



MARITIME INTERCOURSE AND NAVAL WARFARE AS GLEANED FROM SRI LANKAN CHRONICLES

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Abstract

Maritime trade warfare, also called commerce warfare, is a naval/military strategy that has been followed since ancient times. The idea of maritime trade warfare is to attack or neutralize the commercial shipping of one's enemy in an effort to disrupt the enemy's economy, make it more difficult for the enemy to continue waging war by disrupting the enemy's military supply chain that uses the sea. Maritime trade warfare can take different forms. Until the twentieth century, close blockades of an enemy's ports were most common, conducted to prevent the movement of an enemy's commercial shipping. In the twentieth century, with the introduction of new technologies such as torpedo, submarine, and airplane, distant blockades (farther from the enemy coast) became a standard practice. Mining of ports also was practiced. In addition, Maritime Exclusion Zones (MEZs) sometimes were established to prevent ships from entering a designated area. Maritime trade warfare also has included attacking or seizing enemy shipping in general, or outright destroying an enemy's commercial shipping in particular. In the twentieth century, destruction of an enemy's port infrastructure to prevent the loading or off-loading of commercial vessels also became a type of maritime trade warfare. Maritime history is the study of human interaction with and activity at sea. Though it covers a broad thematic element of history often using a global approach but here it is aimed to flush out the salient features of the naval warfare as Sri Lankan historic chronicles revealed. As an academic subject, it often crosses the boundaries of standard disciplines focusing on understanding humankind's various relationships to the oceans, seas and major waterways of the Indian Ocean. Thus, in this nautical history, it is attempted to interpret the past events involving mercantile activities, shipping system under navigations and seafarers between the Far-eastern countries and the Western countries.

Key words:

Mahavamsa, prasastis, Culavamsa, Boat building, Jataka stories, Kadaram expeditions, commercial vessels, Chola, Srivijaya.

Introduction

Sri Lankan chronicles Dipavamsa, Mahavamsa and Rajavaliya record the events of Sri Lanka since the arrival from India of Vijaya in the 5th century BCE. Mahavamsa (MV) is a more detailed chronicle and remarkably without any significant break. Besides giving information on many other things, it scores over other records in South Asia with regard to the details of the use of ships and ports for the purpose of voyages and the number of troops embarked for the attack on Sri Lanka. For some events, the Mahavamsic account is matched by inscriptions from the non-Lankan side. It serves as a one-point source for the naval wars, albeit very few, waged by South Asian rulers, the logistics and the preparations that they had made before undertaking such adventures. Many scholars including its editor W. Geiger have commented on the credibility of the MV as a source and its objectivity. The consensus among them is that it is of value at least from Devanampiyatissa period (3rd century BCE).

For the purpose of this paper, we will study the MV as to the likely motive of Rajendra Chola I (1014-1044 CE) for the attack on Southeast Asia (SEA), the preparations the Cholas could have made for the long voyage by a comparison with the attack on Ramanna (modern Myanmar) by Parakramabahu I (1153-1186 CE).

While the use of navy by the rulers of South India and Sri Lanka is well known from the MV and inscriptions and confirmation from both sides, the same is not the case with the Rajendra Chola I's invasion of the Southeast Asia (SEA) (1025 CE) and Parakramabahu I's invasion of Myanmar (1165 CE). The claim made by these two rulers has not been acknowledged by the invaded Kings or countries. Nor did these rulers leave any inscription or a victory pillar on the invaded country. While we have numerous inscriptions of Rajendra Chola I in Sri Lanka with his usual prasasti "Thirumanni valara" including of his conquest of Kadaram I, he did not leave any such inscription on Srivijaya after the conquest. There is an absolute silence on the part of the invaded countries also. We have to rely on circumstantial evidence only for a confirmation of these attacks.

Subbarayulu² writing on the Chola attack on SEA, laments the lack of a direct evidence and goes to a farther period to infer the capability of the Cholas to undertake such a venture. He refers to an inscription dated in 1187 CE (SII, v, 990) to infer a title of a commander of the Chola Navy, identifies 'Marakkalam' as the biggest of all vessels in use by a comparison between Barus inscription of 1088 CE and a Tamil inscription of 1256 CE (Nellore inscriptions, Gudur 39: ARE .1963-64: No.79) and finally depends on the Tiruvalangadu inscription of Rajadhirajadeva II dated in 1178 CE (EI, xxii,p.87) for a description of the building of ships and naval bases used by Parakramabahu I.

The MV gives a graphic account of Parakramabahu I's anger at Ramanna's insolence and how he had decided to teach them a lesson. His sending an army to help Parakrama Pandya in the war of succession in Madurai also contains an interesting account of the landing of his navy on the other coast in the face of a fierce attack.

A backward projection of Parakramabahu I's attack on Myanmar just as Subbarayalu had attempted, would throw an interesting hypothesis of how Rajendra Chola I's navy would have prepared for the Srivijaya attack and what could have been the reasons for the attack and the result thereof.

