

Tamil place Names in Ceylon Outside The Northern And Eastern Provinces

K. Kularatnam

The Island of Ceylon lies to the south of India, between the latitudes of about 6 and 10 degrees N. and longitudes of 80 and 82 degrees E. covering an area of about 25,000sq. miles (65,000sq. Km.). The estimated population (1963) totals about 11 millions of which 3.3 millions (aprox.) are Tamil-speaking.

According to the 1953 Census, the total Tamil-speaking population was 2,370, 226, made up as follows (out of a total population of 8.1 millions):-

Ceylon Tamils	884,703
Tamils of Indian origin	974,098
Ceylon Moors	463,963
Moors of Indian Origin	47,462

The Ceylon Tamils are found mainly in their traditional homelands of the north and east, and also in the Colombo District. The Moors are found more widespread, particularly as traders in towns; but there are also pockets of Muslim settlements in the rural areas. The Tamils of Indian origin live mainly in the plantation districts of the hill country.

The Ceylon Tamils appear to have constituted a considerable portion of the population in the North. Central and North-western provinces until the recent past. Probably a good many of them have now become Sinhalese by adopting the Sinhalese language. The same can be said also of certain other coastal districts.

From remote antiquity there have been some permanent Tamil settlements in Ceylon¹. This is quite natural because the sea separating Ceylon from peninsular India is only about 20 miles wide. Owing to this, their concentrations must have been along the coast, particularly in the north and north-west. The existence of flourishing Tamil King doms in Ceylon at least from the second Century B.C. (King Elara) is a historical fact, also attested by foreign travellers like Cosmos (6-C.)

Suleyman (9-C). Abu Said (10-C). Macro Polo (13-C) and Ibn. Batuta (14-C). According to the Dipavamsa and Mahawamsa, Sena and Cuttaka, Tamil Kings, ruled from Anuradhapura in the 2nd C.B.C

History also refers to the facts that Vijaya Bahu I (A.D. 1070 - 1110) after constructing a Saivaite (Hindu) temple at Kantalai caused a Tamil inscription to be erected on the spot. at Polonnaruva (about A.D 1109) the Tamil Velaikkara army put up a Tamil lithic record by which they agreed to be the custodians of the tooth relic of the Buddha. King Vikrama Bahu II (1116 - 1137) left behind a Tamil inscription relating to a donation he made for the lighting of a perpetual lamp in the Saivaite temple at Magala in the Kurunegala District (N.W Province). A Tamil inscription of Manabharana. The father of king Parakrama Bahu I, found in the Kurunegala District records the

after the invasions and the occupation of Ceylon by the Colas, (AD 1017 – 1076), and it grew stonger with the Pandya invasions (A.D. 1310 et seq.) It is difficult to gauge the extent of Tamil blood in the Sinhalese, but there is no doubt that it is considerable. Otherwise it is difficult to explain why the Sinhalese language not only in its vocabulary but also in its structure shows the influence of Tamil so strongly and why the Sinhalese caste -system is so similar to that of south India."

On examination of the regional distribution of place names in Ceylon one comes across not only Tamil names in areas which are now Sinhala-speaking (and vice-versa), but also sometimes composite or hybrid place names which are part Sinhalese and part Tamil in composition as well as Sinhalese and Tamil place names juxta-posed within small areas.

The old place names of Ceylon are generally speaking simple and descriptive; they reflect criteria normal to early societies and are related to the concepts and outlooks of people of those times.

The majority of the place names can be listed under one or other of the following classes:-

(The official spelling of toponyms as found in the survey maps are retained.) Not having had any training in linguistics, the present writer has had to be satisfied with merely listing the toponyms on the basis of apparent similarities, and refraining from definite conclusions.

1. Caste and occupatinal, race, etc.,

2. Landforms such as hills, rivers, etc.,
3. Land classification such as forest, desert;
4. Coastal features,
5. Tanks, irrigation works, fields and farms (agriculture),
6. Trees,
7. Animals and birds,
8. Names of deities, personal names,
9. old, new, big, small, good,
10. Settlement, village etc.

(The names, or at least the principal parts of them, are Tamil.)

