

RESEARCH ARTICLE

MYTH-HISTORY INTERFACE IN LITERARY FICTION: A STUDY OF T. D. RAMAKRISHNAN'S "*SUGANDHI ENNA ĀNDĀL DEVANĀYAKI*"

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Abstract

The function and meaning of myth transcended its literary and fictional nature to many realms. E.H.Carr and Lévi Strauss considered history as the subjective representation of past which could be treated even as a formalised form of myth devoid of supernatural elements. The convergence of myth and history in literary texts enables the author to attempt to unravel the reality or the absolute truth, if there is any, to the reader at multiple levels. T. D. Ramakrishnan's *Sugandhi Enna Āndāl Devanāyaki* is an excellent model for study of how myth and history engage in a literary fictional space, and allow the reader to have a hope about future, while looking at past through myth and history. The paper analyses the relationship that myth and history shares, and the need of myths to the history-less and history-denied in their fight to assert their identity with the novel *Sugandhi Enna Āndāl Devanāyaki* as the backdrop.

Keywords: Myth-History, Interface, Literary, Fiction , reality.

Literature, history, and politics together proposes an exotic recipe and when myth is added to it, it precipitates an insoluble, highly reactive component with infinite possibilities of combinations. At different temporal points, they become the text or the context, cause or effect, proving to be inseparable from each other. The New Historicist perception of literature enabled to draw a parallel reading of literature with its socio-cultural and historical conditions as the context whereas the Foucauldian concepts of Power/Knowledge and discourse and Derridian deconstructionist, non-essentialist idea hinds to the nexus between literature and politics, power relations and the role exchanges. T. D. Ramakrishnan's *Sugandhi Enna Āndāl Devanāyaki* is a 2014 published novel in Malayalam translated to English in 2018 that embraces myth and

RESEARCH ARTICLE

concocts the socio-political crises¹ that Sri Lankan community has been facing. The novel cannot be read in isolation but to be analysed by placing the history of Tamils and Sinhalese, the relations between India and Sri Lanka, the political strategies and monopolies of the reigned rulers, the sabotages, deceptions, and retaliations as the background. Myths influence history, enabling men to ground their history upon the old myth themes whereas myths simultaneously bear the traces of human experiences and realities, implying that history too at times wrought myths. The paper attempts to analyse myth as a historical context and political core-text with reference to the text mentioned. The novel draws new equations of history and myth, reality/politics of the day and myth, history and politics, etc. The venture is also to analyse how myth informs history and also to analyse how myth informs history and thus plays a significant role in the politics of a country or a community.

Human beings were always fascinated by tales and they started using their imagination and the ineffable element of the nature to describe those stories. These tales later became myths which swayed people between the worlds of real and unreal. They became inescapably strangled within the myths and once enlightenment and rationalism happened, myths were doomed as illusory. But the influence of myth was there in every act till the date. In *A Glossary to Literary Terms*, Geoffrey Harpham and M H Abrams define myth as “any story or plot, whether true or invented, which was once believed to be true by a particular cultural group and which served to explain the creation of world” (230). The Western classification and categorization of myths limited it from exploring certain myths that were not necessarily describing the creation or redemption of humanity but were not suitable to fit in the rubric of legend. The Indian cultural milieu demands a different definition and understanding of myths which D. D. Kosambi attempted through his works. Claude Lévi-Strauss calls the constitutive elements of myth as “mythemes” (211) in his *Structural Anthropology*, which are irreducible and invincible and common to almost all the myths. These myth themes, as Lévi-Strauss quotes in the same work, which are “the true constituent units of a myth are not the isolated relations but bundles of such relations” (211), where the relations are on a time referent that is two dimensional.

According to Wendy Doniger, myth is,

¹The post-colonial trauma, the favouritism of British rulers towards Tamils, the in-between situation of Tamil indentured labourers with Indian origin, the marginalization Tamil people in the North in the second half of the twentieth century through Sinhala Only Act, etc., the varied and non-continuous policies of the changing governments, the armed sabotage attempts by JVP (Janatha Vimukthi Peramuna) in 1971, the sexual assault against women and children are some of the issues (“Anti-Tamil Riots and Political Crisis in Sri Lanka”). “The most intense armed conflicts (Afghanistan, Columbia, Iraq, DR Congo, Sri Lanka, North West Pakistan, Somalia, Southern Sudan and Northern Uganda) are very protected and although one of the protracted conflicts, Sri Lanka, ended last year [2009] with a military defeat of the Tamil insurgents by the government” (*Alert! 10*).

