

# The Kingdom of Jaffna - Propaganda? Or History?

The history of Sri Lanka during the period of about three and a half centuries between the abandonment of Polonnaruwa and the Portuguese conquest of the maritime provinces comprising chiefly the territories incorporated within the kingdoms of Kotte and Jaffna presents features which are in many ways different from those of the preceding periods. Although this period of the island's history has suffered relatively by neglect and has been represented as one of decline generally by historians influenced by Classical romanticist thinking it has a greater relevance for the understanding of the institutions and problems of modern and even contemporary Sri Lankan history.

In his 'critical review' of the *The Kingdom of Jaffna*, Gunasinghe in effect accuses the author of having written it, like earlier Tamil scholars, with sectarian and propagandist motives, his aim being the proving of an extensive Tamil or South Indian influence on the history of the island from early times. In other words, his charge is that the author has sought to present an Indo-centric or rather Dravidian-centric view of the history of Sri Lanka.

"The underlying theme of this book ... is basically the propagandist idea of proving a predominantly Dravidian influence on the North and East of the Island from early times."

"The propagandist theme of this book."

"... an obsessive desire to prove an extensive Dravidian influence in the Island from early times."

"... a desire to show an exaggerated picture of the expansion of South Indian and Tamil influence in Sri Lanka from early times."

"... a figment of Pathmanathan's imagination."

"... the author's desire to strengthen the underlying theme of the book of proving a predominantly Dravidian influence in Sri Lanka from early times."

"... this sweeping generalization."

"... trying to prove a point for purposes other than historical analysis."

"Conclusions based on flimsy evidence."

The above are some of the comments made by the reviewer Gunasinghe on the author's *The Kingdom of Jaffna*<sup>1</sup>.

I shall proceed to show that not only are the above charges and insinuations without any foundation but also that the reviewer is unacquainted with the findings of recent historical research. I shall support my statements with the findings of competent scholars none of whom can be accused by any sane person of having propagandist motives in reaching his conclusions.

The words "propaganda" and "propagandist" when used in connection with a historical work have an extremely strong pejorative sense and imply that the historian has prostituted his calling. I take strong exception to these words which only the reviewer's ignorance of recent historical research could have led him to use. I leave it to the reader to decide whether the reviewer's denunciations are true in the light of what I submit below.

Gunasinghe begins his exercise by imputing motives to C. Rasanayakam and other Tamil scholars. The implication of his accusation is that whatever has been written by Tamil scholars has been motivated by considerations other than historical analysis. This dangerous and malicious accusation of his is perhaps an indication of the measure of his sense of irresponsibility. He is apparently unaware that another work on the history of Jaffna by S. Gnanapragasar<sup>2</sup> was published soon after the release of *Ancient Jaffna* by S. Rasanayakam.<sup>3</sup> Despite their near contemporaneity these two works are very dissimilar in the treatment of details and the degree of historical sense displayed by their respective authors. Gunasinghe's ignorance of Gnanapragasar's work cannot excuse him for the irresponsible manner in which he imputes motives to Tamil scholars who are no longer alive. It is to be regretted that Gunasinghe attributes motives without any evidence for it.

In *The Kingdom of Jaffna* I have in several instances rejected Rasanayakam's conclusions. Nor have I endorsed his methodology and interpretation of the basic source materials. I have not sought to arrive at conclusions on the basis of evidence from materials that have no relevance to my principal theme. Gunasinghe's failure to point out this fundamental difference between the two works, *Ancient Jaffna* and *The Kingdom of Jaffna* and his assumption that they are on par could not be anything other than a deliberate attempt on his part to mislead the readers particularly in the light of the following observations made by me.

1. S. Pathmanathan, *The Kingdom of Jaffna*, Colombo 1978

2. S. Gnanapragasar, *Yālpāna Vaipava Vimarcanam*, Achchuvally, 1928.

3. C. Rasanayagam, *Ancient Jaffna*, Madras 1926.

*Ancient Jaffna*, however is not a scientific work by modern standards. Many of Rasanayakam's conclusions are controversial, misleading, and wrong, and most of these arise from some of the basic misconceptions of the author. The book is divided into eight chapters of which the first is about the Nāgas, and the second is about the Kalingas. In the first chapter the Nāga settlements in the island and the affinities the Nāgas had with some of the peoples of India are discussed at length but the conclusions arrived at by him are not fully borne out by later studies.... Rasanayakam's studies on the Kalingas have little bearing on Jaffna, much of the materials he used pertains to the history of the Sinhalese kingdom.

The next three chapters on social life and commerce are based on an abundance of materials derived from Graeco-Roman and Tamil literature. But much of these materials relate to the history of the Tamil kingdoms in South India. The last three chapters (VI - VIII) are mainly on the period of the Tamil kings of Jaffna and these represent his main contribution towards the study of the history of Jaffna. Yet, even in these chapters many of Rasanayakam's conclusions would seem to be untenable. As the details of Ceylonese and South Indian history were not well-known during his time, the author has arrived at conclusions on the basis of his wrong assumptions and incorrect interpretations of passages in literature and inscriptions. His contention that there was a local Kalinga dynasty in Jaffna prior to the Cōla conquest of the island and that Vicaya Kūlañkaiccakkaravartti mentioned in the *Yālpāna vaiṣvāmālai* is identical with Magha does not seem to be historically valid. Rasanayakam's work was easily surpassed by that of his erudite contemporary, Gnanapragasar.<sup>4</sup>

Gunasinghe's claim that I have attempted to prove an extensive Dravidian influence over the island is wrong, unfounded and misleading. I have not presented all the evidence relating to Dravidian influences on Sri Lankan history, society and culture in my work. The observations I have made in my work about the influences exerted by the Tamils is completely in accord with the view expressed by Paranavitana. Commenting on the references to Tamils in the Brāhmī inscriptions he writes:

As the Tamils made a bid to gain the mastery of the island as early as the second century B. C. and on many subsequent dates *and have played a most important role in the island's history*, we should make somewhat more than a passing reference to these records in which we find the earliest reference to Tamils in Ceylon.<sup>5</sup>

4. S. Pathmanathan, 'The Pioneer Historians of Jaffna, C. Rasanayagam and S. Gnanapragasar, Paper (Memo-graph) presented at Gnanapragasar Centenary Commemoration Seminar, IATR (Sri Lanka National Unit), Colombo, 1976.

5. *Inscriptions of Ceylon*, Vol. I ed. S. Paranavitana (Department of Archaeology, Sri Lanka) Colombo, 1970, p. XC.

It may also be appropriate to recall Ellawala's incidental observation on this matter. He says :

It is also believed that in the pre-Āryan period the only country beyond the sea known to the people of the Tamil land was Ceylon. It is, therefore, justifiable to suppose that South India had a strong influence on Ceylon both culturally and socially.<sup>6</sup>

That there were Tamil and other Dravidian influences on Sri Lankan society from proto-historic times is indisputable. If I were to revise my book now, I would in the light of recent studies express more emphatically my views on this question. There is sufficient evidence relating to the Dravidian presence in the Proto-historic period of Sri Lankan history, and the correlated testimony of literary, archaeological and epigraphic evidence seems to suggest that the Dravidian influence on social and cultural institutions in the island has been far greater than has been hitherto recognized.

At this point it may be relevant to focus attention on an aspect of the Vijaya legend recorded in the *Mahāvamsa*. This chronicle asserts that Vijaya underwent the ceremony of consecration after securing a royal maiden from Mathurā in the Pāṇḍu (Pāṇḍya) Kingdom. The princess was accompanied by a large number of maidens, who on arrival were to be given in marriage to Vijaya's ministers, and retainers, craftsmen and a thousand families of the "eighteen guilds."<sup>7</sup> The historical significance of this legend which purports to explain the origins of the Sinhalese kingdom is that it presupposes that the society and culture characteristic of this kingdom was a synthetic one combining divergent ethnic and cultural elements which in origin were North Indian as well as South Indian, Dravidian and non-Dravidian. The same idea is conveyed by A.L. Basham when he asserts :

... These two Aryan types, the man of action and the man of thought, together no doubt with Dravidian and aboriginal elements, produced the great civilization of Ceylon.

