

WAS PARĀKRAMABĀHU VI OF CEYLON A JĀVAKA? An Examination of Professor S. Paranavitana's Theory

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THE long reign of Parākramabāhu VI (A. D. 1415 - 1467) was one of the most glorious periods of Sri Lanka's history with notable achievements in peace as well as in war. The early life of this king is surrounded with mystery and the historical sources and literary works only refer to him after he became king of Kōṭṭe. But popular imagination has filled the vacuum left by the scholars; folk tales about his childhood and the manner of his coming to the throne originated not long after his death or even in his life time. These events found a place in the histories written about two centuries later.¹

Parākramabāhu VI of Kōṭṭe has been traced as a descendant of Vijayabāhu V (A. D. 1335 - 1341) of the the Savuḷu dynasty.² This has led one of the well-known scholars of Ceylon, Professor S. Paranavitana to think that Parākramabāhu VI belonged to a Javanese dynasty, having interpreted the name Savuḷu to be Jāvaka. Further he assumes that this ruler had some control over certain parts of the Malay Peninsula.³ Therefore he interprets certain literary references to Parākramabāhu VI in accordance with his theory.

The dynasty of Sinhalese rulers founded by Vijayabāhu V, according to some literary works, was known as the Savuḷu dynasty.⁴ Professor Paranavitana's interpretation on the name Savuḷu is as follows:

This word Savuḷu is, in my opinion, the same as *Jāvaka*. Jāva is pronounced in Tamil as Cāva or Sāva to which āl, meaning 'person' has been added, on the analogy of *Malayāli* from *Malaya-āl*. A Sāvāli or Sāvāl would thus denote a person of Jāvaka race. The final *u* suggests the influence of Telugu, was the language of the rulers of the Jāvaka kingdom in the Malay Peninsula...⁵

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¹ *University of Ceylon History of Ceylon (UHC)* ed. H. C. Ray (Colombo 1959) Vol. 1, pt. 2, p. 660.

² *Savuḷu vijēba nirindu pit Parakum rajun hata munuburu, Pāarakumbāsirita*, ed. Charles de Silva (Colombo, 1954), v. 27.

³ S. Paranavitana, *Ceylon and Malaysia*, (Colombo, 1966) pp. 136 ff.

⁴ D. B. Jayatilaka, *Siṃhala Sāhitya-lipi*, 2nd ed. (Colombo, 1956), p. 113.

⁵ S. Paranavitana, *Ceylon and Malaysia*, pp. 129-30.

Thus according to this scholar the Savuḷu dynasty of Vijayabāhu V and Parākramabāhu VI, who belonged to the same family were Javanese in origin. Paranavitana's theory solely rests on his interpretation of the name Savuḷu. Some scholars, for example, Dr. K. Indrapala, have contested his interpretation of this name.

Indrapala says:

The derivation of Savuḷupati from Java is rather ingenious. It is true that Java is pronounced in Tamil as cāva or sāva. But the analogy on which this is made the first element of Sāvāli is certainly wrong. Malayāli is not derived from the two words *Malaya* and *al*, but from Malayalam, the Tamil name for Kerala, meaning 'valley', in the same way as Vaṅkāli (Bengāli) is derived from Vankālam (Bengāla-Bengal). No one would say that the latter is derived from Vaṅka (Vaṅga) and āl, although it would appear quite logical. The derivation of Savuḷu, occurring in the Sinhalese works is disputed by scholars. Various other interpretations have been given to it.¹

Thus it is difficult to accept Paranavitana's derivation of Jāvaka from Savuḷu and there is no other evidence to show that the Savuḷu rulers were members of a Jāvaka family. Therefore the fact that Parākramabāhu VI was related to the Savuḷu family does not mean that he was of Jāvaka origin, and it is necessary to examine what other proof Paranavitana has given in order to establish Parākramabāhu's connections with the Malay Peninsula.