1. CASTE AND OCCUPATIONAL (RACE), ETC

Chetty: Chettychena (Puttalam Dt.), Vannattivillu (Puttalam Dt.).

Kalingar: Kalinga Elga (Pononnaruva Dt.). Demala duva (Colombo Dt.),

Galapatty (Kalapatty) Malara Dt., Rekewa (night- watcher) Kandy Dt.

2. LANDFORMS, ETC.

A. Mulai, mulla (corner): Achchamulai, Kanamulai (Puttalam Dt.),

Panayadimulai, Ammanamulla,

Mahaarachimulla (kurunegala Dt.),

Kulamulla, Parapamulla (chilaw Dt.)

Athiadimulla (Badulla Dt.)

Karadiyamulla, Kumbalmulla (Ratnapura Dt.), Kurunayaka mulla

(Matara Dt.), Karanayaka mulla,

Ohiva mulla, Parakada mulla,

Sayakkaramulla, Singaramulla,

Welikada mulla, Sarikkamulla,

Suvandachi mulla, (Colombo and

Kalutara Districts).

B. Malai, male: Nedimale (Colombo

Dt.), Mugunamale (RatnapuraDt.),

Munmale (Kandy Dt.), Kotmale,

Gilimale (Kandy Dt.).

- C. Aru: Adampan aru (Anuradhapura Dt.).
- D. Kuda: (bay, etc): Alankuda, Kalkuda, Kandakuda, Mandalakuda, Palaikuda, Tannikuda (Puttalam Dt.).
- E. Villu: Alam villu, Kali villu, Karadan villu, Nagavillu, Panicchavillu, Talaivillu, Vannativillu (Puttalam Dt.), Meenvillu (Anuradhapura Dt.).
- F. Manal: Allaperumanal talawa, Manal tivu (Puttalam Dt.), Manampitiva (Polonnaruwa Dt.).
- G. Kuli: Anaikulli, Kachimadurankuli, Kandakuli, Madurankuli, Mudalakkuliya, Sembukkuli, Sinna sembukkuliya, (Puttalam Dt.), Anaikulaya, Kurukkuliya, Kumbukkuliya, Pirappankuliya, Singkkuliya (Chilaw Dt.), Kuli tota (Galle Dt.).
- H. Veli: Ambaveli Mangala veli, Marukkanveli, Mulakandaveli, Murandaveli, Periyavelliya, Sinna Veli, Sittaraveli, Unaveli (Puttalam Dt.).
- I. Tivu: Erumativu, Ippantivu, Kakkaitivu, Karadivu, Karaitivu, Karukkativu, Killitivu, Kottantivu, Mannativu, Mandamaritivu, Mantivu, Mudentivu, Oddakarantivu, Pambativu, (Puttalam Dt.).
- J. Pallam: Pallama (Puttalam Dt.), Ottupallama, Pallama (Kurunegala Dt.).
- K. Ur: Pudur (Polonnaruwa Dt.) Kollure (Kurunegala Dt.), Nallore (Colombo Dt.).

1. **LAND CLASSIFICATION**
- A. Tottam: Ammatotam, Kunjimtotam, Marikartotam (Puttalam Dt.), Kanda

- kadu tottam, Pudur adu tottam (Anuradhapura Dt.).
- B. Kudal: Erumbukkudal (Puttalam Dt.).
- C. Moddai: Kadayamottai (Puttalam Dt.).
- D. Puval: Karadipuval, Karaiadipuval (Puttalam Dt.).
- E. Kadu: Kaddaikadu, Periyakaddakadu, Sinnakaddaikadu, Navatkadu, Periya kadu, Thota kadu (puttalam Dt.), Kachchaikaduva, Kochikaduva, (Kurunegala and Kandy Dts.), Vilankadu (Anuradhapura Dt.), Velankaduvila (Polonnaruwa Dt.).
- F. Palai: mudalipalai (Puttalam Dt.).
- G. Kalli: Santia kalli (Puttalam Dt.).
- H. Odai: Virudodai (Kurunegala Dt.), Suriodai (Puttalam Dt. & Anuradhapura Dt.).
- I. Parappu: Ponparippu (Puttalam Dt.).