Equally easy to account for are Vijaya's second wife, the princess of the Pāṇḍyas, and her enormous retinue. Dravidian infiltration into Ceylon must have been going on from the earliest historical times and probably before. The story of the princess arose from the need to account for the presence of Tamils in Ceylon, and to provide them with a place in the social and ethnic structure.<sup>8</sup>

6. H. Ellawala, *Social History of Early Ceylon*, Colombo, 1969, p. 158

7. *The Mahāvamsa* trans. Wilhelm Geiger, Colombo, 1960, VII: 55-58; 69-74.

8. A. L. Basham, 'Prince Vijaya and the Aryanization of Ceylon', *The Ceylon Historical Journal*, Vol. I, No. 3 January 1952, pp. 167, 171.



This conclusion is supported by archaeological and epigraphic evidence.

Incontrovertible evidence about the presence of Dravidians in considerable numbers and in different localities in the island during the proto-historic and early historic periods is to be found in the megalithic monuments and urn burials unearthed in the island. In relation to the megalithic remains discovered in the island Paranavitana writes :

These megalithic sites and urn fields are found throughout the regions inhabited by Dravidian-speaking people. The burial customs to which they bear witness are referred to in early Tamil literature. It is therefore legitimate to infer that the people who buried their dead in dolmens and cists, as well as in large earthen-ware jars were Dravidians... The few megalithic monuments and urn-burials discovered in Ceylon are obviously an overflow from South India. The archaeological evidence is supported by literary sources. The Dravidian peoples influenced the course of the island's history about the same time they gained mastery over the South Indian kingdoms.<sup>9</sup>

Archaeological excavations conducted after the publication of the book in which Paranavitana's observations appear, have revealed the possibility that thousands of megalithic urn-burials could be unearthed.

Epigraphical references to Tamils and Tamil loan words in the early historical period which are of considerable historical interest have to be interpreted in the light of the evidence from megalithic artefacts. There are four Brāhmī inscriptions referring specifically to Tamils. Of these two are from Periyapuliyankulam in the Vavuniya District,<sup>10</sup> the third is from Anurādhapura<sup>11</sup> and the last is from Dīghavāpi.<sup>12</sup> It is also significant that the Tamils referred to in all these inscriptions were either traders or associated with the mercantile profession. A factor of considerable importance is that all of them had Prākṛit or Indo-Aryan names. Gunasinghe's assertion that they all had Sinhala names is wrong.<sup>13</sup> The Sinhalese language had not developed its characteristic features around this time. Apart from the Tamils, even the Nāgas and other ethnic groups had adopted Indo-Aryan names and, as we have suggested, this was due to the pervasive influence of the Indo-Aryan cultural tradition transmitted by Buddhism and Prākṛit.

9. S. Paranavitana, *Sinhalayo*, Colombo, 1967, pp. 8-9.

10. *Inscriptions of Ancient Ceylon*, Vol. I, Nos. 356, 357.

11. *ibid* No. 94.

12. *ibid* No. 480.

13. Concerning their names Paranavitana says: But more significant is the fact that they bore names of Sanskrit origin—the types of names that were current among the Sinhalese people too. This indicates that, by the time they came within our ken in these inscriptions, they had been profoundly influenced by the Aryan culture of North India.' *ibid*, p. XC.

There is further evidence relating to Tamil and Dravidian influences in the early period of the island's history. The expression *marumakan*, a Tamil kinship term occurs in no less than six Brahmi inscriptions discovered at different sites in the North Central, Eastern and Uva provinces.<sup>14</sup> The word is unmistakably Tamil and denotes son-in-law or nephew (a sister's son when a man is concerned and a brother's son when a woman is concerned)<sup>15</sup> and as a kinship term it is characteristic of a matrilineal society. Paranavitana's translation of this word as grandson on the assumption that it is synonymous with *Munumburu* is wrong and misleading, there being no philological or lexical connection at all between these two terms. In all instances the translation of this word as grandson has to be rejected and instead the words 'nephew or son-in-law' should be substituted.

The adoption of a Tamil kinship term in inscriptions recorded in Indo-Aryan is significant in two ways. In the first place it suggests a familiarity with the Tamil language which during that period could have been possible only through intermingling with Tamils. Secondly, the adoption of this Tamil word may imply that the Indo-Aryan social organization had no pattern of kinship ties connoted by the word *marumakan*. The use of the word *marumakan* implies a familiarity with Tamils and the prevalence of a matrilineal system of social organization over a wide area in the island. The social status of the persons with reference to whom the word *marumakan* occurs is also of some significance. Two persons were *gamikas*, one was the nephew or son-in-law of a Senāpati. Another person so referred to was the son-in-law or nephew of Uparāja Nāga. In one instance the reference is to a commoner named Sonutara. From the incidences of the occurrence of the word *marumakan* in the Brāhmī inscriptions it may be inferred that there were Dravidian influences at different levels of society.

In connection with Tamil settlements in the Anurādhapura kingdom I have made the following observation on the basis of an expression, *demel kuli*, which occurs in a few inscriptions of the late Anurādhapura period.

The levy of an impost known as *Demele-kuḷi*, which was a kind of poll-tax, also gives some indication of the Tamil settlements in the late Anurādhapura period. Such an impost was presumably collected from all Tamils living in the kingdom. The inscriptions of Sena II (853-887) mention this impost in connection with the villages of Posonavuila and Galindura gomandala. *Demele Kuli* is mentioned also in two epigraphs of Kassapa IV; one of them is from Sīgiriya.<sup>16</sup>

14. *Inscriptions of Ancient Ceylon*, Vol. I. Nos. 83, 289, 487, 643, 744, 1161.

15. D. J. Kanagaratnam, *Tamils and Cultural Pluralism in Ancient Sri Lanka*, Colombo 1978, p. 39.

16. *The Kingdom of Jaffna*, p. 23.

According to Gunasinghe, this, is an instance of error made by me with an obsessive desire to prove an extensive Dravidian influence in the Island from early times.

Before I take Gunasinghe's arguments on the interpretation of *Demeḷ kulī* I would like to state that I have nowhere claimed or implied that the villages of Galimunduru Gomandala and Posonavulla were inhabited entirely by Tamils as Gunasinghe has suggested. He misrepresents the author's remarks and conclusions with a view to proving his point that the author has been motivated by some obsessive desire. The implication of my remark was that there were Tamils living in these villages and this is undeniable whatever the interpretation of the expression *Demeḷ Kulī* may be. Gunasinghe enters into an argument on this point quite unwittingly and without any imagination about the logical implications of the acceptance of even Wickremasinghe's explanation of the expression which he fully accepts and endorses in his misguided enthusiasm. Wickremasinghe's interpretation of the expressions *Demeḷ Kulī* and *Heḷ kulī* respectively as Tamil labourers and Sinhalese labourers would, far from weakening my claim, strengthen my argument about the presence of Tamils in the villages concerned. It would only imply that there were Tamil workmen along with Sinhalese workmen in those villages.

The author does not accept Wickremasinghe's explanation of this term. Nor is the explanation that the word *kulī* occurring in these inscriptions has the connotation of 'impost' a figment of my imagination as Gunasinghe suggests. The interpretation that the expression *kulī* denotes labourers (workers) is based on Wickremasinghe's assumption that it is a Dravidian loan word, being a modified form of *kūli* (coolie). It is even doubtful that the word *kūli* had acquired the connotation 'workmen' at such an early period. It was used in the sense of hire or reward.

