

# インド・ケーララ州のキリスト教 その多様性とアラビア海交易

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インド南西端に位置するケーララ州は多くのキリスト教徒が居住していることでよく知られている。

一九九一年のセンサスによるとキリスト教徒人口は州総人口約二九〇〇万人の一九・三％に及んでいる。他地域と同様、このケーララのキリスト教徒コミュニティは決して一様ではなく、非常に多くの集団に分かれている。おそらく最もよく知られているのが、シリアン・クリスチャンと呼ばれる人びとであろう。彼らは最も早くキリスト教を受け入れた人びとの子孫であり、一二使徒の一人である聖トマスによって改宗した人びとの末裔であるという伝承をもっている（彼らはそれゆえ聖トマス・クリスチャンとも呼ばれている）。

しかしこのシリアン・クリスチャンもまたさまざまな集団に分かれている。後に述べるように、彼らはシリア

正教系、ローマ・カトリック系、プロテスタント系に大別できるが、こうした宗派的区分とは別にユダヤ系キリスト教徒であるクナナヤ・クリスチャンと呼ばれる人びともいる。

また、シリアン・クリスチャンの他にもケーララには、主にカトリックの宣教師によって「異教」から直接改宗したラテン・カトリックと呼ばれる人びと、そしてイギリス時代に主に低位カーストからプロテスタントへと改宗した人びとがいる。

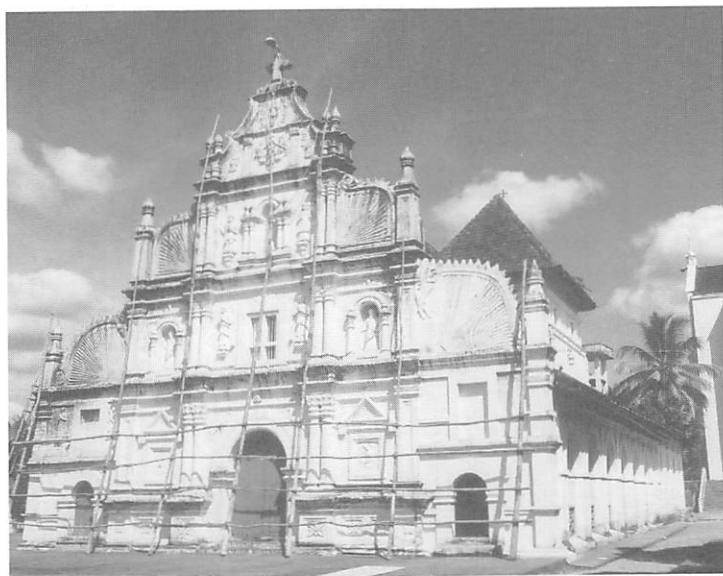
こうしたケーララのキリスト教徒の多様性は、紀元前から行なわれてきたこの地域のアラビア海交易の長い歴史と深く関わるものである。本稿では二〇〇一年十二月に行なった調査旅行をもとにして、このケーララのキリスト教徒社会の多様性の一端をみていきたい。

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## ——聖トマスとシリアン・クリスチャン

ケーララに伝わる伝承によれば、聖トマスは西暦五二一年にコドゥンガルール (Kodungallur) という港町に上陸した。これはイギリス時代にはクランガンノールと呼ばれたところであり、現在のケーララ最大の港湾都市コチ (Kochi, Cochinとも呼ばれる) の四〇キロほど北にある。ここはかつてはアラビア海交易におけるケーララの重要港であり、その後さまざまな文化や人が上陸した地点でもある。聖トマスがこの港町に來たのは、当時ここに大きなユダヤ人のコミュニティがあつたからだともされている (実際このあたりにはユダヤ人たちの居住地がいくつかあり、たとえば、コドゥンガルール付近のチェンナムンガラムには、次頁の写真にみるようにシナゴークやヘブライ語の石碑なども確かに残っている)。聖トマスはマラバール地方に七つの教会を設立し、その後東海岸 (現在のタミル・ナードゥ州) に向かい、チェンナイ (マドラス) 郊外のマイラポール地区において死去したとされている。聖トマスは布教の際にさまざまな奇跡を行ない、それを見たバラモンやナーヤルなどのいわゆる高位カーストがキリスト教に改宗したといわれる。シリアン・クリスチャンはケーララ社会において社会的に高位の地位を占めているとみなされているのであるが、その根拠の一つはそこにある。

現在、この聖トマス伝承を実証する十分な証拠はないとされているが、逆にこの伝承を否定する根拠もみあたらないといわれる。ケーララと西アジアとの間ではすでに紀元前から活発な交易がなされており、聖トマスがい



キリスト教の長い歴史を反映して、ケーララには多くの古い教会が残されている。コッタヤムから30キロほど内陸部に入ったバーラという町にあるワリヤパッリ (大きな教会) という名のこの教会はそうしたものの一つである。この教会は1002年につくられ、18世紀に再建されたと記録されている。

インドに来ていたとしても不思議ではない。胡椒、ターメリック、カルダモン、シナモンといった香料などを求めて、アラブ人、アッシリア人、バビロニア人、フェニキア人、ユダヤ人、ギリシア人、ローマ人などがケーララを訪れていたという。特に紀元前一世紀にエジプトがローマの手に落ちてから、ローマはこの香料貿易に活発に参入した。紀元後の三世紀の間、ローマとの交易はきわめて増加し、ローマの金貨が大量に流れ込んでいた。実際南インドなどでローマのコインが大量に発見されていることはよく知られている。こうした交易の流れのなかで多くの人びとが行き来していたことは間違いないし、聖トマスがそのルートに乗り、新たな布教地を求めたとしてもまったく不思議ではない。

聖トマス伝承の真偽はともかく、キリスト教が非常に古い時期からケーララに根づいていたことは確かである。西暦六八年にコドゥンガルूलに來たユダヤ人による記録には、ここにキリスト教徒コミュニティが存在しているとあり、二世紀にケーララを訪れたアレクサンドリアの学者もこの地のキリスト教について記録しているとされる。またこのキリスト教徒たちが聖トマス伝承をもっていることもかなり以前から知られていた。たとえば後にも触れるモンテ・コルヴィーノのヨハネ (John of Monte Corvino) は一二九一年にマラバール海岸に到着し、そのことを記している。

#### クナイ・トマンの来航と東シリア教会の影響

こうしてケーララに根づいたキリスト教は紀元四世紀に新たな展開をむかえた。西暦三四五年に西アジアからケーララに移住したクナイ・トマン (Knai Thoman, カナのトマスとも呼ばれる) が東シリア教会をここに設立したのである。クナイ・トマンの来航に関しては次のような伝承が残されている。商人として西アジアからマラバール海岸にやって来た彼は、木製の十字架を身につけた人びとを発見した。彼らはキリスト教徒を自称していたが、クナイ・トマンの目にはイエス・キリストを異教の神とする異教信仰のように映った。そこでトマンは、エデッサ (今はウルファと呼ばれるトルコ領内の都市) の東シリア教会の主教にその状況を報告し、状況の改善を訴えた。その後彼はこの主教の支持を得て、ケーララへと移住する人びとを集めた。こうしてエデッサ、エルサレム、バグダッドなどから選ばれた人びと、七二家族計四〇〇名が七隻の船に乗ってケーララの主要港であった前述のコドゥンガルूलへと向かった (その中には数名の聖職者が含まれており、また彼らは後述するようにユダヤ系のキリスト教徒であった)。クナイ・トマンはこうして東シリア教会の信仰をケーララのキリスト教徒たちに伝えた。その後も聖トマス・クリスチャンたちと東シリア教会との関係は続いた。彼らをシリアン・クリ

スチャンと呼ぶおそらく最大の理由はそこにある。

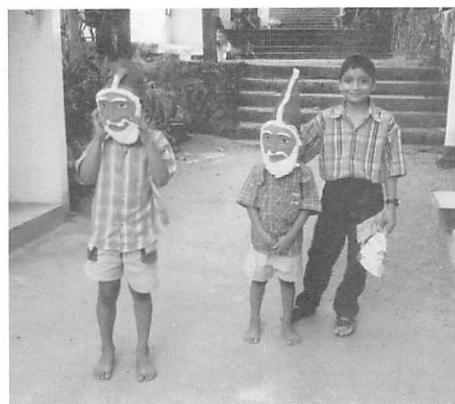
クナイ・トマンは当時のケーララの王であった有名な  
チェラマン・ペルマルから、土地や多くの特権を与えら  
れたという。彼ら与えられた特権は、たとえば税の軽  
減、ターバンや腰のベルトの着用、ゾウに乗ること、車  
で移動すること、絨毯の上を歩くこと、楽器を使うこと  
など多岐に及んだ。こうした特権はケーララのユダヤ人  
たちに与えられた特権と同じであったとされている。彼  
らは当初コドゥンガルールに居住していたが、ムスリム  
の侵入以降はコーッタヤム (Kottayam) やその他の地域  
(Thodupuzha, Chingavanam, Ranni) に居住地を移したと



チェンナマンガラムから見たペリヤール川。聖トマスが上陸したとされるコドゥンガルールはここから少し上流（この写真では右方向）に行った対岸にある。古代以来多くの外国船がここを通った。