RESEARCH ARTICLE

A form of language, and language itself predisposes us to attempt to understand ourselves and our world by superimposing dialectics, dichotomies, or dualistic grids upon data that may in fact be entirely integrated. And underneath language lies the binary nature of the brain itself. (viii)

In the Foreword to *Myth and Meaning*, he describes myth as the constitutive element of facts. They are the facts or realities either manipulated or ornate to be appealing to the listeners. Myth is a mode of communication through which the subtle understanding about the culture and lifestyle of people or community are conveyed. They are added with imaginations, fantasies, aspirations of the communities making them in other way, the vision of the society. They also act as the records of the less important events that were ignored by the historians. “Myth is neither a lie nor a confession, it is an inflection” (10), as Roland Barthes says in *Mythologies*. It is an attribute or descriptive element of the realities.

The intricate link between history, politics and myth in the novel makes it distinct among others in the genre, and the work takes a narrative perspective when it tries to objectively place the Sri Lankan struggles through it. The myth of *Āndāl Devanāyaki* forms the backbone of the whole plot. Devanāyaki’s myth is fascinating as it provides a plethora of interpretations and readings. She is depicted as a utopian concept of freed woman, which was there in reality in the early South Indian kingdoms. The novel also spends much of the pages for exposing the struggles of *Tamil Eeyakkam* or the Tamil Tigers’ organization. But what makes the book appealing is the way it handles myth and history in a fiction and how it exposes the double standards that the Tamil Tigers and Sri Lankan government had taken during the Civil war. In the Friday Review of *The Hindu*, Meena T. Pillai, Professor at Kerala University, writes that the novel is a “daring mixture of the mythological, the metaphysical and the historical set-in contemporary fluid spaces of socio-political unrest and global capitalism” (“Mixing Myth and Memory”). The topic is relevant and prevalent in a world where we find history-less or history denied and the power-seeking sections trying to place themselves on summits which later appear as their histories. The Asian nations, in particular, rely much on the myths to prove their authenticity and ancestry. Devanāyaki myth becomes relevant in a world where ethnic and religious minorities are denied of voice and existence by destroying their entire history. Myths are double edged swords which can be used to annihilate and redeem the existence of a section of the society but if they could be used constructively to have a better understanding of the world, the past and the socio-cultural exchanges and morale, they will prove to be a contribution to the rich heritage of a society.

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Myth has its etymological roots in the Greek term ‘*mythos*’ which means fable or fiction to make sense of the world. Robert A. Segal in *Myth: A Very Short Introduction* defines myth as “simply a story but something significant. The story can take place in the past as Mircea Eliade and Bronislaw Malinowski insist or in the present or the future” (4). Oxford English Dictionary, myth is defined as “a traditional story concerning the early history of a people or explaining a natural or social fact.” (557). Mythology is that which we do not think is necessarily true. In Hans Blumenberg’s *Work on Myth*, he describes myth to refer to any mythic or legendary story-component, including new and altered ones that appear in much later myth graphic, poetic, and dramatic sources. He sees myth as “itself a rational function” (48). In *Mythologies*, Roland Barthes says that “myth is a system of communication that is a message. This allows one to perceive that myth cannot possibly be an object, a concept or an idea; it is a mode of signification, a form” (107). He also attributes to myth the status of being a “semiological system” (109). But French structuralism Claude Lévi-Strauss proposed that myth is to be placed against the context of its cultural and linguistic working (*Myth and Meaning* 34-43).

The term history etymologically stems from the Greek word ‘*historia*’ meaning inquiry. According to Oxford English Dictionary, it refers to “the study of past events”, “the past considered as a whole”, “a continuous record of past events or trends” (395). History, for E. H. Carr, is those facts which remain “dead until historian can understand the thought that lay behind it” (15). He says that it is not a mere study of a dead past but a philosophy of history. He retorts the classic notion of history as the objective record of facts by saying that history is not pure, “since they do not and cannot exist in a pure form: they are always refracted through the mind of the recorder” (22). Ralph Waldo Emerson states that “There is properly no history; only biography” which supports Carr’s view of history (quoted in “Keeping the Dream Alive: A Biography”). “The function of the historian”, according to Carr, “is neither to love the past or to emancipate himself from the past, but master and understand it as the key to understanding of the present” (26)