Starting with Prince Vijaya's landing on Sri Lanka in the 5th century BCE, being an Island nation, Sri Lanka has received and sent many voyages which are recorded in the MV/CV. A tabular representation of such voyages grouped under three different categories is as follows:

Table No.1- Non-military Voyages

Year/reign	Ruler	Mode & traveller details	From	To	Sailing time	Purpose	Reference in MV/CV	Reference by other sources
483-445 BCE	Vijaya	Ship with 700 men	Supparaka	Tambapanni	-	Exiled by King for father misconduct	VI: 39-47	-
		Ship	-	Madhura	-	To seek a princess for marriage	VII: 48-51	-
	Vijaya	Ship with 100 maidens, 1000 families, elephants, horses, wagons etc	Madhura	Mahatittha	-	Marriage with his ministers and retainers	VII: 52-58	-
444-414 BCE	Panduvasu deva	Ship with 32 followers	Sihapura	Mahakandara river	-	To ascend the throne	VIII: 12	-
	Bhadda kaccana	Ship with 32 women friends	Ganges	Gonagamaka	-	To become Panduvasudeva's consort	VIII:20-25	-
247-207 BCE	Devanam piyatissa	Ship - Four men	Jambukola	-	7 days	Envoys to Ashoka	XI, 23, 37	-
			Tamralipti	Jambukola	12 days	Returned home		
		Ship - Sanghamutt a	Tamralipti	Jambukola	-	Brought Bodhi tree	XIX, 20-23	-
923 CE	Dappula III	Ship-Panduking	Pandu country	Mahatittha	-	To seek help to fight the Cholas	CV 58: 5-6	Melapadi inscription (SII, iii, 18)
923-934 CE	Dapuula IV	Ship-Panduking	(Sri Lanka)	(Keralas)	-	Left behind his crown jewels after no help forthcoming	CV 58: 9-10	
1059-1114	Vijaya bahu	Ship with people and costly treasure	(Lanka)	Ramanna	-	(seeking support)	CV 58: 8-9	-
		Ship with camphor, sandalwood & other goods	(Ramanna)	Harbour	-	Return gift	CV 58: 9-10	-

Table No.2-Invasions on Sri Lanka by use of Navy

Year/Reiga	Ruler	Mode & traveller details	From	To	Sailing time	Purpose	Reference in MV/CV	Reference by other sources
177-155 BCE	Sena and Guttaka	Ship with a great army	-	-	-	Horse traders. Usurp the throne and rule	XXI:10-11	-
145-101 BCE	Elara	-	Chola country	-	-	Seize the kingdom and rule	XXI: 13-14	-
		Ship - Bhaluka, nephew of Elara with 60,000 men	(Chola country)	Mahatiitha	-	Killed in battle with Dutthagamini	XXV, 78	-
43, 29-17 BCE	Vatta gamini	Ship with seven Damilas and troops	-	Mahatiitha	-	Seize the kingdom and rule	XXXIII: 39	-
93-102 CE	Ilanaga	Ship	Mahatiitha	-	-	To raise help	XXXV: 26	-
		Ship	-	Rohana	-	Brought an army to fight Lambakannas	XXXV:28	-
171-174 CE	Vankana sika Tissa	Ship with troops	Soli country	Sri Lanka	-	Conquest by Karikala Chola	Rajavalia ¹ p.47	-
433-460 CE	Pandu	Ship	-	-	-	To seize the kingdom and rule	CV 38: 11	-
496-513 CE	Moggallana	Ship	-	Jambudipa	-	To raise help	CV 38:87	-
		Ship with 12 friends	Jambudipa	Sri Lanka	-	To fight Kassapa I	CV 39:21	-
617-626 CE	Silameghavanna	Ship -His estranged General Srinaga	(Sri Lanka)	Opposite shore (India)	-	To seek help	CV 44:71	-
		Ship-General Srinaga with many Damilas	(India)	Sri Lanka	-	To fight the king	CV 44: 72	-
626-641 CE	Jethatissa	Ship-Aggabodhi -III	(Sri Lanka)	Jambudipa	-	To raise help	CV 44:94	-
		Ship-Aggabodhi -III with damila troops	(India)	Kalavapi (Sri Lanka)	-	To fight Jethatissa	CV 44:106	-
		Ship-King's Minister Dathasiva	(Sri Lanka)	Jambudipa	-	To escape Aggabodhi-III	CV 44:106	-
		Aggabodhi-III	(Jambudipa)	Tintini (Sri Lanka)	-	To fight Aggabodhi-III	CV 44:125-126	-
	Ship - Aggabodhi -III	(Sri Lanka)	Jambudipa	-	Flees from Dathasiva	CV 44: 127	-	
				-	To fight Dathasiva	CV44: 129	-	
641-650 CE	Kassapa II	Ship - King Dathopata tissa	(Sri Lanka)	Jambudipa	-	Flees from Kassapa II	CV44:145	-
		Ship-King Dathopata tissa with a great force	Jambudipa	(Sri Lanka)	-	To fight Kassapa II	CV44:152	-