チェンナマンガラムに残るシナゴーク（左）とヘブライ語が書かれた石碑。シナゴークは今では使われておらず、補修もされていない。今にも崩れそうになっている。



クナナヤ・クリスチャンの子どもたち  
（コーッタヤム）

思われる。現在はコーッタヤムがこのコミュニティの中  
心地となっているようである。

ところでクナイ・トマンおよび彼とともに来た七二家  
族は、このように聖トマス・クリスチャンたちと東シリ  
ア教会とを結びつける働きをしたのであるが、その後彼  
ら自身は内婚規制を保ち続け、彼らと地元のカリスト教  
徒などとの結婚は厳しく制限された。そのため彼らの容  
貌は一般のケーララの人びととはかなり異なっているよ  
うにみえる。肌は比較的白く、顔つきは西アジア的な印  
象を受ける（実際この肌の白さは、彼らのアイデンティ  
ティの中核部分を占めているともいう）。この内婚集団

は一般にクナナヤ・クリスチャンと呼ばれ、ケーララ社会の中で独自の地位を保っている。現在このクナナヤ・クリスチャンのコミュニティは二〇万人以上になるといわれ、インドだけでなく北米など世界各地に居住している。彼らの宗派はローマ・カトリックとシリア正教に分かれている。コーッタヤムのクライスト・ザ・キング大聖堂はシロ・マラバル教会（ローマ・カトリックを信じるシリアン・クリスチャンの教会で、ローマ法王の許可の下で一部シリア式の典礼が取り入れられている教会）であるが、運営の主体はクナナヤ・クリスチャンとなっている。

### ——ポルトガルによる支配と

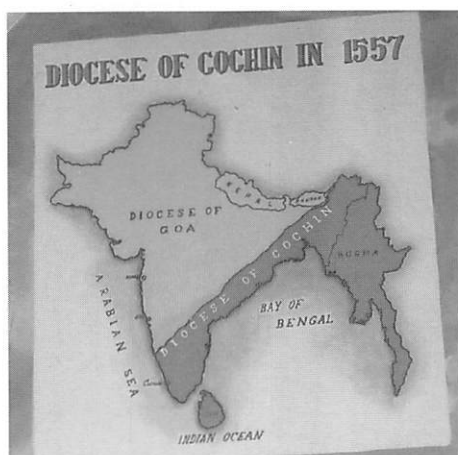
#### シリアン・クリスチャンの分裂

ポルトガル人たちはシリアン・クリスチャンたちのコミュニティにきわめて大きな影響を与えた。彼らは、一四九八年にヴァスコ・ダ・ガマがコーリコードウ（カリカット）に到達して以来、ケーララ、そして南アジアにおける勢力を拡大した。彼らが来航したころ、ケーララは多くの国に分かれていたが、なかでも比較的強大であったのは伝統的にザモリン（マラヤーラム語ではサームデーリ、海の王）と呼ばれるコーリコードウの支配者であり、その他のコチ、コドウンガルール、コッラム（クイロン）などのより弱小の王たちが彼に対立してい

た。強大な海軍力をもっていたポルトガルは、その後の植民地列強と同様、こうした対立を利用して影響力を高めていった。

ポルトガル人が当初標的にしたのはコーリコードウであつたようである。ヴァスコ・ダ・ガマの第一回目の航海の後にポルトガル王が送り出したペドロ・アルバレス・ガブラルもまたコーリコードウへ寄港した。彼はこの時ザモリンとの間に協定を結び、コーリコードウに商館を建設する許可を得た。しかしポルトガル人の勢力拡大を危惧するアラブ人との対立が拡大した。こうしたなかでポルトガル人たちはいくつものアラブ人の船を拿捕し、乗員を虐待するという行爲を行なった。この時の野蛮な行爲に怒った人びとがポルトガルの商館に押しかけ、陸上にいたポルトガル人の半数を殺したという。この事件をきっかけにカブラルはコーリコードウを去り、一五〇〇年一二月にザモリンと敵対していたコチへ向かった。コチがその後ポルトガルの主要な拠点になった経緯の一つはそこにある。コチの王はこのポルトガル人艦長を歓待し、商館の設立を認めた。カブラルはまたケーララ北部のカンヌールや南部のコッラムの支配者からも招待状を受け取ったという。

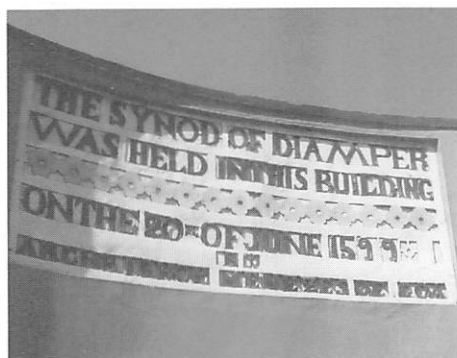
ヴァスコ・ダ・ガマの二度目の航海は一五〇二年二月に開始された。彼はこの時もまたコーリコードウへ寄港したが、ガマの態度は明らかに挑戦的であつた。彼はま



コチのBishop's Houseの壁の一部。壁にはさまざまな表や地図が描かれてあり、インドにおけるローマ・カトリックの歴史を知ることができる。これは南アジアがゴア司教区とコチ司教区に区分されていた1557年の状況を示す地図



クライスト・ザ・キング大聖堂で日曜のミサに参加しているカトリック信者たち（コーッタヤム）



ディアンパーの宗教会議が開催されたことを示す記念碑（ウダヤンペルール）

ずザモリンにこの都市からすべてのムスリムを追放するよう要求した。この要求が却下されると、ポルトガル人たちはコリーコードゥを砲撃し、米を積んだいくつかの船を拿捕し、乗員の手や耳や鼻を切り落とすといった蛮行を行なった。ガマはその後コチへ向かい、王に金の王冠などを献上した。コチの王はこうして領土内にいくつかの商館を設立し、駐屯地を設けることを許可し、また王とポルトガル人との間で定められた価格で香料を買い付ける権利をポルトガル人たちに与えた。もちろんコチの王は明らかにポルトガル人の力を利用しながらザモリンによる支配を拒否しようと考えたのであるが、こうし

たなかでポルトガルの影響力は着実に高まっていった。ポルトガルはまた、コッラムの支配者とも同様の関係を結び、さらに一五〇四年にはザモリン軍と戦い、コドゥンガールからザモリン軍を追放した。コドゥンガール王はこうしてザモリンへの封建的忠誠の義務を放棄し、ポルトガルとの関係を強化した。

ところでポルトガル人たちは、一六六三年にケーララの地を去るまでの一世紀半の間に、さまざまなものをもたらした。カシユーナッツ、タバコ、パイナップル、パイヤといった作物はその一部である。彼らはまた胡椒などの新しい栽培法を持ち込んだ。香料などのケーララ

の産物はヨーロッパとの直接取引によって交易量が増し、多くの人びとがこれらの栽培を行なうようになった。コナッツの改良種もまた持ち込まれ、コナッツ繊維は主要な輸出品となった。

宗教的側面に関しても、ポルトガル人たちはケーララに大きな変化をもたらした。彼らが「異教徒」をどのようにに改宗させていったのかは必ずしも明らかではないが、かなりの熱意をもって布教したことは間違いない。特に有名なフランシスコ・ザビエルはケーララでの布教にも力を注いだ。彼らの手によってローマ・カトリックへと改宗した人びとは後にみるようにラテン・カトリックと呼ばれている。ただ、こうした布教活動の中で、彼らとヒンドゥー教徒たちとの間にはかなりの対立が生まれたことは間違いない。いく人かのポルトガルの総督たちはコッラムやコチ付近のヒンドゥー教寺院の破壊を行なったようである。また、一五七〇年代にはポルトガル人の影響力が拡大しすぎるのを恐れたウエーナードゥ（トラヴァンコール）の支配者が警告を発し、こうしたなかで（コッラムの南にある）アーティンガルという地域で三つの教会が焼き払われるという事件もあった。

ポルトガル人たちはシリアン・クリスチャンたちに対してもその宗教的熱意を強く注いだ。しかしこうした彼らの宗教的情熱の結果、シリアン・クリスチャンたちは分裂し、カトリックと非カトリック（主にヤコブ派）と

いう大きな区分がつけられることになった。

一五九九年に開かれたディアンバー（Diamper）の宗教会議は、ポルトガル人たちのシリアン・クリスチャンたちに対する宗教活動の最大の成果であるともいえる。この宗教会議が行なわれた町は現在ではウダヤンペールと呼ばれており、コチの南一四キロのところにある。この宗教会議では、ポルトガル人のコチ総督、軍の幹部などの出席の下で、ケーララのキリスト教の「誤り」を正し、教会の「ラテン化」を進めることが決議された。これは例えばポルトガル人司教の採用、典礼の変更、ローマ式の法衣の着用などであった。また妻帯を続ける聖職者は破門され、さらにポルトガル人の監視の下で教会内の古代シリア語で書かれた「異端」の書は焼き捨てられた。

しかし、この宗教会議の成果は長続きしなかった。まもなくシリアン・クリスチャンたちとポルトガル人たちとの間には激しい議論が続くようになり、シリアン・クリスチャンたちは彼らの伝統的典礼の継続と、ローマ・カトリックに代わる宗教的權威を求めるようになった。こうしたなかで一六五三年にバビロンのヤコブ派の総主教はアハタツラという主教をケーララに送った。影響力拡大を恐れるポルトガル人たちはこの主教を拘留した。アハタツラのその後の運命については三つの説がある。一つは海に落とされ溺死させられたというもの、二つ目は、ゴアに連れて行かれ、審問の後に焼き殺されたとい

