

## NON - EXTANT ANCIENT SINHALA LITERARY WORKS

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Among the existing literary works in Sinhala, not a single one belongs to an earlier period than the 9th or 10th century A. D. However considering the existence of an unbroken record of Inscriptions available from 3rd century B. C. it is possible to conclude that the art of writing was known in Sri Lanka from about the 3rd century B. C.<sup>1</sup> References in the Chronicles and other evidence suggest that the early Sinhalese might have had this knowledge even earlier.<sup>2</sup>

The Mahāvamsa refers to writing of letters by kings or ministers on certain important occasions. The earliest correspondence referred to takes us back to Prince Vijaya, 5th century B. C. Envoys were sent to Mathurā to ask for the hand of the daughter of King Pandya for Prince Vijaya. Similar requests had been made for his ministers too. These envoys took presents and letters for king Pandya with them.<sup>3</sup> King Pandya is said to have sent a letter in reply together with valuable presents.<sup>4</sup> The next important reference that we come across is a letter sent by Prince Vijaya to his brother Sumitta.<sup>5</sup>

Several letters are also said to have been sent in the time of Pandukābhaya. In one of such letters, King Abhaya is said to have asked Prince Pandukābhaya not to proceed further than River Mahaveli<sup>6</sup>. In 3rd century B. C. Uttiya is said to have sent a letter to the consort of King Kālanitissa through a person in the guise of a monk.<sup>7</sup> There are references to writing of letters during the reign of King Duṭṭhagāmini. According to the Mahāvamsa, the King had his meritorious deeds recorded by his scribes in chronological order.<sup>8</sup>

Among these deeds was the distribution of books on the Dhamma to the Preaching halls.<sup>9</sup> Further the king is said to have found in his own palace a golden plate with an inscription. The Mahāvamsa also mentions that King Devānampiyatissa had a stone pillar<sup>10</sup> inscribed with the words that a certain King by the name of Duṭṭhagāminī would construct a great Stupa by the name of Suvannamālī and that it would be erected at the instance of Mahinda Thero.<sup>11</sup>

It appears that it had been customary for Sinhala Kings to have their meritorious deeds written down by their scribes. According to Dr. D. M. de Z. Wickremasinghe, there should have been other documents in which the important events and news of the reign were recorded. Such documents might have been consulted by the authors of *Mahāvamsa* and *Dīpavamsa*. Possibly the *Sīhalakathā - Mahāvamsa* referred to in *Mahāvamsa* was one of such records.<sup>12</sup> Thus in addition to messages and letters, books also were written by the time of King Vattagāminī Abhaya (89-77 BC.) Dr. Wickremasinghe therefore rejects the theory that the Tripitaka had been handed down by oral tradition until the reign of Vattgāmanī Abhaya during whose reign the Tripitaka is said have been written for the first time.<sup>13</sup>

Vatthagāmanī Abhaya was given assylum by a monk named Kupikkala Tissa when the former was in hiding and in gratitude the King is said to have made a deed of gift of property in a schrewpine leaf.<sup>14</sup> Next we are referred to an incident which is important in many respects, namely the writing down of the Tripitaka at Alōka Vihāra near Matalē.<sup>15</sup>

Inscriptional evidence also supports the view that the early Sinhalas had known the art of writing. In the opinion of Archaeologists the history of Sinhala inscriptions dates from at least the later half of 3rd century B. C.<sup>16</sup> The cave inscription of Kantaka Cetiya at Mihintale, which, according to archaeologists is the oldest Sinhala inscription yet discovered, refers to a King named 'Gamini Uti Maharaja'.<sup>17</sup> According to Prof. Paranavitana<sup>18</sup> the eminent archaeologist, this 'Gamini Uti Maharaja' was no other person than King Uttiya (207-197 B. C.) who succeeded Dēvānampiyatissa. All these inscriptions are of great antiquity no doubt. Significantly almost all of them are cave inscriptions. Generally they mention a donation of a cave to the fraternity of monks.<sup>19</sup> Dr. Wickremasinghe suggests that the ancient Sinhalas were well acquainted with the Brāhmi script which had so developed by the time as to permit Sanskrit words being written in it. He makes this remark with reference to Vessagiri Inscription which he assigns to the period between 161 - 137 B. C.<sup>20</sup> He also concluded that there had been a Sinhala literature, a written literature at that, at least one century before the Council at Alōka Vihāra.<sup>21</sup>

So far I have andeavoured to discover the origin of the art of writing in Ceylon through the writings of the Sinhala people themselves. The *Sīgiri Graffiti* would point to a well - developed art of writing as eavey as the 6th century A. D.

We must now try to find out whether there were any literary works composed during the early phase.

As was pointed out earlier, it would be wrong to suppose that the literary works were composed before the reign of Vattagāminī when the Tripitaka is said to have been put down in writing for the first time.