First, we must turn to the work of Rāmachandra, who was a Bengali Brahmin who came to Ceylon to study under Toḷagamuve śrī Rāhula and was patronised by Parākramabāhu VI.² He wrote a commentary to the *Vṛtta-ratnākara* known as the *Vṛtta-ratnākara-pañcikā*,³ in which he includes a number of verses of his own composition eulogizing his patron Parākramabāhu. There the king is described as *Kusuma-pura-nagara-vara-viracita-padam* 'he who has set up his abode at the excellent city of Kusumapura (Pāṭalīputra)',

¹ K. Indrapala, *Dravidian Settlements in Ceylon and the beginning of the Kingdom of Jaffna*, Ph.D. thesis. (University of London, 1965, unpublished), pp. 454 - 55.

² *Vṛtta-ratnākara with Pañcikā*, ed. C. A. Seelakkhanda (Bombay, 1903), p. 4.

³ *ibid*, pp. 1-2.

Kusuma-pura-pati 'Lord of Kusumapura', and *Magadha-pati* 'Lord of Magadha'.¹ Paranavitana comments on these epithets as follows:

It is well known that Kusumapura was a name of Pāṭalīputra, the capital of Magadha. It is hardly possible to justify the use of these epithets indicating overlordship of Magadha and Kusumapura as due to the reason that the geneology of Parākramabāhu has been traced to a Maurya prince Sumitra, who came to Ceylon with the branch of the Sacred Bo-tree in the time of Asoka in India and Devanampiya Tissa of Ceylon. The expression *Kusuma-pura-nagara-vara-viracita-padam* cannot be explained in that manner. We have therefore to include that Parākramabāhu VI exercised effective authority or at least claimed titular suzerainty, over a region known as Magadha, and a city named Kusumapura or Pāṭalīputra.²

According to Paranavitana there is no evidence to show that Parākramabāhu claimed any authority over Pāṭalīputra in Magadha in India, and he draws attention to an eighteenth century document which refers to a Pāṭalīputra in the Malay Peninsula. This is an account of religious mission sent to Thailand by Kīrti srī Rājasimha of Kandy in A. D. 1750, written by Vilbāgedara-Naide, one of the leaders of the mission. Vilbāgedara tells how, when the mission was returning home with some Thai monks, the ship in which they were sailing sank at a place called Muan Lakon and sent the ship away for repairs. They had to stay at Muan Lakon until the ship returned and in the description of the place, Vilbāgedara-Naide says that there was a city known as Pāṭalīputra where they found a stūpa which was as large as the Ruvanvālisāya at Anurādhapura. According to him there was also a Bo-tree which had been taken from Anurādhapura at the request of Dharmāsoka the younger, who became king of that city later.³

Muan Lakon mentioned in the above account was in the Ligor region which is in the Malay Peninsula and belonged to the kingdom of Ayodhya in Thailand. If we are to accept Vilbāgedara's account, Muan Lakon was known as Pāṭalīputra in the 18th-century,

¹ *ibid.*, pp. 26, 66 and 72.

² Paranavitana, *Ceylon and Malaysia*, pp. 136-37.

³ P. E. E. Fernando. 'An account of the Kandyan mission sent to Siam in A. D. 1750'. *Ceylon Journal of Historical and Social Studies (CJHSS)*, Vol. II (1950), pp. 37-83.

in the light of this account. Paranavitana thinks that Muan Lakon was known as Pāṭalīputra as far back as the fifteenth century also, and he believes that this city and the region on the Malay Peninsula which was known as Magadha was the area over which Parākramabāhu claimed overlordship.¹

Here again Paranavitana's interpretation is purely hypothetical. If Parākramabāhu had any political supremacy over the Malay Peninsula, the Indian scholar Rāmachandra would certainly have mentioned it, since he was a contemporary of the ruler and moreover, as a Brahmin from Bengal, would have been well acquainted with the Magadha and Pāṭalīputra in India. If he had been referring to a Pāṭalīputra and a Magadha on the Malay Peninsula he would have specified that it was not the Magadha in India which was familiar to the contemporary Ceylonese as well as to himself. But he does not make any such distinction.

