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The Sanskrit word *bhujaṅga* is a synonym for *nāga*, the motif on the cover. It is interesting to note that this particular term had been chosen to convey the meaning of "scholar" in ancient Java. The Old-Javanese word *bhujaṅga* "apparently denoted in ancient times in the kingdom of Majapahit a learned man belonging to the clerical order, a more or less official scholar who performed a spiritual and, occasionally at least, a political function."

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CONTENTS

	Page
The People of the Lion: The Sinhala Identity and Ideology in History and Historiography <i>R. A. L. H. Gunawardana</i>	1
Conrad as a Modernist Writer: The Secret Agent <i>D. C. R. A. Goonetilleke</i>	37
The Revolutionary Vision in Sinhala Poetry <i>U. P. Meddegama</i>	54
The Role of Psychology in Indian Aesthetics <i>Padma Sudhi</i>	74
The Dipavamsa in Ancient Sri Lankan Historiography <i>Sirima Kiribamune</i>	89
<i>The Kingdom of Jaffna</i> : Propaganda or History? <i>S. Pathmanathan</i>	101
Book Review: R. A. L. H. Gunawardana, <i>Robe and Plough: Monasticism and Economic Interest in early Medieval Sri Lanka</i> <i>Sirima Kiribamune</i>	126

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The People of the Lion

The Sinhala Identity and Ideology in History and Historiography

The evolution of group identities and of ideologies associated with social groups represents one of the most fascinating areas of historical research. It is also one of the most exacting fields of study requiring of the historian an inordinate amount of caution. The historian who undertakes an inquiry of this type has to constantly keep in mind that group consciousness, like all ideology, is historically determined and historically limited. The Sinhala ideology in its contemporary form, with its associations with language, race and religion, forms an essential part of contemporary Sri Lankan culture and has succeeded in thoroughly permeating such areas of intellectual activity as creative writing, the arts and historical writing. It is not an exaggeration to say that during the last hundred years the Sinhala ideology in its contemporary form has radically refashioned our view of our past. Since many writers assume that the Sinhala ideology in its current form has a very old history, it may be relevant to point out that even in the European languages the word race (Fr. *race*, Ital. *razza*) dates only from about the sixteenth century and that the biological definition of the term as denoting a group distinct from other members of the species by specific physiological characteristics is of even more recent origin. In both Sinhala and Tamil, it is difficult to find a satisfactory equivalent to this word. Hence it does not seem likely that racial consciousness can be traced back very far into the past of these two linguistic groups. Thus when an author of popular historical writings speaks of the mythical Vijaya as having been anxious to find a queen "of his own Aryan race" and further states that "his pride of race revolted at the thought of any but a pure Aryan succeeding to the Government which he had striven so laboriously to found"¹ or when academic historians writing about ancient Sri Lanka refer to "the Sinhala race,"² they are all presenting a view of the past moulded by contemporary ideology. These examples have been cited here to emphasise the need to reexamine this dominant and popular historical view, to go back to the original documents and to place the appearance of different types of group consciousness in their historical settings.

I

The Brāhmī inscriptions, which are the earliest historical documents in Sri Lanka,³ reflect an initial stage in the growth of group consciousness. Perhaps the most important basis of group identity at this time was

1. John M. Senaveratne, *The Story of the Sinhalese*, Colombo, 1930, p. 16.
2. L. D. Barnett, "The Early History of Ceylon" in *The Cambridge History of India*, Vol. I, London, 1921, reprinted in Delhi, 1955, p. 548; G. C. Mendis, *Our Heritage*, Colombo, 1943, p. 20.
3. See S. Paranavitana, *Inscriptions of Ceylon*, Vol. I, Colombo, 1970.

lineage. Individuals who set up inscriptions generally give the names of their fathers or of both fathers and grandfathers, while some of them trace their paternal descent back for three or four generations. Some inscriptions, particularly those of the Brāhmanas, refer to the *varṇa* status of the authors. Occupations and socio-political status of donors are cited in many inscriptions. It is particularly noteworthy that in a significant number of records the terms *upāsaka* and *upāsika* are used to describe the donors, reflecting the early beginnings of a religious identity. A few of the records point to other group identities like Kabojha, Milaka and Damedā. It is likely that Kabojha and Milaka were tribal groups. Paranavitana has suggested that Damedā was the equivalent of Tamil.⁴ Whether the term was used in this period to denote a tribal, linguistic or some other group deserves careful investigation. The term Sinhala, on the other hand, is conspicuous by its absence.

The disparate nature of the earliest settlements in the island would not have been conducive to the development of strong group identities which brought together a large number of people into one cohesive unit. At this primary stage of the development of group consciousness lineage was perhaps the most important criterion from which people derived their social identity. Socio-political position, *varṇa* or ritual status, religion and tribal affiliation were other factors which determined group identity.⁵ During the period from about the middle of the second century B. C. to about the second century A.D., Sri Lanka witnessed the unfolding of a crucial process of social change, bringing about the dissolution of communal property rights and the separation of the primary agricultural producers from elements essential for their production. Parallel and related to this process was the evolution of a state apparatus which brought the whole island under the control of the rulers of Anurādhapura.⁶ It is most likely that the emergence of the state brought with it changes in the ideological sphere, paving the way to a new group identity.

The term Sinhala (Pāli *Sihala*, Skt. *Simhala*) occurs for the first time in Sri Lankan sources in the *Dīpavaṃsa* which has been assigned to the fourth-fifth centuries A.D. In this chronicle the term occurs only once, and in this cryptic verse it is stated that the island was known as *Sihala* "on account of the lion" (*laṅkādiṇo ayaṃ āhu sīhena sīhala itī*).⁷ The term *Sīhaladīpa* or "the Sinhala island" occurs in the *Samantapāsādikā*⁸ the

4. S. Paranavitana, "The Aryan Settlements: The Sinhalese," Chapter VI in *University of Ceylon History of Ceylon*, Colombo, 1959, Vol. I, Pt. 1, pp. 87-8.

5. This is evident from the titles borne by people who inscribed the earliest Brāhmī records. See Paranavitana, *Inscriptions of Ceylon*, Vol. I.

6. For a discussion on the process of state formation in Sri Lanka, see R. A. L. H. Gunawardana, "Social Function and Political Power: A Case Study of State Formation in Irrigation Society," *Indian Historical Review*, Vol. IV, No. 2, 1978, pp. 259-73.

7. *Dv.* 9.1

8. *Samantapāsādikā*, the *Bāhiraṇidāna* section, ed. and trsl. by N. A. Jayawickrama as *The Inception of Discipline and the Vinayanidāna*, London, 1962, pp. 2, 136.

commentary on the Vinaya section of the Pāli Canon, written by Buddhaghosa in the fifth century A. D. The text states that the earlier commentaries used by Buddhaghosa had been written in the language of Sihaladīpa. Fa-Hian, who also visited the island in the fifth century, refers to it by the name "the country of the lions."⁹ The term Heladivi, the equivalent of the Pāli Sihaladīpa, occurs in one of the graffiti at Sīgiri which have been assigned by Paranavitana to a period extending from the eighth to the tenth century A.D.¹⁰ By the eighth century the name was being used to denote a group of people, as is evident from an inscription found at a ruined monastic site in the Ratubaka Plateau in Central Java, which refers to the Simhalas.¹¹

Though the earliest reference to the term Sinhala in Sri Lankan sources is in the *Dīpavamsa*, there is evidence in other sources which suggests that the name can be traced back to an earlier date. In the Allahabad inscription of Samudragupta which has been assigned to the fourth century A.D., there is a reference to Saimhalakā, obviously a name derived from Simhala, among those who accepted the suzerainty of the Gupta emperor and paid him tribute.¹² Pelliot has drawn attention to the occurrence of Chinese renderings of the name Sihaladīpa in literary works of the second and third centuries A.D.¹³ Three Brāhmī inscriptions from the far south of the Indian subcontinent, written in a language which has been identified as Tamil in its formative stages, are also relevant to this study. According to the reading presented by Subrahmanya Ayyar,¹⁴ the term *Īla* is found in these three records. Some epigraphists do not agree with his readings of the *Arittapatti* and the *Āttannavāṇal* records, but they agree that the *Tirupparankunram* inscription refers to "*Īla* householders" and that the term *Īla* should be identified as denoting Sri Lanka.¹⁵ Ayyar suggested an early pre-Christian date for the record. Mahadevan¹⁶ assigns it to the first-second centuries A.D. He interprets the term *caiyalan* in an inscription from *Muttupatti* assigned to the same period, as a reference to a person from Sri Lanka, but this translation is doubtful. The term *Īla* in these records has been identified by epigraphists as denot-

9. See Samuel Beal, "Travels of Fa-Hian or Fo-kwo-ki" in *Travels of Hiuen Tsang*, Calcutta, 1957, Vol. I, p. 45.
10. S. Paranavitana, *Sigiri Graffiti, being Sinhalese Verse of the Eighth, Ninth and Tenth Centuries*, London, 1956, Vol. II, p. 179.
11. J. G. de Casparis, "New Evidence on Cultural Relations between Java and Ceylon in Ancient Times," *Artibus Asiae*, Vol. XXIV, 1962, pp. 241-8.
12. J. F. Fleet, *Inscriptions of Early Gupta Kings and their Successors, Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum*, Vol. III, Varanasi, 1963, p. 8.
13. Paul Pelliot, *Review of Chu-fan-chih*, tr. by F. Hirth and W. W. Rockhill, T'oung Pao, Vol. XIII, 1921, pp. 462-3.
14. K. V. Subrahmanya Ayyar, "The Earliest Monuments of the Pandya Country and their Inscriptions," *Proceedings of the Third All-India Oriental Conference*, Madras, 1924, pp. 275-300.
15. T. V. Mahalingam, *Early South Indian Palaeography*, Madras, 1967, pp. 201-11, 245-50, 251-7.
16. Iravatham Mahadevan, *Corpus of the Brahmi Inscriptions*, Madras, 1966, pp. 8-9.

ing Sri Lanka. *Īlam* denoted Sri Lanka in classical Tamil works, and it has been suggested in the *Tamil Lexicon* published by the Madras University that the term would have been derived from the Pāli *Sihala* and the Sanskrit *Simhala*.¹⁷ This seems very likely since the *Āntan Tivākaram*, one of the earliest lexicons in the Tamil language, equates *Āṇkalam* with *Īlam*.¹⁸ If we accept this explanation of the origin of *Īlam*, it would imply that the term *Sinhala* was also being used by the first or second century of the Christian era to denote a principality and certain types of people from that principality. If indeed the term *Īlam* was derived from *Sihala*, its current use in politics reminds one of the observation made by Marc Bloch, the great medievalist, about the term *Frenchmen*. It is a historical irony that Gauls bear today a name derived from that of the Franks whom they considered to be their enemies. Bloch pointed out that this inappropriate and unfortunate name gave rise in later times, "among the more reflective of our thinkers, to feelings of tragic anxiety."¹⁹

It seems very likely that the beginnings of the Sinhala consciousness arose as part of the ideology of the period of state formation. It is but to be expected that an ideology which evolved during such a period would emphasise a sense of unity. However, state society in Sri Lanka was a society divided on the bases of class as well as lineage, clan, occupation, ritual status and political position. The chronicles give a fair idea how in such a context group consciousness developed and what form it assumed. The *Mahāvamsa* has been generally assigned to the sixth century A.D., but it can be argued that it is a later work. In this chronicle the term *Sihala* occurs only twice. However, on closer examination it becomes clear that the sixth and the seventh chapters present a myth which forms a central element in the Sinhala ideology.

According to this myth, the daughter of the king of Vaṅga by a princess from Kalinga, runs away from home and joins a caravan heading for Magadha. On the way, in the Lāla country, the caravan is attacked by a lion who abducts the princess. From the union of the princess with the lion are born a son and a daughter, *Sihābahu* and *Sihasivali*. When the children grow up, they flee with their mother from the lion's den and reach the frontier regions of their grandfather's kingdom. Here they are befriended by a kinsman who rules the frontier province. The lion ravages villages in his search for his offspring. *Sihābahu* kills the lion. On the death of his grandfather, he is offered the kingdom of Vaṅga, but he prefers to found a kingdom with a new capital city, *Sihapura*, where he reigns with his sister as his queen. They have sixteen pairs of twins. *Vijaya*, the eldest, is of violent disposition. He and his seven hundred

17. *Tamil Lexicon*, Madras, 1924, Vol. I, p. 382.

18. *Āntan Tivākaram*, ed. Lōkanāta Mutaliyar, Madras, 1917, p. 62.

19. Marc Bloch, "Sur les grandes invasions: Quelques positions de problèmes," *Revue de Synthèse*, quoted in Paul Foliakov, *The Aryan Myth: A History of Racist and Nationalist Ideas in Europe*, London, 1974, p. 19.

followers (*parivāra*) harass the people. When the enraged *mahājanas* demand that Vijaya be put to death, the king exiles him, together with his followers. Their ship touches at Suppāraka, but as a result of their conduct, they are driven away again and they land in Sri Lanka.

On the day of their arrival in Sri Lanka the Buddha lay dying, but his thoughts were on the safety of Vijaya and his followers. The Buddha assigns Sakka to protect them, and the latter sends the God Uppalavanna to the island. Uppalavanna sprinkles charmed water on the men and ties sacralized thread (*parittasūta*) on their hands for their protection. Kuvannā, a *yakkhini*, lures the men to devour them but is foiled by the power of the thread. Vijaya overpowers and espouses Kuvannā and, with her help, massacres the *yakkhas* in the island to win over the kingdom. He ruled from Tambapanni and his followers established five other settlements: Anurādhagāma, Upatissagāma, Ujjeni, Uruvela and Vijitapura. The chronicle explains that the region where Vijaya landed and the island itself were known by the name Tambapanni because the hands of Vijaya and his followers were reddened when they touched the earth. The chronicle also gives a definition of the term *Sihala*: "The king Sihabāhu, since he had slain the lion (was called) *Sihala* and, by reason of the ties between him and them, all those (followers of Vijaya) were also (called) *Sihala*."²⁰ Since it is not possible to hold a consecration ceremony without a queen of *ksatriya* birth an embassy is sent to southern Madhurā to ask for the hand of the daughter of the Pāṇḍya king. The Pāṇḍya king sends his daughter, many other maidens and "a thousand families of the eighteen guilds of workmen (*pessakārake*)."²¹ On the arrival of the princess, Vijaya marries her after brusquely dismissing Kuvannā, and members of his retinue marry the other maidens from Madhurā. Vijaya is consecrated and rules for thirty-eight years at Tambapanni, and every year he sends pearls and chanks worth two hundred thousand to his father-in-law at Madhurā. Kuvannā goes to Lankāpura, the city of the *yakkhas* where she is killed by a *yakkha*. Her son and daughter flee to the Malaya region and live there "with the king's assent" (*rājānuññāya*). The boy takes the girl to wife, and from them are sprung the Pulindas.

The story of Vijaya is found in the *Dīpavamsa* and it is evident from the comments in the *Vamsatthappakāsinī*, the commentary on the *Mahāvamsa*, that there was another version in the chronicle of the Abhayagiri

20. This is Geiger's translation of the relevant strophe from the *Mahāvamsa*. See *Mahāvamsa*, tr. W. Geiger, Colombo, 1950, p. 58.

21. The eighteen groups of *pessakārakā*, are comparable with the *aṣṭādaśajāti* in South Indian records. See J. F. Fleet, "Sanskrit and Old Canarese Inscriptions," *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. V, 1876, pp. 50-3. The Pāli chronicles of Sri Lanka record instances of kings assigning *pessakārā* (var. *pessiyā*) to serve in monasteries. The groups of people denoted by this term included craftsmen as well as those who performed service functions with a "low" ritual ranking. See R. A. L. H. Gunawardana, *Robe and Plough: Monasticism and Economic Interest in Early Medieval Sri Lanka*, AAS Monograph Series No. 35, Tucson, Arizona, 1979, pp. 119-20.

monastery. But the Vijaya story was certainly not the only "colonization myth"²² about Sri Lanka. The *Divyāvadāna* presents another story while the account of Hiuen Tsang cites two more. One of the stories cited by Hiuen Tsang (Hiuen Tsang I) is similar to the Vijaya myth. However, the earlier episodes take place not in and around Vāṅga but in South India. Further, it is the killer of the lion who is exiled as punishment for his patricide. He founds a kingdom in the island. "Because the original founder got his name by catching a lion (*chih-sse-tseu*)," the myth explains "they called the country (after his name) Simhala (*Sang-kia-lo*)."²³ In the second story (Hiuen Tsang II), which is basically similar to that in the *Divyāvadāna*,²⁴ Simhala was the son of a great merchant of Jambudvīpa called Simha (*Sang-kia*). Simhala comes to the island with five hundred merchants, looking for gems, and stays back to live in the company of *rākṣasīs*. When the merchants discover that they are about to be imprisoned by their paramours, they escape from the island with the help of a flying horse. Simhala is elected king in his own country, but he leads an expedition to the island and founds a new kingdom after vanquishing the *rākṣasīs*. "Because of the king's name," the story states, "the country was called Simhala."²⁵ Some analysts of these myths have drawn attention to the similarity of certain elements in them to Buddhist stories like the Padakusalāmānava, Sutana, Ghata, Valāhassa and Devadhamma Jātakas and it has been suggested that either the myths were influenced by the Jātakas or both groups were derived from a common source.²⁶

The *Mahāvamsa* version of the Vijaya myth contains certain elements which are discordant with the myth of the visit of the Buddha that the same chronicle presents. During the first visit to the island, the Buddha is said to have expelled the *yakkhas* who lived in the island to Giridīpa, but Vijaya and his followers find a flourishing kingdom of the *yakkhas* in the island. However, the *Dīpavamsa* version of the Vijaya myth makes no mention of Kuvannā or of Vijaya's encounters with the *yakkhas* and is, therefore, consistent with myth of the Buddha's visit. This discrepancy between the two main chronicles raises the problem whether the *Dīpavamsa* deleted part of the Vijaya myth to present a more consistent account or whether those elements in the *Mahāvamsa* version relating to the presence of the *yakkhas* represent later accretions. The *Vamsathappakāsinī* provides additional information about the *yakkhas* when it states that the chief of the *yakkhas* at Sirisavattu was Mahā ālasena and that he married Polamittā,

22. I have borrowed this term from Gananath Obeyesekere. See "Gajabāhu and the Gajabāhu Synchronism: An Inquiry into the Relationship between Myth and History," *The Ceylon Journal of the Humanities*, Vol. I, No. 1, 1970, pp. 25-36.

23. S. Beal, *Travels of Hiuen Tsang*, Calcutta, 1958, Vol. IV, pp. 435-7.

24. *Divyāvadāna*, ed. E. B. Cowell, and R. A. Neil, Cambridge, 1886, pp. 523-9.

25. Beal, *Travels of Hiuen Tsang*, Vol. IV, pp. 438-42.

26. See L. S. Perera, "The Early Kings of Ceylon," Chapter VII in *University of Ceylon History of Ceylon*, Vol. I, Pt. I, pp. 98-111; G. C. Mendis, "The Vijaya Legend," *Paranavitana Felicitation Volume*, ed. N. A. Jayawickrama, Colombo, 1965, pp. 263-92.

the daughter of a *yakkhini* called *Gondā*. The text also tells us that the two children of *Kuvannā* were called *Jīvahattha* and *Dipellā*.²⁷ However, it is not possible to consider these statements as indicative of the relative date of this part of the myth since it is not clear from the contexts whether the author of the *Vamsatthappakāsini* is citing, as usual, information from the ancient Sinhala chronicle of the *Mahāvihāra* or whether he was merely drawing on the extended versions of the myth current in his own time. The *Divyāvadāna* is more useful in this respect since it shows that a version of the myth which spoke of the presence of *yakkhas* at the time of the arrival of *Simhala* was prevalent at the time *Dīpavamsa* was written.²⁸ Most of the myths cited above present the view that the island was originally inhabited by the *yakkhas*, and in all these stories the attitude towards the *yakkhas* is one of hostility. In the *Dīpavamsa* the Buddha is the hero who vanquishes them while in the *Divyāvadāna* and the Hiuen Tsang II version, it is *Simhala*, the eponymous hero, who is credited with the achievement. It is likely that the two sets of myths were of independent origin and had a parallel existence. Evidently the *Mahāvamsa* is presenting a combination of these two sets without paying heed to the resultant contradiction. We shall later see that the *yakkhas*, like the element absent from the *Dīpavamsa* version i.e. the arrival of *Vijaya's* bride from *Madhurā*, form an essential component which completes the message that the *Mahāvamsa* version of the myth is seeking to convey.

Several writers have seen in the geographical references in the myths, pointers to the original homes of the immigrants who came and settled in the island. Barnett saw in them indications of two streams of migration: one of Dravidians from Bengal and Orissa and a later stream, "mainly Aryan," from the Western regions of India.²⁹ Basham argued for the rejection of the view that the *Vijaya* story was "a statement of historical fact" but he tended to attach significance to the geographical references.³⁰ He seems to have considered references to *Kalīṅga* and *Madhurā* as later accretions, but he detected in other references the arrival of the first wave of immigrants from the Western parts of India and of a second wave of immigration from the East. It is noteworthy that though the *Mahāvamsa* refers to *Lāla* as a region between *Vaṅga* and *Magadha* several writers including both Barnett and Basham have identified it with *Lāta* on the Western coast of India. *Paranavitana* was inclined to accept the same view in his attempt to trace "the original home of the Aryan settlers" to the North-

27. *Vamsatthappakāsini* (*Vap.*), ed. G. P. Malalasekera, London, 1935, Vol. I, pp. 259-60, 264.

28. While noting that some of the tales in the *Divyāvadāna* had been translated into Chinese in the third century A. D., M. Winternitz (*A History of Indian Literature*, Calcutta, 1953, Vol. II, pp. 285-6) has assigned this work to the fourth century A. D.

29. Barnett, *op. cit.*

30. A. L. Basham, "Prince *Vijaya* and the Aryanization in Ceylon," *Ceylon Historical Journal*, Vol. I, No. 3, 1952, pp. 163-71.

western parts of India.³¹ However, while all the different versions of the myth reflect what may be called the "immigrant mentality" of a dominant element of the population of Sri Lanka and their belief that they came from India, attempts at locating "the original homes" on the basis of geographical references in the myths would amount to confusing ideological statements with accounts of actual events. The discrepancies between different versions of the myths also point to the need for caution. The *Mahāvamsa* refers to Vāṅga, Kalinga, Lāla, Magadha, Suppāraka and Madhurā. The *Dīpavamsa* does not refer to Madhurā and gives Bharukaccha as a place visited by Vijaya on his way to Sri Lanka. On the other hand, Hiuen Tsang I locates the home of Simhala in South India. The *Divyāvadāna* presents Simhala as a merchant from a kingdom called Simhakalpa and implies it was in Jambudvīpa. The Hiuen Tsang II version of the myth does not refer to any specific part of India, but merely state that Simhala was from Jambudvīpa. As Mendis correctly detected, one of the main functions of the different versions of these "colonization myths" seem to be to explain the origin of the name Sinhala. Certain versions attempt to explain how the island came to be called by this name while the *Mahāvamsa* version seeks to explain how the island came to be called Tambapanni and how a certain group of people came to be called the Sinhala. Mendis believed that "Simhala was originally the name of the island and the people got their names from it many centuries later."³² Such a sequence is not evident from the source material examined above, and, in fact, the information in the South Indian Brāhmī inscriptions seems to preclude such an assertion. The writings of Onesicritus who accompanied Alexander to India testify to the fact that Taprobane or Tambapanni was the earliest historical name of the island.³³ Even in the second century A.D., Ptolemy referred to the island as Taprobane though he noted that it was also called Salike.³⁴ The *Mahāvamsa* version of the Vijaya myth, it would thus appear, originally evolved at a time when the island was still known as Tambapanni and a group of people living there were called the Sinhala.

Evidently there were two distinct connotations of the term Sinhala. The long and detailed description of the origin of the ruling family the myth presents carries the implication that it was the members of this lineage who were the real People of the Lion. This association of the term is also found in the later chronicle *Cūlavamsa*. After describing the matrimonial alliance that Mahinda IV formed with Kalinga and his elevation

31. *University of Ceylon History of Ceylon*, Vol. I, Pt.1, pp. 82-97.

32. See *Paranavitana Felicitation Volume*, p. 268.

33. J. W. McCrindle, *Ancient India as Described in Classical Literature*, London, 1901, p. 102.

34. J. W. McCrindle, *Ancient India as Described by Ptolemy*, London, 1885, pp. 247-59.

of members of his lineage to high positions in the kingdom, the *Cūlavamsa* states that he thereby strengthened the Sinhala lineage (*Sīhalavamsam*).³⁵ Obviously, the term is being used here to denote the dynasty.

Basham and Obeyesekere have drawn attention to the elements of bestiality, parricide and incest in the myth.³⁶ While in certain versions of the myth there is no reference to an animal and Simha is a mere name, in those versions where Simha is in fact a lion the relationship between the lion and the eponymous ancestor assumes a dual character. The latter is both "the progeny of the lion" as well as "the slayer of the lion." It is noteworthy that the *Mahāvamsa* uses the term *ādinna*, a very rare word, to describe this relationship. The word can be associated with *ādi*, meaning "beginning," as well as with *ādiyāi*, "to seize." It is most likely that this word was deliberately chosen to convey the dual character of this relationship. This element of the myth endowed the ruling dynasty with a marvellous origin which marked it out from the populace. The depiction of the hero as lion-slayer is comparable with the epic of Gilgamesh whose prowess in combat with lions is highlighted in a large number of Sumerian seals.³⁷ It is also possible to suggest that, as a structural element in the myth, parricide represents the negation and abnegation of animal origins. In later times the lion-slaying aspect of the myth is found to be given greater emphasis. As noted earlier, according to the Hiuen Tsang I version of the myth, the founder of the kingdom received his name on account of his having caught a lion. The *Vamsatthappakāsinī*, too, states that that Sīhabāhu was called Sīhala because he had "caught the lion" (*sīham gahitvā iti*).³⁸ These sources probably reflect the fact that by about the seventh century the People of the Lion preferred to be known as lion-slayers rather than the progeny of the lion. It is this later interpretation of the term *ādinna* which influenced Geiger to translate the relevant verse of the *Mahāvamsa* as cited above. The Hiuen Tsang I version of the myth does not refer to sibling incest that is found in the *Mahāvamsa*. As Romila Thapar has pointed out,³⁹ while incest of this type explains how two siblings can found a lineage, it also stresses purity of descent. Sibling marriage finds mention in the *Dasaratha Jātaka* and with reference to the *Sākya*s in the *Pāli Suttas*. The story of the sixteen pairs of twins in the *Vijaya* myth also finds parallels in the Indian myths cited by Thapar.

35. Cv. 54.10.

36. Basham, *op. cit.*; G. Obeyesekere, "Religious Symbolism and Political Change in Ceylon," *Modern Ceylon Studies*, Vol. I, No. 1, 1970, pp. 43-63.

37. *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, tr. with an introduction by N. K. Sandars, Middlesex, 1980, pp. 36, 94.

38. *Vap.* Vol. I, p. 261.

39. Romila Thapar, "Origin Myths and the Early Historical Tradition" in *Ancient Indian Social History*, Delhi, 1978, pp. 294-325.

Information on dynastic emblems of South Indian ruling houses is most useful in enabling us to understand the significance of the term *Sinhala*. The Pāndyas had the fish as their emblem, the Cōlas and the Sinda branch of the Nāga lineage had the tiger and the Cālukyas had the boar. It is also evident that certain South Indian ruling families bore the lion crest. Though the bull was the most widely used emblem of the Pallavas of the Simhaviṣṇu line, the figure of the lion is found on some of their coins and seals, and on certain early copper plates.⁴⁰ The animal figures on the Ūruvapalli grant⁴¹ and the Pikira copper-plate⁴² have been identified as lions. It has been suggested on the basis of this evidence that the early Pallavas bore the lion emblem. The lion emblem was also used by some minor Cōla ruling houses. The Malepaḍu plates of Puṇyakumāra, dated in the eighth century,⁴³ and a record from the Bastar region,⁴⁴ issued by a chieftain called Candrāditya, bear the lion crest. Both Puṇyakumāra and Candrāditya claim descent from Karikāla Cōla. It is very likely that, similarly, the lion was the emblem of the ruling house of Sri Lanka and that the dynasty got its name from the emblem. As in Sri Lanka, in South India, too, there were myths which sought to explain these emblems. For instance, the myths of the Sinda dynasty explain how their eponymous ancestor had been brought up by a tiger.⁴⁵

There was evidently a second, wider meaning of the term *Sinhala*. The *Mahāvamsa* states that on account of their association with Sihabāhu (*tena sambandhā*) "all these" were also called *Sihala* (*ete sabbe pi sihalā*).⁴⁶ It is not clear from this cryptic verse who "all these" were, but the preceding verses speak of the followers of Vijaya. In its explanation of the passage, the *Vamsatthappakāsini* states that the seven hundred members of Vijaya's retinue and all their descendants "up to the present day" are called *Simhalas* because of their association with the prince called *Sihala* (*tena sihalanāmikena rājakumārena sambandhā ete sattapurisasatā ca tesam puttanattapanatā yāvajjakālā manussā ca sabbe pi sihalā nāma ahesunti attho*).⁴⁷ Thus it is clear that, at least by the time the *Vamsatthappakāsini* came to be written, a wider meaning of the term *Sinhala* was gaining currency.

Hypothetically, it is possible to postulate a dynasty > kingdom > people of the kingdom sequence in the development of the *Sinhala* identity. However, there appear to have been certain factors operative at this time

40. C. Minakshi, *Administration and Social Life under the Pallavas*, Madras, 1938, p. 82.

41. *Indian Antiquary*, Vol. V, 1881, pp. 50-3.

42. E. Hultzsch, "Pikira Grant of Simhavarman," *Epigraphia Indica* (EI), Vol. VIII, 1905/6, pp. 159-63.

43. H. Krishna Sastri, "Malepaḍu Plates of Puṇyakumāra," EI, Vol. XI, 1911/2, pp. 337-8.

44. *Madras Epigraphical Reports*, Archaeological Survey, Madras, 1908/9, p. 5.

45. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *The Cōlas*, Madras, 1935, Vol. I, pp. 24-6.

46. *Mv.* 7.42.

47. *Vap.*, Vol. I, p. 261.

that prevented the development of a Sinhala consciousness which embraced all the people in the kingdom. It is particularly noteworthy that both the *Mahāvamsa* and its commentary specifically exclude a substantial section of the population of the island from the social group denoted by the term. The Vijaya myth recognizes the existence of three major groups of people in the island. While outlining in detail the origin of the Sīhalas, it also seems to explain the origins of the service castes and the Pulindas. Verses 43-45 in the seventh chapter of the *Mahāvamsa* describe the settlements established by the seven hundred followers of Vijaya while verses 56-57 refer to the arrival of the thousand families of the service castes sent by the king of Madhurā. The implication that this later group should not be confused with the Sīhalas is emphasised in the *Vamsatthappakāsinī* when it specifies that the Sīhalas were the descendants of "the seven hundred" who formed Vijaya's retinue and thereby excludes from this group the descendants of "the thousand families." The origin of the third major group, the Pulindas who occupied the Malaya region, is traced to the offspring of Vijaya and Kuvannā. Geiger was right in identifying the Pulindas with the Veddas.⁴⁸ Sibling incest in the story of their origin emphasises the "purity" of their descent and their distinct status. Thus the Vijaya myth seeks to indicate that the three major groups it identifies are separate categories with distinct origins. If the myth suggests any link at all, it is between the Sinhala ruling house and the Pulindas, but here again it is noteworthy that, according to the myth, Vijaya did not have any children by his marriage with the Pāndya princess. Thus, while the violent Vijaya who suffered exile for his reprehensible ways is presented as the ancestor of the Pulindas, the ancestry of the Sinhalese ruling house is traced to Sumitta, the more sedate younger brother whose youngest son Panduvāsudeva is said to have succeeded Vijaya. On the other hand, the service castes are presented as the descendants of the thousand families from Madhurā: they are thus unlinked by blood with the other two major groups.

These distinctions that the myth makes are of crucial importance for understanding the nature of group consciousness that was developing in the period after the formation of a unified kingdom under the control of Anurādhapura. They enable us to distinguish the Sinhala consciousness of this early period from linguistic nationalism and other types of group consciousness typical of more recent times. Of course, the presence of a common language was a basic prerequisite for the emergence of group consciousness. Buddhaghosa's commentaries speak of a language specific to the island. However, it is significant that language was not conceived as the crucial criterion or the basis of the Sinhala identity at this time. The Sinhala group consciousness did not bring together all speakers of the

48. *The Mahāvamsa*, tr. Geiger, p. 60.

language but deliberately left out a considerable section of the linguistic group including the craftsmen-agriculturists and others who performed ritually "low" service functions.

