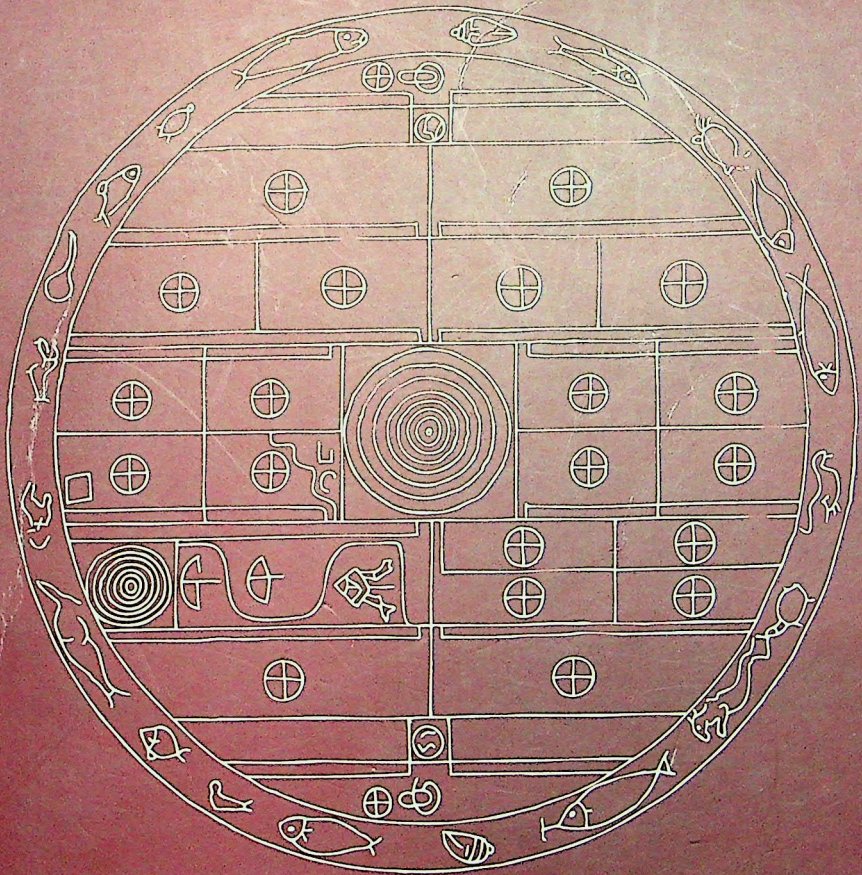


Proceedings of the
National Archaeological Symposium
2014



Department of Archaeology
Ministry of National Heritage

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A Copy of the Cosmic diagram engraved on a rock surface at Ranmasu Uyana in Anuradhapura (c. 700-800 CE) Desinged by Raj Somadeva

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The Heritage Monuments of Jaffna Peninsula and their Preservation