Myth and history share a reciprocal relationship where which precedes the other is a difficult question to be solved. They appear to be in a dichotomous relationship but when analysed deeply, it becomes visible that myth and history are symbiotic, where myth draws some traces of history or reality into its craft and simultaneously history at times try to authenticate itself with the help of the information that myth implicitly conveys (as in Devanāyaki myth which, though being a myth, gives a clear picture of Chola and Chera reign in the Western ghats and the South of the country). History gifts some people with bouquets/power, hands others brickbats and yet others are left out entirely- I read somewhere in *The Hindu* newspaper years back. It has the potential to assert the existence or authority of a community/sections/nation or to

RESEARCH ARTICLE

destroy a group as such by being blind to its existence or by conveniently neglecting them. Myths, which are closely connected to history, thus implicitly attempt to penetrate into and perform from within the political/ cultural ideologies. They try to become another truth which the course of politics has to embrace as history. This brings a danger of using history and myth interchangeably but helps us to explicate that myth and history are on linear line, placed in their estimated chronological order, but working in a rhizomatic fashion at its roots, which changes with time and space.

Literature forms the cover for all these disciplines as myth is an imaginative telling of some realities, which amounts comparatively microscopic, where imagination and narrative style makes it remain intact. History, unlike the dogmatic notion of being objective, is impure and highly subjective as E. H. Carr says (22) and thus is influenced by the politics of the author, the zeitgeist of the time and many other factors. History is thus another piece of literature in which facts come in a relatively greater degree. Literature can narrate and interact with the politics of a community. It reflects and represents the intricacies of the political strategies, the truths hidden under sabotages, the unknown realities behind every war, trying to narrate the 'real' experiences.

The use of myth in the novel as a historical context to the entire narration, forming the apt matrix for the plot to develop, and its presence as a core – text which corrects and guides us through new convictions regarding Sri Lanka, its civil wars and struggle movements are attempted to be read from a detached perspective but with a comparison for the nation and its struggles. Peter Jeevanandam, an Indian director and scriptwriter narrates the story, making it at a time his personal experience of being in Sri Lanka and also a historical piece which delineates the underpinnings of Tamil freedom struggles, suppression by Sinhalese government and the revolutionary ideals of the Tamil community, suggesting to its origin from Devanāyaki and other primordial mythical figures. The pacing of myth against history and politics, enabling it to move to-and-fro the systems, makes it an interesting piece of literature. The novel also attracted scholars for its nature prescience, as it has suggested the overthrow of Mahinda Rajapaksa from power and the return of a Tamil ruler as the head, which later happened in real when Maithripala Sirisena became the President of Sri Lanka after defeating Rajapaksa in the election of January 2015. The work also provides immense possibilities of historical investigations to the past of Sri Lanka which in turn is a search into the history of the South Indian kingdoms which have covered the regions of Sri Lanka too in the earlier period. The novel also brings three important female characters who pose as the icons of Tamil liberation. Āndāl Devanāyaki and Dr. Rajani

RESEARCH ARTICLE

Tiranagame are two prominent figures in South Indian myth and Sri Lankan history², who were ousted from their community, once they stood against the patriarchal ideals and the rules of the male leaders.

Myth and history are related to each other in various realms of social proximity, temporal analogy, etc. In *Myth and Reality: Study in the Formation of Indian Culture*, D. D. Kosambi says that “a myth may grip us by its imagery, and may indeed have portrayed some natural phenomenon or process at a time when man-kind had not learnt to probe nature’s secrets or to discover the endless properties of matter” (44). It speaks of some realities of the socio-cultural settings and enables the reader/receiver to delineate the realities of the past. History/experience becomes the source of myth that they comprise some degree of truth that myths themselves later become the records of past. Myth is not similar to a story or legend. It becomes distinct because it speaks of some real events or experiences, thus becoming true to some extent. It is about the past, but added with subjective remarks and feelings of the narrator including his/ her description of the incomprehensible world.

E. H. Carr argued that history is not entirely objective and pure. For him, past is not dead but living even in the present, which will be alive only if the historian can understand the thought that lay behind it. “History is the re-enactment in the historian’s mind of the thought whose story he is studying” (22) as the history is the “history of thought” (22). History no more remained a distinct narration, which was different from ordinary man’s narration of experience. To him, history is the interaction between the historian and the facts. The historian engages with the facts of the past and produces it through a process of thinking in which he deals with those facts using his subjective experiences (26). The history thus produced will bear the traces of the historian’s subjectivity and perceptions, making it not completely true. Myth that is not completely false or real or history that is not completely false implies that they are mutually connected and that they influence each other in their making. Therefore, Lévi Strauss says,

