from the 5th century B. C. The Mahāvamsa states that Kuvenī sat under the foot of a tree spinning cotton (kantantī) on the day when Vijaya and his followers landed Ceylon.⁵

A weaver is referred to in one inscription of the 1st century A. D., found at Hittaragama Hinna. In another of the same period, found at Kaduruvāva, a tank named Peliekaravayī (weaver's-

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1. SMV., p. 930.
 2. See, supra, pp. 343-344.
 3. See, supra, pp. 243-344.
 4. Mv., XIX, v. 3.
 5. ibid, VII, v. II.

tank) occurs. ¹ According to the Sīhalavatthu there was a famous tailor (tunnavāya) named Tissa in Anurādhapura during the reign of Saddhātissa. ² The Mahāvamsa also states that there were many tailors in Anurādhapura. When Duṭṭhagāmaṇī lay on his death bed, Saddhātissa is said to have shown him the proposed structure of the Mahāthūpa, 120 cubits in height, covered with white cloths stitched by tailors within a very short period of time. ³ This shows the availability of cloth in abundance and the presence of tailors in large numbers at this time. Thus it is clear that the weaving industry was highly developed during this period. As time went on these weavers also formed distinct communities and used to live in separate villages specially meant for them. ⁴

Pottery:

Pottery was another important cottage industry. The excavation of the Tissa Tank in Anurādhapura throws some light as to the existence of a potters' village. Thousands of fragments of pottery found at this place, a few of which were inscribed with early Brāhmī letters ^{are} certainly of pre-Christian date. In two instances there are words on the upturned sides of rice-plates,

1. JRASCB. NS. Vol. V, p. 71.

2. SIV., p. 1-4.

3. Mv., XXXII, v. 3.

4. Mv., XL, v. 96.

which appear to be the names of the persons for whom they were made. One was inscribed "Gapati Sivasa", and the other is
ke Dayapusaha Aba". On all other fragments only one or two letters were found. ¹ These numerous fragments of pottery provide clear evidence of the early existence of the potter's wheel in Ceylon. ²
 The Sīhalavatthu refers to a potter who, seeing a carter's bull abandoned in mud, took its skin in order to prepare clay. ³ We have seen earlier ⁴ that numerous potters lived in Ceylon during this period. An inscription at Patahamalla ⁵ refers to yet another potter and yet another unpublished inscription at Mihintale records a donation by a potter named Tisa (Kubala Tisa). ⁶ Potters too formed a separate class in society and had separate settlements named after their occupation ^{as Kumbha} ~~Rasakāragāma~~. ⁷

Sugar-milling:

Sugar-milling was another important industry. Mahācūli Mahātissa, according to the Mahāvamsa, once did labour in a sugar-mill (gulayantamhi) where jaggery was made and obtained jaggery as his wages which he offered to the monks. ⁸ A 4th century

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1. AC., p. 44-62.
 2. ibid, p. 62.
 3. Sihv., p. 15.
 4. See, supra, p. 146.
 5. CJS.G., II, p. 192.
 6. JRASCB. NS. Vol. V, p. 76.
 7. See, supra, p. 146.
 8. My., XXXIV, vv. 4, 5.

inscription at Tissamahārāma incorporates a grant of land for the cultivation of sugar-cane. ¹

The Sīhalavatthu refers to a merchant of Anurādhapura, who once transported a cartload of jaggery to a market for sale. ² According to both the Mahāvamsa and the Rasavāhinī ⁴ Duṭṭha-gāmaṇī used to offer the Preachers of the Doctrine (Dhammakathika) of every monastery in the Island one nāli (three pints) ⁵ of jaggery four times a month. The Rasavāhinī also reports that when once a sowing festival was going on in the field of a rich man, five hundred monks of the Abhayagiri monastery came to his house for alms on a mischievous invitation given by an enemy of the farmer, his wife without any hesitation or difficulty prepared a special meal with ghee, honey and jaggery. ⁶ Kākavanna Tissa is said to have offered every day curd and jaggery and various kinds of rice-cakes prepared out of jaggery to thousand of monks at ^{the} royal monastery in Mahāgāma. ⁷ All these references clearly show that sugar-milling was a prosperous cottage industry ~~years~~ in Ceylon during this period.

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1. AIC., p. 67.
 2. Sihv., p. 15.
 3. Mv., XXII, vv. 44-45.
 4. Rsv., II, p. 77.
 5. Culture of Ceylon in Mediaeval Times, p. 83.
 6. Rsv., II, p. 166.
 7. Sihv., p. 80.

Although direct references are not to be found, it is likely that other types of cottage industries such as bamboo-work and mat-making etc. also existed, for the Sumaṅgalavilāsinī in enumerating low-occupations refers to the workers in bamboo (naḷakāra), ¹ while in other commentaries references are made to mat-making, ² (kaṭasāraka) .

Metal work

Blacksmiths:

Blacksmiths (kammāra) are not particularly referred to in the Chronicles or epigraphic records; yet, we have references in other sources to weapons and tools of iron and steel made on a large scale during this period. Frequent references to the five weapons of war (pañcāyudha) both in the Mahāvamsa ³ and the Rasavāhinī ⁴ and to various tools such as axe (pharasu), mamoty or digging-hoe (kuddāla) and adze (vāsi) etc. ⁶ clearly indicate that metal work was an important craft. In our sources, the five weapons of war are not enumerated anywhere. Hence it is difficult to determine their exact nature. However, sword, bow and javelin are the weapons most frequently referred to in our sources.

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1. Smv., p. 930.
 2. J., VI, p. 574; DA., I, p. 137; DhA., II, p. 183
 3. Mv., XXV, v. 82.
 4. Rsv., II, p. 75.
 5. ibid, II, p. 88.
 6. Mv., XXVIII, v. 38.

It is stated in the Mahāvamsa that Vijaya was armed with both a sword and a bow when he landed in Ceylon.¹ We have seen earlier that some of Duṭṭhagāmaṇī's paladins were expert sword fighters while others were archers.² In Duṭṭhagāmaṇī's battle, the chiefs on both sides fought with swords,³ while both Duṭṭhagāmaṇī and Elāra while on elephants-back fought with javelins.⁴ A javelin is also referred to in Duṭṭhagāmaṇī's fighting with his brother, Tissa while on horse-back.⁵

Copper-Smiths:

The fact that the Lohapāsāda was roofed with copper⁶ indicates that there were copper-smiths also. It is said that this copper was miraculously found in the village called Tambapittigāma during Duṭṭhagāmaṇī's time.⁷ A reference is made in the Mahāvamsa to a statue of the Buddha, which was established in the shrine-room near the Sacred Bodhi Tree by the king Vohāarakatissa.⁸ The Sīhalavatthu speaks of a smith who worked both in copper and gold.⁹ One of the Vessagiri inscriptions also

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1. Mv., VII, v. 19.
 2. See, supra, p. 361.
 3. Mv., XXV, vv. 58-64.
 4. ibid, XXV, vv. 69-70.
 5. ibid, XXIV, v. 35.
 6. ibid, XXVII, v. 42.
 7. ibid, XXVIII, v. 16.
 8. ibid, XXXVI, v. 31.
 9. Sīhv., p. 107.

refers to a goldsmith.¹ From these evidences it is difficult to determine as to what community did these smiths belong. But one thing is certain that they were not considered as low caste people, because they were the people who made ornaments, weapons of war and other metal crafts for the royal families in those days. The Sīhalavattī speaks of a goldsmith² who made ornaments for king Saddhātissa.²

Carpenters:

Both in the Chronicles and the pre-Christian inscriptions, mention is made of carpenters. Vadaka Sumana³ and Vadaka Suvatiya⁴ occurring in two donative inscriptions at Situlpahuva are direct references to carpenters. We have seen earlier that the Pāli term Vaddhakī was used to denote all those who engaged in various types of building work.⁵ According to the Mahāvamsa Duṭṭhagāmaṇī consulted five hundred brick layers (itthaka vaddhakī) about the construction of the Mahāthūpa,⁶ and the chief architect was rewarded with a suit of clothes worth one thousand coins, a pair of slippers, and twelve thousand kahāpanas, possibly as the consulting fee.⁷ A reference to a carpenter of the lord

1. EZ., I, p. 18.

2. Sihv. p. 107.

3. JRASCB. NS. Vol. II, p. 131. No. 34.

4. *ibid*, p. 132. No. 58.