In the opinion of Dr. Wickremasinghe, literary works had been written in Sinhala at least a century before the event. The art of writing was known to Sinhalas prior to the said event as explained above. Books are referred to even in the reign of the King Dutthagāminī, who belonged to such an early period as 150 B. C. Dr. Wickremasinghe asserts that it was no other work than the *Sīhala Atthakathā* mentioned in the Mahāvamsa Tīkā.<sup>22</sup>

It is therefore an exaggeration to say that the Tripitaka was handed down by oral tradition until the reign of Vattagāmanī Abhaya. The very nature of the Sinhala commentaries which Mahinda caused to have been written precluded the possibility of their being handed down by oral tradition. It may be that by the reign of Vattagāmanī Abhaya they were full of scribes, errors and incomplete, rare and of course unedited. That might well have been the reason why the holy books were restored, commentaries edited and distributed all over the country.<sup>23</sup>

An interest in literary compositions is next found during the reign of Gajabhāhu towards the end of 2nd century A. D. Mahāvamsa gives only a brief account of his reign but the *Rājāvalīya* and the legends have much to say about it. The *Rājāvalī* describes this King as having invaded the Cōla land in India and succeeded in subduing it. He is said to have brought back with him twelve thousand Cōla prisoners in addition to the twelve thousand Sinhalas who had been taken captive during the reign of his own father. The event is described in three verses in *Pārakumbā Sirita* which belongs to 15th century.<sup>24</sup> Legend has it that he also brought with him not only the twelve thousand Cōla prisoners but also the anklet of *Pattini* and a large number of Tamil poems dealing with the *Pattini* cult.<sup>25</sup>

*Silappadikāram*, the Tamil Epic based on the story of Kannagi deified as *Pattini*, which some scholars assign to 2nd century while some others assign to 6th or 7th century, refers to the story of Gajabhāhu.<sup>26</sup> It is said that the Cera King named Senguttivan laid the foundation for *Pattini* cult in his regions by consecrating a shrine dedicated to *Pattini* there and that King Gajabhāhu was invited to attend the ceremony. The reference to Gajabhāhu in *Silappadikāram* lends support to the legendary accounts of the wars Gajabhāhu is said to have fought in South India. These accounts are further substantiated by the statement in *Pūjāvalī* to the effect that the Cōla King took some prisoners from Ceylon for the purpose of employing them in some work on the Kāveri and also by the South Indian tradition that King Karikāla had the dams of River Kāvāri constructed by prisoners.<sup>27</sup> During the period Cōlas and Ceras were inimical to each other. If Gajabhāhu visited India as an enemy of the Cōlas, it is possible that he participated in the consecration ceremony of the *Pattini* shrine and that he introduced to Ceylon the cult of *Pattini* whom the aforesaid Cera king worshipped.<sup>28</sup>

As mentioned above, he is said to have brought a large number of Tamil works on the Pattini cult. But we must not overlook the fact that the reference is found only in the later works. *Gajabhā Kathāva*<sup>29</sup> which belongs to about 18th century mentions that Gajabhāhu brought a large number of books on Pattini cult with him to Ceylon. According to the aforesaid work, he brought as many as 7700 Tamil poems with him. The figure of 7700 may be a hyperbole but it is quite possible that he had the story of Pattini versified by his own court poets.<sup>30</sup>

In addition to the aforesaid main commentaries, there appear to have been many other commentaries in Sinhala. In reviewing the sources of Pāli commentaries, at length, Dr. E. W. Adikaram, suggests that many annotations had been written in Sinhala before Buddhagōsa's arrival here and that some of them were actual books while others were only collections of the views of ancient teachers. According to Dr. Adikaram, the following early annotations, teachers and their opinions are mentioned by name in Pāli commentaries of Buddhagōsa and other commentators.<sup>31</sup>

1. Mahā-aṭṭhakathā or Mūla-aṭṭhakathā
2. Mahāpaccariya-aṭṭhakathā
3. Kurundi-aṭṭhakathā
4. Andhak-aṭṭhakathā
5. Samkhepa-aṭṭhakathā
6. Vinaya-aṭṭhakathā
7. Suttanta-aṭṭhakathā
8. Āgama-aṭṭhakathā
9. Dīgha-aṭṭhakathā
10. Majjhima-aṭṭhakathā
11. Saṃyutta-aṭṭhakathā
12. Aṅguttara-aṭṭhakathā
13. Abhidhamma-aṭṭhakathā
14. Sīhala-aṭṭhakathā
15. Aṭṭhakathā (in the singular number)
16. Aṭṭhakathā (in the plural number)
17. Aṭṭhakathācariyā
18. Ācariyā
19. Ācariyavāda
20. Ācariyamata
21. Therasallāpa
22. Parasamuddāvāsī therā
23. Vitaṇḍavādī
24. Porāṇā
25. Porāṇakattherā
26. Porāṇācariyā
27. Porāṇa-aṭṭhakathā
28. Bhāṇakā

Among these the *Mahā Atthakathā*, *Mahā-paccari Atthakathā* and *Kurundi Atthakathā* were, as mentioned earlier, the main sources of Buddhaghosa's commentaries. Next to these major commentaries in Sinhala, the *Andatthakathā* and the *Samkhepattha Kathā* referred to in *Samantapāsādikā* were considered important.<sup>32</sup> It is agreed that the *Andatthakathā* was written at Konjivaram or Kancipura in South India. Both Dr. B. C. Law and Prof. Malalasekera are of opinion that the *Samkhepatthakathā* was also composed somewhere in India.<sup>33</sup>

The works referred to as *Suttantatthakathā*, *Majjhimatthakathā*, *Samyuttatthakathā* and *Abhidhammatthakathā* by Buddhaghosa in his *Visuddhimagga* had obviously existed in Ceylon prior to his arrival here. The *Dīghatthakathā* referred to in *Sumangalavilāsinī*, the commentary on the *Dīghanikaya*, was also of a prior date.<sup>34</sup>

Another important work of this category was the *Mahā-Atthakathā Mahāvamsa* or *Atthakathā Mahāvamsa*. It contained the history of Buddhism upto its introduction in Ceylon. At first it covered the history upto the passing away of Mahinda but later it was extended to cover the later history. According to Prof. L. S. Perera, Mahāvamsa author has drawn material from the Sīhalatthakathā Mahāvamsa to which *Mahāvamsa Tikā* often refers.<sup>35</sup> According to the latter, the former was in Sinhala.<sup>36</sup>

"The meaning is that the old commentary, the way of teaching of the residents of Mahāvihāra, will be told in the language of Magadha, having given up the language of the Sinhala." What the old commentary referred to here is the same as the Sīhalatthakathā Mahāvamsa is evident from the following statement.