²K. M. de Silva gives a glimpse into the pre-history of the country where he says that a Chinese traveller describes Sri Lanka as a country occupied by spirits and snakes (*A History of Sri Lanka*⁵). The story of man in Sri Lanka began in the fifth century B. C. with Simhabahu and Buddhism had been introduced during the reign of Devanampiya Tissa, a contemporary of the Mauryan emperor Asoka. The Sinhala kingdom of Anuradhapura lasted nearly 1500 years (18). “Colonialism touched Ceylon and its people in uneven fashion” (Nira Wickramasinghe *Sri Lanka in the Modern Age: A History*). The colonial exploration reached the land by the seventeenth century led by Portuguese. Later Dutch and British came and ruled the land. In the twentieth century there were elite conflicts, peasant agriculture, immigration, etc. United Nations Party, led by J. R. Jayawardane bore the expectations of Tamil people but once the activists of the Tamil Eelam realised that it would not fulfil, LTTE emerged in 1983. The ascendance of Mahinda Rajapaksa to power witnessed many changes in the polity, including the suppression of LTTE. In 2015, Maithripala Sirisena, from the Northern part of the country, defeated him in election and became the president of Sri Lanka.

RESEARCH ARTICLE

History has replaced mythology and fulfils the same function, that for societies without writing and without archives the aim of mythology is to ensure that as closely as possible- complete closeness is obviously impossible- the future will remain faithful to the present and to the past. (43)

Roland Barthes reminds us that myth achieves meanings as a lived practice, that provides people with a way of being in this world, in contrast to an epistemic practice such as the writing of the history which gives people a way of understanding or comprehending their world.

In *Northrop Frye in Context*, Diane Dubois says that “myth is a structural principle in literary text because literature is the displaced mythology” (2). For Frye, “displacement refers to the manner in which a myth changes to accommodate social and historical pressure” (36). In literature, it speaks about the social and cultural settings of a particular period or people and also is reflective of the prevailing political scenario as New Historicists claim. There are myths that adopted themselves to fit in the period and also to comprise the social and historical pressures. “Mythistory”³ is a term coined by William McNeill to address mythic stories which comprises of myth placed against the context of history (“Mythistory, or Truth, Myth, History, and Historians”). When history informs of what has been happened, myth attributes to the events of past.

The novel *Sugandhi Enna Āndāl Devanāyaki* combines myth, history, politics and fiction. The novel unfolds a new imaginary experience to the readers, discussing the violent political scenes and despicable orgies that took place in Sri Lanka during the last few decades in the same intensity that it ruminates the bloody remains of Tamil-Sinhala emperors and the myth of Devanāyaki. According to Meena T Pillai,

It is a novel that has recently struck a deep chord in popular imagination and yet complicates the fine line between popular fiction and highbrow literature, set in contemporary fluid spaces of socio-political unrest and global capitalism. Thus, Sri Lanka spills over into Toronto, London, Kerala and vice versa. (“Mixing Myth and Memory”)

³The word refers to mythologized history. “Mythistory” is the story of the past that is widely shared through the cultural ambiance. History is to inform of events where as to explain the meaning of what had happened. It is the term William McNeill uses to address myth, history, truth, and historians together (1). In Joseph Mali’s work *Mythistory*, he recognizes the crucial role that myth plays in the personal and the communal identities. He says that we need to consider not only history, nor myth, “but rather with the process in which both affect the production and reproduction of historical meaning” (27).

RESEARCH ARTICLE

The narrator Peter Jeevanandam, is in Sri Lanka along with his team to shoot a Hollywood cinema, *Women Behind the Fall of Tigers* when the novel opens. Their attempt to make a film on the life of Dr. Rajani Tiranagame from a perspective of her life as influential in the downfall of the Tamil Tigers. The journey leads him to Divine Pearl, the secret centre of Sri Lankan army which consists of interrogation chambers and cell where “physical and mental torture are there. It is the bio-weapons used for physical torture.... Fear is perpetuated within them” (*Sugandhi* 11-12). The first part of the novel takes place in A. D. 992 at Kanthalloor Salai. The Salai was the southern end of Kulasekhara Empire. The land was reigned by the king Mahendra Varman, who had no son to succeed on his throne. The king takes Devanāyaki as his wife. Later the Chola king waged war against Chera ruler, leading to the former losing his life and empire to latter.

