



ICES Research Papers

**Contextualizing Post-War Reconciliation in Sri Lanka:
The Political Economy of Territorial Control in Historical Perspective**

Charan Rainford

INTERNATIONAL
CENTRE FOR
ETHNIC STUDIES



Research Paper No: 12
June 2014

ICES Research Paper No. 12

Contextualizing Post-War Reconciliation in Sri Lanka:

The Political Economy of Territorial Control in Historical Perspective

Charan Rainford

International Centre for Ethnic Studies
June 2014

© 2014 International Centre for Ethnic Studies
2, Kynsey Terrace, Colombo 8
Sri Lanka
E-mail: admin@ices.lk
URL: www.ices.lk

ISBN 978-955-580-152-2

Printed by: Karunaratne & Sons (Pvt.) Ltd.
No. 65 C, Thalgahawila Road,
Midellamulahena, Horana.

This research paper was commissioned as part of the Democracy and Equality Programme implemented by ICES with support from Diakonia, Sri Lanka.

Acknowledgments

This paper builds on aspects of my doctoral research on the persistence of control regimes, and draws on field research undertaken for the thesis in Sri Lanka in 2011-12. Field research was possible thanks to research grants by the SSHRC (Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada)–funded Ethnicity and Democratic Governance program, the Graduate Dean’s Travel Grant for Doctoral Field Research, Queen’s University, and the Department of Political Studies at Queen’s University. I was given research support in Colombo by the International Centre for Ethnic Studies. I am grateful to my supervisor John Mc Garry for his support and advice throughout the thesis project. I would also like to thank the anonymous reviewers for their feedback and suggestions. That said, any remaining inaccuracies are my responsibility.

Acronyms and Abbreviations

Accelerated Mahaweli Development Programme	AMDP
Gross Domestic Product	GDP
Grama Niladhari	GN
Human Rights Council	HRC
International Crisis Group	ICG
Internally Displaced Persons	IDPs
Ilankai Tamil Arasu Kachchi	ITAK
Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission	LLRC
Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam	LTTE
Member of Parliament	MP
Non-Governmental Organizations	NGOs
Parliamentary Select Committee	PSC
Presidential Task Force	PTF
Tamil National Alliance	TNA
United Nations	UN
United National Party	UNP
United States	US
World Bank	WB

ICES Research Papers:

1. Krishnan, Sonny Inbaraj (2012), Transition to Civilian Life of Teenage Girls and Young Women Ex-Combatants: A Case Study from Batticaloa, ICES Research Paper 1, June 2012.
2. Wickramasinghe, Nira (2012), Producing the Present: History as Heritage in Post-War Patriotic Sri Lanka, ICES Research Paper 2, July 2012.
3. Rambukwella, Harshana (2012) Reconciling what? History, Realism and the Problem of an Inclusive Sri Lankan identity, ICES Research Paper 3, August 2012.
4. de Mel, Neloufer (2013) The Promise of the LLRC: Women's Testimony and Justice in Post-War Sri Lanka, ICES Research Paper 4, February 2013.
5. Samararatne, Dinesha (2013) A Provisional Evaluation of the Contribution of the Supreme Court to Political Reconciliation in Post-War Sri Lanka (May 2009-August 2012), ICES Research Paper 5, March 2013.
6. Schubert, Andi (2013) Victorious Victims: An Analysis of Sri Lanka's Post-War Reconciliation Discourse, ICES Research Paper 6, March 2013.
7. Bastian, Sunil (2013) The Political Economy of Post-War Sri Lanka, ICES Research Paper 7, May 2013.
8. Keerawella, Gamini (2013) Post-War Sri Lanka: Is Peace a Hostage of the Military Victory? Dilemmas of Reconciliation, Ethnic Cohesion and Peace-Building, ICES Research Paper 8, June 2013.
9. Dewasiri, Nirmal Ranjith (2013) History' after the War: Historical Consciousness in the Collective Sinhala-Buddhist Psyche in Post-War Sri Lanka, ICES Research Paper 9, July 2013.
10. Karunanayake, Dinidu and Waradas, Thiyagaraja (2013) What Lessons Are We Talking About? Reconciliation and Memory in Post-Civil War Sri Lankan Cinema, ICES Research Paper 10, August 2013.
11. Amarasigam, Amarnath (2013) *A History of Tamil Diaspora Politics in Canada: Organisational Dynamics and Negotiated Order, 1978-2013*, ICES Research Paper 11, November 2013

Contextualizing Post-War Reconciliation in Sri Lanka: The Political Economy of Territorial Control in Historical Perspective

On the night of 18 May 2009, the Sri Lankan armed forces delivered a crushing blow to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), which had been fighting for a separate Tamil homeland for three decades. The final battle in the jungles of the northern district of Mullaitivu eradicated the entire LTTE leadership. Given this new reality, President Mahinda Rajapaksa had an opportunity to address the Tamil minority grievances that had given rise to and lay at the heart of the LTTE's struggle. His negotiating position, furthermore, would have been bolstered by his strong popularity among the majority Sinhalese community, his endorsement (and open support) by influential Sinhalese-Buddhist nationalist voices, and the removal of the more intransigent LTTE as an obstacle to political negotiation. This position was further accentuated by being the man responsible for achieving the 'impossible' – militarily defeating the LTTE. In Ilan Peleg's terms, Rajapaksa had the opportunity to effect a "meta-constitutional and profound transformation," a fundamental alteration of the *idea*¹ of what it meant to be Sri Lankan.² Critical to such transformation, given the more than 80,000 people who had died in the conflict and the hundreds of thousands that had been affected by it, are processes of reconciliation.

Government policies have eschewed forms of reconciliation in favour of maintaining the control regime that has characterized the postcolonial Sri Lankan state. This paper will argue that one critical aspect of this has been the continuation of a historical nexus between economic development and territorial control. First, government policy represents the continuation of a bipartisan 'neoliberal consensus' whereby orthodox, neoliberal economic policies mesh with extensive and large-scale, state-led infrastructure projects that run counter to neoliberal tenets. In the former war-affected areas, the priority has been oriented to infrastructure, particularly highways, rather than more focussed concentration on community and livelihood regeneration throughout the areas that have immensely suffered from decades of civil war. Arguably as important, 'development,' as understood in this context, is seen as a substitute for political reform. This vision is aided by the technocratic interpretation of 'good governance' adopted by major aid organizations, which prioritizes accountable service delivery over a more substantive conceptualization of good governance.

Second, the postcolonial Sri Lankan state is best described as a control regime, where the dominant – here, the majority – community utilizes its political and economic resources to stamp its authority on the state and accentuate the clear hierarchical relationship with other groups. Such regimes, as evidenced in the paradigmatic case of Israel, are perfectly compatible with the workings of democratic institutions in majoritarian settings. An important facet of the Sri Lankan control regime has been the territorial dimension. Territorial control involves the dominant community seeking to control the state's territory, primarily due to fear that

¹ Khilnani (1998); Coomaraswamy (2005).

² Peleg (2007): 106.

losing control of, particularly contiguous, territory can foster secession or irredentism. This is heightened in majority-minority contexts where the minority, as with the Sri Lankan Tamils, has a strong perceived 'kin-state' territorially adjacent to the state. Historically, territorial control has been exercised in Sri Lanka through the resettlement of Sinhalese villagers to the underpopulated dry zone provinces in irrigation projects. Here, a clear socioeconomic goal accompanied a secondary strategy to minimize the demographic threat of a unified Sri Lankan Tamil homeland in the North and East.³

Moreover, 'development' in the Sri Lankan context has entrenched ideological and ethnic underpinnings, given that it is seen as an imperative of the Sinhalese political elites towards their natural constituency, the Sinhalese villager. This is most visible in the aforementioned colonization schemes, particularly the Accelerated Mahaweli Development Programme (AMDP), where symbolic language about the regeneration of downtrodden Sinhalese villages was juxtaposed with the political strategy to dilute the threat of increased Tamil autonomy or, indeed, separatism. At present, both the Eastern and Northern provinces are at the cusp of extensive development agendas. The post-war environment in the Northern Province is complicated by the fact that high levels of militarization persist coupled with military involvement in economic activity. In both areas, infrastructure and development projects are often carried out using labourers from outside the region. Furthermore, control regimes are characterized by inequality. By not recognizing that inequality and explicitly targeting it, there is unlikely to be reconciliation. This paper sheds light on the dynamics of the development discourse in the present environment, arguing that these dynamics must be understood in their historical context. Thus, avenues for post-war reconciliation, such that there is genuine hope for transition from a post-war environment to one that can be described as post-conflict, are limited. This is borne out by political discourse, actions and policy, while also being complementary to the historical evolution of the control regime and its close juxtaposition with state-led development practices.

The paper will begin by providing an overview of its two central theoretical themes, territorial control and neoliberal economic reform. The second section will elaborate on the development of the control regime in Sri Lanka. The paper will then explain how the territorial component of control meshes closely with neoliberal economic reforms begun in 1977, demonstrating the close political relationship between the two. The next section will be an empirical and analytical explication of the present post-war situation evidencing the above. Finally, the paper will conclude by reiterating that post-war development (in the North and East of Sri Lanka particularly) is reflective of historical trends. Given the political nature of this dynamic, the paper argues that such a development strategy is a substitute for neither post-war reconciliation nor more substantive political reform.

³ See Muggah (2008).

I. Theoretical Underpinnings

In their taxonomy on methods of ethnic conflict regulation, John McGarry and Brendan O’Leary list hegemonic control as a form of managing ethnic conflict in pluri-national polities.⁴ Subsequent taxonomies have similarly regarded control as a distinct form of management.⁵ The first systematic understanding of a control regime was offered by Ian Lustick in his study of the stability of Jewish-Arab relations in Israel. He argued that such stability could only be explained in terms of an approach that focussed on the control of the Arab minority.⁶ A control system, as he defined it, focussed on the “emergence and maintenance of a relationship in which the superior power of one segment is mobilized to enforce stability by constraining the political actions and opportunities of another segment or segments.”⁷ Lustick went beyond previous articulations of ethnic domination, all of which varied according to the historical context under study, to argue that control conformed to a series of systematic linkages between state policies such that a “system” of control could be identified.⁸ Subsequent scholarship has adapted and advanced Lustick’s model, employing it to examine states with a clear hegemonic relationship between communities. Most of these models follow Lustick’s example by building on the Israeli experience, and have variously been called ethnic democracies,⁹ ethnocracies,¹⁰ Ethnic Constitutional Orders,¹¹ or as a form of ethnic domination.¹² While diverging in key empirical and normative assertions, each variant includes a hierarchy of privilege within the political system leading to one superordinate ethno-national group exerting power over another, and thereby “stamping its culture and authority on the collective life of the state.”¹³

For the purpose of this paper, control regimes can be said to feature a hierarchical relationship whereby one ethno-national group utilizes its political control of the state to culturally, symbolically and economically privilege its members at the expense of other groups. The dominant community claims ownership of the state, its markers and institutions, and institutionalizes such dominance through legislation, constitution-making and practice. The functioning of a control regime is best demarcated by a separation between symptoms and mechanisms. The symptoms of political control, along political, economic and social/cultural dimensions, establish the framework from which policy actions serve to entrench the control regime.¹⁴ Control regimes are entrenched through myriad political practices, policies and institutions that are best demarcated in five categories: demographic control, electoral control, territorial control, legal/coercive control and the control of political institutions.

⁴ McGarry and O’Leary (1993): 23.

⁵ Schneckener (2004); Coakley (2011); Coakley (2012): 219-240.

⁶ Lustick (1977): 106; Lustick (1980): 69.

⁷ Lustick (1979): 328.

⁸ *Ibid.*: 328.

⁹ Peled (1992); Smooha (2002, 2005).

¹⁰ Yiftachel and Ghanem (2004); Yiftachel (2006); *cf* Uyangoda (2011).

¹¹ Peleg (2007).

¹² McGarry (2010).

¹³ *Ibid.*: 36.

¹⁴ Jamal (2007); McGarry (2010).

In terms of the three symptoms of control, political control refers to domination of the central organs of the state – the executive, legislature, judiciary and bureaucracy, as well as any regional institutions. Economic control involves ethnicized access to public resources, especially public-sector employment and state education, as well as ethnicized distribution of land for political purposes. Symbolic or cultural control involves the hierarchies of identity in an ethnicized state, including prioritization of the dominant language, religion and everyday cultural markers such as national flags and anthems. The model of Israel has acted as the framework for theories about control. While there has been a belief that comparisons with Israel are problematic given its unique creation out of the Holocaust in 1948, its state formation project essentially mirrors modern state formation in most parts of the world. This has been “premised on a specific relationship between state, national identity, and a dominant group.” The state and national identity that is embodied have “generally been cast as an expression of that particular part of the population that played a decisive role in the process of state-building and came to dominate the state.”¹⁵ In general, this has been the titular group that has lent its name to the subsequent state – the Malays in Malaysia, Serbs in Serbia, Romanians in Romania, Russians in Russia – but in some cases, the state and official national identity is not linked in the name, as with the Sinhalese in Sri Lanka. That said, in these cases too, “a dominant group nonetheless owned the state and determined its character and the national character it embodied.”¹⁶ In that sense, Israel is by no means unique and, moreover, in many respects bears striking similarities to the Sri Lankan case, although there are some important differences.

The Basic Laws that make up Israel’s constitution are defined in Jewish terms. This is despite the sizeable Arab minority. These act as a super-constitutional principle that acts as a layer above the democratic character of the state.¹⁷ In Estonia, Latvia and Slovakia, the respective constitutions proclaim the state in terms of the titular majority despite the presence in all three cases of a significant minority group.¹⁸ This is in contrast to the Sri Lankan case where the constitution does not explicitly reference Sri Lanka as being a state of the Sinhalese people. That tie has been implicitly drawn through the function and policy-making decisions of the postcolonial state. Likewise, central to Israel is the Law of Return, which provides all Jews free admission to and settlement in the country. They are considered returnees and not immigrants. The Law of Return also proscribes the right of repatriation of the 3.5 million Palestinian refugees and their descendants. The Law of Return is also complemented by the “virtual non-practice” of Israel’s immigration law and naturalization law. These three aspects of the Israeli immigration regime ensure the preservation of the Jewish majority.¹⁹ Such a strongly drawn link between legitimate belonging is not replicated in comparable cases, although some states do restrict the rights of former citizens from the minority community

¹⁵ Haklai (2011): 37.

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ Jamal (2007): 478.

¹⁸ See van Duin and Poláčková (2000); Pettai and Hallik (2002); Diatchkova (2005); Järve (2005); Commercio (2008).

¹⁹ Smooha (2002): 485.

who have become citizens of their kin state. A case in point is the Hungarian minority in Slovakia.²⁰

The role of a dominant language is seemingly a common feature of most control regimes. In Israel, Hebrew is the dominant official language in all areas of life, including government and economy, and the only language in the Hebrew education stream replacing all foreign languages in the Israeli-born generation.²¹ Moreover, while Arabs enjoy a separate educational system in Arabic, this is not so much a sign of equality as of subordination, as it is underfunded with severe resource gaps and often functions as a mechanism to foster the psychological inferiority of the Arab minority.²² Communal authority is restricted in both religious and educational arenas by the control demonstrated by the fact that Jews control decision-making, and until recently very few Arabs were involved in the administration at all.²³ In Estonia in the mid-1990s, knowledge of Estonian was made essential for gaining citizenship via a civics test administered solely in Estonian.²⁴ While language laws were considerably softened as a result of Estonia's bid to join the European Union, Estonian remains the "tool by which society is to be united lest ethnic relations become dangerous; in other words, public life is to be *ordered* through the use of the Estonian language."²⁵ These policies arguably marked a shift from a control regime to one that sought assimilation of Russians via a combination of citizenship rights, individual rights and social mobility through mastery of the Estonian language.²⁶ This has only had limited success as there continues to be suspicion of Russians, as witnessed by the violence and riots over the removal of the Bronze Soldier of Tallinn in the capital, Tallinn, in 2007. The statue was seen as a symbol of Soviet repression and occupation, and its removal and subsequent relocation sparked violence leading to the death of one Russian protester.²⁷ In Slovakia the 2009 amendment to the state language law imposed fines on the failure to use Slovak when prescribed by the law, such as in the conduct of business.²⁸

In Lustick's original system of control in Israel, the three dimensions were segmentation, co-optation and dependence, and the network of relationships and linkages that obtain among them. Here, dependence is related to the economic dependence of the minority community on the majority.²⁹ In Israel, the link between military service and access to substantial state benefits in employment, education and land allocation is fundamentally discriminatory towards the Arab community given that the Israeli Defence Forces are overwhelmingly Jewish.³⁰ However, the relationship can be more complex where the economic arena is

²⁰ Bauböck (2010).