2. **COASTAL LAND**
- A. See Kuda, under landforms.
 - B. Munai: Andimunai, Kalmunai, Kombimunai (Puttalam Dt.), Kurunchi munai (Anuradhapura Dt.).
 - C. Karai: Oddakkarai, Vellankarai (Puttalam Dt.), Nanjundankarai, Puliانكارai (Chilaw Dt.).
 - D. Turai: Pallivasal turai (Puttalam Dt.), Kaluturai (Kalutara Dt.), Panadura (Panandurai, Colombo Dt.).
 - E. Avi: Palavi (puttalam Dt.), Neeraviya (Anuradhapura Dt.).
 - F. Mundal: Mundel (Chilaw Dt.), Pachakadu Mundal (Puttalam Dt.).
 - G. Padu: Periya padu, sinnapadu, (Puttalam Dt.).
 - H. Kadal: Kаланanai (Colombo Dt.).

3. IRRIGATION AND AGRICULTURE

A. Kulam: Alamkulama, Ankuttan Kulama, Demala Surakkulama, Eppadikulama, Puliyan kulama Pettikulama, Pothukkulam, Pukkulam, Ramankulama, sembukkulam, Sandanankulama, Senkattikulama, Senkatkulama, Surakkulama (Puttalam Dt.), Alankulama, Attikulama, Bambikulama, Ottukulama, Kurundankulama, Kuruvikkulama, Manakkulamagama, Monakkulama, Pevirikkulama, Porasankulama, Punnankulama (Kurunegala Dt.), Irraddaikulama, Naikkulama, Marudankulama, Palakkulama, panaiadikkulama, Pulichchakulam, Chippikulama, Velantikkulam (Chilaw Dt.), Achirikkulama, Alankulama, Andyankulama, Attikkulam, Bandyankulama, Sirunkuttukulama, Gnanikkulama, Ichankulama, Karqmbankulama, Nochikkulama, Puliyan kulama, Sandananankulama, Iladchankulama, Ilandikkulama, Illuppukkulama, Irambakkulama, Iraniankulama, Kammalakkulama, Kandakkulama, Kanjanankulama, Karidikulama, Karambankulama, Karukkankulama, Kattamankulama, Kattankulama, Kawarakkulama, Kidawarakkulama, Kodarikkulama, Kochikkulamā, Kombichankulama, Koppakkulama, Kottamankulama,

Kowankulama, Kulankulama, Kunchikkulama, Kurundankulama, Kurunchakkulama, Kuttikulama, Mankulama, Marakkulama, Navakkulama, Nellikkulama, Nelunkulama, Orukkumankulama, Pambukkulama, Palankulama, Palayakulama, Pallankulama, Pandikkulama, Pandyan kulama, Panikkankulama, Parimiyankulama, Peroyankulama, Pettankulama, Ponimankulama, Ponnarankulama, Pudukkulama, Sangilikkulama; Sattambikulama, Seepukkulama, Sembukkalam, Settikulama, Sinnakkulama, Sirukkulama, Solayankulama, Udayankulama, Vadirimunamarikkulama, Vendarankulama, Vanankulama, Vanniarkulama, Verunkulama, Veruppankulama, Vattankulama, Peikkulama (Anuradhapura and Polonnaruva Dts), Theruvakkulama (Polonnaruva Dt.), Watte wewa (Polonnaruva Dt.), Sippikkulama (Hambantota Dt.), Kolakkanavadi (Kulakkaddu-anai- vadi), (Polonnaruva).

B. Arivi: Arivichenai (Puttalam Dt.), Arivi aru (AnuradhapuraDt.).

C. Chena: (Hena). Arivichenai, Cettichenai, Chenaikkudiyiruppu, Elluchenai, Kallameduchenai, Karrukuchenai, Kilawamduchenai, Kuratihena, Maravanchenai, Nayakkarchnai, Puliyan chinai, Sandichenai (Puttalam Dt.), Kuratihena (Kurunegala Dt.),

Attiadimulachenai, (Anuradhapura Dt.).

