MALAY LANGUAGE IN SRI LANKA: 
SOCIO-MECHANICS OF A MINORITY LANGUAGE IN ITS HISTORICAL SETTING

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Malay language is the language of the Malays of Sri Lanka. Though Malays form only one-twentieth of the population of the Sri Lankan Muslims (who themselves are one-thirteenth of the entire population of Sri Lanka), Sri Lankan Malay language has an importance and distinction of its own. The Malays form a significant group of the Muslims of Sri Lanka, the other principal group being the Moors. There are other very small groups as well.

Historically, the Malay language of Sri Lanka has had its status and role defined by the other languages of Sri Lanka. Sinhalese is the language spoken and used by the majority of the population of the country (the Sinhala). It is an Aryan language, akin rather to the Aryan languages of Western India. Tamil is the language of the Tamils of Sri Lanka; it is also the mother-tongue of the Muslims (Moors) of Sri Lanka. It is a Dravidian language, perhaps the most intricate and developed in its group. Arabic is the religious tongue of the Muslims, loved, respected and used by them in all their religious activities. The Malay language in Sri Lanka has been influenced thus by an Aryan, a Dravidian, and a Semitic language, each with its own particular and different grammatical determinants. Not the least, Malay language in Sri Lanka has been influenced by English, closest to Malay in its sparing use of flexions in the importance of locational (as opposed to flexional) syntax.

PROTO-HISTORY OF THE MALAY LANGUAGE IN SRI LANKA

The proto-history of the Sri Lankan Malay language is somewhat bedevilled by the fact that the term ‘Malaya’ was used by ancient chroniclers as equivalent to ‘Maya rata’ the central part of the island of Sri Lanka (later
known as the Kandyan Kingdom). Incidentally, the Sinhala language, even today, uses the term Ja as equivalent to the term ‘Malays’.10

There would have certainly been trade contacts between the people of Sri Lanka and the people inhabiting (present day) region of Malaya and Indonesia. There was also political contact between these countries, the kings of Sri Lanka finding it prudent to use those friendly relationships when threatened or faced with attacks from the Indian kingdoms. The standard history of Sri Lanka, records one such incident, when Sena I, who ruled in the ninth century CE, retired from his capital, Anuradhapura, in the face of such an attack and proceeded to the north-east of Sri Lanka. The standard history records,

(Sena I) . . . had reached Trincomallee, where he planned to escape across to the Sri Vijaya kingdom of Malaya. Apparently friendly relations already existed between the Sinhalese and the Malays.11

Also the eastern part of Sri Lanka which faces the straits of Malacca, has had Malayan settlements from early times.12 A traditional port (landing stage) in south Sri Lanka is called Humban tota (landing stage of sampan).12 Sampans are the traditional sea-going vessels of Malays and Javanese.13

When the Malays across the seas made incursions into Sri Lanka in the Middle Ages, and were defeated, some of the Malays elected to settle in Sri Lanka and established their settlements.14

The following conjectures regarding the prevalence of the Malay language in Sri Lanka up to, and including, the Middle Ages, could be advanced. Malay was used in the Malay settlements, originally in the east and moved on to other parts of the country. But its use was limited by the fact that it lacked a hierarchical teaching base. Further, the large number of Sanskrit words in the language of the Javanese, made them indistinguishable from Sanskrit and Pali which were the official languages of the Sinhalese kingdoms as well as that of the educated elite.

Some Malay words entered into the common language of the people of Sri Lanka. However, this does not appear to be the case with sarong kabaya or sarang, perhaps the most widely used Malay word, today.15 A modern historian and cartographer, comments on the prevalence, in Colombo in the pre-colonial period, of the baggy trousers of the type worn in the north of the Indian sub-continent.16
MALAY LANGUAGE UNDER THE PORTUGUESE AND THE DUTCH

The colonial period of Sri Lanka falls between 1505 and 1948.17 From the beginning of the fifteenth century, the Portugal had control of the maritime provinces of Sri Lanka. The central authority of the Portuguese empire lay in Portugal itself. The administration of the eastern part of the Portuguese empire were head-quartered in Goa, in the predominantly Konkani-speaking part of western India. Goa housed the seat and administration of the Viceroy of the Portuguese in the East. The Portuguese hidalgos and administrators concerned with Asian affairs were conversant with their regional languages, Arabic (once active in the Iberian lands), Persian and Konkani.18 Malay was a language low in priority.