In essence the Vijaya myth is presenting what may be termed a political definition of the Sinhala identity. The ruling house represented the *Sīhalas par excellence*. It may be relevant to note here that the Sigiri monument, constructed by Kaśyapa I (A.D. 477-95), gave expression to this identity through some of its architectural features. The dominant feature of this monument was the massive figure of the lion after which it was named. The royal apartments were on the summit of the rock. The architectural arrangements were such that the king, descending from his apartments, would walk out through the mouth of the lion, emerging, as it were, from the bowels of the lion, and thereby evoking the mythical origins of the ruling house. The ruling dynasty sought to consolidate its power by utilizing such monuments to propagate the Sinhala myth. On the other hand, by emphasising its equally mythical relationship with the lineage of the Buddha, they attempted to draw upon the growing religious consciousness of the Buddhists in order to strengthen their position.⁴⁹ According to the myth, those other than members of the ruling house acquired the Sinhala identity only through their association with the ruler or through being born in families with such associations. The seven hundred settlers are described as Vijaya's retinue (*parivāra*) and some of them are specifically referred to as state functionaries (*amacca*). It has been pointed out elsewhere that in ancient Sri Lanka state functionaries were recruited primarily from families of high rank who owned property in irrigation works and land, and that there was a tendency for political office to be associated, generation after generation, with certain families.⁵⁰ Traders were another prominent element in the society and their importance is reflected in certain versions of the myth where *Simhala* is presented as a merchant. Thus, those brought together by the Sinhala identity were primarily the most influential and powerful families in the kingdom. It is likely that it was such elements who are denoted by the term *mahājana* in the myth. In the ancient texts it did not carry the meaning that its phonetic equivalent *mahajanaya* conveys today, but denoted "the great men." Thus at this stage of its development the Sinhala consciousness was the consciousness of the ruling class. It probably had a regional tinge, at least initially, since, according to the myth, the original settlements founded by the *Sīhalas* were on the banks of the Kadamba (Malvatu) and

49. See R. A. L. H. Gunawardana, "The Kinsmen of the Buddha: Myth as Political Charter in the Ancient and Early Medieval Kingdoms of Sri Lanka," *The Sri Lanka Journal of the Humanities*, Vol. II, No. 1, 1976, pp. 53-62.

50. R. A. L. H. Gunawardana, "Social Function and Political Power: A Case Study of State Formation in Irrigation Society," *Indian Historical Review*, Vol. IV, 1978, pp. 259-73.

Gambhīra (Kanadārā ?) rivers and in the surrounding region. It is worthy of note that the chronicle attributes a different origin to the settlements in the eastern and southeastern regions of the island⁵¹

The Vijaya myth seeks to define the position of the Pulindas and their relationship with the Sinhala dynasty: They live in the Malaya region with the assent of the king, thereby acknowledging his suzerainty. Certain elements of the myth portray the relationship between the king and the "great men." It was the "great men" of the kingdom who protested about the violent and oppressive behaviour of Vijaya. They demanded that he be put to death and Sīhabāhu was constrained to send him away in exile. In the *Divyāvadāna* and Hiuen Tsang II versions of the myth Sīmhala is a merchant who is selected by the people of his kingdom to be the king of their land. In the *Divyāvadāna* Sīmhala protests that he is only a trader, but the people insist that he accepts the kingship because he was the only capable person.⁵² In the Hiuen Tsang II version Sīmhala is selected on account of his religious merit, wisdom, skill, virtue, loyalty and prudence.⁵³ While these versions present the view that personal ability and qualities of character rather than ritual status should be the criteria that determine the suitability of a person for kingship, the *Mahāvamsa* version seeks to present a markedly different point of view. It embodies the message that the *kṣatriya* status of the ruling family marks them out from people of all other ritual categories. The story of the embassy sent to Madhurā to fetch a *kṣatriya* princess and Vijaya's treatment of Kuvanna serve to underline the point that only such a king who is a *kṣatriya* and who also has a queen of the same *varṇa* status can be consecrated; others do not have a legitimate right to rule. Thus while the "great men" of non-*kṣatriya* status may force the ruling family to govern justly without harassing them, they may not aspire to kingship. The discrepancies between different versions of the myth, reflecting probably their different social origins, point to the tensions within the dominant social group and the problems of political power in the country at this time.

It is also possible to see the Vijaya myth as an expression of a corpus of religious beliefs. The *yakkhas* and *rākṣasīs* occupy a prominent position in many versions of the myth. In the words of Vijaya "men are ever in fear of non-human beings." Oblations (*bali*) are offered to the *yakkhas* to placate them. The *Mahāvamsa* version of the myth highlights the potency of sacralized thread as a charm which afforded protection against the *yakkhas*: it saved the lives of Vijaya's men. Uppalavanna is introduced as a god of the Buddhist pantheon vested with the protection of the island, and it is stated that it was the request of the dying Buddha that Vijaya and the island be protected which led to Uppalavanna being sent by Sakka,

51. *Mv.* 9.7-10.

52. *Divyāvadāna*, p. 527.

53. *Beal, Travels of Hiuen Tsang*, Vol. IV, p. 441.

the king of the gods. The myth synchronises the arrival in the island of Vijaya and his retinue with the death of the Buddha. It also seeks to enunciate certain Buddhist virtues and to point out the "rewards" accruing to those who practise them: the lion was not harmed by the arrows shot by Sīhabāhu as long as he harboured feelings of loving kindness (*mettacitta*) in his heart but was killed the moment he was moved by wrath. At another level the myth reflects the importance of certain places other than Anurādhapura as political centres. All the different versions of the myth seek to explain the name Sinhala, and indeed this was one of the basic functions of the myth. While it is possible to understand this myth at several such different levels, it is possible to see in its *Mahāvamsa* version what Malinowski termed a "charter,"⁵⁴ and in this sense it is comparable with the myth of the visit of the Buddha that the present writer has analysed elsewhere.⁵⁵ One of the primary social functions of the Vijaya myth was the validation of a particular socio-political order. It identifies certain major social groups in the island and seeks to locate their positions in the social order. The Sinhala consciousness presented in the myth was the product of caste (*jāti*) ideology, for the service castes were excluded from membership of the Sinhala group. The Vijaya myth in the *Mahāvamsa* also represents the embodiment of a state ideology which sought to unite the dominant elements in society and to bring them under a common bond of allegiance to the ruling house. When the island came to be called Sīhaladīpa or the island of the Sinhala, this name reflected the claim of the ruling house and this dominant social group to political power over the whole island. By implication, this ideology sought to relegate all other social groups like the service castes and the Pulindas to a subservient position. Evidently, chronicles like the *Mahāvamsa* served as valuable media for the propagation of this ideology.

Invasions from South India posed a threat to the dominant position occupied by this social group, and when powerful kingdoms of the Pāṇḍyas, the Pallavas and the Cōlas appeared in the South Indian political scene these invasions were indeed a serious threat to their political power. The Sinhala ideology presented in the chronicles reflects the tension and antipathy aroused by this threat. It is particularly noteworthy that the chronicles present a version of history which had been moulded to conform to the needs of this ideology. For these chroniclers all kings since the mythical Vijaya were rulers of the whole island. It is only through a reexamination of the *Mahāvamsa* in the light of evidence from the early Brāhmī inscriptions and literary works like the *Dhātuvamsa*, the *Sīhalavathuppakaraṇa* and the *Sahassavathuppakaraṇa* that the process of political development in the island leading to the emergence of a unified kingdom could be reconstructed. Information from inscriptions at sites distributed over a wide area like Periya

54. Bronislaw Malinowski, *Magic, Science and Religion and Other Essays*, Boston, 1948, p. 145.

55. *The Sri Lanka Journal of the Humanities*, Vol. II, No. 1, 1976, pp. 53-62.

Puliyankulam, Occāppukallu, Āmbul-āmbē, Yatahalena, Lenagala, Gōnavatta Bāmbāragala, Kandēgamakanda, Kusālānkanda, Olagamgala, Mottayakallu, Bōvattēgala, Kottadāmūhela, Kolladeniya and Kirimakulgolla, when taken together with evidence in the literary sources mentioned above, point to a situation quite different from what the author of the *Mahāvamsa* would have us believe. It is evident from information in these sources that at the beginning of historical times there were several petty rulers holding sway over various parts of the island. Of these rulers those at Anurādhapura were the preeminent. Devānāmpiyatissa of Anurādhapura sent a delegation to the court of Asoka, held a consecration ceremony with the ritual goods provided by the latter and assumed the titles *devānāmpiya* and *mahārāja*. There is no evidence, however, to show that the other rulers acknowledged his suzerainty or that he was more than a mere aspirant to overlordship over the whole island.⁵⁶

It is against this background that the campaigns of Dutthagāmaṇī which form an integral and important element in the Sinhala ideology, particularly in more recent times, have to be examined. In the *Mahāvamsa*, Elāra, against whom Dutthagāmaṇī waged his war, was the ruler of the whole of northern Sri Lanka and members of Dutthagāmaṇī's lineage had been rulers of the entire Rohana kingdom ever since Mahānāga established his power at Mahāgāma. Dutthagāmaṇī is presented as waging war in the interest of Buddhism. His campaigns culminate dramatically with the capture of Anurādhapura after a duel fought in accordance with the *ksatriya* rules of chivalry. Thus a Buddhist prince of the Sinhala dynasty who ruled over the southern principality conquers the northern principality ruled by a Tamil who, though known for his just rule, was yet a man of "false beliefs." This view of the chroniclers has influenced modern historical writings, and the chauvinist Sinhala writings have picked on these campaigns as representing the exemplary victorious war waged by the Sinhalese against the Tamils. However, even the author of the *Mahāvamsa*, who was obviously transposing to an earlier period conditions more typical of his own times, found it difficult to reconcile material available in his sources with this anachronistic picture he was trying to present. Some information in the *Mahāvamsa* itself suggests that not all the people who fought against Dutthagāmaṇī were Tamils. For instance, Nandhimitta, a general in Dutthagāmaṇī's army, is said to have had an uncle who was a general serving Elāra.⁵⁷ Though the *Mahāvamsa* tried to present Dutthagāmaṇī as the ruler of a unified Rohana fighting against the sole ruler of the northern plains, it is evident that the sources used by the chronicler carried accounts of Dutthagāmaṇī fighting against thirty-two different rulers. As the present writer has pointed out previously,⁵⁸ the most plausible explanation of the

56. R. A. L. H. Gunawardana, "The Rise of a Unified Kingdom," synopsis of a chapter for the proposed revised edition of the *University of Ceylon History of Ceylon*, distributed in 1971 among scholars invited to contribute to this work. Material presented in this synopsis has been incorporated in this and the following paragraph.

57. *Mv.* 23. 4-5.

58. See note 56.

available evidence is that Dutthagāmaṇi was a powerful military leader who unified the island for the first time after fighting against several independent principalities. His campaigns do not appear to represent a Sinhala-Tamil confrontation and, as noted already, the development of Sinhala consciousness is a phenomenon observable after the formation of a unified kingdom ruled by the kings of Anurādhapura.

The Sinhala ideology elaborated in the account of the campaigns of Dutthagāmaṇi clearly reflects the influence of the religious identity which evolved with the expansion and consolidation of Buddhism in the island. Both the *Mahāvamsa* and the *Cūlavamsa* present the view that support for the Sinhala dynasty against the Damiḷas is conducive to the glory of Buddhism. Dutthagāmaṇi in the *Mahāvamsa* and Dhātusena in the *Cūlavamsa* are both presented as waging war against the Damiḷas to restore Buddhism to its proper position. When describing the South Indian invasions in the fifth century the *Cūlavamsa* states that all men of good birth (*janā kulīnā sabbe*) left the area occupied by the invaders to go and live in Rohana.⁵⁹ And, after describing the victory of Dhātusena, the chronicle says that he "restored to its former place the *sāsana* destroyed by the foe."⁶⁰ The chronicle seeks to create the impression that there was a strong anti-South Indian feeling among the dominant elements in Sri Lankan society, but it is less than convincing. A few strophes after making the statements cited above it admits that some men of "good birth" did opt to serve the Tamil rulers. After capturing power Dhātusena is said to have taken punitive action against those "men of good birth who had attached themselves to the Damiḷas and protected neither himself nor the *sāsana*."⁶¹ The claim that the Buddhist order was destroyed by the invaders is also not borne out by the inscriptional records of this period. They indicate that there were Buddhists among the invaders. Some of them were generous patrons of the Buddhist clergy and one of their kings bore the title Budadasa which meant "the servant of the Buddha."⁶²

It is only after the development in South India of a militant form of Hinduism which adopted a pronounced hostile stance against both Buddhism and Jainism that Tamils would have been considered foes of the faith by the Buddhists of Sri Lanka. The Sanskrit literary works composed by the Pallava king Mahendravarman I (A. D. 600–630) and such Tamil writings like the *Tiruvātavūrar Purāṇam* and the *Periya Purāṇam* reflect the intensity of the hostility that the devotees of the Saiva faith harboured against the Buddhists and the Jains. Tiruṇānacampantar is said to have defeated the Buddhist inhabitants of the Potimankai settlement at debate and converted them to Saivism. It is also said that another Saiva

59. Cv. 38. 11-2.

60. Cv. 38. 37.

61. Cv. 38. 38-9.

62. See *Epigraphia Zeylanica* (EZ), Vol. IV, p. 114.

saint, Maṇikkavaṇṇakar, participated in a similar debate at Ćitamparam where he humiliated a Buddhist monk from Sri Lanka.⁶³ It has been suggested that Tiruṇāṇaṇṇampantar lived in the seventh century, and Maṇikkavaṇṇakar has been assigned to the ninth century.⁶⁴ However, in the earlier periods there is no evidence of such hostility towards the Buddhists. Thus while the Buddhist identity was one which linked the Buddhists of Sri Lanka with coreligionists in South India and other parts of the Indian subcontinent, it is only after about the seventh century that prerequisite conditions matured making it possible to link the Sinhala identity with Buddhism and to present Tamils as opponents of Buddhism.

In the second instance where the term Sinhala occurs in the *Mahāvamsa* Vaggttagāmaṇī is described a *mahākālasihala*.⁶⁵ Though Paranavitana preferred to see in this phrase an allusion to Yama,⁶⁶ its literal meaning is "the great black Sinhala." It is also noteworthy that the father of Dutthagāmaṇī was called Kakavannatissa which means "Tissa the crow-coloured." Both the father and son of King Mahāsena bore the title *meghavanṇa* which meant "one with the colour of the rain cloud." The paintings and graffiti from Sigiri also provide valuable information on physical features of the upper rungs of Sri Lankan society at the time. The complexions of the ladies depicted in the paintings vary from a light yellow-brown to a deep blue or black colour. These ladies are richly adorned with jewellery including tiaras, earrings, necklaces and bangles. The paintings certainly depict members of the highest social strata. The variety of the physical types that they represent clearly indicates that the dominant social group at the time was not of a physically homogeneous type. The "amateur poets" who scribbled verses on the Mirror Wall at Sigiri were mostly giving expression to their admiration of the damsels in the paintings. These verses reveal a certain preference for ladies with a lighter complexion, described as the "golden hued" (*raṇvaṇ*) ones. Some of these poets considered those with dark complexions beautiful and desirable. There were several admirers who wrote verses expressing their desire for the darker maidens, whose complexion was poetically compared with the hue of the blue lily (*mahanel*, *Nymphaea stellata*). In a verse that has been often quoted, one damsel is compared to a blue *katrola* (*Clitoria ternatea*) flower.⁶⁷ "When I remember the blue lily-hued ones there is no sleep for me, O friend, I have become like unto an ass," another visitor to Sigiri laments in a poem scribbled on the wall.⁶⁸ The fact that some preferred to be dark than light in complexion is evident from the *Saddharmālaṅkāra*, a literary work datable to

63. See H. W. Schomerus, *Sivaitische Heiligenlegenden (Periāpurāṇa and Tiruvā-tavūrapurāṇa)*, Jena, 1925, pp. 155, 264-80.

64. K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, *A History of South India*, Madras, 1955, pp. 405-7.

65. *Mv.* 33.43

66. S. Paranavitana, *The God of Adam's Peak*, Ascona, 1958, pp. 61-7.

67. Paranavitana, *Sigiri Graffiti v.* 334.

68. *Ibid.*, v. 449.

about the beginning of the fifteenth century. In this work is to be found a story about a lady who performed several meritorious acts and wished that through the effects of the merit thus accumulated she should be born with the complexion of a blue lily in every successive birth.⁶⁹

The *Dharmapradīpikā*, which has been assigned by most scholars to the end of twelfth century, also provides information on the ideas of physical beauty in early medieval Sri Lanka. This work presents a discussion on the five characteristics of female beauty. In its description of the skin characteristics of the ideal beauty, it refers to both the dark (*kāliya*) and the golden-hued (*helilla*) maiden, in that order. The ideal beauty had to have a clear and uniform complexion, "untainted by other colours," and it could be either the colour of the blue lily or that of the *kinihiri* (*Cochlospermum religiosum*) flower.⁷⁰ In literary works, objects of golden colour were compared with the *kinihiri* flower. The *Vesaturudā Sanne*, an exegetical work written in the period of Polonnaruwa kingdom, compares people clad in gold-coloured clothes and wearing golden ornaments to *kinihiri* trees in full bloom. It also states that *kinihiri* trees in bloom looked as if they were covered with golden nets.⁷¹ Thus preferences about skin pigmentation appear to have varied as would be expected in a physically heterogeneous society. The sources examined above reflect the rather unusual aesthetic values of a society in which there were not one but two alternate ideals of physical type: black is beautiful, the *Dharmapradīpikā* asserts, and so is the "golden" hue. The *Buddhavamsa* reveals that these aesthetic values influenced even the Buddhist tradition. Popular tradition holds that the *Buddhavamsa* contains "the word of the Buddha," but the fact that it refers to the death of the Buddha, the distribution of his relics and even to relics venerated in Sri Lanka clearly shows that it is a late work composed probably in Sri Lanka. In its description of the chief disciples of the Buddha this work states that *Sāriputta* was of the colour of the *koranda* flower which, according to the *Vesaturudā Sanne*,⁷² was golden in colour, and that *Moggallāna*'s complexion was comparable to the black rain cloud and the blue lily.⁷³ Evidently, the "black" rain cloud and the "blue" lily are here supposed to denote the same complexion. It is particularly interesting to note that the two chief disciples of the Buddha are in this text representatives of the two main physical types. Thus these two physical types came to be not only idealized but also "enshrined:" the figures of two chief disciples are to be found up to the present day in Buddhist shrines scattered over many different parts of the island. It seems reasonable to suggest that this emphasis on these two physical types reflects the heterogeneous composition of the dominant social stratum.

69. *Saddharmāṭṭhāna* ed. Bentara Saddhātissa, 1934, p. 176.

70. *Dharmapradīpikā*, ed. R. D. S. Dharmārama, Pāliyaḡoda, 1951, p. 254.

71. *Vesaturudā Sanne*, ed. D. E. Hettiaratchi, Colombo, 1950, pp. 19, 67.

72. *Ibid.*, p. 67.

73. *Buddhavamsa*, ed. R. Morris, Pali Text Society, London, 1882, p. 5.

It will have been evident from the preceding discussion that the social group brought together by the Sinhala consciousness does not appear to have coincided with a linguistic grouping in the island or to have represented a single physical type, and that it is only after about the seventh century that it could have been linked with a religious grouping. It is the social and political criteria which clearly stand out in an examination of the factors that united the Sīhalas. It is evident that at the time Dhātusena ascended the throne in the fifth century the Sinhala consciousness was not strong enough to unite the leading elements in society in opposition to the South Indian invaders. At the end of the seventh century, Mānavamma, a Sinhala contender for the throne, captured power with from aid the Pallavas, but the dynasty he founded soon proved to be capable of maintaining their independence and they successfully resisted intervention by powerful South Indian kingdoms for more than two centuries. This long period of political rivalry between the Sinhala and the South Indian kingdoms witnessed the rise and expansion of a militant and vigorous form of Hinduism in South India, displacing both Buddhism and Jainism. On the other hand, Buddhism continued to maintain its dominant position in the religious life of the people of Sri Lanka. These developments provided the prerequisite conditions for the growth of a tendency towards the convergence of the Buddhist and the Sinhala identities. From the time of Kaṣyapa V (A.D. 914-23) kings begin to actively propagate the idea, implicit in the chronicles, that they belong to the same lineage as the Buddha.⁷⁴ An inscription issued by Mahinda IV (956-72) claims that the Buddha had given the assurance that none but Bodhisattvas would become kings of Sri Lanka.⁷⁵ Thus kings of Sri Lanka had to be not only Buddhists, but men destined to be Buddhas. Such ideas would have had considerable political potency at a time when the Sinhala kingdom was confronted with the threat from the Hindu kingdoms of South India. The success of the Sinhala rulers in defending their independence till the time of Mahinda V would have been due primarily to their achievement in utilizing these ideas to mobilize the leading elements in their kingdoms, particularly those who traditionally bore arms, in support of their dynasty. However, even at this stage, it is doubtful whether the Sinhala grouping and the Buddhist grouping in the island were identical. While nearly all the Sinhala were Buddhists, there is still no evidence to suggest that the service castes were now being considered members of the Sinhala group.

The long period of Cōla occupation in the island, spanning the tenth and eleventh centuries, and the intense rivalry between the South Indian and the Sinhala kingdoms would have been a factor which encouraged the extension of the Sinhala identity to cover a wider social group. However

74. Gunawardana, *Robe and Plough*, pp. 173-4.

75. EZ, Vol. I, p. 237.

there were impediments to such a development. Inscriptions from the period immediately after the Cōla occupation reveal that caste (*jāti*) distinctions had become so rigid that they even affected the organization of Buddhist ritual. According to a lithic record set up by Vijayabāhu I (1017-70), he constructed two terraces on the summit of Sumanakūta. The upper terrace was reserved for men of "good caste" and was enclosed by a wall which had gates fitted with locks. He had a second terrace built on a lower elevation for those of "inferior caste" (*adhama jātin*) who came to worship the footprint of the Buddha.⁷⁶ Such arrangements for the performance of ritual at this important centre of pilgrimage reveal how sharply the differences between these two status groups were being emphasised.

Evidently, the intense political rivalry between the Cōla and the Sinhala kingdoms in the time of Parākramabāhu I (1153-86) affected even the religious. Up to this time it was the *nikāya* affiliation which divided them, and these *nikāya* divisions had cut across political boundaries. Several monks from South India had produced commentarial works on Buddhist texts where they professed to follow the traditions of canonical interpretation of the Mahāvihāra *nikāya* at Anurādhapura. In the reign of Parākramabāhu I, various Buddhist fraternities were unified under the leadership of Sāriputta.⁷⁷ Thus, for the first time, the *saṅgha* in Sri Lanka gave precedence to unity on the basis of a political and regional unit, rather than to unity on the basis of sectarian affiliation. Sāriputta's writings were severely criticised by Kassapa, a monk who lived at the Nāgānana monastery situated "in the heart of the Cōla kingdom," at Colādhināthapura. Sāriputta's interpretations, he claimed, encouraged lapses in discipline in the Cōla land and, as such, they had been rejected by the leading monks of that land who cleansed the *saṅgha* of monks who supported such views.⁷⁸ The tenor of this criticism implies that there was something more than mere disagreement on doctrinal matters. That a certain element of regional rivalry had come into these disputes is more clearly evident from the *Simālaṅkāra*, a work from the same period devoted to the problem of demarcating ceremonial boundaries. In this work the author declares his intention to vindicate the position of the Sinhalese monks. All those who knew the Vinaya rules and wished for the perpetuation of the *sāsana*, he maintains, should accept the opinions of the Sinhalese monks which are in accordance with the scriptures and their commentaries. They should certainly reject the views of the Cōliyaṇs which were false and contrary to these. It was a Sinhalese monk, he claims, who wrote the *Simālaṅkāra* and its commentary.⁷⁹ It is evident from these

76. *Ibid.*, Vol. II, pp. 202-18.

77. Gunawardana, *Robe and Plough*, pp. 313-37.

78. *Vimativinodanī*, ed. Boratūḍave Dhammādhāra Tissa, Colombo, 1935, pp. 96-100.

79. *Simālaṅkāra*, ed. Buddhāsiri Tissa, Colombo, 1904, pp. 42-3.

polemical writings that, while the Buddhist identity transcended political boundaries, attempts were being made during this period to mark out within this larger identity the separate positions of the Cōla and the Sinhala monks.

The political conditions of this period were favourable for the extension of the Sinhala identity, and it is evident that, by the time Gurulugomi wrote the *Dharmapradīpikā*, the term Sinhala had acquired a wider meaning. While reiterating the earlier view that the kings of the dynasty descended from Simhala, the father of Vijaya, were the primary group denoted by the term Simhala, Gurulugomi also gives three other connotations of the term. The island ruled by the dynasty received the name of the dynasty; the inhabitants of the island received the name of the island; and their language was called *simhalabhāṣā*.⁸⁰ Gurulugomi's view of a dynasty > island > inhabitants of the island > their language sequence in the extension of the meaning of the term Sinhala reflects an important stage in the evolution of the Sinhala identity. It is noteworthy that, unlike previous writers, he does not refer or allude to the separate position of the service castes. He further differs from them by stating that it was by being inhabitants of the island rather than being descendants of a particular group of people that those other than the members of the ruling house acquired the Sinhala identity. Thus it is evident that the term Sinhala had come to denote by this time "the inhabitants of the island," meaning probably the Sinhala-speaking population who were the preponderant element of the people in the island.

While the Sinhala identity was thus being extended to cover a wider group than in the previous period, there are indications that not all the members of the group within this period were Buddhists. The influence of of Saivism lingered on during the period which followed Cōla rule. This faith received the patronage of three successive rulers, i. e. Vijayabāhu I, Vikramabāhu and Gajabāhu II. The *Cūlavamsa* claims that Gajabāhu brought nobles of "heretical faith" from abroad and had his kingdom filled with "briers of heresy."⁸¹ Tamil tradition claims that he was converted to Saivism.⁸² It has been suggested that both Vikramabāhu and Gajabāhu were Hindus.⁸³ In its description of the invasion of Maṅga (1215), the *Pūjāvalīya* states that this invader compelled "the great men" to adopt false faiths.⁸⁴ Liyanagamage has suggested that this is a reference to people being converted to the Virasaiva sect of Saivism.⁸⁵ The vehemence with which

80. *Dharmapradīpikā*, p. 55.

81. *Cv.* 70.53-4.

82. *Ṣṛī Takṣina Kailāṣa Purāṇam*, ed. Vaitṭiyaliṅka Tēcīhar, 1916, Pt. 2, p. 20.

83. See Sirima Kiribamune, "Buddhism and Royal Prerogative in Medieval Sri Lanka," *Religion and Legitimation of Power in Sri Lanka*, Chambersburg PA, 1978, pp. 107-18.

84. *Pūjāvalīya*, ed. A. V. Suravīra Co'ombo, 1961, pp. 108-9.

85. Amaradasa Liyanagamage, *The Decline of Polonnaruwa and the Rise of Dambadeniya*, Colombo, 1968, p. 128.

Vidāgama Maitreya attacks Saivism and other faiths in his *Budugunālaṅkāraya*,⁸⁶ written in the fifteenth century, also points to the influence of these faiths amongst the Sinhala-speaking population at the time. It is evident from the preceding discussion that while it is possible to speak of a Sinhala variety of Buddhism during this period, as distinct from the Cōla and other varieties of the Theravāda, this does not imply that the terms Buddhist and Sinhala denoted the very same group. These terms denoted two intersecting groupings, and, though there was a substantial population which came within both, there were people who belonged to one group, but not the other.

This period did not witness the growth of a Sinhala consciousness which could prevent the rise to power of kings who were not members of the Sinhala group. And during the six centuries which followed there are several instances of Kalinga and Tamil princes assuming royal power in Sri Lanka. The position of the kings of the Kalinga dynasty which came to power at the end of the twelfth century, appears to have been challenged by South Indian as well as Sinhala contenders to the throne. Nissanka Malla, the first king of this dynasty, was a clever propagandist who used lithic records to propagate the view that *ksatriya* status and adherence to the Buddhist faith were essential prerequisites for kingship. He argued that non-Buddhists such as princes of the Cōla and Kerala origin were unsuited to rule the island which belonged to the *sāsana* and that it would be ludicrous for a man of the Govi caste to aspire to kingship as for a firefly to try to emulate the sun.⁸⁷ It is noteworthy that to a certain extent Nissanka Malla was seeking to counter the Sinhala ideology by emphasising that it was not the Sinhala identity but criteria related to religious affiliation and ritual status which determined the suitability of a person to be the king of the island.

II

The period of political disintegration which followed the collapse of the Polonnaruwa kingdom witnessed significant changes in the composition of the population of the island. The chronicles contain several references to these developments, but it is in works like the *Vit̥tipot* which have not received adequate attention from historians that these events are described in detail.⁸⁸ It is evident that there were several waves of immigration which brought not only South Indian linguistic groups like Demala, Malala, Kannada and Doluvara (Tulu) but also group like Javakas from Southeast Asia. Myths of this period reflect the distribution of the immigrant

86. *Budugunālaṅkāraya*, ed. K. Nānavimala, Colombo, 1953, vv. 121-183.

87. EZ, Vol. II, p. 114.

88. See *Trisimhalē Kaḍa-im saha Vitti*, ed. A. J. W. Marambe, Kandy, 1926. Ananda S. Kulasuriya cites some material from the *Vit̥tipot* in his "Regional Independence and Elite Change in the Politics of 14th Century Sri Lanka," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 1976, pp. 136-55.

population over different parts of the island.⁸⁹ It was probably through a long process that these different linguistic groups came to be absorbed into the two main linguistic groups in the island. There were two kingdoms which were clearly the most prominent among the several diminutive polities which arose during this period. At times there were several polities in the Sinhala-speaking areas. Swept by political winds, the political centre of the main kingdom shifted hastily from place to place till finally it came to rest in the central highlands. The other main kingdom was in Jaffna where immigrations would have added to existing populations to form the heaviest concentration of Tamil-speaking peoples. Though the establishment of a unified realm covering the whole island would have been the aim of many a potentate, it is achieved only in the reign of Parākramabāhu VI (1412-67) who is said to have vanquished Sinhala, Demala, Malala, Kannada and Doluvara foes.⁹⁰

Evidently, this was a period of cosmopolitan culture when fluency in six languages was considered to be a desirable accomplishment by Sinhalese scholars. The hierarch of the Galaturumula fraternity who lived at the end of the thirteenth century or the beginning of the fourteenth century was the first person to be referred to by the title *ṣaḍbhāṣāparameśvara*, "the lord of six languages."⁹¹ The reign of Parākramabāhu VI marks a high point in the development of cultural contact between the Sinhala and Tamil linguistic communities. Nannūrutun Minisannas, a Tamil prince who was married to the king's daughter, composed the Sinhala lexicon *Nāmāvaliya*.⁹² It is clear from this scholarly work that the author had attained a high level of proficiency in the Sinhala language. The author of the *Kokila Sandesa* spoke proudly of his ability to preach in both Sinhala and Tamil.⁹³ It was also a period when Tamil poems and songs were popular among the Sinhala community. According to the *Kokila Sandesa*, poems composed in Sinhala, Tamil, Pāli and Sanskrit were recited at the court of Parākramabāhu VI.⁹⁴ Maha Vāligama was described by the same poet as a place where Tamil songs were sung, and his description clearly reveals an appreciation for this genre of music.⁹⁵ The popularity of the cults of Ganapati (Ganeśa) and Pattini was a factor conducive to the expansion of Tamil cultural influences among the Sinhalese. The *Parevi Sandesa*, written in the middle of the fifteenth century by Totagamuvē Rāhula, refers appreciatively to Tamil songs being sung at the temple of

89. See Gananath Obeyesekere, "Gajabāhu and the Gajabāhu Synchronism: An Inquiry into the Relationship between Myth and History," *The Ceylon Journal of the Humanities*, Vol. I, No. 1, 1970, pp. 25-36.

90. *Kokila Sandesa*, ed. W. F. Gunawardhana, Colombo, 1945, v. 251.

91. *Suryaśataka Sannaya*, ed. M. Piyaṛatana in *Vilgammula Pabaṇḍa*, Colombo, 1956, p. 567.