5. See *supra*, p. 285.

6. *Mv.*, XXX, v. 5.

7. *ibid*, XXX, v. 14.

Vasabha (Bata Vasaha) of Rohana, ¹ gives interesting evidence of the existence of carpenters and builders who were not self-employed, but served a single master. The Bata Vasaha refers to seems to have been a local chief and not a king, since no royal titles are given. The carpenter concerned was evidently fairly prosperous; since he gave a cave to the Order.

Vaṭuka, a South Indian, became the city carpenter (nagaravaddhakī) of Anurādhapura, gained the confidence of the king, and ultimately married the queen Anulā. ² When king Subha was threatened with danger by the rebel Vasabha, he entrusted his daughter and the royal insignia to an architect to safeguard them. ³ The Mahāvamsa Tikā says that this vaddhakī was an intimate friend of the king. ⁴

From all these references it is obvious that the carpenters and builders of this period were respectable people in society.

Artists and Entertainers.

Reference in the Mahāvamsa to a hall of paintings (cittasālā) gives a clear evidence that painting was a developed art in this period. ⁵ The Mahāvamsa also speaks of the wall-paintings

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1. JRASCB. NS. Vol. II, p. 132. No. 58.
 2. Mv., XXXIV, v. 20.
 3. ibid, XXXV, vv. 101-104.
 4. MvT., p. 650.
 5. Mv., v. 20, 53.

depicting events in the life of the Buddha, of the relic-chamber of the Mahāthūpa.¹ A reference is made to a Citakara Data in an unpublished inscription found at Bellavagala in Vilacchiya Korale.² When Duṭṭhagāmaṇī lay on his death bed, Saddhātissa employed painters to decorate the artificial structure of the Mahāthūpa with all kinds of beautiful paintings.³ The Visuddhimagga speaks of a cave which was adorned with beautiful paintings.⁴ Besides these there were sculptors (Rupadaka),⁵ Ivory carvers (Dantakāra)⁶ and jewellers (Manikara).⁷

Music, musicians, singers and dancers both male and female are frequently referred to in the Mahāvamsa.⁸ Epigraphic records of this period also refer to dancers (nata). One inscription at Sāssēruva contains references to a dancer named Cūḍa who was a Gapati. Another inscription of the same place refers to yet another dancer and his son who was also a dancer.⁹ It is clear from these inscriptions that dancers could belong to

1. Mv., 30, 78-88.

2. JRASCB. NS. Vol. V. p. 72.

3. Mv., 32, 1-6.

4. VSM. I. p. 38.

5. CJSBG., II, p. 214.

6. See, supra, pp. 242-243.

7. CJSBG., II. p. 203. No. 617; JRASCB. Vol. 36. No. 98; ASCAR, 1911-12 No. 97.

8. Mv., 25, 99, 102; 31, 37, 82, 112; 32, 78; 34, 60, 77.

9. JRASCB. NS. Vol. V. p. 76.

the Gahapati class (Vaisya), and that this profession also was hereditary.

Other crafts and vocations:

Besides ~~this~~, there were many other professions which can be included in the category of crafts and cottage industries which were considered very low, such as the professions of hunters, ¹ fishermen, ² whashermen, ³ barbers, ⁴ and labourers. ⁵ The lowest of these were the Caṇḍālas whom we have discussed earlier. ⁶

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1. See, supra, p. 130.

2. See, supra, p. 149.

3. See, supra, p. 144, 182.

4. See, supra, p. 144.

5. See, supra, p. 168.

6. See, supra, p. 169 ff

CHAPTER VIII

The Effect of Buddhism on Society.

It is clear from what was discussed in the previous chapters that the caste system was deeply rooted in Ceylon, almost in the same pattern as it was in India during this period. Therefore, in order to understand how far Buddhism influenced Ceylon society, it is necessary to examine whether the caste system was in existence during the period prior to the advent of Mahinda.

There is no doubt that the cultural contact between India and Ceylon, which may have started somewhere in the 5th century B. C., strengthened their cordial relations to a remarkable degree. According to the Chronicles it was Vijaya and his band of followers who first brought Indian political, social and religious ideologies to Ceylon.¹ Further, they obtained maidens as their wives from Madurā the capital of the Pāṇḍya kingdom of South India.² The king of Madurā is said to have sent suitable girls (kaññāyo ca yathāraham) in keeping with the social status of the followers of Vijaya.³ In addition to this he also is reported to have sent one thousand families of eighteen guilds.⁴ Vijaya's nephew, Paṇḍuvāsudeva is said to have married a Sākyan

1. Mv., Chap., 7; Dv., IX, vv. 21 ff.

2. *ibid*, VII, v. 57

3. *ibid*, VII, v. 56.

4. *ibid*, VII, v. 56.

princess from North India.¹ Later on her six brothers came to Ceylon and established settlements in various parts of the country.² Dīghāyu, ~~the son of the king~~, who was one of the six Sākya princes, was the grand-father of Paṇḍukābhaya, perhaps the greatest king of pre-Buddhist Ceylon.³ Paṇḍukābhaya too was careful not to get married to a maiden from a family below his own.⁴ These incidents lead us to infer that the early kings, ministers and others were very particular about their marriage with girls of equal rank. Vijaya's refusal to be consecrated without a girl ~~from~~ from a family equal to his own⁵ alone shows how far he was conscious of his caste. His followers too may have maintained a similar outlook as far as their place in society was concerned. This may have been the reason why the king of Madurā had to select suitable girls from the families of his ministers.⁶ Thus we see that Ceylon was influenced by the Hindu way of life especially by the caste system, during this period.

The fact that there were Brāhmanas⁷ in Ceylon before

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1. Mv., VIII, vv. 18-28.
 2. Mv., IX, vv. 6-11.
 3. Mv., VI, vv. 13-27.
 4. *ibid*, X, v. 35.
 5. *ibid*, VII, v. 47.
 6. *ibid*, VII, v. 52.
 7. See, *supra*, pp. 33-42.

the advent of Mahinda, bears testimony that Brāhmaṇism was the earliest civilised religion in Ceylon. The epigraphic records assigned to the period immediately after the introduction of Buddhism, too, speak of the presence of Brāhmaṇas.¹ It is therefore justifiable to suppose that they were living in pre-Buddhist Ceylon.

Although these records do not reveal whether these Brāhmaṇas performed Vedic sacrifices and other religious rites, the word Yagadata (giver of sacrifice) which occurs in one of the Vessagiri cave inscriptions suggests that there were sacrificial priests also.²

On the other hand, in the Vāsetṭha Sutta of the Sutta-Nipāṭa the Buddha explains Yājaka is the person who maintains himself by the profession of Purohita.³ According to the Pāli Chronicles of Ceylon there were several Purohitas in pre-Buddhist Ceylon. There is, therefore, no doubt that these Purohitas performed Vedic sacrifices in Ceylon during this period.

