

## The Separatist Problem of Sri Lanka as a Creation of the Westerners and their “Discourses”

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There are many explanations of, and interpretations given to the separatist problem faced by Sri Lanka. Some are of the opinion that the problem is due to the hegemony of the majority Sinhala people who have not given any solutions to the grievances faced by the Tamils. Some others view it as a terrorist problem created by a group(s) of armed youth. In this paper it is argued that the problem of Sri Lanka is essentially a problem created by the western powers the Dutch, the British and now the Scandinavian countries, aided by the western social sciences that dictate the ‘theories’ and the ‘concepts’ which have to be used in any ‘discourse’. The ‘discourse’ has been defined in the west, and it can be shown that we are forced to believe that Sri Lanka is in the process of building a nation that should accommodate Sinhala, Tamils, Muslims, Burghers and others. The ‘discourse’ further states that there is a Sinhala Buddhist supremacy that discriminates the Tamils and the other ethnic groups. In the present paper, on the contrary, we argue that the Sinhala nation has been in existence for more than two thousand years and that the ‘minorities’ were a creation of the Dutch and the British. It is not a difficult task to show that the western Christian powers that ruled the Maritime Provinces for more than three hundred years, and then the entire country for a further one hundred and fifty years directly discriminated mainly against the Sinhala Buddhists. The colonialists favoured the Tamils and the other ‘minorities’ in legislature, employment, etc., and when the Sinhala Buddhists began to fight for their due place in the country, beginning in the latter part of the nineteenth century, they were ridiculed, branded as racists and their leaders were ill-treated. It is shown that the struggle of the Sinhala Buddhists was presented as an imposition of discrimination against the Tamils, Christians, etc. Thus, the British were able to cover up their discrimination against the Sinhala Buddhists who were fighting to gain proper recognition for them and their culture. The Tamils were encouraged to fight against the Sinhala people by the British governors who took extra pains to deprive the Sinhala people and the Sinhala Buddhist culture their due place in the country. It is recorded history that the British did not give adequate representation to the Sinhala people in the legislature beginning with the appointment of one member each to represent the Sinhala people, the Tamils and the Burghers, in the legislative assembly though the demography and the history called for more representations to the Sinhala people. It is finally argued that the present is only a continuation of the past with the Scandinavians also coming into the picture, and that the westerners are only making use of the Tamils, and that the so-called peace advocated by the Scandinavians is nothing but a humiliating defeat for the Sinhala Buddhists, and a strengthening of the bogus claims by some Tamils that the so-called Tamil homeland should finally end up as a separate state.

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