Paranavitana's arguments for a Magadha kingdom in the region of Ligor are rather unconvincing. Parākramabāhu is referred to by Rāmachandra as *Magadha-pati*. In explaining this Paranavitana says that as Pāṭalīputra was in Magadha, the region on the Malay Peninsula where Muan Lakon was situated was also known as Magadha. To support his theory he draws attention to the term *Magadhakkhara* used by the Sinhalese *literati* of the eighteenth century to describe the Thai Buddhist manuscripts written in the Pali language in Cambodian characters. Paranavitana interprets this by saying that Sukhodaya received Theravāda Buddhism from Nakhon Srit'ammarat, where Cambodian characters were in use owing to the Cambodian occupation of the area; and that the Pali scriptures taken to Sukhodaya from Nakhon Srit'ammarat were written in the Cambodian script although the language was Pali. The Thais continued the use of the same script in copying the manuscripts and the Sinhalese *litarati* used the term *Magadhakkhara* for these characters, because the Nakhon Srit'ammarat from which this script came to Thailand would have been known as Magadha. Thus according to Paranavitana Nakhon Srit'ammarat was known as Magadha and as Parākramabāhu VI had supremacy over that region Rāmachandra used the epithet *Magadha-pati* in eulogizing his patron.²

¹ Paranavitana, *Ceylon and Malaysia*, p. 138,

² *ibid.*, pp. 138-139.

In saying that the Cambodian script came to Thailand from Nakhon Srit'amarat, Paranavitana has failed to recognise that at one stage most of Thailand itself was under Cambodian supremacy and that Cambodian domination lasted there for some time. Until the introduction of the Thai script by Rāma Khamhaeng¹ in A. D. 1283 various forms of the Cambodian alphabet had been in use in Thailand.² Even the script introduced by him consisted of forms of the existing Cambodian characters altered and adopted so as to render them suitable for writing Thai words.³ Thus the Cambodian script was well known in Thailand and it is not impossible that before the advent of the Thais the Buddhist scriptures which were in use in the regions of present Thailand were written in Cambodian characters. The Khmer inscription of Lu Tai dated A. D. 1361 would prove that the Khmer language and script was still in use even after the introduction of the Thai script.⁴ The Thais used Khmer letters to inscribe the Pali canon long after the Thai script was introduced.⁵ Therefore it is not impossible that as the Thai script was not yet developed for writing Buddhist scriptures the Buddhist monks continued copying them in Cambodian characters. This would explain the use of Cambodian characters to write the Buddhist manuscripts in Thailand. Hence it is very unlikely that these manuscripts were brought from Nakhon Srit'amarat to Thailand as Paranavitana has suggested because the Cambodian script was well known in Thailand even before the arrival of the Thais in that region.

Moreover, at no time in its history was Nakhon Srit'amarat known as Magadha and thus there was no reason for the Buddhist monks of Sri Lanka to use the term *Magadhakkhara* to denote the Cambodian script which was supposed to have been in use in that region. Thus Paranavitana has failed to find proof that Nakhon Srit'amarat was known as Magadha in the fifteenth century A. D.

Why did Rāmacandra use the epithets *Kusuma-pura-nagara-vara-viracita-padam* and *Magadha-pati* in eulogising his patron Parākrama-bāhu VI? This was because of the king's family connections with

¹ G. Coëdes, *Recueil des inscriptions du Siam* (Bangkok, 1924), Vol. I pp. 42 and 48.

² W. A. R. Wood, *History of Siam* (Bangkok, 1954), p. 57.

³ *ibid.*

⁴ Coëdes, 'Documents sur la dynasty de Sukhodaya'. *Bulletin de l'École Française d'Extrême Orient*, Vol. XVII, pt. 2. (1917), pp. 1-24.

⁵ H. R. H. Prince Damrong Rajanubhab, *A History of Buddhist Monuments in Thailand* (Bangkok, 1962), p. 9.