The expression *demeḷ kulī* occurs along with *heḷ kulī* also in the Vihāregama Pillar inscription and a fragmentary pillar inscription in the Colombo Museum.<sup>17</sup> The Vihāregama Pillar Inscription contains the following passage :

*me gamhi heḷ kulī demeḷ kulī nind kot isā me gamat maṅgiva pegiva  
melatsīn radkol kāmiyan no vadnā kot isā . . .*<sup>18</sup>

Paranavitana, who edited this inscription, translates this passage and the expressions that follow it in the following manner :

'. . . and having made the *heḷ kulī* and *demeḷ kulī* proprietary (to the

17. S. Paranavitana, 'Veharegama Pillar Inscription' *Epigraphia Zeylanica* (EZ) IV, No. 6  
S. Paranavitana, 'A Fragmentary Pillar Inscription in the Colombo Museum', EZ,  
IV, No. 32.

18. EZ, IV, p. 53.

estate itself) and having made the *magiwa*, *pegiva*, *melātsi*, and other officers of the royal household not enter this estate<sup>19</sup>

In an explanatory note on the terms *hel kulī* and *demel kulī* Paranavitana remarks: 'These two terms occur also in the Iripinniyāva inscription. Two kinds of imposts levied respectively on Sinhalese and Tamil inhabitants of the country are probably to be understood by these technical terms'.<sup>20</sup> The context in which the expressions *hel kulī* and *demel kulī* occur in the Vihāregama Pillar inscription shows that Wickremasinghe's explanation of these terms is untenable. As they convey a totally different sense than the one implied in Wickremasinghe's interpretation and because they are mentioned in the epigraph along with *kābāli*, another impost, Paranavitana's explanation of the term *kulī* as an impost is the more reasonable one.

Considered in the light of Paranavitana's interpretation of the terms *hel kulī* and *demel kulī* as two imposts levied respectively on the Sinhalese and Tamil inhabitants of the country, Gunasinghe's comments on the author's conclusions are wrong and his assertion that the author has been impelled by an obsessive desire to prove an extensive Dravidian influence in the island is outrageous. It may also be pointed out that the author's conclusions regarding Tamil settlements in the Anurādhapura kingdom were based not merely on the interpretations of the terms *hel kulī* and *demel kulī* but also on the correlated literary and epigraphical testimony of a much more solid character.

Now has the author in his conclusions expressed ideas which are in any way unorthodox. A. L. Basham, for instance, expresses his views more forcefully regarding Tamil settlements when he says:

The existence of a significant Tamil element in the population of Ceylon at the time we speak, no doubt descendants partly of earlier invaders and partly of peaceful immigrants, is attested both from chronicles and inscriptions. A further Dravidian element, and one of the utmost political importance, was provided by South Indian mercenaries, who played an ever increasing part in military and political affairs. Even in the reign of Kassappa IV (896-913) an inscription refers to the Demela-adhikāri utur Pandiradun, thought by Dr. Paranavitana to be the Superintendent of lands granted to Tamil mercenaries; from his name he may well have been a Tamil. More than one inscription of about this time refers to allotments of land to Tamils, the *Demela-kabālla*. Throughout the medieval period, it would seem, the importance of the Tamil element in Ceylon had been

19. *ibid.*, p. 54.

20. *ibid.*

growing, while simultaneously the Tamil powers of South India were gaining strength.<sup>21</sup>

We trust that Gunasinghe will not now insinuate that Basham too has been motivated by an obsessive desire to prove an extensive Dravidian influence on the island.

In connection with the author's observations on the mercantile association called Vanigrāma mentioned in the Badulla pillar inscription Gunasinghe asserts.

Still another such instance is in regard to a village mentioned in the Badulla pillar inscription, of the 10th century. In attempting to prove the extensive expansion of South Indian trade guilds (and, inferentially, the extensive spread of the Tamil-speaking population as far as Badulla) Pathmanathan takes a reference to the Vanigrāma of Hopitigama referred to in this Inscription as a reference to the Manigrāman, a mercantile group that is known to have operated in South India.

In this instance Gunasinghe's complaint that the I have attempted to show that a Tamil merchant guild had a settlement at a place in the interior like Badulla is perhaps understandable. But, if he had been aware that there is a revised edition of this inscription,<sup>22</sup> his views on the matter, perhaps, would have been entirely different. The inscription referred to, which testifies that the locality of Hopitigamu had two types of settlements, one dominated by agriculturalists and the other by merchants, records regulations regarding the rights and duties of both categories of inhabitants and the conduct of officials in their dealings with the people of the two types of settlements.

In a footnote on the Vanigrāma in his edition of the Badulla Pillar Inscription Parānavitana equates the Vanigrāma with the Manigrāman of South India. He asserts:

"Vanigrāma is the same as Maṇik-grāma 'mercantile corporation' occurring as the name of a guild of merchants in several South Indian documents, and in a Tamil inscription found at Takopa in Siam, is doubtless a corruption of Skt. Vaṇig-grāma."<sup>23</sup>

In this context it may be relevant to consider also the views of K. Indrapala on this matter. He writes:

21. A. L. Basham, 'The Background to the Rise of Parākramabāhu I, *The Ceylon Historical Journal*, Vol. IV, Nos. 1, 2, 3 and 4, July and October, 1954 and January and April 1955, p. 11.

22. S. Parānavitana, 'A Revised Edition of Badulla (Horabora) Pillar Inscription', *EZ* Vol V, No. 16.

23. *ibid*, p. 190, f.n. 6.

One of the earliest South Indian mercantile communities to gain a foothold in the island was the Maṇigrāma. In South India its activities extended over a wide area and are referred to in inscriptions from several places from the ninth to the fourteenth century. . . . In Ceylon we get evidence of their activities in the interior market-town of Hopitigamu, near Mahiyangana, in the middle of the tenth century

The Badulla Pillar Inscription of Udaya IV (946-954) refers to them as Vaṇigrāma, a variant form of Maṇigrāma. This variant form occurs in contemporary Tamil literature as well.<sup>24</sup> He further asserts that they enjoyed the privilege of conducting investigations whenever criminal offences were committed by a person or persons associated with them.<sup>25</sup>

In the light of the observations of K. Indrapala and S. Paranavitana on the Vanikrāma mentioned in the Badulla Pillar Inscriptions, Gunasinghe's insinuations and his assertion, "There is not the slightest evidence that the Vaṇigrāma mentioned here had any connection with the Maṇigrāma in South India. On the contrary, the word Vaṇigrāma seems to refer to the mercantile chamber, one of several official bodies in the market of Hopitigamu," are wrong, misleading and totally unsupported by any historical evidence. His main weakness seems to be his preoccupation with ideas expressed in works published decades ago and which are now only of antiquarian interest. What is most distressing is that Gunasinghe does not show the slightest acquaintance with the findings of recent historical research and that he displays an attitude of intolerance to conclusions based on it.

Gunasinghe cites my remarks on Malayarāyara as an instance of my obsession to prove an extensive Dravidian influence on the island and observes:

. . . The conclusions drawn from the evidence is often not beyond doubt, and sometimes provably erroneous. He concludes that a personage called in the *Cūlavamsa* by the name Malayarāyara was a leader of Tamil troops. But the reference he indicates merely says that the Malayarāyara who held the fortress of Vallikākhetta on behalf of Parākramabāhu fought the troops of Gajabāhu, and says nowhere that he was a leader of Tamil troops. On the contrary the *Cūlavamsa* shows that the title of Malayarāja i. e. Malayarāyara, was one that was sometimes given to members of the Sinhala royal family.

Gunasinghe's conclusion is wrong and unwarranted and is based on ignorance which I can only describe as astounding. The *Cūlavamsa* asserts

24. K. Indrapala, 'South Indian Mercantile Communities in Ceylon, circa 950 - 1250', *The Ceylon Journal of Historical and Social Studies*, (New series) Vol. I, No. 2, July - December 1971, pp. 104 - 105.