²¹ Ibid.: 485.

²² Jamal (2007): 486.

²³ Ibid.: 486; Yiftachel and Ghanem (2004): 665.

²⁴ Pettai and Hallik (2002): 514.

²⁵ Feldman (2003): 230.

²⁶ See Commercio (2008) for an argument that Estonia is a system of 'partial control.'

²⁷ Brüggemann and Kasekamp (2008).

²⁸ McGarry (2010): 38.

²⁹ Lustick (1980): 77-79.

³⁰ Yiftachel and Ghanem (2004): 666.

offered as a strategic arena for minority acquiescence while restricting demands for group rights or substantial autonomy. This is the case in Estonia, Latvia and Malaysia, where the Russian and Chinese minorities enjoy a strong role in the marketplace. Michele Commercio argues that in the Estonian case, this is a conscious decision, as whereas political power is “centralized and reserved for the majority ethnic group,” economic power is decentralized and shared by both groups. Dispersing economic control simultaneously allows Russians to make money in the private sector while diminishing the “adverse effects of nationalization policies on Russians,” therefore encouraging “acceptance of the system.”³¹ Commercio draws a parallel to the system in Malaysia where the Chinese were (and are) economically stronger than the Malays.³²

Territorial control is a key facet of the control regime in Israel. Yiftachel and Ghanem go so far as to say that their theoretical variant of control, ethnocracy, is “driven, first and foremost, by a concerted collective project of exerting ethno-national control over a territory perceived as the nation’s (exclusive) homeland.”³³ In Peter Taylor’s terms, territoriality is important because “it uses a bounded space – territory – for securing a particular outcome, i.e. by controlling access to a territory through boundary restrictions, the content of a territory can be manipulated and its character changed.”³⁴ The state controls over 90% of the land, a process that has included the confiscation of 40-60% of Arab land, such that the Arab share of total land has dropped to about 3.5% and their municipal control of land to about 2.5%.³⁵ Policies have included the building of over 700 settlements, often on the site of hundreds of Arab villages destroyed after 1948, the Hebrewization of the landscape and the erasure of its Palestinian Arab past, and the continued settlement of the northern Galilee and southern Negev by thousands of Jews in close proximity to Arab towns and villages.³⁶ Such control makes it possible to continue to establish new settlements to house new Jewish immigrants and enhance national security, and the unrestricted development and expansion of existing Jewish communities. State allotment of land to Arabs for the development of local authorities, public facilities and housing projects is extremely limited, while the state does not found new Arab towns and neighbourhoods.³⁷ Territorial control can also feature gerrymandering strategies where new electoral divisions are created through redistricting or resettlement policies. This was an essential feature of the Northern Ireland control regime between 1920 and 1972,³⁸ and was prominently featured in the southern states of the United States prior to the Civil Rights Act.³⁹ More recently, the Slovakian state abolished Hungarian-dominated subdistricts and created eight new administrative regions that ran in a north-south direction. This had the effect of making the Hungarian minority, territorially concentrated

³¹ Commercio (2008): 82.

³² Ibid.: 91.

³³ Yiftachel and Ghanem (2004): 651.

³⁴ Taylor (1994): 151.

³⁵ Smooha (2002): 486.

³⁶ Yiftachel and Ghanem (2004): 664.

³⁷ Smooha (2002): 486.

³⁸ See O’Leary and McGarry (1996).

³⁹ See Kousser (1992, 1999).

across an east-west direction, into a small minority in all eight divisions and less than 20% in six of them.⁴⁰

A recent volume on ethnic conflict omitted control as a strategy for managing difference on the basis that it can only guarantee short-term stability in divided polities.⁴¹ This argument ignores the fact that control regimes can be remarkably persistent. Israel's control regime, while it has fluctuated in extent, has persisted through contestation, including expansion and contraction beyond its post-1967 borders and the violence that subsequently followed. Thus, it is unclear what is meant by 'short term' in this context. Furthermore, there remains support for the most progressive variant of control – ethnic democracy – among a segment of the scholarship.⁴² Proponents of ethnic democracy, primarily Sammy Smooha, argue that ethnic ownership of the state can coexist with genuinely democratic features. While the democratic principle of ethnic democracy promotes equality and the ethnic principle establishes inequality and preference, this apparent contradiction is not undemocratic, as the framework incorporates both the minimal procedural features of democracy while “excelling” in other democratic principles. This latter includes elite and public commitment to democracy, thus creating the space for minority citizenship to voice dissent without “fearing repression.”⁴³

Regardless of the veracity of Smooha's claim, ethnic democracy invariably invites contestation as it incorporates a rupture of the notion of equality fundamental to more substantive definitions of democracy. Furthermore, the infringement of equality invariably results “under the very best of circumstances, in low-quality, fundamentally flawed democracy.”⁴⁴ Peleg takes his argument beyond the debilitating impact on minorities, arguing that control regimes invariably lead to a diminution of the overall democratic space, increased militarization and heightened impunity.⁴⁵ These positions fit well with the burgeoning scholarship on radical democratic politics inspired by Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe highlighting the centrality of pluralism and difference to modern (liberal) democracy, and the particular importance of understanding the symbolic quality of equal liberty impossible in traditional individual-based accounts of liberal theory.⁴⁶

Sri Lanka aptly fits both these points. Control has led to ultimately violent contestation by the Tamil minority and a similarly violent response, and resulting in a shrunken democratic space, increased militarization and impunity. Thus, while control has persisted, it invites contestation and is not consistent with strong standards of democracy. Contestation can thus fluctuate on a spectrum of the repertoire of contention between non-violent democratic protest and open rebellion. Whereas Sri Lanka moved through these stages to

⁴⁰ McGarry (2010): 55.

⁴¹ Cordell and Wolff (2010).

⁴² See Smooha (2002, 2005, 2009); Järve (2005); Peled (2011).

⁴³ Smooha (2005): 22.

⁴⁴ Peleg (2007): 65.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*: 65-66.

⁴⁶ See Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe, *Hegemony and Socialist Strategy: Towards a Radical Democratic Politics* (London: Verso, 1985); and Chantal Mouffe, *The Democratic Paradox* (London: Verso, 2000); cf Alan Keenan, *Democracy in Question: Democratic Openness in a Time of Closure* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2003): 102-143.

open rebellion in the 1980s, contestation of control does not have to necessarily reach this stage. Whereas when control is ‘hegemonic’ and an overtly violent ethnic contest for state power is either ‘unthinkable’ or ‘unworkable’ on the part of the subordinate community, most control regimes remain stable even in the absence of such hegemony.⁴⁷ Of course, stability is a relative concept. Sri Lanka’s civil war clearly impacted the stability of the state, and its control regime, but stopped short of creating a degree of instability that made state reform absolutely necessary rather than something that was periodically contemplated.⁴⁸

Development policy underwent a major policy shift in the 1970s from a previously Keynesian approach focussed on economic growth to one engendering development through liberal policies emphasizing deregulation, privatization, and the promotion of free trade and foreign investment. This was associated with structural adjustment policies and marked a return to orthodox liberalism. It was influenced both by the success of East Asian market economies and the oil shocks of the 1970s, but also by their wholehearted adoption, ideologically and in practice, by British Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher and US President Ronald Reagan. Their incorporation of the ideology into policy led to a spread to other economies through voluntary adoption or the pressure of being left behind. Neoliberalism came to be the descriptor attached to this reinvigorated orthodox liberalism, primarily because of the all-pervasive nature of its implementation.⁴⁹ Neoliberalism contained an important difference from classical liberalism: the recognition of a role for the state in intervening in the market to promote ‘market-friendly’ policy. Nonetheless, there remained a flaw in the lessons drawn from the East Asian experience, namely, the policies underestimated the extent of state intervention necessary. By the 1990s these policies stood accused of having exacerbated socioeconomic inequalities while enriching multinational corporations and economic elites. This led to a further shift in development policy to include ‘good governance.’

This was catalyzed by the belief that shaky states were unable to push through market reform. In 1989 a World Bank (WB) report on sub-Saharan Africa stated that a “crisis of governance” was at the heart of the development failures in that part of the world. ‘Governance’ was here defined broadly as the “exercise of political power to manage a nation’s affairs,” and remedies included political pluralism, respect for the rule of law and protection of human rights.⁵⁰ This led to the incorporation of good governance as a key pillar in the revised development framework. Moreover, this marked the final transition from development as a purely growth-related phenomenon to development that deployed social engineering to alleviate poverty and inequality. Implementation was complex, given that the organizational culture of the WB ensured that those policy changes implemented were ones that best fit the philosophy of the WB itself, meaning that private-sector development was prioritized over the governance agenda.⁵¹ In subsequent scholarship, both Harrison and Williams

⁴⁷ McGarry and O’Leary (1993): 23.

⁴⁸ Famously, Sri Lanka’s economy grew annually throughout the civil war until 2001, which arguably acted as a trigger for the most prolonged and hopeful rounds of negotiations with the LTTE.

⁴⁹ Cohn (2003): 100.

⁵⁰ Cited in Miller-Adams (1999): 100-101.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*: 2-3.

have asserted that the governance element was integral to the overall programme of social transformation.⁵² This apparent disconnection is explained by the fact that each position is premised on a different notion of governance, either broad or narrow. Governance, as its interpretation evolved, became increasingly associated less with its political dimensions and more with how it could fit a technocratic and economic understanding of development. Thus, this interpretation of governance reduces the “*politics* of development to a purely technocratic issue” with wider social and political issues ignored, reducing the link between better governance and a “free enterprise” economy to rhetoric. Moreover, there is “no analysis of the vested interests, both within and outside the state, which may win or lose” from development policies.⁵³ It is this hollowed-out interpretation of governance that is an important aspect of the transformation agenda of the WB, and it is this interpretation that is of relevance to an understanding of neoliberal market reforms in Sri Lanka.

II. Sri Lanka as a Control Regime

At independence in 1948 Sri Lanka was a multiethnic polity with the majority of the population defined as ethnically Sinhalese (69.9%), followed by Sri Lankan Tamils (11%), Muslims (6%) and Indian Tamils (12.2%). As with other newly independent states, Sri Lanka would be confronted by key questions about the “idea of Sri Lanka” – questions related to the design of the polity, its citizenry and political ethos.⁵⁴ The evolution of independent Sri Lanka is fairly well known and will not be recapitulated in great detail here, except to explain how its emergence fits with the control model elaborated above.

The independence-era Soulbury constitution eschewed minority representation in favour of the Westminster model, albeit “with suitable modifications to accommodate the needs of the minorities in regard to the protection of their rights.”⁵⁵ This came in the form of Article 29(2) prohibiting the passage of laws that unfairly prejudiced any one part of the population and by making passage of any law potentially discriminating against a racial or religious minority dependent on a two-thirds legislative majority. In establishing this fetter on the constitutional sovereignty of the legislature, the commissioners were unanimous on the need to curtail power in a society with “entrenched religious and racial matters.”⁵⁶ Furthermore, the commissioners assumed that pure majority rule would not be possible given that minorities made up 30% of the population.⁵⁷ Two events fundamentally affected this reality. The first was the mass disenfranchisement of the Indian Origin Tamil population, largely made up of indentured labour brought by the British to work in the plantation economy, influenced by the belief that they were a community with “no abiding interest in the country” and, moreover, by the fact that the population was a potent electoral force given their unionization and strong

⁵² Harrison (2004); Williams (2008).

⁵³ Kiely (1998): 74.

⁵⁴ Coomaraswamy (2005).

⁵⁵ K. M. De Silva (2007): 103.

⁵⁶ Edrisinha and Selvakkumaran (2000): 97.

⁵⁷ Coomaraswamy (1993): 128.

left-leaning tendencies.⁵⁸ Thus, political and economic logic combined in disenfranchisement legislation governing citizenship and residency, based both on descent and registration linked to long-term residency. This limited the number of Indian Origin Tamils who could claim citizenship, and, given that the Ceylon (Parliamentary Elections) Amendment Act of 1949 linked citizenship to enfranchisement, thousands were disenfranchised.⁵⁹ Second, the judiciary could have interpreted this legislation as being in violation of Article 29(2) of the constitution, but the Privy Council decided that as the Indian Origin Tamils were not a Sri Lankan community, the citizenship acts were not contrary to the constitution. Given that since 1911 the Indian Origin Tamil community had been regarded in multiple censuses as one of the communities in Sri Lanka, the decision was “tendentious at its best.”⁶⁰

Table 2.1: Population by Ethnicity, 1881-2011⁶¹

	Sinhalese	Sri Lanka Tamils	Indian Tamils	Sri Lanka Moors	Others	Total
1881	1,846,600 66.91%	687,200 24.90%	-	184,500 6.69%	41,400 1.50%	2,759,700
1911	2,715,500 66.13%	528,000 12.86%	531,000 12.93%	233,900 5.70%	98,000 2.39%	4,106,400
1921	3,016,200 67.05%	517,300 11.50%	602,700 13.40%	251,900 5.60%	110,600 2.46%	4,498,600
1946	4,620,500 69.41%	733,700 11.02%	780,600 11.73%	373,600 5.61%	148,900 2.24%	6,657,300
1963	7,512,900 71.00%	1,164,700 11.01%	1,123,000** 10.61%	626,800 5.92%	154,600 1.46%	10,582,000
1971	9,131,300 71.96%	1,424,000 11.22%	1,174,900** 9.26%	828,300 6.53%	131,400 1.04%	12,689,900
1981	10,979,400 73.95%	1,886,900 12.71%	818,700** 5.51%	1,046,900 7.05%	114,900 0.77%	14,486,800
2001*	14,011,734 74.50%	2,233,624 11.90%	859,052 4.60%	1,561,910 8.30%	130,937 0.70%	18,797,257
2011	15,173,820 74.90%	2,270,924 11.20%	842,233 4.20%	1,869,820 9.20%	106,836 0.50%	20,263,723

Note: * Estimates, as census was not fully enumerated in seven districts in the North-East.

** As indicated, this figure includes all Indian Origin Tamils who were either stateless or disenfranchised, so the voting number of Indian Origin Tamils was considerably lower.

⁵⁸ Wickramasinghe (2006): 145.

⁵⁹ The relevant acts are the Citizenship Act No. 18 of 1948 and the Indian and Pakistan Residents (Citizenship) Act No. 3 of 1949. The first set out that citizenship was limited to those who could claim it by descent or by registration, which was available to those intending to be “ordinary residents in Ceylon.” The second act set out the conditions: a claimant for registration had to be resident continuously since 1 January 1946 and to have been in residence before that for 10 years (if unmarried) or 7 years (if married). Documentary proof was necessary. See Farmer (1963): 61.

⁶⁰ Wickramasinghe (2006): 174.

⁶¹ Department of Census and Statistics (2006, 2010, 2012).

The legislation had an immediate exclusionary impact and created the conditions for a control regime in Sri Lanka. In November 1964, after the processing of all applications, just 13% of all Indian Origin Tamils who filed an application had been accepted by registration.⁶² This cut the minority share of the population to about 20%, thereby securing the demographic domination of the Sinhalese (see Table 2.1, bearing in mind that only approximately 150,000 of the 1.1 million Indian Origin Tamils listed in the 1963 census enjoyed voting rights). The judicial decision upholding the legislation was the first indication that majoritarian thinking would govern political decision-making. From this point, successive Sinhalese-dominated administrations acted to entrench control over any inclination towards regional autonomy, federalism, or even limited power-sharing. Any efforts to consider minority accommodation have been superficial or, if genuine, scuttled by the entrenched imperatives of maintaining the control regime.