Magadha in India, not because he had any political supremacy over it. In the *Vṛtta-ratnākara-pañcikā*, Rāmacandra says that Parākramabāhu's mother was Sunetradevi and his father was Jayamāla-mahīpati. He says:

*Kāliṅga-desa-sanjāta-bhūmipāla-kolodhbhavā
Sunetrā nāma devī sā Parākramabhujam prasuh
Dharmāsoka-nṛpānavaye Jayamālo mahīpatih
Tasya putraḥ prajāśriye Parākramabhujō' bhavat.*¹

Sinhalese literary works, too, have given the names of the father and grandfather of this king as Jayamahalenā.² As well as taking Parākramabāhu to be Jāvaka ruler Paranavitana interprets the name of his father accordingly. He thinks 'Māla' is the same as Malaya and takes it to be synonymous with Jāvaka. He explains the derivations of 'Māla' as follows: Malaya = Mayala = Māla. Thus according to him Jayamāla is the same as the Sinhalese Jaya-malaya or Jaya-māla which means Jaya, the Malay. But the origin of the family of Jayamahalenā was traced back to Sumitra who came from India with the Bo-tree and was given the title of Maha-lekhaka with the addition of Jaya for his services. The *Kāvyaśekharaya* states that this prince Sumitra was given the title Jayamahālē and was asked to guard the Bo-tree. It says:

*Damso niriṇdu put - Mihindu māhimi diya kot
mayil vana rivi got - Sumit kumarūta mahat guṇa yut
namin Jayamahālē - tanaturu devana mangule
Vijayīṇdu raja kulē-Devanapā Tis ekalē ...
Mahabō rakina lesa - sālasū bō kalak vāsa -
emahabō abiyesa - visū kulayen melaka mulbāsa ...
Lamāṇi kula pivitutu - Jayamahālāna munuburu³
guṇa gāna miṇi sayuru-siyal niriṇdun mudunmal yuru
Pārakumbā niriṇdu ...⁴*

¹ *Vṛtta-ratnākara with Pañcikā*, p. 20.

² *Pārakumbā-siritā*, vv. 10 ff; *Kāvyaśekharaya*, ed. Dharmakirti Sri Dharmarama, 2nd. ed. (Kelaniya, 1966), canto 15, v. 20; *Saddharmaratnā-karaya*, ed. Dharmakirti Sri Sugunasara Devananda, 2nd. ed. (Colombo, 1955), pp. 536.

³ The editor has used *manapurū* but has given a variant form as *munupuru*, which means grandson and is more appropriate in the context. *Kāvyaśekharaya*, ed. Dharmarama, p. 304, note 3.

⁴ *Kāvyaśekharaya*, canto, 15 vv. 12-13, 17, 20 and 21.

According to the *Kāvyaśekharaya* descendants of Sumitra's family continued in the service of the Bo-tree and used the same title Mahālekhaka. We are told by the *Pārakumbā-sirita* that Sumitra was appointed Jayamahālē and was enjoined to see that offerings to the Bo-tree were duly carried out and maintained.¹ Thus according to writers contemporary with Parākramabāhu Mahalē or Mahalēnā is the same as Mahā-lekhaka. This with the addition of Jaya, was the title appropriate to the head of the family that claimed descent from Sumitra, one of the kinsmen of Aśoka, who are said to have accompanied the Bo-tree to Ceylon.²

Thus the tradition prevailing in the fifteenth century was that Parākramabāhu VI belonged to the family of Sumitra, who was connected with King Aśoka of Magadha. This would explain the statement of Rāmachandra that Parākramabāhu's father belonged to the family of Aśoka (*Dharmāśoka-nrpanvaye*). Furthermore, that was why he used the epithets Magadha-pati and *Kusuma-pura-nagara-vara-viracita-padam* in eulogizing his patron.³ If the contemporary writers knew that Parākramabāhu's ancestors came from the Malay Peninsula and Māla stands for Malaya it is strange that they should have given various other interpretations. There is no legend, folklore or tradition recorded about relations between any one known by the name Jayamāla Parākramabāhu VI and the Malay Peninsula.