うもの、三つ目が、ポルトガルに送られる途中に死んだというものである。シリアン・クリスチャンたちの多くは第一の溺死説を信じたとされる。いずれにせよ、このポルトガル人たちの行為に憤慨した多くの人びとはこれをきつかけとしてカトリックの大司教には従わないことを宣言し、それ以後は彼ら自身の長輔祭 (Archdeacon) に従うことに決めた。こうしてシリアン・クリスチャンたちは、カトリックのロモ・シリアン (Romo Syrians) とヤコブ派 (Jacobite Syrians) に分裂した (ヤコブ派とはシリア正教内の一派で、その信者たちは西アジアではトルコ国境付近のカメシユリ周辺に集中して居住している。その名は創始者ヤコブ・バラダエウスから来ており、キリストは神性と人性をもつのではなく、その人格は単一であるとするキリスト単性論を信じている人びとであるとされる)。

こうしてローマ・カトリックの教えに従おうとしない多くの人びとは、アンティオキアの西シリア・ヤコブ派教会 (West Syrian Jacobite Church) に加わった。ところでこのヤコブ派は一九世紀にさらに分裂した。まず、マルトーマ派 (Marthomites) と呼ばれる人びとは、イギリス国教会派の影響で、このヤコブ派教会から分離した。さらにその後、西シリア・ヤコブ派教会は、インド・シリア正教会 (Syrian Orthodox Church of India) とインド・ヤコブ派シリア正教会 (Jacobite Syrian

Orthodox Church of India) に分裂した。この分裂は、インド人の総大主教 (Catholics) に従う人びとと、シリアのアンティオキアの総大主教 (Patriarch of Antioch) に忠誠を誓う人びととの間で生まれたもので、教会施設の管理などを巡って現在に至るまで争いが続いている。この二つの教会はそれぞれ約一〇〇万人の信者をもっており、シリアン・クリスチャンの宗派の中でも最大級のものである。上記のマルトーマ派の信者は約五〇万人だといわれている。

#### ——ラテン・カトリック・コミュニティ

ポルトガルはまた、ラテン・カトリックと呼ばれるコ



コーッタヤムのマール・エリヤー大聖堂 (上) と日曜日の礼拝 (下)。この大聖堂はシリア正教のもので、伝統的な建築様式を踏襲しながらもかなり近代的なつくりとなっている。内部はカトリックの大聖堂と比べ非常に明るい。



ミユニティの拡大に大きな貢献をした。ケーララにおけるラテン・カトリックの起源は一二九一年に前述のモンテ・コルヴィーノのヨハネという人物が中国への航路の途中にマラバール海岸に立ち寄り、数カ月滞在したときに人びとをカトリックに改宗したことにあるとされている。しかしこのコミユニティの飛躍的な発展はポルトガル時代にもたらされた。その時代の宣教師として特によく知られているのがフランシスコ・ザビエルである。彼は一五四二年にコチと並んでポルトガルの重要な拠点の一つであったゴアに到着し、一五四三年にカニヤクマリからトゥティコリンといったタミル地方での布教に従事し、その後トラヴァンコール（ケーララ南部に位置した王国）に移り精力的に活動した（ザビエルは特にカニヤクマリとコッラムとの間の地域で活動したといわれる）。

このラテン・カトリック・コミユニティはかなり大きなもので、約一七〇万人の信者がいるともいわれており、ケーララ各地に多くの教会が存在しているのであるが、その実態は今まで十分には明らかにされてこなかった。その理由は必ずしも明らかではないが、このコミユニティが信者たちの出身階層などの点においてかなり多様なものであり、一つの「コミユニティ」としての求心力が十分でなかったことがその要因の一つであることはおそらく間違いない。実際、ラテン・カトリックのコミユニティには、ポルトガル時代にラテン・カトリックへと宗

派を変えた聖トマス・クリスチャン（シリアン・クリスチャン）、アングロ・インディアン（イギリス人の祖先をもつ人びと）、そしてキリスト教以外の宗教から直接改宗した多数の人びとが含まれる。この最後のグループには、以下のカースト集団などからの改宗者が含まれている。

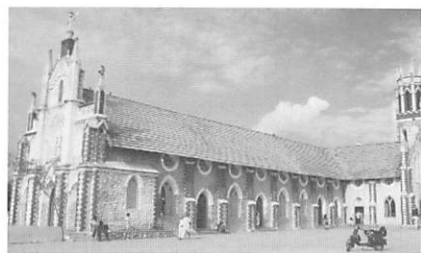
まずパラヴァ (Parava) またはバラタ (bhārata) と呼ばれるカースト集団の多くがラテン・カトリックへと改宗した。彼らの多くはタミル語を話す漁民である。ムックヴァンと呼ばれるカーストはもともとは真珠取りを職業とするタミル語を話すコミユニティであるが、彼らの多くもラテン・カトリックに改宗した。トラヴァンコール藩王国の一九三一年のセンサスによると、このカーストのうちキリスト教徒は三万五三九人で、ヒンドゥー教徒は五九六人であった。その他、タミル語を話すカーストとしては、ナーダールやウェッラーラといったカーストにもラテン・カトリック信者がいる。また、マラーラム語地域ではブラヤやパラヤといった最底辺の不可触カースト（ダリート）からも改宗者が多く出ている。彼らは厳格なケーララのカースト制度の中で厳しい差別を受けてきた人びとである。カトリック教会内におけるカーストの問題は、他のキリスト教の宗派においてと同様、容易には克服しがたい問題となっているようにみえる。たとえばイーラワー・カーストからの改宗者は自ら

をイーラワー・ラテン・カトリックと呼んでいるといわれる。ナーダール、ブラヤ、パラヤといったカーストからの改宗者も同様の習慣を保持しているとされている。いずれにしてもこのカースト問題も含め、このコミュニティに関しては知られていないことが多い。

### ——ケーララとクリスマス

ところで今回の調査旅行はちょうどクリスマスの時期に当たった。キリスト教徒にとって非常に重要なこの行事がどのように行われるのかを観察する機会があったので、その点について記しておきたい。

ケーララでは、クリスマスは、八月から九月にかけて



ティルヴァナンタブラム（トリヴァンドラム）郊外の海岸沿いにあるラテン・カトリックの教会



ティルヴァナンタブラム市内にあるラテン・カトリックの聖ジョセフ大聖堂



街角では多くの「クリスマス・スター」が売られている（ティルヴァナンタブラム市内）。

のオーナム祭や、マラヤーリの新年を祝う四月一四日のヴィシユ祭と並んで、宗教とは比較的關係に多くの人びとによって祝われる一大行事である。ケーララの学校ではクリスマスの聖歌を歌う会が催され、さまざまな宗教の子どもたちが参加するという。商店ではクリスマスケーキが売られている。聞いてみるとヒンドゥー教徒なども買うのだそうだ。「クリスマス・スター」（キリストが生まれたときに現れたとされる大きな星で「ベツレヘムの星」とも呼ばれる）という星形のクリスマス用の装飾品を売っている店の主人に聞くと、買うのはキリスト教徒だけではないそうだ。その他、クリスマスセールの張り紙が出されたりしている。このようにケーララでも

クリスマスはかなりの程度世俗化している。

しかしこうした世俗化もかなり近年のことであるらしい。マラーヤラム語の短編作家であるN・モーハン氏は、『デイリー・スター』紙（一九九八年二月二六日、インターネット版）に次のように語った。「子どものころ私は、クリスマスというものを聞いたことすらなかった。年がたつにつれ、クリスマスは私の家族の中でますます重要で楽しい行事となった。私の読者の多くは私にクリスマスカードを送ってくれる」。クリスマスカードの交換がキリスト教徒以外でどの程度行なわれているかは明らかではないが、（明らかにヒンドゥー教徒である）モーハン氏にクリスマスカードを送る人びとがそれを特に宗教的行爲だと思っていないことは確かであろう。

ところで、このようなクリスマスの世俗化が、商業主義の展開や新しいミドル・クラスの台頭、あるいはグローバル化といった現象と関連するものであることは間違いないであろう。しかしこうした現象は他方でヒンドゥー・ナシヨナリズムの台頭の基礎となるものであるし、実際ケーララでもその兆候はかなりの程度現れてきている。世俗化と宗教的ナシヨナリズムの勃興の連関に関しては十分に注目する必要があるだろう。

ただ、いかにクリスマスが世俗化しようとも、キリスト教徒たちにとってはクリスマスがイエス・キリストの生誕を祝う重要な行事であることは離かである。

私はコーッタヤムにおいて、カトリックとシリア正教会のクリスマス儀礼を見る機会を得た。

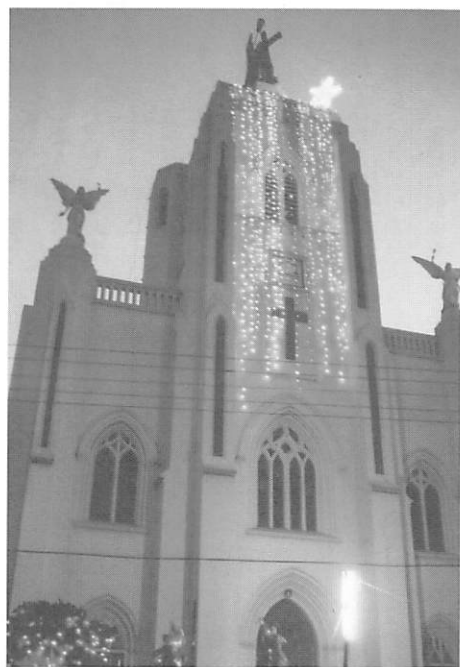
コーッタヤムで訪れたカトリック教会は、クライスト・ザ・キング大聖堂というものである。これは前述のクナナヤ・クリスチャンの中のカトリックの人びとが中心となつて運営している教会であるが、教会に来るのはクナナヤの人びとのみではないという。この教会では日曜日にはすべて午前、五時半からと七時からと八時半から三度の礼拝が行なわれる。平日は午前五時四十分からと午前六時半からとなつている。日曜日の五時半からの礼拝を見た。早朝にもかかわらず約一〇〇人ほどの人びとが熱心に祈っている。男女の列は分かれ、祭壇に向かつて左側に女性、右側に男性ということになっている。