650 CE	Dappula-I	Shp-Hattha datha with Damila force	(Jambu dipa)	Sri Lanka	-	To fight Dappula	CV45: 19	-
676-711 CE	Mana vamma	Ship-Mana vamma	(Sri Lanka)	Jambudipa	-	To seek help from Narasimha pallava	CV47: 4-5	-
		Ship-Mana vamma with well-equipped Pallava army	(Mamalla puram seaport)	Lankadipa	-	To unseat Dathopatissa	CV47: 32-38	-
		Ship-Mana vamma	(Sri Lanka)	Jambudipa	-	To seek help from Narasimha pallava	CV47: 41	-
		Ship- Mana vamma with a Pallava armada	(Mamalla puram)	Uttaradesa (Sri Lanka)	-	To unseat Hathadatha	CV47:46-55	-
831-851 CE	Sena-I	Ship-Pandu King with a great force	Jambudipa	(Sri Lanka)	-	To fight Sena	CV50: 11-12	Larger Sinnama nur Plates
			(Sri Lanka)	(Madhura)	-	Plundered and returned	CV50:42	
945-955 CE	Udaya-IV	Ship-Senapati of Chola king	(Chola country)	(Sri Lanka)	-	To get back Pandyan crown jewels. (The Chola forces return empty handed)	CV53:41-45	Thiruma nallur inscription (SII,xvii, 501)
956-972 CE	Mahinda IV	Ship-Vallabha army	(Southern India)	Nagadipa	-	To subdue the country (the invading forces return after a treaty)	CV54:121-6	Karhad grant, (EI. iv. p.280)
981-1029 CE	Mahinda V	Ship-chola army	(Chola country)	Lanka	-	To seize the country (annexed the northern part)	CV55:13-16	Tanjore Temple inscription (SII, ii.No.4)
		Ship-Chola army				Entire country annexed and taken away Pandyan crown jewels, etc	CV55: 16-28	Neliiyapp ar Temple inscription (SII, v, No.449)
1029-1041 CE	Vikkama bahu	Ship-95000 strong army	(Chola country)	(Lanka)	-	Unsuccessful in capturing the King	CV55:24-32	-
1059-1114 CE	Vijaya bahu	Ship with Chola army	(Chola country)	Mahatitha	-	Unsuccessful in capturing Rohana but two of his generals cross over to Cholas	CV58:13-17	Mani mangalam Inscrp tions (SII, iii, 29)
		Ship with Chola army	Sea coast	Lanka	-	Vijayabahu driven to Vatagiri and finally Chola forces withdrawn in the face of defeat	CV58: 24-59	-
1114-1116 CE	Jayabahu	Ship with troops led by Viradeva	Palandipa	Mahatitha	-	Initially successful but Vikkamabahu slew him.	CV61: 36-47	-
1236-1271 CE	Parakrama Bahu II	Ship with troops	(Java)	Lanka	-	Candabbanu invades but defeated	CV83:36-52	-

Table No.3-Invasions by Sri Lankan rulers on other countries by use of navy

Year/ reign CE	Ruler	Mode & traveller details	From	To	Sailing time	Purpose	Reference in MV/CV	Reference by other sources
174-196 CE	Gajabahu	-	Yapapatuna (Sri Lanka)	Soli country	-	To bring back Sinhalese prisoners and the lost treasure	Rajavalia ⁴	-
851-885 CE	Sena-II	Ship -- Senapati, estranged son of Pandu king and well equipped army	Mahatitha	Opposite coast	-	To recover the lost treasure taken away by Srimara Srivallabha and to install the estranged son of Pandu King	CV 51: 25- 34	-
		Ship- Senapati and army	Sea coast	Mahatitha	-	Returned home with treasure, elephants, horses and men	CV 51: 43- 46	-
913-923 CE	Kassapa V	Ship- Sakka senapati and army	Mahatitha	Pandu country	-	To help Pandu king fight the Cholas	CV 52: 70- 75	Udayen diram Plate (SII, ii, No.76)
		Ship Army	(Pandu country)	(Sri Lanka)	-	Troops brought back on Sakka dying of plague.	CV 52: 78- 79	
945-955 CE	Udaya-IV	Ship-Army	(Sri Lanka)	(Chola country)	-	To bring back the treasure. (the army returns successful)	CV 53: 46- 48	-
1153- 1186 CE	Parakrama Bahu	Ships -- Army	Pallava vanka	Pappahalama (Ramanna)	-	Avenged the insult to his envoys etc.	CV 76: 10- 75	-
		Ships- Army	Mahatitha	Taladilla (Pandyen country)	A day and a night (24 hrs)	To help Parakrama Pandya and his son.	CV 76: 76- 334), 77: 1-105.	Arn pakkam inscription (SII, vi, 46)

Note: CV – Culavamsa – being the most recent part of the Mahavamsa

An analysis of the above tables will go to show how the Mahavamsa/Culavamsa upto the end of the 13th century CE (the period of study of this paper) have recorded the normal and military-related voyages reaching and leaving its shores.

Sailing time

In Table No.1, we see a sailing time of 12 days given for a voyage between Tamralipti and Jambukola.