The Dutch who swept off the Portuguese from Asian seas, were a different kettle of fish. Unlike the Portuguese empire which was royally-emposied by Portugal, the Dutch (to be exact the Veerenigde Ost-Indische Compagnie (VOC), i.e. Dutch East Indies Company) was a private enterprise, managed by businessmen. Chartered by the Dutch (the Netherlands) State, it was a power by itself. A well-informed observer wrote:

The VOC took as its motto, “And Therefore Plough the Seas”... In 1669 the Company paid 40 percent dividened on its capital of 6,500,000 florins. Had one hundred and fifty trading ships, forty ships of war and 10,000 soldiers, and maintained the governments of Ternate, Java, Ambon, Macassar, Banda, Malacca, Ceylon and the Cape of Good Hope.19

Of these occupied zones all, except Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and the Cape of Good Hope, are Malay (Indonesian varieties) speaking areas.20 The headquarters of the Dutch Asian administration was in Batavia in Java. Hence, when the Dutch annexed the maritime provinces in the middle of the seventeenth century, the senior administrators as well as the soldiers were at least conversant with spoken Malay.21 Never before or ever since were there so many Malay-speakers in the central administration of Sri Lanka.

Java and other islands (which form the present Indonesia) were primarily of major concern to the Dutch (i.e. VOC) in their commercial activities. Those islands, in the late seventeenth century, were ruled by indigenous potentates. As I have written elsewhere:

The Compagnie (i.e. VOC) practised their policy of pacification with consummate effect in Java. The Sultan of Bantam in east Java and
the Susuhnan of Mataram in east Java were kept at variance with each other. When the ruling princes were sufficiently to unite against the Compagnie, the latter suppressed them not without violence as it happened to Bantam in 1680. However, the policy of the Compagnie was, on occasions, diplomatic, suave and pervasive. By gradual encroachment, the power of the Sultanate of Mataram was pared down and the reduced territory was shared between the Susuhnan of Soerakarta and the Sultan of Jogjakarta. It was not to be imagined that the indigenous princes and notables would always bow down to the demands of the Compagnie. In Sri Lanka, the Compagnie had a ready-made solution. In 1709, Susuhnan Mangkurat Maas and his entourage arrived as exiles. The same pattern was repeated fourteen years later, when the defeated leaders in the battle of Batavia, viz. forty-four Javanese princes and their retainers entered as exiles. 22

Among those exiles were:

Dynasts of Java:
Penkuran Soeritja.
Sosoura Widjojo.
Raden Pantjie Weera.
Penkaran Adipathi Mangkurat.

Dynasts of Tidor:
Penkuran Meanang Raten (Raja Muda=Crown Prince).
Pather Alam, Sultan.

Dynasts of Bacan:
Ratja Sadoe Alam.
Penkan Kitchil Nainuddin.

Dynast of Padang:
Rahah Jokaran.

Dynast of Bantam:
Rajah Bagus Andulah.

Dynast of Gowon:
Rajah Osman.

Dynast of Mathura:
Raden Ariapen. 23

These notables and their retinue helped to stamp the Malay language
spoken in Sri Lankan with its distinct Batavian flavour. A well-informed observer, writing almost sixty years ago, classed the Malay spoken in Sri Lanka as a Batavian dialect. As the exiles were kept in Sri Lanka in those areas which the Dutch authorities chose for them, there could not be a popularization of Malay. But, in the make-shift draton (courts) of royalty which the exiles 'set-up', educated, cultured, polite, formal Javanese was spoken and written. Perhaps, they introduced gundul, i.e. Javanese written in Arabic script. Gundul survived in Sri Lanka till the mid-forties of this century, in limited circles and for specified purposes.