"Why did the teacher compose this *Pajjapadoruvamsa* in spite of the existence of ancient Sīhalatthakathā Mahāvamsa."<sup>37</sup> The Mahāvamsa Tikā makes it clear that – Pāli Mahāvamsa was composed in view of the fact that the Sīhalatthakathā Mahāvamsa contained too many details (in some places) and abounded in repetitions.<sup>38</sup> But this work has disappeared altogether. We are indebted to Mahāvamsa Tikā for all our knowledge about the work. Prof. Malalasekera, who edited Mahāvamsa Tikā ascribes this work to 8th or 9th century A. D.<sup>39</sup> Among the commentaries referred to in this work are *Uttaravihāratthakathā*, *Vinayatthakathā*, *Mahābōdhivamsatthakathā*, *Dīpavamsatthakathā*, *Sīmākathā*, *Cetiya-vamsatthakathā*, *Sahassavattu Atthakathā* etc. In Mahāvamsa Tikā, we find considerable material taken from these commentaries and Glossaries.<sup>40</sup>

Some works of the Polonnaruva period which followed the Anurādhapura period refer to another work of this category, namely a work which described Suvannamāli Cetiya. This work can be ascribed to 1st century A. D.<sup>41</sup> An inscription round near the Southern Gateway (Vāhalkada) of Suvannamāli Cetiya mentions some rituals performed at the stūpa.

This inscription also helps us to trace another work *Tūpavamsa Kathā* by name. Reading of this work before the public in the terrace formed part of the ritual at the Great stūpa.<sup>42</sup> The work referred to in the *Ruvanvāli* Inscription was perhaps the source of the Pāli *Tūpavaṃsa* as well as of Sinhala *Tūpavaṃsa* which is probably datable to Polonnaruva period.

We also find some reference to a very valuable work in Sinhala. It was called *Vimuttimaggā* and appears to have existed about the 1st century B. C. There are reasons to believe that *Visuddhimaggā*, the great work of Buddhaghosa was inspired by this Sinhala *Vimuttimaggā*. This is of course no longer with us. But the Government of Ceylon recently published a certain Pāli *Vimuttimaggā*. According to the editors, the manuscript was found at Asgiri Vihāra in Kandy in a decayed condition. In commenting its date and author, the introduction remarks<sup>43</sup> that "this great gem of a book was compiled by the Great Elder Mahātiṣṣa, nephew of King Dēvānampiyatissa himself, the first Sinhalese to attain Sainthood after the establishment of the Dispensation of the Buddha in Ceylon, by way of taking down the inscription of his teacher, the Great Elder Mahāmahinda, benefactor of the island."

The introduction also makes a reference to the source of *Vimuttimaggā*.<sup>44</sup> "This book worthy of worship is much older than *Visuddhimaggā* composed in the ancient Sinhala language and was rendered into Pāli at the same time as other Sinhala commentaries. Presumably the Manual of Instruction on Meditation called *Vimuttimaggā* suffered the same fate as the Sinhala commentaries after they were translated into Pāli. Although the work in Sinhala disappeared the *Vimuttimaggā* was protected by the Great Elders of Mahāvihāra who handed it down by oral tradition of successive generations of pupils."<sup>45</sup>

*Elu Daladā Vamsa* is another important work which is no longer with us. It described the history of the Tooth Relic which arrived in Ceylon in 4th century. The Pāli poem, *Dāthāvamsa*, which Dharmakīrti composed during the Polonnaruva period, appears to have been based on this *Elu Daladā Vamsa* which was in ancient Sinhala verse.<sup>46</sup>

The work exists no longer. But if it was in verse as Pāli *Dāthāvamsa* is, the Sinhala language had but then reached such a stage of development as to permit composition of verses in it. That the contemporary Ceylon evinced keen interest in poetry and poetical works is evident from a reference to songs sung by damsels engaged in guarding paddy fields in *Paramatthajotikā*, Buddhaghosa's commentary on Pāli *Khuddakanikāya*. It is doubtful whether the reference is to the same kind of pastoral songs as the peasant women of modern Ceylon sing, namely Pāl Kavi, Goyam Kavi, and Nelum Kavi. But the said *Daladā Kāvya* and the verses referred to in *Paramatthajotikā* establish that the Sinhala people had been interested in poems and poetry even at that early period.

