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# THE TAMILS AND TRINCOMALEE

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Selladurai Gunasingam

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# **THE TAMILS AND TRINCOMALEE**

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**Peradeniya 1979**

TO

**V. N. THAMBIRAJAH**

(Former Chairman, Village Council, Sampaltivu)  
who first induced the author to begin  
archaeological work in Trincomalee

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## The Tamils and Trincomalee

by

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## THE TAMILS AND TRINCOMALEE★

In his edition of a Tamil slab-inscription discovered at *Nilāveli* in the *Trincomalee* District, an inscription which records important historical information concerning the temple of *Kōṇeswaram* and *Tirukōṇamalai* where the temple is situated, the present writer has incidentally remarked in the following manner on the place name occurring in the inscription:

“The first reference to the place name *Tirukōṇamalai* is to be found in the present inscription. It is noteworthy that the name *Tirukōṇamalai* by which *Trincomalee* is known among the Tamils to this day occurs in precisely the same form in this inscription. The persistence of this name over a period stretching for nearly a thousand years is strongly indicative of a remarkable continuity in the Tamil connection with *Trincomalee*. Considering the vicissitudes to which the names of some other centres seem to have been subject over relatively shorter periods of time, this may be indicative of the stability of the Tamil population in *Trincomalee*.”<sup>1</sup>

\* As this paper is written in the form of a re-joinder to K. N. O. Dharmadasa, the author is only concerned in this paper to establish the continuity and stability of the Tamil population in the *Trincomalee* District, from the beginning of Cōla rule in Sri Lanka. The continuity of the Tamil connection with *Trincomalee* prior to the Cōla rule, for which evidence is not lacking would be dealt with in a separate paper.

<sup>1</sup> S. Gunasingam, ‘A Tamil slab-inscription at *Nilāveli*’, *The Sri Lanka Journal of the Humanities*, Vol. 1, No. 1, (Peradeniya, 1975), p. 68.

The above remark is repeated in its entirety (in italics and non italics) by K. N. O. Dharmadasa in his paper 'Place - Names and Ethnic Interests: The Case of *Tirukōnamalai*' in which he endeavours to question its validity.<sup>2</sup> The untenability of Dharmadasa's position stems, in a sense, from his failure to distinguish between the work of a trained historian and that of amateurs. He has not produced any evidence which could truly call into question the validity of the above remark, which suggests, perhaps, that his reaction derives from a misapprehension of certain phrases the present writer employed in the above remark, namely, 'continuity of the Tamil connection with the *Trincomalee* district', and 'the stability of the Tamil population in *Trincomalee*' and an inadequate knowledge of the medieval history of Sri Lanka, something which will be demonstrated in the subsequent pages.

Before taking up the arguments raised by Dharmadasa, it may be observed that in research, strict objectivity, free of any personal predilection or patriotic bias is absolutely essential; one must receive light from whichever quarter it comes and follow truth to wherever it leads. It is from this standpoint that the present author's remark quoted above on the toponymy found in the *Nilaveli* inscription has been made. While editing the inscription, the author found that that was not the proper place to indulge in an elaborate discussion on the utility of toponymic evidence for such research, since the aim of an editor of inscriptions is to decipher, translate and comment on them against the relevant historical background on a scientific basis. Briefly, a discussion of methodology regarding place-names is a matter which has little relevance in the edition of this inscription. Surprisingly, Dharmadasa seems to expect

<sup>2</sup> K. N. O. Dharmadasa, 'Place Names and Ethnic Interests: The Case of *Tirukōnamalai*', *Ibid.*, Vol. 1, No. 2, (1976), pp. 108-114.

for some reason or other, that a lengthy discussion of the usefulness of toponymic evidence should have been undertaken by the present writer. However, Dharmadasa's comments help the present author to re-assert the veracity of his claims made regarding the place-name *Tirukōnamalai* found in the present inscription and the historical importance of the temple of *Kōṇeswaram*.

Dharmadasa presents the views of writers such as Svami Gunaratana, Ven. Pandita Kada Vadduve Nandārama, Dompe Pieris Samarasinghe and Ven. Hendiyagala Sīlaratana in order to show that the technique the present writer has employed is nothing new and that it has been employed earlier by the above writers.<sup>3</sup> However, there is a fallacy in this argument of Dharmadasa's. First of all, the present writer unlike the above writers, is a trained historian, familiar with historical methodology and technique. Secondly, the present writer's conclusion unlike those of the writers named by Dharmadasa, has not been exclusively based on toponyms. The present writer never for a moment imagined that definite conclusions can be based solely on toponyms and his conclusion has been based on not only a study of the toponym but also a knowledge of strong archaeological and historical evidence relating to the medieval history of Sri Lanka, which is presented in a detailed manner in the following pages. Dharmadasa gives the impression that the author's conclusion like those of the other writers named by him is devoid of a historical basis. In this he is mistaken and therefore is wrong to put the present writer in the same category as the other writers he names in his article. One can judge for oneself whether the following statement with emotional overtones of

<sup>3</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 108.

Ven. Pandita Kadavadduve Nandārama and Dompē Pieris Samarasinghe, reproduced by Dharmadasa is that of a trained historian.

"In place of the Sinhalese (village) names which were there in the Northern and Eastern provinces what we find today are half Sinhalese and half Tamil names which in appearance look Dravidian... In fact that most of these transformations occurred during the Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa periods is attested by history. Just because something was wrested away (from somebody) the robber does not become the owner. Nothing mentioned above has so far been handed over legally to the Tamils."<sup>4</sup>

The present writer's remark, which provoked strong reactions from Dharmadasa, pertains to a period covering nearly a thousand years starting from the Cōla conquest of Sri Lanka. The list of Pālī and Sinhalese forms of the ancient name of *Trincomalee* presented by Dharmadasa, however, relates mostly to the period prior to the Cōla conquest. Nevertheless, for the purpose of the point which the present writer has his attention on, it is not for him to take into account the historical development of the earlier period. Given his original point, it would suffice for him to begin confining himself to the Cōla period, for two main reasons: one is that the inscription in question belongs to the Cōla period; and the second, that this was the period in Sri Lanka when South Indian influences were felt in greater measure than ever before so that this period formed an important phase in the development of the Tamil settlement in the island.