Though limited in numbers, the Javanese exiles, with their background of reference, of classical Arabic and Sanskrit works as well as 'refined' Javanese language, were able to influence the linguistic background of the small Malay communities in Sri Lanka, mainly around Colombo (then and now the metropolis of Sri Lanka). Meanwhile, perhaps at a more working level, the Dutch had introduced into Sri Lanka, levies of Malay (correctly, Javanese) soldiers. The Dutch used these levies mostly for garrisoning their forts in Sri Lanka, in such places as Balanc, Galagedara (in the present Central Province) and Kurunegala (in the present North-Central Province). There are still many Malays living in these areas. Incidentally, the indigenous princes who ruled central Sri Lanka and who had abrasive relationships with the Dutch, recruited and maintained Malay soldiery.

Perhaps, an infusion of Malay words into the vocabulary of the Muslims of Sri Lanka came through by a process set in motion by the Dutch. That special law called De Bysondere Wetten was a compilation made by the Dutch of the Islamic law and practices as observed in Java and adjacent islands. That law was introduced by the Dutch in the Muslim settlements in Sri Lanka, principally Colombo. The range of matters dealt with included marriage, divorce and intestacy. That law envisaged a close administrative relationship with the Muslim 'priest' (imām, khatīb), the headman and the Dutch officials.

MALAY LANGUAGE IN SRI LANKA UNDER BRITISH RULE

When the Dutch authorities capitulated to the British in 1795, the fate of Malay soldiers was one of the issues. One article of the Terms of Capitulation said:

The Malay troops should be sent from hence (i.e. Colombo) with their wives and children to Tuticorin (in India) from thence by easy marches to Madras; they shall be submitted while they remain prison-
ers and if not taken into the British service shall at a convenient time be sent to the island of Java at the expense of the British Government.  

It might be conjectured from the above Article that (a) the Malay soldiers had a settled family establishment in Sri Lanka and that (b) the British authorities considered them to be Javanese because of their Malay language. However, this attempt by the British to disestablish the Malay settlements in Colombo did not succeed. Subsequently, Henry Dundas, President of the Board of Control of the British East India Company, then in authority over Sri Lanka, instructed the British governor, Lord Frederic North, to raise a Malay corps, stating that it was:

... to be upon the Establishment of Ceylon and to be raised, clothed and provided with every requirement out of the Revenues of the Island.

The Ceylon Malay Rifles thus recruited was apparently quartered in Slave Island (a part of Colombo abutting the Fort), as the name 'Refle Street' indicated. The Malays thus formed a solid enclave in Colombo. The Malay Regiment, which frequently saw service abroad, distinguished itself in several campaigns. The Malays' soldierly qualities have always won the admiration of the British officer class as well as that of the administration.

**Evolving Mechanism of the Malay Language in Sri Lanka**

The occupation of Sri Lanka by the British meant the introduction of an export-economy; it also meant a gradual increase in imports. The British introduced mono-culture, first coffee, then tea (which survives today). By 1840s, forty thousand acres of high land in Sri Lanka had been sold by the British government to foreign, mainly British, investors.

By the third quarter of the last century, military needs were minimal in Sri Lanka and the British authorities decided to demobilize the Malay Rifles. Accordingly, the regiment was disbanded in 1873. The government provided them with opportunities for civil employment as guards, watchers etc. Economic development had also provided employment opportunities at the places where they lived. Hence by the third quarter of the nineteenth century Malay settlements in Sri Lanka could be schematically classified. It should be remembered that the classification is schematic and theoretic since actual projections cannot be developed for such a numerically small community as the Malays of Sri Lanka. In each of these types of settlements, the
Malay language has a different role to play and is subject to different influences.