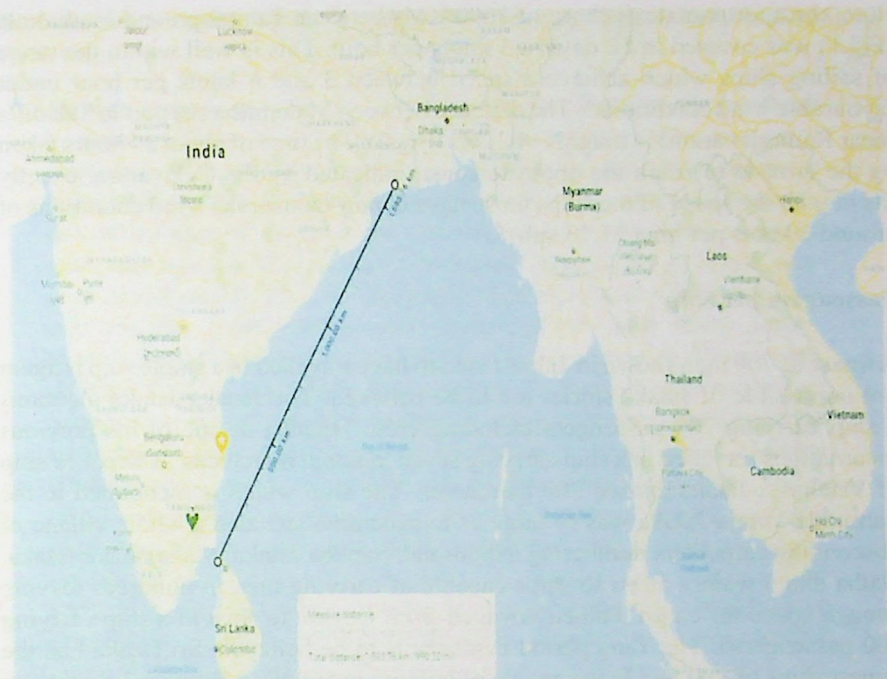


Fig.1



Fig.2

Here, the approximate distance of 1600 KMs between Tamralipti and Jambukola (Fig.1) was covered in 12 days at 3 knots per hour. This is well within the range of sailing ships which achieve a speed between 3 and 6 knots per hour under favourable wind conditions⁵. The distance between Mahatittha sea port to Taladilla (near Rameshwaram) is roughly 90 KMs (Fig.2). The time of about 24 hours taken by the armada to reach the opposite coast, indicated by the Culavamsa, exactly fits in with the speed of the ships those days in non-monsoonal wind conditions of around 2 knots per hour (3.70 kph)⁵.

Passengers per ship

A figure of 700 men shown in Table.1 said to have travelled in a single ship is again not impossible, if Jataka stories are to be believed. The Janaka Jataka mentions a ship carrying 700 passengers including crew. Buddha in one of his previous incarnations travelled in a ship carrying seven hundred merchants. A wrecked ship of Valahassa-Jataka carried 500 merchants. The ship which is mentioned in the Samudda-Vanija-Jataka was so large as to accommodate also a whole village of absconding carpenters numbering a thousand. Sankha Jataka, Mahajanaka Jataka, Datha dhatu wamsa attest to ships capable of carrying men in hundreds leaving enough space for cargo. Fahien voyaged from Ceylon to Java in a ship carrying 200 passengers⁶. The Tang period evidence is to be believed, Sri Lanka had the largest ships of 200 feet long capable of holding upto 600 to 700 men⁷. In the 9th century CE, Li Chao the Mandarin who wrote Tang Kao Shih Pu reports “the ships from the Lion Kingdom (Lanka) were the largest, with stairways for loading and unloading which are several tens of feet in height”

Table 2 refers to 60,000 and 95,000 men landing in Sri Lanka. If a ship could carry about 700 men, this would have required about 86 and 136 vessels. This again was not impossible to assemble.

Boat building and logistics

The Culavamsa's first reference to boat building comes with regard to the help (Table.2) given by Narasimha Pallava (630-668 CE) to Manavamma (676-711 CE). It refers to Narasimha Pallava as reaching the sea coast and building strong ships of different sizes at the port and seeing off his friend Manavamman thus:

Having so pondered, he (Narasimha Pallava) collected his army, equipped it with what was needful, gave it (the pay) it demanded, marched himself at its head to the sea-coast, had numerous strong ships of different shape built hereMana(vamma) began the voyage with the army. The whole ocean was as a (floating) town. Having reached the port he landed with his army. (CV 47: 47-54)

The Culavamsa records Parakramabahu I's preparations (Table.3) for the Ramanna attack thus:

He then ordered to make ready ships of various kinds, many hundreds in number. Now all the country round about coast was one great workshop fully occupied with the building of the ships taken in hand. When within five months he had had all the ships well built, he assembled them in haste at the port of Pallavavanka. Then endowed with vast royal power, he had provisions supplied for a whole year such as rice and the like and abundant weapons of war, such as armour and the like; further gokannaka arrows of iron with sharp points, many hundred thousand in number for defence against elephants, also different kinds of medicines, preserved in cow horns for the healing of venomous wounds caused by poisoned arrows, as well as all kinds of remedies for curing the poison of infected water in the many swampy stretches of country; also iron pincers for extracting arrow heads which are difficult to move when they have pierced deeply and the shaft has broken, lastly also skilful physicians and serving women – everything in complete fashion. After he versed as none other in the right measures, had made a strong force numbering many hundreds of thousands – embark. The Ruler sent all the ships off on one day loaded with all kinds of arms and filled with capable soldiers. Now when this assemblage of ships all at the same time sailed forth in the midst of the ocean it looked like a swimming island. (CV 76: 44-56).