## PERIOD OF THE CŌLA RULE IN SRI LANKA

The archaeological remains on which, in the absence of reliable contemporary literature, we mainly depend for the study of Cōla rule in Sri Lanka, show that in the closing years of tenth and the whole of the eleventh centuries Tamil settlers belonging to various social groups migrated from South India to Sri Lanka in the wake of the Cōla invasions, and that the major part of Sri Lanka was constituted as a province of the Cōla empire till A. D. 1070. The Cōla warriors, officials artisans and Brahmins who migrated to the island in considerable numbers formed the core of the Tamil settlements during this period.

The continuity and the stability of the Tamil population in the *Trincomalee* District, which we will speak of in the succeeding pages and because of which the *Trincomalee* District marks itself out from the other Tamil areas, resulted mainly from the close association that the Cōlas had with *Trincomalee*. As it is, to explain the continuity and the stability of the Tamil population in the *Trincomalee* District, the first phase of which started from Cōla rule, it is necessary to briefly understand the association of the Cōlas with the *Trincomalee* District.

On the basis of the archaeological and epigraphical remains, it could be observed that the nature of the Cōla impact in the island varied from place to place. In spite of the fact that the archaeological remains of Cōla rule are mainly confined to four localities, namely *Polonnaruwa*, *Padaviya*, *Mañottam* and *Trincomalee*, there are several considerations which suggest that the Cōla impact was the most profound in *Trincomalee*.<sup>5</sup> The Cōla inscriptions in the *Trincomalee* District

<sup>5</sup> S. Gunasingam, Some Aspects of the impact of Cōla rule in the Trincomalee District, A paper read before the Ceylon Studies Seminar, 19th September, 1973

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 108.

are greater in number than those in *Polonnaruwa*, which was the centre of Cōla administration in the island. The sporadic archaeological surveys of the *Trincomalee* District have revealed a good number of Cōla records despite the fact that this area has received comparatively less attention from the Archaeological Department.<sup>6</sup> These records, far from being

<sup>6</sup> *Archaeological Survey of Ceylon Annual Report (ASCAR)* for 1954, (Colombo, 1955), p. 14; K. Indrapala, 'Fourteen Cōla inscriptions from the Ancient Rājārājaperumpalli (Velgam vehara/Nātanār kōvil) at Petiya kulam', *Epigraphia Tamilica (ET)*, Vol. 1, No. 1, (Jaffna, 1971), pp. 37-51; A. Velupillai, 'Two short inscriptions from Nātanār kōvil', *Ceylon Tamil Inscriptions (CTI)*, part 1, Peradeniya, 1971, pp. 12-15; A. Velupillai, 'Four More Inscriptions from Nātanār kōvil or Velgam vihara', *Ibid.*, pp. 16-19; A. Velupillai, 'Some More Inscriptions from Nātanār Kōvil', *Ibid.*, part 2, (Peradeniya, 1972), pp. 1-6; S. Gunasingam, *Two Inscriptions of Cōla Ilankēsvara Dēva*, Trincomalee Inscriptions Series, No. 1, Peradeniya 1974, pp. 1-22; S. Gunasingam, 'A Tamil slab inscription at Nilaveli', pp. 61-71; S. Gunasingam, 'Tirukōnamalayil iru Cōlar kalat tamil kalvettukkal', *Virakesari*, 17th June 1972; S. Gunasingam, 'Tirumalayil Rājārājanin Kalattāl muntiya Kalvettukkal', *Elanadu*, 6th August, 1972; S. Gunasingam, 'Kidarattil Kandedutta Kālī Amman Vikrakam', *Virakesari*, 16th July 1972; S. Gunasingam, *Three Cōla Inscriptions from Trincomalee*, Trincomalee Inscriptions Series, No. 2, forthcoming; W. E. Baker and H. M. Durand, 'Facsimiles of Ancient Inscriptions. Lithographed by Jas. Prinsep; The Journal of the Asiatic Society of Bengal, Vol. 4, Calcutta, 1836, pp. 554-55; Sir Alexander Johnston, 'An Account of an inscription found near the Trincomalee in the island of Ceylon', *Transactions of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland*, Vol. 1, (London, 1827), pp. 539-40.

confined to any particular site, have come from various localities scattered widely over the *Trincomalee* District.

It is perhaps useful to point out that any assessment of the degree of the impact of Cōla rule on the *Trincomalee* District should not be based on a mere comparison of the number of inscriptions found in that district with the number found in other areas. For during the past thousand years a large number of the records in other localities might have been destroyed or lost. However, the contents of the inscriptions found in the *Trincomalee* District indicate that Cōla influence in this district was more intense than in any of the others. In this context the fact that a greater number of Cōla inscriptions were found in the *Trincomalee* District than in any other appears significant.

The contents of two recently discovered inscriptions from the *Kantalai* Sivan temple and *Mānankēni* Vilpapatthirar temple we have of Cōla rule, deserve special consideration on account of the fact that they add a new dimension to the picture of Cōla rule in the island.<sup>7</sup> The two inscriptions refer to the prince Cōla Ilankēswara Dēva (together with details relating to his regnal years) whose title and epithet (as found in the inscriptions) belongs to the rulers of Sri Lanka and indicate that he was a consecrated ruler. Hitherto, it has been the view of scholars, including K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, that the Cōlas administered their possessions in Sri Lanka through representatives who were either generals or officials of high rank.<sup>7a</sup>

<sup>7</sup> S. Gunasingam, *Two Inscriptions of Cōla Ilankēsvara Dēva*, pp. 1-22

<sup>7a</sup> K. A. Nilakanta Sastri, 'Ceylon as a province of the Cōla empire', *University of Ceylon History of Ceylon (UHC)*, Vol. 1, part 2, (Colombo, 1960), pp. 413-14; W. M. K. Wijaya-tunga, 'Some Aspects of Cōla Administration of Ceylon in the 11th century', *University of Ceylon Review (UCR)*, Vol. XXIII, nos. 1 & 2, (1965), pp. 69-70

But with the discovery of the *Kantalāi* and *Mānankēni* inscriptions we now have clear evidence to support the view that Cōla Ilankēswara Dēva was a representative of a Cōla emperor sent to Sri Lanka to rule there with regal status in accordance with a practice followed by such emperors in the case of other parts of South India.

As both these inscriptions referring to the Cōla Ilankēswara Deva, are from the *Trincomalee* District, it may be that the *Trincomalee* region received greater attention from the Cōla government. Although it is true that a definite conclusion cannot be drawn merely on the basis of the provenance of the inscriptions, it may, in conjunction with certain related considerations, be used with caution as evidence that is of relevance to the matter.