Political, economic and symbolic/cultural control can be clearly seen in the evolution of the postcolonial polity. All post-independence cabinets have been dominated by Sinhalese, providing the impetus for decision-making to favour the majority community. This domination has been consistent despite minority parties holding a share of seats equivalent to their proportion of the population, indicating why an undiluted majoritarian system is unsuited to accommodating minority considerations. As Jayadeva Uyangoda notes, the capacity of minority representatives to influence the polity has been “extremely limited,” as a permanent Sinhalese majority opposed to change arises at times of crisis.⁶³ Majoritarian domination of the legislature also ensured that the judiciary became increasingly ethnicized. While ostensibly multiethnic in composition, the judiciary consistently buttressed the ethnicization of state policy, evidenced in its failure to strike down the citizenship and franchise laws of 1948 and 1949, and the subsequent language laws of 1956. As former Chief Justice Sarath Silva argues, the judiciary in Sri Lanka has always tended to identify itself with the “aims and objectives of the government in power,” lacking or choosing to ignore the possibility that it could act as more than an occasional check.⁶⁴ The recent impeachment of Chief Justice Shirani Bandaranayake, triggered effectively by her opposition to a government move to vest wide-ranging powers in the central government from local authorities in the Tamil-majority Northern Province,⁶⁵ indicates how strongly that relationship can be drawn.

The symptoms of political control are important in understanding the symptoms of symbolic and economic control. While it is true that symbolic control can be seen in the design of the “markers” of nationhood, such as the national flag and national anthem,⁶⁶ it is the symbolism surrounding Buddhism, the predominant religion among the Sinhalese, and

⁶² Shastri (1999): 80. 140,185 applications were successful, which left some 950,000 Indian Origin Tamils stateless.

⁶³ Uyangoda (2011): 58.

⁶⁴ Interview with Sarath Silva, June 2012.

⁶⁵ Wickramasinghe (2014: 199); cf Hensman (2013).

⁶⁶ Both are essentially Sinhalese in their orientation. To take the national flag, briefly, the traditional Sinhalese lion is front and centre, with two small strips at the left side indicating the minority Tamil and Muslim communities. In many ways this entrenches the idea of the minorities as peripheral to the idea of a Sinhalese unitary nation. See Navaratna-Bandara (2000): 116.

the Sinhala language, and the extension of that importance to political legislation that are key factors underpinning the control regime. This is, of course, influenced by the origin myth of the Sinhalese people and the symbiotic link between ethnicity, the Buddhist religion and the island itself. The island is viewed as the repository of Buddhism with the Sinhalese tasked with both protecting that heritage and disseminating Buddha's teachings. This heritage is backed by the literary canon as well as resort to archaeological evidence, and is taken at face value by the most important elements of Sinhalese-Buddhist nationalist thinking.⁶⁷ Regardless of the veracity of this linkage, its importance lies in it being believed by the majority and, as such, both act as a cornerstone of majoritarian nationalism and as a potent mobilizing device. This juxtaposition of symbolic control with this history is best visualized in two major policy areas.

First, in 1956 the government enacted the 'Sinhala Only' policy that made Sinhala the sole language of administration. The Official Language Act No. 33 and its accompanying material made it compulsory for applicants to the public service to pass a Sinhala language proficiency test. The language issue made second-class citizens of the Tamil-speaking minority, despite the fact that at the time 21.6% of the population were registered as solely Tamil speakers.⁶⁸ As B. Skanthakumar noted, this had the "desired effect of creating an exodus of English-educated Tamils from the public service while Tamil-educated peoples were discouraged from applying to the civil service through non-familiarity with Sinhala or refusal to learn it."⁶⁹ A large number of Tamil public servants were forced into compulsory retirement, owing to their inability to prove proficiency in the national language.⁷⁰ Thus, while the language issue can be seen as a symbolic symptom of control, one of its most immediate impacts was as a form of economic control. Subsequent efforts by political leaders of opposing parties – in 1958 and 1965 – to ease the impact of the legislation on Tamil-speaking citizens were scuttled by their respective political oppositions, coalesced around influential Sinhalese-Buddhist pressure groups. It was only in the 1978 constitution (as a "national" language) and its 13th Amendment ("also an official language," as part of the Indo-Sri Lanka peace treaty in 1987) that legislation brought about a parity of status, although the terminology – "also" – appears to give an inferior status to Tamil.⁷¹

Despite the creation of an Official Languages Commission, parity of status has had little tangible impact on the implementation of Tamil as a national language. In 2009 Minister for Constitutional Affairs and National Integration D. E. W. Gunasekera stated that it

⁶⁷ See Nissan and Stirrat (1990), Gunawardena (1994) and Dharmadasa (1996) for the essence of this argument as well as some of the debate about this heritage and history.

⁶⁸ Kearney (1978): 523.

⁶⁹ Skanthakumar (2008): 67.

⁷⁰ Navaratna-Bandara (2000): 117.

⁷¹ The Tamil Language (Special Provisions) Act, No. 28 of 1958 was passed and its provisions included the use of Tamil for "prescribed administrative purposes" in the North and East; for Tamil to be the medium of admission for Tamil-speaking public servants subject to the condition of requiring sufficient knowledge of Sinhala or acquiring such knowledge within a specified time period; and for Tamil speakers to converse in Tamil with any public official. However, strident opposition to the Act caused prevarication over the regulations necessary to give it effect and it subsequently became a dead letter. In 1966 and subsequently in the 1972 constitution, actions were taken to bring about the necessary regulations to give effect to the Act. Yet, this still fell short of parity of language status.

had not been implemented, which was something that he had sought to rectify. While the relevant legislation existed, action had not been taken to translate the law into something more than a dead letter.⁷² His successor, Vasudeva Nanayakkara, the retitled minister of National Languages and Social Integration, also conceded that attitudinal and bureaucratic barriers had prevented proper implementation of the language laws, although he placed primary fault on the impact of the war. He was fairly confident that in the post-war scenario, implementation would be smoother, although he conceded that this would require a political settlement.⁷³ That implementation of a basic fundamental demand of the Tamil minority in language rights has eluded successive governments indicates the symbolic importance of language in the control regime.

As with the status of Sinhala, the state also moved to protect Buddhism with successive constitutions granting it the “foremost place,” further assigning the state a duty to “protect and foster” it. While this primacy does not legally infringe on the freedom to practice other religions in Sri Lanka, it clearly places Buddhism hierarchically above other religions and, moreover, creates a confusing legal position when the protection and fostering of Buddhism may be at odds with the right to practice other religions.

Finally, economic control has been facilitated by the control of key political institutions with the added catalysis provided by the language legislation. Economic control is underpinned by three so-called ‘affirmative action’ policies carried out by post-independence administrations in the areas of language policy, state-sector employment and university admissions. While only the university admissions policy can accurately be called an affirmative action policy, the language laws, at least until their partial modification in the 1970s, facilitated a bias towards Sinhala-speaking public officials.⁷⁴ In part, this redressed a historical tendency for overrepresentation of minorities in the public service although, contrary to popular theories propagated by the Sinhalese-Buddhist intelligentsia, the reasons had less to do with deliberate colonial policy than with historical educational and geographical factors.⁷⁵

As far as university admissions policy was concerned, Prime Minister Sirimavo Bandaranaike enacted a process of standardization of marks that was aimed at increasing the enrolment of historically underrepresented rural Sinhalese, Indian Origin Tamils and Muslims. The upshot of this, however, was to impact the Tamil community, who had been disproportionately

⁷² Interview with Senior Minister (Human Resources) and former Minister for Constitutional Affairs and National Integration D. E. W. Gunasekera, Senior Ministry Building, October 2011; cf Skanthakumar (2008).

⁷³ Interview with Minister of National Languages and Social Integration Vasudeva Nanayakkara, Ministry of National Languages and Social Integration, June 2012.

⁷⁴ See K. M. De Silva (2007): 269-308.

⁷⁵ As Samarasinghe notes (1984: 175-6), Tamils in Sri Lanka, especially those located in the traditional heartland in the Jaffna Peninsula in the North, emphasized higher education as a route to a career in the public services. This is largely because of the relatively unfavourable man-land ratio in Jaffna, and the peninsula’s lack of quality land for agricultural production. The prioritization of education, in turn, was assisted by the existence of exemplary English-language education facilities which, with the exception of Colombo, were unmatched in the country. As such, in 1948 the Northern Province, where the Jaffna peninsula is located, accounted for 7.2% of the island’s population but 25.9% of total school enrolment in schools with facilities for teaching English. This was largely due to the establishment of numerous Christian missionary schools during the colonial period, both by British and US missionaries.

represented. Hence, while the reasons for standardization were understandable, greater foresight and care should have been taken to ensure that the Tamil community’s share was not impacted in such an immediately devastating manner. For example, in 1964 Sri Lankan Tamils – approximately 11% of the population in the 1963 census – accounted for 37.2% of places in science and engineering, 40.5% in medicine and dentistry, and 41.9% in agriculture and veterinary science.⁷⁶ The government introduced standardization of marks by language media and, subsequently, to science subjects and, in 1974, introduced district quotas to provide for greater representation from underprivileged districts.⁷⁷ The impact of this can be seen in Table 2.2 below.

Table 2.2: University Admissions (1969-77) by Ethnic Origin in Selected Courses of Study (%)⁷⁸

		1969-70	1971-72	1973	1974	1975	1976	1977
Engineering	S	51.7	62.4	73.1	78.8	83.4	76.1	79.5
	T	48.3	34.7	24.4	16.3	14.2	22.4	19.1
Medicine	S	48.9	56.1	58.8	70.0	78.9	65.8	68.0
	T	48.9	39.3	36.9	25.9	17.4	30.4	27.8
Agriculture	S	44.7	58.6	46.6	83.8	73.5	74.0	74.5
	T	47.4	39.0	51.1	11.1	23.5	21.9	23.5
Total Sciences	S	57.7	63.6	67.4	75.4	78.0	71.3	73.3
	T	39.8	33.6	29.5	20.9	19.0	25.9	23.6
Arts	S	88.4	92.6	91.5	86.0	85.6	86.3	85.8
	T	7.5	4.8	6.1	10.0	10.1	8.6	9.2

Note: S – Sinhala, T – Tamil.

The mechanisms of control employed in policy-making are well known, and I do not need to go into them in great detail here except to set up the discussion on the political economy of territorial control below. As such, Table 2.3 provides a summary of the mechanisms deployed along five categories: territorial, demographic, electoral, legal/coercive and the control of political institutions.

⁷⁶ C. R. De Silva (1984): 127.

⁷⁷ K. M. De Silva (2007): 277.

⁷⁸ C. R. De Silva (1984): 138-140.

Table 2.3 Mechanisms of Control Deployed by the Sri Lankan State, 1948-present⁷⁹

Type	Examples
Demographic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Disenfranchisement of Indian Tamils (see above); • Connection to electoral gerrymandering (see electoral control, below).
Electoral	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electoral gerrymandering (creation of Ampara District, 1958); • Utilization of delimitation processes in the Northern Province to limit political representation (drop to 4 from 10 in 2005); • Creation of new electoral divisions in the Northern Province designed to limit political representation (Weli Oya area).
Legal/Coercive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethnicization of the military and police forces¹; • Restrictive legislation (Prevention of Terrorism Act, 1982-present); • States of emergency (1983-2011)²; • Dilution of the independence of the judiciary along ethnic lines.³
Political Institutions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creation of all-powerful executive presidency; • 18th Amendment to the constitution removes term limits and repeals the 17th Amendment powers to create independent commissions; • Failure to implement 13th Amendment to the constitution, and present moves to water down the Provincial Councils Act.
Territorial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colonization/settlement schemes (Gal Oya (1949), Mahaweli (1979)); • Creation of military encampments with settler families, banning resettlement of former inhabitants; • Creation of High Security Zones during wartime, and extension of restrictions post-war; • Creation of 'economic zones' preventing resettlement of internally displaced peoples to original homes.

It is also worth noting that policy changes that arguably could have favoured minorities, such as the executive presidency, have instead operated in a majoritarian manner. This includes the preferential voting system championed by a strand of scholarship as minority-friendly.⁸⁰ As Amita Shastri notes:

[I]t is precisely the fact that the institutional incentives all run in one direction, of potential Tamil/minority second preferences votes giving the margin of victory to particular Sinhalese presidential candidates, and not vice versa, that leads Tamil/minority leaders to negotiate direct deals and coalition agreements with the Sinhalese leader of their choice. This support is then expressed through their support base voting directly for the presidential candidate on first preferences, rather than supporting and voting for a candidate of their own who is not likely to win.⁸¹

Presidents in power have also shown little inclination towards minority-friendly policies. Chandrika Kumaratunga was the one exception, but her efforts were both scuttled by opposition politicians playing the 'ethnic' card and resistance within her own political coalition. Mahinda Rajapaksa's most recent successful election effectively closed the book on the argument that minorities could influence the electoral process by triumphing on the basis of a vote, if closely analyzed, that came solely from the majority community.

⁷⁹ See Rainford (2011, 2012) for a more detailed account of these mechanisms.

⁸⁰ See Horowitz (1991); Reilly (2001).

⁸¹ Shastri (2005): 52.

III. Towards a Neoliberal Consensus: The Politics of Development and the Elite-Peasant Nexus in Sri Lanka

J. R. Jayewardene of the United National Party (UNP) came to power in 1977 with a two-pronged political and economic strategy. The political strategy brought about a new constitution vesting executive power in a strong presidency. A fundamental component of Jayewardene's thinking in this regard was influenced by his belief that a strong executive president was essential to push through the economic plank of his agenda.⁸² Here, Jayewardene pushed through a rapid liberalization of the economy, transforming what had previously been an inward-oriented, highly subsidized economy founded on import substitution. Thus, almost overnight, the economy went through a form of shock therapy with measures including the liberalization of access to foreign exchange; encouragement of private-sector competition; privatization of government services; easing of the state monopoly on imports; opening of markets for foreign competition; easing of tariff barriers; and a drastic reduction in government subsidies and price controls. This was, however, accompanied by a belief that deregulation itself was insufficient to catalyze economic growth and, thus, it was accompanied by "massive capital expenditure on agriculture, industry, housing and infrastructure," largely state directed and financed by foreign aid.⁸³

A recent study by Sunil Bastian has pointed to the importance of foreign aid in this regard. For example, the total aid to Sri Lanka from World Bank sources amounted to US\$ 65 million at the end of 1976. By June 1997 this figure had increased to US\$ 1.9 billion, over 95% of which was concessionary assistance from the International Development Association. Moreover, of a total of US\$ 6.14 billion received between 1960 and 1985, 70% was received in the period 1979-1985 or subsequent to Jayewardene's liberalization agenda.⁸⁴ Thus, foreign aid can be construed as politically linked as an acknowledgment of the pro-western neoliberal policies employed by the new Sri Lankan government. Bastian has called this period a "watershed," an "irreversible break in the history of foreign aid" in Sri Lanka. Regardless of which of the two major parties has been in power, there is "broad acceptance of the direction inaugurated in 1977" with little inkling of a move back towards nationalization.⁸⁵ This is despite the centre-left Sri Lanka Freedom Party having led governments since 1994.⁸⁶ While Jayewardene's successors have not been quite as ambitious – or profligate, as Shastri puts it – and have scaled down the level of foreign involvement, aid inflows remained considerable in terms of GDP. This was the case even when international opinion turned sharply against the Sri Lankan state, such as in the immediate aftermath of the 1983 pogrom aimed at Tamil persons and businesses.⁸⁷ For an event that marked the beginning of the outflow of Tamil refugees to western countries, it did not create any 'ripples

⁸² See De Silva and Wriggins (1994).

⁸³ Richardson (2004): 48; cf Moore (1990); Bastian (2007).

⁸⁴ Figures cited in Bastian (2007): 46. The first set of figures is quoted from a 1998 Central Bank of Sri Lanka report, and the latter figures from a Norwegian study.

⁸⁵ Bastian (2007): 44-45.

⁸⁶ Albeit with a brief two-year hiatus in 2002, although the president remained from the party ranks.

⁸⁷ Shastri (2004): 90.

in aid flows' or engender any discussion on linking aid with conflict. In 1987, four years after the riots, a document marking the 30th anniversary of the relationship between the WB and Sri Lanka contained one paragraph focussing on ethnicity.⁸⁸ Foreign aid played a major role in assisting Chandrika Kumaratunga's 'war for peace' strategy in the 1990s, and after a period when there was closer linkage between aid and the peace process, development programmes by the WB and other western funding agencies have prioritized pragmatic service delivery over good governance and minority rights.