92. *Nāmāvaliya*, ed. H. Jayatilaka, Colombo, 1888, vv. 285-6.

93. *Kokila Sandesa*, v. 286.

94. *Ibid.*, v. 155.

95. *Savan purā pavasana demala gī rasiṇ*. *Ibid.*, v. 55.

Ganapati in southern Sri Lanka.⁹⁶ The *Vayantimālaya*, a poetical work on the goddess Pattini which has been assigned to the period of the Kōtte kingdom, was a translation of a Tamil work.⁹⁷

The interest of the Sinhalese literati in Tamil literature persisted during the period of the Kandyan kingdom when a significant number of Tamil works was translated from Tamil into Sinhala. Some of these, like the *Mahāpadarāṅga Jātaka*, were Buddhist works⁹⁸ and point to the prevalence of Tamil literary works of Buddhist inspiration even at this late date. Kirimātiyāve, the scholar responsible for some of the translations made during this period, speaks of his knowledge of several South Indian scripts.⁹⁹ South Indian scripts were used at times even to write the Sinhala language.¹⁰⁰ The Grantha and Tamil scripts were used by some leading figures among the Sinhalese officials in the Kandyan kingdom even in their signatures.¹⁰¹

The Sinhala consciousness persisted during this period, particularly among certain sections of the literati, as is evident from works like the *Pūjāvaliya* and the *Cūlavamsa*. However, unlike in certain earlier periods, the Sinhala ideology does not appear to have been propagated by the state, and it does not seem to have even received persistent support from kings. Some instances have been cited by certain scholars as pointing to the influence of the Sinhala consciousness. The death of Parākramabāhu VI was followed by a struggle for power, and when Prince Sapumal, the governor of the northern regions, captured power and ascended the throne, he faced an uprising in the southern part of the kingdom. Paranavitana has suggested that this uprising, which is referred to as *Simhalasamge* in the Dādigama inscription,¹⁰² and as *Simhalaperali* in the *Rājāvaliya*,¹⁰³ was "an upsurge of national sentiment" amongst the Sinhalese against a ruler of Malayali extraction.¹⁰⁴ However, this appears to be too sweeping a conclusion to draw from the name giving to the uprising. More recently, Somaratne has suggested that it was a rebellion organized by the supporters of Vīraparākramabāhu whom Sapumal deposed.¹⁰⁵ Vīraparākramabāhu

96. Parevi Sandesa, ed. Tangallē Siri Sunandāsabha, Colombo, 1902, v. 140.

97. Puñcibandāra Sannasgala, *Siṃhala Sāhitya Vaṃṣaya*, Colombo, 1964, p. 286.

98. *Ibid.*, pp. 382 ff.

99. *Ibid.*, p. 347.

100. See A. H. Sunder Raman, "Four Telugu Manuscripts in the Colombo Museum Library," *Ceylon Literary Register*, Vol. III, No. 5, 1933, pp. 193-8.

101. There are several instances of the nobility using the Tamil and Grantha scripts or a combination of these and the Sinhala script in their signatures. See, for instance, the signature of Dumbara Rājakarupā Mudiyanse in documents dated in the years 1688 and 1714 of the śaka era (National Archives Documents Nos. 5/63/67 - 3 and 12)

102. *EZ*, Vol. III, p. 280.

103. *Rājāvaliya*, ed. B. Gunasekara, Colombo, 1953, p. 49.

104. S. Paranavitana, "The Kotte Kingdom up to 1505," *University of Ceylon History of Ceylon*, Vol. I, Pt. 2, 1960, p. 679.

105. G. P. V. Somaratne, *The Political History of the Kingdom of Kotte*, Nugegoda, 1975, pp. 142-8.

was a prince of Tamil descent, being the son of Prince Minisannas, but he had been chosen as the successor by Parākramabāhu VI. Clearer evidence of expression of Sinhala consciousness and antipathy towards the Nāyakkar rulers of Kandy is to be found in the *Kirala Sandesa* and the *Vaduga Haṭana* cited by Sannasgala and Dharmadasa.¹⁰⁶ These two works were written by a supporter of Āhālēpola, a contender to the throne, after the last Nāyakkar king had been captured by the British. In these two works the author attacks the last king for his false beliefs and calls him a "villainous, wicked and heretical eunuch of a Tamil." Obviously, this attack on the king was designed to justify Āhālēpola's betrayal of the king and his treasonable dealings with the British. Dharmadasa argues that this expression of "Sinhala Buddhist" sentiments was not an isolated incident and that there was similar "ideological motivation" behind previous instances of opposition to Nāyakkar rule. However, it is difficult to agree that the evidence he cites is adequate for such a conclusion. Dharmadasa cites two previous instances of opposition to Nāyakkar rulers. The first was when the last Sinhala king decided to designate his brother-in-law, a Nāyakkar prince, as his successor. Some nobles supported the claims of Prince Unambuve, a son of the king by a Sinhalese lady who was not of *ksatriya* status. However, ritual status turned out to be the decisive criterion, and even the leading courtier who supported Unambuve's claims, later accepted office under the Nāyakkar king.¹⁰⁷ In the second instance, a section of the nobility plotted to kill Kīrtti Śrī Rājasimha, who is described in one source as "a Tamil heretic." Though it could be argued that such a description reflects the presence of a "Sinhala-Buddhist" consciousness, it is noteworthy that the work in which this description occurs was written not during the period of Nāyakkar rule but in the reign of Queen Victoria when, as will be seen later, an altogether different intellectual milieu had come into being. It is also significant that the leaders of the plot could not decide on a Sinhala noble to replace the Nāyakkar king, and were attempting to win the throne for a Thai prince.

Rebellions led by sections of the nobility were not uncommon occurrences even when Sinhala kings were on the throne. On the other hand, it is significant that a small band of Nāyakkars from South India did manage to remain on the throne of Kandy for almost a century and the Sinhala consciousness could not unite the nobility to depose them. During this epoch the Sinhala consciousness did not possess the class character of an earlier epoch. It may be also suggested that cultural cosmopolitanism would have contributed to the weakening of the Sinhala consciousness and that the feudal ethos would have further diminished its

106. Sannasgala, *op. cit.*, pp. 466-8, 529-31; K. N. O. Dharmadasa, "The Sinhala-Buddhist Identity and the Nāyakkar Dynasty in the Politics of the Kandyan Kingdom," *Collective Identities, Nationalisms and Protest in Modern Sri Lanka* ed. M. Roberts, Colombo, 1979, pp. 99-128.

107. L. S. Dewaraja, *A Study of the Political, Administrative and Social Structure of the Kandyan Kingdom of Ceylon, 1707-1760*, Colombo, 1972, pp. 81-2.

influence. Unlike the ruling class of the Anurādhapura kingdom, the Kandyan nobility did not possess a powerful unifying ideology strengthened by myths. The feudal ideology of the Kandyan kingdom emphasised "noble" (*radala*) status to such an extent that in effect the *radala* constituted a sub-caste. However, the *radala* nobility was a group whose unity was severely undermined by factional rivalry. In this atmosphere of intense rivalry only such a person could be king whose ritual status placed him well above the *radala*. The failure of Unambuve and the choice of the Thai prince highlight this situation. The success of the Nāyakkars in maintaining their position was due as much to the divisions among the nobility as to the fact that they were the only *ksatriyas* in the island. Apart from the ideology of status, the other major ideological influence was Buddhism. All Nāyakkars had to, at least overtly, declare adherence to the Buddhist faith. Thus it is evident that the decisive criteria of the legitimacy of power had been derived from principles related to ritual status and religious affiliation rather than membership of the Sinhala group. Owing to a combination of factors, the ideology of ritual status gained such an influential position in the last century of the period of the Kandyan kingdom that in effect it disqualified members of the Sinhala group from assuming kingship.

III

It was during the period of colonial rule that the Sinhala consciousness underwent a radical transformation and began to assume its current form. In developing their group consciousness the social classes created by colonial rule drew as much on European thought as on their own past traditions. The period during which the modern Sinhala consciousness evolved witnessed the rise into prominence of racialist theories in Europe. These theories were particularly influential in the study of Asian languages and history. William Jones' lecture on the structural affinities between Indian and European languages, published in 1788, marked the beginning of a new trend of thought in both Asia and Europe. Racial theories followed closely on the heels of theories of linguistic affinity, and the relationship between languages was explained as reflecting the common ancestry and common blood of the speakers of those languages. In 1819 Friedrich Schlegel used the term "Aryan" to designate the group of people whose languages were thus structurally related.¹⁰³ The new racial theory which spoke of a common origin of the non-Semitic peoples of Europe and India had many enthusiastic supporters. Hegel was one of them. Hegel hailed the theory of the affinity of the European languages with Sanskrit, referring to it as "the great discovery (*die grosse Entdeckung*) in history" comparable to the discovery of a continent. It revealed, he stated, the historic relationship between the German and Indian peoples. For

103. Poliakov, *op. cit.*, p. 193.

Hegel, "the dispersion of these peoples, starting from Asia, and their distinct evolution beginning with the same ancestry," were "irrefutable facts (*unwidersprechliches Faktum*)."¹⁰⁹

If the Aryan theory found an influential supporter in Hegel, in Max Müller it found its most effective propagandist. In his writings Müller used the term "Aryan race" very often, and some of his research efforts were directed towards locating "the cradle of our race" and the identification of languages classifiable within the Aryan group. His career spanned more than half a century, and his standing as one of the foremost scholars in Oriental languages added authority to his views. Müller considered the affinity between languages to be indicative of the origin of the speakers of those languages from a common racial "stock." It was his view that the same blood flowed in the veins of both the Englishmen and the Bengalis,¹¹⁰ and in his later writings he described himself as "the person mainly responsible for the use of the term Aryan in the sense of Indo-European."¹¹¹ Racialist thought owed as much to ethnology as it did to comparative philology, and contemporaries of Müller like Knox and Gobineau were propounding a theory of "the white races."¹¹² By about 1875, as Maine observed in his Rede Lecture, a new theory of race, derived primarily from the researches on philology, had come into being.

In the later years of his career Müller did have some misgivings about the use of the term "Aryan race." "To me an ethnologist who speaks of Aryan race, Aryan blood, Aryan eyes and Aryan hair, is as great a sinner as a linguist who speaks of a dolichocephalic dictionary or a brachycephalic grammar," he wrote in his *Biography of Words* published in 1888. "Aryan, in scientific language, is utterly inapplicable to race," he further stated. "It means language and nothing but language; and if we speak of Aryan race at all, we should know that it means no more than x+Aryan speech."¹¹³ While this passage reveals Müller's strong reaction to the confusion resulting from the use of common terms by philologists and ethnologists, it is worth noting that the last conditional clause somewhat diminishes the emphatic ring of the preceding statement. In fact, Müller continued to use the term race, and the very essay in which these passages occur was devoted to a search for what he termed "the cradle of our race."¹¹⁴ He was not very precise about the use of the term and he did not specify what exactly he meant when he said that race was "x + speech." Those who had been influenced by Müller's earlier views were even less inclined to avoiding

109. G. W. F. Hegel, *Die Vernunft in der Geschichte*, ed. J. Hoffmeister, in *Sämtliche Werke*, Band XVIIIa, Hamburg, 1955, p. 163.

110. Quoted by T. H. Huxley, "The Aryan Question" in *Man's Place in Nature and Other Essays*, London, 1901, p. 281, n.l.

111. Max Müller, *Essays*, Leipzig, Vol. II, 1879, p. 333.

112. Poliakov, *op. cit.*, pp. 232-8.

113. Max Müller, *Biography of Words and the Home of the Aryans*, London, 1888, pp. 120-1.

114. *Ibid.*, p. 91.

confusion between race and language. The theory of the Aryan race was by this time too well established to be shaken by such a statement. Müller's later work cited above did not undermine the race theory, and, on the other hand, it contributed to the popularity of the mystical search for "the original home" of the Aryans, and the "study" of their expansion which seems to have been conceived in terms evocative of the expansion of the political power and the languages of European states in more recent times.¹¹⁵

No traces of the influence of the Aryan theory are to be found in William Knighton's *The History of Ceylon*, published in 1845, or Charles Pridham's *An Historical, Political and Statistical Account of Ceylon and its Dependencies*, published in 1849. Knighton referred to the similarities between the inhabitants of India and Sri Lanka which he thought pointed to immigrations from the neighbouring subcontinent.¹¹⁶ It was Pridham's conjecture that the population of the island represented a fusion of immigrants from India and from China or Siam.¹¹⁷

B. C. Clough who compiled the first Sinhala-English Dictionary, published in parts in 1821 and 1830, was the first writer to present the view that the Sinhala language was derived from Sanskrit.¹¹⁸ But this view was not easily accepted by some exponents of the Aryan theory. Christian Lassen, whose influential work *Indisches Alterthumskunde* was published in 1847, distinguished Sinhala from the Aryan languages of the North Indian peoples (*die Arischen Inder*) and listed it with the South Indian languages.¹¹⁹ James de Alwis used the introduction to his edition of the *Sidath Sangarawa*, published in 1852, to present a view which, though basically similar to Clough's, took a position different from Clough on the nature of the relationship between Sanskrit and Sinhala. De Alwis was aware of the researches of William Jones and Franz Bopp. He argued that Sinhala shared a common origin with Sanskrit; it was not, however, a dialect of Sanskrit. De Alwis' hesitant presentation of his argument reveals that his views were not clearly formed at this time:

To trace therefore the Singhalese to one of the Northern family of languages, and to call it a dialect of Sanskrit, is apparently far more difficult than to assign to it an origin common with the Telingu, Tamil, and Malayalim in the Southern family...the Singhalese

115. See *ibid.*, pp. 91-3.

116. William Knighton, *The History of Ceylon*, London, 1845, pp. 2-4.

117. C. Pridham, *An Historical, Political and Statistical Account of Ceylon and its Dependencies*, London, 1849, pp. 20-2.

118. B. C. Clough, *A Dictionary of the English and Sinhalese, and Sinhalese and English Languages*, republished as *Sinhalese-English Dictionary*, Colombo, 1892, p. viii.

119. Christian Lassen, *Indisches Alterthumskunde* London, 1847, pp. 362-3.

appears to us either a kindred language of Sanskrit, or one of the tongues...which falls under the head of the Southern class. Yet upon the whole we incline to the opinion that it is the former.¹²⁰

In his work published in 1859, James Emerson Tennent was more inclined to agree with Lassen, and spoke of "unequivocal proof" of the affinity of Sinhala with "the group of languages still in use in the Deccan; Tamil, Telingu and Malayalim," adding, however, that Sinhala appeared to have borrowed terms pertaining to religion from Pāli and those pertaining to science and art from Sanskrit.¹²¹

The years that followed saw the publication of two major works both of which wielded a deep influence on the evolution of the Sinhala consciousness. In 1861 Müller published his *Lectures on the Science of Language* and in this work he declared that "careful and minute comparison" had enabled him "to class the idioms spoken in Iceland and Ceylon as cognate dialects of the Aryan family of languages."¹²² While Müller's verdict wielded a decisive influence over the Sri Lankan literati, Caldwell's study of the comparative grammar of South Indian languages was certainly another major factor behind the hardening of opinion around the Aryan theory. In his work published in 1856 Caldwell presented a theory which was both a counter and a complement to the Aryan theory. Caldwell used the term Dravidian to designate what he termed "a family of languages," and this was the first time that the term had been used in this sense. According to Caldwell, the Dravidian "family" included six "cultivated dialects" (Tamil, Malayalam, Telugu, Canarese, Tulu, Kadagu) and six "uncultivated dialects."¹²³ It was also Caldwell's opinion that there was "no direct affinity" between Sinhala and Tamil.¹²⁴

De Alwis' essay of 1866 on the origin of the Sinhala language reflects the new climate of opinion that had set in. Not only does he refer to "the Aryan invasions" in this essay, thereby presenting what was to become a popular interpretation of the Vijaya myth, but also he seeks to prove, citing both Caldwell and Müller, that Sinhala belonged to "the Arian or Northern family, as contradistinguished from Dravidian, or the Southern class of languages."¹²⁵ Like many who were influenced by Müller's theories, he was not very careful about making distinctions between race and

120. James de Alwis, *The Sidath Sangarawa, A Grammar of the Sinhalese Language*, Colombo, 1852, p. xlv.

121. James Emerson Tennent, *Ceylon, an Account of the Island: Physical, Historical and Topographical*, London, 1859, p. 328.

122. Max Müller, *The Science of Language*, 1861, republished, London, 1890, p. 60.

123. Robert Caldwell, *A Comparative Grammar of the Dravidian or the South Indian Family of Languages*, 1856, 6th edition, Madras, 1956, pp. 3-6.

124. *Ibid.*, p. 109.

125. James de Alwis, "On the Origin of the Sinhalese Language," *Journal of the Ceylon Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society (JCBRAS)*, Vol. IV, No. 13, 1865/6, p. 143.

language. "Though the complexion of the Sinhalese presents different shades," he wrote, "the 'copper colour' is that which prevails over the rest, and this it would seem is the colour of the Aryan race, so much honoured by Manu (ch.iv, sutra 130) when he declared it an offence to pass over even the shadow of the copper-coloured man."¹²⁶ Thus, at a time when the Aryan theory was gaining general acceptance in Europe, de Alwis was claiming Aryan status not only for the Sinhala language, but also for the speakers of that language.

The Aryan theory provided a section of the colonial peoples of South Asia with a prestigious "pedigree": it elevated them to the rank of the kinsmen of their rulers, even though the relationship was a distant and tenuous one. The term *Ārya* had great appeal also because of its previous religious associations. In Sinhala the term *caturāryasatyaya* denoted "the four noble truths" of Buddhism. *Ārya-astānigumārga* denoted "the eightfold path" of spiritual advancement and *āriyapuggalā* were individuals known for spiritual attainments. In the *Cūlavamsa* the term *Ariya* had been used to denote a group of people, but it is remarkable that in this instance it denoted people who were clearly distinguished from the Sinhalese. In its description of the reign of Bhuvanekabāhu I (1272-1284), the chronicle distinguishes the *Ariya* mercenaries from the Sinhala soldiers.¹²⁷ No Sinhalese kings have been referred to as *Ariya* and, interestingly enough, it was the dynasty which ruled over the Tamil kingdom in Jaffna who called themselves *Ārya Cakravarti* or "Arya emperors." It is an irony of history that in later times it was the Sinhalese who came to be associated with the term *Arya* and were, as such, distinguished from the Tamil speakers.

The classification of the Sinhala language in the Aryan group received the support of several influential writers including Childers, Goldschmidt, and Kuhn.¹²⁸ Meanwhile, as in Europe, in Sri Lanka, too, the exponents of racial theories received strong support from physical anthropology. M.M. Kunte's lecture on Ceylon, delivered in 1879, was one of the most important sources of support. "There are, properly speaking, representatives of only two races in Ceylon—Aryans and Tamilians, the former being divided into descendants of Indian and Western Aryans," Kunte declared, adding that he had discovered that "the formation of the forehead, the cheek-bones, the chin, the mouth and the lips of the Tamilians are (sic)

126. *Ibid.*, pp. 150-1.

127. *Cv.* 90. 16-30.

128. R. C. Childers, "Notes on the Sinhalese Language: No. 1: On the Formation of the Plural of Neuter Nouns; No. 2: Proofs of the Sanskrit Origin of Sinhalese," *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, Vol. VII, 1874/5, pp. 35-48; Vol. VIII, 1875/6, pp. 131-55; Paul Goldschmidt, *Report on the Inscriptions Found in the North-Central Province and the Hambantota District*, Sessional Paper No. 24, Colombo, 1875; Ernst Kuhn, "Origin and Language of the Inhabitants of Ceylon," *Orientalist*, Vol. II, 1865/6, pp. 112-7, republished in *Ceylon Literary Register*, Vol. II, 1932, pp. 489-96.

distinctly different from those of the Ceylonese Aryans."¹²⁹ C.F. and P.B. Sarasin identified three principal "well distinguishable" races in Sri Lanka: the Sinhalese, the Tamil and the Veddas, and they believed that the Tamils were more closely related to the Veddas than the Sinhalese.¹³⁰ Rudolph Virchow, too, tended to agree that there were three races in Sri Lanka. He considered "the Sinhalese race" to be the result of a mixture of Vedda elements and immigrants from India. There were resemblances between these two groups, but they were both distinct from the Tamils. Though the Sinhalese were "a mixed race," there was no doubt that "the Sinhalese face" was "an importation from the Aryan provinces of the Indian continent."¹³¹ These theorists disagreed on the position of the Vedda group and its relationship with the other two groups they had identified, but the views of Kunte and Virchow added strength to the opinion that the Sinhalese were either Aryans or "a mixed race" derived from the fusion of the Aryans and the aboriginal inhabitants in the island. Thus, by the end of the nineteenth century, linguistic groups were being given new definitions in terms of physical characteristics which were supposed to be specific to those groups. The Sinhala and Tamil identities acquired thereby a racial dimension.

These new theories were not easily admitted into the history books. A. E. Blaze's *A History of Ceylon for Schools*, published in 1900, does not show their influence. However, there is evidence from about the end of the nineteenth century that these theories were gaining wide popularity. In December 1897, a magazine called *Buddhist* carried an article entitled "The Aryan Sinhalese." A booklet called *Aryan Sinhalese Names* was published in 1899. In 1910 A. E. R. Ratnaweera founded the magazine named *The Aryan*. If history books had reservations about the Aryan theory at the beginning of the century, they had begun to overcome these reservations by the 1920s. Blaze's book was revised, though with obvious hesitation, to accommodate the new theory, and the mythical founder of the Sinhala kingdom was introduced as "believed to be of Aryan race."¹³² H. W. Codrington, whose *Short History of Ceylon*, was published in 1926, accepted the Aryan origin of the Sinhalese, but ventured to suggest that their "original Aryan blood" had been very much diluted through inter-marriage: "Vijaya's followers espoused Pandyan women and it seems probable that in course of time their descendants married with the people of the country on whom they imposed their language. Further dilution

129. M. M. Kunte, *Lecture on Ceylon*, Bombay, 1880, p. 9.

130. C. F. and P. B. Sarasin, "Outlines of Two Years' Scientific Researches in Ceylon," *JCBRAS*, Vol. IX, 1886, pp. 289-305.

131. R. Virchow, "The Veddas of Ceylon, and their Relation to the Neighbouring Tribes," *JCBRAS*, Vol. IX, 1886, p. 490. See also Virchow's "Ethnological Studies on the Sinhalese Race," translated by W. R. Kynsey and J. D. Macdonald as "Professor Virchow's Ethnological Studies on the Sinhalese Race," *JCBRAS*, Vol. IX, 1886, pp. 267-88.

132. L. E. Blaze, *A History of Ceylon for Schools*, 6th ed, Colombo, 1931, p. 9.

of the original Aryan blood has undoubtedly taken place in later ages, with the result that, though the Sinhalese language is of North Indian origin, the social system is that of the south."¹³³

A few writers expressed their reservations about this trend of thought that was becoming predominant. "Whether the Sinhalese language is a language with an Aryan structure and an Aryan glossary, or a language with a Dravidian structure with an Aryan glossary has divided scholars, and must await a thorough philological investigation," Ponnambalam Arunachalam observed in 1907.¹³⁴ W. F. Gunawardhana was more forthright in his criticism. In a lecture delivered at Ananda College on September 28, 1918, he presented the view that in grammatical structure Sinhalese was Dravidian though its vocabulary was mainly Aryan.¹³⁵ In a paper entitled "The Aryan Question in Relation to India," published in 1921, he further developed this view. He pointed out that it was under Max Müller's influence that the Sinhalese claims to membership of the Aryan race had been put forward. While reiterating his earlier views about the affinity between Sinhala and Dravidian languages, he tried to argue that the Sinhalese were "a Dravidian race slightly modified by a Mongoloid strain and an Aryan wash."¹³⁶ It is noteworthy that while Gunawardhana questioned the classification of the Sinhalese as Aryans, his arguments were based on the concept of the Aryan and Dravidian racial categories. His views provoked a lengthy "refutation" by C. A. Wijesinha who quoted Müller, Kunte and Havell to conclude that the Sinhalese "have hitherto been classified as an Aryan race, and will therefore continue to be classified as Aryan."¹³⁷ In *The Early History of Ceylon* published in 1932, G. C. Mendis also made an attempt to correct this line of thinking by pointing out that Aryan and Dravidian were not racial categories but merely groups of languages.¹³⁸ Coming as it did from a person who had studied in Germany in the period of the rise of Nazism, it was indeed a remarkable contribution. Unfortunately, his views lacked clarity; Mendis himself confused language with race, speaking of "the Sinhalese race" in the same page and of "Tamil blood" in the second edition of this work.¹³⁹ From about the 1920s racist writings in Sinhala take a vehemently anti-Tamil stance, and they select the Dutthagamānī - Elāra episode for special treatment. V. B. Vattu-

133. H. W. Codrington, *A Short History of Ceylon*, London, 1926, p. 10.

134. Ponnambalam Arunachalam, "Population: the Island's Races, Religions, Languages, Castes and Customs" in *Twentieth Century Impressions of Ceylon*, ed. Arnold Wright, Colombo, 1907, p. 333.

135. W. F. Gunawardhana, *The Origin of the Sinhalese Language*, text of lecture delivered at Ananda College, Colombo, 1918.

136. W. F. Gunawardhana, "The Aryan Question in Relation to India," *JCBRAS*, Vol. XXVIII, 1921, pp. 12-60.

137. C. A. Wijesinha, *The Sinhalese Aryans*, Colombo, 1922, p. 110.

138. G. C. Mendis, *The Early History of Ceylon*, Calcutta, 1932, pp. 15-6.

139. *Ibid.*, p. 10.

hamy's *Dutugāmuṇu - Elāra Mahāyuddha Kathālankāraya* was one of the first works of this genre. This poem, published in 1923, reveals an intense antipathy towards the Tamils. This was to become a prominent ingredient in the Sinhala ideology of the following period.¹⁴⁰

If in earlier historical epochs the Buddhist identity reflected a cosmopolitan outlook and extended beyond political boundaries to include coreligionists in different kingdoms, in the twentieth century a new term, "Sinhalese Buddhist," comes into use to denote a group of people in the island who are distinguished from the Sinhalese of the other faiths. Anagarika Dharmapala was probably the first person to use the term. He inaugurated the publication of the newspaper *Simhala Bauddhaya* in 1906. One of the points emphasised by Dharmapala was the need for a leadership, both among the religious and the laity, to direct "the ignorant, helpless Sinhalese Buddhists."¹⁴¹ The portrayal of "the Sinhalese Buddhists" as an underprivileged group had a certain basis in fact in that, under colonial rule, governmental patronage had favoured Christians, particularly those converted to the Anglican faith. The need to struggle for "the legitimate rights of the Sinhalese Buddhists" was to become an essential element of the Sinhalese Buddhist ideology. And, since this group was the largest in the island, the leadership that Dharmapala looked for was not hard to find, particularly after universal suffrage was introduced to Sri Lanka in 1931.

In the context of the socio-economic transformations taking place under colonial rule, the Sinhala consciousness found it possible to overcome some of the limitations which prevented its expansion in its previous historical forms. Though the Sinhala identity had been "extended" earlier to cover "the inhabitants of the island," it is during this period that it entered the consciousness of the masses, bringing together that section of the population belonging to the Sinhala linguistic group through a consciousness overarching their local, regional and caste identities. This consciousness developed among this group of people an appreciation of their common culture. It infused the nationalist movement with certain anti-imperialist potentialities. However, in its varied aspects the Sinhala ideology does not lend itself to being categorized simply as an anti-imperialist ideology. In fact, it was also used to serve a contradictory purpose. Dharmapala extolled the past greatness of the Sinhala Aryans "who had never been conquered," but what he demanded was "self-government under British protection."¹⁴² On the other hand, there were certain propagandists of the Sinhala

140- V. B. Vatthuhamy, *Dutugāmuṇu Elāra Mahāyuddha Kathālankāraya*, Co'ombo, 1923.

141- See Anagarika Dharmapala, *Return to Righteousness, A Collection of Speeches, Essays and Letters of Anagrika Dharmapala*, ed W. Garuge, Colombo, 1965, pp. 519-21.

142- Dharmapala., *op. cit.*, p. 517.

ideology like Ratnaweera, the editor of the *The Aryan*, who took great pains to dissociate the Sinhalese from the militant nationalists of Bengal and stated: "It is a consolation to see...that we are governed by an Aryan nation."¹⁴³ It is not surprising that such an ideology did not produce an anti-imperialist movement of mass proportions.

However, it is necessary to emphasise that the weakness of the nationalist movement cannot be explained only in terms of the ideology, and that the ideology was itself a reflection of the nature and the limitations of the socio-economic changes that had taken place. While British rule undermined certain aspects of precolonial social relations, it did not set in motion that process observable in European history, which swept aside precapitalist institutions and "lumped together into one nation" different social groups, subordinating all other identities to the unifying national ideology of the bourgeoisie. That European process derived its motive power from a particular combination of an industry, an industrial bourgeoisie and a centralizing market.¹⁴⁴ The nascent bourgeoisie of the period of colonial rule in Sri Lanka was a weak bourgeoisie, nurtured by and dependent on foreign capital. Its weakness was reflected in the poverty of its culture, especially in its failure to develop a unifying national ideology, overarching the identities derived from previous historical epochs. The dominant ideas of the culture of this class represented a combination of ideas borrowed from contemporary Europe and from earlier epochs of the island's history. Several ideas borrowed from contemporary Europe came from the ideological armoury of racialism than from the rich stocks of humanism. Even Buddhist leaders like Dharmapala are found using the phraseology of anti-Semitism which was then becoming increasingly evident in a genre of European writings. In his contribution to the *Twentieth Century Impressions of Ceylon* published in 1908, Dharmapala speaks of "the glorious inheritance of Aryan ancestors, uncontaminated by Semitic and savage ideas."¹⁴⁵ In this new intellectual milieu the Sinhala ideology inherited from the past came to be refashioned and infused with racialism.

The Sinhala ideology has reflected the interests and aspirations of the element which has served as its main propagandists, i. e. the Sinhala-educated literati, and this has made it difficult for one to recognize its primary social function of mobilizing the Sinhala masses under the leadership of the Sinhala bourgeoisie. In addition to this "unifying" role, the Sinhala ideology has also played a "divisive" role. While it has been antithetical to the development of a broad nationalist movement and has thereby contributed to its weakness, in its present form, the Sinhala ideology is a

143. The Editorial, *The Aryan*, Vol. I, No. 2, 1910.

144. See Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *Selected Works*, Moscow, 1958, Vol. I, p. 38.

145. Dharmapala, *op. cit.*, p. 487.

factor which divides the bourgeoisie. It has confronted the bourgeoisie with the critical problem of maintaining their class unity while resorting, for the purpose of mass mobilization, to the propagation of an ideology which is disintegrative in its effect on that very class and its state. However, the crisis represented by the conflict of identities is not limited to the bourgeoisie and has affected other classes as well. The Sinhala ideology and other similar group ideologies have left a deep and debilitating impact on particularly the working class by dividing it sharply and by hampering the development of its class consciousness.

IV

It will have been evident from the preceding survey that the nature of the Sinhala identity as well as the relationship of the group brought together by this identity with other groupings based on religion, ritual status and language varied in different periods of history. Thus all these groupings presented historically variable, intersecting social divisions. Identities based on ritual status and religion can be traced back to the most ancient historical documents available in Sri Lanka. The Sinhala identity in its earliest historical form bears the imprint of its origin in the period of state formation, in association with the ruling dynasty and its immediate social base. It is only by about the twelfth century that the Sinhala grouping could have been considered identical with the linguistic grouping. The relationship between the Sinhala and the Buddhist identities was even more complex. There is a close association between the two identities, but at no period do they appear to have coincided exactly to denote the self-same group of people.¹⁴⁶ As Jacobsen observed with reference to Sumerian history, religion and language provided the bases for distinct identities, but it is difficult to group these distinct features within one convenient "bundle."¹⁴⁷

Our survey highlights the role that the literati, the group which occupies the misty regions on the boundaries of class divisions, played in identity formation in ancient as well as modern times. In selecting and reformulating myths and in giving them literary form, the literati played a significant role in the development of Sinhala ideology in ancient society. They fashioned a version of history in conformity with the dominant ideology of their society. This intellectual role was not one that was independent of, or unrelated to, the structure of power. Though it may be rash to generalize about the entire literati on the basis of the evidence in the Pāli chronicles, it can be confidently asserted that these

146. Gananath Obeyesekere presents a different view about the relationship between the Sinhala and the Buddhist identities. See "The Vicissitudes of the Sinhala-Buddhist Identity through Time and Change" in *Collective Identities, Nationalisms and Protest in Modern Sri Lanka*, pp. 279-313.