In addition some existing works refer to many literary works of this period. *Siyabaslakara*, for example, mentions an earlier work on rhetoric and prosody. It is said that this work described some metres such as *Piyum-Gī* and was written by an Elder named *Kalyānamitra* resident of *Kalāguru Sulupā*.<sup>47</sup> According to *Siyabaslakara* this lost work was like a favourite ship to<sup>48</sup> those who wish to enter the deep ocean of poetry. Many references in *Siyabaslakara* indicate the existence of a tradition of verse writing. It is evident from *Siyabaslakara* that the learned men of old were acquainted with rhetoric and prosody even before they studied the theories of Dandīn, the author of *Kāvya-darsa* or before *Siyabaslakara* itself was known to them.<sup>49</sup>

It is interesting that *Sidat-Sangarāva* which Védēha wrote during the Dambadeniya period (13rd century) has some excerpts from an ancient poem called *Asakdā-Kava* and an old *Mayura-Sandēsa*.<sup>50</sup>

The annotator in commenting on the particular verse says that the word 'hänge' occurs in *Asakdā-Kava*:

'Tamā vadanaya pomīn - no ikatāi hänge  
Naranindu ingēn semenada nāsī pasāngī'

According to him the following verse is taken from a poem *Kavsilumina* which obviously is not identical with the existing work of that name.<sup>51</sup>

'Naraniṇdu ingēn semenada nāsī pāsāhī  
Vilasa kala kapturu mada lela hemiliya kalaba'

The author of *Sidat - Sangarāva* intended to illustrate the occurrence of the nasal 'm' in classical Sinhala poetry.

*Sidat - Sangarāva* has another excerpt from *Asak - dā - Kava* in the Section on 'H'.<sup>52</sup>

"Ratata didi ihil vasanaturen rasam dam  
Kiyava kara halalā pāhābara digu nuvaṇ lā."

According to the annotator, the verse is an excerpt from *Asakdā - Kava*. It illustrates the point that 'h' and the vowel are interchangeable.

Further the chapter on compounds has an excerpt from *Asakdā - Kava* "Sakkābili siyo aṅgini ekpasak yavdiv".<sup>53</sup> The annotator explains that the word 'yavdiv' in *Asakdā - Kava* means 'till the end of life'. A certain *Asakdā - Kava* is referred to in several other instances also.<sup>54</sup>

*Sidat - Sangarāva* also has several more excerpts from *Kavsilumina*. Here 'Kusa' and 'Pabavata' are mentioned. But no such verse is found in the existing work of that name.<sup>55</sup>

Sidat Sangarāva has acited so examples from old *Mayura Sandēsa*

Monariñdu ekalhi puḷ salaga navā ganī <sup>56</sup>

Kalavañ bingu mahatvana hiru haṭvata <sup>57</sup>

The existing work of that name was composed during the Gampola period and is therefore later than Sidat Sangarāva. Obviously there was another *Mayura Sandēsa*. <sup>58</sup> But the work is lost.

Further we find that the Sinhala Literature had reached a very high standard during the reign of Aggabodhi (571-604 A. D.). According to *Nikāyasangraha* there were twelve great poets at the time. They were Sakdāmala, Asakdāmala, Demi, Bebiri, Dalabiso, Anurut Kumaru, Kitsiri Kumaru, Dalasala Kumaru, Dalagot Kumaru, Puravadu Kumaru, Siriya-bhāhu and Kasupkota Epā. <sup>59</sup>

Not a single work of any of these poets is extant. But all these poets were famous enough to go down in history.

These works might have perished on account of the disasters in the following periods.

All scholars agree that *Asakdā Kava* mentioned above was a poem by Asakdā, one of the twelve poets referred to above. In the opinion of scholars who have compared the excerpts in Sidat Sanharāva with the *Āsanka Jātaka*, <sup>60</sup> one of the stories of earlier births of the Buddha, which they say is the same as Asakdā, certain beautiful poems occurring not only in Sidat Sangarāva but also in *Elu-Sandās Lakuna* etc. seem to form part of a description of women in some narrative like the *Āsanka Jātaka*. <sup>61</sup>

Some information about our lost works is also found in Inscriptions. Archaeologists are of opinion that the fragmentary inscription at *Jetavanārāma* <sup>62</sup> contains a reference to the literature of Vaitulyavādīns which they wrote during the reign of King Mahāsēna. The phrase 'Vaya tudalakada potehi lī' occurring in said inscription is interpreted to mean the books of Vaitulyavādīns. The inscription at Indikatuseya also belongs to this category. <sup>63</sup> Not a single work of the partisans of Abhayagiri Sect is extant today. All we find are the literary works connected with Theravāda. It is unlikely that the learned monks at Abhayagiri Vihāra did not compose any literary works. <sup>64</sup> But the animosity between Mahāyānists and Theravadins went on raging furiously. The Theravāda Sect appears to have emerged victorious always. On all such occasions the followers of Mahāyāna suffered miserably. The chronicles and other sources do not mince their words when they say that their (Mahāyāna) books went up in flames.



The Anurādhapura Slab Inscription<sup>65</sup> of Kasyapa (914-923 A. D.) whose *Dhampiyā - Atuvā - Gatapadaya* occupies a prominent place in our literature as the oldest classic extant refers to another lost work indirectly: "...who annotated these sermons and described the qualities of the Buddha in his own language and who descended from lineage of the Sun". This suggests that he wrote a poem in praise of Buddha in addition to the glossary on *Dhammapadāḥhakathā*. Such contemporaneous inscriptional evidence is generally more liable than evidence from chronicles or other historical literary works.