The author has successfully commingled the myth of Āndāl Devanāyaki with the historical or the political figure of Dr. Rajani Tiranagame, renowned Sri Lankan Human Rights activist and the head of the Department of Anatomy at Jaffna and the fictional character of Sugandhi who rises as the symbol of the hope of every Sri Lankan. Devanāyaki is a Tamil deity in the Airavateshvara temple, Darasuram in Thanjavur which was a part of early Chola-Chera empires (*Hinduism: An Alphabetical Guide* 14). Devanāyaki is also known as Periya Amman. She is known for her devoted worship of Lord Padmanabha and the recital of Āndāl’s Thiruppavai and Nachiar Mozhi. Devanāyaki is depicted in the novel as an eminent scholar in almost all disciplines of studies. Sugandhi is a fictional character that T. D. Ramakrishna develops, who becomes modern day’s Devanāyaki. Sugandhi is heroic and wise, and at the same time romantic like Devanāyaki. She emerges as the hope of the hapless Sri Lankan community plunged into fear by the decades of civil war and torture. Dr. Rajani Tiranagame was an influential figure in Sri Lankan history during its civil wars in the late twentieth century, who in earlier days supported LTTE and later turned into Human Rights activist after realizing the violence that involved in the LTTE movement.

Evolution of myth is a process that involves social and cultural participation through active interaction of the constitution people’s imagination and experience. In the novel, Ramakrishnan describes this very clearly by presenting how Devanāyaki has become a myth among the tribal folks. He says that it was the Elahagala tribe that ate the body of Devanāyaki and worshipped her (*Sugandhi* 213). It was their experience of getting rain amidst droughts and victory in their weakness that led to their belief in the power of Devanāyaki and later when this illiterate tribal community finds the book on Devanāyaki by Buddhinar, they keep it as a sacred text and starts worshipping it. It is also believed that,

RESEARCH ARTICLE

It is before the Elahagala tribe that Devanāyaki has first appeared after achieving nirvana. She appeared as the revenging deity raging wildly against the slayer of her breast and womanhood, Mahindan. (213)⁴.

Thus, they believed and worshipped her as the goddess who effaced the Arya-Sinhala race in her fiery rage. They began to conduct celebrations commemorating her in which she manifested through *kolams*. It is from certain real-life experiences and the existed cultural and political scenario that Devanāyaki became a deity. The belief turned to be a ritual or a custom that their posterity started believing in the myth of Devanāyaki who was there in the Tamil history which underwent an array of manipulations and distortions. The myths are thus the result of constant interaction between the lived-in experience and the incomprehensive powers of nature within a society.

The myths which have evolved out of the mundane stories and imagination of man later gradually started to influence the conscience of the society. Myth being a tale that has relevance within a particular community, species or culture, addresses the fundamental and difficult questions of human existence. Myths guided the human beings and acted as an escape from the ruthless realities. Through myths, humans found reasons for their daily experiences and wonders around them. Myth, according to D. C. Coleman, “is far from confined to pre-literate societies, though in literate communities it takes different forms and emerges by different roots” (2). The myth of Devanāyaki symbolized the avenging avatar who saves the Tamil race from the Arya-Sinhala hegemony. But the socio-cultural milieu adopted and appropriated the myth to be that of a chaste woman who was a *pattini*⁵ and thus worshipped as a cult of womanhood and motherhood. He also states that “history clearly contributes to the myth-making process” and is “one of its chief social functions” (2). According to Bronislaw Malinowski,

Myth is... an indispensable ingredient of all culture. It constantly regenerated; every historical change creates its mythology, which is however but indirectly related to historical fact. Myth is a constant by-product of living faith, which is in need of miracles; of sociological status which demands precedent; of moral rule, which requires sanction. (122)

The myth of Devanāyaki addresses the South Indian culture of primordial times and implicitly discusses the rituals and customs of the region. In the similar line of Malinowski, the Sri Lankan civil war and the issues of inequality of the twentieth century demanded a myth to evolve for the

⁴The translation of the text to English is done by the author of the paper.

⁵The term loosely means chastity. *Pattini* and *Aṅanku* are two major concepts that revolve around the female cults among Tamils. Refer to Gananath Obeyesekere's *The Cult of the Goddess Pattini*.

RESEARCH ARTICLE

uprising of a downtrodden community. “Through different people the struggle for the honour of the women will continue”, says Sugandhi which reverberates the idea of history instigating the evolution of myth (*Sugandhi* 286).