25. *ibid*, p. 110.

that Malayarāja who was posted at Rattākara was “the leader of the Tamil troops” (*Damīlānīkanāyakam*).<sup>26</sup> Gunasinghe contradicts himself when he both accepts the identification of Malayarāyara with Malayarāja and criticises one for describing Malayarāyara as “the leader of a Tamil army.” Besides, it has to be pointed out that Gunasinghe’s contention that the “title of Malayarāja, i.e. Malayarāyara was one that was sometimes given to the members of the Sinhala royal family” is wrong as regards the Polonnaruwa period.

My remarks on Malayarāyar (a) were based on Geiger’s identification of Malayarāyara with Malayarāja. For purposes of clarification and because a re-examination of this question will, in my opinion, throw some new light on the social history of the Polonnaruwa period, we may reconsider the evidence relating to Malayarāyara and Malayarāja in the *Cūlavamsa* account of Parākramabāhu. The *Cūlavamsa* refers to military leaders called Malayarāja and Malayarāyara in connection with the military campaigns of Parākramabāhu. One of them, Malayarāja, is said to have been posted at Rattākara.

The general called Malayarāyara is mentioned by the chronicler on two occasions.<sup>27</sup> He figures prominently in Parākramabāhu’s campaigns against Gajabāhu. He held the stronghold of Vālikākhetta from where he advanced towards Mallavalāna. Having occupied that stronghold after dislodging Komba, one of the army leaders of Gajabāhu II (1132-1153) Malayarāyara fought two naval actions in the pearl banks and dispersed the forces of Gajabāhu. Later, he is said to have joined Parākramabāhu’s forces that were fighting not far away from Anurādhapura.

As he believed that Malayarāyara is a variant of Malayarāja, Geiger assumed that Malayarāyara and Malayarāja occurring in the account of Parākramabāhu were two different forms of a title borne by a dignitary serving under Parākramabāhu.<sup>28</sup> Geiger’s identification of Malayarāyara with Malayarāja is endorsed by Paranavitana who observes: The attack opened on the west coast. The Malayarāyara or commander of the *Damila* troops of Parākramabāhu, who was stationed at the stronghold of Vālikākhetta (the present Vellāvala, near Buttala oya) advanced northward and took Gajabāhu’s fortress at Mallavalāna. The Malayarāyara then embarked his troops and sailed to Muttākara.<sup>29</sup> Paranavitana, however, is cautious in refraining from describing Malayarāyara as the official who had the title of ‘the King of Malaya’.

Before commenting on the identification of Malayarāja with Malayarāyara we may consider the appropriateness of Geiger’s translation of the

26. *Cūlavamsa* ed. Wilhelm Geiger (PTS) London, 69: 6 - 7.

27. *ibid*, 70: 62 - 63, 155 - 156.

28. Geiger asserts that Malayarāyara is a variant of Malayarāja. See CV trns 70: 62 f.n. 2.

29. *University of Ceylon History of Ceylon (UCHC)* Vol. I, pt 2, p. 449.



expression Malayarāja as found in the account of Parākramabāhu I. The strophe in which the expression in question occurs runs:

*Pubbam Malayarājāvham āmantetvāna khattiyo  
Rattakarāvhave ratte damiḷānikanāyakam.*<sup>30</sup>

Geiger translates this strophe in the following manner:

First of all the prince summoned to him the official with the title of king of Malaya who was leader of the Damiḷa army in the district called Rattākara.<sup>31</sup>

In this instance, as will be subsequently seen, Geiger's translation of the expression Malayarāja does not seem to be justified. The expression Malayarāja, which occurs several times in the history of the Anurādhapura period as recorded in the Pali chronicle,<sup>32</sup> appears only once in the history of the subsequent period. In the Anurādhapura period, Malayarāja was used as an official title and was conferred on princes and sometimes on generals and ministers, who were charged with the responsibility of administering the central and mountainous part of the island, which came to be known as Malaya or Malayadesa. The title was conferred by the king and always by a ruler, who had secured a supervisory control over the principality of Malayadesa.

In the light of Geiger's apt remark that the owner of the title Malayarāja was entrusted with the administration of Malaya,<sup>33</sup> the expression Malayarāja occurring in the *Cūlavamsa* account of Parākramabāhu cannot be regarded as a title which had the same significance. Malayarāja, the leader of Parākramabāhu's Tamil army (*Damiḷānikanāyakam*) is nowhere said to have been associated with the government of Malaya; nor is there any evidence to show that he was ever sent to any area within that principality. His outpost was Rattākara in the northern part of Dakkhinadesa. Another strong consideration against interpreting the expression Malayarāja occurring in the account of Parākramabāhu as a title conferred on a ruler of Malayadesa is the fact that Malayarāja, "the leader of the Tamil army," figures in the account of Parākramabāhu before his conquest of Malaya. On the testimony of the chronicle, he was serving under Parākramabāhu, when the latter's sphere of authority had not extended beyond the limits of Dakkhinadesa. If we accept Geiger's explanation that the title Malayarāja was conferred on a dignitary who was entrusted with the administration of Malayadesa, it would be illogical to assume that Parākramabāhu conferred the title Malayarāja on one of his dignitaries before he had conquered that principality. Parākramabāhu is said to have secured control

30. CV (PTS), 69:6.

31. CV trns 69: 6.

32. CV, 41: 33-35; 42: 6m 44: 43, 53.

33. CV part I, trns p. 54, f.n. 3.



over the mountainous principality by winning over to his side Rakkha, a general (*dandādhināyaka*) of Gajabāhu who was exercising authority over this area. In the chronicle's account of his conquest of Malaya there is no reference to Malayarāja; nor is Parākramabāhu ever credited with having conferred the title Malayarāja on any one serving under him. In fact, in the whole range of traditional history relating to the Polonnaruva period, there is not even a single reference to any king conferring the title of Malayarāja on any dignitary; nor is there any reference to any dignitary being endowed with the title Malayarāja ruling over Malaya.<sup>34</sup> It may also be pointed out here that the general who was left in charge of the administration of Malaya after Parākramabāhu's conquest of it was Rakkha and not Malayarāja, the leader of the Tamil army. It would appear that *Malayarāja* as a title conferred on a prince entrusted with the government of Malaya had fallen into desuetude after the tenth century. Moreover, there is no evidence to suggest that Malayarāja was ever used as an honorific epithet in the manner in which Pāṇdirad and Cōlaraja were used during the late Anurādhapura period. In the light of the foregoing considerations, Geiger's translation of the expression Malayarāja, in this instance, as "the official with the title of king of Malaya" is not justified and is misleading. It has to be explained in a different way. Besides, his translation of the strophe quoted here earlier may be modified in the following manner: First of all the prince summoned to him the one called Malayarāja who was the leader of the Tamil army in the district called Rattākara.

Geiger assumed that the general referred to as Malayarāyara at two instances in the account of Parākramabāhu's early campaigns against Gajabāhu was the same as the one referred to as Malayarāja and described as the leader of the Tamil army because of his belief that Malayarāyara is a variant of Malayarāja. The difficulty in respect of this proposition is that the chronicle does not in any way suggest that the two names, Malayarāja and Malayarāyara refer to one and the same person. Apart from the superficial phonetic similarity of the two names and the circumstance that they both were warrior chiefs serving under the same ruler, there is nothing in the chronicle to connect the two names. As seen earlier, Malayarāja, who was the leader of the Tamil army, was posted at Rattākara while Malayarāyara, who originally held the stronghold of Vālikākhetta, is said to have conducted military operations at Mallavajāna, Muttākara and near Anurādhapura.

Since Malayarāja figuring in the account of Parākramabāhu cannot by any means be considered as one vested with the responsibility of administering Malaya, as I have shown earlier, Geiger's claim that Malayarāyara is a variant of the title Malayarājā is wrong and misleading.

34. The *Culavamsa* credits Vijayabahu with having conferred ranks and titles on his brothers. It is significant that there is no reference in this particular account of the chronicle to the title Malayaraja. See CV, 86 - 90.