Another aspect to be considered here is the nature of *Helatuvā*. The aforesaid Dhampiya-Atuvā-Gatapadaya, a prose work of the Anurādhapura period, has preserved for us number of passages from *Helatuvā*. We can get an inkling of the nature of *Helatuvā* from them. But they are full of errors and unintelligible. Professor Yakkaduve Sri Pragnārāma Thera has had occasion to edit them critically and scientifically for his long introduction entitled '*Samannēsanā*' to the *Mūla-Pannāsaka* of *Majjima Nikāya* published by Vidyālakāra Tripitaka Mandala in 1946. He has thus succeeded in throwing new light upon these passages. The following are the passages as edited by him.<sup>66</sup>

- (i) "Appamādaḥ paṇḍitaha jene" (M. Samannēsanā p. 22)
- (ii) "Sālittaka sippe yat hakuru lana sippi." Helatuvāyehi  
"Yanta hakkaraka lanaka sipāl' yet. (Ibid p. 23.)
- (iii) "Yoge vadāneki, upddāvahi nami" (Ibid p. 22-23)
- (iv) "Mārassa puppevadāneki, puppa akusalai" (Ibid p. 23)
- (v) "Sānavatiyā vatthunāma pathamakī" (Ibid p. 23)
- (vi) "Lakuntakovadānaki, rassa nāmi" (Ibid p. 23)
- (vii) "Rahado vadānaki, āvāṭhi nami" (Ibid p. 23)

Linguistic features of these *Helatuvā* passages have been examined by scholars. They are of opinion that the passages show characteristic of Prākṛit also found in pre-Christian inscriptions. Most of these passages end in 'ī' e. g. 'Patamakī, nami, nemi, vadānakī,<sup>67</sup> The words, also show much affinity with Pāli. For example the terminal 'k' in *Vadānakī*, *Patamakī* etc. is typically Prākṛit.<sup>68</sup> This characteristic is often met with in the Trinigala inscription of 4th century A. D.<sup>69</sup>

It is therefore necessary for us to take *Helatuvā* into consideration in any study of Sinhala literature or the history of Sinhala language. These ancient Sinhala commentaries would have claimed the attention of international oriental scholars even today had it not been for the misfortune of their having been translated into Pāli by Buddhaghosa. These *Helatuvā*, as exemplified by the limited number of passages we have now, help us to get a glimpse of the early Sinhala language which of all the modern Indo-Aryan languages, has a continuous history extending as far back as the 3rd century B. C.

The late Anurādhapura period saw a remarkable development of all forms of fine arts in Ceylon. Sculpture, Painting, Architecture and the like were at their zenith, as evident from the existing works and ruins. Buddhism encouraged the development of fine arts and therefore outstanding works of sculptural art including marvellous images had been constructed several centuries before any literary works in prose or verse were composed. Ancient sculpture at Anurādhapura now in ruins bear testimony not only to the artistic talent of ancient Sinhala but also to the purity of their culture. If they were talented enough to express their artistic genius in stone during the Anurādhapura period, there could be no doubt that they were talented enough to undertake compositions of prose and verse in Sinhala. Any outstanding development of sculpture and painting always goes hand in hand with a development of literature.<sup>70</sup>

The Jānakīharana of King Kumāradāsa makes it abundantly clear that during this period when great art of India exerted its influence on the art of Ceylon, the learned men of Ceylon were studying Sanskrit and other advanced literature and were able to produce Sanskrit poetry not second to Indian epics in standard.

Only three literary works written during this period are extant. They deal with three different fields of learning. One is a work on the principles of literary criticism, the second a work on the fundamentals of Discipline (Vinaya) and third a glossary on a Pāli Commentary. Presumably the Sinhala literature of the period covered many more fields than the aforesaid ones.

The question arises here as to what happened to these literary works. Scholars are divided in their opinion. The Editors of the Sinhala Etymological Dictionary are of opinion that these ancient poetical works disappeared on account of the linguistic difference in the later periods. With reference to the linguistic development from 9th to 13th century, the Editors make the following observation:<sup>71</sup>

‘The language of the inscriptions of the Early Sinhalese Period differs considerably from that of the Early Medieval Period. We must bear in mind that the spoken language changed more rapidly than the written language did. As time went on there was such a difference between the two as to make it difficult, if not impossible, for the people acquainted only with the contemporary spoken language, to comprehend the ancient written language. For this reason presumably the inscriptions and other state documents were written in a language to closer to the spoken language. The difference between the ancient written Sinhala and the Medieval written Sinhala can best be explained this way.’

Prof. Parānavitāna rejects this theory.<sup>72</sup> There is no evidence to say that such a drastic linguistic change did really take place or that the Sinhalese poetical works of the period disappeared on account of their being unintelligible to the Sinhalese of the succeeding generations. The language of *Kavsilumina* does not differ greatly from that of *Sigiri Graffiti*, the verses of which belong to an earlier period. The language of Sinhala verse of 6th century could not differ very much from that of 8th century. Both Parānavitāna and Martin Wickremasinghe therefore conclude that the ancient Sinhala poetical works disappeared on account of invading forces.<sup>73</sup>

Let us now consider the disaster which these invading forces bear upon the Sinhala literature.

According to *Mahāvamsa*<sup>74</sup> and the last chapters of the *Pūjāvaliya*,<sup>75</sup> Māga killed all Sinhalese whom he suspected to belong to the Sinhala Royal Family, enslaved all caste Sinhalese, molested women, demolished sacred buildings, persecuted monks, converted monasteries into homes for the Tamils, destroyed libraries and burnt down books and committed other inhuman acts. According to *Rājāvaliya*, rare palm leaf manuscripts were thrown asunder after taking out the binding twine and allowed to be blown off by the wind. All the literary notes and works they could lay hold of were reduced to ashes.<sup>76</sup> We can well imagine the fate of the literary and other works which they suffered at the hands of foreign invaders such as Māga.

