

NATIONALISM AND EDUCATION

IN

SRI - LANKA

FROM

1880 - 1948

by

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A dissertation submitted for the
Master of Education degree 1975
University of Sri-Lanka

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ABSTRACT

Nationalism is a theme that caught my fancy from the time, I was an undergraduate. It has been a dominant force, not only in Sri-Lanka, but in the whole of South East Asia. If not for the force of nationalism that has been at work perhaps, a few of the weaker nations, would have been assimilated by the powerful West, in their quest for power and prestige. Some of us owe our very survival to this powerful force. Many of our institutions traditions and customs have been saved by this.

Education was one such sphere, where its powerful influence began to be felt from 1880. Of course 'Nationalism' had awakened the people of Sri-Lanka long before that, but the resistive movements in the form of well organised educational institutions began to appear only after 1880. Hence the decision to begin my discussion from that year. 1948 marks the end of an era with the dawn of the 'independence. Therefore the discussion ends there.

I have dealt with it in eight chapters. The first chapter is more or less introductory. — With an open discussion about nationalism and the significant role it has played in the other countries.

The Chapters 2 - 6 deal with the history of education in Sri-Lanka from very early times up to 1948, because the changes after 1880 cannot be understood unless in relation to the historical background.

The chapter 7 explains the extent to which the educational changes of Sri-Lanka were affected by nationalism, while the last chapter evaluates these changes, in relation to the present.

In dealing with the subject matter I have gone into the original sources whenever they were available. But the secondary sources too were of immense help.