女性には、パンジャビ・ドレスかサリーという格好であるが、全員が布で頭を覆うようにしている。男性は上がワイシャツで、下がルンギーという格好がほとんどである。

二月二四日にはこのカトリックの大聖堂は一日中開いていた。多くの人びとが集まり、各自がひざまづいて静かに祈っている。聖職者に罪の告白をする人びともあった。深夜のミサは二月二五日の午前〇時から始まった。オルガンやドラムに合わせて聖歌が歌われ、楽しくにぎやかな雰囲気であつた。三〇分ほど経過した後、皆が外に出た。用意してあつたヤシの葉に火がつけられ、その周りを回る儀式が行なわれた。その後キリストの生

誕を模したまぶねに電気がつけられた。二時頃にミサは終わり、一人一人にケーキがふるまわれた。その後教会の庭で盛大な花火大会が行なわれた。

私が訪れたシリア正教会の施設はマール・エリヤー大聖堂 (Mar Elia Cathedral, Marとは古代シリア語でLordという意味) という。前記のカトリックのクライスト・ザ・キング大聖堂が西洋式の建築様式であったのに対して、マール・エリヤー大聖堂はケーララの伝統的な教会建築の様式を引き継いでいる。しかしとてもモダンな建物で、窓が多いため内部はクライスト・ザ・キング大聖堂よりもはるかに明るい。一二月三日日曜日の午前八



コーッタヤムのクライスト・ザ・キング大聖堂。  
聖夜だけ電球で飾られた。



マール・エリヤー大聖堂のクリスマス儀礼。午前  
3時半頃。



マール・エリヤー大聖堂前の敷地内にて

時からの礼拝に参加した。はじめは参加者は少なかったが、次第に増え、最後には入りきれなくなった。ここではどういうわけかカトリックとは逆で、男が左、女が右になっている。服装はカトリックの方と変わらない。ここでもまた人びとが熱心に祈る姿が印象的であった。シリア正教会においてはクリスマスの深夜のミサは二月二五日午前二時三〇分から、つまりローマ・カトリックよりも二時間半遅れて始まった。この教会においても音楽は重要な役割を果たしているようにみえたが、前記のカトリックのミサとは違い、楽器演奏を伴わないもので、静かで厳かな印象を受けた。三時三〇分頃から全

員が列をなして外へ進み、地面の上で火がたかれ、その周りを人びとが回った。その後聖職者がその火の前で何かを読み上げた（この儀式はティアラックル *Tharackal* と呼ばれる）。その後人びとは教会の周りを列をつくって回り、大聖堂内に入った。その後も儀式は続き、人びとは長い朗読風の歌を歌った。私は午前四時頃までこの大聖堂にいたが、その後ホテルに帰った。人びとは儀式終了後各家庭に帰って食事をとるのだそうだ。

本稿でみたようにケーララのキリスト教は非常に長い歴史をもち、アラビア海交易を中心とするさまざまな影響のなかで多様な側面をもつものとなってきた。このキ

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リスト教徒コミュニティに関しては今まで多くの研究がなされてきたのであるが、まだ十分に知られていないことも多いように思われる。本稿でみたようにラテン・カトリックやクナナヤ・クリスチャンといったコミュニティに関してはほとんど知られていない。また、教会とカリストとの関係も、イギリス時代の研究はある程度はあるものの、インド独立後の状況に関しては十分に考察されていないように思われる。さらに最近の傾向であるケーララにおけるBJPなどのヒンドゥー・ナショナリスト勢力の台頭とキリスト教徒コミュニティの対立についても今後さらに調べられるべきであるように思われる。

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<http://www.gfhg.net/kanaya/comm/>

**In the Name of Allah the Compassionate, the Merciful**

**THE RESOLUTION UNANIMOUSLY ADOPTED  
AT THE SPECIAL SESSION HELD ON 4TH MAY 2002  
AT THE PUBLIC LIBRARY AUDITORIUM COLOMBO 7**

**WHEREAS** the Government of the Democratic Socialist Republic of Sri Lanka has entered into Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) for the cessation of hostilities, as a first step towards initiating peace talks to find a viable and lasting solution to the ethnic problem in Sri Lanka,

**AND WHEREAS** the Government has also decided to introduce Constitutional Reforms to enable a wider range of the civil society to participate in the decision making process in Sri Lanka,

**AND WHEREAS** the Sri Lankan Malays who had enjoyed representation in the legislature since independence have been deprived of such representation after the promulgation of the Republican Constitution of 1972 except for the period from 1989 to 1993,

**THIS Special Session of the Conference of Sri Lankan Malays (COSLAM):**

1. Commends the signing of the MOU as an opportune and necessary step for the initiation of peace talks aimed at finding a just and equitable solution.
2. Calls on both parties to the MOU to assiduously abide by its provisions both in letter and in spirit with sincerity and candour
3. Calls on both parties to expedite the initiation of peace talks and to approach these talks in a spirit of give and take, with the ultimate objective of arriving at a solution to the ethnic problem whilst ensuring the rights of all ethnic and religious groups in the island within the framework of a united and sovereign Sri Lanka.
4. Urges the Government to make constitutional provision to:
  - a. Elect or appoint a Malay to Parliament
  - b. Elect or appoint a Malay each to the Provincial Councils and its Successors of the Western, Central and Southern Provinces.

have sought solutions. It is still not clear as to how the present government wants to respond. Time will tell the story.

The Malays themselves have been active in defending their distinct identity for a secured future for their community while extending their support to safeguard the country they claim to be their motherland.

“What counts is not necessarily  
the size of the dog in the fight;  
it’s the size of the fight in the dog.”

- *Dwight D. Eisenhower*

had a stronger impact over the Malays to take Moor wives and to get converted into Muslim. had they been not Muslim before their marriage. They also adopted Tamil as their lingua franca to communicate with the Indian Muslims or the Moors. Almost all Malays I interviewed in Colombo, Matara, Kirinda and Hambantota spoke Tamil in addition to Malay and Sinhala languages.

The Muslim identity of the Malays is something they are proud of. Many I met were gradually accepting the orthodox Islamic teachings. Yet what was interesting was their zeal to identify themselves as ethnic Malays while being a Muslim. In Malaysia, being a Muslim is a requirement to be accepted as a Malay. No non-Muslims are accepted as Malays. In Bosnia Herzegovina, Muslim is an ethnic identity. But the Malays who are treated similarly stress that their Muslim identity is religious not ethnic. Why do they assert ethnic identity?

The Malays assert their ethnic identity because their culture is distinct. Their language is different from other Muslims'.

## **6. Conclusion**

The Malays of Sri Lanka have remained a distinct ethnic group in Sri Lanka primarily because they have maintained their mother tongue, the Malay at least in a colloquial form. Having originated from different regions in the East islands that included Malay Peninsula and Indonesian archipelago, they have formed a Sri Lankan Malay community from a diverse origin.

Despite its small size in number, the Malays had proved that they deserve to be treated as a special class of people, some of whom lived receiving special benefits from the Dutch government, and many as military men getting established special Malay regiment and a separate mosque for the Malay soldiers. Moving from one master to another, the Malays also proved that they deserve care from subsequent masters including the governments of Independent and Republic Sri Lanka.

The Malays made Sri Lanka their home and contributed joining hands with other communities towards the nation building of a united Sri Lanka. They represented in high offices from Legislative Council to National Parliament including in the first cabinet of Independent Sri Lanka and engaged in wider range of professions including Public and Educational service, in the armed forces, judiciary, medical and engineering etc. However, there are several factors that have hampered their progress as a community, for which they

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was also about the sermons in Malay language in the Malay military mosque. He said only once a month they are provided with a sermon in Malay language. The Malay parents of young adults are worried of their children not being interested in learning the Malay but have turned to English stream.

The last but not least plight of the Malays of Sri Lanka is their religious identity. They are Muslim by religion not by ethnicity, they assert. But they are treated as Muslims not as Malays. This is what they emphasize in defending their identity. As indicated in the preceding pages that not all the Malays were Muslims nor they were always Muslims in the past. By the time the Malays were brought to Sri Lanka during the middle of the 17th century by the Dutch, there were large Muslim settlements in the coastal areas of Sri Lanka. They were the settlements of the Moors or those who had come from South India from the 6th century A.D. The large number of Malays particularly soldiers came to the island without their womenfolk, many were still young and single. They took women from Moor community, whose religion was similar to them, especially to those who came from Indonesian archipelago. The people from Java were the followers of the Shafi School of Muslim religion while the majority of Indian Muslims belonged to the same school. This must have



6. Malay street, the main street in Slave Island in Colombo.



7. A Malay boy with his Moor friend in the Glennie Passage that links to free settlement along the railway line in Slave Island.