Though most of the vessels used in Sri Lanka's external trade were generally of foreign construction, sea-worthy craft were built in Sri Lanka as well, and are known to have sailed as far as China. Perhaps some of the latter may even have been used to transport Parakramabahu I's troops to Myanmar⁸.

Thiruvallangadu copper plates vide v.80 says the Chola army crossed the ocean by ships and burnt the Lord of Lanka (Ceylon)⁹. Rajendra Chola I's prasasti at Tanjore Temple refer to Rajendra Chola I's "having dispatched many ships in the midst of the rolling sea¹⁰". An inscription¹¹ at Tiruvallangadu dated in the 12th year (1178 CE) of Rajadhirajadeva II says Parakramabahu I was gathering forces and building ships at Uratturai, Pulaichcheri, Matottam, Vallikamam and Mattival for a naval attack on the Chola Kingdom. The Chola king frustrated this attempt with the assistance of Srivallabha, the nephew of Parakramabahu I and a rebel by sending an expedition with him and destroying all these five places.

A trireme of the 5th century BCE built by Greeks may have had a length of about 125 feet (38 metres), a beam of 20 feet (6 metres), and a draft of 3 feet (1 metre). Manned by about 200 officers, seamen, and oarsmen (perhaps 85 on a side), with a small band of heavily armed epibatai (marines), under oars it could

reach seven knots (seven nautical miles per hour; one knot equals 1.15 statute miles per hour or 1.85 km per hour or about 13 Kilometres per hour)¹².

Description of sailing, landing and attack on Myanmar



Fig.3



Fig.4

When Parakramabahu I heard of many insults committed by the King of Ramanna, he ordered either his capture or his killing. He placed troop leaders under Damiladhikarin Adicca and commanded him to depart speedily. The Culavamsa (76: 56-68) records thus:

Subdued by adverse winds some of these ships went down, some drifted on to foreign shores. Numbers of trusty warriors who had embarked in one of the vessels landed on the crows island (Kakadipa). They fought a battle there, captured several of the inhabitants of the island alive, brought them, then to the King of Lanka and presented them to him. Warriors of great fighting strength who sailed on five vessels landed on the territory of Ramanna in the port called Kusumi. These doughty soldiers with the Nagaragiri Kitti at the head, equipped with armour and weapons, slew from their landing-place the troops belonging to the Ramanna country, many thousands of them in terrible combat and while they, like to rutting elephants, hewed down around many coco palms and other trees and set fire to the villages, they laid waste a great part of the kingdom. But the ship on which the Damiladhikarin Adicca commanded, landed in the territory (of Ramanna) at the port of Papphalama, and while at once the people with the Damiladhikarin at the head, fought a gruesome, fearful, foe-destroying battle and captured alive many people living in the country, they plunged the Ramanna kingdom into sore confusion. Thereupon, the Sinhalas with terrible courage, fearful with their swords, burst into the town of Ukkama and slew the monarch of the Ramanas. When they had subdued the Ramanas and brought their country into their power, the great heroes (probably Adicca and Kitti) mounted a splendid white elephant. They rode round the town free from all fear turning the right side towards it and thereupon made known by beat of drum the supremacy of the Sovereign of Lanka.

At 2 knots per hour, the ships from Lanka would have taken about 24 days if they voyaged non-stop to reach Ramanna (about 2150 KMs) (Fig.3).

Description of landing and attack on Pandya country

In the expedition to Pandya territory, the hundreds of ships which returned from Myanmar expedition could have been put to use as there was no reference to a fresh construction of ships.

The Culavamsa gives a graphic account how the Lankan Armada landed on the opposite coast (Taladilla near Rameshwaram) and fought its way.

When he (Lankapura) caught sight of the coast, since a hostile army was standing there, he made all his troops put on their armour on board. As the ships had to lie in deep water and because with a landing just at this spot, the

armour of the whole army would have been wet through, he made the troops get into hundreds of boats of small size. Then when the rain of arrows from the Damilas standing on the coast came flying he made shields fashioned of leather set up in front of the people (as protection) against the arrows and so landed in the Pandu kingdom at the port called Taladilla. After putting to flight the Damilas at the port and capturing the harbour, he took up a position there and fought with vast forces four battles. (CV 76: 89-94).

In all accounts of victories gained by the Lankan forces, horses are always mentioned as the principal booty (foot note, p.73 of the Culavamsa, Part 2; CV 76.96, 176, 189, 232, 258 & 332, CV 77: 85, 95). The horses, men and elephants captured from the Chola country and from the Pandyns were sent to Ceylon (CV 77: 103). This is a pointer to not many horses and elephants carried on ship and the invading forces relied on capturing from the enemy. In Rajendra Chola I's invasion of Kadaram also, in his prasasti we find the Chola forces capturing elephants as booty. The Culavamsa gives the force strength of 50 to 60,000 on the Pandyan side fighting the war (CV 76: 248) also many accounts of how the Sinhalese took Tamil warriors on their side with inducements and favours (CV 76: 280-285, CV 77: 96-101) to reinforce their forces. This attests to the fact that local support is a factor in any naval attack. Reinforcements from Lanka also joined the Sinhalese forces on the mainland (CV: 76:292-295).

Local assistance in overseas conquest

The Culavamsa makes several references to Tamil forces from the mainland invading on Sri Lanka being assisted by local residents and probably troops attached to the trade guilds.