The *Kantalāi* inscription of Cōla Ilankēswara Dēva also refers to some economic activities of the members of *Perunguri* of the Brhmadēsam called *Rājarājacaturvēdimangalam* in *Rājaviccātiravalanādu*, otherwise called *Rājendraṭolavalanādu*. The *Kantalai Rājarājacaturvēdimangalam* referred to above had a long and continuous history. Though we do not have clear evidence about the size of this settlement, it is not difficult on the basis of the available data to portray the nature of this settlement.

Even after the fall of Cōla rule in the island, this settlement continued to flourish and was supported by such rulers of the *Polonnaruwa* period as Vijayabāhu I (1055—1130) A. D.) and Nissankamalla (1187—1196).<sup>8</sup> Moreover, as was usual with such

settlements in South India, it had an organisation of its own for the regulation of its affairs, for we are told that *Perunguri Perumakkal* (the great people of the great assembly) functioned at *Kantalāi*. The existence of such a settlement with established traditions of administration would indicate a fairly stable population of Brahmins at *Kantalāi* during the period of Cōla rule and thereafter at least upto the reign of Nissankamalla. It could, therefore, be inferred that the number of religious institutions set up by the Cōlas and the religious requirements of the Cōla presence around the region of *Kantalāi* were of such magnitude as to need the services of a large number of Brahmins.

In connection with the problem in hand, it would also be of interest to note another reference to the assembly 'Perunguri Perumakkal'. In the medieval South Indian inscriptions frequent reference is made to various local bodies called Ūr, Sabhā, Nātu, and Nagaram. From the fact that these sabhās were normally located in caturvēdimangalam and from the nature of the qualifications required of their members it is evident that these bodies were exclusively Brahmin in composition. However, their activities were not confined to religious matters. They functioned more like local bodies with general functions and powers. Like most other institutions in the Tamil country this institution also dates from the Pallava period; but it reached the peak of its development during the Cōla period. The sabhā was an important element in the local government, the perfection of which was one of the most notable features of Cōla administration in South India. Our inscription thus provides evidence of the introduction of this type of local government in the *Trincomalee* District thereby revealing that the local affairs at *Kantalāi* were managed by this kind of sabhā.

The information recorded in the *Nilāvēl* inscription that the *Konēswaram* temple received a lavish endowment of about

<sup>8</sup> S. Paranavitana, 'A Tamil slab-inscription from Palamōttai, *Epigraphia Zeylanica* (EZ), Archaeological Survey of Ceylon, Vol. IV, (London, 1943), no. 24, p. 125; D.M.De Z. Wickremasinghe, 'Kantalai Gal Asana Inscription of Kittu Nisanka Malla (1187-1196 A. D.)', EZ, II, no. 42, (London, 1928), pp. 283-90.



one thousand seven hundred and ten acres (two hundred and fifty four *veli*) of wet and dry land to meet its daily expenses helps establish that this temple performed various services and remained an institution to cater to the various needs of a large number of population there.<sup>9</sup> To put it briefly, the *Kōṇēsvaram* temple and a great proportion of the Tamil settlements that existed in *Trincomalee* seem to have been interdependant in the development of religious, social and cultural affairs.

Besides patronizing the *Kōṇēsvaram* temple, the *Cōlas* set up other Saivite temples in different localities in the *Trincomalee* District. Ruins of *Cōla* temples have been found at *Kantalāi* and *Mānānkeni*. In this connection, it is useful to consider the evidence on the *Pālamōttai* inscription of the time of Vijayabāhu I. This inscription refers to a Hindu temple called Vijayarāja Isvaram situated at *Kantalāi*, otherwise called Vijayarājapuram. As *Kantalāi*, where a Caturvēdimangalam had been created, was a strong hold of the *Cōlas*, it may also be argued that, contrary to the view shared by Paranavitana and Indrapala<sup>10</sup> that this temple was probably built during the reign of Vijayabāhu I, a *Cōla* structure originally named after a member of the *Cōla* family was perhaps renamed in the reign of Vijayabāhu I as in the case of various other institutions subjected to the same process.

Further we have evidence to the effect that all the five villages that were granted in both money and kind for the maintenance of the Great temple at Tanjore in the time of Rājārāja I were from the *Trincomalee* District and that two

of them were renamed after *Cōla* princes during the period of *Cōla* occupation in Sri Lanka.<sup>11</sup> It may be taken as supporting evidence to show that the *Cōlas* had a closer association with the *Trincomalee* District than with other parts of Sri Lanka in their possessions.

The aforementioned considerations leave us in no doubt that *Trincomalee* attracted the special attention of the *Cōlas* during their rule in Sri Lanka. The cause for this special attention could be sought in the context of their maritime policy. *Trincomalee*, being the closest and most convenient of the major ports of Sri Lanka for the *Cōla* vessels on their voyages to South East Asia provided a vital link in their routes of overseas trade; such compelling factors did not exist in relation to the other parts of Sri Lanka.<sup>11a</sup> As a result of the greater attention of the *Cōlas* to and the consequent impact of *Cōla* activities on *Trincomalee*, this region had fairly strong Tamil elements in its population during this period. The Tamil settlement in this region seems to have extended from *Trincomalee* to *Periyakulam* and *Mānkanai* in the north, *Kantalāi* and *Pōthankādu* in the west and possibly *Verugal* in the south.

## POST CŌLA PERIOD

In 1070 A.D. Vijayabāhu I defeated the *Cōlas* and became the ruler of the whole island. The words summing up his achievements in the Ambagamuva rock inscription of Vijaya-

<sup>9</sup> S. Gunasingam, A Tamil slab inscription at Nilaveli, pp. 61-71

<sup>10</sup> S. Paranavitana, A Tamil slab inscription from Pālamottai, pp. 191-96;

K. Indrapala, *Ilankayir Orāvidak Kaddidakkalai*, (Colombo, 1970), p. 26

<sup>11</sup> *South Indian Inscriptions (SII)*, Archaeological Survey of South India, Vol. II, part II, No. 26, p. 27

<sup>11a</sup> For details see: S. Gunasingam, *Some Aspects of the impact of Cōla rule in the Trincomalee District*, Ceylon Studies Seminar, 19th September 1973.



bāhu I,<sup>12</sup> namely, 'with his own valour he drove away wholly the darkness of Tamil forces, and brought the whole island of Lanka under one canopy (of dominion)' do not, as will be seen subsequently, mean that the re-assertion of Sinhalese power in the whole island under Vijayabāhu I eliminated altogether the Tamil influence from Sri Lanka.