The neoliberal consensus does, however, have a distinctly local flavour. This was partly necessitated by the circumstances the UNP found on election with unemployment as high as 25% during the previous regime, making the creation of jobs of even greater concern. Furthermore, the UNP needed to shrug off the impression of being elitist and western centric in order to attain electoral success, leading to its rejuvenation as a populist party with strong grassroots organization. As a result, Jayewardene needed to balance economic liberalization with the traditional role of providing state patronage to party cadres and voters, something that would ostensibly be restricted under party discipline. This led to an adroit manipulation of liberalization with a localized developmental model. The Accelerated Mahaweli Development Programme (AMDP), which I will elaborate on below, was the apogee of this relationship with pervasive language and imagery constructed around it. The employment of symbolism "recreated the landscape and values" of the traditional, precolonial Buddhist kingdoms in its incorporation of the symbolic triad of temple, paddy field and tank (reservoir).⁸⁹

As with the colonial image of the village as central to the Sinhalese-Buddhist tradition, development in the neoliberal era has ordered village life to an ideal visualized by a statist interpretation of what development in a village should look like.⁹⁰ Furthermore, the extent to which symbolic imagery has come to represent rural development has become more pervasive, to the extent that "the contemporary use of these symbolic elements represents an expansive and power-laden articulation of cultural themes that have long been part of common sense about rural society."⁹¹ Indeed, far from being an alien, elite-driven imposition, the logic of the ideological frame is bought into by the peasantry itself as it correlates with their "own recollections of a hazy, distant past where virtuous kings ruled, and the land was a 'nation of villages'."⁹² Openings of elements of the AMDP were accompanied by lavish celebrations, embodying the traditional ideological relationship between the peasantry and rulers. Development, especially when culture met raw capitalism, represented the key element in the culture-politics paradigm central to the nexus between village and elite:

⁸⁸ Bastian (2007): 118.

⁸⁹ Spencer (2008): 621; cf Woost (1993); Tennekoon (1988).

⁹⁰ Woost (1994): 79.

⁹¹ Woost (1993): 505.

⁹² Brow (1988): 317.

[P]olitics' and 'culture' were not different and separate 'things' to be brought together or separated as circumstances demanded. 'Culture' was a central symbolic resource in unprecedented levels of intra-regime political competition. Would-be successors to the ageing Jayewardene competed with each other in 'cultural' terms: the minister of lands had the Mahaweli scheme, with its pageants, elephants and dam-openings; the equally ambitious minister of trade had his *mabapolas* (great markets), huge open-air events with popular singers and entertainers; the prime minister had his Village Awakening scheme that would rejuvenate the rural areas through the creation of new model villages; and nothing happened without a phalanx of Buddhist monks, an oil lamp, and as often as not a 'cultural show' of some sort or another to mark the opening, the closing, the turning of the first furrow in the paddy field, the planting of the new coconuts, or whatever material success was there to be celebrated.⁹³

As Serena Tennekoon points out, in Sri Lanka, development (*samvardhana*) "refers not only to the production and distribution of material benefits – water, land, houses, roads, education, jobs: it is also a form of discourse. Until nudged into second place by the recent preoccupation with "national security," "development" was the chief priority of the postcolonial state."⁹⁴ As such, an increase in foreign aid led to greater deficit spending and paradoxically an expanded role in public-sector control of investable resources: "in the first decade of liberalization, the state expanded as fast as the economy."⁹⁵ This created a dichotomy in the doctrine of economic liberalization in Sri Lanka that "has assumed the status of a contradiction."⁹⁶

Likewise, the "elite-peasant nexus" whereby in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, local colonial-era elites sought legitimacy by trumpeting the needs of the peasantry is of critical importance to understanding the nature of development.⁹⁷ Traditional elites in the Sri Lankan context are not defined by caste, class, wealth or the exercise of political power, but rather by a status conferred from below and based on the prestige and honour accorded to them. Political power, likewise, is less important than their indirect influence on cultural life and as repositories of authoritative cultural wisdom.⁹⁸ As a result, the category was, with rare exceptions, a closed shop. Given their small number compared to the general population, legitimacy was thus found in taking up the cause of the peasant as part of a nationalist agenda. This strategy was both 'an end and a means,' as any material improvement in the livelihood of the rural population would justify increased participation by the colonial elite in everyday life. This, in turn, would "provide greater developmental opportunities to the people through the action of their representatives who would now wield power."⁹⁹ This relationship was strengthened from 1956 onwards by the emergence of a more rural political elite that tied its fortunes even more closely to those of the peasantry. These 'intermediate

⁹³ Spencer (2008): 621.

⁹⁴ Tennekoon (1988): 295.

⁹⁵ Herring (2001): 146.

⁹⁶ Moore (1990): 353.

⁹⁷ See Samaraweera (1981) for an excellent analysis of this phenomenon.

⁹⁸ Peebles (1995): 15.

⁹⁹ Samaraweera (1981): 132.

classes' or elites, their interests and their patronage toward the peasantry, constitute the beating heart of the control regime.¹⁰⁰

As such, development is a deeply political process, one that is expansionary and exclusionary in its scope, expansionary insofar as it romanticizes the notion of a “nation of villages” and exclusionary insofar as it is the Sinhalese-Buddhist villager that is the ideal.¹⁰¹ With universal suffrage in 1931, the potency of this relationship took on new meaning as politicians battled to gain the higher ground.¹⁰² While the apogee of aid-driven development was in the first half of the 1980s, the Rajapaksa administration has paid for development programmes through the support of traditional donors – WB, International Monetary Fund, Japanese government and Asian Development Bank – while also enjoying large-scale support from the Chinese and Indian governments. Indeed, the availability of ‘new funding’ restricts the leverage the traditional donors have to operate in Sri Lanka, thereby perhaps explaining their pragmatic engagement amid criticism that minority concerns are not being properly considered.

IV. The Political Economy of Territorial Control: Land, Development and Control

Territorial control involves the domination of the state's territory by the superordinate community, typically the majority. This often arises out of a fear of losing land to minorities, either because it will facilitate the reproduction of the minority's culture or create the conditions for secession or irredentism. This is accompanied by a fear that if minorities control land in their possession, through decentralization or regional autonomy, they will discriminate against the members of the majority within that region.¹⁰³ In a recent contribution, James Fearon and David Laitin focussed on what they termed the “sons of the soil” conflict between “members of a regional ethnic group that considers itself to be the indigenous “sons of the soil” and recent migrants from other parts of the country.”¹⁰⁴ While they often “simmer at a low level” these conflicts last on average twice as long as civil wars without these features – 15 years as opposed to 7 years.¹⁰⁵ The migrants are typically members of the dominant ethnic group who come in search of land or government jobs, often as a result of state-led economic incentives or development projects. In addition to Israel, which I described above, a number of states have employed such strategies.

¹⁰⁰ Shastri (1983: 4) coined the term based on the notion of “intermediate regimes” coined by Michael Kalecki. As she puts it, “S. W. R. D. Bandaranaike successfully came to power on the basis of a heterogeneous collection of Sinhalese petty-bourgeois interests which had grown to occupy positions of subordinate importance in rural society in the preceding period. They consisted essentially of the smaller landowners, shopkeepers and those employed in subsidiary positions within the local services. Their economic base lay primarily in the small-scale means of production (often land) and exchange ... Coupled with the small urban commercial bourgeoisie, they fulfil very well the definition of “lower middle class” or “intermediate classes” elaborated by Kalecki and Raj.” It can be argued that the salience given to the preservation of the peasantry created the conditions for the emergence of these ‘intermediate classes’ – which included the bhikku or Buddhist monk, the Sinhalese teacher, the Ayurvedic physician and the Sinhalese intellectual – who brought with them a more organic and powerful Sinhalese-Buddhist nationalism. Their propulsion of Bandaranaike to power relied on a strongly ethnicized platform that included the pledge (ultimately carried out) to make Sinhala the sole official language. Cf Farmer (1965); Jayawardena (1984).

¹⁰¹ Brow (1988): 321.

¹⁰² Tennekoon (1988); Spencer (2008).

¹⁰³ McGarry (2010): 54.

¹⁰⁴ Fearon and Laitin (2011): 199.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid.: 200.

While the strategy of settling migrants in these areas is a mechanism to control local indigenous majorities, not all states that adopt them are control regimes. In Bangladesh the Chittagong Hill Tracts have seen formerly autonomous hill communities react strongly to settlement by Bengali immigrants via state-led (both East Pakistan and Bangladesh) hydro-electric projects and subsequent development.¹⁰⁶ The southern Muslims, Uighurs and Moros in Thailand, China and the Philippines, respectively, have all been subject to similar ‘sons of the soil’ strategies.¹⁰⁷ In Estonia and Latvia the Soviet state settled Russian migrants as a means to combat guerrilla activity, by indigenes as well as ethnic Germans, against the reannexation of these territories by the post-Second World War Soviet state. This dynamic is the reverse of the Sri Lankan case and, ironically, led to the independent Estonian and Latvian states adopting strict language, registration and citizenship practices against the ethnic Russians as a means to ensure comfortable majorities for the titular group in each case.¹⁰⁸ That said, Fearon and Laitin spend the bulk of their paper on a case study of the Sri Lankan case.

The basis of that choice is sound. The Sri Lankan state has used development schemes, primarily irrigation schemes, to resettle Sinhalese villagers from the densely populated ‘wet zone’ to the more arid, underpopulated ‘dry zone.’ The dry zone, so called due to limited rainfall, accounts for 11 districts in the northern, north-central, eastern and southeastern parts of the country. Despite comprising about 60% of the island’s land mass, it accounted for just one quarter of the country’s overall population in 1945.¹⁰⁹ It is clear that at some stage the dry zone had more proportionate levels of population density vis-à-vis the rest of the island than it did prior to the settlement schemes. The hollowing out of the population was likely a result of malaria outbreaks and other difficulties related to inhabiting a fairly hostile locale.¹¹⁰ Fear of land scarcity in the rest of the island, coupled with landlessness and deprivation, made resettlement of the dry zone both a necessity and an important political tool.¹¹¹ This form of social welfare twinned to economic goals is the most symbolic manifestation of the elite-peasant nexus. Indeed, it is arguable that the intensification of the process coincided with the rise of the strategic nexus, beginning in the early 20th century and gathering pace in the immediate pre-independence and post-independence period through the active involvement of D. S. Senanayake, who became Sri Lanka’s first prime minister.¹¹² Throughout, the process was imbued with imagery of revitalizing the Sinhalese villager and his livelihood and, as Peiris puts it, politicians were preoccupied with “millennial visions” of restoring the grandeur of the historical past.¹¹³ As noted, the AMDP represented the apex of this dynamic.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid.: 204; cf Mohsin (2003).

¹⁰⁷ Ibid.: 204-207.

¹⁰⁸ See Pettai and Hallik (2002); Diatchkova (2005); Järve (2005).

¹⁰⁹ Amerasinghe (1976): 621; Muggah (2008): 75; cf Peebles (1990).

¹¹⁰ Peebles (1990); Muggah (2008).

¹¹¹ Muggah (2008): 76.

¹¹² See Samaraweera (1981) and Peebles (1990). Cf Amerasinghe (1976) for an overview of settlement schemes, particularly the early efforts.

¹¹³ Peiris (1981): 24.

The AMDP sought to create ‘national self-sufficiency in agriculture’ while simultaneously generating electricity for domestic and industrial use. As should be clear, a concomitant goal was to empower villagers through participation in self-sufficient agriculture.¹¹⁴ The settlement component sought to relocate 700,000 villagers – more than 5% of the then population – from the wet zone to the dry zone.¹¹⁵ As with other policies that fit a control framework – public service employment and university admission policies, for example, were progressive, democratic measures that sought to redress an imbalance towards Sinhalese public servants and rural students, but had unmistakably pernicious effects on minorities – irrigation/settlement programmes had both a legitimate economic goal in creating a sustainable agricultural economy in the dry zone and a social goal in alleviating concerns about overpopulation in the wet zone. As Minister P. Dayaratne notes, in his mind, settlement schemes had a primarily economic agenda that dated back to D. S. Senanayake’s time. As the only Member of Parliament to continuously serve in the area from the implementation of Jayewardene’s economic liberalization policies to the present, first as a district minister and most recently as a cabinet minister, he is in a unique position to speak to this issue. As he correctly notes, the agricultural and paddy land development in the Eastern Province, via the Gal Oya scheme and then the Mahaweli scheme, had a profound impact on the production of rice in Sri Lanka.¹¹⁶ Thus, there is no doubt that the agricultural impact of these policies cannot be simply ignored. They had an important economic benefit.

That said, because of an unexpected decline in the value of rice, the AMDP has been viewed as an economic failure by independent evaluations.¹¹⁷ Large parts of the AMDP remain incomplete or in disuse. This is in accordance with David Dunham’s observation that the success rate of government-sponsored settlement schemes internationally has been “bleak” as they tend to divert resources away from productivity towards what is in effect a social welfare activity.¹¹⁸ In Gal Oya, initiated in 1949 with approximately 50,000 hectares of irrigated land, the system was, for decades, extremely dysfunctional and underproductive while also (arguably) inadvertently exacerbating ethnic divisions in the area.¹¹⁹ Indeed, in 1956 the area was the location of the first ethnic riots that targeted the Tamil community in Sri Lanka.

On the other hand, the AMDP had a clear ideological and ethnic dimension and, in this, it was far more successful. As Robert Muggah has noted, by “dramatically reconfiguring the ethnic ratios of northern and eastern districts, the government was able to justify a number of administrative adjustments to provincial and district boundaries to reflect changes in national population density and distribution.” As it so happened, these changes diluted the “electoral potency” of the minorities and “challenged the Tamil-speaking contiguity”

¹¹⁴ Muggah (2008): 83.

¹¹⁵ Ibid.: 83.

¹¹⁶ Interview with P. Dayaratne, senior minister (Food Security), May 2012.

¹¹⁷ See World Bank (1995, 2004).

¹¹⁸ Dunham (1982): 44-45.

¹¹⁹ See Norman Uphoff (1996, 2003) for a positive account of the management of ethnic differences in the system during the 1980s when a USAID-funded project was largely successful in rehabilitating the left bank of the Gal Oya system.

between the North and East, a cherished aim of Sinhalese nationalism.¹²⁰ That this was an explicit state strategy that aimed to rupture the geographical contiguity of the potential Tamil ‘nation’ was evidenced in various comments made by government officials, including President Jayewardene, who stated that it was necessary for ensuring the national ethnic ratio and the defeat of terrorism.¹²¹

The profound impact of settlement programmes is most clearly illustrated in the changed population dynamics for the eastern districts of Trincomalee and Ampara where marked increases are shown in the Sinhalese share of the population (see Table 4.1). In Trincomalee the Sinhalese population began the 20th century at a 4% share, steadily increasing to about a quarter in the latest census enumeration of 2011. In Ampara the story is similar, although there is an added element of territorial control to be considered when evaluating the numbers.

Table 4.1 Sinhalese Population in Trincomalee and Ampara Districts¹²²

Year	Total Population (Trincomalee)	Sinhalese		Total Population (Ampara)	Sinhalese	
		No.	%		No.	%
1921	34,112	1,501	4.4			
1946	75,926	11,606	15.3			
1963	138,553	39,925	28.8	211,732	61,996	29.3
1971	188,245	54,744	29.1	272,605	82,280	30.2
1981	255,948	85,503	33.4	388,970	146,943	37.8
2001* est.	340,158	79,614	23.4	592,997	236,583	39.9
2011	378,182	101,991	27.0	648,057	251,018	38.7

The Ampara District itself was created in 1958 by carving out the southern chunk of the Batticaloa District, which had been mostly minority dominated.¹²³ The resultant Ampara District was the epicentre of development related to Gal Oya and other settlement schemes, with major deforestation taking place in the inland areas to create inhabitable lands. Prior to this, the population was concentrated on the coastline, where the minority Tamils and Muslims continue to predominate, with the major town of Ampara little more than a village at the time of redistricting.¹²⁴ The resultant district guaranteed greater Sinhalese representation in the Eastern Province and this was a strong consideration in the design.¹²⁵ In 1953, in the last census that Ampara remained part of Batticaloa, Sinhalese accounted

¹²⁰ Muggah 2008: 88; cf Gunasekera (2000), which is an account from an insider of the Mahaweli Programme on the ideological dimension involved.