The long and glorious reign of Parākramabāhu VI was one of brightest periods in the literary history of Ceylon.⁴ Well known Buddhist scholars such as Toṭagamuwe Śrī Rāhula, Vīdāgama Maitreya, Kāragala Vanaratana, Vimalakīrti Dhammadinna, Vāttave Terindu and a number of others were active in contributing to

¹ *Pārakumbā-sirita*, v. 11.

² *UHC*, Vol. I, pt. 2, pp. 661; M. B. Ariyapala, *Society in Medieval Ceylon* (Colombo, 1956), pp. 116-117.

³ Although Paranavithana translates this term as 'he who has set up his abode at the excellent city of Kusumpura', Gunawardana has given other possible translations such as 'he who has graced the city of Kusumapura with his footsteps,' i.e. 'he who has visited, Kusumapura' or 'he who has established his sway over Kusumapura'. R. A. L. H. Gunawardana, 'Ceylon and Malaysia: A Study of Professor S. Paranavithana's research on the Relations between the Two Regions', *University of Ceylon Review (UCR)*, Vol. XXV, nos. 1 & 2 (1967), p. 53.

⁴ *UHC*, Vol. 1, pt. 2, P. 776.

Sinhalese literature.¹ Many literary works, including the *Saddharamaratnākaraya*, *Kāvyaśekharaya*, *Pārakumbā-sirita*, *Kōkilasandēsaya*, *Sālalihiṇi-sandēsaya*, *Girā-sandēsaya*, *Paravi-sandēsaya*, *Haṃsa-sandēsaya* etc. were written during this reign and most of these contain an account of the king.² Though at times they have exaggerated various facts, one would expect contemporary reports to contain some truth. But in none of these accounts is there any mention of Parākramabāhu having political relations with the Malay Peninsula.

In this respect Paranavitana has drawn attention to a verse in the *Pārakumbā-sirita*. It says: *Gajapati hayapati narapati rajunedi māda gat kaṭāra*.³ Paranavitana's translation of the passage is 'he who, after having crushed the arrogance of kings who are lords of elephants, lords of horses and lords of men, captured Kaṭāra.'⁴ Paranavitana then interprets the *kaṭāra* mentioned in the above passage as the name of a region in Malaysia called Kaṭāram or Kiṭāram in Tamil, the modern Kedah. Thus he takes this as evidence for Parākramabāhu having political supremacy over the Malay Peninsula.⁵ But the translation given by Paranavitana does not very well suit the context of the verse. When translating the first line one has to take the whole verse into consideration. The four lines of the verse are as follows:

*Gajapati hayapati narapati rajunedi māda gat kaṭāra
bujā bala yasa vaturu uturu kala sakyalinut piṭāra
raja niya muni bana viyaraṇa kav naḷu sarasavi kotāra⁶
vajambi meraju tui puvatara kapaṭa rājaturu kuṭāra.*

The translation of the poem would be as follows:

The widespread fame of this king, the water of fame of the might of whose arms has spilled over the very ends of the earth, manifests itself as a cauldron of the vanquished pride of kings who are lords of elephants, lords of horses, and lords of men; as a treasure house of polity, Buddhist doctrine, exegesis, poetry and drama for the Goddess Sarasvatī; and as an axe for the trees of scheming kings.

¹ Punchibandara Sannasgala, *Simhala Sāhitya Vamsaya* (Colombo, 1964, in Sinhalese) pp. 245-90.

² *ibid.*

³ *Pārakumbā-sirita* (ed.) Charles de Silva, v. 73.

⁴ Paranavitana, *Ceylon and Malaysia*, p. 145.

⁵ *ibid.*, pp. 145-146.

⁶ *Pārakumbā-sirita*, ed. Charles de Silva, v. 73.

Thus if one translates the word *kaṭāra* as a 'cauldron' it gives a better meaning to the poem than taking it as *kaṭāha*, a name of a place in the Malay Peninsula. Therefore this could not be given as evidence to support the theory that Parākramabāhu VI had political control over the Malay Peninsula.