Paṇḍukābhaya is said to have built here and there (tahim.-tahim) in Anurādhapura houses named Sivikāsālā and Soṭthisālā.⁴ Soṭthisālā, according to the Mahāvamsa Tīkā, means either a hall

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1. See, supra, pp. 37-42.
 2. JRASCB., Vol. 31, p. 323.
 3. Sutta Nipāṭa, p. 119.
 4. Mv., X, v. 102.

where the Brāhmaṇas recite Sotthivacana or a hospital.¹ Geiger has accepted the second interpretation in his Mahāvamsa translation.² But the equivalent Skt. word Svastivacana according to Monier-Williams³ means a kind of religious rite preparatory to a sacrifice or any solemn observance, performed by scattering boiled rice on the ground and invoking blessings by the repetition of certain Mantras. As these names are mentioned along with other names of buildings of religious nature it is more likely that Sotthisālā was a religious place than a hospital.

The word Sivikāsālā is explained by the commentator as either a hall meant for the phallic symbol of Śiva or a lying-in-home.⁴ Geiger has, again, accepted the second interpretation according to his translation.⁵ But Paranavitana says that the first interpretation is more acceptable, because this name is also mentioned in company with other buildings of a religious nature. ~~It~~ so phallic worship formed part of the religion of the people of Ceylon in the time of Paṇḍukābhaya.⁶

But according to the Petavatthu⁷ and the Vinaya⁸

1. MvT., p. 296.

2. Geiger, Mv., Trs., p. 75.

3. Monier-Williams Skt. Eng. Dic. S.V. Svasti.

4. MvT., p. 296 "Sivikāsālā nāma sivaliṅga patiṭṭhāpitacāsālā vijāyanagharaṃ va".

5. Geiger, Mv., Trs., p. 75.

6. JRASCB., Vol. 31, p. 326.

7. Petavatthu, I, II.

8. Vinaya, I, p. 192.

Sivikā means a palanquin, a litter. Sivikāgabbha, according to the Viñaya means a room in shape like a palanquin.¹ The Jātaka speaks of Sivikā mañca in the sense of a throne-palanquin,² and Sivikā Suvanna in the sense of a golden litter.³ From all these references it is clear that Sivikā means a litter. Sivikāsālā may, therefore be interpreted as a hall in shape like a palanquin (cf. Sivikā Gabbha).

On the other hand there is no impossibility of forming a Secondary Derivative form Sivika from the Noun Stem Siva which means the god Śiva. When it is used as an adjective to the word Sālā which is in the feminine gender, it takes the form of Sivikā which means that which belongs to the god Śiva. Hence the word Sivikā Sālā may also mean the hall where something which belongs to Śiva is established. The commentator may have thought of this etymological possibility in addition to his acquaintance with the phallic worship which was current in his day, and interpreted Sivikā Sālā as the place where the phallic symbol was established, for both in the Samantapāsādikā⁴ and the Udātṭhakathā⁵. Buddha-ghosa refers to the worship of Śiva. According to the Mahāvamsa king Mahāsena is reported to have demolished several shrines of

1. Vinaya, II, p. 152.

2. J., V, 136, 262.

3. J., I, 52, 89.

4. Samantapāsādikā, III, p. 626.

5. Udāṇaṭṭhakathā, p. 131

¹
Devas. The Mahāvamsa Tikā explains that these Devālayas were the shrines where the phallic symbol was established. ² One thing is certain that the author of the Mahāvamsa Tikā is not confident in his interpretations of this word as he gives two alternative explanations. It is, therefore, quite likely that he gave the first interpretation bearing in his mind the existence of phallic worship during his own day.

Even in India phallic worship was not widespread in Āryan society before the 3rd century B. C., though it had been well known in the Mohenjodaro period. Kauṭilya in enumerating the deities to whom shrines should be dedicated within a king's Capital, mentions Śiva also. ³ The coins of the Arjunāyanas attributed to the second century B. C. show a bull before a Linga. ⁴ Another coin of Rudra Gupta assigned to the period between 200 and 100 B. C., shows on the reverse a trident between two pillars which may be interpreted as the emblem of Rudra-Śiva. ⁵ These stray references show that Śiva had not yet risen to the position of the Supreme deity as he became to one great section of the Hindus at a later stage. If this was the position of Śaivism in India, it is rather difficult to suppose that Śaivism flourished

1. Mv., XXXVII, v. 40.

2. MvT., p. 502.

3. Arthaśāstra, Śāmasāstri's Trs. 3rd Edition, p. 59.

4. Allen, Catalogue of Indian coins, p. LXXXII.

5. Allen, Catalogue of Indian Coins, p. CXVIII.

in Ceylon before 3rd century B. C.

On the other hand frequent references to the word Siva in epigraphic records of Ceylon from 3rd century B. C. onwards, cannot simply be ignored. A cave named Manapasudasana of prince Duhatara, son of prince Siva is referred to in an inscriptional record at Lenagala in the Kāgalla District.¹ Another inscription at Yaṭṭahalena Vihāra in the same District also refers to a prince named Siva.² The dedication of a cave by three people is recorded in another inscription.³ Of these three, the first two are Brāhmaṇas (Paṭake).⁴ The other is a village headman named Siva (Gamaka Siva). It is evident from this that the village headman Siva had equal social status with the Brāhmaṇas. Also an Upāsaka called Siva is referred to in yet another inscription in Kurun-āgala District.⁵ It is to be noted here that the names Sivadatta, Sivadāsa and Sivapālita which appear among the names of other donors in the Bhārhut inscriptions⁶ and on coins⁷ suggest that they were named after the faith they originally professed.

1. CJSG., II, p. 202, No. 615.

2. CJSG., II, p. 203, No. 618.

3. CJSG., II, p. 203, No. 619.

4. See, supra, p. 41.

5. CJSG., II, p. 211, No. 653.

6. EI., II, pp. 95-96.

7. Allen, Catalogue of Indian Coins, p. LXXXIX.

The word Visadeva is used as a proper name in another inscription.¹ He may have assumed this name after the highest god (Viśva Deva=Śiva) whose worship he or his family originally professed.

Reference to the word Velu in epigraphic records² also shows the acquaintance of the early Sinhalese with Śaivism. Vēl in Tamil means a folked spear and Murukan, one of the sons of Śiva is described as carrying this weapon and referred to as Vālasa. Hence Velusu in our inscriptions (Parumaka Velusu putaparakapusadevaha lene)³ may very well be a reference to Murukan. It is, therefore, reasonable to suppose that those who used the words Velu and Velusu in their proper names, at least belonged to the families which professed Śaivism, if they were not Śaivites themselves. Further, the name Śiva has been explained by historians as being at least partly of Dravidian origin.⁴ It is also believed that in the pre-Āryan period the only country beyond the sea known to the people of the Tamil land was Ceylon.⁵ It is, therefore, justifiable to suppose that South India had a strong influence on Ceylon both culturally

1. JRASCB., New Series, Vol. II, p. 130. No. 12.

2. CJS.G., II, p. 225, No. 745.

3. JRASCB., New Series, Vol. II, p. 132, No. 54.

4. The History and Culture of ^{the} Indian People, Vol. I, p. 162.

5. *ibid*, p. 159.

and socially. Thus the people of Ceylon during this period may have easily come to know of their form of worship - Saivism, side by side with Brāhmanism.