**Alpha Type Malay Settlement**

Even today, Colombo has the largest concentration of Malays, predominantly in the Slave Island region. It was where the disbanded Malay Regiment and its dependants were housed. Contiguity of housing brought about a *kampengli* atmosphere. Malay life in Slave Island has a distinct flavour of its own. Some Malays began to acquire immovable property, some of which was given off to mosques. For instance one Pandan Bali donated land for a mosque at Wekande in south Slave Island. A kind of hierarchical polarization began to be formed. Some of the Malay landowners and mosque officials were proficient in written Malay (*gundul*). However, the basic norm was spoken Malay.

(Slave Island) was and is the bedrock of the Malay language in Sri Lanka. Close contiguity of houses, sufficient number of Malay-speakers and the fact that a large section of these speakers were former soldiers, ensured that the language was earthy and vibrant. Some of these (slang) words such as *kinjath* (wretched) had even entered the vocabulary of other Muslims of Colombo.

English language was accessible to a large number of Malays in Colombo. Hence, they easily obtained Government employment. When the Police force was established in Sri Lanka, a substantial number of the constabulary were Malays. In course of time the highly educated Malays moved out of Slave Island and established themselves elsewhere.

**Beta Type Malay Settlement**

This type is found in the southern sea-board of Sri Lanka. There are two versions; the urban settlement of Hambantota and the fishing community (of Kirinde). Possibly, these are the earliest Malay settlements in Sri Lanka. Both versions of this type of settlement used to speak Malay (rather Javanese), somewhat archaic than Slave Island Malay. The Hambantota settlement is affluent and English has made inroads into their speech. The Kirinde community still has archaic words in their speech. Perhaps, some 'sanskritization' has taken place between these two sub-types.

**Gamma Type Malay Settlement**

This was a cantonment-type of settlement on the outliers of the Dutch
forts. This grouping is found in towns such as Kurunegal, Galaha and though the Dutch forts and their British successors have vanished, these settlements remain surrounded by other communities. These were small settlements and the Malays were more affluent than the other communities, as a whole. The Malays here have had a background of English and they took to government jobs easily at middle and lower levels. Their spoken Malay was heavily mixed with English words. Two special characteristics might be noted. Some of their names are classical Malay (Indonesian), names not used in other parts of Sri Lanka. In the second place, most of their mosques are called 'military mosques'. When small communities of Malays began to form in up-country towns, where tea plantations gave them jobs, these type of settlements reproduced themselves.

**Epsilon Type Malay Settlement**

There are indications that the Malay communities of the north-east and north-western parts of Sri Lanka coalesced with the larger community of Muslims (Moors). Yet, Malay words occur in their Tamil spoken language.

**MALAY LANGUAGE IN SRI LANKA: SOME SPECIAL FEATURES**

Though Malay cannot be said to be in Sri Lanka a standard, pervasive, articulated language today, it has features which are of interest.

Malays have names which immediately stamp their identity. Malays, both males and females have three names like the ancient Romans. First is the titular name. These are Tuan (a variation perhaps of Tun), Mass (superior) and Baba (elder). Every Malay has one of these names and so cannot be called honorifics. Generally ‘Tuans’ are descended from Malaysian ancestors and ‘Maas’ from Indonesian ancestors. But this is not a hard-and-fast rule. Invariably, every Malay female has Gnei (lady) before her name. The Malays’ second and third names are personal and family names, respectively. Other Muslims rarely go on for family names; they prefer to prefix their fathers’ names as initials to their own names.

As Appendix A shows, Malay names have their distinctive flavour. Some, such as ‘Jaldin’ are telescopic forms of Arabic words; some others are phonetic adaptations, the Malays always preferring ‘b’ to ‘d’. A large number of Malay names in Sri Lanka are Sanskrit in origin, perhaps pointing to Javanese/Sunatran origin. Some names are simple Malay words. Some Malay names might have been pronounced differently in the past. At least one Malay name sounds like a Dutch address of courtesy.
MALAY WRITING AND LITERATURE