8. A small mosque built along the railway line in Slave Island.



9. A Malay worker in Colombo.

the fish market, my informant told me that even non-Malays speak Malay when they negotiate with the Malay fishermen. Kirinda also is in advantage of having a Muslim High School, that has classes from Grade six to twelve known as General Certificate of Education-Advanced Level(G.C.E A/L), where the majority of the students are Malay children from the settlement. They consist more than 95% of the student population. The majority of teachers including the headmaster and his deputy are Malay. They speak to their students in Malay outside the class. But I was told to my surprise that the medium of instruction in the school is Tamil.

The language factor is another plight of the Malay grievances. Almost all Malay children either study in Sinhala or Tamil medium as there is no choice since the English medium has been abolished. There has been no educational policy to allow the Malay students to study a language of their choice let alone receiving instruction in Malay, whereas there are schools, which teach their students foreign languages like German, French or Japanese in addition to English. Several children, whom I interviewed, study either in Tamil or Sinhala medium. An interesting story was that children at Lankasabha School in Colombo teach students Tamil in Sinhala. In another encounter with a Malay settlement, which is known as Kirula Road Malay Gardens in Colombo, there are about twenty Malay families. The children spoke fluent Sinhala and a couple of twin sisters answered me promptly when I asked their name in my broken Tamil. But the great grandfather, a retired policeman was worried about the Malay language as children will be burdened to learn several languages: Sinhala, Tamil and English leaving their mother tongue behind. Next settlement I visited was the Slave Island, the first foremost Malay settlement in Sri Lanka. The main street is named as Malay Street along with which there are government offices and private companies, where onetime in the past was Kampong Kertel, the major Malay settlement in Colombo. The Malays living on the Java Lane that directs to the present Malay Military mosque were worried about the language being used inside the mosque. The Imam inside the very Malay mosque is no longer come from a Malay family like in the past. The priest I met when I visited this mosque was from Eastern province of Sri Lanka and was from the Moor community. He spoke no Malay but fluent Arabic, which he teaches the children and Tamil his mother tongue. My interpreter spoke to the priest in Tamil. Naturally, the mosque goes preferred the priest at the mosque speak Malay. One gentleman I spoke to was the only adult male figure of a family of three generation. He is married to a grand daughter of the lady, who was 72 year old and owns the house. His worry

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left out. And in the case of free education, too, the Malays had no other choice but to choose either Tamil or Sinhala as their medium of instruction in schools since the English stream education was abolished in 1962. And this language policy of the government even divided the Malays into two language streams: one those speaking Sinhala and other speaking Tamil. Generally Malays are known to be multi-lingual and are in advantageous position than those of mono-linguals in finding employments. But in reality, the number of multi-lingual Malays is lesser than one would expect in the settlements farer from Colombo. An example can be drawn from two Malay settlements in Sri Lanka one being Slave Island and other being Kirinda, both places, where I happened to meet a number of Malay people.

Kirinda, a historical seaside community where Queen-to-be Viharamahadevi<sup>26)</sup> is said to have come ashore after her perilous drifting voyage from Kelaniya, is now a largest Malay settlement in Sri Lanka, which is located in Hambantota district in the south, about 170 miles away from Sri Lanka's capital city Colombo. Out of 300 families living in this village, the Malay comprised 95%. Malay is the main language spoken in households, shops and in the market-places. The 75% of the Malay population are fishermen and the rest are farmers. In



3. Mr.T.K.Azoor, the president of Conference of Sri Lankan Malays (COSLAM)



4. A family gathering at the residence of Mr. Hamin, a vice president of Conference of Sri Lankan Malays (COSLAM)



5. From left Dr.B.A. Hussainmia, the witer and Mr.T.K.Azoor sharing Malay food at a social gathering in a Malay residence in Colombo.

Although these two gentlemen failed to secure seats in Parliament either through nomination or election, they later contested local elections and proved worthy to be nominated by the political parties. Mr. Ossman was elected in the Sri Lanka Muslim Party<sup>25)</sup> (SLMC) ticket from the Colombo District to the Western Provincial Council in the Provincial Election held in 1988. He resigned from the Party after a year. His place was then given to another Malay Mr. M. A. Ameer an ex-Sri Lankan footballer who served until 1993. In the case of Mr. T. K. Azoor, a leading lawyer in Colombo and dynamic leader of Malay community joined the SLMC in which he was elevated to a Deputy leader won the Colombo Municipal Council election held in 1997. He polled the second highest number of votes in his list and got himself elected to the Council. There are several other Malays who have been successful in winning local elections. They are also worthy of mention: Mr. Shiraz Sheriff, the Vice Chairman of the Nawalapitiya UC, Mr. Hilaly Abdeen, a member of Kandy Municipal Council and Mr. Allon Deen a member of Hambantota UC. These limited Malay positions in a few Municipal and in Provincial Councils have yet to serve as a clout to force their voice heard in the national level. But it is not an easy task to make their voice heard, for the Malays cannot elect a leader of their choice because there is no electorate, which has a Malay majority. The only way out is to create a system that elect or appoint members of minority: a Malay member to represent the Malay minority community.

Several organisations have raised the above issue asking the government to pay worthy attention to the dire need. One such organization was the Conference of Sri Lankan Malays (COSLAM) led by Mr. T. K. Azoor, an untiring activist for the Malay cause. His movement urged at a special session held on 4th May this year the Government to make constitutional provision to elect or appoint a Malay to Parliament as well as each to the Provincial Councils and its Successors of the Western, Central and Southern Provinces (see the Appendix 1). The Malays urge the government to create a system that will address the plight of Malay community. What are their plights?

The first is that the entire Malay community, except those individuals, who have their own wealth, power or extra ordinary talents, are deprived of their legitimate rights: right to employment, right to abode and right to free education as equal as to other communities of Sri Lanka. The majority of Malays, who were employed in the armed forces, Police and the fire brigade in the past, have been displaced by individuals from other communities. While several housing projects were launched to provide houses for the houseless, the Malays were

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25) A new Muslim Party formed in 1988 by M.H.M. Ashraff, who became a powerful Minister in the PA Government that came to power in 1994.

26) She was a daughter of the king of Kelaniya, who cast her adrift to sea as a sacrifice for a royal indiscretion. She is said to have washed up on the shore at Kirinda and was taken as queen by King Kawantissa. They later became the parents of the great King Dutugemunu, who united the onetime divided Sri Lanka into a united under one crown for the first time.

in 1924 as the third Muslim Member and who was an energetic and dynamic leader would espouse the cause of the Muslims, when the occasion demanded. But he lost the State Council elections he contested in June 1931 and again in the State Council held in February 1936. But this time he was appointed a nominated member of the State Council.

It was in 1947; Dr. Jayah got elected to the Parliament when he won the first Ceylon Parliamentary election. He was elected the 2nd member of the three-member electorate. He was then appointed Minister of Labour and Social services in the First Cabinet of Prime Minister D. S. Senanayake. He served the ministry and as an MP till he was offered Sri Lanka's ambassadorial post in Pakistan by the Prime Minister. Dr. Jayah was again made an appointed MP in the short-lived Parliament of March to July 1960 on his return to the island from Pakistan. Not many Malays were lucky to be appointed or elected to the Legislative or Parliament of Sri Lanka after him. However, the Soulbury Constitution had a provision allowing the Prime Minister to choose six members to the House of Representatives. He chose all these members from the minority communities who could not otherwise get them elected to Parliament. This led to a tradition that the Prime Ministers appoint a Malay member to Parliament afterwards. As a result Dr. M. P. Drahaman and Mr. B. Zahiere Lye were appointed MPs. The tradition of appointing Malay members did not continue that long, when Prime Minister Dudley Senanayake, who succeeded his father after his death in 1952, did not appoint any Malay MPs to Parliament.

After a long gap of more than 25 years, two Malays were accommodated in the National lists of two major political parties: one was Mr. M. S. Ossman in the Sri Lanka Freedom Party<sup>22)</sup> (SLFP) National list and other was Mr. M. H. Amit in the National list of United National Party<sup>23)</sup> (UNP). Mr. Amit was appointed an MP and served until he resigned to make way for Mr. Gamini Disanayake to reenter Parliament. At the same period, Mr. M. E. H. Mahroof was elected to Parliament from the Trincomalee District and served as the Deputy Minister of Port and Shipping during the latter part of his tenure<sup>24)</sup>. Since 1993, there has been no Malay member in Parliament. In the General Election held in October 2000, there were two Malay members in the National lists of two major political parties. Mr. T. B. Abbas was in the UNP National list, while Mr. T. K. Azoor in the National list of the National Unity Alliance (NUA). But both failed to get appointed MPs. In the General Election called in after a year, none of the major political parties had Malay names in their lists of candidates or in the National list.

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22) Centre leaning party formed of 'Sinhala Mahasabha' of S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike, who became the Prime Minister in 1956.

23) First Political Party formed by D.S. Senanayake, the first Prime Minister of Independent Sri Lanka.

24) The Malay Dilemma, A Commemoration Issue on the 42nd Death Anniversary of Dr. T.B.Jayah, 31st May 2002

cricketers some of whom have represented Sri Lanka. They have also donned the Sri Lankan jersey in football and rugby. Some of them have even become captains of the national team and coached in swimming etc. The Malay sportsmen and sports women are also known excelling at other sports including Judo, Karate, Athletics and Netball bringing fame to Sri Lanka. The Malays aspire to contribute to the nation building of Sri Lanka by undertaking their share of duty while defending their legitimate rights. What rights to defend?