Malayarāyara is the Pāli and Sinhalese transcription of the Tamil name Malayarāyar. The general practice followed in both languages in transcribing a Tamil proper name ending with a consonant is to add the vowel *a* to the final consonant in the name. During the period we are now concerned with, there were many Tamil chieftains in South India, who had the expression *rāyar* or *rāyan* as the final part of their names. The Pāli chronicle itself provides numerous examples to show that the term *rāyar* suffixed to the names of Tamil chiefs was transcribed as *rāyara*. Yādharāyara, Mālavarāyara, Villavarāyara, Pāirṇḍirāyara, Vīraṅgarāyara and Kalingarāyara are such instances.<sup>35</sup> If we assume, in agreement with Geiger, that Malayarāyara is a variant of Malayarāja it cannot be explained why the author of the chronicle should have referred to Malayarāja by a Tamil name in two instances.

Returning to the vexed question of the identity of Malayarāja with Malayarāyar two explanations are plausible. One is that these two names were personal or family names of two persons. The other explanation is that, if the two names refer to one and the same individual, the form Malayarāja has to be considered as a rendering into Pāli of the Tamil name Malayarāyar. In this context it may be pointed out that the occurrence of the form Malayarāyara in two instances as against a solitary instance of the occurrence of the form Malayarāja in the whole *Cūlavamsa* account of Parākramabāhu should have some significance. Whether Malayarāyar(a) was identical with Malayarāja or not, he was not, as shown earlier, a ruler of Malayadesa and the foregoing discussion confirms the author's observation that he was a Tamil general serving under Parākramabāhu. The presence of a Tamil general in Dakkhinadesa, when it was under the authority of Parākramabāhu, could cause no surprise especially when we consider that two Tamil dignitaries, Mākkalīnkam Kaṇavadi and Vijayāpāranan had been among the *pañcapradhānis* of his father, Mānābharana I, otherwise called Vīrabāhu.<sup>36</sup>

The absurdity of Gunasinghe's insinuation that I have been motivated by communal considerations and an obsessive desire to show that the Dravidian influence over the island was extensive is exposed by further evidence, which we now present regarding Tamil warrior chiefs and officials, who had served in the administration during the Polonnaruva period. I have elsewhere made an observation to the effect that Kilivai Apimānarāman, Malayarāyar and Matimān Pañcaran were Tamil generals serving under the Sinhalese rulers during the Polonnaruva period.<sup>37</sup> Kaṇtan Pilantavan Vallan who was the recipient of an immunity grant from Vikramabāhu (1111-1132) was another warrior of some conseq-

35. CV, 76; 137, 163, 173 - 5, 178, 179, 210, 218 223, 268; 77: 28, 40,

36. S. Paranavitana, 'Two Tamil Pillar Inscriptions from Budumuttava', *EZ*, III, No. 33, p. 305.

37. *The Kingdom of Jaffna*, p. 79.

uence as suggested by his epithet Kaṇṭan (victor).<sup>38</sup> The Kahanibilyāva inscription which records the immunity grant bestowed on him suggests that he had a land holding of considerable size somewhere in the neighbourhood of Rantisā Vāva.<sup>39</sup>

A Tamil warrior chief, who held a position of considerable authority and influence in the Polonnaruva kingdom during the early twelfth century, was Kaṇṭan Kaṇavadi, referred to as a general (*daṇḍanāyaka*) in an inscription discovered recently in the Trincomalee district. Kaṇṭan Kaṇavadi who had under his command a Vēlaikkāra army consisting of four units (*nālpātai*) had placed under the protection of the Vēlaikkārar, the Buddhist temple called Vikkīrama calāmēkapperumpalli.<sup>40</sup> Besides, the inscription records that the Vēlaikkārar under his command held land granted to them as life-tenure (*jivitam*) by the king at the locality called Ututurai. Finally, I may draw attention to the expression *Demala lēdaru pota* (register of Tamil clerks) mentioned in the Panākaduva copper plates of Vijayabāhu.<sup>41</sup> This would suggest that there was a group of Tamil clerks serving under Vijayabāhu I.

Commenting on my observations on Hindu influences on society during the Polonnaruva period and especially on my remark that "the court of Polonnaruva seems to have been imbued with and animated by ideas which emphasized that the monarch was super-human and potentially divine,"<sup>42</sup> Gunasinghe remarks: "These instances perhaps, can be viewed as mistaken interpretations by a historian who was commenting on available facts. But this same view cannot apply to certain other passages, where conclusions have been drawn without any benefit of facts at all."

In a misguided and futile attempt to show that I have drawn conclusions without the support of any evidence Gunasinghe further adds: "While it is correct to say that the author of the *Cūlavamsa* has shown Parākramabāhu I as a larger than life-figure, nowhere has he compared this king with a god or attributed divinity, actual or potential, to him.

38. Paranavitana says: 'The inscription embodies an edict of Vikramabahu I (1112 - 1132), conferring immunities to a land brought under cultivation by a person named Kandan Pilantavan Vallan. The name indicates a person of Tamil origin'. See S. Paranavitana, 'Kahambilyava Slab Inscription of Vikramabahu I', EZ, Vol. V, No. 39, p. 405.

39. *ibid*, 408.

40. S. Gunasingham, Trincomalee Inscriptions Series No. 3: A Tamil Slab Inscription from Mayilawewa (Mayilankulam) forthcoming. The author is indebted to S. Gunasingham who showed him an estampage he has prepared of this inscription which is of considerable historical importance. It was set up in the reign of Vikramabahu. The naming of a Buddhist temple after Vikramabahu and the occurrence of the title *Vikkīrama Calameka* in this epigraph are of great significance. Besides, it provides further evidence on the activities of the Vēlaikkārar and the strength of their army in medieval Sri Lanka.

41. S. Paranavitana, 'The Panakaduva Copperplate Charter of Vijayabahu I', EZ, Vol. V, p. 29

42. *The Kingdom of Jaffna*, p. 65.

The inscriptions of Vijayabāhu I, Parākramabāhu I and even Nissankamalla try to prove the pure descent of these kings from the *ksatriya* lineage, and do not attribute divinity to them." As his comments relate to my remarks on two aspects, namely, ideals of kingship and Hindu influences we shall deal with them separately for the sake of clarity.

It is of interest to compare Gunasinghe's views on kingship with those of some of the most reputed scholars of Sri Lanka. In his comments on kingship during the Polonnaruva period G. C. Mendis remarks: "The ideas of kings too changed to some extent during this period. In the preceding Chapter it was pointed out that a king was looked upon as a bodhisattva. According to Nissankamalla an impartial king was like a Buddha, and though kings appeared in human form they were to be regarded as gods, and Nissankamalla's statement clearly shows the strong influence of Hinduism at this time."<sup>43</sup>

The same ideas are expressed rather more forcefully by another authoritative interpreter of the institutions of Sinhalese traditional society, S. Paranavitana who says:

The position which the king occupied in the administration of the kingdom continued to be the same as at the close of the earlier period. The theory that the king was a god seems to have come to the fore at times, for instance, in the reign of Kassapa I. This was generally accepted by the people as a whole.