D. Kinaru: Kollankinaru (Puttalam Dt.).

E. Kani: Andankani (Puttalam Dt.).

F. Cholai: Palaicholai, Vattacholai, (Puttalam Dt.).

G. Vayal: Pallikundavayal, Pulidivayal (PuttalamDt.).

H. Vaikkal: (Chilaw Dt.).

I. Patti: Manikkampattiya, Sinnavilupattiya (Polonnaruva Dt.).

J. Eri: Minneriya (Pollonaruva Dt.).

K. Pola: Karakkapola (Kurunegala Dt.).

L. Panai: Pittipanai (Negombo Dt.).

M. Veli: Puduveli (Polonnaruva Dt.).

6. TREES (VIDE SUPRA: TANKS ALSO)

Vembu: Maduramdu vembu (Puttalam Dt.).

Panai: Ottapanai, Periya Panai, Sinnappanai (Puttalam Dt.), Pittipane (Negombo Dt.).

Iluppa: Illupadeniya (Chilaw Dt.).

Practically every known tree has been honoured by being used to designate tanks, chenas, etc. e.g: Alaikolaweva (Polonnaruva Dt.), Kurunjavettai (Polonnaruva Dt.), Vilankadu, Velankaduvila (Polonnaruva Dt.).

7. ANIMALS AND BIRDS

A. Anai: Anaikutti (Puttalam Dt.), Anaulundawa (Polonnaruva Dt.), Anaimaduva (Puttalam Dt.), Anaikkuliya (Chilaw Dt.), Anaulundawa (Chilaw Dt.), Anaikattiya (Anuradhapura Dt.), Singapuli, Singapuli Kande, (Kurunegala Dt.), Kokkavillu (Puttalam Dt.).

8. DEITIES PERSONS ETC.

Amman: Ammatotam (Puttalam Dt.).

Andi: Andimunai, (Puttalam Dt.),

Andigedera, Andigama (Puttalam And Kurunegala Dts.), Andigoda (Galle Dt.), (Galle Dt.), Andiambalama (Colombo Dt.).

Pandiyar: Virapandiana (Chilaw Dt.), Pandiyankulama (Anuradhapura Dt.), Pandyawatte (ratnapura Dt.).

Maniyar: Maniyarwatte, Maniyargama (Kegalle Dt.).

Kaliamma: Kaliammahara, (Colombo Dt.), Kalipola (Kalipola (Karunegala Dt.).

Pullaiyar: Pullaiyaradi (Anuradhapura Dt.)

Allaperumantalawa (Puttalam Dt.).

9. OLD, NEW, BIG, SMALL, GOOD, NEAR

Perum, periya: Periya Kalanchiya, Periya Kadu, Periyakulama (Anuradhapura Dt.).

Kutti: Anaikutti (Puttalam Dt.),

Adi: Erukkaladi adi, Ilandai adi, Kalladi, Manchadi, Sirambiadi, Tillaiadi (Puttalam Dt.), Pullaiyar adi:

(Anuradhapura Dt.), Sinakarukku panai (Chilaw Dt.), Sinnachariyagama (Kurunegala Dt.), Sinnaveli, Sinnakudiyiruppu, Sinnapadu (Puttalam Dt.).

Nalla: Nallachiya, (Kurunegala Dt.),

Nallachiya, Nallapanbukkulama,

Nallamudeva (Anuradhapura Dt.)

Palaya: Palayakulama (Anuradhapura Dt.)

Pudu: Pudukkudi, Pudukkulama,

Puduveli, Pudur (Anuradhapura and Polonnaruva Dts.).

Attiadimulachenai, (Anuradhapura Dt.).

D. Kinaru: Kollankinaru (Puttalam Dt.).

E. Kani: Andankani (Puttalam Dt.).

F. Cholai: Palaicholai, Vattacholai, (Puttalam Dt.).

G. Vayal: Pallikundavayal, Pulidivayal (PuttalamDt.).

H. Vaikkal: (Chilaw Dt.).

I. Patti: Manikkampattiya, Sinnavilupattiya (Polonnaruva Dt.).

J. Eri: Minneriya (Pollonaruva Dt.).

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Anaulundawa (Polonnaruva Dt.),

Anaimaduva (Puttalam Dt.),

Anaikkuliya (Chilaw Dt.),

Anaulundawa (Chilaw Dt.),

Anaikkattiya (Anuradhapura Dt.),

Singapuli, Singapuli Kande,

(Kurunegala Dt.), Kokkavillu

(Puttalam Dt.).