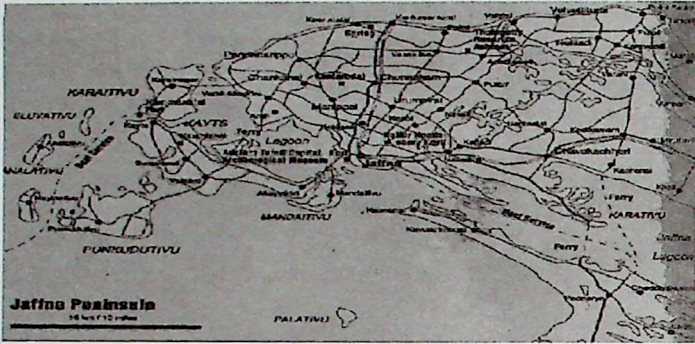
V. Sivaruby

Abstract

The Jaffna peninsula includes the Zones of Vadamardchy, Thenmaradchy, Valikamam and Island groups. Jaffna peninsula has been marked as a region having not less than 3000 years of unique heritage history and has been classically identified in the Sri Lankan historic sources from ancient times. Before this region was named as 'Yalppanam' in 15th century, it has been marked as a unique region under the names of 'Nagativa' and 'Nakanatu' in historic manuscripts. It is also ensured by the inscriptions in the Pragkrit and Tamil languages of the latter period. The archaeological explorations and excavations which were undertaken after the 1970s seem to enlighten the history of Jaffna peninsula. In accordance with the Archaeological Act of Sri Lanka, hundreds of visible and tangible monuments found in the northern part of Sri Lanka have been gazetted by the Department of Archaeology. Most of those important heritage monuments of Sri Lanka are being maintained and preserved presently. However, it can be stated that the heritage monuments of Jaffna peninsula have not yet been entirely identified or included into the whole management plan. The objective of this research is to document the tangible heritage monuments of Jaffna peninsula including the ancient settlement sites, ancient Hindu and Buddhist temples, Dynasty heritage monuments (Jaffna Kingdom), traditional houses, Choultry (madam -T), resting stones (Sumaitbanki kal- T), avuranchchikatkal (T) etc. together with European forts, churches, administrative centers and to make their importance known and as well to reveal the importance of their preservation to the public at large. The policy of managing the heritage monuments includes the maintenance, preservation, consolidation, rehabilitation, restoration, reproduction and reconstruction. The main objective is their preservation to increase their life span. In their preservation, local social bodies, universities, the protectors those who protect the heritage assets conventionally, state volunteer organizations and the private sector bodies could be engaged and those monuments could be preserved and handed over to the future generation. It could be observed that these heritage monuments have been destroyed from time to time by factors like ethnic conflicts, natural impacts and the fact that the importance of archaeological heritage monuments was not realized. Anyhow, by preserving these existing heritage monuments, these, invaluable and rare treasures of heritage monuments could be prevented from being lost. As a matter of fact, these heritage monuments and sites could be made as excellent places of tourist attraction.

The Jaffna peninsula includes the Zones of Vadamardchy, Thenmaradchy, Valikamam and nearby Island Groups. Not only the historic sources, but as well the archaeological heritage monuments which rely up to now and the archaeological explorations which have been carried out up to now also ensure that Jaffna peninsula has been marked as a region having its unique heritage history. The Jaffna having not less than 3000 years of history has been

classically identified at the Sri Lankan historic sources from the ancient times. Before this region was named as 'Yalppanam' in the 15th century CE, it has been marked as a unique region with the names of 'Nagadipa(m)', 'Nakanatu' and 'Nagapumi' in Pali, Tamil and Sinhala literatures and also has been called as 'Nagadipa' in the map of second century CE made by Ptolomy (Weerakody 1997;87). Many Bhrami inscription as well ensure this



Map 1. The Map Showing the Northern Peninsula

idea. The *Vallipuram* gold plate of 3rd century CE. could be pointed out as a good example for this. The message regarding the Buddhist *Vihara* established at “*Naka tiva*” has been mentioned in this document which was found at the place *Vallipuram, Jaffna* in 1936. There is no any doubt that the name “*Nagativa*” mentioned here is the “*Nagadipa (m)*” mentioned in Pali literatures (Paranavitana 1982: 79 & 80). Though, its ancient and succeeding history is in lower stances in the historic literatures up to 16th century CE. In this connection, the archaeological explorations and archaeological excavations which were undertaken after 1970s enlighten the history of *Jaffna* peninsula.

The researches regarding the prehistoric period of Sri Lanka grew up generally during the earlier part of the 20th century. It could be stated that they were fulfilled particularly after 1960s only. The authentic archaeological evidences which realise that the Paleolithic people were living before BCE 125000 years have been gathered from the explorations done by Deraniyagala at *Iranaimadu* in the Northern Sri Lanka and at *Bundula* in Southern Sri Lanka. Following the people of this Stone-age, the evidences have been obtained that the Mesolithic cultural people lived in more than 75 places from up-country

to low land areas in Sri Lanka since 37000 BCE. Since the Quartz and Chert stone tools used by this people have been broadly found in the places like *Mathoddam* and *Poonakary* in the Northern Sri Lanka it has been revealed that these people had lived in the Northern Sri Lanka as well. However, any evidences for the live

of these Paleolithic and Mesolithic people at the *Jaffna* peninsula have not yet been received. The reason stated for this is that the suitable situation for the life of these people of Stone-age was not found in the *Jaffna* peninsula. Since the *Jaffna* is a region generally having lime stones, hardy stones suited for the live of stone - age people were not found. Therefore, it is believed that the Stone - age people could have not been lived here. However, it could be considered that while these Stone - age people displaced from South India to Sri Lanka, they should have settled down in *Jaffna* and afterwards moved to the other regions in Sri Lanka.