147. T. Jacobsen, "Political Institutions, Literature and Religion," *City Invincible*, ed. C. H. Kraeling and R. M. Adams, Chicago, 1960, pp. 64-5.

chronicles reveal the important role of at least a section of the literati in the formulation and propagation of a state ideology in ancient and early medieval society.

The history of the development of the Sinhala ideology since the nineteenth century reveals the formidable role that the study of "dead languages" and "the remote past" has played in shaping mass consciousness and thereby in the moulding of the present. It was the study of Oriental languages, particularly Sanskrit, and of comparative philology that initiated in the nineteenth century a trend which came to wield such a decisive influence on contemporary mass consciousness. In Sri Lanka the discipline of history was initially a reluctant draftee, but it is now firmly entrenched within this ideological framework. The depth of the impact of this ideological current becomes evident even from a cursory review of recent research on Sri Lanka in those disciplines categorized as the humanities and the social sciences which perform a crucial social function in either validating or refashioning current ideology. The ability of these disciplines to grow out of the deformations derived from the impact of racialism and communalism would depend on the extent to which those engaged in research and teaching recognize the social function of their disciplines, and develop an awareness of the ideological underpinnings of research and other academic work.¹⁴³

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143. This is a revised version of a paper presented to the Seminar on Nationality Problems in Sri Lanka, organized by the Social Scientists' Association and held on 22 December 1979. The author is grateful to the participants in this Seminar and to Dr. Ralph Pieris for comments.

Conrad as a Modernist Writer

The Secret Agent

The fact is you want more scepticism at the very foundation of your work. Scepticism, the tonic of minds, the tonic of life, the agent of truth,—the way of art and salvation.

Conrad, Letter to John Galsworthy, 11 November 1901.

Joseph Conrad's works are usually taken together with 20th-century literature so that we are inclined to forget that more than half his life was spent in the 19th century and that it was in the 19th century that he began his career as a writer. *Almayer's Folly*, his first fictional effort, was published in 1895, and it was followed by *An Outcast of the Islands* in 1896. Both these Malayan novels are prentice work; they reveal faint signs of Conrad's later greatness but are written very much in the vein of the conventional exotic fiction of the late 19th century. When *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'* appeared in 1897, Conrad unmistakably showed for the first time that his talent was extraordinary, yet he is still recognisably a 19th-century writer. He is very much a 19th-century realist and he celebrates the traditional values of the Merchant Service such as courage, discipline, loyalty, endurance and collaborative endeavour. It is true that he suggests the limitations of these values: while these values enable the European seamen to deal with grave but straightforward and not unfamiliar problems such as those caused by the storm, these values do not equip the ordinary sailors to cope with serious, unfamiliar, subtle problems such as those posed by Donkin and, above all, by James Wait. Still, Conrad's emphasis is on the strength of these values rather than on their frailties: Old Singleton and the officers are always equal to the problems posed by nature as well as by human beings such as Donkin and Wait. Conrad, however, becomes modernistic as he develops, and this tendency first declares itself in his technique. His objectivity becomes more scrupulous, his use of material more strictly economical and his novelistic structure organic yet independent of plot. These aspects of technique are triumphantly employed in *Lord Jim*, published in 1900, while his novelistic vision is still of a piece with *The Nigger of the 'Narcissus'*. It is in *Nostromo*, issued in 1904, that not only Conrad's technique but his artistic vision becomes modernistic: he becomes sceptical of the strength and validity of all moral values. The values of all his characters, ranging from public prestige esteemed by Nostromo to scepticism itself upheld by Decoud, are tested against the silver and emerge as more or less qualified. Yet a trace of 19th-century faith remains in Conrad's vision even in his greatest work. It is true that Giorgio Viola, "the idealist of the old humanitarian revolutions,"¹ is an old

1. Joseph Conrad, 'Author's Note' (1917): *Nostromo*, London: Penguin, 1963 ed., p. 12.

man and an immigrant who cannot affect or take part in the affairs of Costaguana; Captain Mitchell, who retains the values of the Merchant Service, and Don Pepe, who is the loyal retired military man, are rather dense and actively support the "material interests." But the values of Giorgio Viola, Captain Mitchell and Don Pepe are able to withstand the corruption usually wrought by the silver. When Conrad writes *The Secret Agent* (1907), his talent develops further and is fully modernistic in both technique and artistic vision. It is mainly his vision that I wish to examine here.

In a letter to R. B. Cunninghame Graham of 7th October 1907, Conrad wrote of *The Secret Agent*: "It had some importance for me as a new departure in genre and is a sustained effort in ironical treatment of a melodramatic subject."² Both Conrad's viewpoint and fictional mode are ironic. It is true that in *Heart of Darkness* (1902) he had employed an ironic method through a narrator, Marlow,³ but the irony of *The Secret Agent* is of a different quality and is deployed without a narrator. The novel is thus, for Conrad, "a new departure in genre." Its "subject" is usually the stuff of melodrama — the life of a double agent, embassy plotting a bomb blast, accidental death, suicide and underground revolutionists. But Conrad's controlling interests are not those of a writer of melodrama.

F. R. Leavis suggests that the central theme of the novel is "insulation."⁴ Certainly, "insulation" describes accurately the relationship of Adolf Verloc and Winnie, both before and after marriage. But it seems to me that the central and developing theme is about betrayal. The basic tendencies of Mr. Verloc's character are towards order, opulence, indolence and respectable domestication but, in ironic contrast, his home is lower middle class and squalid, his associates revolutionists, his profession that of a double agent (he is both a spy for the Russian Embassy and a police informer). Thus, Verloc has betrayed his true nature by his chosen way of life. His innate bias towards secretiveness and his profession induce him to keep Winnie in the dark about his way of life, and he thus betrays his wife. Yet Verloc gains by contrast with his associates, the anarchists, Karl Yundt, Comrade Ossipon, Michaelis and the Professor. Verloc is like one of us whereas the anarchists seem a breed apart; Chief Inspector Heat rightly recognises, with a shock of horror, the alienness of the rebels when he accidentally runs into the Professor in the street. Verloc's appearance is untidy and flabby: "he had an air of having wallowed, fully dressed, all day on an unmade bed;"⁵

2. C. T. Watts (ed.), *Joseph Conrad's Letters to R. B. Cunninghame Graham*, Cambridge: The University Press, 1969, p. 169.
3. See D. C. R. A. Goonetilleke, *Developing Countries in British Fiction*, London, Macmillan, 1977, p. 110.
4. F. R. Leavis, *The Great Tradition*, London: Penguin, 1962 ed., p. 231.
5. Joseph Conrad, *The Secret Agent*, London: Dent, 1961 ed., p. 4; all later quotations from the novel are from this edition and their page numbers are noted in my text.

the first remark made by Mr. Vladimir, the First Secretary of the embassy of Czarist Russia, when he sees Verloc, is "He's fat – the animal" (p. 19). His appearance reflects Conrad's moral disapproval but he is much less repelling than the anarchists. He even has an element of worthiness and an appeal which the anarchists lack. He is a man more sinned against than sinning. He ruins not only his family but himself. He brings about ruin because he is weak in a human way rather than because he is actively evil.

Conrad seems to have thought that Winnie is a more important character than Verloc. He seems to have thought she is the heroine of the novel in the conventional sense, that the story is her story, that she is heroic, that she wins and deserves the wholehearted sympathy of the reader.⁶ Christopher Cooper virtually subscribes to these views.⁷ Can we agree? Winnie's life before she accepted Mr. Verloc's offer of marriage is relevant to our assessment of her. Her mother remembers:

There had been a steady young fellow, only son of a butcher in the next street, helping his father in business, with whom Winnie had been walking out with obvious gusto. He was dependent on his father, it is true; but the business was good, and his prospects excellent. He took her girl to the theatre on several evenings. Then just as she began to dread to hear of their engagement (for what could she have done with that big house alone, with Stevie on her hands), that romance came to an abrupt end, and Winnie went about looking very dull. (p. 40)

The son of the butcher did not have the means to provide for Stevie, Winnie's half-witted younger brother, and her mother, whereas Mr. Verloc had, and this fact alone makes Winnie decide in favour of Verloc, though the butcher's son was closer to her in age, was more attractive and had won her affection. Winnie has the capacity to love and she betrays her own nature when she contracts a marriage of convenience with Verloc of her own free will. After marriage, her love as such was only for Stevie and this is a betrayal of her husband. The intensity of her feelings for the boy had its origins in her childhood – "As a little girl she had often faced with blazing eyes the irascible licensed victualler (their father) in defence of her brother" (p. 38) – and remains undiminished. It is true that her love for Stevie is partly selfless. The boy needed a home and protection; he could not fend for himself. He does not appeal to her for help, but she looks after him of her own accord and gains nothing materially thereby. Yet, emotionally, Winnie does gain from Stevie. He provides her with an object for affection, both before and after marriage. The feelings which he evokes in Winnie,

6. Conrad, 'Author's Preface' (1920): *The Secret Agent*, p. xii.

7. Christopher Cooper, *Conrad and the Human Dilemma*, London: Chatto & Windus, 1970, p. 19.

are a substitute for her want of love for her husband and the absence of children. These feelings introduce a savour into the otherwise tasteless life of a double agent's wife. Thus Winnie's devotion to Stevie has its self-aggrandizing aspect. It is not heroic self-abnegation. I cannot but disagree with Christopher Cooper: "Winnie Verloc is throughout motivated by a concern for her idiot brother which in its quality amounts to that nobility which stems from a desire to make life easier for others and operates to the complete exclusion of self-interest."¹⁹ I deny that Winnie achieves "nobility." Her "self-interest" is unconscious, but it is there.

Verloc assumes that he is loved by Winnie for his own sake, and the reader sympathises with him in his error. Winnie throughout conceals from him the true state of her heart. Moreover, while betraying Verloc in this important respect, she assumes that Verloc loves her for her own sake and expects this kind of love as a matter of right:

In the early days, made sceptical by the trials of friendless life, she (Winnie's mother) used sometimes to ask anxiously: "You don't think, my dear, that Mr. Verloc is getting tired of seeing Stevie about?" To this Winnie replied habitually by a slight toss of her head. Once, however, she retorted with a rather grim pertness: "He'll have to get tired of me first." (p.40)

Winnie's mind was very limited: a "distant and uninquiring acceptance of facts was her force and safeguard in life." (p. 153) With such a mind, she was extremely fortunate in engaging the affections of the butcher's son and she must indeed be thankful for having secured even Mr. Verloc as her husband. The relationship of Verloc and Winnie is carefully defined by Conrad:

Their accord was perfect, but it was no tprecise. It was a tacit accord, congenial to Mrs. Verloc's incuriosity and to Mr. Verloc's habits of mind, which were indolent and secret. They refrained from going to the bottom of facts and motives. (p. 245)

Both Verloc and Winnie are equally responsible for what their marital relationship is. *It is superficial and vague, the husband and wife are insulated from each other.* Yet it is precisely because of its superficiality and vagueness and the insulation that the marriage achieves a kind of success. Both have confidence in each other's fidelity and they do not betray each other in this respect, even though Comrade Ossipon directed shamelessly inviting glances towards Winnie. Verloc provides Winnie with a home which is not less than she deserves. He provides for Stevie

8. Christopher Cooper, op. cit., p. 19.

and Winnie's mother without a murmur of discontent. Indeed, his generosity seems virtually transcendental to Winnie's mother. She wishes to reduce his burden by entering an almshouse and thereby secure permanent provision for Stevie, though Verloc had not said or done anything to warrant her self-sacrifice and anxiety on account of her son. On the other hand, Winnie is a dutiful wife. She not only runs the household efficiently, lends a hand in the shop, but is solicitous for Verloc's welfare; here is the scene at night in the bedroom of the Verlocs after Verloc had been upset by his encounter with Mr. Vladimir at the Russian embassy:

Mrs. Verloc expressed her surprise at seeing him up yet.

"I don't feel very well," he muttered, passing his hands over his moist brow.

"Giddiness?"

"Yes. Not at all well."

Mrs. Verloc, with all the placidity of an experienced wife, expressed a confident opinion as to the cause, and suggested the usual remedies; but her husband, rooted in the middle of the room, shook his lowered head sadly.

"You'll catch cold standing there," she observed. (p. 57)

Winnie's conscientiousness answers to Verloc's own conscientiousness and is less worthy than his. Hers derives partly from gratitude for Verloc's generosity in providing for Stevie and her mother, where as his is entirely on her own account.

The relationship of Verloc and Winnie is catapulted into a crisis when Stevie dies in the bomb blast: The manner in which this crisis is presented, illustrates Conrad's mastery of a modernist form for his novel. The pivot of the entire plot is only one incident, Verloc's attempt to blow up the Greenwich Observatory, and Conrad so uses it that it is perfectly adequate for such a complex and rich novel. As early as chapter four, during the conversation between Comrade Ossipon and the Professor, Conrad mentions the explosion at Greenwich Park and Verloc's association with it, but it is only towards the end of chapter nine that a clear picture of the incident emerges. In-between Conrad employs cunning shifts of time and place and the climactic last scene between Verloc and Winnie gains maximum intensity and maximum ironic import.

It is true that Verloc had employed Stevie to carry the bomb with which he accidentally blew himself up, and Verloc had hidden from Stevie the real nature of his assignment. He had betrayed Stevie's trust in him as the soul of wisdom and goodness and also Winnie's belief in him as a

generous, selfless patron, she had even regarded him as Stevie's foster father. But Verloc remains, as Conrad himself states in the novel, "a human being — and not a monster as Mrs. Verloc believed him to be." (p. 257) It was impossible for Verloc to take Stevie into his confidence because the lad was a half-wit. Moreover, Verloc tells Winnie:

"By heavens! You know that I hunted high and low. I ran the risk of giving myself away to find somebody for that accursed job. And I tell you again I couldn't find any one crazy enough or hungry enough. What do you take me for — a murderer, or what? The boy is gone. Do you think I wanted him to blow himself up? He's gone. His troubles are over. Ours are just going to begin, I tell you, precisely because he did blow himself up. I don't blame you. But just try to understand that it was a pure accident, as much an accident as if he had been run over by a 'bus while crossing the street.'" (pp. 256-7)

Of course, Stevie's death is not quite "a pure accident, as much an accident as if he had been run over by a 'bus while crossing the street'" and Verloc is responsible for employing Stevie on a dangerous and unlawful mission, absolutely outside the normal course of Stevie's life. But there is something to be said for the circumstances which Verloc mentions; these are extenuating. Whereas Verloc truthfully says "I didn't mean any harm to come to the boy" (p. 231), Winnie is incapable of judging him properly and proceeds to misjudge him:

Mrs. Verloc's mental condition had the merit of simplicity; but it was not sound. It was governed too much by a fixed idea. Every nook and cranny of her brain was filled with the thought that this man, with whom she had lived without distaste for seven years, had taken the "poor boy" away from her in order to kill him — the man to whom she had grown accustomed in body and mind; the man whom she had trusted, took the boy away to kill him! (p. 249)

Verloc appears fully human in being driven to desperation by Mr. Vladimir's forcefully expressed threat to discontinue his services as a spy of the Russian embassy if he did not commit an outrage that would influence the British government to pass repressive legislation. Verloc felt, quite rightly, that his whole livelihood was being menaced. He attempts to save himself and Winnie by trying to blow up the Greenwich Observatory; his motive is understandably human and not wholly selfish. When he tells his wife, "Do be reasonable, Winnie. What would it have been if you lost me?" (p. 234), he has grounds to feel aggrieved. He genuinely sympathizes with Winnie in her bereavement and tries to console her:

"You'll have to pull yourself together, my girl," he said, sympathetically. "What's done can't be undone."

Mrs. Verloc gave a slight start, though not a muscle of her white face moved in the least. Mr. Verloc, who was not looking at her, continued ponderously:

"You go to bed now. What you want is a good cry."
(pp. 240-41)

During the crisis, Verloc's feelings and thoughts range from fatalism ("Nothing could be helped now" p. 231), to generous sympathy for Winnie, annoyance at her stupor and even to optimism. He looks forward to life after serving a term of imprisonment and, with characteristic generosity of spirit, he includes Winnie in his plans for the future. He is open about his secret life in a way he had never been. Yet none of Verloc's moods or words elicit a proper response from Winnie or alter her obsession that he had intentionally murdered Stevie. Her reactions to the crisis are independent of Verloc's and have a much narrower range. She moves from a nightmarish paralysis of rage and despair over Stevie's death to a murderous cunning and a macabre sense of irresponsibility and idleness. The vagueness and superficiality of the relationship of the Verlocs and the insulation between them, which were responsible for the success of their marriage, is also responsible for its failure. Understanding and communication are needed during the crisis if the marriage is to survive, and these are precluded by the very nature of their relationship. Verloc was incapable of understanding "either the nature or the whole extent of" Winnie's passion for Stevie (p. 233), while Winnie had been incapable of communicating this passion to Verloc. She is incapable of understanding Verloc or joining him in a search for a solution to their difficult problem. The crisis jolts Verloc into making gestures of understanding and communication, but these are not reciprocated by Winnie. When her obsession compels her to plunge a carving-knife into Verloc, the reader does not feel that justice is being done. It seems to me that Winnie is more to blame than Verloc for the final collapse of their marriage and our sympathies, at this stage in the novel, are with Verloc rather than with Winnie. Still, Winnie never loses our sympathy. Verloc's case is complicated and it is difficult for her to judge him, especially in her emotional state. Indeed, it is difficult even for a person better endowed intellectually than Winnie and without her emotional involvement to judge Verloc's case. Our sympathies for her increase when she flees after murdering Verloc. She entrusts herself and her money to Comrade Ossipon, only to be betrayed. She believes that Ossipon loves her for her own sake, ironically recalling to the reader Verloc's belief that Winnie loved him in his own right, whereas Ossipon is interested only in her money. He gets hold of her money and then deserts her. She commits suicide soon after. Yet Ossipon is not a

monster. His increased disinclination to assist Winnie after he discovers the murder, is human and understandable. He feels guilty when he learns of Winnie's suicide and his own personality disintegrates. His plight adds to the pathos of the novel's conclusion.

The story, then, is as much Verloc's as Winnie's. If she is the "heroine," then she is not the single chief character. In this case, Verloc is the "hero" and an equally important character. Indeed, the terms "hero" and "heroine" are not quite appropriate when applied to Verloc and Winnie. Both are not heroic and do not win our wholehearted sympathy and approval. Rather, Verloc is an anti-hero and Winnie an anti-heroine. Our sympathies and approval for both are divided and well up in much the same degree for both. If there is a difference of degree, it is in Verloc's favour. The value of their relationship is nil and it ends in disaster, in nothing. Winnie precariously holds on to a love of life after murdering Verloc, but this is soon crushed and is not established as a positive value. Conrad's outlook, then, in his presentation of the personal themes is completely sceptical.

In his valuable pages on *The Secret Agent* in *The Great Tradition*, F. R. Leavis is preoccupied with Conrad's moral interest in the novel. But it seems to me that Conrad has a distinctly social interest which Leavis neglects. There is a social theme about order and disorder which is important and bulks large in the novel. In fact, the personal and social themes are interrelated: Verloc's public role as a double agent is partly responsible for his personal isolation at home; the attempt to blow up the Greenwich Observatory represents an attempt made by Verloc to save both his public profession and private home and, ironically, the attempt results in the destruction of both. The social theme is presented with the same kind of art as the personal theme; see, for instance, the scene at the Russian embassy, early in the book:

Mr. Vladimir bore the look of heavy inquiry with perfect serenity.

"What we want is to administer a tonic to the Conference in Milan," he said, airily. "Its deliberations upon international action for the suppression of political crime don't seem to get anywhere. England lags. This country is absurd with its sentimental regard for individual liberty. It's intolerable to think that all your friends have got only to come over to."

"In that way I have them all under my eye," Mr. Verloc interrupted, huskily.

"It would be much more to the point to have them all under lock and key. England must be brought into line. The imbecile bourgeoisie of this country make themselves the accomplices of the very people whose aim is to drive them out of their houses to starve in ditches. And they have the political power still, if they only had the sense to use it for their preservation. I suppose you agree that the middle classes are stupid?"

"Mr. Verloc agreed hoarsely.

"They are."

"They have no imagination. They are blinded by an idiotic vanity. What they want just now is a jolly good scare. This is the psychological moment to set your friends to work. I have had you called here to develop to you my idea."

"A series of outrages," Mr. Vladimir continued calmly, "executed here in this country; not only planned here - that would not do - they would not mind. Your friends could set half the Continent on fire without influencing the public opinion here in favour of a universal repressive legislation. They will not look outside their backyard here."

Mr. Verloc cleared his throat, but his heart failed him, and he said nothing. (pp.29-30)

Verloc is aware of the ironies of his position: he is conscious of the real difficulties of his job in a way Vladimir is not and does not care about. Above both the characters operates the still wiser irony of Conrad. His irony shows up, by implication, the ineptness of Verloc, the unscrupulousness and brutal repression of autocracy represented by Vladimir, and the perverse destructiveness of anarchism. Conrad's irony also suggests that there is some truth in Vladimir's criticism of English insularity and middle-class denseness, but at the same time it suggests that the present state of order in England with its "individual liberty" is wrongfully menaced and is to be preferred to autocracy and anarchism. The irony thus works at several levels at the same time, and packs a wealth of social and political insight into the comic scene.

Conrad's sceptical insight is so penetrating that the social theme takes the reader to the very core of social and political realities of a capitalist state. These are thoughts evoked in Chief Inspector Heat when he runs into the Professor in a London street:

Chief Inspector Heat was, of course, not insensible to the gravity of moral differences. But neither were the thieves he had been looking after. They submitted to the severe sanctions

of a morality familiar to Chief Inspector Heat with a certain resignation. They were his fellow-citizens gone wrong because of imperfect education, Chief Inspector Heat believed; but allowing for that difference, he could understand the mind of a burglar, because as a matter of fact, the mind and the instincts of a burglar are of the same kind as the mind and the instincts of a police officer. Both recognize the same conventions, and have a working knowledge of each other's methods and of the routine of their respective trades. They understand each other, which is advantageous to both, and establishes a sort of amenity in their relations. Products of the same machine, one classed as useful and the other as noxious, they take the machine for granted in different ways, but with a seriousness essentially the same. The mind of Chief Inspector Heat was inaccessible to ideas of revolt. But his thieves were not rebels. His bodily vigour, his cool, inflexible manner, his courage, and his fairness, had secured for him much respect and some adulation in the sphere of his early successes. He had felt himself revered and admired. And Chief Inspector Heat, arrested within six paces of the anarchist nick-named the Professor, gave a thought of regret to the world of thieves—sane, without morbid ideals, working by routine, respectful of constituted authorities, free from all taint of hate and despair.

After paying this tribute to what is normal in the constitution of society (for the idea of thieving appeared to his instinct as normal as the idea of property), Chief Inspector Heat felt very angry with himself for having stopped, for having spoken, for having taken that way at all on the ground of it being a short cut from the station to the headquarters. (pp. 92-3)

Conrad suggests ironies at the centre of the social situation. He sees law and crime, property and thieving, as two sides of the same coin and anarchism in this system as both peculiar and insanely destructive. Conrad is also indignant at Heat's calm acceptance of the given social state. Conrad's many-faceted irony plays on Heat as a representative of order, on ordinary society and on anarchism. More striking, artistically, is the scene when Winnie and Stevie converse after leaving behind the wretched cabman, the equally wretched horse and the cab in which Winnie's mother had been conveyed to the almshouse:

Hanging back suddenly, Stevie inflicted an arresting jerk upon his sister.

"Poor! Poor!" he ejaculated, appreciatively. "Cabman poor, too. He told me himself."

The contemplation of the infirm and lonely steed overcame him. Jostled, but obitinate, he would remain there, trying to express the view newly opened to his sympathies of the human and equine misery in close association. But it was very difficult. "Poor brute, poor people!" was all he could repeat. It did not seem forcible enough, and he came to a stop with an angry splutter: "Shame!" Stevie was no master of phrases, and perhaps for that very reason his thoughts lacked clearness and precision. But he felt with greater completeness and some profundity. That little word contained all his sense of indignation and horror at one sort of wretchedness having to feed upon the anguish of the other — at the poor cabman beating the poor horse in the name, as it were, of his poor kids at home. And Stevie knew what it was to be beaten. He knew it from experience. It was a bad world. Bad! Bad!

Mrs. Verloc, his only sister, guardian, and protector, could not pretend to such depths of insight. Moreover, she had not experienced the magic of the cabman's eloquence. She was in the dark as to the inwardness of the word "Shame." And she said placidly:

"Come along, Stevie. You cant help that."

The docile Stevie went along; but now he went along without pride, shamblingly, and muttering half words, and even words that would have been whole if they had not been made up of halves that did not belong to each other. It was as though he had been trying to fit all the words he could remember to his sentiments in order to get some sort of corresponding idea. And, as a matter of fact, he got it at last. He hung back to utter it at once.

"Bad world for poor people."

"Don't you know what the police are for, Stevie? They are there so that them as have nothing shouldn't take anything away from them who have."

She avoided using the verb "to steal," because it always made her brother uncomfortable. For Stevie was delicately honest. Certain simple principles had been instilled into him so anxiously (on account of his "queerness") that the mere names of certain transgressions filled him with horror. He had been always easily impressed by speeches. He was impressed and startled now, and his intelligence was very alert.

"What?" he asked at once, anxiously. "Not even if they were hungry? Mustn't they?"

The two had paused in their walk.

"Not if they were ever so," said Mrs. Verloc, with the equanimity of a person untroubled by the problem of the distribution of wealth, and exploring the perspective of the roadway for an omnibus of the right colour. "Certainly not. But what's the use of talking about all that? You aren't ever hungry." (pp.170-74)

The scene is fine ironic comedy. Conrad sees to it that the thoughts and speech of Stevie and Winnie are perfectly in character and at the same time suggests insights beyond their minds. Stevie's sympathy for the poor is, in the main, inarticulate and naively instinctive and Winnie's resignation to the existence of poverty is superficial, yet Conrad also suggests central problems of capitalist society, the inequality of classes and the distribution of wealth.

Irving Howe regards Conrad as a conservative,⁹ but it seems to me that, in *The Secret Agent*, Conrad is not a conservative but a "critical realist," to use a term from Soviet literary criticism. Arnold Kettle notes, "By *Critical Realism* I assume we mean literature written in the era of class society from a point of view which, while not fully socialist, is nevertheless sufficiently critical of class society to reveal important truths about that society and to contribute to the freeing of the human consciousness from the limitations which class society has imposed on it."¹⁰ *The Secret Agent* was written in the era of class society. Conrad was not a socialist; we may recall that the socialist who enters *Nostromo* at the close of the novel, is a gross caricature. Yet Conrad is sufficiently critical of class society to reveal important truths about that society, as regards both personal and social life, and by his unflinching exposure of these truths, he contributes to the freeing of human consciousness from the limitations which class society has imposed on it. While pointing to deficiencies and problems of capitalist society, Conrad at the same time suggests that it is greatly preferable to the autocracy of Czarist Russia and anarchism. And the preference is sound.

In England, anarchism was a movement of minor consequence. As George Woodcock notes,

English anarchism has never been anything else than a chorus of voices crying in the wilderness, though some of the voices have been remarkable. At no time did the anarchists

9. Irving Howe, *Politics and the Novel*, Cleveland & N. Y. : World Publishing Company, 1962 ed., p. 79.

10. Arnold Kettle, "Dickens and the Popular Tradition," David Craig (ed.), *Marxists on Literature*, London: Penguin, 1975, p. 214.

have even a remote chance of controlling the British labour movement. They have always been a small sect, hardly existent outside London and Glasgow, and in adapting themselves to their situation without admitting it, they have concentrated more than libertarians in many other countries on the graces of art and intellect.¹¹

If Conrad was principally interested in English anarchism in its own right, a part of the subject of *The Secret Agent* would have been of minor significance. But fortunately Conrad is concerned with anarchism not so much as a movement in its own right, but as a form of social disorder. As such, he does not attempt to evaluate anarchism as a movement; it is irrelevant to criticise Conrad for neglecting "the real and most impressive best" among the 19th-century anarchists as Irving Howe does.¹² It is true that, as George Woodcock notes, "the modest record of the English movement shows an experimental spirit which has embraced every kind of anarchist thought and has produced every type of anarchist individual, with the sole exception of the practising terrorist."¹³ But Conrad does not intend to present or suggest or do justice to the range of English anarchist thought or of English anarchist individuals. He has selected four types of anarchists—Karl Yundt, Comrade Ossipon, the Professor and Michaelis—who, though not representing the best among the anarchists, still seem to me convincingly lifelike rank-and-file social rebels. They are presented as bold caricatures and their repelling physical attributes reflect Conrad's moral disapproval.

Karl Yundt is a preacher of terrorism and his distinguishing feature in this respect was that "he took the part of an insolent and venomous evoker of sinister impulses which lurk in the blind envy and exasperated vanity of ignorance, in the suffering and misery of poverty, in all the hopeful and noble illusions of righteous anger, pity, and revolt." (p. 48) He is disgustingly decrepit. He was "old and bald, with a narrow, snow-white wisp of a goatee hanging limply from his chin;" his mouth was "toothless," his eyes were "extinguished," his "skinny groping hand deformed by gouty swellings." (p. 42) Comrade Ossipon is a pamphleteer and he thinks: "the only thing that matters to us is the emotional state of the masses. Without emotion there is no action." (p. 50) Though he lives off the women he seduces, he is curiously wanting in attractions: "a bush of crinkly yellow hair topped his red, freckled face, with a flattened nose and prominent mouth cast in the rough mould of the negro type." (p. 44) "The negro type" of Ossipon's features is meant by Conrad to denote ugliness. The Professor feels superior to the other revolutionists because

11. George Woodcock, *Anarchism*, London: Penguin, 1972 ed., p. 414.

12. Irving Nowe, *op. cit.*, pp. 97–8.

13. George Woodcock, *op. cit.*, p. 415.

he is more dangerous: he dabbles in explosives and carries with him a bomb that could wipe out every creature in his vicinity. His ideas are more deadly than those of the others:

"To break up the superstition and worship of legality should be our aim. Nothing would please me more than to see Inspector Heat and his likes take to shooting us down in broad daylight with the approval of the public. Half our battle would be won then; the disintegration of the old morality would have set in its very temple. That is what you ought to aim at. But you revolutionists will never understand that. You plan the future, you lose yourselves in reveries of economical systems derived from what is; whereas what's wanted is a clean sweep and a clear start for a new conception of life. That sort of future will take care of itself if you will only make room for it. Therefore I would shovel my stuff in heaps at the corners of the streets if I had enough for that; and as I haven't, I do my best by perfecting a really dependable detonator." (p. 73).

The Professor's appearance is unprepossessing. He is puny, frail and shabby; "his flat large ears departed widely from the sides of his skull.... the flat cheeks, of a greasy, unhealthy complexion, were merely smudged by the miserable poverty of a thin dark whisker." (p. 62) Michaelis is presented as the least objectionable of the anarchists. Conrad is capable of seeing to it that Michaelis lucidly, accurately and consistently expresses Marxism:

"...All idealization makes life poorer. To beautify it is to take away its character of complexity—it is to destroy it. Leave that to the moralists, my boy. History is made by men, but they do not make it in their heads. The ideas that are born in their consciousness play an insignificant part in the march of events. History is dominated and determined by the tool and the production—by the force of economic conditions. Capitalism has made socialism, and the laws made by the capitalism for the protection of property are responsible for anarchism. No one can tell what form the social organization may take in the future. Then why indulge in prophetic phantasies? At best they can only interpret the mind of the prophet, and can have no objective value. Leave that pastime to the moralists, my boy." (p. 41).