8. DEITIES PERSONS ETC.

Amman: Ammatotam (Puttalam Dt.).

Andi: Andimunai, (Puttalam Dt.),

Andigedera, Andigama (Puttalam And Kurunegala Dts.), Andigoda (Galle Dt.),

(Galle Dt.), Andiambalama (Colombo Dt.).

Pandiyan: Virapandiana (Chilaw Dt.),

Pandiyankulama (Anuradhapura Dt.),

Pandyawatte (ratnapura Dt.).

Maniyar: Maniyarwatte, Maniyargama

(Kegalle Dt.).

Kaliamma: Kaliammahara, (Colombo

Dt.), Kalipola (Kalipola (Kurunegala

Dt.).

Pullaiyar: Pullaiyaradi (Anuradhapura Dt.)

Allaperumantalawa (Puttalam Dt.).

9. OLD, NEW, BIG, SMALL, GOOD, NEAR

Perum, periya: Periya Kalanchiya, Periya

Kadu, Periyakulama (Anuradhapura Dt.).

Kutti: Anaikutti (Puttalam Dt.),

Adi: Erukkalai adi, Ilandai adi, Kalladi,

Manchadi, Sirambiadi, Tillaiadi

(Puttalam Dt.), Pullaiyar adi:

(Anuradhapura Dt.), Sinakarukku panai

(Chilaw Dt.), Sinnachariyagama

(Kurunegala Dt.), Sinnaveli,

Sinnakudiyiruppu, Sinnapadu (Puttalam

Dt.).

Nalla: Nallachiya, (Kurunegala Dt.),

Nallachiya, Nallapanbukkulama,

Nallamudeva (Anuradhapura Dt.)

Palaya: Palayakulama (Anuradhapura

Dt.)

Pudu: Pudukkudi, Pudukkulama,

Puduveli, Pudur (Anuradhapura and

Polonnaruva Dts.).

10. SETTLEMENT, VILLAGE, ETC.

Ambalam : Ambalam, Andiambalama (Puttalam Dt.).

Kudiyirruppu: Chenaikudiyiruppu (Puttalam Dt.).

Kudi, Kudil: Kuravankudil (Puttalam Dt.).

Kaddi: Marichukaddi (Puttalam Dt.).

Pola: Kalipola (Kurunegala Dt.),

Marapola (Colombo Dt.), Nekandapola,

Pedipola, Warakapola (Colombo Dt.),

Kotuwalpola, Muttetupola, (Ratnapura

Dt.), Weedipola (Hambantota Dt.),

Wannipola (Kandy Dt.), Irivendum pola,

Rahupola (Badulla Dt.).

Kotte: Kotte (Colombo Dt.), Kasikotte,

Wahalkotte (Kurunegala Dt.).

Ur: Kollure, Nallure (Kurunegala Dt.),

Nalluruva (Colombo Dt.), Vallindauru,

Tivumunaiur, Pudur, Kollur

(Anuradhapura Dt.).

Kovil: Kovilangegammaduva (Kandy

Dt.), Kovilkare (Ratnapura Dt.),

Kovilkande (Kurunegala Dt.),

Koilandigama (Puttalam Dt.).

Madam: Nainamadama, (Chilaw Dt.)

Kade: Kochikade, Mariakkade (Colombo Dt.).

From the foregoing it seems very likely that some time in the past the North, Central and North-Western Provinces as well as the conastal tracts as far south as Colombo were inhabited by Tamil-speaking people, as is amply demonstrated by archaeology and history. In addition, there have been also atleast small settlements elsewhere in the Island, of Tamil-speaking people. The many composite or hybrid place names and the juxta-position of Sinhala and Tamil place names indicate the peaceful co-existence of people of both language groups.