We can look at the problem from another angle. The History of Buddhism in Ceylon is marked by constant struggles between Theravāda and Mahāyāna or more precisely between Mahāvihāra and Abhayagiri Vihāra representing the two schools respectively. We often read of some Sinhala Kings burning down all works on doctrine opposed to Theravāda and proclaiming that all such doctrines were heresies. It would not be out of place to consider a few such instances here.

The history of the struggle goes back to the reign of Vaṭṭagāmanī Abhaya. It began with the donation of Abhayagiri Vihāra to a certain Mahātissa Thera. Sometime after Mahātissa Thera received the donation, certain charges were levelled against him and the inquiry ended in his expulsion. Some of the followers also left Mahāvihāra in protest.<sup>77</sup> This event marked the first schism of the sangha in Sri Lanka. Those who belonged to the break-away group come to be known as Dharmarucikas after the name of a teacher whose teachings they professed to follow.<sup>78</sup> The partisans of Abhayagiri were in sympathy with Mahāyāna and established contact with Vaitulyavādīns in India. But the Mahāvihāra group succeeded in convincing the King that Vaitulyavāda was all heresy. A minister named Kapila was appointed to inquire into the dispute. The heresy was exposed and the Abhayagirikas were punished and their books reduced to ashes.<sup>79</sup>

Later in 3rd century A. D., King Goṭhābhaya is said to have shed luster on the Dispensation by earmarking sixty selected monks of the Vaitulyavādī Sect and burning down the Vaitulyavāda.<sup>80</sup> During the reign of Mahāsēna, his queen is said to have burnt down the Vaitulyavāda after putting to death the monk named Sanghamitra who was the chief counsellor of the King.<sup>81</sup> Partisans of Mahāvihāra also had their share of suffering when Vaitulyavādī monks persecuted Theravādī monks and reduced the Mahāvihāra to ashes. It is on record that King Mahāsena destroyed about 360 mansions including the Loha Pāsāda at the instigation of Sanghamitra.<sup>82</sup>

Among the sects that had their influence in Ceylon, the Mahāsāngika Sect had some following during the reign of Sena I (887-907 A.D.). He is said to have built a monastery, Vīrānkura by name, for them.<sup>83</sup> At about the same time another philosophy, Nīlapaṭadarṣana by name, made its way into Ceylon.<sup>84</sup> This philosophy does not appear to have taken root in Ceylon.

The information tabled above would show the type of competition that existed between Theravāda and Māhāyana. A large number of works of Theravāda Sect exist today. The question that arises here is whether the other Sect did not have a literature of its own. The probable answer is that they did have an extensive literature including religious literature of its own, and that the competition between the sects led to their literature being reduced to ashes. Of course only a few copies were available of such works. What was left over were destroyed by invaders. Fortunately for us a few works have escaped the disaster. It is these works that help us to get a glimpse of the ancient literature.

There is another aspect of the problem which has not claimed the attention of our scholars. The Helatuvā datable to the time of Mahinda disappeared altogether consequent upon their having been rendered into Pāli by Buddhaghosa in 5th century A. D. How far was Buddhaghosa responsible for the loss of early Sinhala literature? It was claimed that the commentaries were translated into Pāli for the benefit of international scholars. Was Pāli an international language at the time? If the commentaries in Sinhala were not translated into Pāli, would not all serious students of Buddhism learn Sinhalese instead? Why were they translated into Pāli? Why did not they help Sinhala to become an international language instead? We must certainly pay attention to all these questions.

It is in *Buddhaghosuppatti*, a history of Buddhism in Burma, that we find a detailed biographical account of Buddhaghosa.<sup>85</sup> But the work is of little historical value. It is doubtful whether the information it furnishes on the life of the great savant deserves more credence than that in a fiction. The only work that gives us some reliable information about the life of Buddhaghosa is the contemporaneous *Mahāvamsa*.<sup>86</sup> Prof. Malalasekera points out that the information found in *Mahāvamsa* is based on the earliest sources and therefore worthy of much credence. He is also of opinion that the biographical account given there bears the mark of authenticity.<sup>87</sup>

Let us therefore summarise the biographical account given in *Mahāvamsa*. It states that Buddhaghosa was originally a Brahmin youth who had mastered the three Vedas, an adept in all philosophies and a master of argumentation. He arrived at a monastery in Jambuddvīpa and went on reciting the Veda day and night in its original words from beginning to end. An Elder named Revata<sup>88</sup> overheard him and realised that he was a person endowed with immense wisdom and decided to subdue him. The Thera asked "Who is braying there?" The Brahmin replied: "What? do you know the meaning of bray?" The Thera said 'I know' and the brahmin youth enunciated his views. In reply the Thera put forward his own view. He recited the Abhidhamma text which the Brahman youth found it difficult to, comprehend and asked: "Whose incantations are these?" The thera replied 'These are the incantations of the Buddha'. The youth asked for them and the Thera replied that he could have them after entering the order. He entered the order for the sake of incantations, mastered the Tripitaka and was satisfied that it was the way.