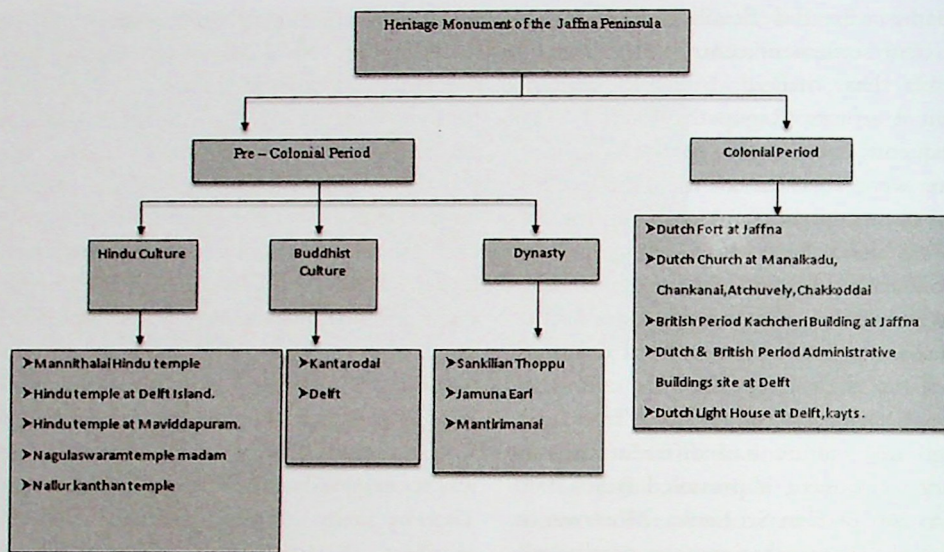
The archaeological explorations taken place up to now in the *Jaffna* peninsula have denoted that the human history and civilization history of the *Jaffna* peninsula arose with the Megalithic Culture. Among these archaeological explorations, the explorations carried out in *Kantharodai* by Paul Peiris in 1917 CE, by the Sri Lankan Archaeological Department in 1967 CE and by Vimala Begly of the Pennsylvania University in 1970 CE and the archaeological explorations done by the Sri Lankan Archaeological Department in 2011 have exemplified this centre as the Cultural Centre of the Iron-Age on the basis of the evidences of ancient town settlements.

Ragupathy who did detailed research on the ancient settlement centres of the *Jaffna* peninsula has marked over 40 ancient settlement centers (Ragupathy 1987, 1-171). Consequently the evidences for the Megalithic Culture were revealed at the explorations carried out in the archaeological centres like *Poonakary* and *Chaddy*. Since these cultural people used large stones for the gravestones used while burying the deceased ones and as they used iron and black and red coloured Potteries in their daily life, this culture is called as “Megalithic culture” and “Iron age”. Though this culture had different periods country to country, it prevailed from 1000 BCE to 300 BCE in Sri Lanka. Moreover, it was found that overseas contacts particularly maritime commercial contacts were resulted with this Megalithic Culture. The location of Sri Lanka and its specialities of physical and geographic aspects only encouraged the overseas contacts with Sri Lanka. The literal evidences and the archaeological evidences which were found here prove that the *Manthai*, *Yambugola* and *Trincomalee* harbours employed important role in this overseas trade. In the Megalithic centres at the *Jaffna* peninsula could also be observed that they also have faced these overseas contacts. Particularly the archaeological evidences of Indian, Greek, Rome, Arabic and Chinese countries collected from *Kantharodai* and *Poonakary* centres are also good evidences. These overseas commercial contacts also influenced the urbanization which arose in the mature stage of the Megalithic Age.