Conrad's condemnation of Michaelis too is clearly implied in the physical attributes which he gives the ticket-of-leave apostle:

He had come out of a highly hygienic prison round like a tub, with an enormous stomach and distended cheeks of a

pale, semitransparent complexion, as though for fifteen years the servants of an outraged society had made a point of stuffing him with fattening foods in a damp and lightless cellar. (p.41)

The anarchists are not, however, totally revolting. It is customary for critics to overlook the sympathy which Conrad elicits for the anarchists by sketching their past to explain their present state and by other suggestions. The Professor is, as Conrad indicates in a letter, "a megalomaniac of an extreme type,"¹⁴ but even from him I do not wholly recoil. Conrad makes us understand how the frustration of the Professor's ambition and vanity influences him to formulate destruction as his creed;¹⁵ we respect his peculiar integrity; we feel sorry for the way he is lost in crowds and is undersized, miserable and lonely. Our sympathies go out to Michaelis when we learn that his term of imprisonment is not justified, that it has made him obese and, much worse, damaged his mind. Yet far more important than Conrad's sympathy for the anarchists is his criticism. All of them serve to bring out, in common, "the criminal futility of the whole thing, doctrine, action, mentality" and "the contemptible aspect of the half-crazy pose as of a brazen cheat exploiting the poignant miseries and passionate credulities of a mankind always so tragically eager for self-destruction."¹⁶

In *The Secret Agent*, the forces of disorder are opposed by forces of order. Conrad sees ironies in the forces of order too. "Chief Inspector Heat was a kind man, an excellent husband, a devoted father;" he enjoyed "public and departmental confidence." (p. 119) But he could be shockingly dishonest and unjust: he wanted to frame Michaelis for the explosion at Greenwich Park. He uses Verloc as an informer unknown to anyone else in his department and he wanted to hide this fact even when it interferes with the true investigation of the explosion. He conceals the address-tab he found under the lapel of dead Stevie's coat until the Assistant Commissioner forces out the information. There seems to be some truth in the Assistant Commissioner's fleeting thought that the reputation of Chief Inspector Heat might possibly have been made in a great part by the Secret Agent Verloc." (p. 131) Thus, Conrad suggests the existence of dubious methods and incongruities behind the smooth public front of Justice. His moral disapproval of Heat is implicit in his description of Heat's physiognomy as having "too much flesh." (p. 116) When we discuss the Assistant Commissioner, we remember A. J. Guerard's true

14. Joseph Conrad, letter to R. B. Cunninghame Graham, 7 October 1907: C. T. Watts (ed.), *Letters to Cunningham Graham*, p. 170.

15. See especially *The Secret Agent*, pp. 80-1.

16. Conrad, 'Author's Preface': *The Secret Agent*, p. ix.

contention that "such slight author-identification as exists in *The Secret Agent* is clearly with Assistant Commissioner."¹⁷ Yet the more important thing is that Conrad is able to portray him with sufficient objectivity so as to place him. He had "considerable gifts for detection" (p. 117) and he is more than a match for Heat. He, not Heat, finds out from Verloc that Vladimир had instigated the bomb outrage. Yet he feels uncomfortable in his present job; he dislikes being "chained to a desk in the thick of four millions of men" (p. 113) whereas, in contrast, "the police-work he had been engaged on in a distant part of the globe had the saving character of an irregular sort of warfare or at least the risk and excitement of open-air sport." (pp. 112-13) He is impelled, in the first place, to save Michaelis from Heat's inclination to frame him, not from a sense of justice, but from self-interest; he does not wish to offend Michaelis' aristocratic patroness because she was a "good friend" of his wife and himself (p. 112) and had an "excellent influence" upon his wife. (pp. 111-12) Still, he is the least objectionable among the representatives of order; naturally, he is lean and his appearance is unoffending. The elder statesman's appearance implies that Conrad disapproves of him more strongly:

Vast in bulk and stature, with a long white face, which, broadened at the base by a big double chin, appeared egg-shaped in the fringe of thin greyish whisker, the great personage seemed an expanding man. Unfortunate from a tailoring point of view, the cross-folds in the middle of a buttoned black coat added to the impression, as if he fastenings of the garment were tried to the utmost. From the head, set upward on a thick neck, the eyes, with puffy lower lids, stared with a haughty droop on each side of a hooked, aggressive nose, nobly salient in the vast pale circumference of the face. (p. 136)

He is self-centred and conducts himself with a sense of self-importance, yet he is not corrupt. His private secretary is silly, bumptious, and has been appointed purely because of his social status, regardless of merit. In sum, the representatives of order in *The Secret Agent* are not as reprehensible as the representatives of disorder, but they are tainted.

One critical issue remains: the question of setting. London is presented with a Dickensian vividness and vitality, also with less caricature and more realism than in Dickens. Probably, it is the effectiveness of Conrad's portrayal of London that prompted Leo Gurko to elaborate an eccentric thesis that "the heart of the book, the dominant idea that determines its movement, is London."¹⁸ Numerous touches—for instance, Conrad writes:

17. A. J. Guerard, *Conrad the Novelist*, Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1962, p. 223.

18. Lee Gurko, *Joseph Conrad: Giant in Exile*, N. Y. : Macmillan, 1962, p. 169.

"on the pavement of the squalid and wide throughfare, whose poverty in all the amenities of life stood foolishly exposed by a mad profusion of gaslights, . . ." (p. 170) — build up a total composite impression of London as a sprawling murky sordid metropolis. Not only the personal theme and the social theme, Conrad's presentation of the setting too is disillusioned. His disillusion is unflinching and total. His vision in *The Secret Agent* is fully modernistic.

D. C. R. A. GOONETILLEKE

The Revolutionary Vision in Sinhala Poetry

I shall examine in the present paper the work of some of the young Sinhala poets produced during the last decade with a view to assessing their attempts at expressing social consciousness through poetry. The work of poets such as G.B. Senanayaka, Gunadasa Amarasekara, Mahagama Sekara and Wimal Disanayaka will not be studied at length for the reason that their vision of society does not differ very much from what it was in the pre-1970 period. Although in his later works he has showed a much deeper understanding of our society, Mahagama Sekara was not committed to any particular political ideology. The young poets of the present decade, however, show such commitments and they are not reluctant to express frankly their political beliefs. Poets such as Parakrama Kodituvakku, Buddhadasa Galappatti and Monica Ruwanpatirana who are deeply perturbed by the injustice and corruption in society penetrate its lower levels for their subject-matter. These poets seem to have been influenced by the literary dialogue prevailing in the island during the last few years which emphasized that 'Socialist realism' was the prime objective of the artist.

In the 1950s, and 1960s, modern Sinhala poets were, by and large, concerned with expressing individual spiritual experience through poetry. They were dissatisfied with the achievement of their immediate predecessors, the poets of the 'Colombo School,' and considered it their task to find better forms and styles to express the experience and sensibility of the modern age. Poets such as Siri Gunasinghe, Gunadasa, Amarasekara, Mahagama Sekara and Wimal Disanayaka deserve mention as the pioneers of the modern movement in Sinhala poetry.¹ These poets have broadened its spectrum of experience and worked towards the development of a suitable style. Further the poetry published after 1970 by some of these poets, in contrast to the poetry of politically motivated young poets, differs only slightly from their work before 1970 with regard to subject-matter. Mahagama Sekara's last volume, wherein we find a vision of life deeply rooted in Buddhist philosophy and some other ancient Asian mystical teachings, is an exception.²

1. i. Siri Gunasinghe, *Mas Lē Nūti Ā-a* (Bones with No. Flesh or Blood, 1956, *Ratu Kākula*, (The Red Bud), 1961, *Abhinkmana*, (The Renunciation), 1958.
 - ii. Gunadasa Amarasekara, *Uyanaka Hinda Liyū Kavi*, (Poems Written in a Park, 1957), *Bhāva Gīta*, (Emotive Lyrics), 1955 and *Amal Biso*, 1961.
 - iii. Mahagama Sekara *Vyaṅgā*, *Heta Irak Pāyayi*, (Tomorrow Rises a Sun) (1961), *Sakvālihi*, 1962; *Makniśāda Yat* (Because of....), 1964.
 - iv. Wimal Dissanayake, *Akal Vāssa*, (Untimely Rain), n.d. *Kalpa Vinasaya* (End of an Aeon n.d.) *Nara Rakusā* (The Human Demon), 1969 *Indracāpaya* (The Rainbow), 1972.
 - v. Sarat Amunugama, *Hadatula Ā-a*, (Desires of a Heart), 1963.
2. See Mahagama Sekara. *Pratibuddha*, posthumously published in 1977.

Dāl Kavuluwa (Meshed Window, 1973) and *Viñḍini* (I Feel, 1975) by G. B. Senanayaka resemble his poems in *Pali Gāṇiṃa* (The Revenge) of 1946 which are the earliest examples of Sinhala free verse, not only in style but also in subject matter. He expresses his vision of life and philosophical ideas in these two works quite unhindered by the much publicized literary debates of the time. In *Āvarjana* (Reminiscences, 1975) Amarasekara hardly seems to be influenced even slightly by the current trend. He does not advocate 'revolution' as the solution for social problems. Compositions such as 'Pemaḍāsa' (p. 11), 'Mehekāriyagē miya giya piyā' (The Servant Woman's Dead Father, p. 14), 'Mehekāra Kella' (The Woman Servant, p. 52) and 'Sēnagē Vistaraya' (Sena's Story, p. 86) may be cited as the few instances of the author being influenced by the contemporary literary tendencies. Wimal Disanayaka's poetical works, *Indracāpaya* (1972) and *Rāvpiḷiṛāv* (1975) may be considered the most representative contemporary Sinhala poetry in contrast with the work of the younger poets with political inclinations. Among the poems in *Rāvpiḷiṛāv* the following may remind one of the work of other young poets as regards subject-matter: 'Ātma Apavādayak' (A Self accusation, p. 7) 'Samvādayak' (A dialogue, p. 12) 'Mata magen Ayadumak' (An Appeal from Myself, p. 18), 'Hingana Daruvā' (The Beggar Boy, p. 22) 'Daruvakuge Biya' (A Child's Anxiety, p. 32.) These compositions reflect the influence of 'socialist realism' to a considerable extent. In 'The Beggar Boy' the poet reminds 'respectable society' of its responsibility towards a poor suffering child:

His body in search of two eyes
 lies by the road under the scorching sun
 his wailing in search of two ears
 floats in the cruel air
 his figure, deformed and discoloured
 reminds me of a creature from the past.
 I look away averting my eyes,
 taking a coin from my pocket
 I offer it to him,
 hurriedly, without looking back
 I walk along the pavement, and
 feel a fierce and black fear
 with painted nails following me
 Am I not responsible?
 for the dark stream
 that flows through his sinful life.³

Most other young poets whose work is discussed in this paper, have also focussed attention on the life of beggars, servants and poor farmers as a means of criticizing the present social order. This poem by Wimal

3. W. Disanayaka, *Rāv Piḷiṛāv*, 1974, p. 22.

Disanayaka can be compared with 'A Question from a Judge' by Buddhadasa Galappatti in 'A Queen Wept!' In the following analysis of the work of young socialist-minded poets it is clear that they, too, concentrate on similar subjects such as beggars, servants, orphans and prostitutes, but they are more militant and less restrained than Amarasekara or Disanayaka. As a result of the politically motivated literary dialogue of this period⁴ the pioneers of the Sinhala free-verse tradition were looked down upon as being petit-bourgeois and ignorant of the true problems of the masses. The young poets were, at the same time, hailed as being genuine artists closer to the common man. However, it will be clear from an analysis of their work that they too do not refrain completely from drawing on the themes and subject-matter often used by their predecessors. But some of these young poets do not evince an interest in the aesthetic aspects of poetry. Their main interest lies in exposing the plight of the masses rather than in paying attention to poetic diction or expressing romantic feelings. It is perhaps this social consciousness which appeals to the minds of youthful readers.

A few examples from the work of these young poets would reveal how radical these poets are as regards subject-matter and vision. "We who belong to the era of man's setting foot on the moon, must change our vision accordingly" is what Tilakaratna Silva states in some of the poems in *Deviyō Tātigena Mahapolovata Eti*, (Alarmed, the Gods Descend to Earth) of 1977;

Misery-poverty-malnutrition-crimes
 unrest of the young-unemployment-question of slums
 international conflicts-economic depression-immigration
 these and many other jaws of degeneration are agape
 To ward off all these disasters
 bearing in mind determination like an *Indrakhīla*
 thinking of the era of man's walking on the moon
 without wasting time on deciphering palm leaf manuscripts
 discerning clearly the future way through sage's eyes
 let's march forward united.⁵

The first part of the above quotation, it has to be admitted, reads like prose, but the second part is enriched with poetic expressions and figures of speech. The consciousness and sensibility shown by this poet of the national as well as international situation must be pointed out as a positive development in the modern Sinhala poetry. The poetical works of Kodituwakku, Galappatti and Ruvanpatirana, who have a most prolific output than other contemporary poets, illustrate social reality, criticize the social order and offer political revolution as the panacea for social problems.

4. See, Simon Navagattegama, *Sāhityaya, Samājavādaya saha Kālā Viāraya*, 1973.

5. Tilakaratne Silva, *Deviyō Tātigena Mahapolovata Eti*, 1971, p. 61.

These young poets are admirers of Marxism and they at times sacrifice artistic quality in their attempts to express boldly their wish for social change:

Leaving the lonely desert for good
my eyes caught sight of –
a portrait of a young man
on the wall of a lecture theatre
surrounded by a dilapidated barbed wire fence
coming forward
casting off chains.⁶

Not in a mansion but in a hovel was I born
Nor am I a princeling and I have never seen a crown
Yet I yearn to become a king
Tell me of a child who became king
yet was no heir to a crown.⁷

People in a certain land, who lived like you
Shedding tears from their eyes, uttering sorrowful words
Went forth suddenly and besieged the palace of their King
I recount you this tale from a book of history
There's no other remedy I have learnt from books
O, men, besiege the kings ruling your land.⁸

Come forward
bearing arms
Sacrifice now for a better tomorrow
Let's march to that brave new world.⁹

In the following poem P. Kodituvakku too expressed his belief that one's lost rights could only be regained through a struggle:

Go, seek, seek forthwith
Go, seek the driplet of milk carried away by the river
Pursue your search along the river – tarry not
Son, go, seek your driplet of milk!
That drop of milk stolen by a myriad foes
that drop of milk sucked by poisonous snakes
Son, that drop of milk, collected by your mother
to feed you, tossing about upon her bosom.
that drop of milk.....

Pursue, undaunted, along the river, your search
Pursue your search throughout the sandy desert now smouldering
Go forward at once, defying the menacing swords
Bring back the drop of milk borne away by the river on you birthday.

6. B. Galappatti, *Pāra Vasā Āta*, 1974, p. 6.

7. M. Ruvanpatirana, *Angulimalagē Sihina*, 1974, p. 48

8. *Ibid*, p. 62.

9. Siri Kahavala, *Obē Gīta Mage Kaṇḍulu*, 1973, p. 6

that day you found and sucked
 the drop of milk your mother brought
 to feed you, tossing about upon her bosom
 you would have become
 immortal.¹⁰

To convey his message to the reader, Kodituvakku makes use of the idiom of the Sinhala folk poetry. The 'drop of milk' in this poem symbolizes the lost rights of the masses. The poet has also tried to create a pleasant and powerful style through a blend of classical vocabulary with that of modern usage.

It is evident from the foregoing excerpts that these young poets are very interested in changing the existing social order. They expect to arouse those who are deprived of their rightful place and share in society. If a more detailed survey of the work of these young poets is done, we will then be able to see how they express their revolutionary attitudes even through subjective experience. Although there are several poets, both male and female, belonging to this category, only a few significant ones, whose poetry is not only full of revolutionary ideas but also rich in literary merit, will be examined in this paper.

Senarat Tennakon is comparatively less well-known as a poet. The freshness of his style and the novelty of form somewhat obscure his message of revolution. In *Layimē Hēḍāva* (The Gloom of the Shacks, 1974) and *Hendirikkā Malak* (A Hendirikka Flower, 1976) Tennekoon draws on the reality of the life of estate labourers, farmers as well as the *chena* cultivators in the Dry Zone. Freshness of style is achieved through selecting words from regional dialects and exploiting the resources of folk-poetry. Those characteristics are evident in the following example:

Bearing up all suffering like a *dunuke* flower
 sighing like queen *Madri*
 begetting doubts about me
 Love, I know well, your mind
 Your fragrance soothes my fatigued self
 Dear, are you not aware of it?
 Although borne amongst clusters of *kinihiri* and *dotalu*
 The *vātake* flower stands out with its fragrance
 Through the mound of earth in the grave of memory
 blue grass of happiness springs up
 But as the price of sarees keeps on shooting up
 dear, you recede from me.¹¹

10. P. Kodituvakku, *Peḍi Malliye*, 1972, p. 30.

11. S. Tennakon, *Layimē Hēḍāva*, 1974, p. 19.

Tennakon often depicts vignettes of rural Lanka, and looks at people in remote rural areas with feelings of nostalgia and romance. He differs from the poets of the 'Colombo School' in this respect, namely, that he reveals his impressions of the changing countryside without confining himself to mere descriptions of it. The political ideas found occasionally in Tennekon's poetry have not, however, limited his subject-matter. This poet is equally familiar with the life and social problems of the city as with the mental agony of a labourer:

Although I toil sweating
 with aching limbs I toil
 bathed in sweat
 Yet, I am paid only a pittance
 But to the local 'Pukka Sahib'
 working under electric fans
 Warming luxurious chairs
 smoking cigarettes and telephoning
 A few thousands as salary
 Is it for status and position ?
 Those devoted to developing the country
 and protecting the nation
 are starving, abandoned
 Bouquets for the brainy
 mud for labouring hands
 Damn the wretched life-style
 that creates suffering for us
 It is with our help
 a country will progress
 we who drink water from a coconut shell
 and eat stale food off a plantain leaf
 One day with mind and belly raging
 we, driven mad
 will regain our rights stolen from us
 That day, hoisting victory flags skywards
 we will fashion a new world.¹²

The direct and sincere tone of Tennakon's poetry is one of the positive qualities which distinguishes it from the common run of politically motivated compositions of the day. The rigid control that the poet exercises does not permit the anger of the writer from developing into hatred.

In his latest work, *Hendrikkā Malak*, Tennakon concentrates more upon the life of the poor farmers in the 'Vanni' or the North Central Province. He seems to be very familiar with both the life and dialect of this area

12. *Ibid.* p. 30

which had never before been depicted so vividly and earnestly in Sinhala poetry. It was, perhaps, only the folk poet who depicted the life in the 'Vanni' through 'pāl kavi' (poems of 'chena' watchmen) with a genuine feeling before this poet. In the course of describing the life and feelings of the villagers and farmers and their perennial problems Tennakon repeatedly projects his revolutionary vision. Poems entitled *Alut Taruvak* (New Star, p. 16), *'Sinha Pātav Avadi Venavā'* (Young Lions Are Waking Up, p. 24) *'Putuni'* (My Son, p. 42) may be cited as expressions of socialist and revolutionary ideas:

The whole universe changes
and faces the new sun
In Asia, the slumbering lion cubs
are waking up.
O toiling friends, there's a journey to make
a journey to make, if not we'll be stranded in the hills
Brave we would be, if we go
If we go, the mountains will be rent asunder
O toiling friends
join hands, let's go
go without any delay.¹³

As is evident from the above excerpt, Tennakon, too, like Siri Kaha-
vala and Tilakaratne Silva, shows some awareness of the political situation
in other countries. Thus, these young poets have contributed towards
the widening of the horizons of Sinhala poetry and have added to its range
of subject-matter. Tennakon's poems are not always devoted only to
depicting village life and expressing socialist ideas. At times, they include
general social observations and personal experience as well:

In the mill of life
turns the wheel of existence
Warmed by the fire of lust
the human iron is fashioned
On the red hot iron
falls the hammer of sin
After a long wait in the mill
smoothened and perfected
it comes out
to the market place of society.¹⁴

This poem shows how the poet has selected appropriate vocabulary
and form to suit his theme. Terms such as 'the wheel of existence' and 'the
fire of lust' reminding the reader of Buddhism, form a striking contrast

13. S. Tennekon, *Hendrikkā Malak*, 1976, p. 24.

14. S. Tennekon, *Layimē Hēḍāva*, p. 87.

with a term like 'the market place of society.' It is not only due to the freshness of his style but also due to the complicated nature of his themes that Tennakon deserves a special place among contemporary poets. The field of experience in modern Sinhala poetry is generally restricted to city life and university campuses. But we can find a different type of experience and sensibility in Tennakon's work as well as in that of Monica Ruvanpatirana.

Ruvanpatirana, who enjoys a great popularity, is the only contemporary female poet worthy of discussion in a serious study of new Sinhala poetry. Her poems reveal the feelings and problems of an educated young woman of our time—thus adding a touch of femininity to modern Sinhala poetry which had hitherto been male-dominated. Monica Ruvanpatirana has published four collections of poems so far, viz; *Api Dennā Saha Tavat Kīpa Denek'* (Two of us and a Few Others, 1971), *Tahanam Desayakin* (From a Prohibited Land, 1912), *Angulimālagē Sihina'* (Dreams of Angulimāla) and *Obe Yeheliya Āya Gāhāniya'* (Your Consort, the Woman, 1975).

All these works have enjoyed considerable popularity and recognition. In her first collection of poems Ruvanpatirana deals mostly with youthful romantic feelings, while a few compositions are devoted to stating her experience gained as a government employee.

It is possible that her poems would have a fresh appeal to the Sinhala reader who had for a long time been accustomed to the romantic feelings and intellectual problems of male poets. Simplicity of expression and sincerity must have been the other major factors in her immediate success. Most of the poems in *Tahanam Dēsayakin* have to do as much with personal experience as with the plight of the poor. It is in this volume that Ruvanpatirana emerges as a poet with a deep concern for the plight of the poor and the underprivileged. This social concern and sensibility is a dominant feature in her later work too. The reason for the sufferings of the masses according to her, is the injustice inherent in the present social system. Thus Ruvanpatirana writes about the life of labourers, beggars and prostitutes in the city and farmers in the village in order to expose it:

Your father, imprisoned in the dingy foundry
beats iron with a hammer, perspiration pouring from body, like lava
Through the innumerable sparks rising from the iron as he hammers
Son, the way to your future lies.¹⁵

To make you happy by putting out the fire in your belly
Having trudged long through towns and villages
Daughter I took you to the capital city
And there, I left you in a big mansion

15. Ruvanpatirana, *Tahanam Dēsayakin*, p. 28.

You, bidding me farewell I beheld
 Like a flower laden with dew
 You came back, bringing wealth a plenty
 Daughter, where is your smile I valued so much?
 Such comforts I never sought
 Put out the fire in my heart, not that in the belly.¹⁶

In the first of these excerpts we see a toiling blacksmith working in his gloomy workshop to earn a living for himself and his son. As the fourth line makes clear the aim of the poet is not mere description but the pointing out to the younger generation a way of liberation through struggle. In the second poem quoted above we are acquainted with the feelings of a poor father on seeing his daughter returning home laden with money, but at the expense of having been sexually exploited. This poem reveals the plight of thousands of poor girls taken to the city as housemaids. Thus, Monica Ruvanpatirana, like many other contemporary young poets, tries to analyse various social ills and vices and to expose them.

Monica Ruvanpatirana's third volume, *Angulimālagē Sihina* (The Dreams of Angulimāla) typifies most of her work, and hence it would be instructive to examine its content to show how the author's mind is steeped in current ideas of socialist realism, and also her attempt at widening the field of experience. The poems in this work can be classified as follows, according to content and theme:

- i. Poems of self-expression,
- ii. Vignettes of office life,
- iii. Descriptions of and reflections on social order.

Out of the three categories it is the poems belonging to categories 2 and 3, that embody a revolutionary vision. 'In the Course of an Interview,' which is the first poem in *Angulimālagē Sihina*, the poet laughs at the routine questions asked at interviews and is amazed that the interviewers do not delve into details of the candidate's personal life. 'God Sakra' is a prayer to Sakra, the king of the heavens in Buddhist literature, drawing his attention to the case of a poor mother toiling the whole day to support her children. 'A Poem Written on 1st of May' shows the poet's feelings of happiness and enthusiasm on witnessing a May Day rally. 'From a Street Walker' is about the thoughts of a street walker who counters the common charge that she kindles the fire of lust in peoples' minds by complaining that she herself is consumed by the fire of anxiety, but that there is no one to put it out. In 'From an Accused,' a poor clerk who is under a cloud complains that though laws prescribe punishment for offences

6. Ibid. p. 29.

they do not consider the circumstances that lead people commit such offences. 'A Poem from a Farmer' reveals conditions in the Dry Zone. The farmer sweats in his field, undergoing all sorts of hardship, but at harvest time, a rich merchant who had not shed a single drop of sweat, comes to the field, and exploits the farmer by paying a low price for his harvest. These themes exemplify how deeply the poet's mind is fixed in reality. She is often moved by the suffering and pain of the downtrodden. Further, we find in her poetry the expression, by a sensitive young female clerk, of the feelings and emotions which are in turn, the products of her innermost being. In the 'Office Song' this is how the poet beseeches the sun:

While you set in the west beholding me pen in hand
my life dries up like ink drops
smothered by files I am at the point of death
Please sun, don't rise tomorrow over my office block.¹⁷

In poems like this Ruvanpatirana expresses the agony of thousands of her colleagues.

In another short poem, 'Death on the Pavement' attention is focussed on a dead beggar:

In the morning when all the world is awake
Today, I miss your familiar voice
in a sun-scorched alley
why do you sleep still?
Those who never heeded your cry in the past
have flocked round you in their thousands
beholding you huddled in silence,
Please beggar man, arise from your sleep.¹⁸

Ruvanpatirana succeeds in this poem in communicating her displeasure at the lack of compassion in people, without sacrificing the poetic quality of her composition. Thus she saves herself from falling into the category of poets whose main concern is the propagation of certain political ideas. 'The Welcome Dance' may be cited as another good example of this positive characteristic.

Having obtained peoples' sanction
He lifts his head; bows his head
Now shifting the eyes, now the body, to and fro
to the accompaniment of the beating drums
for the sake of someone
going in procession in a vehicle

17. Ruvanpatirana, *Angulimālagē Sihina*, p. 41

18. *Ibid.* p. 37.

from your barefeet
 rises up the sound of anklets
 Down the ages, all alone, sorrowfully
 You performed your dances
 and that heritage
 makes your feet still tread the ground
 But for you, no semblance of procession
 Only the molten tears
 From the heart of a sympathetic earth.¹⁹

The poet creates a powerful image here, likening the melting tar to the tears of mother earth weeping over the plight of the dancer. It is this type of imagery and a style rich with emotion and humour, that have established Ruvanpatirana as a promising young poet.

We do not intend discussing Monica Ruvanpatirana's latest work *Obē Yeheliya Āya Gāhāniya* (Your Consort the Woman, 1976) as it is devoted to praising the greatness of woman, incidentally showing the author's growing interest in the women's liberation movement.

It would be useful to discuss the work of Buddhadasa Galappatti at this point in our survey since he, too, deals with the same type of subject-matter as Ruvanpatirana and draws his inspiration from similar social situations. Both these poets are equally concerned with the burning problems of our society. Galappatti has four collections of poetry to his credit, viz, *Dolosmahe Pahana* (The Eternal Lamp) which he published in collaboration with Sunil Ariyaratne and Jayalath Manoratne in 1971, *Kāṭaṭa Pavura* (The Mirror Wall, 1972), *Pāra Vasā Āta* (The Road is Closed, 1974) and *Rājinak Hāṇḍuwāya* (A Queen Wept, 1976). Like Monica Ruvanpatirana, Galappatti too, presents a variety of themes. He employs an emotional style and often writes of love. This is reminiscent of the poetry of Gunadasa Amarasekara. Our discussion of Galappatti's work will be mainly based on *Pāra Vasā Āta* and his latest work *Rājinak Hāṇḍuwāya* as these two volumes consist of poems which are more relevant to our study than his early works.

His poems deal with the reinterpretations of stories and characters selected from classical Sinhala and Buddhist literature, feelings associated with love and romance, the plight of his countrymen and incidents rooted in everyday social life. Poems such as 'My Love' and 'Forgive Me My Son' in *Pāra Vasā Āta* resemble the poetry of Monica Ruvanpatirana as regards subject-matter as well as style. Consider the following poems:

Stranded and helpless, I cannot
 exist, in the desert of life
 I cannot endure the starving childrens' cry
 Hence, my love, I fear to love you

19. Ibid. p. 35.

The few gold pieces you earn, thirty days being over
 how will they suffice to support us after marriage
 for our childrens' schooling and for buying rations
 what a lot of gold pieces are needed.....
 To you possessing gold - I pledge,
 to live my life with you.....²⁰

Here instead of presenting a girl who is prepared to sacrifice everything for love, the poet ironically commends the practical nature of the girl who rejects her lover, and thus rebukes society for setting such great store by money.

'The Night I Listened to Ravi Shankar' and 'At Ratnapura Town Hall' in *Pāra Vasā Āta* and 'Your Smell,' 'Vacancies For Jobs' and 'The 1st Day of May' in *Rājīnak Hyñduwāya* are some of the poems where Galappatti interprets personal experience from a socialist perspective. 'At Ratnapura Town Hall' is a poem about the inhuman treatment of a servant girl by her masters:

Maid Premavati's face is clouded with disappointment
 Out of the theatre, carrying the baby she goes
 not fortunate enough to witness
 the happenings on the stage.
 Premavati, don't weep,
 We won't have to cry eternally
 We will smile one day
 Hurling away the baby
 We will smile one day.²¹

Premavati, the maid servant, must have been, probably for the first time in her life, watching a play, 'with open-mouth' as the poet says, but quite unfortunately for her the baby she was holding begins to cry.

'A Question For a Comrade' a poem taken from the same collection is typical of the Sinhala poetry of the present decade:

The green rice sways in the breeze
 Pearls of perspiration glisten on the body
 Your body feels no tiredness
 Your dauntless mind brings you victory
 But comrade, have you really gained victory?
 Your toil nourished one who never sweated
 Someone who never sweated, who
 used your toil to gain the lead
 and drank the cup of victory.²²

20. Galappatti, B. *Pāra Vasā Āta*, 1974, p. 3.

21. Ibid, p. 9.

22. Ibid.

Poems such as these which lack novelty of experience and other poetic qualities such as richness in imagery or subtlety of suggestion may not appeal to the serious reader of poetry. But they were promptly accepted by the youthful readers and politically-biased critics as the product of a new generation of poets catering to the needs of our contemporary society. Most of the young poets of this decade appear not to be concerned about originality and pay very little attention to technique.

Ruvanpatirana's poem, 'A Poem From a Farmer' found in *Angulimālagē Sihina* is yet another example in respect of the ideas expressed. All these poets express their sympathy for the poor farmers who work hard to cultivate their fields, and their hatred for the owners of the fields or merchants who reap the crop and give only a trifle to the farmer. The idea underlying the repetition of these facts may be the desire for a complete change in the existing social system, as Siri Kahavala says in the following poem:

We have nothing, but
they, possess all the best things
in the world
There's no place to bury our corpses
they possess the best land
We live and sleep on the road
as they own all houses and mansions
Our feet bleed from trudging the roads
They own the best cars
Love cannot be had without money
They take the best women
The basis of the division
of wealth is wrong
Thus, in every competition
they can beat us
So, let us get together and share out
everything in the world again.²⁴

Another characteristic of the work of these young poets is the re-interpretation of religious and romantic stories. For instance the following are some of the poems of this category belonging to Galappatti's work: 'Maname Seen in a Dream,' 'Prince Vijaya and Sita,' 'Pabavati is a Fool' in *Dolosmahe Pahana*, 'To Prince Sinhabahu,' 'A Letter From Asokamālā,' and 'True Love was with Ummādacitrā' in *Pārā Vasā Āta*, and 'Yasodaiā's Complaint' and 'The Twentieth Century Pātācārā' in *Rājinaḥ Hānduwaya*. In *Pabhāvati is a Fool*, Galappatti portrays a girl from contemporary society who falls for a man's physical and superficial qualities and later regrets her mistake. She recalls the story of Princess Pabhāvati in *Kusa Jātaka* and

23. Siri Kahavala, *Obē Gīta Magē Kaṇḍuḷu*, 1973

24. *Ibid.*, p. 16

considers her a fool for not appreciating king Kusa's love, disregarding his physical defects. This is how this girl's feelings are presented in plain language:

Had I got married
to the ugliest man in the world
I would have been happy
to the end of my days
Then that man would have loved me
With all his being
Pabhāvati seems to me a fool
because, she didn't love her husband Kusa,
A fount of love.²⁵

In this simple poem, we are told, how an innocent girl was enticed by a rich, handsome man and later condemned by him to a life of suffering. Princess Pabhāvati rejected Kusa's love because of his ugliness, while this girl accepted an attractive person who does not reciprocate her love.

Thus, we can assume that this poet laughs at the undue importance placed on money and physical beauty in our society, disregarding human feelings and emotions.