As has been mentioned above, Malay was written in gundul. It has to be carefully learnt for one cannot dispense with vowels as one can in Arabic after learning that language. Gundul had one advantage in that it could be read by anyone who could read Arabic-Tamil (which was known to all educated non-Malay Muslims) but they had to know spoken Malay at least. Gundul was learnt mainly by the traditional Malay scholars and by mosque officials such as lebbe, katib and mua’zzin. It can be said that gundul was kept alive by these groups. It is known that at least one journal was published in this regard.45

It could not be expected that gundul could compete successfully with languages such as English, Tamil and Sinhala for the attention of the average Malay of Sri Lanka. Gundul survived as the language in which Malay bills of marriage (kavin) were drawn, till the forties of the twentieth-century. Essentially, kavin were formal documents with set phraseology; hence, they did not need much linguistic expertise.46 By that time, Malay (Indonesian) written in Roman script had become popular in Malaya and (present-day) Indonesia (then called Dutch East Indies). That Malaya adopted the English system of phonetics and Dutch East Indies, the Dutch system, caused variations in the transliteration, which was not helpful to the intending learner of Malay in Roman script.

Some Malay classics flourished in translation in a curious way. In the latter part of the nineteenth century, translation of some works in Malay were made. These were rendered into Tamil. These were wonderous tales, some of them concerned with semi-legendary incidents in the lives of Islamic personages (and so looked upon with some disfavour by the ‘ulama’). These works included Hikayat Kejadian Noor Muhammad (The History of Noor Muhammad), Hikayat Bulan Brbela (The Story of the Separation of the Moon); Hikayat Bayan Budiman (rendered into Tamil as The Story of the Parrots).47 By these means some Malay words came to the knowledge of other Muslims.

An exclusive Malay literary activity is the making of panteh verses or ballad poetry, rendered orally.48 Such traditional verses as the following would have been popular in Sri Lanka.

Apa guna pasang pelita  
Jika tidek dengan sumboh mya  
Apa guna brmain mata  
Kelau tidek dengan sunggoh ny.
(Why are you trying to illuminate a lantern—Since there is no wick there— Why are you trying to flirt—Since you have no wish there).

The art of ballad making did not quite catch up among the Malays of Sri Lanka. First, it was difficult to deal with rural themes in urban Sri Lanka in which the Malays mainly lived. Secondly, poetically gifted Malays often knew Tamil or Sinhala or English to compose poems in those languages and thus reach a larger audience. For instance, in the late nineteenth century, Tuan Kichil Jabbar of Ragale (in the hill country of Sri Lanka) made a name for himself in the field of Tamil ballad verse (called themmangu in Tamil).

MALAY LANGUAGE IN SRI LANKA: TRIPODAL INFLUENCES

The strength of the Malay language, its lack of flexions, locational accidence, simple syntax is also its weakness, particularly in a spoken tongue, which Sri Lankan Malay mainly is. The English language started exerting its influence from the nineteenth century. The school system set up by the British easily attracted the attention of the Malays in Sri Lanka. Long used to official discipline (indeed the Malay soldiery was the backbone of the British administration), the Malays did not have any antipathy to the British school system. By 1869 when the Department of Public Instruction was set up, the Malays had entered the educational stream. The educational advancement of the Malays could be seen in the following figures of students in government schools in the last quarter of the nineteenth century (it should be kept in mind that in Sri Lanka the population of Moors is twenty times that of the Malays.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1881</th>
<th>1882</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Malays</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moors</td>
<td>1319</td>
<td>1163</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Up to the forties of this century, Malays were represented in most branches of Government service. At the beginning of this century, Malays formed a substantial portion of Muslims in Government service. The Police, the Customs, and the Colombo Fire Brigade were mainly Malay-staffed.

This situation had two implications on the role of the Malay language, as English dexterity was the base of Government employment. The high level Malay official tended to concentrate on English and Malay became a language used for limited purposes (apa khabar-khabar baik level of small talk.). At the lower level—that of minor employees—English words entered into their Malay vocabulary.