His voice was like that of the Buddha and therefore he was called Buddhaghosa. He wrote the treatise named *Ñānodaya* and also the commentary named *Atthasālinī* on *Dhammasaṅgani*. He who was endowed with wisdom began to write his commentary on *Paritta*. The Thera this and said: "We have the texts here but not the commentaries. We also do not have the interpretation of various teachers. The Sinhala people possess the pure commentaries in Sinhala which the Wise Elder Mahinda composed after studying the word of the Buddha as recited at the three councils and also the way of speech postulated by the Great Elder Sāriputta. Go there, study and translate them into the language of Māgadha." He who possessed supreme intelligence set forth and arrived in Ceylon during the reign of King Māhānāma (406-428A.D.). At the Mahāvihāra he studied all Sinhala commentaries and the Theravāda doctrine completely under Elder Sanghapāla and asked for the books to write commentaries upon. The Mahāvihārikas wanted to test him and gave him two stanzas to express his talent. "We will satisfy ourselves and then think of giving you all the books" they said. Buddhaghosa composed *Visuddhimagga* by 'churning' as it were the whole Tripitaka and its commentaries. The monks of Mahāvihāra were highly satisfied and repeatedly said that he was no other person than the future Buddha Maitreya and gave all the texts for him to write commentaries upon.

The Thera lived at the Dūrasanga Granthākara Pirivena adjoining the Mahāvihāra and translated all the Sinhala commentaries into Māgadhi, the original language of all Peoples. All Theravāda teachers acclaimed his commentaries as if they were the Canon itself. The Mahāvamsa says that he left for India in order to worship at the Sacred Bodhi Tree after completing all his work in Ceylon.

It would be necessary here to refer briefly to the *Sīhalaṭṭhakathā* which Mahinda composed for the benefit of the Sinhala with the assistance of Sinhala monks.<sup>89</sup> According to Buddhaghosa, these *Sīhalaṭṭhakathā* were brought to Ceylon and rendered into Sinhala for the benefit of the people of Ceylon by Mahinda.<sup>90</sup> *Mahā Aṭṭhakathā*, *Mahā Paccariya Aṭṭhakathā*, and *Kurundi Aṭṭhakathā* were the major commentaries. These three works appear to have covered all the texts of the Tripiṭaka.<sup>91</sup> In addition to these three major commentaries, there were several minor ones. All of them were in Sinhala. Not a single one of those can be considered the earliest Sinhala literary works in extant. Buddhaghosa's translations of Sinhala commentaries earned much fame for Ceylon but at the same time they had as much adverse effect on Sinhala literature. He was undoubtedly responsible for the disappearance of *Sīhalaṭṭhakathās*.

*Buddhaghosuppatti* describes with great alacrity and gusto how the Sinhala commentaries were burnt down after they had been translated into Pāli.<sup>92</sup> According to the work, Mahinda's commentaries in Sinhala when piled together went up to a height of seven elephants of medium size.<sup>93</sup> It is surprising that this reference is not found in any document in Ceylon.

Another aspect that should claim our attention here is the principles on which the translations were based. Buddhaghosa himself mentions them in his own *Samantapāsādikā*:<sup>94</sup> "This commentary on the Vinaya will be written with the *Mahā Aṭṭhakathā* as the body, taking the meanings given in *Mahā Paccariya Aṭṭhakathā* and incorporating also the views of Thera." Elsewhere in the same work he says that he would write the commentary briefly in Pāli replacing only the language but not abandoning all interpretations.

As he himself has thus pointed out, he followed the tradition of the Mahāvihāra and omitted only what was irrelevant, unnecessary details and repetitions. On his own admission, he omitted certain things. But had he preserved all that was in the Sinhala commentaries without isolating what he thought was irrelevant, he would have been of greater service to the present-day historians and those engaged in religious and social research. Dr. Rahula has given several instances of what Buddhaghosa had left out.<sup>95</sup> *Mahāvamsa Tīkā*<sup>96</sup> mentions that the *Helatuvā* contained some informations about the mother of King Asoka in its commentary on *Cūlasīhanāda Sutta* of *Majjhima Nikāya*. But Buddhaghosa's commentary on *Cūlasīhanāda Sutta* does not contain any such information. Obviously Buddhaghosa had not translated *Helatuvā* as he found it.

Further folk - tales common to all Ceylonese people were made use of by commentators and preachers by way of illustrations. That they were commonly known is evident from the fact that he satisfies himself by merely mentioning them. In *Visuddhimagga*, for example, he says that 'the story of *Telakandarika* should be told here,' (*Telakandarika Vatthu cettha Kathetabbam*). and that 'the story of mango-eating Mahātissa Thera, resident of *Cīvara Gumba* be told here' (*Cīvaragumbavāsika ambakhādaka Mahātissa Theravattthupi cettha kathetabbam*). Neither of these stories is narrated in any of Buddhaghosa's commentaries.<sup>97</sup> We have no way of tracing back these folk tales. This mission of Buddhaghosa deprived those interested in social and religious research of the benefit and left the Sinhala literature poorer.