At the same time, the poet tries to reveal some facets in the life of the upper-middle class. As an example of the compositions of this category we can also consider 'To Prince Sinhabāhu' which is an appeal to the prince who is the protagonist in the well-known Sinhala play 'Sinhabahu' of Ediriweera Sarachchandra. Here the poet recollects how prince Sinhabāhu forced open the stone door of the cave, where he was kept by his father, a lion according to the legend, and gained freedom for his mother, sister and himself. The poet thinks that it was for the whole Sinhala people that Sinhabāhu gained freedom that day. But, that freedom no longer exists. The nation is again imprisoned in a cave. To save the nation, the poet appeals to Sinhabāhu:

Prince Sinhabāhu, come back to us, I pray thee
Show us again the strength of your mighty hands
Break down this cave and dispelling our dark thoughts
Take us to a new world
glowing with the golden light of liberty.²⁶

Through Prince Sinhabāhu's character, the mythical ancestor of the Sinhala, the poet invokes feelings of freedom. According to him, it was Sinhabāhu who gave the Sinhala people their first lesson in fighting for freedom. Thus in almost all his compositions we find feelings of dissatisfaction with the present social order, sympathy for the suffering masses, along

25. B. Galappatti, S. Ariyaratne and J. Manoratne, *Dolosmahe Pahana*, 1971.

26. Galappatti, *Pāra Vasū Āta*, 1974, p. 2

with a wish for a complete change in our political and social systems. Galappatti's strength as a poet lies in his ability to maintain a balance between his political ideas and his emotional, personal experience.

Among contemporary Sinhala poets, Kodituvakku is perhaps the most ardent propagator of revolutionary ideas. He seems to be more politically active than any other young Sinhala poet. This may be one of the reasons for his remarkable enthusiasm for expressing socialist ideas through the medium of poetry. He has published three collections of poetry so far, viz; *Podi Malliye* (To My Younger Brother, 1972), *Akikaru Putraykugē Lōkaya* (The World of a Disobedient Son, 1974) and *Alut Minhek Ävit* (A New Man has Arrived, 1975). These volumes consist of poems containing the feelings of a young revolutionary who is dissatisfied with every aspect of the present social order. 'Judgement of a Revolutionary,' the first poem in *Akikaru Putraykugē Lōkaya*, may be taken as a striking and effective expression of the ideas and hopes of the younger generation. This poem presents a few reports issued by some social institutions on the behaviour of a young revolutionary and, finally, the statement by the accused. His disbelief in traditional social institutions as well as the power of his expectations are implicit in this forceful appeal. The following is a translation of the last section of this poem:

Dont confine me within a shell like a snail
cutting off the cells
Don't turn me into a coward
by preaching morality to me
Don't convert me into a brute
by heaping falsehoods on me
Don't turn me into a pliant disciple
to whom freedom has been denied
Permit me to raise questions like Socrates
Permit me to doubt like Descartes
Permit me to push on like a river
Permit me to cut through like a dagger
Permit me to rise up LIKE A MALE ORGAN.²⁷

The rhythm as well as the rhyming of this poem, together with the repeated use of words such as *Nokarav* and *Ida Diyō* add to the power of expression. The belligerence of a rebel is reflected in the vigour, and the forcefulness of the poem. In 'One of Us,' a poem in *Podi Malliye*, Kodituvakku denounces communal and racist ideologies:

Sarasvatī-Nityakalā

We bathed at the same spot in the river Menik

27. Parakrama Kodituvakku, *Akikaru Putraykugē Lōkaya*, pp 6-7
The last three words are given in larger type in the original poem.

We worshipped as a common group at 'Sri Pāda'
 We were inseparable at school too,
 It was the same at the 'tōse kadē'

(where we had *vad* together)

To Somādevī, our office colleague
 at Kataragama

Sivalingam
 had given his address.....

The Elāra Duṭugāmunu duel
 Victory to Duṭugāmunu
 Elāra's body on his elephant !!!

Cease your applause

Cease your applause

Cease your applause

Who do you applaud ?

Who has got

a.....tear.....drop

to bestow in his name ?

One of our own

died in that war

a member of our household

a blood relation²⁸

Here the poet tells the Sinhalese not to rejoice over Duṭugamunu's victory, telling them that Elāra was not an enemy but a relation. To substantiate his view, the poet reminds us of common instances from contemporary life when Tamil and Sinhala people participate in common activities, and disregard ethnic differences. While trying to change his attitude towards history, Kodituvakku further attempts to look at traditional methods of learning from a perspective which is centred upon pragmatism:

I beg you to give me a hearing
 the learning you imparted to me
 is worthless now
 For centuries
 from pathway to pathway
 along highways and byways
 through different cities in different lands
 I wondered but in vain
 Your learning has not helped me
 to gain a livelihood.²⁹

The above verse is taken from "A Suit against Disāpāmok" in *The*

28. Kodituvakku, *Pedi Malliye*, pp. 12-13

29. *Ibid*, pp. 17-18.

World of a Disobedient Son. The sceptical view of traditional learning as depicted here, may be taken as being typical of the view of today's younger generation, who no longer care for an educational system which does not help them to get immediate employment. Galappatti, too, holds a similar attitude, as is evident from the following example:

But my heart quivers:
Will my knowledge be sufficient
to overcome obstacles
Teachers, who educated me
Parents, who brought me up
tell me, I beseech you, what else should I learn,
to snatch the laurels.³⁰

The above quotation from "A Poem without a Title" resembles Kodituvakku's poem "A Suit against Disāpāmok" with regard to the theme in that both the poets doubt the relevance and validity of their education in the context of modern society. While giving an account of the highlights of his career as a promising student in the first part of his poem, Galappatti states his fear about the future especially with regard to employment. Thus he exposes the frustration of educated youth.

These young poets always attempt to inject ideas of social protest even into historical or religious episodes. This is quite clearly seen in such poems as "To the Fortunate Man" and "I am Not Patacārā" in *To My Little Brother* and "A Message from Patacārā," "Lord, Please Come Hither" and "Kisā's Sons" in *The World of a Disobedient Son*. "A Message from Patacārā" is an example of the re-interpretation of a religious story:

A woman who suffered
more than anyone in the world
crossed the river Aciravatī
.....but my Lord,
She comes back today
without seeing you anywhere
with fire of sorrow not extinguished
Even by the river Acirvatī.
Two children following her
stumbling and falling
pale with anaemia.
Even the river
didn't take those children,
The hawks in the sky
rejected them too
.....under the clock tower

30. Galappatti, *Pāra Vasā Āṭa*, p. 29.

In a drain by the bus stand
 shaking empty cans
 spending the night
 in the police cell
 and the morning at
 the V. D. clinic.
 The gate is closed
 at Jetavana Vihāra
 The Lord IN/OUT
mushrooms blossom
 eloped for love
 with a wood chopper
 leaving behind wealth worth millions
 and the life on the seventh floor
 cruel and shallow;
 like an anthill full of snakes,
 But the cobra
 leaving the anthill followed behind,
 After being bitten,
 left, alone in the storm
 — friends,
 KILL THE COBRA.

I am your ever loving,
 Patacārā.³¹

Here the most important image is that of the 'cobra' which becomes a symbol of the wealthy class to which Patacārā's parents belonged. They would never have approved her living with a labourer. Thus the killing of the cobra may be symbolic of the overthrow of the power of the wealthy classes. In this poem, while making use of the main incidents in the story of Patacārā, the poet draws attention to the life of a poor prostitute. As we have already noted, this type of re-interpretation of stories taken from classical Sinhala and Buddhist literature is a favourite practice of contemporary poets.

Another significant feature in Kodituvakku's poetry is the manner of depicting of modern society. In his poems of social criticism he becomes aggressive, straightforward and precise. Let us consider the following poems:

Beware of dogs'
 the sign is no more, father
 I replaced it with
 'Come, see the flowers'

31. Kodituvakku, *Akīkaru Putrayakugē Lōkaya*, p. 8

I've sent downstream
 my paper boats
 along with your myriad gods
 and other beliefs.
 You taught me those days
 'flowers fade'
 still next morning
 all flowers will bloom
 brightly and refreshingly
 It has not dawned yet
 still the flowers
 which are to bloom tomorrow
 are waiting expectantly
 the morning to come
 I see as an urn,
 and the bright sun
 as the flowers,
 the new Taprobane
 of our life.³²

In this poem the poet conveys in symbolic form the anticipated victory of the revolution. The unhappy past is like the night while the morning, or the future, is like the bright sun. The disobedient son in this poem makes a confession to his father, revealing how he discarded everything appreciated by his father and accepted everything rejected by him. The poet does not like to live in the past, surrounded by myths and traditions, but tries to break all ties with it. He sets out in search of reality and freedom like Prince Vijaya of the myths who went in search of Tambapanni after being expelled by his father for having been disobedient. Kodituvakku's latest collection, however, includes a few compositions devoid of any aesthetic quality as the poet has deliberately permitted himself to indulge in a bit of propaganda. *Älut Minihek Avit* (New Man Has Arrived) shows lack of originality with regard to themes and careless application of form and technique. Some of the poems in this work, e. g. 'A Long Journey,' "Life is a Kiss, When I am with you," "The Story of the Five Princes" and "The Revolution in the Farm" are essentially propagandist in nature and serve to bolster political views. Consider the following excerpt from 'Life is a Kiss, when I am with you':

At night, lying between wife and son,
 I see with closing eyes — my comrades
 gathering round my bed
 Never will I be alone when amongst you
 Life is a kiss, when I am with you³³

32. *Ib d.*, pp. 17-8.

33. P. Kodituvakku, *Älut Minihek Avit*, p. 33.

These are the thoughts of a young social worker. He feels lonely for a moment at home after a hard day's work. As his wife and son are sound asleep, to overcome his feeling of loneliness he ponders over the things said and done during the day. Even as he remembers the enthusiasm shown by some members of the village development society, he is overwhelmed by joy and excitement, as depicted in the last section of the poem quoted above.

Similar ideas are expressed in some other poems in this collection, for instance in "The Revolution in the Farm." In this poem, a picture of a collective farm is painted, the like of which does not exist in our country. The workers, farmers and their leaders are shown to be victorious in the end, like the heroes and heroines of romantic fiction. Though Kodituvakku's later poems, marked by bold presentation of political views, lack poetic quality, his earlier work, which is rich in original imagery, fresh thought and characterised by sensitive and forceful language, will be appreciated by readers.

Some of the major Sinhala poets before 1970 were experimenting with form and language. But their efforts were not well received by the readers and the only poet who continued with his experiments and gained wide popularity was Mahagama Sekara. Unlike Siri Gunasinghe, Gunadasa Amarasekara and Wimal Disanayaka, the post-1970 young poets were basically not concerned about form and the other technical aspects of poetry. These later poets made use of the forms and vocabulary developed by the earlier poets. They explored new aspects of society in their work. Thus, as we have already discussed, instead of the problems of the middle classes and descriptions of nature, a whole new range of subject matter and a new vision of life began to appear in Sinhala poetry after 1970. These young poets had witnessed the plight of the educated youth of the post-1970 period. Several of the young poets of the present decade were involved in or affected by the insurrection of 1971. It will be easier for us to understand these young poets if we place them against this social, economic and political background. The cultural and literary controversy of the early 1970s regarding 'socialist realism' also appear to have influenced these young poets to some extent.

The young poets of the period under review have been greatly successful in popularizing Sinhala poetry among the younger generation and in convincing them of the potential of the free verse form as being the most effective medium of expression. Though some of the work we have examined above is naive and even crude, poets like Ruwanpatirana, Galappatti and Kodituvakku have the talent necessary to produce creative works of enduring value, if only they would pay greater attention to the techniques and craft of poetry.

U. P. MEDDEGAMA

The Role of Psychology in Indian Aesthetics

Consciousness (*Samvit*, *Manas*, *Prajñā*) is the essence of everything, but it is a pervading quality of psychical phenomena, according to Psychology. To distinguish Philosophy from Psychology, I would quote lines from *Milindapañha* (II.15) *Kim lakkhaṇo bhante manasi kāro kim lakkhaṇā pañña'ti ūhana lakkhaṇo kho mahārāja, manasi kāro, chedana lakkhaṇā pañña'ti* - II.22, *ye keci kusalā dhammā sabbe te samādhipamukhā*), where the author distinguishes mind (*manasikāra*) from consciousness (*pañña* or *prajñā*). Mind, according to him, is an instrument of reasoning or questioning while consciousness is attained through meditation (*samādhipamukha*). What is discussed as mind is the field of Psychology while the consciousness (Intuitive intellect - *prajñā*) comes under the realm of Philosophy. Very specifically and clearly it is stated in *Laṅkāvatāra-sūtra*, that the mind is studied by Psychology or *manovijñāna*:—*cittaṃ manaḥ ca vijñānaṃ lakṣanārtham prakalpyate* (II.104). Consciousness which is denoted by the word *prajñā* in the Buddhist Literature, is certainly more primitive than mind, but both of them have a common ancestor. It is necessary here to trace what is meant by consciousness in the whole range of Indian philosophical systems and what words stand for consciousness in a psychological sense.

The word *kratu*, in the Vedic-period, from the root *kr* means that which fulfils ones function at the human level. The sense of willing and desiring are represented by the word *kratu* and one who attains that *kratu* is *dakṣa*¹. In the aesthetic sense the power of will, and desire, (*kratu*) attained in the work of art turns the doer of that into a *dakṣa* or an artist of any art-form. The term *kratu*, later on changed into *manas* and *prajñā* with the general sense of desiring, willing and remembering.²

During the time of the Upanishads, the word *ātman* stands for different shades of meaning. It is considered as identical with the body which is then the essence of existence.³

But soon this perishable body is understood as mortal and the seers of the *Upanishads* try to find out something subtler and higher than the

1. SB 1.4.1, *Sa yadeva manasā kāmayata idam me syāt idam kurvīyati sa eva kratur atha yadasmī tat.*

2. Ait. Up. 3.2., *S: m n nām, jñānam, vijñānam, prajñānam medhā, dṛṣṭiḥ, dhṛtiḥ, matiḥ, manīṣa, jñāna, smṛtiḥ, samkalpāḥ, Kratur, asuḥ, Kāmah, vāc, sarvaṇyeva etāni prajñānasya nāmaccheyāni.*

3. Ch. Up. 8.7.4., *yeso' kṣ n puruṣo dṛśyate eṣa ātmeti; Tait. Up. 2.1., Sa vā eṣa puruṣḥ annarasamayah.....ayamātmā.*

body. In their enquiry, they declare "prāṇa is the ātman", as sense-organs cannot work without it,⁴ and it is superior to the body and the sense organs on account of the psychological reason too. It is regarded as immortal and the ultimate truth.⁵ Prāṇa is the substratum of the body. In their further enquiry, they reach the third stage where they discover the utility of consciousness functions in the body. This ātman is declared then as prājñā. The prajñātmā, the receptacle of the psychological activities of the sense organs is not perceived in deep-sleep or trance.⁶ Next the ātman is conceived as an active subject, as an essential seer in contrast with the old role of prajñā as a mere receptacle of all impressions. Ātman, now becomes the internal subject which moves freely from world to world.⁷ This I-ness has become the subject where, unlike the flower, it expresses itself by the word 'I know'. This consciousness of I-ness (samvit), therefore, implies the presence of a cognitive relation (grahana) between grāhya and grāhaka. It is the peculiar illumination of jñāna or awareness which reveals the subject, the object and itself in an act of knowledge. Consciousness cannot be reduced to terms other than itself. Ātman as consciousness (samvit) has developed gradually. Citta is seen in animated beings. Among animated beings, again, the ātman has developed gradually, and in man again, it has developed gradually, for, he is the most endowed with prajñā. He knows, knew and would know. But in other animated beings only hunger and thirst are a kind of awareness or understanding.⁸ This psychology of the development of consciousness in man is accepted by the full-fledged system of Vedānta. The Sāṃkhya-Kārikā, like the Vedāntists believes in the existence of the conscious principle apart from the material principle.⁹ Here, in the context of consciousness which is helpful in analysing the aesthetic-activity, I am not dealing with the view of nihilists who don't accept the existence of consciousness at all.

The phenomena of psychology are mind, senses, sense - objects, (environment) perception, motivation, attitudes, feelings, thoughts, sensation, impulses and attention which are instrumental in giving rise to the aesthetic point of view. Through them the behaviour of a person can be imagined in a psychological sense. First of all, I would deal with the mind and its different activities in the aesthetic experience.

The mind corresponds to the Vedāntic word antahkarana which has four functions: 1. manas, the indecisive faculty of mind, 2. buddhi, the decisive state which decides that this is a tree and not a man, 3. ahaṃkāra

4. Br. Up. 3.4.1., Ch. Up. 5.16, yeḥ prāṇena prāṇīti sa ta asmā sarvāntareḥ.

5. Br. Up. 2.3.6., Prāṇa vai satyḥ m te sāmese satyḥ m.

6. Kauś. Up. 3.4.4.19. yo vai prāṇ h ā prajñā, yā vā prajñā, so prāṇa, evameva eṣa prajñā ātmān id m gā itam anupraviṣṭo ā lomebhyḥ ā rakhebhyaḥ.

7. Br. Up. 4.3.11 ff. Sa jīyate m ito yatra kām m hiraṇmayḥ puruṣaḥ ekahḥ msah.

8. Air Āraṇyaka 2.3.2., tasya ya ātmānam āviṣṭatā vecāsnute havirabliṅgḥ h...

9. Sāṃkhya-Kārikā 17. S m hātaparīarthatvā trigunādiviparyāyād adhiṣṭānāt puruṣo its bhoktṛbhāvāt kaivalyartham pravṛtteśca.

the ego which ascertains that 'I know', 4. *citta*, the storehouse of mental-states which makes remembrance and reference possible. The 'mind' of Western psychology is different from the 'mind-stuff' of Eastern psychology. According to *Vedānta*, self-consciousness resides in the respective sense organs, thinking and ideational activities of the *ātman*. So introspection and external observation include our empirical consciousness which is known as mind-stuff. Things of the world are mind-made or phenomenal in nature. Empirical consciousness constitutes the real individual,¹⁰ and includes the entire phenomenal world comprising mind and matter.¹¹ Empirical consciousness contains five sense perceptions and the mind-stuff. Empirical consciousness and its world are dependant on each other for their existence, and are known as *prapañca*,¹² or illusion which can give the parallel meaning of *māyā* or cosmic-illusion. With the word *prapañca* and *antaḥkarana*, another word *sparsa* should be taken to give the whole meaning. *Sparsa* can be used to signify any kind of impression but its literal meaning is impact or touch. Impressions originate from the impact of matter on the live organism (empirical consciousness)¹³. The senses of touch, taste and smell come into actual contact with the sense-organs. But for the senses of seeing and hearing, for their logical explanation they are the darkest chapter of aesthetics, which without any external contacts are the most powerful instruments of tasting beauty, as they have the property of generalisation.¹⁴ The theory of light corresponding to our seeing faculty is also the darkest chapter of physics.

Newton's corpuscular theory of light was refuted by Huygen's wave theory and then Einstein's quantum theory of light revived Newton's theory supported by experiments: yet eventually 'light' found a clear expression and synthesis in the 'dualistic' theory i.e., waves and particles both. In the year 1928 Louis Brogly questioned that if radiation can manifest itself as particles, why should not 'matter' behave as 'radiation' and that it does so was proved by experiments. It looks that our seeing and hearing faculties, which have no direct contact with objects, are made of the combination of light and sound respectively. The light and sound energies are invisible, though their effects are perceived. Therefore, light and sound must be in contact with the eye and the ear, but this contact is subtle and invisible to us. We can express more through the *Sāṃkhya* system of philosophy, according to which, the whole world is made of the three *guṇas* with thousands of variations and gradations. With reference to aesthe-

10. *Mund. Up.* III. 2.7, *Karmāṇi vijñānamayaśca ātmā pare 'vyaye sarva ekibhavanti Praśna. Up. bhidyete tāsām nāmarūpe puruṣa ityevaṃ procyate.*

11. *Br. Up.* 1.4; *Ch. Up.* VI. 3.2.; *Suttanipāta* 355.537.909. *Mund. Up.* I.1.9. *tasmā etad brahma nāma rūpam annaṃ ca jāyate.*

12. *Mund. Up.* V. 12. V.17; *Anguttaranikāya* II. 162.

13. *Ch. Up.* 2.22.3; 2.22.4. *Katha Up.* IV.3 *Sarve Sparsāḥ mṛtyor'ātmānaḥ.*

14. *Abh. Bh.* I.10 *dṛśyam śṛāvya . ca.....ekavacanena Sarvasādhārānatayaiva yadyogyam tacca Spṛśyādirūpam na bhavati dṛśyaśṛavyayoyostu bahutarasādhārānayopapattih.*

tics we can say that the senses of taste, smell and touch are the participants in the *ahamkāra* part of our mind-stuff (*ahamkāra* is characterised by a predominance of *rajas-guṇa*) while the seeing and hearing faculties are the participants in the *buddhi* part of our 'mind-stuff' which is characterised by a predominance of *sattva-guṇa* (the subtlest *guṇa*). Only the faculties of seeing and hearing have played a great role in the perceptual aesthetics of fine arts, as they have more, than the other three senses, a generalising capacity¹⁵. In broad terms, Patañjali has also divided all the world-objects into two—*dr̥ṣṭa* and *anuśravika* (*Yoga-Sūtra* 1.15) *dr̥ṣṭānuśravika viśaya*. To elaborate it more, I would like to quote Prof. R. B. Perry of Harvard and Mr. Edwin B. Holt where they say that both mind and matter are composed of a neutral stuff which, in isolation, is neither mental nor material.¹⁶ I admit this view regarding sensations of hearing and seeing which equally belong to the mental-stuff (which has mind and matter both). Should we admit that the faculties of hearing and seeing are not psychical phenomena? To define psychical phenomena, we have to ascertain that they are phenomena which intentionally contain objects in themselves.¹⁷ The faculties of seeing and hearing certainly have objects. But due to their *sāttvic* nature, they predominantly work over the act of thinking rather than on the content of a thought. The act of thinking can be understood as the same kind of consciousness as the empirical consciousness. Even scientifically, light is invisible, it is only the effect of light which falls on an object as a stimulus and then is noticed by our nerve centre of the brain and subsequently communicated to our sense of seeing, which makes an image on the retina of our eye. According to Western psychologists, the mind is passive. They do not tell us how continuous and successive sensations received from the same object are unified in the mind that is passive. But the mind-stuff of Indian psychology is different from the Western mind because of its dynamic principle of consciousness. Vācaspati holds that pure consciousness (*ātmā*) is manifested when limited in the condition of *jīva*¹⁸ (individual-consciousness). Mind or *antahkaraṇa* gets its power by association with the self. Individual consciousness does not possess the dual character of *jñātr* and *jñeya*¹⁹. These are the character of *ahamkāra* a part of mind-stuff, which is the object of self-consciousness. According to *advaita-Vedānta*, consciousness is of two types: 1, *Nirupādhiḥ*, 2. *Sopādhiḥ*. *Jñātrtva* (objectivity) belongs to the latter consciousness which is a modification of *avidyā*. According to *Sāṃkhya-Yoga*, ordinary perception takes place as the transcendental *buddhi* goes out to the object through the channels of the sense organs and assumes the form of the

15. *Supra*. f.n. No. 14.

16. *The concept of Consciousness*. (Geo. Allen & Co. 1914.) p. 52.

17. *Psychologie Vom Empirischen Standpunkte* Vol. I, 1874, p. 115 Brentano.

18. *Bhāmati* 1.1.1 *Jīvo hi cidātmatayā svayam-prakāśatayā aviśayopapādhiḥ kenā rūpeṇa viśaya iti bhāvah*.

19. *Vivaraṇa Prameya Saṃgraha Vidyaranya* . p. 53.

objects, but the manifestation of the objects is performed only when the reflection of the self (*puruṣa*) is cast upon the unconscious *buddhi* which is modified in the form of object. Thus Self (*puruṣa*) knows an external object only through the mental modification on which it casts its reflection.²⁰ *Vijñānabhikṣu* thinks that there is also a mutual reflection of the self on the *buddhi* and of the reflected *buddhi* on the self. It is through this double reflection that the self comes to know the external objects.²¹

Now I would deal with the question of "What is the process of perception and what is the role of the mind therein"? I am, here, quoting the views of the principal systems of Indian Philosophy about the process of perception.

Vedānta:- From ephemeral to non-ephemeral there is a continuous chain of ascendance and each preceding factor is the cause of the following. As from senses to mind and mind to consciousness one gets transformed to a higher cause. Ideas of reflection (*sparsa* of *mana*) are followed by the ideas of sensation (*sparsa* of *indriyas*) as a result of mental and external stimuli.

Sāṃkhya:- Sense-organs are not material and they are made of psychic-factors that go out towards their objects. They come in contact with their objects by means of their *Vṛttis* (*prāpyakāri*).

Nyāya and Vaiśeṣika:- The bases (*adhiṣṭhāna*) of the sense-organs are material, but the senses come into contact with their objects, either by going out towards them or by the objects themselves coming and striking the sense-organs.

Mīmāṃsā:- There is a faculty (*śakti*) abiding in the physical bases of the sense-organs.

Buddhists:- No psychic-factor, no *vṛttis* either, but sense-organs are composed of matter, hence, they are *prāpyakāri*. Senses of taste, smell and touch, because of immediate contact, are known as *prāpyakāri* and sight and hearing, because of the absence of any direct contact are known as *aprāpyakāri*.

Western psychologists use the word 'consciousness' as awareness or perception and unconsciousness as lack of awareness and perception. For mind also, they have confused concept. Mind means the place in which thought, reason, imagination and all the other mental activities exist and it is one of the essences. Other Western philosophers defined the mind as being made of no material, needing no space to exist, and as being pure spirit.

20. *Tattvavaiśārādi* (Vacaspati Mishra) mentioned in *Yoga-bhāṣya* 1.7 2.17-10.

21. *Yoga-Vārttika* I.4.3-35 Br. Up. śaṅkara bhāṣya 2.1.19. Yathā hi kevalo raktaḥ sphaṭiko lakṣyate janāṇaḥ rañjakādyopādhanena tadvat paramapuruṣaḥ.

It is closely related to the commonly accepted definition of the word 'soul'. Western philosophers have often used the two words mind and soul interchangeably. So long as psychology (in Greek the word *psyche* means soul) was a branch of philosophy, it could be study of mind defined as soul. When psychology became a natural science in the latter part of the 19th century, it became apparent that a new word was needed to express what psychology studies. At first, the word consciousness replaced the word 'mind', and it, in turn, was replaced by the word 'behaviour'. Psychologists do study the various mental activities such as thinking, reasoning, imagining and feeling because these activities can be observed either directly or indirectly in the behaviour of the individual.²²

The process of perception certainly contains in it the conscious principle of mind-stuff with which *advaitic* – theory of *bimba-pratibimbavāda* and the limitation theory (*avaccheda-vāda*) are performed. But the third theory of *Vedānta* and *Sāṃkhya*, that is, *rājaputravat upadeśāt* or as the son of Kunti was known as the son of Rādhā or as the prince of the royal family brought up in a low caste family, mistook himself to be a low-caste man, so does the *Brahman* through his own nescience assume limitations and is later released by his own discriminative knowledge.²³ The theory of *rājaputravat tat upadeśāt* which is caused by *māyā* or *avidyā* or *prakṛti* can be given an equal footing with the *oedipus* complex of Freud. This complex is also taken from Sophocles' Greek tragedy where a king's son through ignorance killed his father and unknowingly married his own mother and produced four children.²⁴ Oedipus was separated by his father in his childhood due to the prophecy that he would be killed by his own son. He was brought up by three foster parents, the last was the king. The ignorance of Oedipus has been taken by Freud as a complex where he tried to show that the opposite sexes have inborn oedipal attachment for their opposite parent. He reduced all his theory of *unconscious mind*, *libido*, *repression*, *transference* including *Oedipus-complex* only to sex energy. The *Sāṃkhya-Vedānta* concepts of *rājaputravat tat upadeśāt* and *kaunteyasya eva rādheyatva vad* which show the relationship of the soul with the empirical world, differ from the concept of *oedipus-complex*, only due to the realisation of reality till ignorance lasts.

In *Oedipus-complex*, ignorance did not shatter and it ended in tragedy where Oedipus blinded himself, and his mother Jacosta hung herself. If it could be a complex, as Freud said, even after coming to

22. Psychology. Understanding human behaviour, Chapman Harold Martin and others, McGraw Hill Book Co. 1958. p. 170-71.

23. *Siddhāntaleśa-Saṃgraha-Jīveśvara-Svarūpa-Nirūpanam*, Appaya Dikshitar p. 158; *Sāṃkhya-Sūtra* 6.27-28; *Yoga-Sūtra*, 1.4.7 II.20; IV.22; *Sāṃkhya-kārikā* 62:—Tasmān na badhyateddhā na mucyate nāpi Sams-arati kaścit. Samsarati badhyate mucyate ca nānāśrayā prakṛtiḥ.

24. Psychology for the class room, Strom Robert D., p. 362, Englewood Cliff, New Jersey, USA.

know that they were son and mother, husband and wife, they should have lived without a feeling of guilt. But it was the ignorance and not the complex. But in Indian psychology, introspection of the self should be done and ignorance should be shattered before any wrong action leads to a tragedy in life. The Yama-yamī dialogue in the Rg. Veda showed the achievement of the end after warding of the wrong doing. Throughout Sanskrit literature, we would find that the end has been accomplished, as a rule, by extracting and developing the metaphysical principles implicit in the psychological teachings and techniques. The concept of sorrow or tragedy is eradicated in Indian aesthetics as a non-aesthetic achievement. As happiness contains the generalising property (*Sādhāranya-dharma*) in it, there is always a purposeful motive in our art-forms. Indian aesthetics does not go by impulsive actions, but it is led by purposeful motivations. To enlighten the mind is the foremost purpose of Indian art and it is always followed by a sense of propriety.²⁵ When I say purposeful motivation, it means that this motive gives importance to the beauty of the society rather than to an individual's happiness as an end. We always try to gain some measure of group-approval through doing something which would bring us recognition from the other members of our group. This gives rise to the slogan that art is for other's sake, and not for the sake of itself. In order to live together in harmony, we must reach some agreement in art concerning what is to be valued or despised. This does not mean that each individual in the group must value everything exactly as everyone else does, but only that, everyone must agree in general to a system of aesthetic values. Aesthetic-value in the art-form should be appealing to all who are consensually participating as connoisseurs.²⁶ In the system of values, the concept of universal plays a great role. Universal is the concept which may be shared by many particulars. When I say connoisseur in the context of aesthetics, it implies the universal of Indian aesthetic experiences recognised as an aesthetic-value. A difference of opinion about a particular idea, colour, form, emotion²⁷ or a thing is a topic of considerable interest in the understanding of human behaviour and its impact on aesthetics. Difference statistically lies sometimes in the degree of measurements, in the mean between the two extremes²⁸ in the intelligence, in the physical ability, in the efficiency of work. Because of these differences due to

25. *Sukraniti.*, IV.4.102-103; BNS., 14.68; Dhv. Al II - Aucityad ite nanyad rasa-bhaṅgasya kāraṇam.

26. *Uttararāmacarita*; III 13 dravibhūtapremna.

27. Difference in thought and emotions gave the concept of synthesized entity of ardhanaṛiṣvara, *Siva-Purāṇa*, Rudra Samhitā, 49.17 ardhanaṛiṣvaram bhānu bhānu Koṭiśataprabbham,

28. Difference in the mean between the two extremes; degree of measurement and interest with respective examples: M. Bh. Sabha Parva, 65.33 naiva hrsvā na mahatī na kṛṣā natirohīnī n'akunīcitakeśī ca taya divyāmyaham tvayā. of *Abhinayadarpana*, 26 Nandikeśvara. *Viṣṇudharmottara Purāṇa* ch. 41.11 Rekham praśānsantyācārya vartanam ca vicakṣaṇaḥ. Strīyo bhūṣaṇām icchanti varṇādhyam itare janāḥ.

some reason or the other, as mentioned above, aesthetic experiences vary from one man, society or culture or a nation to another man, another society, another culture or another nation. Furthermore, the difference lies in the intelligence of different poets.²⁹ Some give a good picture of the present (*Mṛcchakatika*) some are efficient in showing the past and its history of thought-system (*Rāmāyaṇa*) and some express future incidents (*Mahābhārata*). And even more than that there are a few who give everything of the present, past and future. (*Kalidasa: Rūsamhara, Raghuvaṃsa and Shākuntalam*). The psychological activities of such poets includes intelligence (*mati*) memory (*smṛti*), and intuition (*prajñā*) in their totality. Memory is retained in the *citta* of *antahkaraṇa*. The synonym of *citta* is *buddhi*. Memory stays in four of the *Vṛttis* as mentioned in *Yoga-Sūtra* I.6. Patanjali has defined memory as (*Yoga-Sūtra*) I.2. Whatever experiences are received through cognition of the objects when cognised through Evidence, Misconception and Fancy, they remain in *citta* in the form of impressions (*samskāram ābharate*), or according to *Nyāya*, *Samskāramātrajanyam jñānam smṛti*. The field of memory is very vast as illustrated by the following table:

WAKING STATE	DREAM	SLEEP
Pramāṇa Viparyaya Vikalpa abhāviṭasmar -tavya	bhāviṭasmaratavyā i.e., smṛtyābhāsa	tāmasika, rājasika, sāttvika experience of recollection.