The material we gather from literary sources about Parākramabāhu's conquests and military activities does not support such a conclusion. In the *Pārakumbā-sirita* which is a panegyric in honour of Parākramabāhu VI, almost all his achievements are discussed.¹ But here nothing is mentioned about his connections with the Malay Peninsula or anything about his supremacy over that region. The poem, being a panegyric written during the reign of Parākramabāhu himself, would certainly have mentioned it if the ruler had any control over the Malay Peninsula. Other literary works which are written during this period are equally silent about these relations.²

Paranavitana has drawn attention to a Pali stanza in the colophon of the *Saddharmaratnākara* which, according to him gives Parākramabāhu VI the epithet 'Candrabhānu'. The stanza is as follows:

Rammā bhavantu sakalā'pi ca rājadhānī
Dhamme ramantu (sic) Jagatīpati Candabhānu (sic)
Sammodayantu janataṃ subha-kālamaghā
*Sabbe bhavantu sukhitā muditā samaggā.*³

The *Saddharmaratnākara* was written during the seventh year of the Parākramabāhu VI by a Buddhist monk named Vimalakīrti Dhammadinna.⁴ According to Paranavitana 'Candrabhānu' was a title used by the Jāvaka family of Candrabhānu and, because he was related to this family, Parākramabāhu too used this epithet.⁵

¹ Suppressing of provincial rulers and bringing all the Sinhalese provinces under his authority, v. 46; conquest of Jaffna, v. 52; repelling an invasion by Kanarese forces, v. 51; Sinhalese expedition to Adriampet, v. 53; suppression of the rebellion of Jōtiya Sitana of Kandy, v. 48

² Gunawardana, *op. cit.*, p. 56, note 205.

³ *Saddharmaratnākara*, ed. Kalapuvawe Dharmakīrti Sri Suganasara Devananda, 2nd. ed. (Colombo, 1955), p. 536.

⁴ Punchibandara Sannasgala, *op. cit.*, p. 251.

⁵ Paranavitana, *Ceylon and Malaysia*, pp. 139-140.

But for more than one reason Paranavitana's interpretation cannot be accepted. First from the context in the *Saddharmaratnākara*, it is not certain that this verse refers to Parākramabāhu VI. Secondly, even if it did, writers like Coedès have pointed out that Candrabhānu was not a title but the name of the ruler of Tāmbraḷiṅga who invaded Ceylon during the reign of Parākramabāhu II.¹

This is the only reference to Parākramabāhu VI using this title and Paranavitana explains that because of the unpopularity of Candrabhānu among the Ceylonese, since he was an enemy of the Buddhist religion, Parākramabāhu did not use this title as he wanted to consolidate his power.² But if he had been a Jāvaka and the Savuḷu dynasty had been a Jāvaka family, as Paranavitana asserts, then there would have been no need for the Jāvakas to worry about using this title, as the Savuḷu family was already well established in the fifteenth century. The people accepted them as the rulers of the Sinhalese kingdom and they had the support of the Buddhist monks. Therefore there was no reason for Parākramabāhu not to use the title if he really wanted to do so. But the problem is whether he wanted to use it or not. For the Savuḷu family, as we have already seen, was not a Jāvaka family; therefore Parākramabāhu VI who was a Savuḷu could not be regarded as belonging to the Jāvaka family. In the *Saddharmaratnākara* the author probably included 'Candabānu' as an adjective to the word 'Jagatīpati'. If the author meant Parākramabāhu VI by 'Jagatīpati' its adjective could be taken as an eulogy which would mean 'the Lord of the World as splendid as the radiance of the moon'.

In order to support his thesis that Parākramabāhu had close contacts with the Malay Peninsula, Paranavitana has given some evidence from the Chinese histories. During the reign of the Yung-lo Emperor (A. D. 1402-1424) of the Ming dynasty there was a Chinese naval expedition to Ceylon under the celebrated Chinese commander Cheng Ho.³ In the course of his first expedition to

¹ G. Coedès, 'A propos de la Chute du royaume de śrīvijaya'. *Bijdragen tot de Taal-Land-en Volkenkunde van Nederlandsch Indie*, LXXXIII (1927), p. 462.