The divinity of the King is accepted in literary works, and expounded in more than one epigraphical record of the period. The *Rasa-vāhini* tells us that "kings conduct themselves on the earth as if they were created out of the six divinities, namely, Yama, the sun-god, the moon-god, Mrtyu (Death), Kuvera (the God of wealth) and Agni (the God of fire)". The Galpota inscription of Nissankamalla echoes the Manusmṛti in declaring that though kings appear in human form, they are divinities and must, therefore, be regarded as gods.<sup>44</sup>

What I said in My work about kingship during the Polonnaruva period is in general conformity with the views expressed by G. C. Mendis and S. Paranavitana. The comments made by Gunasinghe on this point are irrelevant and totally wrong, and betray his ignorance on this point and his lack of familiarity with the primary sources. The inscriptions of Vijayabāhu I, Parākramabāhu I, Nissankamalla and the general Bhāma declare in no uncertain terms that the monarch was potentially divine. Our recent studies on this subject show that the ideas and ideals of kingship that prevailed in the Polonnaruva period represent a synthesis

43. G. C. Mendis, *The Early History of Ceylon*, Calcutta, 1940, p. 99.

44. UCHC, Vol. I, part I, p. 634; part II, p. 532.

of three conceptions, namely, the Dhammic conception rooted in Buddhist idealism, divinity of kingship, and the heroic ideal.<sup>45</sup> Besides, the views of G. C. Mendis and S. Paranavitana highlight the absurdity of Gunasinghe's contention that divinity 'actual or potential' was never attributed to kings. I have been accused again of being sectarian and motivated by an obsessive desire to prove an extensive Dravidian influence on the island for a casual remark about Hindu influences on Sri Lanka during the Polonnaruva period. Let us again see what reputed Sri Lankan scholars, some of whom have thoroughly examined the evidence from Sinhalese sources, literary and epigraphical, have to say on this matter.

Hinduism received a great deal of encouragement in Ceylon during its occupation by the Cholas, and Hindu influence did not disappear with their expulsion. When Vijayabāhu I became king of Rajarata he did not deprive the Hindu shrines of their revenues, and the kings after him, who were children of princes and princesses of Pāndya or Kalinga, not only observed Hindu rites but also built Hindu temples.<sup>46</sup>

'The cults of Hinduism that wielded a considerable influence on the inhabitants of this island must have been practised and preached by people who had come from the different parts of India. Whether they had any real converts, it is difficult to surmise; *but no doubt the people adopted many Hindu and Brahmanic rites and ceremonies, and included them in their own faith.*'<sup>47</sup>

'The literature of the period refers copiously to Hindu gods, brahmins, heretics, ascetics, vēdas and sacrifices. These references are really in connexion with Indian settings, but here and there the writers show their familiarity with these practices, and were no doubt keenly aware of the consequences that followed them. Perhaps these writers, such as Dhammasena and Buddhagupta, while inculcating the fundamentals of Buddhism, also sought to popularise the doctrine with a view to checking the devastating influence of other faiths. This evidence that there were other faiths in the island is corroborated by the testimony from the chronicles and other books of later periods.<sup>48</sup>

'Buddhism was so much of a philosophy that it had nothing concrete to offer to the common man, who, as a result, grasped the various

45. S. Pathmanathan, "Kingship in Sri Lanka: Ideology of State Power, circa A. D. 1070 - 1270," paper presented to the South Asian History Seminar, S. O. A. S., London, 1979.

46. G. C. Mendis, *The Early History of Ceylon*, p. 107.

47. M. D. Ariyapala, *Society in Medieval Ceylon* (2nd print) Colombo, 1968, p. 180.

48. *ibid*, p. 181

*non-Buddhistic beliefs and practices from Hinduism and Brahminism, which afforded tangible forms of worship. Ultimately Buddhism itself adopted such forms.*<sup>49</sup>

‘Most important of these cults were Śiva and Viṣṇu cults, which were and are still widespread. In many a Sinhalese home one may see Viṣṇu being worshipped, with other planetary gods such as Sani (Saturn) who is considered dangerous. *Literary works refer to these gods and the cults connected with them. The SdhRv admonishes the people to give up faith in Viṣṇu and Mahēśwara and take refuge in the triple gem.*<sup>50</sup>

In the light of the passages we have quoted here from G. C. Mendis and Ariyapala, the chance remark I have made in my work regarding Hindu influences is justified and is by no means a sweeping generalization. Gunasinghe’s observations on my remark even in this instance again is baseless and contradicts the views of competent scholars.

Commenting on a passage on the importance of trade relations between South India and Sri Lanka Gunasinghe observes: ‘It is to be regretted, however, that Pathmanathan too seems to have written his book with the same motivation as the earlier Tamil scholars had, and that he too seems to have had the objective of proving that the influence of South India had been predominant on historical developments in Sri Lanka..... This underlying theme, though expressed more insidiously than by earlier scholars, is nevertheless present, as may be seen from the following passages. This type of misleading generalization, made by inserting statements unsupported by any evidence, can only be due to the subtle attempts to strengthen the underlying theme of the book of proving a predominantly Dravidian influence in Sri Lanka from early times.

The pattern of the Indo-Ceylon trade during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries was of course not the same as it was during the Polonnaruva period. The essential difference was in the position held by the island’s export commodities in the Indo-Ceylon trade. There is no evidence to show that arecanuts were exported from the island to South India before the fourteenth century. Her principal export commodities were pearls, gems, elephants and certain varieties of wood and spices. There is some evidence to show that grain and textiles were imported in substantial quantities. In connection with textile products imported into the island, B. J. Perera writes: ‘Textiles was a major import of Ceylon. The chief sources appear to have been India and China... From an

49. *ibid.*, p. 184

50. *ibid.*, pp. 184-185.

analysis of Chinese references to the export of textiles to Ceylon, it is apparent that they were mostly luxury variety for the royalty and the upper classes.<sup>51</sup>

"India was another source for Ceylon's requirement of textiles. Here too the cloth imported may have been luxury varieties. Kasi shawls are mentioned in the *Guttila Kāya* and Gurjara cloth in the *Paravi Sandesa*. Cambay exported to Ceylon a special variety of cloth which was called "cambaya" from the place of origin. South India too was a source for Ceylon's textiles requirements.<sup>52</sup>

"Cloth was another import from South India. The very word (*redi*) appears to be a word of Dravidian origin. This word which means a coarse cotton cloth is used in Sinhalese to designate cloth in general. The word (*renda*) which in Sinhalese is a name for lace, is also a word of Dravidian origin indicating that they were originally imported from South India."<sup>53</sup>

Still another commodity imported to the Island from South India was rice. B. J. Perera asserts: One of the chief imports of Ceylon in the tenth century was rice... The writings of foreign travellers and geographers contain several references to the import of rice to Ceylon from South India... But rice was certainly imported long before the abandonment of Rajarata... Ibn Khurdadbeh writing in the 9th century states of Babattun (identified as Sri Kandhapuram): "Rice is produced here and exported to Sarandib." Khurdadbeh's evidence is also supported by Edrisi: "It (Sri Kandhapuram) produces rice in large quantities and supplies provisions to the markets of Sarandib."<sup>54</sup> Dependence on rice imports from South India became conspicuous after the abandonment of artificial irrigation works in the thirteenth century. Paranavitana contends that precious metals also were obtained from India.<sup>55</sup> In the light of the observations of B. J. Perera our casual remarks on the trade between Sri Lanka and South India during the Polonnaruva period could in no way be regarded as a sweeping generalization; nor do they imply that the Sri Lankan economy was dependent on that of South India as Gunasinghe suggests.

One of the main factors that led to a further growth of Tamil settlements in the island during the period that intervened the tenth century and the abandonment of Polonnaruva during the late thirteenth century was the penetration of the organized groups of Tamil traders into several parts of the island. Such a development could be explained only against

51. B. J. Perera, 'The Foreign Trade and Commerce of Ancient Ceylon', *CHJ*, Vol. II, Nos. 1 & 2. July to October 1952, p. 20.

52. *ibid.*

53. B. J. Perera, 'The Foreign Trade and commerce of Ancient Ceylon - II: Ancient Ceylon and its trade with India', *CHJ*, Vol. I, No. 3. January, 1952, p. 202.

54. *ibid.*, p. 197.

55. *UCHC*, Vol. I, part 1 p.



the background of trade relations between Sri Lanka and South India and the role played by such trading groups in the seaborne commerce of the littoral countries of the Indian ocean.