Another important Dravidian god is Ganeśa. Archaeological evidence from Mihintale suggests the existence of this god in Ceylon during the pre-Christian centuries. The friezes of Ganas (dwarfs) on the lower cornice of the Kanṭhaka Cetiya at Mihintale are full of interest. Many of these dwarfish beings are portrayed in various amusing attitudes- some playing musical instruments, one sporting with a cobra, another standing on his head, and so on. Some are animal headed. We have one with the head of ^a horse, another with that of a bear, and yet another with that of a monkey. Particularly interesting is an elephant-headed Gana, apparently with one tusk, attended by other Ganas holding various objects. It is possible to ^h conjecture that this is a prototype of Ganeśa, the various attributes of the deity being held in the hands of the attendants as the figure is provided with only two hands, unlike the later images which have four. ¹

Ganeśa according to the Brāhmanical Hindus is a benign god who removes obstacles and who typifies wisdom. The very character of the god as having an elephant-head shows his native Indian or non-Aryan origin. ² Paranavitana is of opinion that

1. ASCAR., 1935.

2. History and Culture of ^{the} Indian People, Vol. I, p. 1621



Frieze from a VIHARAKAḬA at
KANTAKA-CETIYA, Mihintalē.
(Archaeological Survey, Ceylon)

the date of the original Kanṭhaka Cetiya where these dwarfish figures are found is earlier than the 1st century B.C. and that it is therefore one of the earliest religious monuments in the Island.¹ If this is to be accepted it is reasonable to infer that the people in Ceylon during the early pre-Christian centuries at least had the knowledge of Gaṇapati as a deity of some importance.

This is very surprising, since the god Ganeśa or Gaṇapati occurs neither in Tamil nor in Sanskrit literary sources until very much later, and images of him are not to be found before the mediæval period. Nevertheless the figure in question is evidently elephant-headed, and the centre of attention of the human-headed Ganas on either side, who are making offerings as to a god. He is clearly Ganeśa, Lord of Ganas, though of course we cannot be sure that he filled exactly the same place as the Ganeśa or Gaṇapati of later Hindu mythology.

Though we will not contest Dr. Paranavitana's dating of the Stūpa to the 1st century B. C. we cannot avoid the impression that the Prize in question is linked with the later Sculpture of Amarāvati, where similar Gaṇa figures occur, and we

1. ASCAR., 1935, pp. J.4-6.

would not maintain that the sculpture, as distinct from the structure of the Cetiya, is earlier than the 2nd century A. D. But in any case this is the earliest known representation of an elephant-headed Gana, and gives evidence of the worship of a prototype of Ganeśa in Ceylon before he is known to have been worshipped in India.

One of the pre-Christian inscriptions contains a reference to a person called Bata Vasudeva.¹ On the strength of this and considering the religious significance attached to the word Vāsudeva one would ask whether the cult of Vāsudeva also was in existence in Ceylon during the early pre-Christian centuries. There is no doubt that in later periods this cult was known to the people of Ceylon too, for in the Dhammasaṅgani Atthakathā a reference is made to the word Vāsudevāyatana, which means a temple erected in honour of Vāsudeva.² But it is very difficult to believe in the existence of the Vāsudeva cult in Ceylon before 3rd century B. C. for clear evidence of its existence even in India does not go beyond 100 B. C.³ Therefore, the only possible suggestion that can be made in this connection is that if the person who used this word as his name knew the meaning of it, he

1. CJS.G., II, p. 107. No. 427.

2. Dhammasaṅgani Atthakathā, p. 141.

3. Select Inscriptions, Vol. 1, pp. 90-91.

may have had at least some kind of knowledge about the Gād
Vāsudeva.

The fact that the people in Ceylon were accustomed to the Hindu way of life in the pre-Christian centuries, is also evident from the references to the astral names used as proper names. It was the usual custom in India to name a person after the Nakṣatra in which he was born. This practice, no doubt, was known in Ceylon society also, for some of the personal names occurring in the inscriptional records are astral ones, such as Phussadeva,¹ Anurādha,² Visākha,³ Asālha⁴ and etc. Soothsayers and astrologers are also frequently referred to in our sources during this period.⁵ The Mahāvamsa records soothsayers' predictions about the arrival of both Paṇḍuvāsudeva⁶ and Bhaddakaccānā.⁷ Astrologers also declared that Ummāda cittā's son would slay his uncles.⁸ Paṇḍukābhaya also consulted learned astrologers about the suitability of the site where Anurādhapura

1. JRASCB. Vol. II. New Series, p. 130. No. 24; p. 132. No. 55, 56, 61.

2. Mv., IX, Vv, 9, 11; AC, p. 420, 437. No. 50, 444, No. 65; 454, No. 82.

3. AC., p. 429, No. 25; CJSB, II, p. 216, No. 686.

4. AC., p. 444, No. 62; CJSB, II, p. 192, No. 551.

5. See, *supra*, pp. 354-355.

6. Mv., VIII, v. 14.

7. MvT. p. 227.

8. Mv., IX, v. 2

was to be built.¹

Besides, there were a few local deities belonging to particular trades. The Mahāvamsa speaks of the God of hunters (Vyādha deva) to whom Paṇḍukābhaya allowed a site for worship by the Vyādhas who lived in Anurādhapura.² According to the Mahābodhi Vamsa³ there was another such deity called Kammāra deva or 'the God of blacksmiths'. When Devānampiya Tissa marked out the sacred ground for the Saṅgha in Anurādhapura, it is said that he sited the shrine dedicated to this God as a mark of one boundary. In addition to these deities of particular castes there was also a city-God (Pura deva) who was considered as the guardian deity of the city of Anurādhapura.⁴

From the above discussion it becomes clear that the majority of civilized people in pre-Buddhist Ceylon were the followers of Hinduism in one form or ~~the~~ other, and there were also representatives of heterodox Indian religions such as Jains and Ajīvikas.⁵ It is therefore obvious that the pattern of society existed in Ceylon was based on the caste system laid down by the Hindu law-givers in India. In other words, the social *structure*

1. Mv., X, v. 75.

2. *ibid*, X, v. 89.

3. Mahābodhivamsa, p. 136.

4. Mv., XXV, v. 87.

5. JRASCB., Vol. 31, p. 302, ff.

in Ceylon before the advent of Mahinda was much the same as in India during that period.

The Buddhist mission to Ceylon led by Mahinda in the 3rd century B. C. undoubtedly brought with it the Buddha's teachings on caste as expressed by him in the 6th century B. C. in India. It is, therefore, necessary here to examine what was his attitude towards this question, in order to understand the changes, if any, that took place in the social outlook owing to the Buddhist influence.

By the time Buddhism arose the caste system was firmly established as a social institution in India. Moreover this was developed into a sacred and religious institution by the Brāhmaṇas. Consequently certain sections of the society, particularly Śūdras and other low-caste people, were deprived of social, economic and religious rites or privileges enjoyed by the members of other castes.¹ Hence the Buddha, who stood both as a religious and a social reformer, had to make the people understand the futility of the caste system at least as far as their spiritual attainments were concerned. He demonstrated the futility of caste distinctions by the following simple arguments.