Kassapa II (641-650 CE) made his sister's son Mana the King. Mana expelled the Damilas, the mercenaries whom Dathopatissa had brought with him and had become an undisciplined rabble. The Damilas banded themselves together, seized the town and messaged Hatthadatha who was in Jambudipa to return to the Island. He came with a Damila force and all Damilas living in Lanka joined him. He occupied the city and ruled under the name Dathopatissa (CV 45: 8, 11-22).

During Sena I's rule (846-866 CE), Pandyan King Srimara Srivallabha (815 – 862 CE) came in person with a great force and laid waste the whole of Uttaradesa, the Northern Province. It appears that the Tamil forces landed in the North which can be presumed to be Port Jambukola and then proceeded to occupy an armed camp in Mahatalitagama, a village in Uttaradesa. The many Tamils who lived there went over to his side. The Tamil army was full of vigour and determination and ready to lay down its life for the King. (CV 50.12-18). The Pandyan king plundered what was valuable in the treasury of

the King, the town and the Viharas, leaving the splendid Island deprived of her valuables. (CV 50: 33-36). The Pandyan king returned to his country from the seaport after a treaty had been agreed upon and handing over the capital to the Sinhala king. (CV 50: 38-42).

During the reign of King Mahinda IV (956-972 CE), the Vallabha king (CV 47:15 also refers to a Vallabha king to make war with Narasimha Pallava. It appears Culavamsa refers to Kings of Kannada region as Vallabha in general; Vallabha is a title kept by successive Rashtrakuta kings just as the Cholas kept Parakesarivarman or Rajakesarivarman – see Reu 1933) identified with Rashtrakuta King Krishna III sent a force to Nagadipa (the northern province of Lanka). Mahinda-IV sent his General Sena to fight the invading forces. Unable to defeat the Lankan troops, the invaders made a friendly treaty with the ruler of Lanka and left. This way, the fame of the Lankan king spread far and wide. (CV 54:12-16). It appears that the Tamils in Nagadipa did not support the Rashtrakuta forces invading Lanka resulting in their defeat.

King Mahinda V (1001-1029), having lost all his fortune due to misrule, was unable to pay his troops. The Kerala troops sieged the palace but the King escaped to Rohana and ruled from there. In the remaining parts of the country, Keralas, Sihalas and Kannatas carried on the Government as they pleased. A horse-dealer from the opposite coast informed the Chola king of the prevailing conditions. The Chola king landed a strong body of troops who advanced to Rohana and seized all royal ornaments, wealth of the monasteries and other valuables. The troops captured the King and sent him and all the treasures to the Chola king. With Pulatthinagara as base, the Cholas held sway over Rajarattha as far as the locality known as Rakkhapanakantha. The Chola king sent an army of 95000 to seize the King's son Kassapa and they ransacked the whole province of Rohana in every direction. The Chola army went back to Pulatthinagara on being harassed by two brave officials. King Mahinda V dwelt 12 years in the Chola land and died there. (CV 55:3-33).

Vijayabahu I (1059-1114 CE) challenged the Chola king to fight him as his envoys were insulted. His generals were preparing for a war with procurement of ships and provisions to send troops to Chola country but in the 30th year (1089 CE), his velakkara troops revolted refusing to go to Chola country (CV 60: 27-37).

Parakramabahu I in his 16th year had put down a revolt in Mahatittha (Manthota) (CV 76: 7-9).

Parakramabahu I's interventions in Pandyan war of succession is dated between 1169-1177 CE. Coinciding with Parakramabahu I's expedition to Madurai was the revolt in the Tamil dominated Mahatittha region. The local Tamils saw the mobilization of troops and the preparations going on for the attack on what they considered "Tamilagam" and sensed that Parakramabahu I's intentions were not just for answering the appeal for help from Parakrama Pandya but it was beyond. They showed their resentment by rebelling against the King. But as has happened before, the protest was brutally put down with all four arms of the military pressed into quelling it.

Parallels between Rajendra's Kadaram and Parakrama Bahu's Ramanna expedition

- Srivijaya had a friendly and cordial relationship with the Cholas as can be seen from the Chudamani Vihara built by its rulers in Nagapattinam and Rajaraja Chola I through larger Leiden copper plate extending a grant of a village with tax exemptions in 1006 CE and Rajendra Chola I confirming it in 1019 CE to facilitate the construction and its operation¹³.
- Srivijaya's agents/envoys kept donating to Kayoroganswamy temple at Nagapattinam between the period 1014 and 1019 CE¹⁴.
- Vijayabahu I sent to the King of Ramanna country number of people and much costly treasure. Then arrived in the harbour many ships laden with various stuffs, camphor, sandalwood, and other goods (CV58: 8-10).
- Between the countries of Lanka and Ramanna there had never been a dissension since they were inhabited by people who held the same faith. The rulers of the island of Lanka and the monarchs of Ramanna were both in like manner, true disciples of the Sugata. Hence all former monarchs in both countries in deeply-rooted trust, filled with friendly feeling were wont to send each other many costly gifts and in this way for a long time maintain intercourse without dissension. Also with King Parakramabahu, the Monarch of Ramanna kept up friendly relations even as former rulers who had for a long time held firmly to him (CV 76: 10-15).