A remarkable feature of South Indian society during the period of Cālukya and Cōla supremacy in the Deccan and the kingdoms of the Tamil country was the development of mercantile guilds among which the most famous were the Manigrāmam, Ayyāvōle or An̄n̄r̄ruvar, Nānādesis, Vira valāñciyār and the Nagarattār. Their general affluence, their numbers and the state of dominance they achieved over a number of artisans and other groups of commodity producers made them one of the most important segments of society. Ports and towns dominated by them sometimes came under their control and became autonomous units under the authority of mercantile interests. According to the *prāśastis* incorporated in some of the inscriptions they had set up in South India they travelled by both land routes and water routes. They traded in magnificent elephants, horses of the finest breeds, large, sapphires moonstones, pearls, rubies, diamonds, lapis-lazuli, onyx, topaz, carbuncles, emeralds and other precious articles, and cardamoms, cloves, bdellium, sandal, camphor, musk, saffron, *mālegaja* and other spices and perfumes. They sold these wholesale or hawked them about on their shoulders; they paid the *sunka* regularly, filled the royal treasury with gold and jewels, and replenished the armoury.<sup>56</sup>

What is of significance as regards Sri Lanka is that the activities of persons or groups affiliated to the Nānādesis, Nagarattār, An̄n̄r̄ruvar, Vira Valāñciyār and other associations of Tamil traders are recorded or referred to in no less than eighteen inscriptions of which sixteen are in Tamil and the remaining two in Sinhalese.<sup>57</sup> Moreover, these inscriptions far from being concentrated in one or two localities have been found at such places as Anurādhapura, Māntai, Polonnaruva, Padaviya, Vāhalkada, Vihārehinna, Ilakatu Aba, Detiyamulla and Galtenpitiya and Nainātivu. The commodities they handled included pepper and other spices, elephants and horses. The inscriptions at Anurādhapura and Nainātivu show that the Nānādesis and Paradesis who brought elephants and horses had established close links with the local rulers. Presumably, they supplied luxury commodities to the court and were the agencies for the sale of commodities, which were royal monopolies and were a source of substantial wealth for the monarchy. The provenance and contents of the inscriptions, as well as the influential position which they held in contemporary Sri Lankan society, suggest that a major share of the island's external trade and a substantial share of the internal trade in Rajarata and the northern part of Mayarata were in the hands of Tamil merchant guilds. A denial of the existence of such a

56. Yazdani, *The Early History of the Deccan* pts I - VI London, 1960 pp. 434 -5.

57. A. Velupillai, *Ceylon Tamil Inscriptions*, pt. I, Peradeniya, 1971, pp. 44-57, 74, 7-22; Part II, Peradeniya, 1973, pp. 8, 20; EZ, Vol. I, p. 180, EZ. Vol. II. p. 236, *University of Ceylon Review*, XXI, No. 1. April 1963, p. 70.



process would amount to a misrepresentation of historical realities. Another and perhaps a more important aspect of the Tamil mercantile associations in medieval Sri Lanka was the significant contribution they made to townlife. Evidence suggests that two of the northern towns of Rajarata, Padaviya and Vāhalkada had become autonomous units under the control of the Aññurruvar and were named after them as Ayyampolil pattinam and Eri Virapattinam respectively. Far from having exaggerated the role of such mercantile groups in Sri Lankan society we now feel that we have, not emphasized adequately the significant role played by the Tamil mercantile associations in the social history of Medieval Sri Lanka.

Concerning the author's remark about the South Indian origins of the Alagakkōnaras and the family of Senālañkādhikāra Gunasinghe observes:

"The statement that the Senālañkādhikāra family had a South Indian origin is completely erroneous, on the contrary, the *Nikāya Saṅgrahaya* written only 10 years after the career of Prime Minister Senālañkādhikāra, says that he was of the Menavara Vamsa, which is stated in the *Rājaratnākaraya* to have been a family descended from a Prince of the Sākyas who had come with the Bodhi tree in the pre-Christian era.

But Paranavitana says:

"Senā Lañkādhikāra is stated to have been a scion of the Meheṇavara family to which also belonged some of the later kings of Gampola. This family claimed to be descended from the Maurya prince Bodhigupta, who came with the Bodhi tree and married a princess named Sunandā, after having removed her from a nunnery (Meheṇavara). *The Meheṇavara family is nowhere mentioned before the Gampola period, and the story of its origin is an ingenious attempt to give a popularly acceptable explanation of the name, which in reality is identical with Malayālam Menavan 'baron' or 'minister', and is thus of the same significance as the Sinhalese bandāra given to Senā Lañkādhikāra's family in later traditional accounts. Senā Lañkādhikāra's descendants up to Kotte times bore names and titles that are Malayālam or Tamil.*"<sup>58</sup>

In the light of this considered opinion of Paranavitana's, Gunasinghe's accusations against me are unwarranted. He does not show familiarity with even such a work as the *University History of Ceylon*. The use of origin myths as instruments of legitimation was not confined to the Gampola period or restricted only to Senālañkādhikāra and his progeny. The use of such myths for similar purposes could be traced from the beginnings of the recorded history of Sri Lanka.

Gunasinghe's objection to my identification of Mākōn mentioned in the *Mattakkalappu Mānmiyam* is wrong, being unsupported by any well sustained argument. The identification of Mākōn with Māgha is not based merely on the superficial phonetic similarity of their names. The account of Mākōn, as recorded in the Tamil chronicle, in all its essential features, is in agreement with what is said of Māgha in the Pāli and Sinhalese chronicles. In agreement with those chronicles, the Tamil text concerned claims that Mākōn came from Kalīṅga, occupied the capital, and ruled over the kingdom mainly with the support of Kerala and Tamil troops. Besides, it confirms the claim made in those chronicles about the religious activities of Māgha. It may also be mentioned here that Toppāvai mentioned in this Tamil chronicle was the name by which Polonnaruwa was referred to by the Batticaloa Tamils. In the author's opinion Toppāvai is a corruption of Tōpāvāva, along the bund of which the architectural remains of the city of Polonnaruwa are concentrated.<sup>59</sup> The fact that the form Toppāvai is not mentioned in any Pāli or Sinhalese work cannot be an argument against identifying Toppāvai as Polonnaruwa. The Sinhalese and Pāli texts cannot be expected to refer to this city by a form of the name by which Polonnaruwa was known to the Tamils of the eastern part of the island.

Gunasinghe's accusation that I have not duly acknowledged the work of A. Liyanagamage in Chapter IV of my work is wrong and misleading. I have duly acknowledged his work and quoted him at several instances. Besides, I have re-examined the problems relating to the decline of Polonnaruwa and Māgha's conquest of it in the light of some additional information that was not available to Liyanagamage, when he published his work. In the process I have endorsed some of his conclusions while suggesting my own ones to some of the problems concerning historical factors that led to this development. Gunasinghe's observation that "some of the conclusions that he has reached, such as his view, in contrast to the view of Liyanagamage, that there was no alliance between the Pāṇdyas and the Sinhalese King against Māgha, are arguable propositions" is misleading and wrong. A. Liyanagamage has not argued anywhere, as Paranavitana has done, that the Pāṇdyas were allied with Parakramabahu II against Māgha. This assertion of Gunasinghe arises from some confusion on his part. I have re-examined the whole evidence relating to the Pandya invasions and demonstrated that the Pāṇdyas attacked Chandrabhānu on account of their own quarrel with him and the evidence of the Pāṇdyā inscriptions is decisive on this point. What is an arguable proposition is not the alliance between the Pāṇdyas and Parākramabāhu II against Māgha as Gunasinghe asserts but the alliance between the Pāṇdyas and the Sinhalese king against the Javaka Candrabhānu and we

59. According to Fagan Polonnaruwa was known as Topary after Topaveva. The name Topary may not be correct. It may be a corruption of Tōpāvai. See James T. Rurnam, *The Polonnaruwa Colossus IATR*, 4th Conference Seminar, 1974, Proceedings Report, pp. 4, 17.

have not totally rejected such a possibility although there is no tangible evidence to sustain such a proposition,

In the section on the origins of the Ārya Cakravarttis we have re-examined the question exhaustively by marshalling all types of available evidence and attempted to interpret the historicity of the traditions of the origins of Ārya Cakkaravarttis as recorded in contemporary literature in the light of epigraphic evidence relating to the Ārya Cakkaravarttis of the Pāndya kingdom.