## **5. Defending a Distinct Ethnic Identity**

The Malays of Sri Lanka are compelled to defend their legitimate right: a simple right to be heard. They have made Sri Lanka their home though they had originated from the islands of the East. They have lived here more than 300 years first as exiles, then as settlers and now as legitimate citizens of Sri Lanka. All the Malays except aliens or wayfarers, living in Sri Lanka are those who were born in this island. They live side by side with communities belonging to Moor, Tamil, Sinhala and Burghers as well. They fought shoulder to shoulder for freedom, made their sacrifice to safeguard the country they were born whenever they were required to do so.

The Malays in Sri Lanka are generally hard working people. The majority of city dwellers are educated and multi-lingual, competitive in business. They represent in the Public and Education Services, in the armed services and Police, in the field of law, medicine, science and technology, engineering and now in Information Technology and Computer Science. They also hold high posts in private companies. But they have no voice in the national Parliament, the highest body of the decision makers for the country and its citizens. These circumstances have deprived the Malays from the opportunity of participating in the decision making process.

It was not that they had never been represented in the National Councils. There were several Malays elected or nominated MPs including Dr. T. B. Jayah, Dr. M. P. Drahman, and Mr. B. Zahir Lye till 1960 and Mr. M. S. Ossman, and Mr. M. E. H. Maharroof in the Republican Parliament till 1994. But in retrospect, the appointment, the election or the nomination system did not secure a continued representation of the Malay community in the Parliament.

In the most cases, members from minority communities like the Malay could not win elections except in special cases. Dr. Jayah who was first appointed to the Legislative Council

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independence for Sri Lanka.

Dr. Jayah was also very much concerned about the education. He believed that equal educational qualification would eradicate the gap among the different ethnic groups. He emphasized that:

“The supreme need of the hour is education, not merely elementary education, not merely half hearted education, but an education that will turn out heroes and heroines, leaders and reformers, thinkers and philosophers, an education that will make us a progressive enlightened and powerful minority.”<sup>20)</sup>

The formation of prominent societies of today’s Muslim and Malay elites attributes to Dr. Jayah’s initiatives that promoted education among the Muslim population, which included the Moors, the Malays, and the Mehmans etc.

As indicated earlier, the Malays were primarily the soldiers, the policemen, and the fire brigades. They have a long history of service in the armed forces of Dutch Ceylan, British Ceylon and today in the multi-ethnic Sri Lanka. A police day is marked on March 21st every year to commemorate Police heroes, is the day on which a Malay PC named Sabhan laid down his life in 1864 becoming the first Police officer to die in action<sup>21)</sup>. Although the number is small, the Malays continue to serve in the Armed and Police. Quite a number have made their sacrifice in the ethnic war with the Tamil separatists.

The Malays are also known to be impressive in their contribution to national sports in Sri Lanka. The history of Cricket in Sri Lanka records that the Colombo Malay Cricket Club founded in 1872 was the first cricket club in the island. The club has produced outstanding



1. A road in Colombo 7 area named after a java (Malay) settlement in the past.



2. Members of Colombo Malay Cricket Club in Slave Island.

20) Pertumuan Melayu, the Souvenir published marking the Malay Rally on 26-27 Jan 2002.

21) Pertumuan Melayu (Malay Rally) 2002 Souvenir, Sri Lanka Malay Association, Colombo, (2002).

congregations. Every Muslim settlement of some size had such a mosque which was its only public building and object of great pride.' (Hussainmia, 1990, 126-127). The mosques are also the centers of learning, where the Malay children are taught Arabic language and recital of holy Koran.

Thus the Malays arrived in Sri Lanka at different periods of time, on different reasons and from a diverse region of Eastern islands that included Malay Peninsula, Java and other Indonesian islands formed a community of their own: the Malay community with the support of British founded Malay Regiment, the Mosques erected for their sake and their own undying efforts of maintaining their lingual and ethnic identity as the Sri Lankan Malays.

#### **4. The Malay Contribution towards Sri Lanka**

The Malay community, despite being one of the smallest communities in Sri Lanka, has contributed towards the nation building of Sri Lanka as an equal partner in the multi-ethnic mosaic of the island nation. 'They were not only daunting soldiers in time of war, but erudite scholars dedicated to their religion, cultural pursuits and contributed commendably to all walks of Sri Lankan life.'<sup>17)</sup> Muslim leaders fought shoulder to shoulder with their counterparts, the Sinhala and the Tamil freedom fighters for the independence of Sri Lanka.

Among Muslim leaders, Dr. T. B. Jayah was one of the most prominent and illustrious national leaders of Sri Lanka. He was an educationist and a political visionary. Being a Malay Muslim, he strove for freedom of all communities. He is known as a leader who put his country before community. It was his thesis that became a corner stone of the present governance as 'One Nation – One Country' in which he originated a united democratic concept of a Unitary State. Originally as a teacher, he taught at several well-known schools such as Ananda College<sup>18)</sup>, Prince of Wales and as the Principal of Zahira College, he transformed a tottering elementary school to a premier educational institution in Sri Lanka. As a politician, he was deeply concerned about the welfare of the Muslims including his own Malay community as well as other communities. He was first elected to the Legislative Council in 1924 and appointed Minister of Labour and Social Service in 1947 in the first Cabinet of Independent Sri Lanka under Prime Minister D. S. Senanayake. He also served as the first High Commissioner (Ambassador) of Sri Lanka in Pakistan in 1950. He won praises from S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike<sup>19)</sup>, then leader of the House in the State Council for a three hour long speech he made in 1944 in support of the Dominion Bill that paved the way for full

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17) *Pertemuan Melayu (Malay Rally) 2002 Souvenir*, Sri Lanka Malay Association, Colombo, (2002).

18) "Colleges" in Sri Lanka are equal to senior high schools in Japan

19) Father of president Chanerika Bandaranaike Kumararunga



There is also no historical record, which indicates that all the Malays had adopted an Ambedkar style of mass-conversion to become Muslims nor there was any Malay ethnic leader like Ambedkar of India, who got converted to Buddhism with millions of his followers of the *Achut* (untouchable) cast. Malays' conversion to Islam may have been a gradual and centuries long process. It is recorded that the Malays (of the Malay Peninsula) converted into Islam at the beginning of the 16th century A.D. and ceased visiting to Sri Lanka as Arabs and Mohammadians had established themselves in the seaports of Sri Lanka and 'had gradually taken over the entire trade of the Island into their hands. The Malays were the freight careers of the East, but after their conversion to Islam, they relinquished ambitious maritime pursuits in favour of their co-religionists, the Arabs contenting themselves with ventures nearer home, for which the numerous islands of the Archipelago and the extensive coastlines of the Peninsula and Java and Sumatra afforded them ample scope' (E. Reimers).

This suggests that the majority of Malays of Sri Lanka may have converted into Islam after they came to Sri Lanka and through their Moor relatives. Although there is no mention about any mosques erected during the Dutch period, the British Administration in Sri Lanka built several separate places of worship for their soldiers. They built Sri Siva Subramaniam Swami Kovil for the Indian Hindu soldiers and the Military Mosque and Akbar Mosque for the Malay soldiers. What role did the Malay mosques play?

The Malay mosques catered the spiritual needs of the regiment and boosted the socio-religious cohesion of the community. The first Malay mosque was built during the British rule at Wekende in Slave Island at the request of the Malay soldiers, as they wanted to have their mosque erected closer to where they live. Otherwise, they were in disadvantage in attending the Moor mosque, where sermons were held in Tamil and Arabic, not in their mother tongue, Malay. There are several mosque built in Galle, Trincomalee, Kalpitiya, Badulla, Kirinde, Kurunegala and Kandy to cater the spiritual needs of the Malay military personals as well as the ordinary Malays, who worked on their own or worked for the British as gardeners and servants.

The mosques played very important role in the formation of a Malay community serving them with their social and cultural needs in addition to the religious service. This helped build an ethnic and cultural identity for the Malays. 'The mosques were not only the places of collective worship, but also center of community administration, where important discussions were held by members of the community and decisions taken on behalf of respective

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Malay community. Islam played a constructive role to keep them distinct from other religions. However, the Islam that Malays had embraced was not the orthodox Islam of Arabia. When the Arabs introduced Islam into South India and Indonesian islands, 'they merely wanted the new religion to be accepted by the people.'<sup>16)</sup> And the Malays who were brought especially during the Dutch period to Sri Lanka were not all Muslims.

It is not known exactly since when the Malays of Sri Lanka got converted into Islam, though their homeland folks had done so at the beginning of the 16th century A.D. The Malays, who had arrived or lived in Sri Lanka after Chandrabhanu's invasion till the Dutch invasion, have been Buddhists, Hindus or mixture of both in the present terminology of Buddhists and Hindus. It is difficult to establish the religious back ground of these Malays because they were formed from various groups that included Amboinese; Balinese and Javanese because among the Amboinese, there was a considerable number of Christians, and Balianese belonged to Hindu or Buddhist religions. Some Javanese had become Christians and were receiving benefits from the Batavia government (Hussainmia, 1990, 53). Therefore, the Malays who came to Sri Lanka before and during the Dutch administration are not known whether all of them were Muslims. An extract from the Dutch minutes by Council of 8th September 1660 shows that there were Christians among those who came to Sri Lanka:

"Whereas the Javanese soldiers 28 in number have now for some time past offered themselves to be instructed in the Christian doctrine, have made public profession thereof, accepted Holy Baptism, and have solemnly married according to Christian rites; also seeing that they have procreated children and, further have elected to dwell in this land and to serve the Honourable company most respectfully and obediently; so has the Superintendent proposed (and they with the greatest delight accepted), to select a place within the watches of this City, a fertile spot, in order to settle them there with their families, and to found there a village according to the limits and ordinances that shall be appointed for them; further they shall cultivate rice according to their natural skill, but nevertheless, that they shall always continue in the military service, wherefore a general increase is hereby granted them and their wages have accordingly been raised as follows: to a sergeant, 8 Spanish reals, to a Corporal 5 1/2 , and to a Private 3 1/2 Spanish reals monthly." (E. Reimer's Translation)

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16) M. Farook Thaliph, " Malay – their enriched culture and endemic customs' (04 Sep. 2002).