² Paranavitana, *Ceylon and Malaysia*, p. 140.

³ *Hsing-ch'asheng-lan* ('Triumphant Vision of the Starry Raft'); *Ying-yai-sheng-lan* ('Triumphant Vision of the Shores of the Ocean'); *Hsi-yang-ch'ao-kung-tien-lu* ('Record of Tributary Nations of the West'); *Ming-shih-lu* ('Variable Records of Ming Dynasty'); *Pien-i-tien* ('A History of Foreign Nations'); *Ming-shih* ('History of the Ming Dynasty'). All these Chinese sources are cited by

the west in A. D. 1405 Cheng Ho visited Ceylon. The Chinese sources say that A-lieh-k'u-nai-erh (Alagak-kōnāra) who was then ruling the island, was hostile to the Chinese commander. Cheng Ho returned to China, but came once again in A. D. 1411, when he captured Alagak-kōnāra who was taken back to China with his family as prisoner. The Chinese emperor treated the captives with consideration, set them free, and ordered them to select the most worthy subject to be placed on the throne. They selected some one called Yeh-pa-nai-na who was proclaimed king of Ceylon under Chinese suzerainty.¹ Some sources have given the name of the person selected to be appointed king as Pu-la-ka-ma-ssu-la-cha which has been identified as Parākramabāhu-rājā.² One Chinese work says that Yeh-pa-nai-na later became Pu-la-ko-ma-pa-ssu-la-cha.³

Hitherto the name Yeh-pa-nai-na has been taken by scholars, including Paranavitana, to be the Chinese transcription of the Sinhalese title *āpānan* (*āpā-nāna*).⁴ However, according to the new interpretation of the material Paranavitana identifies this title as the Chinese version of Yāpā-nāna and gives the meaning 'Lord of Yāpā, i.e. Java' to it.⁵ This interpretation of Paranavitana is merely hypothetical because we can find no evidence either in Sinhalese literature or in epigraphy for Yāpā to be taken as Java. When the Sinhalese chronicles meant Java they simply used that name, as we have seen in the *Cūlavamsa* account of the Jāvaka invasions.⁶

Further Paranavitana says that Parākramabāhu was supported by a Malay ruler, as Parākramabāhu himself was a Malay prince, and he came to Ceylon with the Chinese commander Cheng Ho, under the protection of his armada and took the prince with them to the Chinese court.⁷ This argument again is based on the inter-

William Willets, 'The Maritime Adventures of Grand Eunuch Ho', *Journal of South-east Asian History*, Vol. V, no. 2 (1964), pp. 25-42; G. P. V. Somaratna, 'Grant Eunuch Ho and Ceylon', *Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, New series, Vol. XV (1971), pp. 36-47.

¹ Willets, *op.cit.*, pp. 31 ff.

² *Hsi-yang-ch'ao-kung-tien-lu*, cited by Willets, *op. cit.*, pp. 34-35.

³ *Wu-hsueh-pien*, cited by Willets, *op.cit.*, p. 35.

⁴ *UHC*, Vol 1, pt. 2, p. 665.

⁵ Paranavitana, *Ceylon and Malaysia*, pp 143 ff.

⁶ *Cūlavamsa*, ed W. Geiger (Colombo, 1953) LXXXII, 36 ff.