For the meaning of intelligence again we have to take refuge in the concept of *antahkaraṇa*, where the role of *manas* is important with the cooperation of the ten faculties (5 *jñānendriyas* and 5 *karmendriyas*). *Manas* is activated in the gross-body and waking state of consciousness. Memory is the reaction of the two states of consciousness i.e., waking and dreaming and their functions in the gross as well as subtle-world. Here, *jīvātma* enjoys the experiences of the subtle world in seven subtle places through 19 subtle outlets.³⁰ Here, man becomes introvert and enjoys the subtle world in the form of thought. The individual soul functions even

29. Difference in the efficiency gave rise to the kind of poets and artists in the art-world. *Kavya-Mīmāṃsā*, Rajashekhara. IV, *Śiṣye pratibhā dvidham śiṣyamācaksate yaduta buddhimānāharya-buddhiḥ ca. yasya nisargataḥ śāstramanudhāvati buddhiḥ sa buddhimānaḥ. yasya ca śāstraabhyāsaḥ samskurute buddhimasāvāharya buddhiḥ tridhā ca sa smṛtir matih prajñeti. atikrāntasyarthasya smṛti smṛtiḥ. Varttamānasya mantri matih anāgatasya prajñātri prajñeti.*

30. *Māndūkya-Up.* 4. *Saptāṅgaḥ, ekonaviṃsatimukhaḥ.... Vaiśvānaraḥ prathamāḥ pādāḥ.*

in the sleeping state through *prajñā*. *Prajñā* means *prakṛstena ajñāh*, i.e., complete ignorance. During this state, the gross body becomes absolutely, inert; so that it looks like dead. *Jivātmā*, here breaks relation with the gross body and the subtle body. Here, *jivātmā* experiences only consciousness, void of any pairs of opposites. Here, in *prajñā*, the preparation for concentration is worked out. As right knowledge (*prajñā*) comes from spiritual clearness³¹, here, a creative writer can glimpse consciousness in its totality (*paramārthika sattā*) and cannot go astray through *avidyā* (*arthakriyākāṇḍi*). Eternal values in the arts and its metaphysical aesthetic activities are projected only in this state. In a way, we can say, that beauty is a journey on the high way of our consciousness and as the artist of any creative art proceeds on his journey, he experiences the mounting joy of beauty till he reaches the end of the road which is difficult to traverse, because of its immeasurable height.

In the characterisation of behaviour of any personality, the behaviour cycle works in art and aesthetic activity. I have to explain here, the word 'personality' and 'behaviour cycle' with reference to modern psychology, and their impact on modern aesthetics. Where a series of actions constituting mental-occurrence of any kind; sensation, images, belief or emotion are continuing unless interrupted; until some more or less definite state of affairs is realised is known as 'behaviour cycle'. The property of causing such a cycle is called 'discomfort' and the property of mental occurrences in which the cycle ends is called pleasure. This mental 'discomfort' is called 'desire'. The cycle ends in a condition of quiescence of desire which is the purpose of the cycle.

For personality, let me trace the history of the term. The word 'personality' probably comes from the Latin word *per* and *sonare*, the combined meaning of which is 'to sound through'. Originally, it means an actor's mask through which the sound of his voice was projected. Later on, it meant the false appearance which the mask created. Still later, it began to give the meaning of the qualities of the character in the drama. So, 'personality' originally signified the aesthetic accessory rather than an object of psycho-analysis. Psychologically, it refers primarily to the organisation of the inter-related traits and other aspects of the behaviour of an individual which evolve around the behaviour-cycle. When we speak of a personality-trait, we mean a dependable way of thinking, feeling and responding or as Stagner has put it³², a generalised tendency to evaluate situations in a predictable manner and to act accordingly.

Intelligence (ability to learn, to make good judgement, to bring together many facts and derive a conclusion), appearance and impression, health,

31. *Yoga-Sūtra*, I.48 *Rthambharā tatra prajñā*.

32. Ross, Stagner. *Psychology of Personality*, 2nd Ed., McGraw Hill Co., New York, USA, 1948.p. 143.

size, weight, and body build, attitudes towards others (for self-defence and self-enhancement), knowledge (information of all sorts), skills, values, emotional tones and control, roles (as a member of several groups, we have different positions and roles)—these are the personality traits in evaluating the character of any art form. Through language, colour, stone and notes of music, the artist communicates these personality-traits with the outer and inner understanding and the knowledge and skill relevant to the particular art. An artist has to be an extrovert, an introvert and ambivert in accomplishing the work of art. Art is nothing more than a pleasing communication of pleasing things. That is the sum of the personality traits of an artist. The temperament and behaviour of an artist would influence his art work also. How he defends himself and how he enhances his self, reflects on his artistic accomplishment also. In all the art forms, an artist defends himself by *restructuring his self*. He often gives himself desirable characteristics through depicting his own character, which he really does not have. Sometimes for *self-justification*, he uses false reasoning or we can say he emotionalises his reason, which is the act of self defence as in the case of sour grapes to the fox. An artist is not supposed to be a saint but *śāṭha*³³ and where he is capable of projecting the attributes of his own unworthy impulses or motive to his characters of the composition, he should do so. A great example of sainthood, wickedness is shown in *Mṛcchakatika* by Śūdraka through *self projection* where he depicts the character of sheep and acts himself as a wolf in sheep's clothing in different characters of the play. Regression is also a method of self defence in the work of an artist. The whole of the *Meghadūta* has shown the reaction of the regression as a mechanism of self-defence, where the *Vāsanā* of Yakṣa has played a great role to show his un-fulfilled love-feeling through the message of the clouds. Self-defence and self-enhancement in the form of compensation also has a great role in the aesthetic activity of India. Shakuntalā being abandoned by Dīśyanta has fulfilled her love through producing Bharata in the vicinity of the jungle. Sītā when accepted by Rāma from the harem of Rāvāna, again was thrown to the jungle and she gave birth to her twin sons. The law of compensation can be well traced in the aesthetic-theory of *bhāga* and *yoga* where we sacrifice for others by reaching our own greatest usefulness and eventually our own greatest happiness. If we identify with something outside ourselves and really work for it, we find the greatest satisfaction of life. The *hedonistic paradox* of psychology is refuted here. As man cannot be humanised without the ethical values which are compensatory to his behaviour, the aesthetic theory of *karuṇā* or compassion has its source in the psychology of defence mechanism of compensation.

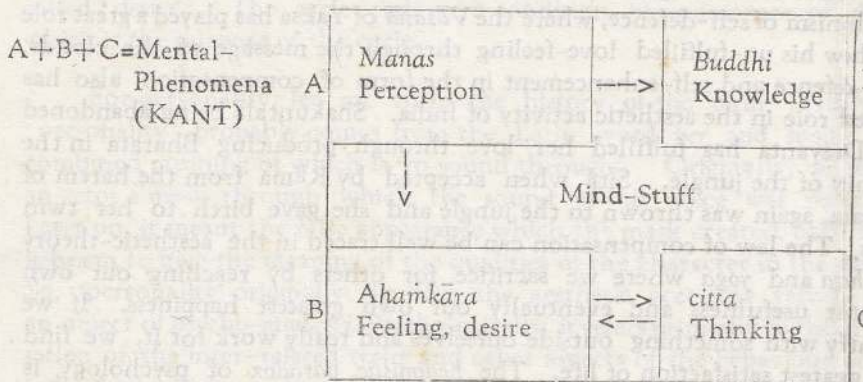
Another method of self defence is sublimation, which has been achieved in all the great art of Indian aesthetics. As Freud employed

33. *Kīna-Sūtra* V. 6.2.50-52.

the term, it refers to a situation in which we take the energy of an anti-social and disapproved urge and re-direct it into a socially approved channel which is mentioned by Rajashekhara also in his *Kāvya-Mīmāṃsā*.³⁴ The classification of hero-types into *dhīrodāta* etc. by the aestheticians of India has been done by psychological sublimation.

In *svagatakathana* of Sanskrit dramas, we often see that the dramatist wants to conceal something opposite through the device of *svagatakathana* than what he exposes to the audience. It is known in psychology as *reaction formation* device of self-defence. *Introjection* as a method of self-defence has a role in the concept of morality which is bitter and resentful to our taste. But, through artful depiction, an artist introjects these concepts of morality in the mind of the readers in such a way that they think them to make them their own. *Pāñca-tantra* and *Hitopadeśa* are the examples for the defence of introjection by their seasoned writers. Art in India has played a great role in the national life of an individual and the moral laws are introjected in the Indian aesthetic-activity so much that ethical values are identified as aesthetic-values in Sanskrit aesthetics.

In dealing with emotion and feeling as a personality-trait of an artist, I have to take *antahkarana* and its four-fold activities. Indians, recognised three great divisions of mental-phenomena which are typified with knowledge, desire and feeling. If I make a chart of Kant's definition along with the line of *antahkarana*, it would be like this:



A+B, B+C, C+B, +A+D = Mind-stuff (Indian Philosophy).

The word *citta* of *antahkarana* is different from the *citta* as pure consciousness which is *bodha*. The modes of thinking which receive the sensational (*manas*) from the external stimuli are again modified in the

34. *Kāvya-Mīmāṃsā* X.3.p.133 (Chowkhamba-1964). *Jānīyāllokasāmīnatyam-kvīh-kutra mameti ca asaṁmatam pariharenmate, bhīnivesata ca.*

form of certain desires and feeling (egoity or *ahamkāra*) when they are in contact with prior *samskāras*. When the innumerable travellers in the form of mental-occurrences or impressions (*samskāras*) roaming in the road of *citta*, with the help of *manas* through perception, come in contact with external stimuli (objects), the corresponding *samskāras* select their counter-feelings from the external objects and enliven themselves with double-force and become emotions with the purposeful desire. Knowing thoroughly this metaphysical explanation,³⁵ Sanskrit aestheticians very sophisticatedly propounded the theory of *rasa* based on *sthāyībhāva* (latent impression) and made the psychological divisions of *rasas* based on permanent moods and transitory emotions as such.³⁶ There are innumerable unconscious influences in our creation and appreciation of art due to the experiences of the past which we have forgotten and still are lying in the form of seeds. As they are sprinkled with the water of external stimuli, they are at once recalled and recognised with a feeling of acquaintance and thus are delighted in this harmony. Therefore, forgetfulness and memory play a great role in the reconstruction of art images and their appreciation. Forgotten *samskāras* are like the old acquaintances; when they meet the new acquaintances with the old traits of their own, they are enlivened and delighted because of memory of familiarity.³⁷ Not only this, few enlivened *Samskāras* become stronger urges during this process: the time of art-activity, and an artist adds those urges to his present desires, as salt to the injury. Then he feverishly longs to attain honour, power, riches, fame and love of a woman. Owing to the incapability of achieving them pragmatically, he transfers all his wishes to the creation of beautiful things of art and subsequently, is comforted by this act, and makes others also comfortable and reap their gratitude and admiration. The same idea is given by Freud also but only for the selectivity of sex-urge and its sublimation in the art form.³⁸ The concept of consciousness and unconsciousness of Freud is refuted by John B. Watson in favour of the Indian concept of *samskāras*. He calls consciousness as present and unconsciousness as past and finds a biological basis for the unfulfilled wishes where he says that our ordinary habits quench the habits and instinctive tendencies which belong largely in the past.³⁹

35. *Kāvymīmāṃsā* v. LL 8. ff. *Saṁskāro hi sarvasya guṇam utkarṣayati.*

36. *Bhaṭṭa nāṭya śāstra* VI. *Vibhāvānubhāvavyabhicārisamyogād rasaniṣpattiḥ.* Ibid. VII.2. p. 379. *evam ete kāvyarāśabhivyaktiḥetavaḥ hekonapañcāśadbhavaḥ.*

37. *Yogātra* I. 49. *tajjasaṁkāro 'nyasaṁkāra* - that is the state during the rising of knowledge - but opposite traits of *Samskāras* would be useful for the present purpose. and BNS IV.4. *Sukhaduḥkhādikairbhavaibhāvastad bhāvabhavanam.*

38. Freud *Introductory Lectures on psycho-analysis*, p. 314.

39. 'Psychology of wish fulfilment' *The Scientific monthly* Nov. 1916, p. 483.

Though these art-forms belong to the poet as an individual, our attitudes towards beauty is essentially disinterested; we are as if, lost in admiration of it.⁴⁰

The forgetfulness of the past (of this and other lives in the rebirth process) has put a riddle before philosophy as well as before aesthetics. That is why Buddha all through his gospels in his teaching emphasises again and again the importance of *smṛti* or mindfulness.

Right *smṛti* is the entrance to the light of the faith and the *bodhisattva* does not pay attention to anything that is adverse to it.⁴¹ One title for Buddha is *amūṣita-smṛti*, one whose *smṛti* never disappears.⁴² A *bodhisattva* never loses *smṛti*, and so is never distracted in mind.⁴³ It purifies *buddhi*, gives constancy and consistency to his thoughts and helps him to keep the doctrine in his mind.⁴⁴ So much for *smṛti* in general. The Buddhist philosophers devised the special formula of the four fields of mindfulness (*smṛti*). *Smṛti* should be applied to: 1. *Kāya*, 2. *vedanā* (feeling), 3. *citta* (thoughts) and 4. *dharma* (phenomena).⁴⁵ *Āśvaghoṣa* and *Vasuandhu* say that these four meditations (*smṛti*) are antidotes to four *viparyāsa* (perversions).⁴⁶ *Viparyāsa*s of Buddhism can be equated with the concept of *Avidyā* of *Yoga-Sūtra* (II.5) *anityaśūcidukhenātmasu nitya-śūcisukhtmakhyāti avidyā*.

Judging all the interpretations about *smṛti* in Buddhist literature, I came to the conclusion that the incessant mindfulness without primitive lethargy could be useful in spiritual attainment, where the spiritualist like a prophet could predict the flux of time and its events into one unit. But for aesthetics this forgetfulness (latent impressions) has proved to be an outcome of a variety of beautiful thoughts and feelings when aroused by present stimuli of memory. *Avidyā*, *māyā* and *prakṛti* and *viṃśa*—all these cosmic powers of illusion are helpful in advancing us to spiritual and aesthetic activities.⁴⁷ Forgetfulness and memory, though paradoxal, are the fundamental principles of Indian aesthetics. Aroused by memory,

40. *Sāhitya-darpana*, Viśvanātha, XII. 13. *parasya na parasyeti mameti na meti ca tadāsvāde vibhāvādeḥ paricchedo na vidyate* (the disinterested attitude is elaborately discussed under the title 'Psychical distance' by Edward Bullough in his article in the 'Eritain's Journal of Psyche' 5. 1912.

41. *Lalita-Vistara* 34.15-239-2

42. *Ibid.* 434. 16.

43. *Aṣṭa-Sahasrikā-Prajñā-pāramitā* 326.7 MITRA R, Calcutta, 1888.

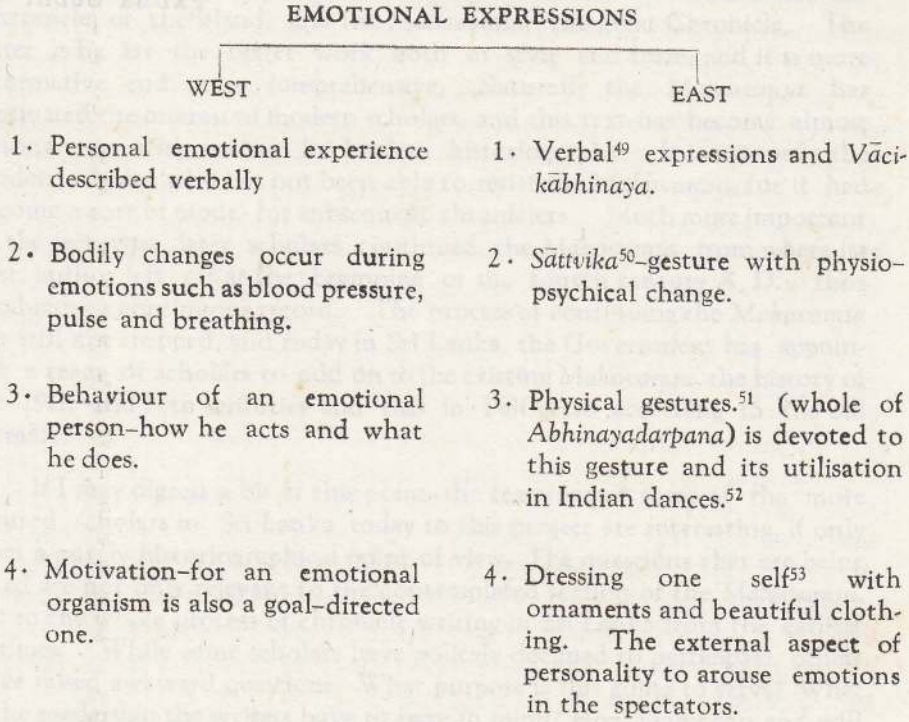
44. *Daśabhūmika sūtra* 8.6, 42.15, 44.18. RAHDER, Paris, 1926.

45. *Mahā-vyutpatti XXXIII*, p.73. (ed. Sakaki, Kyoto, 1928.) *Dharma-samgraha* XIV, p.9, Max Muller. Oxford, 1885.

46. *Saundarāranda* XVII. 25; *Mahāyānasūtrālamkāra*, 140.24.

47. *Āryadeva Catuḥgatakam*, *Cittavisuddhiprakaraṇa*, II. 37; II 40: by Maha Mahopadhyaya Vidhusekhara Bhattacarya from Bhāṭa language to Sanskrit:- *Karṇājālam jalenaiva Kāntakenaiva kāntakam, māve tathā rāgamuddharanti māṇis'neh*. Moreover *lohapinao jale kṣipto majjaty tu kevaṇem patrikṛtam tadevānyem tārayeta tarati svayam*.

this primitive forgetfulness (samskāras) in the present reference becomes renewed, leaving all its old traits of quality, and emotions arise. All emotions have four aspects which may be analysed and investigated. Modern psychology divides emotional experiences into four. We have to appreciate the common sense of the theoreticians of Sanskrit aesthetics, who, long ago, were aware of the four divisions of emotions in dance and drama, which are based on emotional expressions.⁴⁸ The following diagram reflects the parallelism between the West and East as far as emotional expressions are concerned.



48. BNS VI. 23; VIII. 10. and *Abhinaya-darpana*, 38. Gairola Allahabad, 1967.

49. *Abhinaya-darpana*, 48. Ibid *vācā viracitaḥ kāvyanaṭakādi tu vācikaḥ*

50. Ibid 40-41 *Stambhaḥ svedāmbu romancaḥ svarabhango' tha vepathuḥ Vaiyar nyamaśru pralaya itvastaḥ sāttvikāḥ smṛtāḥ.*

51. Ibid 42. *tatrāṅgiko' ṅapratyaṅgopangaistraidhā prakāśitaḥ. ṅgānyatra śiro hastan vaksāḥ pārśvaṇ katitara pādav iti*

52. Ibid. 43-326.

53. Ibid. 39. *akāryo hārakeyuraveśadibhir alaṅkṛtaḥ.*

All the *rasas* in Sanskrit dramas are represented by these four types of gestures. These are different in illustrating an individual *rasa*. This emotional development which is evolved in getting the aesthetic-experience of each *rasa* (mood) is the full-fledged advancement of the theory on aesthetic emotions, which are yet to be touched by the Western psychologists with their proper sequences. It is difficult to elucidate all the aspects of psychology in a small paper like this. One can devote at least five treatises to describe the role of psychology in Indian aesthetics. I have left, here, the psychological theory of colour which can elaborately be compared again with the *rasa* theory of Indian aesthetics.⁵⁴

PADMA SUDHI

54. BNS. VI, 42-43. *Syāmo bhavati śṛṅgārah sito hāsyah prakṛtitaḥ kapotah karuṇāścaiva rakto raudraḥ prakṛtitaḥ gauro vīra tu vīṇīyah Kṛṣṇāścaiva bhayanakāḥ nīlavarnas tu bībhatsah pītas caivodabbhūt smṛtah.*

The Dipavamsa in Ancient Sri Lankan Historiography

It is common knowledge that chronicle writing was a very popular literary form in ancient and medieval Sri Lanka. Chronicles were written on a variety of subjects, mostly religious. Objects of worship such as the Relics of the Buddha, the Bodhi tree, the Stupas and even individual temples formed the subject of chronicles, punctuating the literary history of Sri Lanka. Among these texts, two, which attempt to relate the history of the island stand out in somewhat bold relief—the *Dipavamsa*, the Chronicle of the island, and the *Mahāvamsa*, the great Chronicle. The latter is by far the better work, both in style and form, and it is more informative and more comprehensive. Naturally the *Mahāvamsa* has captivated the interest of modern scholars, and this text has become almost synonymous with ancient Sri Lankan historiography. It is not only the modern scholar who has not been able to resist the *Mahāvamsa*, for it had become a sort of model for subsequent chroniclers. Much more important is the fact that later scholars continued the *Mahāvamsa* from where its first author left off at the beginning of the fourth century A. D., thus producing a continuous record. The process of continuing the *Mahāvamsa* has still not stopped, and today in Sri Lanka, the Government has appointed a team of scholars to add on to the existing *Mahāvamsa*, the history of the 19th and 20th centuries—and this in Pāli verse according to the old format.

If I may digress a bit at this point—the reactions of some of the more reputed scholars in Sri Lanka today to this project are interesting, if only from a purely historiographical point of view. The questions that are being asked are not only relevant to the contemplated section of the *Mahāvamsa*, but to the whole process of chronicle writing in Sri Lanka from the earliest of times. While some scholars have politely declined to participate, others have raised awkward questions. What purpose is this going to serve? What is the readership the writers have to have in mind? How many can and will read the history of 19th and 20th century Sri Lanka in Pāli verse? Similar enquiries regarding the earlier phases of the chronicle should yield interesting insights to the origin and process of history writing in ancient Sri Lanka.

To return to the point at issue, the spotlight has nearly always been on the *Mahāvamsa*, and by comparison, the *Dipavamsa*, the older chronicle, which covers the same ground as the first part of the *Mahāvamsa*, has suffered a certain amount of neglect. There is fair consensus on the view that the *Dipavamsa* represents the earliest stage of the chronicle, and that the oldest layers of traditional history have to be sought in it. A second and more important reason for this enquiry is to try and plot a different

approach to the problem from what has been done so far. Most scholars working on the chronicles have been largely concerned with the question 'how' and have not always asked the question 'why'. By and large, their writings are devoted to explain the process of historical evolution and the probable steps leading to the historical chronicle represented by the *Dīpavamsa* and the *Mahāvamsa*. These enquiries have no doubt been extremely revealing and have in no small way helped our understanding of the evolution of the Pāli chronicles.

To raise some of the neglected questions – why did chronicle writing come about in Sri Lanka? What triggered off some of the early traditions that are incorporated in the chronicles? What were the concerns and commitments of the tradition-makers? Neither the *Dīpavamsa* nor the *Mahāvamsa* record contemporary events. They both look at the past through certain traditions available at the time. What was their present which made these traditions relevant? In other words for what purpose were they remembering the past? What sort of audience did the chroniclers have in mind? It is obvious that the authors selected their material from what they knew of the past. Why did they select what they did and not other information which brings to mind the oft-quoted statement of Geiger, "not what is said but what is left unsaid is the besetting difficulty of Sinhalese history."¹ I am in no way suggesting that I have found definitive answers to these questions. But an attempt at answering them would reveal important facets regarding the origin of history writing in Sri Lanka.

Opinion regarding the *Dīpavamsa* has varied between such devastating statements as "the *Dīpavamsa* stands unsupported on its own tottering feet"², and the more balanced view that it is based on one or more sources on the same lines as the *Mahāvamsa*.³ The weaknesses of its composition such as mistakes of grammar and metre, gaps in the story, a clumsiness of style and numerous repetitions have been noticed.⁴ It is generally accepted that the *Dīpavamsa* stands very close to its source or sources, and hence reflects those sources.⁵ Memory verses, the very occasional prose passage, and different versions of the same episode have been considered to be tell-tale signs of what was originally an oral tradition. Much of this can be conceded although some judgements need modification. It has sometimes been thought that the *Dīpavamsa* is the work of more than one author and that it was accomplished in a number of stages.⁶ I have no doubt that the chronicle as we have it today constitutes a single compositi-

1. W. Geiger, *Cūḍavamsa* I (Eng. transl.), P. T. S., 1929, p. v.

2. O. Frpnke, *Journal of Pāli Text Society*, 1908, p. 1.

3. H. Oldenberg, *Dīpavamsa* (Dv.), 1879, p. 1 foll.

W. Geiger, *Mahāvamsa* (Eng. transl.) P. T. S. 1934, p. IX ff.

4. Oldenberg, *op. cit.*, pp. 6–7.

W. Geiger, *Dīpavamsa and Mahāvamsa*, 1908, p. p. 11 ff.

5. Oldenberg, *op. cit.*, p. 7.

6. B. C. Law, *On the Chronicles of Ceylon*, 1947, pp. 1–9.

on, but the reasons for the other view are obvious. For, within the *Dīpavamsa* can be noticed different strata of tradition. Some of them seem to answer the demands of different periods and others suggest different concerns. While the various arguments in the *Dīpavamsa* reflect a response to certain demands, commitments and situations, the work as a whole too had purpose and definite ends in mind.

The chronicle opens with an account of the three visits of the Buddha to Sri Lanka, and goes on to give the genealogy of the Buddha, which is wound up with the synchronisation of dates between the life of the Buddha and the dynasty of kings ruling at Magadha. A crucial point here, is an attempt to fix the date of the death of the Buddha which is calculated as the eighth year of Ajātasattu. Next, we have the story of the three Buddhist Councils at which the Theravāda point of view is said to have been upheld, and all other views rejected. The account of the Third Buddhist Council, which brings in the Asokan connection in a big way, ends with the sending out of Buddhist missionaries to various countries including Sri Lanka. With the scene having shifted to Sri Lanka, chronologically, one is shunted back to the date of the *parinibbāna* or the death of the Buddha, on which day is contrived the arrival of the earliest colonisers of the island led by Vijaya, who becomes its first king. The narrative proceeds with dynastic history up to the reign of Devānampiyatissa, bringing us to the point at which the Buddhist mission led by Mahinda arrives in the island. The establishment of Buddhism is the major theme of the chronicle, taking up almost a third of the book. Into this is once again woven the Asokan contact, and the island's connection with the three Buddhas prior to Gautama Buddha. From this point onwards, the *Dīpavamsa* consists largely of dynastic history with the occasional pause over rulers like Bhātika Abhaya, who made some special contribution in the service of Buddhism. The last ruler of the chronicle is Mahāsena, and here the main concern of the author is the rise of heretical beliefs, and the king's support of them.

The objectives with which the *Dīpavamsa* looks at the past seem to circumscribe the chronicle within a religious orbit. In it, it is possible to identify three major concerns for which the chronicler seeks legitimation in the past. One is the projection of Sri Lanka as the island of destiny—'the *dharmadīpa* concept.' The second and most pressing theme is the insistence on the view, that the Theravāda form of Buddhism is the authentic form of Buddhism. Thirdly, there lies as a sort of continuous undercurrent, the advocacy that the highest obligation of rulers was to honour and serve Buddhism, that is the Theravada form of it. One can of course see that these three major themes are interconnected, which reiterates the point made earlier that the objectives of the *Dīpavamsa* are of a somewhat limited nature.

The notion that Sri Lanka was the 'Island of Destiny', where Buddhism was going to shine in all its splendour, is not one which is carried through the text. It would have been strange if it was, for, by the fourth century A. D., when the *Dipavamsa* came to be written, Buddhism was firmly established in Sri Lanka, and for this there is independent archaeological evidence. At this point, it was not necessary to use the past as propaganda to spread or conserve Buddhism, and there was no threat to Buddhism as such, to seek sanctions in the past. The idea, however, had relevance in an earlier period, when the rapid gains made by Buddhism had to be consolidated. The *dhammadīpa* concept finds expression mostly in the stories connected with the visits of the Buddha and that of Mahinda to Sri Lanka. The Buddha is made to see the island at two of the most crucial times of his life—at the time of enlightenment⁷ and at the time of death.⁸ In the first instance, he sees its destiny as a stronghold of Buddhism which will be introduced to the country by Mahinda. On his deathbed, he sees that Vijaya will arrive in Lanka on that very day, to start human habitation, and requests the God Sakka to protect the island, a task which he transfers to the God Uppalavanna. On the eve of Mahinda's departure to Lanka, Sakka is made to remind him of the Buddha's predictions and his (Mahinda's) role in their fulfilment.⁹

The Buddha not only predicts the island's destiny but is also instrumental in securing it. His first two visits to the island were for the express purpose of suppressing the Yakkhas and Nāgas—the demons and serpents who were inhabiting the country so that, it would become a fit abode for human beings.¹⁰ One notices the very harsh and condemnatory words in which these non-humans are described. Epithets such as frightful, cruel and blood-thirsty, full of desire and anger towards other beings, back-biting, pitiless and given to injuring others—and this does not exhaust the list.¹¹ The Nāgas fare slightly better at the hands of the author of the *Dipavamsa*, but even in their case, the descriptions are by no means complimentary.¹² However, they are considered to be powerful beings, but not too powerful for the Buddha whose might overwhelms them. In fact, at one point, the Buddha is described as a mighty Yakkha subduing the Yakkhas.¹³ He is said to have used terrifying methods, and it has been pointed out, that the Sri Lankan chronicles cast the Buddha in a mould quite different to his Canonical image as the Compassionate One, who

7. Dv. 1. 14-22.

8. Dv. 9. 21-5.

9. Dv. 12. 29-31.

10. Dv. 1. 20-1; 2. 11-4.

11. Dv. 1. 46-7, 71.

12. Dv. 2. 5-7.

13. Dv. 1. 54.

overcomes turbulent elements with kindness and love-metta.¹⁴ It is very likely that such stories arose out of the need to draw people from animistic beliefs; and to prove the superiority of Buddhism over them. While Gautama Buddha rids the country of demonic and Nāga forces, giving over the protection of the country to Buddhist gods, the three former Buddhas, when they arrive, rid the island of famine, pestilence and drought. These stories from the past were intended to establish the efficacy and credibility of the Buddhist religion, and perhaps had a mass audience in mind. They do not represent the initial period of winning converts to Buddhism, but a period of consolidation when the Buddha was already a revered figure.

Briefly, the story of this land of destiny starts with a fresh cycle of events. Three previous cycles are remembered when Buddhas had sanctified the island, and had established their religion. By pushing back the country's association with Buddhism, the message that is conveyed is that Sri Lanka was and is the land of Buddhism. A fresh start is made with the Buddha Gautama. The Yakkhas are got rid of, the country is sanctified by the presence of the Buddha, and protected by the gods. Vijaya arrives under the benevolent eye of the Buddha, who passes away on the same day. As prophesied, Buddhism is brought to the island by Mahinda. The planting of a branch of the Bodhi tree under which the Buddha attained enlightenment, the enshrinement of the bodily relics of the Buddha in a *stupa*, and the establishment of the order of Buddhist monks and nuns from among the highest in the land, seals the destiny of Sri Lanka as the island of Buddhism, the *dhammadipa*.

Why did people need these stories? Were they responding to a challenge from other religions? Inscriptional evidence suggests the rapid spread of Buddhism after its introduction, but it is very possible that after the initial euphoria generated by the new religion, people were slipping back to their old animistic beliefs. Hence the need for stories of the Buddha overpowering the spirits. However, the Mahinda stories seem to speak from a position of strength. One does meet with the occasional challenge thrown out to the more organised religions like Hinduism and Jainism. Asoka's disillusionment with all other religions, and his conversion to Buddhism, and the rejection of Brahmanical Hinduism by Moggalliputtatissa, illustrate this attitude.¹⁵ It should however be noted that there is no condemnation of these religions in a Sri Lankan situation, at least not within the framework of the *Dipavamsa*. Therefore, it is not possible to argue that Buddhism was threatened by these religions. I would like to suggest that the *dhammadipa* concept was born in an atmosphere when it was found necessary to conserve the status quo by seeking authority in the past.