Swarga	swarga	swarga	- paradise/heaven
Wanita	wanita	wanita	- lady/woman
Warna	warna	warna	- colour
Warta	warta	warta	- report
Wangsa	wangsa	wangsa/bangsa	- race/tribe
Dharmawangsa	Dharmawansa	Dharmawansa	- religious tribe
Jayawangsa	Jayawansa	Bangsajayah	- victorious tribe
Sinhawangsa	Sinhawansa	Sinhawangsa	- lion tribe
Weerawangsa	Weerawansa	Weerawangsa	- warrior tribe

Above are some of many Malay words that have derived from Sanskrit words and similar to Sinhala language, which show that not all words are corrupted in today's Malay language as some suggest as the language has become corrupted and left to a mere Creole language. The Malays have not lost their attachment to their linguistic identity nor to their ethnic identity of "Malays". The Malays of Sri Lanka has developed their own distinct features to an extent that Tunku Abdul Rahman, a former Prime Minister of Malaysia commented on the Sri Lankan Malays in the following:

The only difference is that their features have changed. They look more like Indians (the Kelings) than Malays and their language is strongly influenced by the Indian dialect. What's more they have lost touch with adat and custom, but still they call themselves Malays...

But these (Malay) soldiers who went there without their womenfolk married into the families of the Indian Muslims. These Muslims were known as the Moors and after generations of intermarriages, it is hard to pick one from the other, Malays or the Moors, except when they themselves announce their racial identity...(Rahman 1983, 195)<sup>15)</sup>

However, there is no argument about the fact that the Malay language accorded a stronger support in forming the Malay community of its own outside Malay Peninsula and Indonesian archipelago.

Thirdly, the religion of Islam was another force behind the formation of a Sri Lankan

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15) Quoted from Hussainmia, (1990, 18)

a form of simple spoken Malay. As the majority of people came from this area to Dutch Ceylan<sup>13)</sup>, it is possible that they retained the “Batavia dialect” and got mixed with local languages in Sri Lanka. This was only natural because of their long absence from their native land. Further, there was no proper learning and teaching of standard Malay language in Sri Lanka neither in the past nor even at present. This may have contributed to the creation of a Sri Lankan styled “Malay” language. In fact, Malay and Sinhala languages share a common root of Sanskrit language. The Malay language, like Sinhala has a strong influence from Sanskrit language as Java, Sumatra had Buddhist and Hindu empires in the past. A close look at some examples below give us a better picture of the fact.

<b>Sanskrit</b>	<b>Sinhala</b>	<b>Malay<sup>14)</sup></b>	<b>(Meaning)</b>
Agama	agama	agama/igama	- religion
Bhasha	bhashawa	bahasa	- language
Bhumi	bhumi	bhumi	- earth
Devi	devi	devi	- goddess
Dosa	dosa	dosa	- sin
Grahna	grahna	grahna	- eclipse
Guna	guna	guna	- use/benefit
Guru	guru	guru	- teacher
Jeeva	jeevita	jeeva	- life
Labha	laba	laba	- profit
Manusya	manusyaya	manusia	- human being
Megha	megha	megha	- cloud
Mukha	muhuna	muka	- face
Puja	puja	puja	- worship
Pustaka	pustaka	pustaka	- book
Pustakalaya	pustakalaya	pustakalaya	- library
Sadhu	saadu	saadu	- priest
Sawari	sawari	sawari	- tour/journey
Senapathi	Senapathi	Senapathy	- army commander
Sisya	sisyaya	siswa	- student/pupil
Sundari	sundari	sundari	- pleasant

13) Dutch name for Sri Lanka

14) Qouted Malay words and their meanings from an article by M. Farook Thaliph, “ Malays – their enriched culture and endemic customs”(04 Sep. 2002)

departure from Sri Lanka at the end of 1805.

### **3. Formation of Malay Community in Sri Lanka**

The Malay community of Sri Lanka is formed of a number of people arrived in Sri Lanka at different periods of time, on different reasons and from a diverse region of eastern islands that included Malay Peninsula, Java and other Indonesian islands. They are popularly known as “*Jaminissu*” among the Sinhalese community and “*Jamanusar*” among the Tamil community meaning “People from Java” in both languages. The term “*Javaka*” we found in the *Culawamsa* also has a similar meaning: “Person from Java” (Java+ka) (Java+person) while the Malays call them “*Melayu*” in Malay language. How did they form the Malay community?

There are several factors that helped form the Malay community of Sri Lanka. Firstly, the formation of a separate regiment for Malays in the British military played an important role towards the formation of the Malay community. By the time of Governor North’s departure from Sri Lanka, he had laid a foundation for a future Malay community of Sri Lankan style. During his tenure of 10 years as Governor, he persuaded 75% of the Malays that included exiles of various class and people come from different islands in the East living in Sri Lanka to join the British military service. During his administration, North recruited Malays from all over including locals and those from the Malay Peninsula. He set up a separate military regiment for Malay soldiers, formed a Boy’s company to give prior training to the children of the Malay soldiers and formed an Invalid Regiment to help them find alternative jobs. North set up Malay settlements and provided jobs. He even looked after the children and wives of those soldiers who died in the battle. The Malay regiment played a central role in promoting welfare for the Malay soldiers and communicating with other Malays and settlements in cities and villages in the island. On top of that, the Malay Military mosque, primarily set up to serve the spiritual need of the soldiers, also attracted the Malays living around the area. The mosque served as a center promoting friendship among the Malays came from different places of origin.

Secondly, the Malays themselves played a formidable role in maintaining their language and customs. Although they came from same region of the East islands, they spoke variety of dialects spoken in Malaya and Java islands. During the time of the Dutch rule over Batavia, the people living in the area had developed a separate dialect called “Batavia dialect” which is

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forming a Malay Regiment for the first time outside Malay Peninsula. The Malays became the first Asians to hold commissions from the British Sovereign. By this time, the strength of the Malay Corps amounted to 1200 soldiers.

During North's time, he established several Malay colonies in Sri Lanka starting from Mahagampattu region, in the southern part of Sri Lanka. The first one was opened in Hambantota, which is now a major Malay invalid settlement in the south. Later, two other settlements were established in the villages of Kirinda and Palatupana. The settlers were assigned to different kinds of work including in the saltpans found in the region and farming and fishing etc. The region at the time was a jungle and not even a coolie from other community wanted to work in the area. Having seen the Malays were enduring the hard life, Governor North was pleased with the Malays and wrote that 'they were hard workers and courageous and not easily terrified with little dangers and inconveniences' (Hussainmia 1990, 63) in one of his dispatches to the Home Government.

Thereafter, Governor North decided to recruit Malays to enlarge his forces. His recruitments largely came from Malay Peninsula as he set up recruiting agency for the first time in Penang (Prince of Wales Island) around 1800. He also tried to bring Malays from other British colonies like, Cochin in India, Island of St. Helena etc. But larger number came from Malay Peninsula with their families to settle in Sri Lanka to serve the British military. The Malays were periodically brought to Sri Lanka until the recruitment was halted in 1803 after the British lost to the Kandyan kingdom in the war against Kandyan Kingdom on 24th June 1803. The defeat was largely attributed to the desertion of Malay soldiers who formed the main strength of the British garrison.

The desertion of 'British Malays' had occurred mainly because of the 'Kandy Malays' who were in the Kandyan King's service and offered security and protection to the Malay soldiers in the British side. 700 Malays deserted to the Kandyan side leaving only 250 Malay soldiers behind. Governor North was so furious that he immediately ordered the halt of recruiting the Malays. But he later changed his mind and resumed taking the Malays into the service. He changed his mind in consideration of the loyalty of Captain Nauradeen who led the Malays in the British force and the assurance and "invariable attachment" shown by the Malay exiles living in Sri Lanka to the British government. He then rebuilt the Malay Regiment, which was left with only 600 soldiers by recruiting more from the Malay Peninsula and other east islands. North continued his effort to strengthen the Regiment until his

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followers. This was followed in 1723 by 44 Javanese Princes and Noblemen, who surrendered to the Dutch at the Battle of Batavia, were exiled to Sri Lanka<sup>12)</sup>. All these lived in the four main coastal towns under the jurisdiction of the Dutch, namely Colombo, Galle, Trincomalee, and Jaffna (Hussainmia, 1990, 40). Others including the slaves were confined to quarters on the Slave Island surrounded by Bere Lake in the center of Colombo. The majority of people living in the area even today are the Malays. The Dutch is said to have stocked the lake around the island with crocodiles, preventing the slaves' escape. Those who escaped were flogged and branded for a first offense, hanged for a second.