The last point raised by Gunasinghe concerns the numerical preponderance of the Tamil-speaking people in the north-eastern littoral and in the areas that were included within the kingdom of Jaffna. His main argument against any conclusions on this matter is based on incidental references in the *Cūlavamsa* and the *Pūjāvaliya* to the presence of Sinhalese in some of the localities in these regions. In its account of Candrabānu's second invasion the *Cūlavamsa* asserts: "At that time the lord of men Candrabhānu, formerly beaten after hard fighting, having collected from the countries of the Pāndus and Cōlas and elsewhere many Damila soldiers representing a great force, landed with his Jāvaka army in Mahātittha. After the king had brought over to his side the Sihalas dwelling in Padī, Kurundi and other districts, he marched to Subhagiri."<sup>60</sup> The *Pūjāvaliya* claims that Candrabhānu brought under his power Kurundi, Padī, Gona, Debarapatana, Mānamatta and other localities and assembled a large army consisting of Tamils, Jāvakas and Sinhalese when he marched against Subbhagiri.<sup>61</sup> These references could only suggest that there were Sinhalese living in such places as Padī and Kurundi but they do not imply by any means that they were in a majority in those localities. Besides, it has to be emphasized that the author's conclusions do not imply that these localities were inhabited exclusively by Tamils during the thirteenth century.

The references made in the *Cūlavamsa* and the *Nikāya Saṅgrahaya* to the presence of Tamils in the earlier centuries show the untenability of Gunasinghe's position. In relation to the invasion of the island by Śrī Māra Śrī Vallabha the *Cūlavamsa* records: "The many Damiḷas who dwelt here and there, went over to his side. Thereby he gained great power."<sup>62</sup> The *Nikāyasāṅgrahaya* refers to "the great multitude of Tamils in the villages, market towns and all over the kingdom (*gam niyamgam rājadāni pura un Demala maha senaga*) in the period of Cōla rule."<sup>63</sup> If one attaches to these incidental references the same significance as Gunasinghe attaches

60. CV, 88: 61-64.

61. *Pūjāvaliya*, ed. A. W. Suravira, p. 135.

62. CV, 50: 15.

63. *Nikāya Saṅgrahaya* ed. Simon de Silva, A. Mendis Gunasekera, W. F. Gunawardhana, Colombo, 1907, p. 17.

to the statements recorded in the chronicles relating to the presence of Sinhalese in the northern part of Rajarata in the time of Candrabhānu, it has to be assumed that the Tamils were settled in very large numbers in parts of Rajarata in the ninth as well as the eleventh centuries. But, it is my contention that definite conclusions cannot be drawn merely on the basis of such statements in the chronicles and it may be pointed out that I have maintained uniformity and consistency in the interpretation of such evidences throughout my book.<sup>64</sup>

My remarks regarding the transformation of the Northern and North-eastern parts of the island which were included within the medieval Tamil Kingdom into predominantly Tamil-speaking areas is supported not only by archaeological and local literary evidence but also by the testimony of Portuguese, Dutch and British administrators, Chroniclers and historians.<sup>65</sup>

During that period of three centuries corresponding to that of the Vijayanagara supremacy in the Tamil country no event or movement which could lead to large scale migrations of Tamils from South India to Sri Lanka had taken place. The Tamil kingdoms of South India had succumbed to invaders and conquerors from the north. After the thirteenth century Tamil society in South India was in disintegration. There is no evidence of the movement of Tamil mercantile and military communities on any appreciable scale after the thirteenth century. South Indians continued to migrate to the island in considerable numbers but such migrations were very much restricted in scale in comparison with those of the period prior to the fourteenth century. The political, economic and cultural factors, which had contributed to large scale migrations of Tamils from South India to the island, were no longer in operation after the decline and fall of the Pāṇḍya power in South India. It may therefore be assumed that the major stages of Tamil settlements in the northern and eastern districts which became the nucleus of a Tamil kingdom and many independent or autonomous principalities under the authority of Tamil

64. Note for instance the author's remark: 'The *Nikaya Sangrahaaya*, a Sinhalese chronicle written in the fourteenth century states that there were Tamils in large numbers in the towns, market places and villages in the Kingdom. This could be an exaggeration'. *The Kingdom of Jaffna*, p. 44.

65. Reference may be made to the following texts: Ceylon, Sir James Emerson Tennent, Vol. I. London, 1860, p. 415; *The Douglas Papers*, being a report drawn up for the consideration of the Secretary of State in 1800 when the British settlements of Ceylon were to be made a Crown Colony, and bearing the comments of Henry Dundas, Viscount Melville, Secretary of State, ed. Father S. G. Perera, Colombo, 1933, p. 140; Ralph Pieris, Administration of Justice and Revenue on the Island of Ceylon under the Dutch Government, 'The Cleghorn Minute', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (NS)*, Vol. III, 1954, p. 131, A true and Exact Description of the Great Island of Ceylon by Phillipus Baldaeus trns. Pieter Brohier, Mahara-gama, 1960, p. 287; A Historical Relation of Ceylon by Robert Knox, Glasgow, MCMXI, p. 281; *The Temporal and spiritual Conquest of Ceylon* by Fernao de Queyroz trns. Fr. S. G. Perera, Colombo 1930, p. 46; *Ribeiro's History of Ceilao* with notes from De Barros, De Coute and Antonio Bocarro. trns. from Portuguese by P. E. Pieris, part I, p. 3.

chiefs styled Vanniyar had preceded the fourteenth century. Such a conclusion is fully in accord with that of Sir Alexander Johnston. Commenting on the contents of a Tamil inscription found at a site in the Trincomalee district Johnston observes :

‘However contradictory these traditions may be as to the meaning they attach to the inscription, I think it may safely be concluded, both from them and from the different histories which I have in my possession that the race of people who inhabited the whole of the Northern and eastern provinces of the island of Ceylon, at the period of the greatest agricultural prosperity spoke the same language, used the same written character, and had the same origin, religion, castes, laws and manners, as that race of people who at the same period inhabited the southern Peninsula of India . . .’<sup>66</sup>

That Alexander Johnston was referring to the period when the major irrigation works were in good working order as the one of ‘the greatest agricultural prosperity’ is a legitimate inference. That such a period had preceded the fourteenth century is a well-established historical fact. Thus, my conclusions regarding the transformation of the North-eastern littoral in particular and the northern and eastern provinces in general into predominantly Tamil speaking areas is fully in accord with the assertions of the Portuguese, Dutch and British administrators, chroniclers and historians.

Lastly, reference may be made to the following observation of the author: ‘During the early centuries of the Christian era Buddhism which had spread almost over the entire island promoted a sort of cultural homogeneity. The Tamils and other Dravidians who followed Buddhism and had come under the influence of the cultural tradition transmitted by Prakrit seem to have been absorbed within the framework of this cultural homogeneity.’<sup>67</sup> In the light of this observation, Gunasinghe’s assertion: ‘While Pathmanathan mentions these instances, he does not, probably because it would weaken the underlying theme of his work of there being a culturally distinct Tamil population in Sri Lanka from early times, draw the logical conclusion of there probably having been such a cultural similarity and affinity between the Sinhala and Tamils in this early period that they were virtually indistinguishable from each other is wrong and misleading. It is an instance of Gunasinghe’s deliberate distortion and misrepresentation of my conclusion. What led him to indulge in this sort of exercise has to be left to one’s imagination.

S. PATHMANATHAN

66. Sir Alexander Johnston, ‘An account of an inscription found near Trincomalee in the island of Ceylon’, *Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol. I (London) 1827, p. 540.

67. *The Kingdom of Jaffna*, p. 3.