¹²¹ Muggah (2008): 117-118.

¹²² Department of Census and Statistics (2007a, 2007c, 2012).

¹²³ It remains dominated by minorities. The 2011 census shows the Sinhalese share of the population at 1.2%.

¹²⁴ Interviews with several academics, civil society actors and community activists in the Eastern Province, October 2011 and June 2012.

¹²⁵ Wickramasinghe (2006): 269. I confirmed the intentionality of the design process through interviews with a former government agent in Ampara, a senior academic at the Eastern University of Sri Lanka, members of the Batticaloa Peace Committee, and an Eastern Province-based parliamentarian. The interviews were held in October 2011 and June 2012.

for 11.5% (31,174) of the population. This was, in itself, a major increase from 5.83% and 11,850, respectively, in the 1946 census. Hence, the trend was for increased settlement in the Eastern Province even prior to the creation of Ampara. After the Ampara District was removed from Batticaloa, the Sinhalese population declined considerably in the Batticaloa District while steadily increasing in the Ampara District.¹²⁶ It is also worth noting that the first enumeration of the Ampara District had 61,996 Sinhalese which, given that 6,715 remained in the Batticaloa District, meant that the Sinhalese share of the population had doubled. As Table 3.1 illustrates, this figure continued to increase as resettlement continued apace. While an opportunity was given to Tamil and Muslim villagers to resettle in villages as part of the Gal Oya scheme, the land allocated was significantly inferior to that provided to Sinhalese villagers and, furthermore, none of the state patronage that accompanied the construction of houses and facilities in the Sinhalese parts of the scheme were available in those allocated to the minority communities. Moreover, the original Mahaweli plan had included Tamil urban centres in the design, which would have brought benefits to those areas, including infrastructure and road development. However, when implementation went ahead, those components were discarded.¹²⁷

As with many other aspects of patronage politics, there is a pure patron-client dimension to the resettlement. Nonetheless, the impact was to dilute the homogeneity of the Eastern Province, which had been principally a Tamil-speaking province prior to the creation of the Ampara District. Moreover, it created resentment and even in the 1950s, settlement schemes drew the ire of the primary Tamil political party, the Ilankai Tamil Arasu Kachchi (ITAK, Federal Party). This has consistently been included as one of the primary grievances of ITAK and its successor parties – the Tamil United Liberation Front and Tamil National Alliance (TNA). Indeed, when riots broke out in Colombo in 1958, there were also serious clashes in the Eastern Province between settlers and the indigenous minorities that left hundreds dead. As Fearon and Laitin observe, violence in the Eastern Province was concentrated in areas where Tamils were a majority but recent settlement schemes had encroached into those areas. This later escalated into far greater bloodshed when the LTTE emerged, including tit-for-tat massacres. As they observe, this would have been completely avoided if resettlement schemes had concentrated on Sinhalese-majority areas rather than seeking to challenge Tamil-speaking homogeneity in those areas.¹²⁸

¹²⁶ The first census after the redistricting shows the Sinhalese share of the population at just under 4% (6,715). This declined further to 1.2% (6,127) in the 2011 census.

¹²⁷ Peebles (1990): 43. It should also be noted that there was a huge increase in the Sinhalese population in other North-Central districts that are part of the dry zone, such as the Polonnaruwa District. I have concentrated here on the eastern districts because of the ethnic component of territorial control and the implications this has had for conflict. See Peebles (1990): 40.

¹²⁸ Fearon and Laitin (2011): 202-203.

V. Post-War Economic Development in Eastern and Northern Provinces: Facilitating Reconciliation and Justice or More of the Same?

Reconciliation is a disputed concept but its essential components entail a rebuilding of a prior relationship, a joint and shared acknowledgement of what has taken place, and a shared desire to move forward in a new direction. In the Sri Lankan context, reconciliation cannot be apolitical, and would require a multifaceted and reflective process that would, at the very least, provide accountability for major violations of human rights and a forum for acknowledgment of suffering. This would be insufficient in the absence of a political component that addresses the inequality at the heart of the Tamil grievance and seeks to ameliorate those concerns through some form of political autonomy. Lastly, reconciliation would necessarily have to begin from the assumption that while the war is over, the root causes of the conflict are not. This is a post-war moment, not a post-conflict moment, and greater ground needs to be covered for the latter to be achieved. That said, as noted above, the end of a civil war offers a rare opportunity for a polity to redefine how it views itself, to renegotiate the 'idea' of the state. Indeed, it is worth quoting the government-appointed Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission (LLRC) on this point:

Sri Lanka now faces a moment of unprecedented opportunity. Rarely does such an opportunity come along without equally attendant challenges. This is especially true of any meaningful effort towards post-conflict peace building following a protracted conflict. Sri Lanka's case is no exception. Terrorism and violence have ended. Time and space have been created for healing and building sustainable peace and security so that the fruits of democracy and citizenship can be equitably enjoyed by all Sri Lankans. To this end, the success of ending armed conflict must be invested in an all-inclusive political process of dialogue and accommodation so that the conflict by other means will not continue.¹²⁹

Having set the parameters of what reconciliation would look like and why the moment is opportune, we can evaluate the extent to which they have been achieved. Three principle observations can be made.

First, President Rajapaksa and his administration have eschewed minority accommodation in favour of an integrationist vision of a Sri Lanka, of Sri Lankans, where minorities do not exist. In his address to the nation following the LTTE's military defeat, he stated that "we have removed the word minorities from our vocabulary three years ago," proclaiming that there were only two kinds of Sri Lankans, those that loved the country and those that did not.¹³⁰ Likewise, his brother, the influential secretary to the Ministry of Defence, Gotabhaya Rajapaksa, has argued that:

The existing constitution is more than enough for us to live together. I don't think there is any issue on this more than that ... I mean now the LTTE is gone, I don't think there is any requirement. I mean what can you do more than this? This gives power at a lower level. Even now we had the local government elections. Then the president will have very soon provincial elections and appoint chief

¹²⁹ Commission of Inquiry on Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation (LLRC) (2011): 1.

¹³⁰ Full speech, Ministry of Defence, http://www.defence.lk/new.asp?fname=20090519_04 [4 April 2014].

ministers and ministers. So devolution-wise I think we have done enough. I don't think there is a necessity to go beyond that.¹³¹

Their vision views the civil war purely as a struggle against the LTTE, divorced from the evolution of the Tamil political struggle and, indeed, the motivation behind the LTTE's emergence. The government did hold 18 rounds of talks with the TNA but no tangible progress emerged from the discussions. While the TNA did put forward a comprehensive set of proposals on a number of issues, including the powers of devolution and the unit to which devolution would take place, the government reneged on a pledge to respond. This silence lends credence to those who argue that the talks were nothing but a façade to placate international opinion.¹³² In a recent statement, the TNA stated that the failure to respond to the TNA document was “clearly demonstrative of the lack of a genuine commitment on the part of the Government to the evolution of an acceptable political solution,” going on to add that the government was feigning reconciliation to the international community while being engaged in a “deceitful exercise.”¹³³

More recent decisions regarding the implementation of the 13th Amendment to the constitution – which provided for devolution to the provincial level – indicate that there is no appetite for political reform and, indeed, the government is seeking to dilute what little devolution there is at present. This is precipitated both by a suspicion of devolution to the periphery, especially to minority-dominated areas, and a desire to centralize power. Gotabhaya Rajapaksa has gone so far as to call for its repeal, arguing that it was an impediment to the post-war development process.¹³⁴ This impediment to the development process was the trigger that led to a public struggle with Chief Justice Shirani Bandaranayake, which led to her subsequent impeachment in a chain of events riddled with a lack of due process.¹³⁵ While the government has not gone so far as to repeal the 13th Amendment, it moved to dilute it considerably by removing land and police powers¹³⁶ from provincial jurisdiction while preventing (or making highly improbable) the merger of any two provinces. This has led to further consternation on the part of the Indian government, which has reiterated that the Sri Lankan government needs to go beyond the 13th Amendment.¹³⁷ Moreover, these moves contradict repeated assurances by the Rajapaksa administration that it was committed

¹³¹ India Today (2011).

¹³² Interviews with Tamil parliamentarians, August-October 2011; interview with Paikiasothy Saravanamuttu, executive director, Centre for Policy Alternatives, October 2011; cf ICG (2012): 9-10.

¹³³ Tamil National Alliance (TNA) (2013).

¹³⁴ The Island (2012).

¹³⁵ While a number of rulings brought about the administration's ire, it was the court ruling in a case on 17 September 2012 that was particularly important. Here, the court temporarily blocked a law to establish a new department of Divineguma (Uplifting Lives) that would have coordinated a range of government welfare and development programmes under the Ministry of Economic Development headed by the president's brother Basil Rajapaksa. As some of these powers were provincial, the court ruled that all nine provinces were required to approve the legislation. See International Crisis Group (ICG) (2013): 5.

¹³⁶ Land and police powers have actually never been exercised by any provincial council.

¹³⁷ The Indian External Affairs minister made two pointed statements about the implementation of the 13th Amendment. See Hindustan Times (2013).

to the implementation of the 13th Amendment.¹³⁸ Finally, the government has established a Parliamentary Select Committee (PSC) to bring about constitutional reform. A number of such committees have been set up in the past and none have led to successful reform. In this instance, the PSC will be boycotted by the TNA and the major opposition parties. The TNA, for its part, noted:

The TNA resisted pressure to join the Parliamentary Select Committee (PSC) to bring about constitutional reforms until a clear agenda for the Committee was set. The agenda of the government is now clear to us. It moves to incrementally water down the already-limited provisions of the 13th Amendment: first, by rendering the [Provincial Council] List superfluous; second, by restricting the freedom of peoples to determine administrative boundaries through Parliament; and finally, by removing all constitutional provisions on the devolution of land and police powers. There is no doubt that the proposed PSC will be the vehicle to achieve the above objectives. We also note that Professor Tissa Vitharana, who headed the APRC¹³⁹ and who kept inviting us to the PSC from 2011, has been left out ... Minister Rauff Hakeem, who told the Indian Parliamentary delegation last year that he will act as a bridge between the Government and the TNA at the PSC deliberations has been left out; and Minister Rajitha Senaratne, who only last week invited the TNA to confidently come into the PSC on the basis that he would support us, has been left out ... Finally we wish to state that in the absence of any Opposition member of Parliament, this PSC will be nothing but a sub-committee of the Government Parliamentary Group ... and will have no credibility whatsoever.¹⁴⁰

The three ministers mentioned in the TNA statement are all progressive members of the government alliance – Hakeem as leader of the Muslim Congress, and Vitharana and Senaratne as senior ministers who have supported minority accommodation. Indeed, the latter two were part of a group of government parliamentarians who, in a very unusual and unexpected development, publicly disagreed with the direction being taken on the 13th Amendment.¹⁴¹

Second, on the issue of reconciliation, repeated calls by the international community for the government to appoint an independent commission to investigate allegations of gross human rights violations in the last days of the civil war resulted in hostility and inaction. Ultimately, the government agreed to appoint the Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation Commission in May 2010. The LLRC was given the mandate to investigate “the facts and circumstances that led to the failure of the ceasefire agreement operationalized on 21st February 2002 and the sequence of events that followed thereafter up to the 19th of May 2009.” While the primary mandate was criticized for its narrow focus, the commissioners interpreted the mandate more broadly, relying on one part of the overall mandate, which stated that the commission

¹³⁸ The first of these assurances was made in the week after the LTTE defeat, when President Rajapaksa “expressed his firm resolve” to proceed with implementation of the 13th Amendment and to engage in a broader dialogue with all parties, including Tamil political parties. Reassurances were also made in May 2011 (by External Affairs Minister G. L. Peiris), and January 2012. See ICG (2012): 10.

¹³⁹ The All Party Representative Committee (APRC) sat from 2006 to 2008 and was appointed by President Rajapaksa to discuss constitutional and political reform. It was similar in its trajectory to numerous parliamentary and presidential select committees set up to discuss political reform in the past, insofar as none have resulted in any form of tangible political reform. The APRC process was scuttled by the president despite the best efforts of Chairman Vitharana.

¹⁴⁰ TNA (2013).

¹⁴¹ See Daily Mirror (2013).

should inquire as to the “institutional, administrative, and legislative measures which need to be taken in order to prevent any recurrence of such concerns in the future, and to promote further national unity and reconciliation among all communities, and to make any such other recommendations with reference to any of the matters that have been inquired into under the terms of this Warrant.”¹⁴² The commission submitted its report in November 2011, having extended the period of the warrant twice, and having travelled extensively to all parts of the island.

The recommendations of the report were extensive, covering such broad areas as land issues, resettlement, reconciliation, human rights violations and disappearances. The report acknowledged the root causes of conflict and made several recommendations on how ethnic differences could be ameliorated. As such, while the report did not deliver uniformly on every level, with the section investigating human rights violations in the late stages of the war being particularly thin, the document made several recommendations that political commentators acknowledged were steps in the right direction. As an opening gambit in a longer process of reconciliation, the LLRC report serves its purpose well, but it needs to be both more than a dead letter and a starting point.

In March 2012 the United Nations Human Rights Council (HRC) resolution on “Promoting Reconciliation and Accountability in Sri Lanka” called on the government to implement the “constructive” recommendations of the LLRC, specifying that, among other things, it credibly investigate allegations of extrajudicial killings and enforced disappearances; guarantee freedom of expression; reduce militarization in the North; strengthen formerly independent civil institutions; reach a political settlement on devolution of power; re-evaluate detention policies; and enact impartial land dispute resolution mechanisms. It also requested that the government produce a “comprehensive action plan” to achieve these goals as well as to “address alleged violations of international law,” which the HRC felt the LLRC had not adequately addressed.¹⁴³ The government action plan of July 2012 did little to meet these expectations. As the International Crisis Group noted, it committed the government to a lower set of expectations than requested by the commission, which was already a compromise resolution. The action plan ignored the LLRC recommendations on governance and impunity for human rights violations and “watered down even its weak recommendations to investigate a small number of alleged war crimes.”¹⁴⁴ The follow-up HRC resolution in August 2013 noted that the action plan had neither adequately addressed the LLRC’s constructive recommendations nor adequately addressed the serious human rights allegations. The resolution also called for the government to both facilitate a visit by the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights and to implement the recommendations made in her report, including the establishment of a truth-seeking mechanism as “an integral part of a more comprehensive and inclusive approach to transitional justice” and to conduct

¹⁴² LLRC (2011): iv.

¹⁴³ UN Human Rights Council (2012).

¹⁴⁴ ICG (2012): 3-4.

an independent and credible investigation into allegations of violations of international humanitarian law.¹⁴⁵

Little progress on implementation has taken place to date. In the present session of the HRC in March 2014, the final resolution will likely cautiously approve of limited progress while continuing to call on the government to implement the constructive recommendations of the LLRC and to take accountability seriously. Ultimately, therefore, the whole process has moved very little. Only several areas, such as language issues, have been taken forward. Some of the more symbolic gestures, such as ensuring the national anthem be sung simultaneously in both Sinhala and Tamil and that an event is held concurrent to national day celebrations to “express solidarity and empathy with all victims of the tragic conflict” in order to provide the necessary impetus to reconciliation, have been summarily ignored.¹⁴⁶ To the contrary, in December 2010 President Rajapaksa discussed legislation that would have scrapped the singing of the anthem in Tamil at official functions, stating that no country in the world has an anthem in more than one language. Moreover, he argued that singing the anthem in Tamil would undermine national unity. The Ministry of Public Administration passed a circular stating that all government departments must abide by the decision.¹⁴⁷ Following media backlash, the government denied any such decision had been taken. Regardless of the backtracking, it remains unclear whether the legislation was passed or not; it was a “regressive move,” as one political commentator put it, before going on to add:

The lessons of history seem to be have been forgotten here; discrimination over language was one reason behind the civil war. If one nation, one anthem was the logic then it didn't do anything to make the Tamils feel secure about their present or the future. There are several countries where the Anthem is sung in more than one language.¹⁴⁸

Belgium, Canada, New Zealand, South Africa and Switzerland all have anthems in multiple versions. Gotabhaya Rajapaksa called the provision of the national anthem a “ridiculous idea,” adding that a number of other political recommendations made by the LLRC “could not” be implemented.¹⁴⁹ Minister Wimal Weerawansa called the Tamil version of the anthem a “joke” and something that was only implemented after the 1978 constitution, ignoring the fact that it had been sung in Tamil in the Northern and Eastern provinces since independence.¹⁵⁰

Third, and finally, the government strategy focusses on development, arguing that the development of all areas of the country will satisfy the aspirations of all citizens. In this, the government extends the logic of the embedded neoliberal consensus, alongside strategies of territorial control. While part of this agenda deepens social contradictions at the state-society level and has an effect beyond ethnic identity, the element of territorial control, while also embedded in the social structures of Sinhalese society, nevertheless has a disproportionately

¹⁴⁵ UN Human Rights Council (2013).