The historic sources and the documents of European period state about the Hindu and Buddhist temples, state capitals, state places, forts, harbors, trade cities and important historic centers which existed in the Northern Sri Lanka before the arrival of Portuguese. However, the Portuguese, Dutch and British

who dominated sine 16th century CE in the Northern Sri Lanka have mostly used the aforesaid historic points as their ruling centers. Because of the aesthetic abolition policy which was followed during the Portuguese and Dutch periods, the heritage monuments like Hindu and Buddhist temples, civil habitats and administrative centre were highly affected. Also their Christian churches and administrative centers were established in the same places with European aesthetic tradition. However, since the indigenous people obtained religious independence at the latter part of Dutch ruling the Hinduism was regenerated again in Northern Sri Lanka. Thereby many temples arisen. Considerable numbers of temples are being maintained with the oldest history. There are evidences for the adherence of the influence of European period at some temples recreated during the European ruling. This aspect could also be observed in the houses made by the indigenous administrators and popular leaders of the society who were holding higher posts during the European ruling.

The heritage of a nation or a region is viewed into two divisions as the natural heritage which includes the natural and intangible aspects (for example; plants, animals, landscape, minerals, physical aspects of land and water, human history before the historical times) and the cultural heritage which includes the physical and intangible aspects. Herein, the cultural heritage includes the buildings, places of historical importance, monuments, archaeological objects and aesthetic objects. The cultural heritage refers that which was followed by a group or society during the past and is being maintained continuously at present and has to be provided for the wealth of next generation in the future. The protection and management of the rare treasures of the cultural heritage includes



Map 1 A Flowchart showing the setting of the Heritage Management activities in Jaffna Peninsula

those of cultural environment, places of archaeological explorations, historic documents, the culture expressed by the social bodies, ancient buildings, religious faiths, industrial heritage, aesthetic aspects, archaeological findings and spiritual places etc.

Generally, these valuable heritage monuments of the *Jaffna* peninsula could be categorized into two as Pre-Colonial Heritage Monuments and Colonial Heritage Monuments. The Pre-Colonial Heritage Monuments could also be further categorized as related to Hinduism, Buddhism and Dynasty.

These valuable heritage monuments of the *Jaffna* peninsula could be viewed as follows

Though the archaeological relics related to the Hinduism were generally marked since the Megalithic period, the tradition of making temples using undestroyable things was developed in Sri Lanka after 6th century CE like in *Tamil Nadu*. The one of its causes is

the activity of the Devotion Liberation set up along with the *Pallava* and *Pandiya* ruling. The spoilages of the Hindu buildings and statues found at the places such as *Anuradhapura*, *Devinuvera*, *Nalandha*, *Thiruketheeswaram* and *Thirukoneswaram* are the best instances for this. The *Diravida* temple architecture customs following the *Pallava* and *Pandiya* temple architecture mostly attained high peak during the ruling of *Chola*. It could be found using the literal archaeological evidences that this *Diravida* aesthetic custom had its influence in Sri Lanka as well while the Sri Lanka underwent to the ruling of *Chola* (993 – 1070 CE). The *Jaffna* including Northern Sri Lanka also experienced this influence. Most of the Tamil literatures indicate as several Hindu temples were found during the period of Tamil Kingdoms which ruled the Northern Sri Lanka particularly who ruled by having *Nallur* as their capital city. However, it could be observed obviously using the European documents and archaeological relics that Hindu aesthetic customs have

mostly been destroyed on the basis of European's severe religious spreading policy over 350 years. Therefore, though the famous Hindu religious places in the *Jaffna* peninsula such as the *Nallur Kanthasamy Temple*, *Maviddapuram Hindu Temple*, *Naguleswaram Hindu Temple* and *Sirappar Madam* possess the present architectural custom it could not be forgotten that they all have long traditional historic background. On the above historic background the Hindu religious archaeological cultural monuments of the *Jaffna* peninsula are able to be identified.

While the Buddhist religious archaeological cultural monuments of the *Jaffna* peninsula are viewed, though the earthen statues, sculptures and symbols are the pioneer religious faiths of the Hindu religion, since the Buddhism intuitionally developed with government support most of the people who followed the Megalithic Culture accepted that religion. Subsequent to the introduction of Buddhism in 3rd century BCE to Sri Lanka evidences for its spreading at several places in the *Jaffna* peninsula could be observed. Particularly the Buddha statues and Buddhist worshipping relics found at the places like *Kantharodai*, *Chunnakam*, *Mahiyapiddy*, *Vallipuram*, *Navatkiry*, *Delft* and *Nainativu* could be denoted. Many evidences are found at the Pali literatures and *Brahmi* stone inscriptions realize that Tamils and Tamil Kings were as Buddhists and supported the Buddhism during the ancient and intermediate histories. The Buddhist archaeological monuments existing in the *Jaffna* peninsula can be viewed in this background.