The restoration of such sovereignty under Vijayabāhu I was not in any way accompanied by violent measures directed against the Tamil settlements which had sprung up under Cōla rule inspite of the long and bitter struggle that had taken place. Several factors which are listed below, were perhaps jointly responsible for the absence of retaliatory measures by Vijayabāhu I against the Tamils and these resulted in the prevalence of a peaceful atmosphere, immediately after the transfer of power from the Tamils to the Sinhalese.

(1) Firstly, Vijayabāhu I, as a ruler himself, was probably magnanimous enough to think that damages to institutions in the course of wars were unavoidable, as war is seen to be a grim business of fire and sword so that retaliatory measures were not called for.

(2) The patronage of the Cōlas, contrary to what is narrated in the *Cūlavamsa*, extended to the Velgam-Vihara in *Trincomalee*, which was renamed as *Rājarājaperumpalli* after Rājarāja I.

(3) Thirdly, Kulōttunga I, who came to power in the Cōla empire when Vijayabāhu I liberated Sri Lanka, perhaps on the timely realisation of the fact that any hostile measure by him against the Sinhalese after the transfer of power would bedevil the situation from the point of view of his own people in Sri Lanka, did not exhibit for a long period of about fifteen

years any open hostility towards Vijayabāhu I, instead feigning friendly relations by asking for Vijayabāhu's sister in marriage and despatching a conciliatory embassy to the *Polonnaruwa* court.

(4) The dynastic affiliations with the Pāndyas the Sinhalese court had in the far south of Sri Lanka, which had remained outside the sphere of Cōla rule, also perhaps contributed towards quelling the animosity that Vijayabāhu I might have had against the traces of Cōla rule in Sri Lanka after his victory over the Cōlas.

In this peaceful atmosphere under which the transfer of power from the Tamils to the Sinhalese occurred, the Hindu institutions in the *Trincomalee* region continued to flourish even in the reigns of Sinhalese monarchs as evidenced by contemporary records. A Tamil slab inscription from *Palamōttai* in the *Trincomalee* District, dated in the 42nd year of Vijayabāhu I, records the religious donations made by a Brahmin lady in memory of her husband to the God Sri Vijayarāja Iswaram Udaiyār of Ten Kailāsam in *Kantalai* alias *Vijayarājacaturvēdimangalam*.

It is clear from this record that *Rājārājacaturvēdimangalam* which existed during Cōla rule in Sri Lanka, and also probably a Hindu Temple there of Cōla origin were renamed after Vijayabāhu I and that his zeal for Buddhism did not prevent him from extending his patronage to the Hindu faiths.

The reference to a *Vēlaikkāra* regiment in this record is also significant. The *Vēlaikkāra* troops were brought from South India to Sri Lanka during the course of the Cōla conquest in the late tenth and early eleventh centuries. Even after the expulsion of Cōla power from Sri Lanka, *Vēlaikkāras* continued to stay in the island, and the present reference to

<sup>12</sup> D. M. De Z. Wickremasinghe, 'Ambagamuva Rock Inscription of Vijayabāhu I (1058-1114 A. D.)', EZ, II, No. 35, p. 216

the Velaikkāras shows that settlements of these forces were found in *Trincomalee* even after Cola rule. It is again in the reign of Parākramabāhu I that, according to the *Cūlavamsa*, there was a Velaikkāra army stationed at *Kottiyār*.<sup>13</sup> In addition, a 13th century inscription from *Padaviya* records the construction of a vihara by a Velaikkāra general.<sup>14</sup>

In the context of the influence of Tamil elements in the *Trincomalee* District the fact that the fairly long stone slab measuring 2 ft. 10 in. by 1 ft. 4 in., from *Pālamōttai* was inscribed in twenty five lines in Tamil even in the reign of the Sinhalese monarch Vijayabāhu I, must be accorded some significance - atleast in conformity with the view of Paranavitana on a small golden plate (measuring 3 9/16 in. by 1 in.) of only four lines of writing in old Sinhalese from *Vallipuram* in the Northern Province, that this inscription proves that Sinhalese was the prevailing language there at the time of the plate.<sup>15</sup>

For the period which intervened between the end of Vijayabāhu's rule and the shift of the capital from *Polonnaruwa* to *Dambadeniya*, we have evidence to establish that the Tamil elements continued to exert influence in the *Trincomalee* District. The brahmin settlement 'Caturvēdimangalam', which existed atleast from the reign of Rājārāja I in Sri Lanka, continued, as we noticed earlier, to receive patronage from the non-Hindu rulers, as evidenced by the *Kantalai* inscription of Gajabāhu II

and that of Nissanka Malla.<sup>15a</sup> The inscriptional evidence of the patronage extended by Gajabāhu II to Hinduism in the *Trincomalee* District is well corroborated by literary evidence.

Attesting to the patronage extended by Gajabāhu II to the *Kōṇeswaram* temple, *Kōṇesar Kalvettu*, a Tamil chronicle, narrates that when the services of *Kōṇeswaram* temple were disturbed on account of the death of the Pāsupatha Brahmin, Gajabāhu arrived in *Trincomalee*, summoned the Vannipam, Thānam and Vari Pattu and the Nāttavar and investigated into why the temple services were given up. As he was told that it was due to the demise of the Pāsupatha Brahmin, he elevated the Brahmins who came from abroad to the status of Mutanmai. Beside, he granted the *Kōṇeswaram* temple 1100 gold coins and proclaimed that a tenth of the grain tax and of the proceeds from the sale of goods should be earmarked for the Temple.<sup>16</sup> Gajabāhu II is also credited in the *Takshinakailāsapurānam* with his patronage of the Brahmins attached to the temple of *Kōṇeswaram* at *Trincomalee*.<sup>17</sup> The *Takshinakailāsapurānam* also refers to the antagonism between the Saivites and the Sinhalese and the subsequent conversion of Gajabāhu II to Saivism.<sup>18</sup> Though the work is not alto-

<sup>15a</sup> K. D. Swaminathan, 'An Inscription of Gajabāhu II', *Ceylon Historical Journal*, Vol. 10, Nos. 1 to 4, (1960-61), pp. 43- 6; D. M. De Z. Wickremasinghe, 'Kantalai Gal-Asana Inscription of Kittu Nissankamella (1187-1196)', pp. 283-290

<sup>16</sup> The text of the *Kōṇesar Kalvettu* is appended to the edition of *Takshinakailāsa Purānam*.