¹⁴⁶ Recommendations 9.277 (page 386) and 9.285 (page 387) of the LLRC (2011).

¹⁴⁷ *Times of India* (2010).

¹⁴⁸ *Hindustan Times* (2010).

¹⁴⁹ See Gunasekera (2012).

¹⁵⁰ *Groundviews* (2010).

negative effect on minority communities.¹⁵¹ As noted in this paper and documented repeatedly in the scholarship on post-war Sri Lanka, the government sees development as a more than suitable substitute for political or societal reform. It argues that the greatest obstacle to prosperity has been the internal conflict, and with its end Sri Lanka is in a strong position to be an economic leader in the Asia-Pacific.

This is envisaged through a ‘five-hub’ strategy, namely, aviation, commerce, energy, shipping and knowledge, leading to Sri Lanka’s position as a “global dynamic hub.” This terminology first appeared in Mahinda Rajapaksa’s 2010 *Mahinda Chintana* electoral portfolio, which, upon his victory, was reinterpreted into the government document *Sri Lanka – the Emerging Wonder of Asia: Mahinda Chintana – Vision for the Future*.¹⁵² In Rajapaksa’s words, the objective is to “transform Sri Lanka into a strategically important centre of the world,” adding that it was his intent to “transform Sri Lanka to be the Pearl of the Asian Silk Route once again, in modern terms.”¹⁵³ The five hubs chosen seem to reflect both Sri Lanka’s geostrategic position while, with the exception of energy, harkening back to the ancient glory of the Sinhalese-Buddhist kingdoms.¹⁵⁴ The vision calls for major and ambitious infrastructure development, centred in the transformation of Hambantota into a shipping and aviation port with the creation of a new town (Siribopura) to oversee development, while also developing regional ports in Oluvil, Trincomalee and Kankesanthurai, all in the North-East of the island. The energy component focusses on the development of hydro, coal and wind power plants, and the positioning of Sri Lanka as a regional energy hub, although this appears reliant on the successful drilling for oil off the southern coast of Sri Lanka. However, as one evaluation of the employment opportunities to be generated by this strategy notes, Sri Lanka has a “long way to progress in transforming the economy into a dynamic global hub,” lagging behind in “all areas of concern.” Furthermore, the evaluation notes that a big part of the problem is that skills development is simply not at a satisfactory level to compete with regional powers in Asia, such as Singapore, China, Hong Kong, South Korea and Malaysia.¹⁵⁵ This assessment indicates that people-centred development is a fundamental prerequisite for successful economic development in Sri Lanka, and given the existing disparities in economic productivity between the Western Province (including Colombo) and the war-affected regions (as well as poorer Sinhalese-dominated areas such as the Moneragala District), far more comprehensive and targeted economic strategies would be necessary to generate the conditions to make the sort of “leap forward” that Rajapaksa envisages.¹⁵⁶ As a recent study on fishing communities in the Northern and Eastern provinces points out, meaningful post-war development in northern Sri Lanka cannot only “address isolated and selected livelihood issues,” given that the “primary reason why the Northern communities

¹⁵¹ See Bastian (2013) for a very thorough analysis of the first of these components in the post-war context.

¹⁵² Ministry of Finance and Planning (MFP) (2010).

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*: preamble.

¹⁵⁴ Abeyratne (2012): 3.

¹⁵⁵ *Ibid.*: 36-37.

¹⁵⁶ Indeed, the knowledge hub component of the strategy is the only element that seems to bear some potential for achievement. Unsurprisingly, it is also the least developed of the strategies.

have been dispossessed of the benefits of development are the structural circumstances that have been reinforced and worsened by thirty years of war.” Understanding these structures of dependency are critical to any effort to “reframe development so as to accommodate the perspective of communities in the war affected areas.”¹⁵⁷

More problematically, even the evaluation assumes that the strategy is a “timely conceptualization of the anticipated rapid economic progress of Sri Lanka, after ending the 30-year long political conflict in May 2009, which had become the major bottleneck of both economic progress and policy reforms.”¹⁵⁸ As should be clear by now, this is an erroneous assumption. Nonetheless, it is an assumption that runs through the *Vision for the Future* document in which the word ‘minority’ is not mentioned, ‘Tamil’ is only mentioned in terms of the language stream for educational purposes, and ‘ethnic’ has one entry excepting a reference to creating a “multi ethnic cultural centre in Jaffna” in order to “create leadership with broad understanding of the need of “Unity and Diversity” and thereby respecting the Cultural Heritage of each ethnic, social and religious group.”¹⁵⁹ While this latter is a laudable goal, it is ironic that it is centred in the symbolic capital of the Tamil community, and is something that will not assuage fears that national unity would entail the erasure of minority cultures. In the final analysis, there is little that indicates anything more than a conflict-blind or ethnic-blind development strategy. This government strategy is tacitly supported by the major international financial institutions. The WB’s agenda in Sri Lanka continues to focus on public service delivery, reminiscent of the following speech by former Country Director Naoko Ishii on the launch of the Country Assistance Strategy of 2008. Ishii noted a strong linkage between “good governance and one of our key objectives, that of improved and accountable service delivery,” before subsuming the former (which used to have a transformative agenda) into the definition of the latter as: “the Bank engages in these service delivery sectors like health and education we will seek opportunities to strengthen those accountability mechanisms and ensure that services reach those who need them ... Whether we call this accountable service delivery or good governance it amounts to the same thing: the citizen gets better service and is healthier and better educated as a result.”¹⁶⁰

This conflict-neutral terminology continues to be relevant to the operations of the WB. As a recent article found, a recent WB report “renders invisible the effects of war on the North and East” by reducing it to a question of access to markets, adding:

Because of facts of “ethnolinguistic or religious heterogeneity,” which remains unproblematised, the Bank argues that the state should administer “spatially targeted” policies to improve access. As the report puts it, “Language, ethnicity, or religion may divide one part of a country from another, effectively reducing market forces of migration and interregional trade”. This contorted description of the situation in war-affected areas

¹⁵⁷ Chaaminda (2012): 16.

¹⁵⁸ Abeyratne (2012): 3.

¹⁵⁹ MFP (2010): 201.

¹⁶⁰ World Bank (2008).

completely ignores not only the flow of displaced persons but also the different spaces in terms of political access and power that have been carved out in the North and East by the LTTE and militarisation by the state. Moreover, it reinforces the government's position that the current political issues can be reduced to that of "development" while negating the deeper political roots of the conflict.¹⁶¹

Even the development of ports in Oluvil, Trincomalee and Kankesanthurai have shown little progress, and when progress does take place there is no guarantee that it will benefit minority communities.

Indeed, the militarization of the North and East in particular suggests that this will not be the case. There is no space here to be exhaustive but a few illustrative examples can be employed. In the Eastern Province, land is being allocated to military encampments, as in Vaharai near the coastal town of Batticaloa, where more than 1,000 acres of land belonging to the Sri Lanka Cashew Corporation have been handed over to the military. Similar encroachment and utilization of land has taken place in other divisional secretariats, and other efforts have taken place to isolate land for military camps.¹⁶² Major development projects in Muttur and Sampur have led to the refusal to resettle Tamil and Muslim IDPs in their original homes. Taking the new coastal road from Trincomalee to Batticaloa, the extent to which military encampments remain front and centre is striking, including development projects that are being run by the military.

This phenomenon is far more extensive in the Northern Province where militarization is more pervasive than in the East. Aided by the edicts of the Presidential Task Force on Resettlement, Reconstruction and Security in the Northern Province (PTF), the military effectively runs a parallel administration alongside civil institutions. Appointed in 2009 and vested in a small number of "mostly Sinhalese officials in Colombo," the PTF has far-reaching powers that have been extremely influential in how resettlement and reconstruction have been carried out in the North.¹⁶³ It has placed severe limitations on development work being carried out by NGOs and its "regime of permits, approvals and extensive reporting requirements, often applied arbitrarily, has significantly reduced the amount and quality of the assistance delivered to the north." While this has eased in the last two years, the PTF remains largely unmoved on rights issues, issues of social mobilization, and on the recognition of the role of NGOs in issues of resettlement.¹⁶⁴ The military has a close link to the PTF, including the presence of senior military leadership in the task force's composition as well as a prominent role for ex-military personnel and in the power to approve beneficiary lists for humanitarian projects. NGOs have been obliged to invite local commanders for consultations and events, and government officials are obliged to keep the military informed and involved, including in handing over and planning development projects. The military's

¹⁶¹ Collective for Economic Democratisation (2013).

¹⁶² Interviews with civil society and political actors in the Eastern Province, October 2011 and June 2012. This has included areas such as Chenkalady and Vavunativu.

¹⁶³ ICG (2012): 13.

¹⁶⁴ Ibid.: 13.

control over the environment is so thorough that it has effectively replaced the LTTE as the final authority for appeal over local disputes.¹⁶⁵ Moreover, the level of militarization has shown no real decline despite repeated requests by the international community. Indeed, the government's LLRC recommended a staged demilitarization of the Northern Province so that normalcy could return.¹⁶⁶

While there has been a slight reduction in the number of soldiers in the North, reliable estimates put the figure at between 150,000 and 200,000.¹⁶⁷ A recent article in *Economic & Political Weekly* attempted to fashion some empirical data on the extent of militarization. Having established that 15 army divisions, three army task forces, two naval commands and at least two significant air force bases are located in the Northern Province, the article arrives at a conservative estimate of 198,000 security personnel based in the province. This would approximate to 1 security personnel for every 5.04 civilians or a force density of 198.4 security personnel per 1,000 civilian population. Putting this in context, it notes that a recent analysis undertaken for the US Department of Defence asserts that a density of 40-50 troops per thousand population would be necessary for reasonably high confidence of operational success. This estimate is for an active theatre of operations and not a post-war cessation of hostilities. Furthermore, the density in the Northern Province far outstrips that in Iraq at the height of the 'surge' (20 per thousand civilians); Northern Ireland in the mid-1970s (23 per thousand); the peak of French presence in colonial Algeria (60 per thousand); Chechnya in 2003 (150 per thousand); and Jammu & Kashmir, where a recent estimate was one security personnel for every 26 civilians as compared to the aforementioned 5.04 in the Northern Province. So not only is the Northern Province highly militarized, the evidence provided suggests it is the most highly militarized region anywhere in the world.¹⁶⁸ While the author of this report is not identified for security reasons, recent reports by the International Crisis Group (ICG) note that militarization has not been reduced.¹⁶⁹ Statements by leading political and military figures also seem to provide no indication that demilitarization is being contemplated. Gotabhaya Rajapaksa has consistently invoked the need to be vigilant for a re-emergence of the LTTE, pointing to the existence of an international network that cannot be disregarded, and stating that high security zones had been replaced by strategically placed military personnel so that "we can control certain areas."¹⁷⁰ In October 2013 two senior military officials, Major General Udaya Perera and Military Spokesman Brigadier Ruwan Wanigasuriya, both stated that the presence of a vast Tamil diaspora continued to be a separatist threat and thus mitigated against hasty demilitarization.¹⁷¹

¹⁶⁵ Ibid.: 15.

¹⁶⁶ Recommendation 9.227 (page 376): "It is important that the Northern Province reverts to civilian administration in matters relating to the day-to-day life of the people, and in particular with regard to matters pertaining to economic activities ... The military presence must progressively recede to the background to enable the people to return to normal civilian life and enjoy the benefits of peace."

¹⁶⁷ ICG (2013): 18.

¹⁶⁸ A Correspondent (2012): 35.

¹⁶⁹ ICG (2013): 18-19; ICG (2012).

¹⁷⁰ Jansz (2012).

¹⁷¹ Nathaniel (2013).

Given the extent of militarization and the active involvement of the military in everyday development activities, particularly in the Vanni region in the North, it is no surprise that land has been sectioned off for military purposes, both through legal tenders and through encroachment. Former High Security Zones such as in Valikamam North in the Jaffna District remain largely off limits, with approximately 37,000 out of a pre-war population of 85,000 being permitted back to their homes. This is in 21 of 45 *grama niladhari* (GN) divisions (or subdistrict units). The remaining GN divisions, including prime fishing and agricultural land, remain under military control. The construction of a new bund suggests that resettlement is not expected soon. This area includes Kankesanthurai port, which begs the question of how development benefits from the ‘shipping hub’ would percolate to the ordinary person in the region. Likewise, military encampments and the settlement of military families have caused lands in Karainagar, Palaly, Pooneryn and multiple other smaller villages to be off limits. This phenomenon extends to the Mannar District (Mullikulum, for example) and deep into the Vanni, where everyday life is run by the military.¹⁷² Indeed, “the army is the government and nothing, or very little, happens without their saying-so.”¹⁷³ While some have argued that the efficiency of the army makes it excellent material for development activity, it is no accident that “military hyper-activism” is not particularly good for nurturing democracy.¹⁷⁴ Furthermore, the branching out of the military into development and agricultural activities¹⁷⁵ has the added effect of overloading the marketplace with underpriced goods, thereby undercutting the livelihood of local communities.¹⁷⁶

Sumith Chaaminda’s recent study on fishing communities in the North-East finds several worrying assertions about the livelihood of fishermen, particularly in the Northern Province, in the post-war context. Fishing production in the Jaffna District used to be the largest of all districts in Sri Lanka, contributing approximately 20-25% of total fish production before 1983, but this dropped to about 5% by the end of 2002. From a high 48,677 metric tons in 1983, fish production in Jaffna District fluctuated between 1,191 and 3,232 metric tons during the period 1991-2001, before stabilizing to about 21,000 metric tons in the brief peace window of 2003-2004 and in 2010.¹⁷⁷ Thus, the post-war fishing industry has some way to go to reach previous levels of production, suffering also from increased competition by southern fishermen as well as large trawlers from South India.¹⁷⁸ Moreover, as the study finds, northern fishermen suffer from structural dependency issues such as indebtedness to big businessmen and political patronage structures, while continuing to face difficulties that arise from restrictions on where fishing can take place, usually because of military purposes.¹⁷⁹ In the final analysis, the post-war economic development strategy has largely bypassed the

¹⁷² See ICG (2012) for similarly detailed information on military camps and resettlement restrictions.

¹⁷³ A Correspondent (2012): 37.

¹⁷⁴ Ibid.: 37.

¹⁷⁵ Thousands of acres of land have been taken over for agricultural purposes by the military. Some of this is government-owned property.

¹⁷⁶ ICG (2012): 23.

¹⁷⁷ Chaaminda (2012): 6-7.

¹⁷⁸ Interview with senior representative of fisheries cooperative, Jaffna District, June 2012.

¹⁷⁹ Chaaminda (2012): 17-18.

fishing industry in the Northern Province and, as a result, failed to alleviate entrenched structural dependency and has arguably intensified such dependency. This will arguably lead to increased resentment.¹⁸⁰ Given the importance of the industry to the livelihood of northern communities, and the practicality in promoting it, this is an indictment of the failure of government economic strategy.

The above context is not conducive to reconciliation. I have provided only a snapshot of the present picture, where facts on the ground constantly change and little information stays concrete for very long. Nonetheless, extensive militarization, forced relocation, preventing IDP (and refugee) resettlement, symbolic Sinhala-ization (name-boards, road names, billboards, war memorials), settlement of military families and land encroachment continue to take place. A further development in this regard is redistricting and delimitation. Having successfully enabled Sinhalese representation in the Vavuniya District of the Northern Province, the government has recently created a new electoral division in the Mullaitivu District. This new electoral division, in the Weli Oya area, will be entirely Sinhalese and will thus ensure further Sinhalese representation in a district that was previously entirely dominated by Tamils.¹⁸¹ Furthermore, the Elections Commissioner has announced that owing to the reduced population in the Jaffna District (see Table 3.2), there would be a concomitant reduction in the number of representatives for the district. This is perfectly consistent with the electoral regulations in Sri Lanka, as distribution of seats in parliament is based on the population density of the relevant districts. As such, the Jaffna District has seen its representation decline from 11 (1989) to 10 (1994) to 9 (2000) before increasing slightly to 10 in 2005, and reducing to 6 in 2010. With the present population figures, the district will likely be reduced to 4 members.