When Sri Lanka became independent of British authority on February
1948, the indigenous languages of Sri Lanka (Sinhala and Tamil) came into their own. English was gradually replaced as the medium of instruction. Sinhalese were taught in the Sinhala language and Tamils in Tamil; however, Muslims (including Malays), Burghers and students of mixed races were allowed to study in English. In 1970s, this concession was withdrawn and Muslims had to choose between Sinhala and Tamil as the medium of instruction at all levels of education.

Malays are excellent linguists; they attained competence in Tamil/Sinhala with ease. The effect of Sinhala and Tamil is that of an involved, intricate, established language on a loosely-built spoken tongue. For instance, the Tamil language has complex sentences of extraordinary intricacy. The Sinhala language has its vocabulary-source in Sanskrit, from which also, many Indonesian dialects derive their stock of words. Hence, there was a tendency for the average Malay in Sri Lanka to let Malay language slide into obsolescence, as all Malay-speakers in Sri Lanka live in a Tamil-speaking or Sinhala-speaking environment.

MALAY LANGUAGE IN SRI LANKA: RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

Several external events have helped to keep the Malay language in Sri Lanka, active and vibrant. Some of the British administrators in Sri Lanka were good at Malay, having seen service in Malaya earlier in their official careers. At least one Governor was fluent in spoken as well as written Malay.

During the Second World War, after the over-running of the Dutch East Indies and Malaya by the Japanese, many Malayans from mainland Malaya and also from Java and near by islands, came to Sri Lanka. Some of them contracted marriages in Sri Lanka and established themselves here. When Malays—men, women and children—travelling to Malaya had their ships torpedoed, they were accommodated in Colombo. There were also Malay units serving with the South-East Asian Command (SEAC) in Sri Lanka in the 1940s. All these events brought living Malay (and Javanese) speech to Sri Lanka.

During the fifties, Malaysia and Indonesia had become independent. Hence, an Embassy of the Republic of Indonesia and a High Commission of Malaysia were established in Sri Lanka. Stimulated by these developments, Sri Lankan Malays began to seek ways of studying and developing the Malay language in Sri Lanka. The several Malay welfare organizations began to hold classes in Malay. The Sri Lanka Broadcasting Corporation (the state sound broadcasting agency) provides weekly transmissions on Malay. In the course of time, Malay was introduced as a subject at the General Certifi-
Some critics have held that Malay at that level is an impressionistic exercise, lacking the rigour of Latin or French (Appendix B). However, this criticism seems unfair since supportive literature and other facilities for Malay are not readily available for Malay studies. At any rate, the income-generating opportunities of German or French cannot be said to exist for Malay. The Department of Muslim Religious and Cultural Affairs, has taken steps to focus attention on the heritage of the Malays. 

Since Malay is an important language of the developing world, there are indications that there is bright future for Malay studies in Sri Lanka.

**NOTES AND REFERENCES**

1. Sri Lanka was known as Ceylon till 1972 when it became a republic. Sri Lanka is a multi-religious (Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity), multi-racial (Sinhalese, Tamils, Muslims, Burghers), and multi-linguistic (Sinhala, Tamil, English) country. The Muslims form nearly 8% of the total population of Sri Lanka. The Muslims of Sri Lanka comprise the Moors (descendants of Arab settlers), the Malays (descendants of Malays and Javanese settlers) as well as very small groups such as the Faqirs. Moors are over one million in number while the Malays are around 44,000 (Statistical Pocket Book of Sri Lanka (Colombo, 1982, p. 12). Details about the Muslims may be found in, M.M.M. Mahroof and M. Azeez (compilers) An Ethnological Survey of the Muslims of Sri Lanka (Colombo: Sir Razik Fareed Foundation, 1986, pages 262, Maps and Bibliography). For Faqirs, M.M.M. Mahroof, “Minstrels and Trobadours; Towards a Historical Taxonomy of the Faqirs of Sri Lanka” in Islamic Studies (I/S) Islamabad, Pakistan, vol. 30, no. 4 (1991), pp. 501. seq. Tamil is the mother tongue of the Muslims of Sri Lanka; but most are fluent in Sinhala. Other languages of interest to the Muslims are, Malay, Arabic (revered for religious purposes) and Urdu (a peripheral language). For Arabic, M.M.M. Mahroof (a) “The Study and Teaching of Islam and Arabic in Sri Lanka; A Centenary Appraisal” in Muslim Education Quarterly (MEQ), (Cambridge, vol. 3 no. 1 (1985), pp. 51 seq; (b) “Islamic Foundations of Sri Lankan Muslim Education” in Hamdard Islamicus (H/I), Karachi. Pakistan, vol. xiv. no. 3 (1991), pp. 5 seq. For Urdu, M.M.M. Mahroof, “Urdu in Sri Lanka: Socio-Linguistics of a Minority Language”, in Islamic Studies, vol. 31. no. 2 (1992), pp. 185–201.

