

**ETHNICITY, CULTURE AND RELIGION IN  
SRI LANKA:  
A MULTI-DISCIPLINARY SEMINAR**



**PROCEEDINGS**

**Seminar Room, Faculty of Arts**

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# **Multi-Culturism in Sri Lanka - Polanaruwa Period**

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Sri Lanka is one of the multi-cultural nations in South Asia. Tamil and Sinhala people have had an ancient and continuous history. Though the history between the two races highlights the political frictions, it has failed to highlight the ties, co-operation, friendship and marriages between two races. If we look back at the history, economic, politics, social and cultural activities of the two races, we understand that the both races have had a peaceful co-existence. The Polanaruwa period is an ideal era to demonstrate the above fact.

Before the Cholas made Polanaruwa as the capital, it had been the sub-capital of the earlier Sinhala kings. The period from 10th century A.D. to 13th century A.D. was a glorious era in its economic, politics, social and cultural life. The historians point out that the above period had had the best relationship between the Tamil and Sinhala races. The following spheres are full of example of their co-existence:

- a) Tamil soldiers had the responsibility of defending Buddhism.
- b) Tamil soldiers were in the army of the Sinhala kings.

- c) Tamil officers were in the administration of the Sinhala kings.
- d) Marriage ties between the Tamil and Sinhala royal families.
- e) Tamil inscriptions by Sinhala kings.
- f) Influence of Dravidian art in the Sinhala art and the vice versa.

The main objective of this research is to highlight relevant ties between the Tamil and Sinhala races.