

# THE LESSONS OF HISTORY AND **SRI LANKAN HISTORY**

— Jayalath Fonseka —

At time we feel so, and a multitude of doubts assail our enterprise. To begin with, do we really know what the past was, what actually happened, or is history 'a fable' not quite "agreed upon"? Our knowledge of any past event is always incomplete, probably inaccurate, beclouded by ambivalent evidence and biased historians, and perhaps distorted by our own patriotic or religious partnership. "Most history is guessing, and the rest is prejudice" Even the historians who think to rise above partiality for his country, race, creed, religion or class betrays his secret predilection in his choice of materials, and in the nuances of his adjectives. The historian always oversimplifies, and hastily selects a manageable minority of facts and faces out of a crowd of soul and event whose multitudinous complexity he can never quite embrace or comprehend "Again, our conclusions from the past to the future are made more hazardous than ever by the acceleration of the change.

Since man is a moment in astronomic time, a transient guest of the earth, a spore of his species, a scion of his race, a composite of body, character, and mind, a member of a family and a community, a believer or doubter of a faith, a unit in an economy, perhaps a citizen in a state or a soldier in an army, we may ask under the corresponding heads - astronomy, geology, geography, biology, ethnology, psychology, morality, religion, economics, politics and war - what history has to say about the nature, conduct, and prospects of man. It is a precarious enterprise, and only a fool would try to compress a hundred centuries into a hundred pages of hazardous conclusions. We proceed.

Let us define history, in its troublesome duplicity, as the events or records of the past. Human history is a brief spot in space, and its first lesson is modesty. At any moment a comet may come too close to earth and set out little globe turning topsy-turvy in a hectic course, or choke its men and fleas with fumes or heat; or a fragment of the smiling sun may slip off tangentially - as some think our planet did a few astronomic moments ago - and fall upon us in a wild embrace ending all grief and pain. We accept these possibilities in our stride, and retort to the cosmos in the words of Pascal. "When

the universe has crushed him man will still be nobler than that which kills him, because he knows that he is lying, and its victory the universe knows nothing" History is subject to geology. Every day the sea encroaches some where upon land, or the land upon sea: cities disappear under the water, and sunken cathedrals ring their melancholy bells. Mountains rise and fall in the rhythm of emergence and erosion; rivers swell and flood, or dry up, or change their course; valleys become deserts, and isthmuses become straits. To the geologic eye all the surface of earth is a fluid form, and man moves upon it as insecurely

Climate no longer controls us as severely as Montesquieu and Buckle supposed, but it limits us. Man's ingenuity often overcomes geological handicaps: he can irrigate deserts and air-condition the Sahara; he can level or surmount mountains and terrace the hill with vines; he can build a floating city to cross the ocean, or gigantic birds to navigate the sky. But a tornado can run in an hour the city that took a century to build; an ice berg can overturn or bisect the floating palace and send a thousand merry-makers gurgling to the Great Certainty. Let rain become too rear, and civilization disappears under sand, as in Central Asia; let it fall too furiously and civilization will be choked with jungle, as in Central America. Let the thermal average age rise by twenty degrees in our thriving zones, and we should probably replace into lethargic savagery. In a semitropical climate a nation of half a billion souls may breed like ants, but enervating heat may subject it to repeated conquest by warriors from more stimulating habitats. Generations of men establish a growing mastery over the earth, but they are destined to become fossils in its soul. Thank you Will and Ariel Durant your contribution - Te below I write IN SIMPLE ENGLISH The our country Then CEYLON HISTORY now SRI LANKA HISTORY THE CHANGE OF ITS RELIGION

## **SRI LANKA HISTORY CHANGE OF ITS RELIGION WITH TIME**

I read a lot about Sri Lankan History Past & Present and it is one of my hobbies

,When my brother in law who was attached to Water Board and managing the water project in Ampara I had a chance of learning Buddhism and history from a famous Buddhist monk, Buddangala Hamuduruwo of Ampara He gave me a book called "Pure Buddhism "Sudda Buddha darmaya" ONLY WORSHIP PLACES are BUDDHU MADURA / BODIYA & CHAITHTHIYA No KOVIL or No DEVALA What Load Buddha preached

Before introduction of Buddhism to our country 2550 years ago we all were SINHALESE HINDUS / TAMIL HINDUS We were PRACTICING HINDU RELIGION (except a few UNCIVILIZED {vadda people} were worshiping Moon, Sun, Rocks and Trees) The present day Sinhalese are a mixture of the indigenous people and of other people who came to the island from various parts of India. The Sinhalese recognized the Vijayan Indo-Aryan culture Hindu and Buddhism, as distinct from other groups in neighboring south India.

AFTER introduction of Buddhism by NORTH INDIANS majority of all Sinhala (Sinhalese) became Buddhists and Buddhism spread and flourished in every part of the country very fast (At present 69% of the POPULATION of our COUNTRY ARE BUDDHISTS

There were a few Muslims (merchants) in coastal areas and they grew slowly & steadily very friendly, hardworking well organized and were very good businessmen

After introduction of Christianity by Portuguese A small part of Sinhalese & A small part of Tamils became Christians So, before 2550 years ago PAST our country was SINHALA HINDU / TAMIL HINDU COUNTRY Practicing HINDU Religion and Majority of our people were HINDUS NOW majority of our people (About 69%) are Buddhists, NOW THIS IS A SINHALA BUDDHIST COUNTRY

Last ten 10 year's population growth: Sinhalese 1.5% Tamils 1.3% Muslims 14.5% as per population ratio Total Population is 20.39 Millions. Ratio - Sinhalese 16.59 M, / Tamils

2.19M, / Muslims 1.57M / Others 0.10M There is a book named CEYLON HISTORY Written by famous Archaeologist and Histologist Professor Dr. Senarath Paranavitharana, (HE had earthen ancient ruins, written so many history books & articles written History papers and Articles to media He has mentioned that there was no clear evidence that Lord Buddha had visited or come to Ceylon) It is in Colombo University library very good reference and I HAD A CHANCE TO READ THE BOOK Adam's Peak is a 2,243 m (7,359 ft) tall conical mountain located in central Sri Lanka. It is well known for the Sri Pada, i.e., "sacred footprint", a 1.8 m (5 ft 11 in) rock formation near the summit, which in Buddhist tradition is held to be the footprint of the Buddha, in Hindu tradition that of Shiva in Sri Lanka All People in Ceylon worship LORD SHIVA (before Lord Buddha)

The fabled Kataragama Devalaya is shrouded in mysterious legends about the Kataragama god or 'God Skanda' (the god of war, love and beauty in Hinduism) and is illustrated in different ways by the various religious groups of the country that dates back to the ancient times. Before introduction of Buddhism The close association of the 'Devalaya' or temple to the many religious groups in the country is a shining example of Sri Lanka's DIVERSE, but united society MAJORITY OF ALL SRI LANKAN'S BUDDHIST STILL WORSHIP LORD SKANDA

THINK Good, SPEAK Good & DO Good this are What all RELIGIOUS leaders LORD BUDDHA, JESUS CHRIST AND OTHERS, PREACHED to us, to all humans in the world

So I prefer to call everybody SRI LANKAN'S (Nahi verana verani) Spread Love not hatred, Love & help your brothers/sisters (Tamil, Muslim, Sinhalese, or any other raises)