Myth is a construct of the historical realities of the time and later participates in the construction of the history itself. It is generated initially to explain the incomprehensibility of the earth and the origin and existence of human beings and later emerges as a guiding principle which has the ability to draw boundaries between chaos and order, evil and good, right and wrong, etc. The myths are also at times informed by political and social agendas of different sections of the society like the leaders of communities to discipline the people within it. Later it starts affecting the community in such a way that they learn from the myths and act according to it. The myths which evolved from man’s ignorance of nature becomes the knowledge of the nature of itself.

According to Mircea Eliade, the function of myth is to “establish models for behaviour” (*Myth and Reality* 8). Devanāyaki becomes the correcting conscience of Sri Lankan Tamils that their indifferent slaughtering of young and old from Sinhala community appears as wrong to them. The image of fierce woman goddess who revenges against anyone who let a woman or child weep is a threat not only to the murdering suicide bombers and perpetrators of violence but also to the entire system of patriarchy and considers war as their game of leisure. It was a tool for man in power to guide people into their ideology but through Devanāyaki, becomes the correcting principle. Tamil *Eelam* fighting has its early form in the retaliation of Devanāyaki against the Sinhala king Mahindan. Her strategies and later realisation that war is not the ultimate solution becomes the true reflection of the Sri Lankan experience of the Civil war.

The elevation of myth to the point of becoming history leads in turn to become a redemptive canon. Myth becomes the rectifying conscience that repairs and resolves the present of Sri Lanka and orients the future. The mettle of Devanāyaki even while encountering death and her promise to wipe the tears of the Sri Lankan community, indifference to its ethnic differences, is a rectifying testimony. And it is this that makes Devanāyaki distinct among other Tamil deities and myths. Devanāyaki revenges and rises, not alone for her husband neither for her chastity, but for the entire human species out there who are suffering injustice as she has suffered. Devanāyaki finds her manifestation in Sugandhi, the future of Sri Lankan injustice towards Tamil or ethnic minorities. It orients us for the future that it emphasizes on a creative movement to attain freedom from injustices, where a new dispensation is opened up. Myth helps the history-less or history-denied generations to find their links with the past and thus orients

RESEARCH ARTICLE

themselves in the history by either reconstructing their own or constructing a powerful parallel history.

Myth forms the backbone of history and politics as it is from the myths of past that many voids in history are filled and this history enables the devising of a politics which is more inclined to justice. In myths, there is a distinct depiction of power distribution which forms the prototype of the contemporary political system. The myths speak of hierarchy, oppression, injustice, punishment, etc. The myths present well-orchestrated political and social systems prevailed. The customs and practises mentioned in those myths gives a clear picture of the constituting components, their role and many an answer to the questions we have about past. The myths enable us to revisit the past and delve into the hidden truths. The movements for a free Tamil nation, LTTE, Dr. Rajani Tiranagame who fought for Human Rights, Sugandhi in her struggle to attain freedom from injustice through the murder of the deserved- every events of the present day as the ever-repetitive archetypal instance.

The myth of Devanāyaki, the courageous queen and diplomat, which had a plethora of versions had elements that influenced the later history and vice versa. The struggle of Devanāyaki to dethrone Mahindan, the brutal king who maltreated the subjects subjecting them to abject torture, intersects with the Tamil people's struggle to dismantle a system that discriminates a section of the state, tortures and neglects a group based on their ethnicity, lingua franca, descent, etc. Devanāyaki is a hope for a race, an assurance for their redemption from uncertainties and insecurities. The myth of Devanāyaki enables Sri Lankan Tamils to feel of being possessed and having a history, even if it is not accepted by a majority of the nation. It gives them a strength to live and fight for their space. Karen Armstrong gives a description to myth, "a myth is essentially a guide: it tells us what to do in order to live more richly.... A myth is true because it is effective [in this], not because it gives us factual information" (10). The myth is a reflection, a guide, an archetypal symbol of human existence which is subjected to subjugation, discrimination, and silencing. Myth that becomes the intricate part of human life later conditions and colours their history. The myth influences in such a way that the history also will align along its path. The Sinhala-Tamil conflicts in the myth become relevant in the later history of Sri Lanka. The myth of Devanāyaki influences the Tamil history enormously in its retaliation against the years of oppression. Gilles Deleuze says that "myth, with its always circular structure, is indeed the story of foundation" (255). Devanāyaki's myth is also a story of foundation, that of the Sri Lankan Tamils. The myth also works within the concept of simulacra, where the origin is lost in its cause. But the myth being "circular in structure" provides the hope that redemptive myth of Devanāyaki is still working in the Sri Lankan socio-cultural space.

RESEARCH ARTICLE

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RESEARCH ARTICLE

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