14. R. A. L. H. Gunawardene, "The Kingdom of the Buddha: Myth as Political Charter in the Ancient and Early Medieval Kingdom of Sri Lanka," *The Sri Lanka Journal of Humanities*, Vol. II, No. 1, 1976, pp. 54 - 55.

15. *Ibid.* 5:57 - 8, 62 - 8; 6:24 - 30.

A major argument in the *Dīpavamsa* is the case for the authenticity and purity of Theravāda Buddhism. Placed before its audience is a record of the true faith and its fight against heresies. The dialogue is between the Theravāda and the non-Theravāda within Buddhism. The polemical use of the past for sectarian ends did not start among the Sri Lankan Buddhists. The break-up of the Buddhist clergy into rival sects occurred long before the introduction of Buddhism to Sri Lanka by the Theravādins. They had entered into bitter controversy with their opponents, and the search for the past had begun.

The case for the Theravāda is first met with in the account of the first two Councils in the Cullavagga in the *Vinaya Pitaka*.¹⁶ From this it would seem that dissent within the Buddhist clergy arose immediately after the death of the Buddha and, before further damage was done, the leading monks of the time assembled at Rajagaha and rehearsed the teachings of the Buddha, thus creating an authority to which the Buddhists could turn, now that the Buddha was not there to appeal to in the event of doubt. The Cullavagga speaks of a more grave danger which faced the orthodox Buddhists a hundred years later, when a group of monks from Vesālī began to advocate heresy. Once again, we are told, that the chief monks of the time held the Second Council, which refuted the position taken up by the monks of Vesālī. The Third Council which is believed to have taken place in the reign of Asoka is not mentioned in the Cullavagga. There is no doubt that the Cullavagga account is an answer to a challenge experienced around the time the Canonical literature was composed, when the past was needed to exercise authority over the present. This process of legitimation and authentication is brought down a step further in the *Dīpavamsa*, where orthodox Buddhism is said to have been rehearsed a third time at the Council held at Pāṭaliputra during the time of Asoka.¹⁷

Some may perhaps argue that the chronicles were merely recounting the Canonical tradition, bringing it up-to-date with the account of the Third Buddhist Council. It is not possible to concede this, for the accounts of the First and Second Councils in the chronicles, not only have a local audience in view, but convey a sense of fresh urgency, and a feeling that it meets a new situation and challenge. There are many new elements in the Sri Lankan tradition not noticed in the Cullavagga. The leading monks of the First Council are said to have been those, who were specially commended by the Buddha during his life-time, and it is emphasised that they had all learnt the doctrine at the feet of the Buddha.¹⁸ The Theravāda is called the *aggavāda*, the highest doctrine.¹⁹ A general

16. H. Oldenberg (ed.), *Vinaya Pitaka* Vol. II, pp. 284 ff.

17. *Dv.* 7.39 - 43.

18. *Dv.* 4.11.

19. *Dv.* 4.15.

challenge is thrown out to all opponents. It is contended that "neither monk nor brahmin, however clever, will be able to subvert the religion, which stands like the Sineru mountain."²⁰ There is a repetitive insistence that the doctrine as rehearsed at the Council is indestructible, "neither God, nor Māra, nor Brahma, nor any earthly being can find in it the smallest ill-spoken word... The Theravāda is founded on true reason, free from heresies, full of true meaning..."²¹ Describing the Second Council held a hundred years later, the chief monks who participated are made to derive their authority from the monks of the First Council. Not only were they pupils of these monks, but they had actually seen the Buddha.²² The final claim is that the Theravāda stands like a great Nigrodha tree and the heretical schools are like thorns which had grown on it,²³ a mistaken simile, for the Nigrodha tree has no thorns. The Third Council held during the reign of Asoka, two hundred and eighteen years after the death of the Buddha, was also convened to dispel false doctrines and practices. There is severe criticism of heretics, who had infiltrated the Saṅgha for gain.²⁴ Thus, it is claimed, that the orthodoxy of the Theravāda was upheld through three Councils from the time of the death of the Buddha.

The chronicler does not stop at re-stating past traditions to authenticate the position of the Theravāda. He introduces further evidence to press his point regarding the historicity of his assertions. The First and Second Councils were separated by a hundred years, and there were one hundred and eighteen years between the Second and the Third. An unbroken line of eminent Buddhist teachers (*ācariya paramparā*), each of whom held the position of 'the Chief of the Vinaya' (*vinaya pamokkha*) is introduced to bridge the Councils.²⁵ The emphasis is on the handing down of the Vinaya, for this was the area of dispute before the rise of Mahāyāna doctrines and even after, in the Sri Lankan situation. The author's dilemma is clear, for there is many an assertion that the entire doctrine was handed down by these monks. Beginning with Upali, who spoke on the Vinaya at the First Buddhist Council, the list extends to Moggaliputtatissa, the Chief monk of the Third Council, and Mahinda who introduced Buddhism to Sri Lanka.

Underpinning all these arguments is an elaborate backdrop of dates bringing the evolution of the Theravāda within a definite chronological framework. This is intended as the most persuasive part of the entire exercise, and demonstrates a concern for evidence to prove the point that is being made. Linking the events of Buddhism with notable personalities and dates was meant to provide historical verification of the tradition.

20. Dv. 4.19 - 20.

21. Dv. 4.20 - 4.

22. Dv. 4.49 - 50.

23. Dv. 5.52.

24. Dv. 7.34 - 41.

25. Dv. 5.76 et seq.

The dates of the *upasampadā* or higher ordination of the Vinaya teachers are linked to the chronology of the Magadhan line of kings, and their dates are in turn synchronised with the Sri Lankan king - list.²⁶ The starting point is the Parinibbāna, which was in the eighth year of Ajātasattu, and the first year of Vijaya in Sri Lanka. A typical example of these chronological synchronisms reads as follows:- the twenty fourth year of Ajātasattu is the sixteenth year of Vijaya, the sixtieth year of the Thera Upāli when the *upasampadā* of the Thera Dāsaka took place. The dates on which the Theras passed away are also worked out against the Magadhan regnal years.²⁷ This chronological information seems to have been particularly important, and one suspects that questions were, or had been asked about dates. They are worked out in a variety of ways. After the initial synchronisms, the *Dīpavamsa* sets out the number of years each Vinaya teacher lived after the demise of his predecessor.²⁸ The list is repeated once again with the number of years each one lived after the *upasampadā* and then again the number of years they held the rank of Vinaya chief.²⁹

The synchronisation of dates relevant to Theravāda Buddhism with the Magadhan chronology has not been noticed in the canonical texts, although one cannot ignore the possibility that the chronicles derived it from an Indian source. But the re-arrangement of these dates with the juxtaposition of Sri Lankan dates was obviously of local authorship, catering to a local audience. The working out of these dates would have been only achieved some time after the introduction of Buddhism, and could not have formed part of the argument advanced to win the first converts in the island. The case for the authenticity, purity, and historicity of Theravāda Buddhism, as made out in the *Dīpavamsa*, was without doubt, meant for a sophisticated audience, who needed convincing, and reflects a period when this form of Buddhism came under attack, and when its position was challenged.

Just as some of the comments in the *Dīpavamsa* regarding the circumstances leading to, and the results of the Buddhist Councils, sound like an over-reaction to those situations, the statements which describe the purpose of Mahinda's mission to Sri Lanka seem somewhat out of context. In one of the few prose passages found in the text, Mahinda is made to say "(The Island) is covered and enclosed by the overclouding darkness of ignorance and of (worldly) existence; it is ruined by envy and selfishness; it cannot rise from the delusions which are produced by the fault of idleness; it has entered on a wrong way and goes far astray from the true path;... high-born people have been (as it were) people covered with sores and

26. *Ibid.*

27. *Dv.* 5.97 *et seq.*

28. *Dv.* 5.89 - 94,

29. *Dv.* 5.95 - 6.

have become (feeble like) Muñja or Babbaja grass. Tambapanni has been entirely subdued by obstacles and passions in consequence of the obscurity of error and the darkness of ignorance and of (worldly) existence; it is covered, pervaded, veiled, overshadowed and girt round with that great darkness, the obscurity of error."³⁰ This seems harsh condemnation of a people who were considered ripe for conversion, and who are described in an earlier stanza as *nipunā Tambapannikā* "clever Tambapanninans".³¹ Such accusations as "straying away from the true path" and "covered by the darkness of error, seem to be levelled at a different set of people, a group who had entered a path which the author considered to be false, in other words, non-Theravadins. This is an instance where the author is carried away by his emotions, and it only reveals the intensity of the conflict, which gave rise to traditions, which not only fight for the past but also for the present.

What this present was is a moot point. It has already been suggested that the *Dīpavamsa* embodies traditions of varying antiquity. It is widely accepted that the historical traditions which formed part of the Sinhalese commentarial literature had reached a definitive stage around the first century. A.D.³² They formed an important part of the source material of the *Mahāvamsa* and no doubt served the *Dīpavamsa* as well. But do the ideological struggles reflected in the *Dīpavamsa* hark back to the first century A.D.? The answer is not easy,

The period around the first century A.D. saw the rise and expansion of Mahāyāna Buddhism in India. Although the impact of this form of Buddhism has been noticed in Sri Lanka, one can only chart its progress through the documentation of those opposed to it, an altogether unsatisfactory procedure. There is a success story against the intrusion of unorthodox views, and begins in the reign of Vattagāmaṇi Abhaya (89-77 B.C.) However, the hard evidence points to the first century A.D. as the period of serious challenge to the traditional continuity of orthodoxy. The conflict, when it began, seems to have centred round problems of Vinaya or discipline, which explains why our sources concentrate on the succession of Vinaya teachers. The *ācariya paramparā* of Sri Lankan theras as given in the *Samantapāsādikā*, a Vinaya Commentary, is believed to come down to about the first century A.D.,³³ and the same appears to be true of the history of Buddhist nuns in Sri Lanka spelt out in the *Dīpavamsa*.³⁴ This particular section of the *Dīpavamsa* speaks of a present where there were both *bhikkhus* and *bhikkhunīs*, who upheld the Vibhajjavāda (Theravāda) and who preserved the tradition of the Vinaya,

30. *Dv.* 12.32 - 3.

31. *Dv.* 12.34.

32. E. W. Adikaram, *Early History of Buddhism*, 1946, pp. 85-7.

33. *Ibid.*

34. *Dv.* 18.1 *et seq.*

This present is difficult to identify, but the list of Vinaya teachers, both monks and nuns, show that in or around the first century A.D., there was an appeal to the past which finds expression in some of the traditions in the *Samantapāsādikā* and the *Dīpavamsa*.

This period of challenge and response was not one of limited duration, and it seems to have escalated with time. The conflict later crystalised into a dichotomy between two leading monasteries, the Mahāvihāra and the Abhayagirivihāra, the former being the seat of orthodoxy. A preoccupation with problems of discipline suggests that the battle was fought on this front, although the doctrinal struggle surfaces from time to time. The *Samantapāsādikā* takes notice of a conflict over discipline which took place around the beginning of the first century A.D., in the reign of Bhātika Abhaya. State intervention was found necessary to resolve the problem, which had turned into a confrontation between the Mahāvihāra and Abhayagirivihāra. The minister Dīghakārayana, who was appointed the arbiter, is said to have decided in favour of the Mahāvihāra. Naturally, decisions other than those in favour of the Mahāvihāra will not find mention in the commentaries. The *Dīpavamsa* records the intervention of the minister Kapila, in the reign of Vohārikatissa (A.D. 209 – 231), to suppress heresy, Vitandvāda, as it is called. It is on this same note of controversy that the *Dīpavamsa* ends. The reign of Mahāsena, at the end of the third century A.D., seems to have witnessed a great upheaval, and the account of it leaves little doubt as to the intensity of feeling. The two leading figures in the opposing camp are described as the wicked Mitta and the evil Soṇa, and there is a savage attack on their followers—shameless individuals who misled the king and who were only monks in appearance. They were like stinking corpses, like blue flies (obviously the kind that settles on stinking corpses). They are said to have preached false doctrines but the two examples quoted seem somewhat of an anticlimax. These evil monks are said to have thought it not proper to calculate a person's age for the purpose of higher ordination from conception, and the second seems even more trivial, they allowed the use of ivory fans.³⁵ Once again it is the conflict relating to the rules of discipline that are highlighted. Obviously this is not the entire story.

What is interesting about this episode as reported in the *Dīpavamsa* is that the account practically stops mid-stream. One misses the announcement of the triumph of orthodoxy. The report is wound up with the statement that, because of his association with wicked men, Mahāsena did much good and evil, and passed away according to his actions. The *Dīpavamsa* ends with a general admonition that one should not associate with evil men. In the *Mahāvamsa*, the Mahāsena episode is carried to its logical conclusion. The king realises his folly and rehabili-

35. *Dv*, 22.68-74.

tates the Mahāvihāra, which according to the *Mahāvamsa*, was physically destroyed by the opposing faction. Here one can see the growth of the tradition and the rounding off of rough edges. The *Dīpavamsa* story without these embellishments seems to stand very close to the event. It would seem that the *Dīpavamsa* took form in this atmosphere of religious conflict, and explains the entire rationale for it. The writing of history is often considered a means to attain definite ends. Prophecies and events were marshalled out to argue the case for the Theravāda in the face of a growing crisis in faith. The *Dīpavamsa* reflects a historical awareness which comes during a period of instability. By and large the *Dīpavamsa* records the battle, the *Mahāvamsa*, the victory.

If one accepts the position that the reason behind the *Dīpavamsa* was polemical, the question which rises immediately is, to whom was it addressed. The internal evidence in the chronicle suggests that an important section of the audience envisaged were the rulers and the leaders of society. We have enough evidence outside the chronicles that the economic viability of the religious institutions of this period depended largely on royal patronage, and the patronage of those who were in a position to transfer resources. The emphasis laid on the acceptance of Buddhism by Asoka, his benefactions to the *saṅgha*, and the building of monasteries becomes intelligible in this context. Much is made of the patronage extended to Buddhism by Devānampiyatissa and the religious activities of rulers up to Mahāsena. Monks and nuns admitted to the *saṅgha* are almost always from the highest in the land. The episodes relating to the reigns of kings like Mahāsena and Vohārikatissa demonstrate that rulers and officials identified themselves with one or other of the rival sects, and securing their attention was of decided advantage. Thus the Mahāvihāra monks campaigned, keeping in mind both their own members, and the ruling classes, whose support was necessary for stability and continuity. The use of Pāli as the language of the chronicle had wider implications. It was not long after the composition of the *Dīpavamsa* that the decision was taken to translate the Sinhalese Commentaries into Pāli. This represented an attempt at making available the literature of the Theravādins to a wider Buddhist public, and very possibly the *Dīpavamsa*, too, comes within the orbit of the same movement.

In Sri Lanka, the Buddhist viharas were the centres of learning and education. That the literature, which grew out of them, composed by monk authors, should reflect their concerns, is not in the least surprising. These concerns produced a historical awareness which was documented

from time to time. If one is talking of imperatives for the writing of history, the problems of the Theravādins produced such imperatives. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that it was the dynamics of Buddhism which generated history writing in Sri Lanka. It is unfortunate that we have been left with only the Theravada version of it, but history usually tends to be the record of the winners.

SIRIMA KIRIBAMUNE

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 Dravido-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*¹.

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. Gnanapragasar² was published soon after the release of *Ancient Jaffna* by S. Rasanayakam.³ 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 Vāipava 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 Kūḷaṅkaicakkaravartti mentioned in the *Yālpāna vaipavamālai* is identical with Magha does not seem to be historically valid. Rasanayakam's work was easily surpassed by that of his erudite contemporary, Gnanapragasar.⁴

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.⁵

4. S. Pathmanathan, 'The Pioneer Historians of Jaffna, C. Rasanayagam and S. Gnanapragasar, Paper (Mimeograph) 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.⁶

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."⁷ 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 Āryan 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.⁸

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 Āryanization 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.⁹

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 Brahmi inscriptions referring specifically to Tamils. Of these two are from Periyapuliyankulam in the Vavuniya District,¹⁰ the third is from Anurādhapura¹¹ and the last is from Dīghavāpi.¹² 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.¹³ 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.¹⁴ 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)¹⁵ 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 *Soṇutara*. 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, *demeḷ kuḷi*, which occurs in a few inscriptions of the late Anurādhapura period.

The levy of an impost known as *Demeḷe-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 *Posonavulla* and *Galindura gomandala*. *Demeḷe Kuḷi* is mentioned also in two epigraphs of *Kassapa IV*; one of them is from *Sigiriya*.¹⁶

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 *Demelē 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 *Demelē 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 *Demelē Kulī* and *Hel 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 *demelē kulī* occurs along with *hel kulī* also in the Vihāregama Pillar inscription and a fragmentary pillar inscription in the Colombo Museum.¹⁷ The Vihāregama Pillar Inscription contains the following passage :

me gamhi hel kulī demelē kulī nind kot isā me gamat maṅgiva pegiva
melatsīn radkol kāmiyan no vadnā kot isā ...¹⁸

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

... and having made the *hel kulī* and *demelē 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*, *pegiwa*, *melātsi*, and other officers of the royal household not enter this estate¹⁹

In an explanatory note on the terms *hel kulī* and *demel kulī* Paranavitana remarks: 'These two terms occur also in the Iripinniyava inscription. Two kinds of imposts levied respectively on Sinhalese and Tamil inhabitants of the country are probably to be understood by these technical terms'.²⁰ 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.

Nor 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-kābālla*. 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.²¹

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 Vanikgrāma 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 Manigrāma, 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,²² his views on the matter, perhaps, would have been entirely different. The inscription referred to, which testifies that the locality of Hopitigama 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 Paranavitana equates the Vanigrāma with the Manigrāma of South India. He asserts:

"Vanigrāma is the same as Manik-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. Vanig-grāma."²³

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. Paranavitana, '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.²⁴ He further asserts that they enjoyed the privilege of conducting investigations whenever criminal offences were committed by a person or persons associated with them.²⁵

In the light of the observations of K. Indrapala and S. Paranavitana on the Vaṇigrāma 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” (*Damīlūṇikanāyakam*).²⁶ 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.²⁷ 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.²⁸ 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 Mutṭākara.²⁹ 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
Rattakārāvhave ratte damiḷānikanāyakam.*³⁰

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*.³¹

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,³² 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*,³³ 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.³⁴ 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 Pāndirad 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 Valikākhetta, is said to have conducted military operations at Mallavalāna, 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 Malayarāja 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 Malayarāja. 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*. Yādhavarāyara, Māḷavarāyara, Villavarāyara, Pāṇḍirāyara, Viragaṅgarāyara and Kalingarāyara are such instances.³⁵ 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 *Cūlavam̐sa* 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, Mākkalīṅkam Kaṇavadi and Vijayāparanan had been among the *pañcapradhānīs* of his father, Mānābharana I, otherwise called Virabāhu.³⁶

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 Paṇcaran were Tamil generals serving under the Sinhalese rulers during the Polonnaruva period.³⁷ Kantan 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).³⁸ The *Kahambiliyāva* 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*.³⁹

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 (*nālpāṭai*) had placed under the protection of the *Vēlaikkārar*, the Buddhist temple called *Vikkirama calāmēkapperumpalli*.⁴⁰ Besides, the inscription records that the *Vēlaikkāra* 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 pōta* (register of Tamil clerks) mentioned in the *Panākaduva* copper plates of *Vijayabāhu*.⁴¹ 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,"⁴² 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 *Vikramabāhu* I (1112 - 1132), conferring immunities to a land brought under cultivation by a person named *Kandan Pilantavan Vallaṇ*. The name indicates a person of Tamil origin'. See S. Paranavitana, 'Kahambiliyava Slab Inscription of *Vikramabāhu* 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 *Vikramabāhu*. The naming of a Buddhist temple after *Vikramabāhu* and the occurrence of the title *Vikkirama 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 *Vijayabāhu* 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."⁴³

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.⁴⁴

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. 614; part II, p. 532.

of three conceptions, namely, the Dhammic conception rooted in Buddhist idealism, divinity of kingship, and the heroic ideal.⁴⁵ 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.⁴⁶

'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.'⁴⁷

'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.'⁴⁸

'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, 1969, 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.⁴⁹

'Most important of these cults were Śiva and Visnu cults, which were and are still widespread. In many a Sinhalese home one may see Visnu 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 Visnu and Mahēśwara and take refuge in the triple gem.⁵⁰

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 importtrace 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 Polonnaruwa 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.⁵¹

"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.⁵²

"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."⁵³

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." Khurdbadah's evidence is also supported by Edrisi: "It (Sri Kandhapuram) produces rice in large quantities and supplies provisions to the markets of Sarandib."⁵⁴ 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.⁵⁵ 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 Aññūrruvar, Nānādesis, Vīra valaṅciyār 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 *prasastis* 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, lapiz-lazuli, onyx, topaz, carbuncles, emeralds and other precious articles, and cardamoms, cloves, bdellium, sandal, camphor, musk, saffron, *malegaja* 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.⁵⁶

What is of significance as regards Sri Lanka is that the activities of persons or groups affiliated to the Nānādesis, Nagarattār, Aññūrruvar, Vīra Valaṅciyār 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.⁵⁷ Moreover, these inscriptions far from being concentrated in one or two localities have been found at such places as Anurādhapura, Māntai, Polonnaruva, Padaviya, Vāhalkaḍa, Vihārehinna, Ilakatu Aba, Detiyamulla and Galtenpitiya and Nainativu. The commodities they handled included pepper and other spices, elephants and horses. The inscriptions at Anurādhapura and Nainativu 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. Veluppillai, *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 *Āṇṇurruvar* 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 *Senālaṅkādhikāra* Gunasinghe observes:

"The statement that the *Senālaṅkādhikāra* 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 *Senālaṅkādhikāra*, says that he was of the *Mēnavara Vamśa*, which is stated in the *Rājaraṭnākara* 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 Laṅkādhikāra* is stated to have been a scion of the *Mehēnavara* 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 (*Mehēnavara*). The *Mehēnavara* 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 *baṇḍāra* given to *Senā Laṅkādhikāra*'s family in later traditional accounts. *Senā Laṅkādhikāra*'s descendants up to *Kotte* times bore names and titles that are Malayālam or Tamil."⁵⁸

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 *Senālaṅkādhikāra* and his progeny. The use of such myths for similar purposes could be traced from the beginnings of the recorded history of Sri Lanka.

58. UCHC, Vol. I, pt. 1, p. 640.

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 Kalinga, 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.⁵⁹ 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 Pāṇḍyas 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 Pāṇḍyas 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 Pāṇḍyas attacked Chandrabhānu on account of their own quarrel with him and the evidence of the Pāṇḍya inscriptions is decisive on this point. What is an arguable proposition is not the alliance between the Pāṇḍyas and Parakramabāhu II against Māgha as Gunasinghe asserts but the alliance between the Pāṇḍyas and the Sinhalese king against the Jāvaka 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 Tōppāvai. 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 Pāṇḍya 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 Pāṇḍus and Cōḷas and elsewhere many Damila soldiers representing a great force, landed with his Jāvaka army in Mahātitttha. After the king had brought over to his side the Siḥala dwelling in Paḍī, Kurundi and other districts, he marched to Subhagiri."⁶⁰ The *Pūjāvaliya* claims that Candrabhānu brought under his power Kurundi, Paḍī, Gona, Debarapatana, Mānamatta and other localities and assembled a large army consisting of Tamils, Jāvakas and Sinhalese when he marched against Subbhagiri.⁶¹ These references could only suggest that there were Sinhalese living in such places as Paḍī 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."⁶² 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 Cōḷa rule."⁶³ If one attaches to these incidental references the same significance as Gunasinghe attaches

60. CV, 88: 62-64.

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.⁶⁴

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.⁶⁵

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 Sangrahaya*, 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, Maharagama, 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 . . .’⁶⁶

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 Prākṛit seem to have been absorbed within the framework of this cultural homogeneity.’⁶⁷ 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.

BOOK REVIEW

R. A. L. H. Gunawardana, *Robe and Plough: Monasticism and Economic Interest in Early Medieval Sri Lanka*, Association for Asian Studies Monograph No. 35, University of Arizona Press, Tucson, 1979, xii, 377 pp., 3 maps.

Robe and Plough is perhaps the latest addition to the list of trendy titles on cultural history such as *The Rose and the Rock*, *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* and *The Icon and the Axe*. This publication was long awaited and let me say straightaway that it was worth waiting for. Initially done as a doctoral dissertation, the material has been worked over, using fresh evidence and giving it a surer touch. In very broad general terms, this is a history of Buddhism during the four centuries extending from the ninth to the thirteenth. It would, however, be an injustice to the author to suggest that he merely takes up the tale where Walpola Rahula left off in his book, *History of Buddhism in Ceylon* (3rd century B.C. to the 10th century A.D.). The present work is a refreshingly new approach to the whole question of Buddhist monasticism in Sri Lanka and covers a much wider chronological spectrum than the four centuries indicated. The history of Buddhism and Buddhist institutions is presented from the point of view of economic structure and economic change and this in turn adds a new dimension to the contents of the book and its usefulness. The detailed examination of the intricate and complex structure of the economic and administrative organisation of the Buddhist monasteries gives the reader an insight into the wider question of the economic and administrative mechanisms of the country at large during this period, and in this respect the present work, while reviewing and re-interpreting the pioneering studies of L. S. Perera, attempts a fuller discussion, for L. S. Perera concerned himself almost exclusively with epigraphic sources.

A work of painstaking scholarship, this book will be valued for a long time not only for its interpretive skill but also for the rich documentation of evidence. The serious scholar will find it a mine of information, superbly handled. The easy command of such diverse sources as Sinhala and Tamil inscriptions, Pali commentaries and Sanskrit texts is impressive. Thoroughness is a distinguishing hallmark which runs through the entire book and the author's statement that "detailed data from a wide variety of sources have been meticulously examined" is no idle boast.

Among the major concerns of the book is the monastery, its structure and organisation. The transformation of a community of selfless monks to a group owning vast tracts of property is delineated with great dexterity. Attention is drawn to the fact that life in the larger monasteries was very comfortable with monks not only receiving their daily requisites but also additional income in the form of stipends, paid out of the income accruing to the monastery. It is argued that the concentration of wealth among the group led to a positive and pragmatic approach by the *saṅgha* to the whole question of material property, and the evidence for the changing attitudes of the *saṅgha* towards wealth from the period of Buddhaghosa (5th. century A. D.) onwards is carefully spelt out. That theory kept pace with practice is a point well made. The material attractions of monastic life and their consequent effect on recruitment is discussed and many rulers had to resort to the unpleasant task of purging the *saṅgha* of undesirable elements.

The extensive buildings of the larger monasteries and their vast land-holdings and other emoluments made necessary an elaborate administrative system. The various facets of this organisation such as supervision and management, accounting and book-keeping, and the administration of justice are explained, although the evidence available does not make an even picture. Tenurial rights of monastic property is a focal point in the discussion and the impressive array of evidence fully justifies the author's position, when he refutes the views of Rahula that "the *śāsana* constituted a full-fledged state department." On the whole the monasteries ran their own affairs. It has been immensely clear that they had considerable economic and administrative control over the residents of the monastic land-holdings, which, according to the author brings out "a certain feudal element in the body politic." The control over religious property by 'Oriental despots' advanced by Wittfogel has been cast aside.

Although there was occasional tension between them, the power structure of the state and *saṅgha*, does not seem to have intruded on each other and they functioned to their mutual advantage. While the king had sufficient power to prevent the *saṅgha* from becoming a law unto themselves, the *saṅgha* in their turn, with their tremendous social influence, could, on occasion, challenge the position of the king. This interdependence was a stabilising factor in Sinhalese society and provided certain checks and balances in the political life of the country. The close association between the rulers and Buddhism, it is claimed, led to the emergence of "one of the most politically potent ideas" that only a Buddhist could become king in Sri Lanka. The overwhelming evidence cited in support can be further strengthened by the fact that two kings of this period, Vikramabāhu I and Gajabāhu II were denied royal consecration because they were not Buddhists.

Factionalism among the Buddhist clergy began quite early in its history but the period before the fifth century A. D. remains cloudy. By the ninth century however, the Mahāvihāra, Abhayagiri and Jetavana *nikāyas* had reached a mature stage of development and this forms a major area of investigation. Here the author steps outside the beaten track and advances the theory that the *nikāya* divisions in Sri Lanka did not follow doctrinal lines, and that a *nikāya* was not synonymous with a school of Buddhist thought. A great deal of evidence is marshalled out to establish the view that it was the Theravādins of the Abhayagirivihāra who formed the most formidable opposition to the Mahāvihāra. That the former monastery accommodated more than one point of view, and was consequently an extremely dynamic intellectual centre is convincing, but that the Mahāyāna leanings of this *vihāra* were "inconsequential" is controversial. That the commentarial texts of the Mahāvihāra should only argue about the views of the Theravādins, does not necessarily reflect the relative importance of the Theravāda at this *vihāra* as against the Mahāyāna. The vast amount of material brought together regarding the prevalence of Mahāyāna beliefs and practices seems to militate against this position. I would like to keep my options open. However, there is no gainsaying that the author's contention is an extremely robust one and will no doubt engage the serious attention of scholars interested in the history of Buddhism. I should add that herein one finds one of the most informed accounts of Mahāyāna and Tantric Buddhism in Sri Lanka, which provides an even more illuminating discussion and documentary than the widely acclaimed contribution of Paranavitana on the same subject.

This brings me to another focal point in this thesis, the structural transformation of the *saṅgha* from *nikāya* to *mūla*. The founding of the *mūlas* is traced to as far back as the seventh century A. D., but the effective functioning of this institution is ascribed to the post-tenth century A. D. period. The loss of monastic land-holdings during the time of Cōla rule and the confiscation of temple property by Vikramabāhu I had a detrimental effect upon the corporate existence of the *nikāya*, and it is suggested that these events acted as a catalyst for change. The unification of the *saṅgha* under Parākrāmabāhu I is highlighted not only as a crucial event in the history of the *saṅgha* but also as a moment which reflects that a fundamental change had taken place. The charting of this institutional change from *nikāya* to *mūla*, culminating in the concept of one *saṅgha* under a *saṅgharāja* is a notable contribution made by the author. Following the traditional sources, scholars like Eliot and Paranavitana took the stance that the unification of the *saṅgha* under Parākrāmabāhu I represented the triumph of the Mahāvihāra over the other *nikāya*. This position is seriously challenged and that views other than the Theravāda continued long after this period is demonstrated with overwhelming evidence. This, however, leaves unresolved two major questions. First, when and how did the non-Theravāda sects disappear in Sri Lanka, for one has to face the fact that eventually only the Theravāda survived. Secondly, why did the great scholastic achievements of the Abhayagiri *nikāya*, which has been the subject of much enthusiastic comment in this book, not survive? Whether they were destroyed or fell into disuse, the survival of the traditions of the Mahāvihāra has to be interpreted as an ultimate triumph, and if this did not happen in the reign of Parākrāmabāhu I or around that time, when and how did it take place? That some of the texts of the Abhayagiri tradition were destroyed by Māgha is not totally convincing. It is possible that the answers to these questions lie outside the period under survey, but until they are resolved the traditional view cannot be wholly discredited.

The current periodisation of Sri Lankan history on the basis of capital cities has been rejected, but it is not very clear whether the author is suggesting a new scheme of his own—a distinct historical period extending from the ninth to the thirteenth centuries. If so, it lacks conviction, for, within this period the ninth and tenth centuries are often picked out for comment in contradistinction to the rest of the period and there is a tacit admission that the Coḷa invasions and the events which followed were a watershed in the history of the island. Although there is a studied avoidance of the terms, 'Anurādhapura period' and 'Polonnaruva period', one does notice the occasional use of "the period of the Anurādhapura kingdom;" and "the period of the Polonnaruva kingdom." I cannot see much difference between this terminology and that which has been avoided. Periodisation in history is a hazardous venture. This, however, is not a significant issue in the book.

Printing errors, though not a serious problem, are noticeable especially in the references given in the footnotes, e.g. p. 54, f.n. 5 and p. 322 f.n. 40. In the text itself Dhātusena's regnal period reads as A. D. 455-574 (p. 12) ! I wish they had been avoided in an otherwise excellent publication which was both a privilege and pleasure to review.

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