Table 5.1 Population Shifts in Jaffna District, 1971-2011¹⁸²

Year	Population	Increase (No)	Increase (%)
1971	635,117		
1981	738,788	103,671	16.3
2011	583,378	(- 155,410)	(- 21.0)

The glaring problem with this assessment is that it does not take into consideration the reasons for the reduced population, namely large-scale unregistered and registered internal displacement to IDP camps, relocation centres or with families in Colombo. This displacement is forced and necessarily temporary until families can return to their original homes. The decision taken by the Elections Commissioner does not take into consideration the existential challenges caused by the recent end to decades-long civil war. Indeed, the timing of the

¹⁸⁰ Ibid.: 19-20.

¹⁸¹ Interviews with Tamil National Alliance MPs Suresh Premachandran and M. Sumanthiran, University of Colombo academic Dr. K. Sarveswaran and a civil society activist based in the Northern Province. See Rajasingham, *Asian Tribune* (2011).

¹⁸² Department of Census and Statistics (2007b, 2012).

delimitation must also be considered suspicious, as is the timing of the 2011 census in the northern districts, given that it took place with population numbers in flux. Furthermore, the reduced population in Jaffna and the increased Tamil (and minority) presence in Colombo is pointed to by a number of Sinhalese politicians as reasons why any territorial autonomy or federalism is not necessary. All these elements have the potential to change facts on the ground, which would limit the potential for autonomy (or secession, for that matter). Suresh Premachandran, a senior TNA MP, when asked whether negotiations with the government would bring about political concessions with regard to land resettlement, stated that he did not anticipate any such concessions owing to the fact that it is a clear ideological programme on the part of the Sri Lankan government to dilute the electoral potency of the Tamil areas.¹⁸³ This, in turn, dilutes any future demand for territorially-based autonomy or federalism. It is, however, very much consistent with the imperatives of a control regime.

In September 2013 the first ever elections for the Northern Provincial Council were held. The TNA won the election comfortably with 78.5% of the vote¹⁸⁴ amid 67.5% turnout.¹⁸⁵ The party's candidate for chief minister, former Supreme Court Justice C. V. Wigneswaran, had run on a platform seeking a federal solution to Tamil aspirations. Moreover, the resounding victory amounted to a total rejection of Rajapaksa's development as an alternative to devolution strategy, and it also put the lie to the notion that the northern citizenry was comfortable with high levels of militarization.¹⁸⁶ Indeed, as Muttukrishna Sarvananthan finds, the performance of the TNA in the Northern Province in 2013 outperformed its predecessor, the Tamil United Liberation Front (TULF) in the 1977 general elections, when Tamil nationalism was at its height. In the Jaffna electoral division, the TNA/TULF won 84% of the vote in 2013 as compared to 72% in 2010, while in the Vanni electoral division the TNA/TULF won 68% in 2013 as compared to 54%. As he notes, both the 2013 Northern Provincial Council elections and the 2012 Eastern Provincial Council elections "debunks the myth of "no more minorities" and "one country one voice" signature campaigns" of the Rajapaksa administration.¹⁸⁷

VI. The Prospects for Reconciliation in Post-War Sri Lanka: Some Conclusions

Throughout this paper, I have sought to demonstrate that post-war economic development in Sri Lanka is the logical continuation of the post-1977 neoliberal consensus, one of the primary manifestations of which has been the symbiotic link between state-led large-scale economic development programmes and territorial control. Territorial control is one facet of the control regime that has characterized the Sri Lankan state largely from independence or,

¹⁸³ Interview with Suresh Premachandran, September 2011.

¹⁸⁴ In the three Tamil-dominated districts, the TNA received 84.37% (Jaffna), 81.57% (Kilinochchi) and 78.56% (Mullaitivu) of the vote.

¹⁸⁵ While being a high turnout, Jaffna District recorded the lowest turnout with 64.15%, and the remaining four districts recorded over 70%.

¹⁸⁶ Wickramasinghe (2013): 201.

¹⁸⁷ Sarvananthan (2013).

at least, from 1956 onwards. These elements are at the front and centre of the government's agenda for national unity, which eschews political reform and reconciliation in favour of economic development. It has consistently rebuffed efforts at constitutional reform, which it promised to deliver a week after the end of the war. Indeed it has moved instead to dilute the limited devolution that is presently available in the 13th Amendment to the constitution. In this regard, Sunil Bastian makes an important point when he asserts that one major disconnect in the neoliberal strategy of the present government is its complete disinterest in reforming the state.¹⁸⁸ The crisis of the state in Sri Lanka has led to what various scholars have called "soft authoritarianism"¹⁸⁹ or "creeping authoritarianism,"¹⁹⁰ involving an unprecedented level of patrimonial and patronage politics, heightened corruption, diminished law and order, increased impunity, and hostility to human and minority rights discourses. A particularly worrying trend has been increased anti-Muslim feeling among influential members of the Sinhalese community, leading to strident demands for the ban of halal foods. This development fits well with Ilan Peleg's analysis of hegemonic or control regimes, where he asserts that they ultimately lead to a diminution of the space available for legitimate democratic protest, whether by members of the majority or minority community.¹⁹¹

Reconciliation can only occur if there is a major change in direction, likely only possible under a complete transformation of the regime. This seems very unlikely at this stage. Given that the Indian government has consistently sought assurances that the political aspirations of the Tamil people be met, and given that India's intervention in 1987 led to the only reluctant shift away from a purely unitary state, it might be tempting to conclude that external factors could lead to a change in these dynamics, perhaps through a renewed Indian role in facilitating state reform. Yet, given the particular dynamics of the majority Sinhalese community and the deep mistrust toward Indian interference, this would be unlikely to lead to lasting change. It is more likely that internal changes, perhaps resulting from the present administration overreaching its power, could lead to a set of circumstances where reconciliation and political dialogue are resulting by-products. Growing frustration over the perception that the ruling administration has been paying lip-service to uplifting economic conditions has catalyzed protest in myriad arenas. This has, however, yet to crystallize into more sustainable protest movements. Therefore, far more likely by far is a continuation and perpetuation of the present dynamics, at least for the near future.

¹⁸⁸ Bastian (2013): 10.

¹⁸⁹ DeVotta (2010).

¹⁹⁰ Bastian (2013): 7.

¹⁹¹ Peleg (2007): 65-66.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Scholarly Books, Articles and Research Papers/Reports

Abeyratne, Sirimal. "Employment Implications of the "Five – Hubs Strategy" of Sri Lanka," International Labour Organization Employment Sector Employment Working Paper No. 116 (Geneva: International Labour Organization, 2012).

Amerasinghe, Nihal. "An Overview of Settlement Schemes in Sri Lanka," *Asian Survey*, 16, 7 (July 1976): 620-636.

Bastian, Sunil. "The Political Economy of Post-War Sri Lanka," International Centre for Ethnic Studies Research Paper Series, No. 7 (Colombo: International Centre for Ethnic Studies, 2013).

----- *The Politics of Foreign Aid in Sri Lanka: Promoting Markets and Supporting Peace* (Colombo: International Centre for Ethnic Studies, 2007).

Bauböck, Rainer. "Introduction: Dual Citizenship for Transborder Minorities? How to Respond to the Hungarian-Slovak Tit-for-tat," in Rainer Bauböck, ed., *Dual Citizenship for Transborder Minorities? How to Respond to the Hungarian-Slovak Tit-for-tat* (Florence: Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies, European University Institute, 2010): 1-4.

Brow, James. "In Pursuit of Hegemony: Representations of Authority and Justice in a Sri Lankan Village," *American Ethnologist*, 15, 2 (May 1988): 311-327.

Brüggemann, Karsten and Andres Kasekamp, "The Politics of History and the 'War of Monuments' in Estonia," *Nationalities Papers*, 36, 3 (2008): 425-448.

Burger, Angela S. "Policing a Communal Society: The Case of Sri Lanka," *Asian Survey*, 27, 7 (July 1987): 822-833.

Chaaminda, Sumith. "Fishing in Turbulent Waters," International Centre for Ethnic Studies Research Paper Series, No. 2 (Colombo: International Centre for Ethnic Studies, 2013).

Coakley, John. *Nationalism, Ethnicity and the State: Making and Breaking Nations* (Thousand Oaks, CA and London: Sage, 2012).

----- "National Majorities in New States: Managing the Challenge of Diversity," in Alain-G. Gagnon, André Lecours and Genevieve Nootens, eds., *Contemporary Majority Nationalism* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2011): 101-124.

Cohn, Theodore H. *Global Political Economy: Theory and Practice*, 2nd edition (New York: Longman, 2003).

Commercio, Michele E. "Systems of Partial Control: Ethnic Dynamics in Post-Soviet Estonia and Latvia," *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 43 (2008): 81-100.

Coomaraswamy, Radhika. "The Struggle for Human Rights: A Personal Story," speech at McGill University on accepting the Robert S. Litvack Award for Human Rights, November 8, 2005, <http://www.dailynews.lk/2005/11/28/fea04.htm> [July 6, 2013].

----- “The Constitution and Constitutional Reform,” in K. M. De Silva, ed., *Sri Lanka: Problems of Governance* (New Delhi: Konark, 1993): 127-147.

Cordell, Karl and Stefan Wolff, *Ethnic Conflict: Causes, Consequences, Responses* (Cambridge and Malden: Polity, 2009).

A Correspondent, “Notes on the Military Presence in Sri Lanka’s Northern Province,” *Economic & Political Weekly*, 48, 28 (14 July 2012): 34-40.

De Silva, C. R. “Sinhala-Tamil Relations and Education in Sri Lanka: The University Admissions Issue – The First Phase, 1971-7,” in Robert B. Goldmann and A. Jeyaratnam Wilson, eds., *From Independence to Statehood: Managing Ethnic Conflict in Five African and Asian States* (London: Pinter, 1984): 125-146.

De Silva, K. M. *Sri Lanka’s Troubled Inheritance* (Kandy: International Centre for Ethnic Studies, 2007).

De Silva, K. M. and W. Howard Wriggins, J. R. Jayewardene of *Sri Lanka: A Political Biography: Volume II – From 1956 to His Retirement (1989)* (London: Leo Cooper, 1994).

DeVotta, Neil. “From Civil War to Soft Authoritarianism: Sri Lanka in Comparative Perspective,” *Global Change, Peace & Security*, 22, 3 (2010): 331-343.

----- *Blowback: Linguistic Nationalism, Institutional Decay, and Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2004).

Dharmadasa, K. N. O. “The Roots of Sinhala Ethnic Identity in Sri Lanka: The Debate on the ‘People of the Lion’ Continued,” *Ethnic Studies Report*, 14, 2 (July 1996): 137-170.

Diatchkova, Svetlana. “Ethnic Democracy in Latvia,” in Sammy Smooha and Priit Järve, eds., *The Fate of Ethnic Democracy in Post-Communist Europe* (Budapest: Open Society Institute, 2005): 81-114.

Dunham, David. “Politics and Land Settlement Schemes: The Case of Sri Lanka,” *Development and Change*, 13 (1982): 43-61.

Edrisinha, Rohan and N. Selvakkumaran, “The Constitutional Evolution of Ceylon/Sri Lanka 1948-98,” in W. D. Lakshman and Clement A. Tisdell, eds., *Sri Lanka’s Development Since Independence: Socio-Economic Perspectives and Analyses* (Huntington: Nova Science, 2000): 95-112.

Farmer, B. H. “The Social Basis of Nationalism in Ceylon,” *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 24, 3 (May 1965): 431-439.

----- *Ceylon: A Divided Nation* (London and New York: Oxford University Press, 1963).

Fearon, James and David Laitin, “Sons of the Soil, Migrants, and Civil War,” *World Development*, 39, 2 (2011): 199-211.

Feldman, Gregory. “The European-ness of Estonia’s Ethnic Integration Policy: Nation, Culture, and Security in an Applicant State,” *Cambridge Review of International Studies*, 16, 2 (2003): 223-238.

Gunasekera, Malinga H. *For a Sovereign State: A True Story on Sri Lanka’s Separatist War* (Ratmalana: Vishva Lekha, 2000).

- Gunawardena, R. A. L. H. "The People of the Lion: Sinhala Consciousness in History and Historiography," in Social Scientists Association, *Ethnicity and Social Change in Sri Lanka* (Colombo: Social Scientists Association, 1984): 1-53.
- Haklai, Oded. *Palestinian Ethnonationalism in Israel* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011).
- Harrison, Graham. *The World Bank and Africa: The Construction of Governance States* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004).
- Hensman, Rohini. "Independent Judiciary and Rule of Law Demolished in Sri Lanka," *Economic and Political Weekly*, 49, 9 (2 March 2013): 16-19.
- Herring, Ronald J. "Making Ethnic Conflict: The Civil War in Sri Lanka," in Milton J. Esman and Ronald J. Herring, eds., *Carrots, Sticks, and Ethnic Conflict: Rethinking Development Assistance* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001): 140-174.
- Horowitz, Ronald L. *A Democratic South Africa? Constitutional Engineering in a Divided Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991).
- International Crisis Group, "Sri Lanka's Authoritarian Turn: The Need for International Action," Asia Report No. 243, 20 February 2013.
- "Sri Lanka's North II: Rebuilding under the Military," Asia Report No. 220, 6 March 2012.
- "Sri Lanka's Judiciary: Politicised Courts, Compromised Rights," Asia Report No. 172, 30 June 2009.
- Jamal, Amal. "Nationalizing States and the Constitution of 'Hollow Citizenship': Israel and its Palestinian Citizens," *Ethnopolitics*, 6, 4 (November 2007): 471-493.
- Järve, Priit. "Re-Independent Estonia," in Sammy Smootha and Priit Järve, eds., *The Fate of Ethnic Democracy in Post-Communist Europe* (Budapest: Open Society Institute, 2005): 61-80.
- Jayawardena, Kumari. "Ethnic Consciousness in Sri Lanka: Continuity & Change," in Committee for Rational Development, *The Ethnic Conflict: Myths, Realities and Perspectives* (Delhi: Navrang, 1984): 226-271.
- Khilnani, Sunil. *The Idea of India* (New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1998).
- Kiely, Ray. "Neo liberalism Revised? A Critical Account of World Bank Concepts of Good Governance and Market Friendly Intervention," *Capital & Class*, 64 (Spring 1998): 63-88.
- Kousser, J. Morgan. *Colorblind Injustice: Minority Voting Rights and the Undoing of the Second Reconstruction* (Chapel Hill, NC: University of North Carolina Press, 1999).
- "The Voting Rights Act and the Two Reconstructions," in Bernard Grofman and Chandler Davidson, eds., *Controversies in Minority Voting: The Voting Rights Act in Perspective* (Washington DC: Brookings Institution Press, 1992).
- Lustick, Ian. *Arabs in the Jewish State: Israel's Control of a National Minority* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1980).

----- “Stability in Deeply Divided Societies: Consociationalism versus Control,” *World Politics*, 31, 3 (1979): 325-344.

----- *Arabs in the Jewish State: A Study in the Effective Control of a Minority Population* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1977).

McGarry, John. “Ethnic Domination in Democracies,” in Paul Weller, ed., *Political Participation of Minorities: A Commentary on International Standards and Practices* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2010): 35-71.

McGarry, John and Brendan O’Leary. “Introduction: The Macro-political Regulation of Ethnic Conflict,” in John McGarry and Brendan O’Leary, eds., *The Politics of Ethnic Conflict Regulation: Case Studies of Protracted Ethnic Conflicts* (London: Routledge, 1993): 1-40.

Miller-Adams, Michelle. *The World Bank: New Agendas in a Changing World* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999).

Mohsin, Amena. *The Chittagong Hill Tracts, Bangladesh: On the Difficult Road to Peace* (Boulder, CO and London: Lynne Rienner, 2003).