While viewing the dynastical heritage monuments of the *Jaffna* peninsula, it is widely considered among the historic authors that a Tamil Kingdom under the ruling of a King was firstly originated by

Ariyacakkaravarti Emperors with *Nallur* as the capital city. However, it could be found through the literal and archaeological evidences that the origin of the dynasty of Northern Sri Lanka is correlated with Megalithic Culture and a subsequent dynasty was present in the Northern Sri Lanka. The state of Tamil Kingdom ruled by having *Nallur* as the state capital in the Northern Sri Lanka since 13 CE to 17 CE is a specialized one in the dynasty of Sri Lanka. There are many inscriptions in the Tamil and Sinhala literatures and Portuguese and Dutch documents about the administrative centres, forts, temples and palaces which existed in this capital. Any buildings which could be identified as of those periods could not be found at present. Though some building ruins have accidently been obtained, the aesthetic tradition of *Nallur* Kingdom could not be identified. The main cause for this is the aesthetic abolition policy followed by the Europeans. However, since the Portuguese who won the *Nallur* Kingdom, the latter Dutch and British used *Nallur* as one of their important administrative centres, the ruins of buildings made as the mixture of European and indigenous aesthetic tradition are viewed as the heritage monuments of the *Jaffna* Kingdom today. The heritage monuments such as *Sangiliyan Thoppu*, Minister's Home and *Yamuna Pond* could be viewed in this background.

Next, when we analyze the building archaeological relics of the Colonial period of *Jaffna* peninsula those seem to be the forts and churches of the Dutch period. Though the buildings and churches of Pre-Dutch period were constructed during the Portuguese period they were renovated in Dutch aesthetic style by the Dutch who caught up the ruling from Portuguese. Although the Dutch aesthetic traditions were

recreated by British they mostly represent the Dutch aesthetic traditions. Hence the forts, churches, administrative centres and light houses of the *Jaffna* peninsula stand out as the indications of European dominancy prevailed for 350 years.

According to the Archaeological Heritage Act of Sri Lanka, the residential places, religious places, administrative centres and other important monuments having more than hundred years of history have been declared as heritage monuments. As a result, hundreds of visible and tangible monuments found in the Northern Sri Lanka have been incorporated within the Department of Archaeology, Sri Lanka since 2010. Accordingly the following heritage monuments have been identified in the *Jaffna* peninsula which holds a classical traditional history.

- In the *Jaffna* town area and *Valikamam* Zone the *Jaffna* Fort, Wall of *Navalar*'s House, *Vannarpannai Sivan* Temple, *Navalar Mahavidhiyalayam*'s Old Building (Nomadic Temple), *Kathiresan* Temple, Old Kachcheri Building, *Hinner* Hall, Hindu College's Old Building, *Saiva Paripalana Sabbai* (Publication Place of *Inthusathanam*), *Yamuna* Pond, *Sangiliyan*'s Palace Entrance, *Sangiliyan*'s Palace's Foundation, *Sangiliyan*'s Minister's House, St. James Church, *Maviddapuram Kanthasamy* Temple, *Naguleswaram* Hindu Temple and *Sirappan Madam*, *Mayiliddy* Church, *Kantharodai*, *Sampalthurai*, *Chankanai* Church, *Vadducoddai* Church, *Nilavarai* and *Atchuvely* Church;
- In the *Vadamaradchy* Zone the *Tberumoodi* Choultry, *Sakkoddai* Church, *Malusanthi* Choultry and *Kerny*, *Alvai* Church, the *Anuranchikkal* with stone inscription of *Udupiddy Veerapathirar* Temple and

Manatkadu Church;

- In the nearby Island Groups the *Vediyarasan* Fort, *Biobab* Tree, *Rany's* Palace, *Paravaikoodu*, Dutch Fort, Buddhist *Thoobi*, Water Tank and Well in the *Delft*, and *Kayts* Church, *Hamanbeel* Fort, *Punguditivu* Church, *Mandaitivu* St. Peters Church, archaeological remains of *Nainativu*, and the *Karainagar* Light House.