1. Manu., IV, 80, 81; 8, 413-414; 10. 96, 139; II, 73-87;

The Brāhmaṇas are represented as saying " the Brāhmaṇa is the best colour (caste), other castes are low; the Brāhmaṇa is the white colour, other colour is dark; the Brāhmaṇas are purified, not non-Brāhmaṇas. The Brāhmaṇas are the true sons of Brahmā, born from his mouth, Brahma-born, Brahma-created, heirs of Brahma". ¹

The same description is given by king Avanti Putta of Mathurā to the elder Mahākaccāna. The elder shows that a wealthy Kṣatriya can have one of the other castes to minister him. If a Brāhmaṇa were a thief or adulterer, he would be punished like any other. ² After the king was convinced of the equality of the four varṇas, through this discourse, the king says "O, venerable sir, it is certainly true that the members of all the four varṇas are equal in their social ranks". ³

The Assalāyana Sutta of the Majjhima Nikāya states that the Brāhmaṇa is brought forth from the womb of a woman in exactly the same way as any other man. ⁴ The Brāhmaṇa is a specifically Indian phenomenon. In the neighbouring countries no Brāhmaṇa exists. In those countries like Yona and Kambhoja there are only

1. Majjhima, II, 84; Dīgha, II, 81.

2. *ibid*, II. p. 88.

3. *ibid*, p. 86.

4. *ibid*, II. p. 148.

masters (Ayyo) and slaves (Dāso). Those who are rich are masters, and those who are poor are slaves. The rich may become poor, and the poor rich".¹ If a Brāhmaṇa commits sin, he suffers for it like every other man. Like every other man the Brāhmaṇa also has to abstain from evil deeds, if he desires salvation".² The Śūdra, who is despised for his caste, is as much capable of good thoughts and noble deeds as the Brāhmaṇa. If a bath can purify a Brāhmaṇa, it can equally purify a man of any other caste.³

"Nor does fire show any special regard for differences of caste. The fire produced by the members of the so called highest caste by rubbing costly fragrant sticks, arises just in the same way as that produced by the members of the so called lowest caste by rubbing pieces of wood from a dirty foul-smelling dog-trough (Sāpāna Doni), a pig-trough (Sūkara Doni), a washerman's trough (Rajaka Doni) or castor-oil twigs (Eranda-kattha).⁴ When sexual intercourse takes place between the members of different castes, the children in all cases take after the mother as well as the father, and there is no difficulty in assigning them to their proper parents".⁵

In the Vāsetṭhasutta found both in the Majjhimanikāya

1. Majjhima, p. 149.

2. *ibid*, II. p. 149-150.

3. *ibid*, II. p. 151.

4. *ibid*, II. p. 152.

5. *ibid*, II. p. 153.

6. *ibid*, II. p. 300ff.

and the Sutta Nipāta,¹ the Buddha argues as follows: "All human beings have organs exactly alike; there is not the slightest difference in kind. In plants, insects, fishes, snakes, birds, quadrupeds, the marks that constitute the species are abundant, whereas among men this is not the case. Neither the hair, nor the formation of the skull, nor the colour of the skin, nor the vocal organs, nor any other part of the body exhibits any special differences. By birth and descent all men are alike; they become different only through differences in occupations, and they are designated accordingly. Some are called farmers, some artisans, some merchants, some sacrificers, some kings, some robbers and so on".

On the contrary, the Buddha emphasised the ethical standard of an individual alone as the criterion for superiority among mankind. For distributing alms the Brāhmanas prefer an ethically good-natured man, even when he may not have gone through the initiation ceremony (Anūpanīto) known as 'second birth'.² Thus the Buddha showed that one's own superiority or purity lies not in one's own birth and descent but in one's conduct only.

The Esukāri Sutta of the Majjhima Nikāya also contains

1. Sutta Nipāta, p. 115, ff.

2. Majjhima II, p. 154.

some discussions about the quality of mankind. Here Esukārī states that a Brāhmaṇa should be served by any of the four castes, a Kṣatriya by any of the three lower, a Vaiśya by the two lowest and Śūdra only by a Śūdra. The Buddha rejects this Brāhmanic convention and says that what ever the service which makes a man better and not worse should be undertaken. He is not better or worse through high birth, high caste or great wealth. He further says that even if of high birth he is rewarded according to his actions, not according to this caste. Again Esukārī maintains that the castes are distinguished by their sources of income, the Brāhmaṇa by living on alms, the Kṣatriya by his bow and arrows, the Vaiśya by farming and cattle-rearing and the Śūdra by his sickle and carrying-pole. But the Buddha replies that those four classes are mere designations in accordance with their birth, just as a fire that burns logs is a wood-fire, or a fire that burns straw a straw-fire. But the functions of the fire are the same.¹ Thus the Buddha explained the equality of mankind in terms of their functions.

In the Vasala Sutta of the Sutta Nipāta he further explains this as follows: "He is a caṇḍāla who cherishes hatred; who torments and kills living beings; who steals, or commits adultery; who

1. Majjhima II, p. 154.

does not pay his debts; who maltreats aged parents; or fails to support them; who gives evil counsel and hides the truth; who does not return hospitality nor render it; who exalts himself and debases others; who ignores the virtues of others and is jealous of their success. He is a Brāhmaṇa who is free from sin. Not by birth does one become a Caṇḍāla, nor by birth does one become a Brāhmaṇa; by deeds one becomes a Caṇḍāla, ¹ by deeds one becomes a Brāhmaṇa".

The Buddha thus proved that there is no caste as such. He admitted everybody without any distinction of caste or creed into the Saṅgha. In the Pahārāda Sutta of the Anguttara Nikāya ² he says that just as the rivers, differently named, lose their identity when they enter the ocean and are henceforth known as the great ocean, so do the members of the four castes lose their former identity as soon as they enter the Order, and are henceforth known as the Śramaṇas, the Sākya sons (Samaṇā Sakyaputtiyā). Not only the members of all the four castes but also the outcastes were admitted to the Saṅgha. ³

The conclusion that can be arrived at from this is that there is no caste difference whatsoever among the members of the

1. Sutta Nipāta, p. 21.

2. Anguttara Nikāya, p. 737.

3. Theragāthā, p. 277 ff.

Saṅgha. But on the other hand it is also evident that among the laity the convention of caste was deeply rooted.

As ^Rfound there was no other way of dispelling this convention, the Buddha found a solution to this in the interpretation of Karma. This was explained in the Cullakammavibhaṅga Sutta of the Majjhima Nikāya.¹ According to this, the Buddha says that a man is reborn in a high caste (Uccakulīno) or in a low caste (Nicakulīno) as a result of his Karma in a previous birth, just as he is short-lived (Appāyuka) or long-lived (Dīghāyuka), healthy (Appābādhā) or sickly (Byābādhā), beautiful (Vaṇṇavanta) or ugly (Dubbannā), powerful (Mahesakka) or weak (Appesakka), rich (Mahābhoga) or poor (Appabhoga), wise (Paññavanta) or foolish (Duppañña) according to his previous Karma. Thus all differences whether social, economic, intellectual or physical are explained in terms of the theory of Karma.

There is no doubt that after the advent of Mahinda these ideas played an important role in the social life of the people of Ceylon. The caste distinction among the people in Ceylon during this period was purely an economic factor. It had no religious or spiritual bearing whatsoever. It was not a system

*of
Caste but a system
of*

1. Majjhima, III, p. 214 ff.

of class only, for the people of all walks of life enjoyed the freedom of religion irrespective of their social ranks which they achieved purely on occupational grounds. All the people from king to caṇḍāla were called Upāsakas when they took refuge in the Tisaraṇā, the Buddha, the ~~Dhamma~~ and the Saṅgha.

It is also evident from epigraphic records of Ancient India that people of different strata of society bore this title Upāsaka from the third century B. C. to about the 3rd century A. D.