2. However, Malay speakers form only 1/260th part of the total population of Sri Lanka. The words 'Malay language' in this article are used as a term to include all varieties of historical Malay-Indonesian languages as used in Sri Lanka.


4. There are in Sri Lanka also very small communities of Afghans, Memons (Sunny), Borahs and Khojas (both Shi’ah). M.M.M. Mahroof and M. Azeez, An Ethnological Survey of the Muslims of Sri Lanka (ESMSL), chap. 1 (by M. Azeez).


10. Some area names in Sri Lanka have the Ja prefix, such as Jawatte (Javanese garden), Jaela (Javanese canal).
12. Hambantota still has a solid presence of Malays.
13. As a rule, the s sound dissolves into h sound. Hence sampan=hampan. Geiger, Grammar of Sinhalese Language, passim.
15. Sarong, the stitched rectangle of cloth worn by the average Sri Lankan male is called lungi or kalli in south India.
17. The colonial period of Sri Lanka was shared by three European Powers. The Portuguese ruled the maritime provinces of Sri Lanka from 1505 to 1646, the Dutch from 1656 to 1796. The British annexed the only indigenous principality, the kingdom of Kandy in 1815 and ruled entire Sri Lanka from that date till 1948, when Sri Lanka became independent. Though specialist studies have been made of the colonial period, an easy reference source is S.G. Perera SJ, A History of Ceylon for Schools, part I, "The Portuguese and Dutch periods" and part II, "British period" (Colombo).
21. Dutch affairs in Sri Lanka were controlled by the (Dutch) Council of India in Batavia, Java.
23. The highest royal titles were Sultan and Suvunman. Rajas were rulers of considerably less territory. Penkerams formed the class of royal families and court circles.
25. Since written Malay has always to be accentuated with Arabic diacritical marks (unlike in standard Arabic), gundul (Malay written in Arabic script) looks cluttered to the unpractised eye. The Malay text book in the 'Marlborough Series' used to print the gundul alphabet.
30. "Instructions from Henry Dundas, President of the Board of Control of the East India Company to governor North, 13th March 1801, paragraph 102" in G.G. Mendis, (ed.), Colebrook-Cameron Papers.
31. The term ‘Slave Island’ originates from the fact the Dutch kept their indentured labourers there. Sinhala and Tamil languages have always referred to that area as Company Veediya (‘Company Street’, ‘company’ standing for the Dutch East Indies Company). Also, see R.L. Brohier, Changing Face of Ceylon, passim.


36. A translation of the deed is in M. Murad Jayah, “Sri Lankan Malays”.


38. M.M.M. Mahroof, “Malays of Sri Lanka”.

39. Cf. the general structure of the social organization of the Muslim community as a whole, in (ESMSI), chapter VI, “Muslim Social Organization”, by M.M.M. Mahroof.

40. The fishing community is a distinct sociological entity in Malaysia; socio-anthropological studies on the Malayan fishermen exist.

41. The term ‘samskritization’ is, of course, used in the Srinivas (ian) sense.


43. For instance, the name ‘Sourjah’ pronounced today with j (as in ‘jam’) might have been pronounced with j as y.

44. That name is ‘Junkeer’, which is strongly reminiscent of the Dutch jon heer = the German word junge Herr = young sir.