<sup>17</sup> *Takshinakailāsa Purānam* (Tkp), ed. P. P. Vaithiyalinga Tecikar, Kalaniti Press, (Point Pedro, 1916), p. 87;

also see: *Tirukōṇācalapurānam*, ed. by A. Sāmugaratna Aiyar, Jaffna, 1909, Kayavāku patalam, pp. 170-78

<sup>18</sup> Tkp., 7, 89-96

<sup>13</sup> *Cūlavamsa*, translated by Wilhelm Geiger (into German) and from German into English by C. Mabel Rickmers, Colombo, 1953, 74:, 44-49

<sup>14</sup> S. Paranavitana, 'A Sanskrit Inscription from Padaviya', *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society Ceylon Branch (JRASCB)*, New Series, Vol. VIII, part 2, pp. 261-64

<sup>15</sup> S. Paranavitana, 'Vallipuram Golden Plate Inscription of the Reign of Vasabha', *EZ*, Vol. IV, No. 29, p. 235

gether reliable, in this instance, the tradition seems to be based on some historical incidents. The antagonism between the Sinhalese and the Saivites and the subsequent conversion of Gajabāhu II to Hinduism may be explained with reference to the process of assimilation of the Sinhalese culture into the Tamil culture or the gradual transformation of the *Trincomalee* region into a Tamil speaking area during the period when it was well on its way along the lines of developments that were laid down during Cōla rule in Sri Lanka.

The extent of the patronage of this monarch to Hindu faiths in *Trincomalee* reaches its highest point in the reference found in the *Cūlavamsa* to him as one who had fetched nobles of heretical faith from abroad and has thus filled Rājaraṭṭa with briers (of heresy).<sup>19</sup> These all induce us to think that Gajabāhu II had Saivite leanings and that bereft of all hope after his overthrow, he chose to spend his last days in a Hindu atmosphere in *Trincomalee*.<sup>20</sup>

The reference in the *Kōṇṣar Kalvettu* to the Vannipāṃ in connection with Gajabāhu's activities goes to prove the existence around the period of 12th c., of the Vanniyars who became influential elements in the population of *Trincomalee* in the later centuries.

Although it is true that a number of unreliable traditions have got mingled in the story of the Vanni chieftancies as found in the Tamil chronicles, it could be made out that Kulakkōttan, a Saiva prince from the Cōla country, played an important role in establishing Vanni chieftancies in the *Trincomalee* District after renovating the *Kōṇṣwaram* temple there. Even if a precise view of the identity and chronology of Kulakkōttan

is not possible, his activities could be ascribed to a period somewhere between the end of Cōla rule and the emergence of a Tamil Kingdom in the north.

The fact that from *Trincomalee* and its adjoining *Padaviya*, about ten inscriptions which refer to various social groups, including merchants and soldiers, were discovered during the period between 12th and 13th centuries must be allowed some significance in the context of the Tamil influence over the *Trincomalee* region.<sup>21</sup>

The foregoing discussion, thus, underlines the general view of Arasaratnam that "the overthrow of the Cōlas and reassertion of Sinhalese power did not mean the extermination of Tamil influence. The increase in numbers of the Tamil community, their general affluence, and the influential positions they held in the militia and administration made this impossible."<sup>22</sup>

## PERIOD OF TAMIL KINGDOM IN THE NORTHERN SRI LANKA

The events that were set in motion in the North and North-Eastern parts of Sri Lanka in the wake of the Cōla rule in the island, the political developments that took place in South India consequent to the fall of the Cōla empire and the invasion of Māgha which may be called a land mark in the annals of the Tamils of Sri Lanka, were, though varying in degrees, jointly responsible for the transfer of the capital from *Polonnaruwa* and the emergence of a Tamil Kingdom in the first

<sup>21</sup> K. Kanapathipillai, 'Māṅkanāi inscription of Gajabāhu II', UCR, XX, No. I, p. 12; S. Paranavitana, 'A Tamil Slab Inscription from Pālamōttai', EZ, No. IV, pp. 191-96; K. D. Swaminathan, 'An inscription of Gajabahu II', CHJ., Vol. 10, Nos. 1-4, (1960-61), pp. 43-46; A. Velupillai, 'Two Inscriptions from Kantalai', CTI, II, pp. 37-41;

Villūnrik Kandaswāmy Kōvilil Irandu Tamilk Kalvettukkal, Tinakaran, 18th November, 1972

<sup>22</sup> S. Arasaratnam, Ceylon, (1964), p. 103

<sup>19</sup> CV., ch. Lxx, vv. 53-55

<sup>20</sup> See: S. Kiribamune, 'The Royal Consecration in Medieval Sri Lanka: The problem of Vikramabāhu I and Gajabāhu II', The Sri Lanka Journal of South Asian Studies, Vol. 1, No. 1, (Jaffna, 1976), pp. 12-32

half of the thirteenth century comprising the north and north-eastern regions of Sri Lanka. With the emergence of the Tamil Kingdom, the contacts of the northern and eastern parts of Sri Lanka with South India became greater and the position of the Kingdom was more and more strengthened. It is interesting to note here that the *Kudumiyāmalai* inscription dated in the 11th regnal year of Jātavarman Vīrapāṇḍya, a co-regent of Jātavarman Sundarapāṇḍya in the Second Pāṇḍyan empire, includes Sri Lanka among the conquests of Vīra Pāṇḍya, and it records that Vīrapāṇḍya, after his victory, planted a flag of victory with a double fish emblem on it at *Kōṇamāmalai* and on the peaks of the *Trikūṭa* mountain and received elephants as tribute from the other king of Sri Lanka.<sup>23</sup>

The survival of the carving of the double carp to the present day on the left side of the gateway of Fort Fredrick at *Trincomalee*, the workmanship of which is much anterior to the Tamil inscription found on the right side of the main entrance to the fort, adds historical support to the claims of Vīrapāṇḍya in his *Kudumiyāmalai* inscription as regards his activities in *Trincomalee*.

The inclusion of Sri Lanka among the conquests of Vīrapāṇḍya does not mean that Vīrapāṇḍya conquered the whole of the island. By the time of the invasion of Vīrapāṇḍya, the formation of an independent Tamil kingdom in the north and the north-east was well accomplished and Vīrapāṇḍya's activities in Sri Lanka were confined only to the Tamil Kingdom.