Asoka himself confessed in several Inscriptions¹ that he became a lay-devotee of the Buddha, a few years after his consecration. This change of his religious outlook took place when he came into close contact with the Saṅgha (The Community of monks).² The first Rock Edict itself clearly shows that he started his Righteous war (Dhammaviḥaya) by observing the first Precept of the Pañcasīla.³ In the same Inscription he advocates his subjects not to become addicted to social amusements.⁴

1. IA. Vol. VI. p. 155: Select Inscriptions, Vol. IV p. 49ff.
"Devānam piye hevaṃ āhā sātīlekānā adhiṭṭhiyāni savacchāni aṃ upāsake sumi. cf. "budha.. Sake". in Maski.
2. "Saṅghe Upayāte", Minor Rock Edict I, Ia, VI, p. 149 ff.
3. Select Inscriptions, Vol. I, p. 16; "Na kiñci jīvaṃ ārabhitvā prajāhitavyaṃ"
4. Select Inscriptions, I. p. 16. "naca samā = jo katavyo. cf. "Samajjābhicarana" Dīgha. II. p. 182.

According to Rock Edict V, he prohibited the killing of certain animals on upasatha days, ¹ thereby emphasising the importance of observing the Eight Precepts on these days.

The Kuṭā Buddhist Cave Inscriptions (2nd and 1st centuries B. C.) also refer to donations of cave grants by Upāsakas to the Saṅgha. ² A Kol Buddhist Cave Inscription (2nd and 1st centuries B. C.) too refers to a grant of a cave to the Saṅgha by an Upāsaka. ³ In the Amarāvati Buddhist Cave Inscriptions (2nd century B.C.) again, the word Upāsaka appears among the names of donors of cave grants to the Saṅgha. ⁴ The Sue Vihāra Inscription (c.78 A.D.) refers to a gift of Vihāra by an Upāsaka called Balanandī. ⁵ Similarly the Nāsik Buddhist Cave Inscriptions, ⁶ the Junar Buddhist cave Inscriptions, ⁷ the Kānheri Buddhist Cave Inscriptions ⁸ and Ajanta painted Inscriptions, ⁹ contain records of cave grants made to the Saṅgha by Buddhist lay-devotees both male and female.

A perusal of these epigraphic records clearly shows that the people both male and female of different strata of society

1. IA. Vol. 18, p. 75.

2. ASWI, Vol. IV, p. No. II; p. 86, No. 13.

3. ASWI., Vol. IV, p. 89, No. 4.

4. ASSI., Vol. I, p. 82, 90, 106.

5. IA., Vol. 10. p. 326.

6. EI., Vol. VIII, p. 77, No. 91

7. ASWI., Vol. IV, p. 98, No. 34, p. 95; No. 15; p. 84, No. 7.

8. ASWI., Vol. V. p. 78, No. 12; p. 85. No. 28; p. 79. No. 15

9. ASWI., Vol. p. 136, No. 2. p. 137, No. 3, 4, 10, 12, 13, 14, 15.

used this title Upāsaka or Upāsikā as the case may be, irrespective of their castes. Among these Upāsakas, there is no doubt that there were at least Kṣatriyas,¹ Brāhmaṇas,² and Vaiśyas³, if not people from all the four castes. Although it is not quite clear from these records whether the people of the lowest stratum of society (Śūdra) were among the other donors, there is no doubt that they enjoyed the right to use the title Upāsaka once they had taken refuge in the Triad, for there is a reference in the Abhiḥjamāna Petavatthu to show that there was a barber who was called an Upāsaka.⁴ It is also evident from the Jātakas⁵ that barbers were considered as low-caste people. Thus it is evident from this and from other references,⁶ that the title Upāsaka was used by all the Buddhist laity irrespective of the castes to which they belonged.

It is, therefore, justifiable to infer that it was this system and social outlook which was carried to Ceylon along with different streams of cultural influence.

So far as Ceylon is concerned, references are not wanting

1. IA., Vol. VI, p. 155.

2. ASWI. Vol. IV, p. 86, No. 13; gift of a brāhmaṇī, the wife of a brāhmaṇa is referred to.

3. ASWI., Vol. V. p. 78, No. 12. a gift of a merchant who was an Upāsaka is referred to here.

4. Petavatthu, I, "Abhiḥjamāna Vatthu".

5. Jātaka, II, p. 5; II, p. 452.

6. Samantapāsādikā Commentary, p. 353.

in the Pāli Chronicles to show that there were Buddhists in Ceylon even before the reign of Devanāmpiya Tissa. Nine months after the Enlightenment, the Buddha is said to have visited Ceylon and preached the Doctrine to the people at Mahiyāṅga. ¹ Having listened to the discourse, many people became Upāsakas by taking refuge in the Triad, and the vows of Five Precepts. ² Then on his second visit to Ceylon, five years after his Enlightenment, ³ many people in that part of the Island (Nāgadīpa), became Upāsakas. ⁴ Although the Chronicles do not refer to the conversion of any particular individual on his third visit to Kālāṇiya, eight years after his Enlightenment, ⁵ it is evident that he paid this visit at the request of Maṇiakkhika, the ruler of Kālāṇiya, who became an Upāsaka three years prior to this visit. ⁶ It is, therefore, reasonable to assume that the followers of this ruler at Kālāṇiya, too, may have embraced Buddhism on this occasion. After the introduction of Buddhism, almost the entire population of Ceylon practically became Buddhists. ⁷

1. Mv., I, p. 31.

2. *ibid*, I, p. 32.

3. *ibid*, I, p. 47.

4. *ibid*, I, p. 62.

5. *ibid*, I, p. 74.

6. *ibid*, I, p. 64.

7. There were other religious beliefs, too, before the introduction of Buddhism. Read: "Early History of Buddhism" by Rāhula, p. 34-47.

Although the legends of the Buddha's visit to Ceylon are almost certainly later unreliable traditions, they existed very early, probably pre-Asokan centuries of Buddhism in places mentioned, and that these traditions evolved in order to account for this fact, and to give these early Buddhists an even more honourable origin than those converted by Mahinda.

Now there are two questions to be answered so far as the Buddhist laymen in Ceylon is concerned. Whether all the lay Buddhists, irrespective of their different stages of attainment, were called Upāsakas and whether all the people of different strata of society who acquired necessary qualifications, were called Upāsakas irrespective of their castes?

According to the original definition of the term Upāsaka, all Buddhist laymen and laywomen, by reason of their taking refuge in the Triad, were entitled to be called Upāsakas and Upāsikas as a form of address by monks. But for a Buddhist commonly to be called an Upāsaka by everybody, he should have acquired certain specific qualities, some of which are referred to in the story of Cūlagalla Upāsaka in ^{the} Rasavāhinī.¹ It is quite evident from this story that to become an Upāsaka in the real sense of the word, one must, spend most of his time with the monks, attending on their needs every ² day.

1. Rsv., II, p. 153.

2. cf. Asokas association with the Sangh "Sanghe upayite", Minor Rock Edict I.

only for ordinary Buddhist was not called an Upāsaka.¹ such a Buddhist is popularly called Upāsaka or Upāsikā, today, in Ceylon society. The evidence of the Rasavāhinī shows that this restricted use of the term is a very old one, but from the frequency of the use of the term in our inscriptions it seems that in the early centuries of Buddhism in Ceylon it had the broader sense of the Pāli Scriptures.