Rift with Myanmar

The Culavamsa describes the immediate provocation for Parakramabahu I's attack on Myanmar as follows:

But once upon a time the deluded one hearkened to the words of slanderers, of certain messengers who came back from our land, and deprived the envoys of the sovereign of Lanka who came into his own country, of the maintenance formerly granted. Furthermore he issued the order that elephants which had

(hitherto) been sold by many (traders) to foreign countries were no longer to be sold. Further with evil intent he made the restriction that elephants which had formerly been sold there for a hundred or a thousand silver nikkhalas must (henceforth) be sold for two or three thousand. He also did away with the age-old custom of presenting an elephant to every vessel in which gifts were conveyed. When he caught sight of a letter written on gold, addressed to himself, he under the pretext that they were envoys sent to Kamboja, or saying something of that kind, had the envoys of the sovereign of Lanka after taking from them all their goods and chattels, thrown into a fortress in the Malaya country. And although, he learned exactly how his own envoy Tapassin by name, had had every distinction conferred on him by the ruler of Lanka, he nevertheless bereft of all political wisdom, took everything away from the envoys of the monarch of Lanka: their money, their elephants and their vessels, had blocks of wood fastened to their feet to their greatest torture, and employed them in the work of sprinkling water in the prisons. When once upon a time, a prince of Jambudipa Kassapa by name sent costly gifts along with a letter of gold, he forbade his people to land and in an insulting manner made them take the letter back to their town. One day he had the Sihala envoys summoned to him and declared to them: "henceforth no vessel from the Sihala country shall be sent to my kingdom. Give us now in writing the declaration that if (messengers) from there are again sent to us, in case we should slay the envoys who have come here, no blame of any kind will attach to us. If ye give not the declaration ye shall not have permission to return home. After he had made them sign this, so that in the event of a transgression they should not return again to their country, he took the paper from their hand. The teacher Vagissara and the scholar Dhammakitti he sent off in a leady vessel into the open sea. Once upon a time he took from the hands of the messengers the gifts and goods which the ruler of Lanka had sent in order to buy elephants, with the promise that he would give them fourteen elephants and silver money but he told merely lies and gave them nothing. Further they seized by force a princess whom the ruler of Lanka had sent to Kamboja land.

When King Parakkamabahu heard of these many insults committed by that (prince), he thought with the greatest indignation" "Where in the world of Jambudipa is there a King who would be capable of treating my envoys in such a manner?" He summoned the Ministers and spake: "either the capture or the slaying of the King Arimaddana must be effects" (CV 76:15-38).

Rift with Srivijaya

Thus, the Chola and Lanka relations with Srivijaya and Ramanna respectively run parallel on many counts. The character of Rajendra Chola I and Parakramabahu I is similar in a sense both were aggressive rulers with an intent and readiness for war. Both wanted to expand their territory and had their own digvijayas. The Cholas never

cared for relations or sentiments as we see from the way they attacked the Cheras even though they had a matrimonial alliance (Queens of Parantaka I and Sundara Chola were Chera princesses from whom the successive Cholas claim descent) and a significant Malayali population by then had settled in the Chola country. The Culavamsa's account also confirms that sentiments and matrimonial alliances had not always worked as we see Parakramabahu I resuming Lanka's intervention in Pandyan affairs needling the Cholas, ignoring the fact that Kulottunga I's daughter Suttamalliyar was married (ibid, below) to Parakramabahu I's father, even though Parakramabahu was born to Ratnavali, his father's another wife and daughter of Vijayabahu I. Either under Brahmanical influence of Kshatriyas' duty of expanding territory or their own instinct for territorial expansion, the Cholas especially under Rajendra I had gone to places none had gone before. Both Ganges and Kadaram expeditions took place one after the other consecutively and all Chola inscriptions and eulogies and poems take these two territorial conquests together to indicate them as a part of the same digvijaya. While it would not be out of character for Rajendra Chola I to attack Kadaram as part of his digvijaya, there could have been casus belli as in Parakramabahu I's case, in the form of insults to the Chola envoys and traders, excessive tolls charged for passing through the Malacca strait, raising unreasonable trade barriers, uncontrolled piracy on Chola ships that could have catalyzed Rajendra Chola I to mount an attack. The plunder that accompanied any invasion is a by-product of the battle rather than the main aim of the attack.

Aftermath

Parakramabahu I did not make any claim of annexing Myanmar or exacting tribute from that country and there is only one inscription at Devanagala (ASC 1893, p.73) confirming the Aramana campaign in the 12th year of reign (1165 CE). The reigning King of Aramana at that time was Bhuvanaditta. The inscription also mentions the town of Kusumi. Burmese chronicles have nothing to say about such a catastrophe having overtaken the country¹⁵ (C.V : 69).

During Parakramabahu I (1153-86 CE)'s reign, Alaungsithu (1112-67 CE) was the ruler in Myanmar. The Sinhala accounts were one sided. Burmese sources did not record any such attack. But they say they were misled by an Indian envoy (Aung 1967, p.47). Alaungsithu continued to live even though the MV says he was killed (Aung 1967, p.49). Perhaps, they killed a local chieftain and the attack could have taken place in some places of Myanmar. Vijaya Bahu II (1186 CE) wrote a letter lending a friendly hand to Myanmar. Good relations continued thereafter during Nissanka Malla's time too¹⁶.