At this juncture, the question as to why Vīrapāṇḍya chose *Kōṇamāmalai* for celebrating his victory over the whole of the Tamil Kingdom by setting up a flag with the double carp, cannot be without significance.

Reserving a detailed investigation in the absence of satisfactory evidence, for a future occasion, an attempt could be made at present to seek an answer to the question on the basis of some circumstantial evidence.

In the course of the narration of Vīrapāṇḍya's invasion of Sri Lanka, the inscription goes on to record that Vīrapāṇḍya captured from the defeated king-regiments of forces, chariots, silk garments, ear ornaments, a heap of nine gems, the throne of the enemy, the crown armoury, a long pearl necklace, flags, an umbrella, a drum, a couch, a staff, elements of royalty and so forth and he restored the son of the Jāvahas to the kingdom of Ilam formerly ruled by his father. This narration of events which, as seen from the above details, implies a courteous atmosphere, suggests that the activities of Vīrapāṇḍya were more or less concentrated on the centre of power, and when the centre of power where the battle probably took place, was captured, as a mark of victory, he planted a flag with his royal symbols at *Kōṇamāmalai* where the centre of power was situated. If this interpretation is accepted, we may say that *Trincomalee* remained an important place of power of the newly formed independent Tamil kingdom, as it had been during the Cōla occupation of Sri Lanka under the Cōla representative, Cōla Ilankēswaradēva of *Kantalai* and *Mānāṅkēni* inscriptions—something which reminds us of the remark of Cordiner in 1800 that 'thoughts have been entertained of rendering *Trincomalee* the seat of Government in preference to the fruitful district of Colombo.'<sup>24</sup>

It is also possible that Vīrapāṇḍya went to *Trincomalee* to celebrate his victory over the Jāvaka and pay homage to the deity at *Kōṇamāmalai* as he probably thought that it was the most sacred centre of the Tamils from earlier times as noted in the preceding pages.

<sup>23</sup> *Inscriptions of the Pudukkottai State*, ed. by T. Desika Chari, Sri Brihadamba State Press, (Pudukkottai, 1921), vol. 1, No. 366

<sup>24</sup> Tennakoon Wimalananda, *The British Intrigue in the Kingdom of Ceylon*, Gunaseṇa Historical Series, Vol. II, 1973, Introduction xlvii.

The impact of Pāndya supremacy over the newly formed Tamil kingdom was decisive and it ultimately led to the rise of the Āryacakravarti dynasty. When it is considered that consequent to the death of Māravarman Kulasēkara Pāndya about 1310, when the Pāndya empire began to disintegrate, and, as a result, Sundra Pāndya was reduced to the necessity of having to seek the help of an Āriya Cakravarti of the northern kingdom, the dominant and recognised position the northern kingdom assumed under Āryacakravartis is easily understandable.

To sum up the political developments of this time, the establishment of a Tamil kingdom under the Pāndyas and the Āriyakravartis, the influential position of some minor chieftancies in the northern and eastern regions of Sri Lanka and the lack of intimate contacts between the Sinhalese and the Tamils consequent to the drift to the South West by the Sinhalese were largely responsible for the partition of Sri Lanka into two different linguistic regions.

It should be mentioned here that the temporary eclipse the northern kingdom suffered when it was subjugated by Prince Sapumal and brought under the suzerainty of Parākramabāhu VI, did not in anyway alter the ethnic composition of its population. After a period of seventeen years, it regained its independence which it continued to maintain till 1591 when it became virtually subject to the Portuguese.

When the Āryacakravartis established their power in northern Sri Lanka, they extended their authority in the *Trincomalee* District. On the basis of the literary and archaeological evidence at our disposal, it could be asserted that some Vanni chieftancies, accepting the authority of the Āryacakravartis, carried on political and administrative activities in the *Trincomalee* District.

The inscription from *Kankuveli* in the *Trincomalee* District, which is assignable to 14th century A. D. on palaeographical

considerations, records a land grant in the village of *Kankuveli* to the God of Kōnanāthar by Vanniyanār and the Adappars of seven villages.<sup>25</sup> The concluding portion of the record mentions Mudalimar, Thānaththār and Varippattu as witnesses to the grant. The Tamil work *Yālpānavaipavamālai* refers to seven Vanni divisions (ēluvannipam) and these divisions may be identified by means of what is referred to in the *Kankuveli* record as Ēlur (seven villages).<sup>25a</sup> Whether or not this identification is accepted, what may be understood from the record is that during the time of this record the *Trincomalee* region included the seven villages administered by the officers called Adappar under the lordship of the Vanniyanār. In the context of the fact that in current place name usage the word 'Malai' represents *Trincomalee*, what is referred to in the record as 'Malaiyil Vanniyanār' (Vanniyanār of malai) may be taken to mean the Vanniyanār of *Trincomalee*; if this explanation is accepted one may assert that the whole of *Trincomalee* was under the charge of a Vanniyanār, something which is corroborated by literary evidence. The other reference in the record to Mutalimai, Thānam and Varipattu, these officers who are said to have been the witnesses of the land grant, strengthens what is stated in another Tamil work, *Maddakkalappu Mānmiyam*, to the effect that Mutalimai, Thānam and Varippattu had always assisted the Vanni chieftancies in administration.<sup>26</sup>

In terms of the close cultural contacts between the northern and eastern parts of Sri Lanka it should also be mentioned that, as evidenced by more or less contemporary literature, the lavish patronage to the *Kōṇeswaram* temple by Āryackra-

<sup>25</sup> K. Indrapala, 'Kilakkilankaic Cācanankal', *Cintanai*, Vol. 2, parts 1 & 2, (1968), pp. 37-40

<sup>25a</sup> *Yālpānavaipavamālai* (Yvm), text edited by Mudaliyar K. Sabanathan, Colombo, 1953, pp. 38-39

<sup>26</sup> See: S. Pathmanathan, *Vanniyar*, (Peradeniya, 1970), pp. 33-47

vartis and later on by the kings who bore the alternating throne names, *Pararāsasēkaran* and *Sekarāsasēkaran*, fairly indicates that the *Kōṇeswaram* temple served as a constant source of communication between the north and east.