However it could be stated that the heritage monuments of the *Jaffna* peninsula have not been entirely documented or under led into the whole management plan. Though several regions underlie this, by making measures to engage not only the Department of Archaeology, Sri Lanka but as well the local social bodies, heritage funds, development intuitions, universities, those who traditionally protect the heritage monuments, government volunteer institutions, private sectors etc in their protection, these heritage monuments could be protected without leading to change their antiquity and these rare un-renewable treasures could also be properly handed over to the future generations.

The policy of managing the heritage monuments includes the maintenance, preservation, consolidation, rehabilitation, restoration, reproduction, reconstruction etc. The main objective of their protection is to increase the life time of heritage monuments and their cultural historic value. As such in the protection measures of the heritage monuments of the *Jaffna* peninsula the of the reconstruction Dutch Fort could be stated as the first operational phase. The Department of Archaeology, Sri Lanka is operating this reconstruction action with the financial assistance of the Sri Lankan and Netherland governments.

Generally it could be observed that these heritage monuments have been destroyed time to time by the factors like contemporary wars, natural impacts and the fact that the importance of archaeological heritage monuments not perceived. Anyhow, in spite of this, by protecting these existing heritage monuments like the measures followed in the other parts of the world, these unrecoverable, invaluable and rare treasures of heritage monuments could be prevented from spoilage and as well those could be made to stand out as excellent cultural tourism centres. Therefore by properly managing the heritage monuments of the *Jaffna* peninsula, those could be utilized towards the growth of tourism sector by providing explanations to the civilians, by making awareness and by entirely protecting them and as well it could be led to take part in the political, economic and cultural growth of this region.

In view of providing priority to the cultural tourism centres of the *Jaffna* peninsula by documenting and revealing the historic ancientness, specialties and importance of the tangible heritage monuments of the *Jaffna* peninsula like ancient settlement centres, historically oldest Hindu and Buddhist temples, dynastical monuments (*Jaffna* Kingdom), traditional houses, choultries, *sumaitbanki* (T) stones, *avuranchehikatkal* (T) and the other heritage monuments including European forts, churches, administrative centres etc, those could be protected on the basis of future planning and as well since the intangible cultural traditions similar to the tangible cultural traditions lie down as the whole heritages of our society, by declaring the cultural tourism centres of the *Jaffna* peninsula in view of specifically providing priority to the social, cultural, aesthetic and traditional heritages which are conjoined with the traditional live of the *Jaffna* people the

cultural tourism growth could be achieved and as well could enable to protect the traditional and cultural customs. Without viewing these heritages which stand out to truly perceive the history of the *Jaffna* peninsula as a capital for the cultural tourism sector, it is necessary to sight them as the accesses to find out the past or the beginning and symbolic state of our society.

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Hindu Temple Ruins Of Delft



Maviddapuram Temple



Mannuthalai Temple



Kerimalai Siraocar Nidam



Malisanthi Madam



Arukaal Nidam at Anaikodai



Kantharodai Buddhist Temple



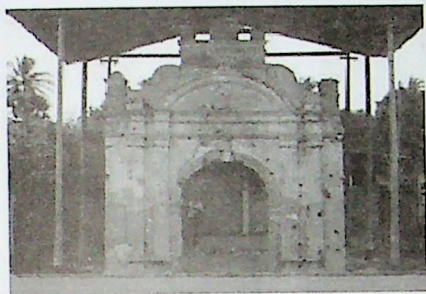
Delft Buddhist Ruins



Avuranchi & Well



Sumaithanki Kal



Sankilayan Thoppu



Old Kachchery



Avuranchi With Inscription



The ru Mōdi Mādām



Jamuna Pond



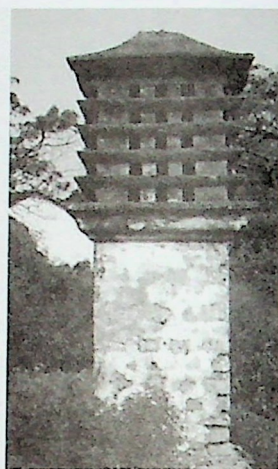
Mānthari mānai



Karainagar Light House



Delft Queen Tower



Pigeon Nest