Whereas, Rajendra Chola I's Kadaram expedition figures in almost every inscription after the digvijaya including Sri Lanka's Velgama Vihara inscriptions (1024-1027 CE) and Ataragala Ainnurruvar Slab inscription (1036 CE). It is also

mentioned in Kalingattupparani of Jayankondar and Ulas written by Ottakoothar. And an inscription at Thirumazhuvadi of 1044 CE¹⁷ of Rajadhiraja in the year of Rajendra Chola I's death, Kadaram has been shown as the easternmost part of the Chola's boundary indicating thereby that they had perceived that country to be under their dominion or a tribute paying vassal.

While the immediate successors of Parakramabahu I had extended a hand of friendship to Myanmar rulers, there had been no such evidence seen in Chola-Srivijayan relationship. Only in 1090 CE that two envoys of Kadaram paid a call on Kulottunga requesting for certain favours for the Chudamani Vihara – almost 65 years after the 1025 CE invasion.

Srivijaya's destruction and Java's revival started with this attack. Java was then ruled by Airlangga (1019-43 CE). Srivijaya and Java were in constant war as per the Chinese sources. After the Chola attack, Srivijaya became weaker. Airlangga tried to shift the focus from Srivijayan ports to his own country to become a centre of commerce. We should not forget that Srivijaya's decline led to the success of Airlangga. From his inscriptions we come to know that he had succeeded in most of his objectives¹⁸.

As a result of the Chola attack, there had been no Srivijayan missions from 1018 to 1028 CE to China¹⁹.

Virarajendra claims²⁰ that he conquered Kadaram on behalf of an unnamed king who sought his help and restored Kadaram to him. Probably Virarajendra intervened in a dispute over succession to ensure that the tribute received from Kadaram remained unhindered.

Kulottunga I's persona

We know from the activities of Kulottunga I (1070 to 1125 CE), his disengagement from overseas conquests and focus on domestic politics. He probably wanted to follow his predecessor's footsteps of matrimonial alliances to end enmity. As we know, Virarajendra married off his daughter to Chalukya Vikaramaditya²¹ and another daughter named Rajasundari²² to Rajaraja Devendravarman of Eastern Ganga dynasty.

Kulottunga I appeared to have asked for the hand of Vijayabahu I's (1059-1114 CE) younger sister Mitta. Vijayabahu I refused and married her off to a Pandyan prince. The Culavamsa says:

‘Though repeatedly entreated by the Cola monarch (Kulottunga I), the King (Vijayabahu I) proud of his family would not give him his younger sister. On the contrary, he fetched the Pandu King who came of an unblemished line and

wedded to him his royal sister Mitta by name who had been born after him'
(CV 59: 40-41).

Undeterred, Kulottunga I tried to mend fences by sending an envoy to Vijayabahu I with rich presents. However, Kulottunga probably resented Vijayabahu's friendship with Chalukyas who also sent envoys. Vijayabahu's envoys sent to Kannata (Chalukyas) with return gifts were maimed by the Cholas. Vijayabahu sent a stern message to Kulottunga with the latter's envoys dressed in women's apparel for a trial of strength. Vijayabahu twice made preparations for the war, the last one being in his 45th regnal year (c.1104 CE) but both the times the Chola King had given him a miss (CV 60: 24-47).

Finally, Kulottunga appeared to have reconciled and given his daughter Suttamalliyar²³ to Virapperumal alias Manabharana, a son by a Pandyan prince and Mitta, the Vijayabahu I's younger sister (ibid). Budumuttava (Sri Lanka) pillar inscription (1118-9 CE) records this as:

In the eighth year of his Majesty Jayabāhu tēvar, Cuntamalli, the consort of (prince) (Pāṇṭiyaṅār) Virapperumāḷ and a daughter of Kulottunkacola tēvar granted to the temple of Vikkirma calāmēka - isvaram at Vikkiramacalamēkapuram a standing lamp of alloyed metal (tarānilai viḷakku) of two spans in length and ten kācu (gold coins) for burning it as a perpetual lamp²⁴.

Conclusion

There were famous naval battles in the ancient world. Greco-Persian wars in 5th century BCE, Punic wars in 3rd century BCE, Viking naval raids in the 11th century CE but all of these occurred in their immediate neighborhood. Rajendra Chola I's Kadaram expedition covered a distance of over 2300 KMs (Fig.4) - a unique event in the world history. No scholar has ever doubted or contested the claim of the Cholas of the invasion. This goes to his credit. Rajendra Chola I's expedition inspired rulers in the neighbourhood as we see in 1165 CE, almost after 140 years, Parakramabahu I undertaking an expedition to Ramanna which is of almost equal distance (about 2150 KMs) and challenge. With tables turned, Chandrabhanu (1230-1263 CE) from Tambralinga (Malay Peninsula) invaded Lanka in 1247 CE. This was no less audacious. However, Chandrabhanu was killed in a battle with Pandyas after his brief rule in Jaffna (CV 83: 36-52). Unlike the armies of Parakramabahu I and Chandrabhanu, Rajendra Chola I's army appear to have received local support which could have played an anchoring role in the Chola's conquest as well as in the continued occupation of Sri Lanka and hold over Kadaram.

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