## COLONIAL PERIOD

On the basis of the literary and archaeological evidence at our disposal, it is clear that the Vanni chieftancies who had established their influence in the *Trineomalee* District under the Āryacakravatis of the northern kingdom in the 14th century A. D., continued to exercise their power in *Trincomalee* even during the Portuguese rule in Sri Lanka, accepting the overlordship of the later kings of Jaffna.

The *Verugal* inscription which may be assigned to the 16th century on the basis of palaeography and its contents, records the names of persons who built the four walls of a temple.<sup>26a</sup> In connection with building the walls, the record refers to the proper names of Kayilāyavanniyanār and Timassa, son of Simayāpillai. The reference to Kayilāyavanniyanār in this record may indicate that *Trincomalee* during this period was under the authority of a Vanni chieftain called Kayilāyavanniyanār and thereby corroborates what is said in the contemporary literature about the association of the Vanniyars with the *Trincomalee* region. The influential position, Vanni chieftains held even after the end of Portuguese in Sri Lanka would probably have partly formed a base to the view of Dutch Governor Ryckloff Van Goens (1663 - 1675) that 'the district of *Trinequenemalee* as far as *Poeleraw* or *Passe Secco* extends nearly in a north west direction and is called Vanni.'<sup>27</sup>

During the period of Portuguese rule in Sri Lanka *Trincomalee* had attracted the Portuguese mainly in two respects. One is

<sup>26a</sup> A. Velupillai, 'A note on the *Verugal* inscription', CTI, I, pp.9-11

<sup>27</sup> *Memoirs of Ryckloff Van Goens (1663-1675)*, The Dutch Records of the Ceylon Government, No. 3, trd. by E. Reimers, 1932, pp. 14 - 15

the harbour and the other is the Hindu temple of *Kōṇeswaram*. It seems to us on the basis of the descriptions of the temple by Father Queyroz, that the temple had a greater attraction for the Portuguese than the harbour. Speaking of the principality of *Trincomalee*, Father Queyroz observes:

'The Kings of Ceylon erected three Pagodes, two at the extremities of the hill overhanging the sea, and one in the middle and the highest point, which was the principal one and one of the most venerated in India, being worshipped by the idolatrous navigators who descry it from the sea, and much frequented by a concourse of Pagans from the whole [of India], so fanatical in their false devotion, that from the last Pagode which stands on the rock over the sea, they throw themselves down in sacrifice to their idols reaching the bottom in pieces being persuaded that by that leap into Hell they are lifted upto paradise.....'<sup>28</sup>

In another instance, attributing the fame and reputation of the *Kōṇeswaram* temple to the knowing of many things by Indians about *Trincomalee*, Queyroz says:

'The pagode of Triquillimale was at this time the Rome of the Gentiles of the Orient, and more frequented by pilgrims than that of Ramanacoir near the shoals of Chilao, and that of Xilavarao, eight leagues from Nagapatao, and that of Canjavarao, two days journey from S. Thome and Tripiti and Tremel in Bisnaga and Jagarnati in Orixa, and Vixante in Benga, which are the most frequented in these days by the Gentiles.'<sup>29</sup>

It should be remarked here that Father Queyroz had made the above observation at a time of religious bigotry when Christians were fired by a crusading zeal against oriental beliefs and systems which they described as 'heathenish'.

In the light of the description of the temple by Father Queyroz, it shows that C. R. de Silva has aptly observed that 'the spot chosen for the fort at Trincomalee was the site of the famous Kōṇesar temple. This temple had been one of the

<sup>28</sup> Father Queyroz, *The Temporal and Spiritual Conquest of Ceylon*, trd. into English by Father S. G. Perara, Book 1, (Colombo, 1930), pp. 66 - 67.

<sup>29</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 236

best known and most frequented Hindu temples in this region in the 16th century, and had made Trincomalee a pilgrim as well as a trade centre.<sup>30</sup>

The ruthless destruction of the temple on new year's day by the Portuguese Viceroy Constantine de Saa when he took possession of the port of *Trincomalee* in 1622 A. D., may remind us of the Mahāsena's sacrilegious activities in the 3rd century A. D., of demolishing a Hindu shrine in the same district for the reason, as given in the *Mahāvamsatikā*, that it remained a stumbling block to the spread of Buddhism in that area.<sup>31</sup>

The thriving and flourishing position the *Kōṇeswaram* temple attained before it was subjected to sacrilege by the Portuguese, may be attributed to the presence of a sizable Hindu population in the *Trincomalee* District during this period, for any temple, even the finest or the most wonderful, cannot survive for long without a fair concentration of devotees and their patronage—something which is attested by the unfortunate fate of the temple of Gangaikonda Colapuram, one time the finest in South India, the costly workmanship of which is sadly neglected in what is now a desolate land.<sup>31a</sup>

On the strength of the above observations and the nature of the patronage the *Kōṇeswaram* temple enjoyed, it may be asserted that this temple reached the peak of its fame and reputation in the first quarter of the 17th century and thereby it not only functioned to cater to the religious and cultural

needs of the people mainly of *Trincomalee* but also remained a constant source of communications between Sri Lanka and outside Sri Lanka until it received the fatal blow of complete demolition by Portuguese cannon in 1622 A. D.

At this juncture it should be mentioned that the contention of Tennakoon Wimalananda who figures in the footnotes of Dharmadasa's paper, that 'with the expansion of Muslim power in India..... *Trincomalee* too with its religious establishments passed into oblivion'<sup>32</sup> lacks any historical basis.

The tables that follow, one of which covers the period extending from the first half of the 19th century to the third quarter of the 20th century, clearly show the stability of the Tamil population in the *Trincomalee* District. According to the 1881 census which is the earliest available population wise, the strength of the Tamil population was 14,394 and it was more or less fourteen times and three times greater than the Sinhalese and Muslim population of that area respectively.

The enormous numerical strength of the Tamil population as compared with other groups in the *Trincomalee* District in the last quarter of the 19th century as shown by that year's census, must be, no doubt, attributed to the natural growth from earlier times and there is no evidence to show that during the Dutch and the British rules in Sri Lanka, any events took place so as to lead to the creation of new Tamil settlements on an impressive scale in the *Trincomalee* District.

At this juncture it is useful to invite the attention of readers of this paper to the concluding portion of a letter of 1st July 1827, accompanied by a facsimile of a long inscription said to have been found in the *Trincomalee* Fort, to the secretary of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland by Sir Alexander Johnston, the Chief Justice and President of His Majesty's Council in Sri Lanka under Sir Thomas Maitland, the then Governor of the island of Sri Lanka.