The Dutch government also established a first settlement for the Malays, who served them, in an area close to the Slave Island. A Dutch report dated 25th June 1681 indicates that a piece of land 13 Morgen (about 28 acres) in extent was granted to the Javanese Malays situated at Wolvendahl. There were 196 houses and had coconut and jak trees planted.

It is not known the exact number of exiles brought to Sri Lanka during the Dutch period. But by the end of 18th century A.D., it appears that at least 200 members of eastern nobility were resident in the Island. With their families, the number of Malay people amounted close to 2000 people.

#### The British Period (1796-1948 A.D.):

It was the British who brought the third category of Malays to Sri Lanka. Many came from the Malay Peninsula and became the permanent source of providing military manpower and to serve the British in the island. The British drove the Dutch away and took control of the coastal area in 1796. Frederic North, the first British Governor of Sri Lanka, at first, did not like the idea of incorporating the Malays, the soldiers who fought against the British during the Dutch rule over Sri Lanka and had become prisoners of war after the Dutch fell to the British, into his military. But he agreed to take the 300 Malay soldiers under custody of the British when the Dutch surrendered. The Dutch had stipulated that the Malays should be sent back to Java Island at the cost of the British, who in turn first sent them to Chennai, India and later incorporated into the British military in Sri Lanka. This was the starting point that recruited hundreds of Malays into the British military service, thereafter.

Governor North was also the first British Administrator, who initiated reforms in the military and formed Malay Corps raising their salaries resembling to those of the native Corps. As a result, these Malay Corps were admitted into the King's service on 23 April 1801

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12) Murad Jayah, "Social Welfare Issues Concerning the Ceylon Malays" in *Moors' Islamic Cultural Home Silver Jubilee Souvenir*, 20 July 1970, p. 70.

order of the King of Kandy because the brothers declined the royal offer to head the Malays in the service of the king but chose to remain loyal to their British master, the King of the Great Britain.

Beside these *Javakas* who arrived in Sri Lanka as Chandrabhanu's army or servicemen during the reign of King Parakramabahu II, there were seafarer freight careers, and the merchants ventured in ambitious maritime pursuits around Madagascar. They often called round the coastline of Sri Lanka, which suggests that many of them may have settled in areas near the harbours such as Hambantota and around the coastline. According to one of my Malay informants at Kirinda Malay settlement<sup>10)</sup>, Hambantota was named after Sampan, the seafarers from the Indonesian archipelago, who called to the natural harbour in the past. These seafarers, and the freight careers of the East, after their conversion to Islam at the beginning of the 16th century A.D. relinquished their ambitious maritime pursuits in favour of their co-religionists, the Arabs. The visits of Malays became lesser and ceased visiting Sri Lankan waters at the beginning of the 16th century A.D. when Arabs and Mohammadians established themselves in the seaports of Sri Lanka and gradually took over the entire trade of the Island into their hands. (Edward Reimers, 1924)

#### The Dutch period (1640-1796 A.D.):

The second arrival of the Malays in Sri Lanka took place during the Dutch administration, which ruled the coastal area of Sri Lanka for a period of more than one hundred and fifty years. Having driven away the Portuguese, who were ruling the coastal area of Sri Lanka, the Dutch established the full control of the coastal area in 1640. They brought hundreds of Malays from all over in Malay Peninsula and Indonesian islands. Those who were brought to Sri Lanka consisted of two categories. One being the political exiles from Indonesia including other deportees expelled by the Batavia<sup>11)</sup> government and second group consisted of all other classes of Malays who were brought to serve the Dutch government in Sri Lanka. This second group included those recruits for the Military and other services, too.

Among the first category, it also included princely exiles from various parts of the Indonesian islands and the Malay Peninsula. The Batavia government banished the Javanese including the nobles and many other eastern kings, princes as well as the chiefs and the dignitaries of the region for rebelling against the Batavia rule. In 1709, Susuna Mangkurat Mas, the King of Java, was exiled to this country by the Dutch with his entire family and

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10) Kirinda Malay settlement has the biggest Malay population: 95% are Malays.

11) The Dutch name for the Government in Java and other East Islands after Batavia, the old name of the Netherlands.



Parakramabahu, the Great's Admiral and captains were Malays and King Rajasingha I is said to have had Malays in his service. This may suggest that there were Malays before they were brought or arrived during the Dutch and the British colonial rules in Sri Lanka. Therefore, the arrivals of the Malays can be categorised into three periods. What are they?

#### The Early Period (1247-1640 A.D.):

The earliest arrival of the Malays we have known took place in the middle of the 13th century A.D. with the invasion of Chandrabhanu, the Buddhist King of Nakhon Si Thammarat in the Isthmus of Kra of Malay Peninsula. *Culawamsa*, a chronicle of Sri Lanka has recorded the incident:

When the eleventh year of the reign of this King Parakramabahu II<sup>6)</sup> had arrived, a king of the *Javaka* known by the name of Chandrabhanu landed with a terrible *Javaka* army under the treacherous pretext that they were followers of the Buddha. All these wicked *Javaka* soldiers who invaded every landing-place and who with their poisoned arrows, like (sic) to terrible snakes, without ceasing harassed the people whomever they caught sight of, laid waste, raging their fury, all Lanka. (*Culawamsa* LXXXIII, 36-51).

The term *Javaka* used in the chronicle is a well-established name for the Malays of the Peninsula<sup>7)</sup>. Chandrabhanu attacked the Sinhala kingdom twice and failed both times. In the second attack, he himself got killed. But Chandrabhanu had succeeded taking over the northern part of Sri Lanka and become the ruler of the Javanese Kingdom<sup>8)</sup> in Javapattanam (present Jaffna). This Javaka King of Sri Lanka who is mentioned in the inscriptions of the South Indian Pandyan King, Jatavarman Vira Pandyan (A.D.1235-1275) has been identified as Chandrabhanu (Sirisena 1977, 14).

The *Yalpanam Vaipava Malai*, the chronicle of Jaffna mentioned of two local names such as Chavakaccheri<sup>9)</sup> (Javakaccheri-Java settlement) Chavakotte or Ja Kotuwa (Javaka Fort) confirming the Java/Malay connection with Jaffna. It is presumable that these *Javakas* may have moved towards the Kandyan kingdom at a later part of the history and worked for the King of Kandy, who is said to have a garrison of army consisted of the Malays. There is a well-known story that a Malay captain named Nouradeen and his brother were beheaded at the

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6) King Parakramabahu II ruled from 1236 to 1270 A.D.

7) Quoted from Hussainmiya, B.A., *Orang Rejimen, The Malays of Ceylon Rifle Regiment* (1990) p.33.

8) Murad Jayah, "Social Welfare Issues Concerning the Ceylon Malays" in *Moors' Islamic Cultural Home Silver Jubilee Souvenir*, 20 July 1970, p. 70.

9) Local Tamil people living in this area seem to know little about this history when I asked them during my last visit to Jaffna in January 2002.

dilemma.

Although a three fourth of a century has passed since Edward Reimers, a renowned archivist first shed lights on Malay community in Sri Lanka, only a handful of papers were written on the subject until some of serious scholarly research papers of Dr. Hussainmia were published in 1987 by the Institute of Malay Language, Literature and Culture (IBKKM) of the Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia. Then his doctoral thesis 'Orang Rejimen, the Malays of the Ceylon Rifle Regiment' published in 1990 by the same university in Malaysia, turned out to be a prime source for study and research on Malays in Sri Lanka.

The purpose of this paper is to study about the Malays of Sri Lanka, their history and how they formed a distinct ethnic group in Sri Lanka. It will examine their share of contribution towards the nation building of Sri Lanka and their present plight and dilemma how to preserve their distinct identity in parallel with their religious identity as Muslims in a multi-ethnic Sri Lanka. The Malays assert they are Muslim by religious identity. But they are a distinct ethnic community with their own language and culture different from others. Less has been written about this socio-political aspect of the Malay community that has focused on their distinct identity. Hence, this is an attempt to fill that long due gap at least in some way.

To complete this paper, I have mainly depended on interviews with many Malay gentlemen of different socio-political calibre and informants at the fieldwork on my several visits to Slave Island in Colombo, Galle, Matara, Kirinda, Hambantota in Sri Lanka. Several reference materials at the Public Library in Colombo and borrowed materials from several Sinhala and Malay scholars and friends in Sri Lanka were indispensable for the purpose.

## **2. The Background: The Arrivals of Malays in Sri Lanka**

The Malays of today's Sri Lanka are said to be the 'descendants of the 17th century Malay Kings, Princes and Nobles exiled from Java by the Dutch and of the Malay soldiers brought in by the British in the 18th century from the region including Malay Peninsula<sup>4)</sup>, then known as Suvarnabhumi'<sup>5)</sup>. However, the origin of the Malay community of Sri Lanka goes far beyond the 17th century A.D. It is impossible to say the exact date of the original arrival of the Malays to Sri Lanka. But references in Chulawamsa about an invasion by a Malay King named Chandrabhanu make it presumable that the Malays had contacts with Sri Lanka earlier than the Dutch period. According to Edward Reimers, there are also references to the Malays in other historical works of the Sinhalese of the 13th and 14th centuries A.D. that King

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4) Pertumuan Melayu (Malay Rally) 2002 Souvenir, Sri Lanka Malay Association, Colombo, (2002).

5) Murad Jayah, "Social Welfare issues concerning the Ceylon Malays" in *Moors' Islamic Cultural Home Silver Jubilee Souvenir*, 20 July 1970, p. 70.