⁷ Paranavitana, *Ceylon and Malaysia*, pp. 144 ff.

pretation of a single word occurring in the *Rājāvaliya* in connection with a foreign invasion. Some years before the accession of Parākramabāhu VI the *Rājāvaliya* says:

During the reign of king Vijayabāhu, Dosraja, king of Great China (*Mahācīna*), landed in Laṃkā with an immense army and under pretext of bringing presents and curiosities, craftily carried away king Vijayabāhu, who fell into his hands, foolishly thinking that he also brought presents...¹

Paranavitana thinks that the *Mahācīna* mentioned in this account means Greater China and denoted a region which included the eastern coast of the Malay Peninsula. Thus the Dosraja of *Mahācīna* was a Malay prince who allied himself with Cheng Ho and came to Ceylon.²

Here Paranavitana's interpretation is obviously unsatisfactory, unless one has the preconceived idea of proving the existence of close political links between Ceylon and the Malay Peninsula. This account cannot be taken as a reference to a Malay ruler for more than one reason. First of all the *Rājāvaliya* account does not seem to be trust-worthy because it contains so many obvious errors. It says King Vijayabāhu was taken captive to China which is completely wrong. It was Alagak-kōnāra who was taken captive. Furthermore, the *Rājāvaliya* says that Alagak-kōnāra ruled the island from that time until the accession of Parākramabāhu VI. Thus the author did not have a clear picture of the history of the period. Secondly, the derivation of the name Dos from *Jāvesa*, 'Lord of Java' through the intermediate forms *Davesa* and *Davasa* is highly imaginary. In these circumstances the *Rājāvaliya* reference cannot be taken as evidence of Jāvaka relations with Ceylon.

According to the *Ming-shih*, in A. D. 1459 the last envoys were sent to China from Ceylon.³ The name of the ruler of Ceylon given in the Chinese chronicle is Ko-li-sheng-hsia-la-shi-li-pa-chiao-la-jo. Paranavitana takes this name to be the Chinese transcription of Kālīṅga-Simhala-srīvijaya-rāja. Then he identifies this ruler as Parākramabāhu VI, saying that after he captured Kaṭāha, the Sinhalese ruler added srīvijaya to his title. Further, Paranavitana adds that

¹ *Rājāvaliya*, tr. Gunasekera (Colombo, 1900) p. 66.

² Paranavitana, *Ceylon and Malaysia*, pp. 144-145.

³ Tennent, J. E. *Ceylon* (London, 1860), Vol. 1, 1, p. 625.

'it is also not impossible that his ancestors, too, claimed to be titular sovereigns of Śrī Vijaya and Parākramabāhu's capture of Kaṭāha was undertaken to justify the claim'.¹

However, we have already seen the difficulties of accepting that Parākramabāhu VI captured Kaṭāha. Moreover he is not related to any dynasty in South-east Asia. Therefore Parākramabāhu had no special reason to use the title Śrī-Vijaya. Then again, Parānavitana's derivation of śrīvijaya from shi-li-pa-chiao is also not justifiable.

As Gunawardana has pointed out,

The key term that Parānavitana uses for his argument is represented by the four characters *shi-li-pa-chiao*... which is taken to represent Śrī Vijaya. But the Chinese maintained very close relations with the empire of Śrī Vijaya and the chroniclers of the Imperial Court as well as other Chinese scholars used certain specific characters to denote Śrī Vijaya. Earlier Chinese writings like the works of I-tsing and Houei-je use the application *Che-li-fo-che*... or its shortened form *Fó-che*... while the later chroniclers like the *Sung-shih* and the *Ming-shih*, the writings of Chao-ju-kua (1225), and particularly of Ma-Houan (1425-32?) who lived in the period under discussion consistently used the term *San-fo-ts'i*... It is most doubtful that the *Ming-shih* would have used two variant forms, different from each other in the number of characters and in their phonetic value, to denote the same region. Hence the attempt of Parānavitana to attribute the title Śrī Vijaya Raja to Parākramabāhu does not seem to be supported by the Chinese evidence he cites.²

The foregoing discussion shows that Parānavitana has failed to prove his theory of the Jāvaka origin of Parākramabāhu VI and his having political supremacy over the Malay Peninsula in his reign. From all the sources available about his reign it would appear that he was a Sinhalese monarch related to the *Savulu* family and the family of *Jayamahalēnā*.

¹ Parānavitana, *Ceylon and Malaysia*, p. 146.

² Gunawardana, *Op.cit.*, p. 57.