Literary and epigraphic records of Ceylon bear ample testimony to show that the Buddhist laity of different social grades were normally called Upāsakas. In one Inscription both titles, Gapati and Upasaka were used by one and the same person named Raki.² We have already seen earlier³ that the Gapatis of Ceylon were identical with the people of the Vaiśya caste in India. There is, therefore, no doubt, that the Vaiśyas in Ceylon society, too, who were Buddhist, used the title Upāsaka.⁴

A reference is made to a joint grant by an Upāsaka and Gapati.⁵ This shows that if they did not enjoy social status of equal rank, they could not have made this grant jointly. Then there is a reference to an Upāsaka who was a son of a Brāhmin

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1. Rsv., II, p. 9; p. 144. "Neso upāsako tissa pitā bhātā ca mātulo, na nātī suhado hoti diṭṭha sambhatthako tava."
 2. C. J. S. II, p. 190, No. 543.
 3. See, *Supra*, pp. 107-120.
 4. CJS. II, p. 430, No. 7; p. 195, No. 571.
 5. CJS. II, p. 211, No. 659.

or of a person of rank equal to that of a Brāhmin.¹

It is also evident from the Rasavāhinī that even Caṇḍālas could sometimes be called Upāsakas. Once a Caṇḍāla, Bahula by name, who knew the art of digging a Cetiya, was asked to show how to dig the Cetiya by a political aspirant called Sirināga, who was a son of a Brāhmin. But he promptly refused his request saying "how can I, while being an Upāsaka, dig a Cetiya built in honour of the Buddha?"² There are a few other references to show that even Dāsas who embraced Buddhism were called Upāsakas.³

Thus it is obvious that, so far as the religious life was concerned, the people of different social grades lost their caste distinctions in the religious life, and were called by a common term Upāsaka or Upāsikā as the case may be. But in question of domestic and family matters they no doubt retained their caste distinctions at least to some extent if not in the same form of Indian Caste system.

Thus we see that Buddhist community became an entirely different unit from the rest of population. They had their own places of worship, their separate ceremonies and priests. Among

1. Nakatika puta Upasaka- See PARUMAKA; CJS. II, 214, No. 674.

2. Rsv., II. p. 8.

3. *ibid*, II, p. 16; p. 32.

those who formed themselves into a homogeneous community with its own ethics and philosophy of life, there were no caste differences.

When the majority of the population embraced Buddhism, the Brāhmaṇas had no religious rites and ceremonies to perform, and their place was occupied by Bhikkhus as teachers and advisers of the community. It is to be noted that the Brāhmaṇas as a class cannot exist apart from Hinduism, nor can they maintain their social status in keeping with their religion, in ^a society other than Hindu. Consequently the Brāhmaṇas also gradually began to embrace Buddhism. There are epigraphic records to show how the Brāhmaṇas lost their individuality among other Buddhists after they embraced Buddhism. ¹

There are few references to the Brāhmaṇas who acted against Buddhism and Buddhists in Ceylon and a few Brāhmaṇas who failed miserably in their career. One such Brāhmaṇa named Sirināga even became a political usurper in Ceylon. The Rasavāhinī speaks of this Brāhmaṇa as a very powerful enemy of Buddhism, who destroyed the cetiyas and monasteries wherever possible and captured the throne at Anuradhapura at last. It also adds that

1. See, supra. p.38.

soon after he captured Anurādhapura, he was attacked by a disease which was incurable. Hence he reconstructed the cetiyas he destroyed as a compensation for his evil deeds. Yet he could not regain his health.¹ Even though this story is cited as an example to illustrate the evil consequences which one could expect by doing harm to the Buddhist institutions, it also shows the degree of unpopularity one would acquire by doing smething which the entire Buddhist population hated.

Another Brāhmaṇa called Brāhmaṇa Tissa who raised a revolt in Rohana and spread his disastrous activities all over the country,² and became so unpopular among the Buddhist community that he was given the most contemptuous designation Caṇḍāla Tissa.³ These incidents suggest that the political aspirants of early Ceylon should have become at least sympathisers of Buddhism if not genuine Buddhists themselves.

Elāra who reigned Ceylon from 205 to 161 B. C. was a non-Buddhist. According to the Mahāvamsa⁴ he was a very righteous king. The most remarkable feature of his administration,

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1. Rsv., II, p. 8.
 2. See, supra, pp. 36-37.
 3. Manorathapūraṇī, I, p. 92.
 4. Mv., XXI, vv. 15-33.

according to the Mahāvamsa, is the emphasis he laid on the administration of justice. But it is rather difficult to believe that he developed ~~the~~ religious tolerance in its true spirit. If that was so Duṭṭhagāmaṇī would not have made the statement that he would fight against Elāra in order to protect the Buddhasāsana in Ceylon.¹ But one thing is certain that he was a very clever political administrator. Before he captured Anurādhapura he had realised the importance of adopting himself to the existing society. Thus he was able to rule for forty years without becoming unpopular among the people. This shows what influence Buddhism had, even in the field of politics.

The early history of Ceylon reveals without any shadow of doubt that some of the Sinhalese kings such as Duṭṭhagāmaṇī and Saddhātissa were the very embodiments of faith and piety. King Saddhātissa was so famous for his piety that once he is said to have done labour in a paddy field belonging to a householder (Gahapati=Vaiśya),² in order to give alms to the Saṅgha,³ lowering himself to the rank of a labourer (Śūdra). According to legend he raised a girl of a beggar's family to the rank of his daughter and gave her in marriage to his chief minister, as she

1. Mv., XXV, v. 2.

2. See, supra, pp. 107-120.

3. Sīhalavatthu, p. 32.

gave alms to the community of monks with the little money she earned by selling her hair.¹ We do not suggest that these stories are literally true, but they are indicative of the social and religious atmosphere of the period.

King Mahācūli Mahātissa too is said to have worked as a labourer in a paddy field and in a sugar-mill in order to give alms to the Saṅgha in the hope of acquiring more merit.²

Thus Buddhism became such a strong guiding factor in men's lives that sometimes even a common man whose social status was very much lower than that of the king, stood boldly against the orders of the latter. Once a person named Tissa, who was an Upāsaka, disobeyed king Saddhātissa, who with the intention of testing the former's faith ordered him to kill a fowl. The king threatened Tissa with punishment by death for disobeying the order, but Tissa was not to be moved by such threats.³

According to another tradition a peasant of Uttaravaddhamāna, who took the five precepts at the feet of Piṅgala Buddhakkhita, was ready to allow the python that caught him in its coils to swallow him rather than kill the dreadful serpent.⁴ Gakkana, another Upāsaka, would not destroy the life of a hare

1. Sīhalavatthu, p. 94-96.

2. Mv., 34. 2-5.

3. Samyutta Aṭṭhakathā, (Sāratthappakāsinī), III, p. 49.

4. Papañcasūdanī (Sin. Edn) I, 204.

even to save the life of his mother.¹ These stories again point to the values which developed in Sinhalese Buddhist society of the time.

Even the Caṇḍālas who became Upāsakas disobeyed the Brāhmaṇas who sometimes enjoyed the status of kings. A Caṇḍāla named Bahula together with his seven sons once refused the orders of a very powerful political aspirant² called Sirināga, who^{was} also a Brāhmaṇa, to break a cetiya.³ It is also to be noted here that Sirināga in giving them orders, addressed them with the word 'friend' (Bhane)³ instead of using the normal form of address 'you wretched fellow' (Are).⁴ It is also evident from this that the Upāsakas were held in high esteem, irrespective of their rank in society.