Moore, Mick. “Economic Liberalization versus Political Pluralism in Sri Lanka?” *Modern Asian Studies*, 24, 2 (May 1990): 341-383.

Muggah, Robert. *Relocation Failures in Sri Lanka: A Short History of Internal Displacement and Resettlement* (London and New York: Zed, 2008).

Navaratna-Bandara, A. M. “Ethnic Relations and State Crafting in Post-Independence Sri Lanka,” in W. D. Lakshman and Clement A. Tisdell, eds., *Sri Lanka’s Development Since Independence: Socio-Economic Perspectives and Analyses* (Huntington: Nova Science, 2000).

Nissan, Elizabeth and Roderick L. Stirrat. “The Generation of Communal Identities,” in Jonathan Spencer, ed., *Sri Lanka: History and the Roots of Conflict* (London: Routledge, 1990): 19-44.

O’Leary, Brendan and John McGarry. *The Politics of Antagonism: Understanding Northern Ireland* (London and Atlantic Highlands, NJ: Athlone Press, 1996).

Peebles, Patrick. “Colonization and Ethnic Conflict in the Dry Zone of Sri Lanka,” *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 49, 1 (February 1990): 30-55.

Peiris, G. H. “Agrarian Transformations in British Sri Lanka,” *Sri Lanka Journal of Agrarian Studies*, 2, 1 (1981): 1-26.

Peled, Yoav. “The Viability of Ethnic Democracy: Jewish Citizens in Inter-war Poland and Palestinian Citizens in Israel,” *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, 34, 1 (2011): 83-102.

----- “Ethnic Democracy and the Legal Construction of Citizenship: Arab Citizens of the Jewish State,” *The American Political Science Review*, 86, 2 (1992): 432-443.

Peleg, Ilan. *Democratizing the Hegemonic State: Political Transformation in the Age of Identity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2007).

Pettai, Vello and Klara Hallik. "Understanding Processes of Ethnic Control: Segmentation, Dependency and Co-optation in Post-communist Estonia," *Nations and Nationalism*, 8, 4 (2002): 505-529.

Rainford, Charan. "Between Stability and Transformation in Ethnically Hegemonic Polities?: Consolidating Control in Post-War Sri Lanka," paper presented at IPSA World Congress of Political Science, Universidad Complutense, Madrid, Spain, 9 July 2012.

----- "Can't Get There From Here?: Dilemmas of Power-Sharing in a Control Regime – The Case of Sri Lanka," paper presented at Ethnicity and Democratic Governance workshop on *Power-Sharing: Empirical and Normative Critiques*, Munk Centre for International Studies, University of Toronto, 19 November 2011.

Reilly, Ben. *Democracy in Divided Societies: Electoral Engineering for Conflict Management* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

Richardson, John M. "Violent Conflict and the First Half Decade of Open Economy Policies in Sri Lanka: A Revisionist View," in Deborah Winslow and Michael D. Woost, eds., *Economy, Culture and Civil War in Sri Lanka* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004): 41-71.

Samarasinghe, S. W. R. de A. "Ethnic Representation in Central Government Employment and Sinhala-Tamil Relations in Sri Lanka: 1948-81," in Robert B. Goldmann and A. Jeyaratnam Wilson, eds., *From Independence to Statehood: Managing Ethnic Conflict in Five African and Asian States* (London: Frances Pinter, 1984): 173-184.

Samaraweera, Vijaya. "Land, Labor, Capital and Sectional Interests in the National Politics of Sri Lanka," *Modern Asian Studies*, 15, 1 (1981): 127-162.

Schneckener, Ulrich. "Modes of Ethnic Conflict Regulation: The Politics of Recognition," in Ulrich Schneckener and Stefan Wolff, eds., *Managing and Settling Ethnic Conflicts: Perspectives on Successes and Failures in Europe, Africa and Asia* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004): 18-39.

Skanthakumar, B. "Opening the Door to Tamil/s? Linguistic Minority Policy and Rights," in B. Skanthakumar, ed., *Language Rights in Sri Lanka: Enforcing Tamil as an Official Language* (Colombo: Law and Society Trust, 2008): 59-110.

Shastri, Amita. "Channelling Ethnicity through Electoral Reform in Sri Lanka," *Commonwealth and Comparative Politics*, 43, 1 (March 2005): 34-60.

----- "An Open Economy in a Time of Intense Civil War: Sri Lanka, 1994-2000," in Deborah Winslow and Michael D. Woost, eds., *Economy, Culture and Civil War in Sri Lanka* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2004): 73-94.

----- "Estate Tamils, the Ceylon Citizenship Act of 1948 and Sri Lankan Politics," *Contemporary South Asia*, 8, 1 (1999): 65-86.

----- "The Political Economy of Intermediate Regimes: The Case of Sri Lanka, 1956-1970," *South Asia Bulletin*, 3, 2 (Fall 1983): 1-14.

Smootha, Sammy. "The Model of Ethnic Democracy: Response to Danel," *Journal of Israeli History*, 28, 1 (2009): 55-62.

----- “The Model of Ethnic Democracy,” in Sammy Smooha and Priit Järve, eds., *The Fate of Ethnic Democracy in Post-Communist Europe* (Budapest: Open Society Institute, 2005): 5-60.

----- “The Model of Ethnic Democracy: Israel as a Jewish and Democratic State,” *Nations and Nationalism*, 8, 4 (October 2002).

Spencer, Jonathan. “A Nationalism without Politics? The Illiberal Consequences of Liberal Institutions in Sri Lanka,” *Third World Quarterly*, 29, 3 (2008): 611-629.

Taylor, Peter J. “The State as Container: Territoriality in the Modern World-system,” *Progress in Human Geography*, 18, 2 (1994): 151-162.

Tennekoon, Serena N. “Rituals of Development: The Accelerated Mahaweli Development Program of Sri Lanka,” *American Ethnologist*, 15, 2 (May 1988): 294-310.

Uphoff, Norman T. “Ethnic Cooperation in Sri Lanka: Through the Keyhole of a USAID Project,” in Milton J. Esman and Ronald J. Herring, eds., *Carrots, Sticks, and Ethnic Conflict: Rethinking Development Assistance* (University of Michigan Press, 2003): 113-139.

----- *Learning from Gal Oya: Possibilities for Participatory Development and Post-Newtonian Social Science* (London: Intermediate Technology Productions, 1996).

Uyangoda, Jayadeva. “Travails of State Reform in the Context of Protracted Civil War in Sri Lanka,” in Kristian Stokke and Jayadeva Uyangoda, eds., *Liberal Peace in Question: Politics of State and Market Reform in Sri Lanka* (London and New York: Anthem, 2011).

van Duin, Peter and Zuzana Poláčková. “Democratic Renewal and the Hungarian Minority Question in Slovakia: From Populism to Ethnic Democracy?” *European Societies*, 2, 3 (2000): 335-360.

Wickramasinghe, Nira. “Sri Lanka in 2013: Post-war Oppressive Stability,” *Asian Survey*, 54, 1 (2014): 199-205.

----- *Sri Lanka in the Modern Age: A History of Contested Identities* (London: C. Hurst & Co; Colombo: Vijitha Yapa, 2006).

Williams, David. *The World Bank and Social Transformation in International Politics* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2008).

Woost, Michael D. “Developing a Nation of Villages: Rural Community as State Formation in Sri Lanka,” *Critique of Anthropology*, 14, 1 (1994): 77-95.

----- “Nationalizing the Local Past in Sri Lanka: Histories of Nation and Development in a Sinhalese Village,” *American Ethnologist*, 20, 3 (August 1993): 502-521.

Yiftachel, Oren. *Ethnocracy: Land and Identity Politics in Israel/Palestine* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2006).

Yiftachel, Oren and As’ad Ghanem. “Understanding Eethnocratic’ Regimes: The Politics of Seizing Contested Territories,” *Political Geography*, 23, 6 (August 2004): 647-676.

Reports and Statements

Collective for Economic Democratisation, “Urban Development: Where the World Bank Leads, Sri Lanka Follows,” *The Island*, 23 June 2013: http://www.island.lk/index.php?page_cat=article-details&page=article-details&code_title=82006.

Department of Census and Statistics, “Population by Ethnic Group according to District,” 2011 census, 2012.

----- “Population by Ethnic Group, Census Years,” Abstract, 2010.

----- “Basic Population Information on Ampara District” Preliminary Report based on Special Enumeration, 2007a.

----- “Basic Population Information on Jaffna District” Preliminary Report based on Special Enumeration, 2007b.

----- “Basic Population Information on Trincomalee District” Preliminary Report based on Special Enumeration, 2007c.

----- “Brief Analysis of Population and Housing Characteristics,” 2001 census, 2006.

LLRC – Commission of Inquiry on Lessons Learnt and Reconciliation, Report, November 2011.

Ministry of Finance and Planning, *Sri Lanka – the Emerging Wonder of Asia: Mahinda Chintana – Vision for the Future* (2010), <http://www.treasury.gov.lk/publications/mahindaChintanaVision-2010full-eng.pdf>.

Tamil National Alliance, Statement on Parliamentary Select Committee, 2 July 2013.

United Nations Human Rights Council, Resolution 22/1, Report of the 22nd Regular Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council (A/HRC/22/2), 25 February-22 March, 2013, <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session22/Pages/22RegularSession.aspx>.

----- Resolution 19/2, Report of the 19th Regular Session of the United Nations Human Rights Council (A/HRC/19/2), 27 February-23 March, 2012, <http://www.ohchr.org/EN/HRBodies/HRC/RegularSessions/Session19/Pages/19RegularSession.aspx>.

World Bank, Country Director Naoko Ishii’s opening remarks at the Strategy Dissemination Workshop commemorating launch of Sri Lanka Country Assistance Strategy, 8 October 2008, <http://web.worldbank.org/WBSITE/EXTERNAL/COUNTRIES/SOUTHASIAEXT/0,,contentMDK:21927197~menuPK:158845~pagePK:2865106~piPK:2865128~theSitePK:223547,00.html>.

World Bank, “Project Performance Reassessment Report, Sri Lanka – Third Mahaweli Ganga Development Report (Credit 1166-CE),” 28 June 2004, [http://lnweb90.worldbank.org/OED/oeddoelib.nsf/b57456d58aba40e585256ad400736404/75b997a0bf4de24d85256fcc00543d68/\\$FILE/ppar_29489.pdf](http://lnweb90.worldbank.org/OED/oeddoelib.nsf/b57456d58aba40e585256ad400736404/75b997a0bf4de24d85256fcc00543d68/$FILE/ppar_29489.pdf).

----- “Independent Evaluation Group Report – Mahaweli Ganga Development,” 1995, <http://lnweb90.worldbank.org/oed/oeddoelib.nsf/DocUNIDViewForJavaSearch/0D869807701D1EEE852567F5005D8903?OpenDocument>.

Newspaper Articles and Online Sources

Daily Mirror, “Silent Majority in Govt. Wants 13 A- DEW,” 24 June 2013, <http://www.daily-mirror.lk/news/31396-silent-majority-in-govt-wants-13-a-dew.html>.

Groundviews, “Is the Tamil Version of Our Anthem a Joke?” 16 December 2010, <http://groundviews.org/2010/12/16/is-the-tamil-version-of-our-national-anthem-a-joke/>.

Gunasekera, Tissaranee. “Gotabhaya Rajapaksa Has Revealed the Real Nature of the Rajapaksa Regime,” *Transcurrents*, 7 April 2012, <http://transcurrents.com/news-views/archives/10885>.

Hindustan Times, “Implement 13th Amendment, India Tells Sri Lanka,” 5 July 2013, <http://www.hindustantimes.com/India-news/NewDelhi/Implement-13th-amendment-India-tells-Sri-Lanka/Article1-1087793.aspx>.

----- “Whose Anthem Is It Anyway?” 14 December 2010, <http://www.hindustantimes.com/world-news/SriLanka/Whose-national-anthem-is-it-anyway/Article1-638217.aspx>.

India Today, “SL War Crimes: Gotabaya Hits out at Jayalalithaa; Confident of Indian Support,” 8 August 2011, <http://indiatoday.intoday.in/story/sl-war-crimes-gotabaya-hits-out-at-jayalalithaa-confident-of-indian-support/1/147475.html>.

The Island, “Repeal 13A without Delay Says Gotabhaya,” 13 October 2012, http://www.island.lk/index.php?page_cat=article-details&page=article-details&code_title=63716.

Jansz, Frederica. “Gotabaya Rajapaksa – Three Years Later,” *Sunday Leader*, 27 May 2012, <http://www.thesundayleader.lk/2012/05/27/gotabaya-rajapaksa-three-years-later/>.

Nathaniel, Camelia. “Army Denies its Presence Is Responsible for Insecurity of Northern Women,” *Sunday Leader*, 13 October 2013, <http://www.thesundayleader.lk/2013/10/13/army-denies-its-presence-is-responsible-for-insecurity-of-northern-women/>.

Rajasingham, K. T. “Weli Oya – the New AGA Division in the Mullaitivu District,” *Asian Tribune*, 16 September 2011, <http://www.asiantribune.com/news/2011/09/15/weli-oya-new-aga-division-mullaitivu-district>.

Sarvananthan, Muttukrishna. “The Myth of ‘No More Minorities’,” *Colombo Telegraph*, 15 October 2013, <https://www.colombotelegraph.com/index.php/the-myth-of-no-more-minorities/>.

Times of India, “Sri Lanka Scraps Tamil Version of Its National Anthem,” 12 December 2010, http://articles.timesofindia.indiatimes.com/2010-12-12/south-asia/28247438_1_national-anthem-tamils-sri-lankan.

All online sources are available as of 20 March 2014.

Footnotes

- 1 Reliable figures do not exist for the ethnic composition of the police and armed forces but with the exception of Tamil paramilitary groups that are aligned with the government, it is clear that they are predominately Sinhalese with practically no Tamil representation and a small Muslim proportion. See Burger (1987) for an early account of the ethnicization of the coercive organs of the state.
- 2 States of emergency were renewed monthly almost continuously from 1983 to their lifting in August 2011.
- 3 See ICG (2009).

In the aftermath of the military defeat of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam in May 2009, the government has embarked on extensive economic development programmes that have acted in large part as a substitute for political reconciliation or reform. In effect, policy-making has amounted to a continuation of the nexus between economic development and territorial control where government policy represents a furthering of a bipartisan “neo-liberal consensus” whereby orthodox, neo-liberal economic policies mesh with extensive, large-scale state-led infrastructure projects that run counter to neo-liberal tenets. Moreover, “development”, as understood in this context, is seen as a substitute to political reform. Territorial control is the territorial dimension in control regimes, regimes – often democratic – where the dominant community utilizes its political and economic resources to stamp its authority upon the state and accentuate its hierarchical relationship with the other communities. Territorial control involves the control of the state’s territory, primarily fostered by a fear that a lapse in control of, particularly contiguous territory can foster secession or irredentism. Historically, territorial control has been exercised in Sri Lanka through the settlement of Sinhalese villagers to the underpopulated dry zone provinces in extensive irrigation schemes. Here, a clear socio-economic goal co-exists with a secondary strategy to minimize the demographic threat of a contiguous Sri Lankan Tamil homeland in the Northern and Eastern Provinces. This paper sheds light on the dynamics of the development discourse in the present environment, arguing that these dynamics must be understood in their historical context. Thus, avenues for post-war reconciliation such that there is genuine hope for transition from a post-war environment to one that can be described as post-conflict are limited. This is borne out both by political discourse, actions, and policy, while also complementary to the historical evolution of the control regime and its close juxtaposition with state-led development practices.

Charan Rainford is a doctoral candidate in the Department of Political Studies at Queen’s University, Kingston, Canada. Prior to this, he was an affiliated researcher with the International Centre for Ethnic Studies (ICES). His research interests are in majority-minority relations in divided polities and the successful management of such diversity, ethnic conflict and nationalism, diaspora politics, and the study of regional security cooperation. He has published and co-authored book chapters and policy papers on regional order in South and South-East Asia, the “development through peace” paradigm in Sri Lanka, and is co-author (with Ambika Satkunanathan) of *Mistaking Politics for Governance: The Politics of Interim Arrangements in Sri Lanka 2002-2005* (ICES, 2009).

Printed by Karunaratne & Sons (Pvt) Ltd.

ISBN 978-955-5801-52-2



9 789555 801522 >