45. Though Muslim ‘little magazines’ often had a desultory existence, still because of lack of daily newspapers and other entertainment, they had a steady audience.


48. In some respects, the Malay ballads are very close to medieval English ballads. Themes such as in ‘Lord Randal’ are frequently found in Malay.

49. Kanaka Senthinathan, Ilankiyil Thamil Ilakiyya Valarchi (History of Tamil Literature in Sri Lanka) (Colombo, 1961); chapter on Muslim poets.


51. M.M.M. Mahroof “Malays of Sri Lanka”.

52. Murad Jayah, “Sri Lankan Malays”.

53. The Tamil language is rich in ‘over-grown adjectives’ as in German. Sentences such as the following are common. (Netru ennudan irandu manithiyalankal kadaime manithar) infru vanthar, (Yesterday—with me—two-hours-talked-man, came today too). Hermann Beythan, Prussische Grammatik der thamilischen Sprachen (Leipzig, 1943); also the works of Santor B. Steever.

54. Terms like dhamma, agama and puja are found in Sinhala as well as in classical Malay, though the context is different. For instance, puja means Islamic worship (rituals).

55. Sir Hugh Clifford was that Governor. “A speech in Malay by H.E. was much appreciated”, wrote Assistant to Government for Southern Province, referring to a meeting held at Hambatota (Administration Report for 1907).

There were a large number of Tamils, mainly from northern Sri Lanka, who served as officials in the Federated Malay States, who knew Malay.

56. The Headquarters of SEAC, headed by Admiral Lord Louis Mountbatten was in Kandy (in central Sri Lanka).

57. The Malay text-book in the Teach Yourself Series was frequently in use.
58. There is a thirty minutes programme in the mornings of Thursdays and Sundays (Muslim service) and a Friday night programme of equal duration (Sinhala service).
59. The GCE (AL) also offers as courses Latin, Sanskrit, Pali, Arabic, Hindi, Urdu, Persian, French, German and other languages.
60. For instance, background texts such as Oxford Companion to German/French/Italian Studies do not appear to exist.
61. The Department of Muslim Religious and Cultural Affairs included Malay cultural items in its annual Milad al-Nabi celebrations. The Department of Muslim Religious and Cultural Affairs has now been raised to the status of a state Ministry for Muslim Religious and Cultural Affairs.

APPENDIX A

SOME TYPICAL NAMES OF THE MALAYS OF SRI LANKA

Variations of Arabo-Persian Words
Ahl—(Ahl-i)
Ahamath (Ahmad)
Backer (Abu Bakr)
Galiph (Khalifah)
Jappar (Jabbar)
Laphir (Lafr)
Mahamooth (Mahmud)
Osman (Uthman)
Pakeer (Faqir)
Ramdin (Ramadan)
Sarip (Sharif)

2. Telescoped Versions of Arabo-Persian Words
Amath (Ahmad)
Amith (Hamid)
Baardeen (Badr al-Din)
Jalain (Jalal al-Din)
Saldin (Salah al-Din)
Seedin (Sayyid Din)
Shamdin (Shams al-Din)
Sudin (Sa'ud Din)

3. Prakrit/Sanskrite Words
Banda (lineage/line of strong forbears)
Jayah (victorious)
Nagara (city, nation)
Mahat (great)
Dharma (right/righteous)
Kanaka (gold)
Weera bandsa (heroic lineage)

4. Proto-Malay Words
Aliba
Bongso
Booso
Bagus
APPENDIX B

Syllabus in the General Certificate of Education (Advanced Level)

MALAY (subject no. 46)

Those who desire to offer Malay as a subject can obtain detailed information by applying to the Commissioner of Examinations.


N.B. Since detailed syllabi are given for languages such as Latin, Greek, Pali, Sanskrit, French, German, Hindi, Russian, perhaps, the lack details for Malay is an indication that few students offer it.