Further, even the Brāhmaṇas who were in the capacity of officiating priests did not show any displeasure or content^{at} at the sight of Caṇḍālas as the case was in India.⁵ When the prince Sāliya had fallen in love with Asokamālā, the Caṇḍāla girl, Duṭṭhagāmaṇī requested his Brāhmaṇa chaplains to go and examine the auspicious signs on the body of this girl, before he

1. Papañcasūdanī (Sin. Edn.) I, 204.

2. Rsv., II. p. 8.

3. ibid, II. p. 8.

4. J., IV, p. 386.

5. See, supra, p. 170.

approved the marriage.¹ They willingly, examined her carefully.² It is also reported that after the marriage was approved, the king along with his ministers participated in the marriage ceremony, solemnised the marriage and partook of the meal prepared by Asoka-mālā herself.³

These incidents no doubt bear testimony to the fact that the caste system in Ceylon during this period was not as rigid as in India. This change in social outlook can be attributed purely to the influence of Buddhism. But on the other hand it should be borne in mind that even Duṭṭhagāmaṇi himself was at first against this marriage, and persuaded the prince to change his mind, assuring him that he would contact a suitable girl either from a royal family or from a Brāhmaṇa family on behalf of Sāliya.⁴ This shows that the caste system was not completely done away with in Ceylon society, in spite of the fact that it was strongly influenced by Buddhism. But certainly the rigidity with which the caste system was held in India was not to be found in Ceylon. The remarkable change that took place in the social outlook in Ceylon was that whatever differences there might have been between the various strata of society in matters mundane, Buddhism brought them all close together on almost an equal level.

1. Rsv., II, p. 119.

2. ibid., II, p. 119.

3. ibid., p. 120.

4. ibid., II, p. 119.

at the place of worship. This is virtually the situation in Buddhist society in Ceylon at the present time; and though the Ceylon caste is of later development in its present form, the nature of caste in Ceylon does not appear to have altered greatly for nearly 2000 years.

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Conclusion

In the light of what we have discussed in the previous chapters, the Social Institutions of Early Ceylon during the period under review can broadly be divided into two stages in the process of their development. The first stage covers the period from the Aryan colonisation up to the advent of Mahinda, and the second stage covers the period from the 3rd century B. C. to the 4th century A. D. The advent of Buddhism sharply divided the social history of Ceylon into pre-Buddhist and post-Buddhist periods.

Pre-Buddhist society in Ceylon ~~was~~ more or less the same as that in India of the same period. When the early Aryan colonists migrated to this country both from the North-Western and the North-Eastern parts of India, they brought with them the recollections of the various institutions of their home country. By far the most important of these was the Caste System.

In whatever society in which the Brāhmanas had much say, the distinctions of different strata of society ~~were~~ well marked. We have seen in a previous chapter the important role played by the Brāhmanas in the society of pre-Buddhist Ceylon.

They were employed as royal chaplains, administrators, teachers, astrologers, soothsayers and sacrificers. When the rulers of the country were at the mercy of the guidance of these Brāhmaṇas, they normally had to abide by the Brāhmaṇic rules and regulations which governed the society.

Moreover, Buddhism was hardly known before the advent of Mahinda while the orthodox Indian religions such as Brāhmaṇism, Śaivism, and Vaiṣṇavism and some heterodox religions such as those of the Jainas, the Ājīvikas and the Parivrājakas, were better known in Ceylon at this period.

Orthodox Hindus observe the Caste System with its all rigidity in matters both mundane and spiritual. Except the Buddhists, the followers of Jainism and probably other heterodox religions mentioned above are also strict observants of the Hindu Caste System.

Marriage between persons of equal rank was the order of the day. The family organisation was modelled according to the joint family system of the Hindus. The law of succession from brother to brother was preferred to that from father to son. Customs and manners connected with the domestic ceremonies were observed in the same way as they were in the Hindu society. The

hereditary character of professions was very conspicuous. This undoubtedly led to the establishment of various settlements on a communal basis. The consecration of kings ^{was} conducted according to the Hindu pattern. Even at places of worship class distinction could be seen. Thus the social structure in Ceylon during the pre-Buddhist period was modelled on the same pattern as it was in India of the same period.

But along with the Buddhist mission led by Mahinda in the 3rd century B. C., there is no doubt that the Buddha's attitude towards the caste system was also introduced to Ceylon. We have also seen clearly how Asoka introduced a new type of Abhiseka where the Kṣatriyas were given a more prominent place in society than the Brāhmanas. This was the first instance where the orthodox Brāhmanic convention of society was threatened in Ceylon.

In addition to this when people embraced Buddhism in thousands and began to learn the significance of Buddhism more deeply, they realised the futility of the then existing caste system. When the majority of the population became Buddhists, the services of Brāhmanas became less and less needed, with the results the Brāhmanas could not exist as a separate class in society, which was predominantly Buddhist and where the Hindu way of life was not much in force. Therefore some of the Brāhmanas

themselves embraced Buddhism, while others gave up their priestly functions and took to various other professions such as those of traders, physicians, politicians, soothsayers and astrologers etc. Thus the Brāhmaṇa community as a separate class in society began to decline in Ceylon during this period.

The Kṣatriyas and the nobles, the Vaiśyas, the Śūdras and the Caṇḍālas were the distinct classes left behind in society. Even among these classes social differences completely disappeared at places of worship. From the Kṣatriyas to the Caṇḍālas, all those who embraced Buddhism were commonly designated as Upāsakas. The religious functions were conducted in such a way that anybody could participate in them irrespective of their rank in society.

But Buddhism was not strong enough in Ceylon to do away with the caste system completely, so far as domestic affairs were concerned.

The convention of marriage between the members of equal rank was still very strong except in the case of love marriage. Even this exception could only be seen among the royal families and possibly among the richer families. But it should be borne in mind that even in such cases the approval of other members of

those particular families was not easily obtainable. We have seen how great the reaction of the public was when Sāliya married a Candāla girl; Wehn Anulā married one after the other several men who were below her dignity and rank, she became the most unpopular ruler that Ceylon had ever experienced. Thus the law of marriage was as rigid as in the pre-Buddhist period. There is no doubt that it was equally rigid among the people of other ranks also.

Along with the political advancement of the country, owing to the ever-increasing population it was necessary to find out new ways and means of production of varied nature to cope with the country's demand. It is therefore natural that new professions came into existence. This undoubtedly led to a new line of development in the evolution of caste system in Ceylon.

On the other hand there was no hard and fast rule that a particular class of people should follow a particular profession. For instance, among the Kṣatriyas, there were kings who did agriculture, ivory carving and the practice in medicine side by side with their royal functions. Even kingship was not confined to the Kṣatriya class. For example, the royalty of the Lambakanna dynasty may be cited. Thus the gradual decline of the Kṣatriya class in Ceylon could also be seen during this period.

Even if Kṣatriyas did exist, their number may have been very insignificant. Thus the second of the four Varnas of the Hindus also disappeared from the social structure in Ceylon during this period. In other words, the caste system in Ceylon was reduced to two Varnas only, according to the Hindu classification - the Vaiśyas and the Śūdras.

Thus we see that the social structure of Ceylon in this period was not the same as that in the pre-Buddhist Ceylon. On one hand, striking reformative changes took place, in that ^{that} all the people enjoyed the common privileges at places of worship irrespective of rank, status or sex and the position of women was raised to an equal level with that of men both in the fields of politics and intellectual ⁱlife, on the other hand the rigidity of the convention of marriage between persons of equal rank, which is the basic factor of the Indian caste system remained unchanged. This was the beginning of the present day caste system in Ceylon.

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