<sup>32</sup> Tennakoon Wimalananda, *op. cit.*, introduction, xlvii

<sup>30</sup> Chandra Richard De Silva, *The Portuguese in Ceylon, 1617-1638*, Colombo, 1972, p. 67.

<sup>31</sup> G. P. Malalasekera, (Editor), *Vamsatthappakasini, Commentary on the Mahāvamsa*, PTS, London, 1935, XXXVII vv. 15 - 25

<sup>31a</sup> See: K. A. NilakantaSastri, *The Colas*, University of Madras 1955, second revised edition, pp. 234 - 35



### Population of Trincomalee District According to Religion <sup>33</sup>

Year	Christians	Moors	Buddhists	Hindus
1827	1481	3245	250	14182
1881	2289	6256	884	12768
1891	2862	7067	1023	14793
1901	2970	9191	983	15294
1911	2799	10386	984	15585
1921	3080	12912	1192	16927
1946	9056	23890	13669	29379
1953	8246	29152	4082	32362
1963	11,200	42770	37960	46220
1971	13,279	60852	52476	61550

<sup>33</sup> Nicholas Bergman, *Return of the population of the Island of Ceylon, Colombo, 1827; The Census of Ceylon, 1901*, (Colombo, 1902), pp. 82-83; *Census Publications, Ceylon, 1921*, Vol. IV, (Colombo, 1926), p. 239; *The Census of Ceylon, 1911*, Colombo, 1922, p. 35; *Census of Ceylon, 1946*, Vol. 1, part 1, General Report, Colombo, 1950, pp. 172-91; *Census of Population, Ceylon 1953*, Vol. 1, part 2; *Census of Population, Ceylon, 1963*, (Colombo), 1967, p. 32. The author thanks Dr. P. Balasundarampillai for his assistance in preparing this table.

<sup>33a</sup> Ibid.

### Population of Trincomalee District According to Community <sup>33a</sup>

Year	Lc/S	KS	CT	IT	CM	IM	Others	Total
1881	935	—	14394	—	5746	—	1112	22197
1891	1109	—	17117	—	6426	—	1093	25745
1901	532	671	17069	—	8258	—	1911	28441
1911	383	755	16913	320	9529	185	1470	29755
1921	763	733	18138	448	12662	184	1179	34112
1946	11191	4515	30433	3362	22136	1083	3206	75926
1953	10262	5034	34035	3482	27748	868	2204	83917
1963	21820	18130	51060	2990	41950	610	1660	138220
1971	29008	26300	67516	5739	60698	840	1888	191989

Lc/S = Low Country Sinhalese; KS = Kandyan Sinhalese; CT = Ceylon Tamil  
IT = Indian Tamil; CM = Ceylon Moors; IM = Indian Moors

Sir Alexander Johnston, referring in his letter to many traditions in the country respecting the contents of the inscription, had concluded in the following manner:

'However contradictory these traditions may be as to the meaning which they attach to the inscription, I think it may safely be concluded, both from them and from all 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 their 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; and that it is therefore probable that some information as to the character and language in which the inscription is written may be derived from the ancient histories and traditions of that part of India, many of which I procured from the Brahmans of Ramisserum, Trichendore, Madura, Seringham, Combeconum, Chillemburum, Congeveram, and Tripetty while I was travelling in the Peninsula in 1807 and 1817.'<sup>34</sup>

In his above statement, Sir Alexander Johnston, a foreigner and a former Chief Justice who may be presumed to have been free of bias, had not specifically stated the precise period which his above statement has relevance to. It may, therefore, not be wrong to say that the incomparably large proportion of Tamil population in *Trincomalee* during the period of his office - the last quarter of the 18th century and the very beginning of the 19th century, and his fruitful endeavour to understand on the available data at his disposal, the long stretch of history of the region where the inscription was discovered from, probably enabled him to make such an assertion.

The preceding pages, thus, reassert the veracity of the remark on 'the continuity and stability of the Tamil population in the *Trincomalee* District' for a period of nearly a thousand years from the period of Cola rule in Sri Lanka made by the present writer on the strength of the continued persistence of

the place name '*Tirukōnamalai*' as well as on the basis of known archaeological and literary evidence.

The second comment of Dharmadasa, though in general, centres round the temple of *Kōṇēswarem*, is, in the main, confined to the reference found in the *Vāyupurāṇam* to a temple of God named *Gōkanna* with which the temple of *Kōṇēswarem* has been identified by the present writer.

In his comment on the above reference, Dharmadasa mainly deals with the location of the temple the *Vāyupurāṇam* refers to.

In his edition of the inscription under question, when the present author identified the '*Gōkanna*' shrine of *Vāyupurāṇam* with the *Kōṇēswarem* temple of *Trincomalee*, he has qualified his statement by reference to his work entitled *Kōṇēswarem*.<sup>35</sup> In his monograph, the author, devoting about nine pages, has made an attempt for his identification as above, taking into consideration the diverse views already expressed by different writers on the identification of the *Gōkanna* shrine referred to in the *Vāyupurāṇam*.

Dharmadasa has, however, made no attempt to pursue the arguments adduced by the present writer in support of his identification of the *Gōkanna* shrine with the *Kōṇēswarem* temple on the eastern coast of Sri Lanka. Dharmadasa's comments which have not been based on an examination of the present writer's views in *Kōṇēswarem* cannot be taken seriously. Dharmadasa's failure to go through the present writer's arguments on the identification may be attributed to his ignorance of Tamil in which the book *Kōṇēswarem* has been written; but this ignorance cannot, in any way, exculpate Dharmadasa when he

<sup>34</sup> 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. 1, (London, 1827), p. 540

<sup>35</sup> S. Gunasingam, *Kōṇēswarem*, Peradeniya, 1973, pp. 55-64

decides to enter a controversy with regard to the identification of the site.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>36</sup> The author wishes to thank Mr. K. Selvaratnam, Dr. S. Pathmanathan, Dr. T. Kandiah and Professor A. Velupillai for their comments on this work. The author also acknowledges his debt to Mr. K. Kanthasamy for placing at the author's disposal a photo copy of a Tamil inscription of the time of Vikramabahu I from Trincomalee District and for help in other ways. Finally, the author's thanks are due to those attached to the Aservatham Press, Jaffna for their service in the competent execution of the printing of this work.

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