



Written by by K.S. Sivakumaran

Sunday, 22 March 2020 07:54 - Last Updated Sunday, 22 March 2020 08:25

Nov 09-Nov 15, 2007 04

# ur Rajadhani



V.N. Giritharan

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Let me introduce to you the book on the architecture during the existence of the Kingdom of Yalpanam (Jaffna). We know that the last king of the Kingdom of the people in the northern part of the country was Sankiliyan.

The late professor in Tamil, K. Kanakapathipillai had written a short play in that title. Sankiliyan ruled from Nallur (Nallur means a Good County or City or Village). One is reminded of the existence of Nallura in Panadura. Again Panadura could mean the port the bhala singer had landed. Nallur remains the symbolic representation of Lankan Siva Thamilians of the northern Sri Lanka.

### Essence

Let me begin with what the foreword of the book tells us. I give below the essence of what a distinguished writer, a fine stylist and a columnist in Tamil, S. Yoganathan has said in his preface:— "The Thamil Brahmic inscriptions belonging to the 3rd century B.C. were dug out during the excavations in Kantharodai and Asanal Kottai. This discovery revealed to a great extent of the existence of a fine Thamilian culture in the Megalithic age. The Romans, the Arabs, and the Chinese have had direct trade relations with the Sri Lankan Thamilians. There are records to prove that in the 5th century A.D., the Lankan Thamilians had had an advanced cultural inheritance. A Siva (meaning a branch of Hinduism) Thamil temple being found

runner to young intellectuals and researchers. V.N. Giritharan is such a researcher, although his discipline is architecture. Despite gathering sufficient evidences, he has written this guide in an exemplary manner. This book was published eight years ago (1996).

### Research

One must appreciate the fact that this talented writer now in Canada could have really ventured into more historical research had he been living in Sri Lanka. Raghupathy, is a great scholar with whom I had the fortune to move with, while both were teaching in Male' in the Maldives. Raghupathy, I believe, is now in Mysore in India where he had his post-graduate studies.

In the absence of historical researchers from the Thamil community in Sri Lanka, we have to rely on researchers like Sudharshan Seneviratne and Perinayagam and a few other scholars for impartial and objective findings.

The new woman member of parliament from the Mattakalappu district, K. Thangaswari writes in Thamil only, because she graduated in that language. Her books should be translated into English (and even Sinhala) for proper evaluation.

May I be permitted to say that another academic from Mattakalappu, whose field is Thamil, has researched on the subject of names in the northern areas of Sri Lanka. This too is ironical for two reasons: He is not from the North and he too is in Canada now. In the same breath, I must say Indrapala is either in Australia or New Zealand and he has researched in English, the

The author, V.N. Giritharan says that he was stimulated to do some research on Nallur while attending a lecture in the university by academic Nimal de Silva.

Since this is a subject with which I am not very familiar, let me give some idea of the titles of his chapters.

They are self-explanatory: Nallur and Singai Negar, Nallur and Kanthasamy Kovil, The Fortresses of Nallur and Ramaports Around Its Dena on Field Studies, The Entrance Gate of the Fortresses, The Port and the Vesil Uthanthha Pillayar Temple, Ancient Works and Architecture, Town Planning of the Hindu and the Cassie System, South Indian Temple Cities, Structure of the Nallur Town in Nallur Katsobani.

This little book of merit has also a few photographs and designs to illustrate what the writer finds in his research.

It would be interesting for the selective readers to learn about the titles of some works which Giritharan mentions as references: *Conquest of Ceylon - Queeroz F vol 1 & 4, Tamils and Ceylon - C.S. Navaratnam, The Kingdom of Jaffna - S. Pathmanathan, Urban and Regional Planning - Seneviratne and Seneviratne*

Reverting to Giritharan's books - most of his contributions in Thamil and translations are available in his own website - I must say that his books are works of an investigative mind.



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