On the other hand he made a great contribution to the development and propagation of Pāli Literature. But we are not interested in that aspect and have to concentrate on our own problem. If what *Buddhaghosuppatti* says is true, the translations of the Tripiṭaka by Buddhaghosa were responsible for the destruction of Sinhala commentaries, the great gift which Mahinda made to the people of Ceylon eight centuries ago. Malalasekera suggests that the word 'destruction' should not be taken literally. According to him it means that Buddhaghosa's commentaries had the effect of Sinhala commentaries being ignored or forgotten. In other words he admits that Pāli commentaries overshadowed everything else.<sup>98</sup> According to *Buddhaghosuppatti*, the wisdom of other intellectuals dims before Buddhaghosa like Moon before Dragon's Head (Rāhu).<sup>99</sup>

Prof. Malalasekera quotes *Buddhaghosuppatti* and seems to agree with what it says here. But Buddhaghosa himself admits that his commentaries are based on or translations of Sinhala commentaries which were composed under the direct supervision of Mahinda whom the people of Ceylon called 'The second Buddha'. Then how could the Pāli commentaries surpass the Sinhala commentaries? Elsewhere he quotes Rhys Davids.<sup>100</sup> "Although the method followed in his (Buddhaghosa's) commentaries was the same as the ancient commentarial method preserved in the Tripiṭaka, he has shown greater academic proficiency than the ancient writers". Malalasekera is in full agreement with Prof. Rhys Davids here.<sup>101</sup> In view of the fact that we have no way of comparing the lost commentaries in Sinhala with the existing Pāli commentaries which are translations of the former, how is it possible for us to agree with Rhys Davids here? How unscientific would such a comparative study be, if ever attempted? Malalasekera relies on what Prof. Rhys Davids says. But the former has adduced no reasons for doing so. Has either of them done any research on *Helatuvā*? The Pāli commentaries certainly helped the development of Pāli literature in Ceylon. But they were mainly responsible for the Sinhala literature being overshadowed.

Buddhaghosa made it clear that Ceylon, the country that preserved the Tripitaka by oral tradition, is superior to all other countries and justifiably the Home of Theravāda Buddhism. Later years attracted a large number of students of Buddhism to the island. What attracted them here is the large number of valuable works of Buddhaghosa.<sup>102</sup> According to Malalasekera, Pāli had already developed into a language pliable in usage, simple in form and able to express all the thinking of contemporary man.<sup>103</sup> But what Buddhaghosa expressed in his Pāli commentaries had already been expressed in Sinhala. Is it possible for us to say what had been expressed in Sinhala. Is it possible for us to say what had been expressed in Sinhala was expressed more vividly by Buddhaghosa in Pāli?

Moreover Pāli does not appear to have been a living or spoken language in any part of India. There is no historical evidence for such an assumption. The Buddha is said to have preached in Pāli. But there is no historical evidence to support the view. The earliest evidence we have is the fact that the Pāli Tripitaka was reduced to writing at Aloka Vihāra. Then was Pāli an artificial language invented to facilitate the Tripitaka being handed down by oral tradition? Each religion of Indian origin had a language of its own. Is it established that Buddhism had a language of its own?<sup>104</sup>

Classical Sinhala words have crept into the Canon itself in the guise of Pāli words. Prof. Yakkaduvé Sri Pragnārāma Thera, has given several instances of such words and phrases in his introduction<sup>105</sup> to *Pāli Majjhima-nikāya* edited by the Principles of Vidyālakāra Pirivena. One example is the word 'Vadānake' which occurs in the *Uddāna gāthā* at the conclusion of *Sammāditthi Sutta*<sup>106</sup> of *Majjhima Nikāya*. The key to the meaning of these stengas is found in the word 'Vadānake'. The Pāli Text Society editions have discarded the verses altogether. In Burmese editions, the word has been replaced by the word 'Padānam'. Only in the Siamese editions it is given as 'Vadānake'. In spite of the fact that it is found in *Majjhima Nikāya* which forms part of the Pāli Canon, the word 'Vadānake' is not Pāli at all. It is old Sinhalese.<sup>107</sup> There are also other Sinhala words in *Majjhima Nikāya*. Prof. Yakkaduvé Sri Pragnārāma Thera has marshalled facts from a large number of words in old Sinhala, Prākṛit and Sanskrit in support of his theory that the word is old Sinhala. A fuller inquiry into the language of *Majjhima Nikāya* and other texts in the Tripitaka is bound to throw more light on the relationship between Pāli and Sinhala.

There is yet another theory of Malalasekera which we have to consider here. According to him, a great number of people could be addressed in Pāli than Sinhala.<sup>108</sup> But in order to understand the commentaries which Buddhaghosa translated from Sinhala into Pāli, both the oriental and occidental scholars had to learn Pāli. But Pāli was never an international language or for that matter a living or spoken language



in any particular country. Had it not been for Buddhaghosa's translations which led to the disappearance of the precious Sinhala Commentaries, the Sinhala language, a living and spoken language indeed, would have earned a more significant international position than Pāli.

Buddhaghosa and other commentators are indebted to the Sinhalese commentaries. These Pāli commentaries have become internationally famous and assumed to be independent works. The commentarial literature in Sinhala has been ignored altogether. The very fact that these Pāli commentaries are only translations of Sinhala commentaries is overlooked. Some Indian scholars feel sorry that the Mahāvihāra monks co-operated with Buddhaghosa in a project that led to the disappearance of these Sinhala commentaries altogether.<sup>109</sup> According to Rhys Davids, Malalasekera and others, the Pāli commentaries are more systematic than the Sinhala ones. Buddhaghosa and other commentators on the other hand have acknowledged their indebtedness to Sinhala commentaries, in each of their works. It is therefore obvious that their are not independent works but translations or adaptations of Sinhala commentaries. It appears that Mahāvihāra monks permitted Buddhaghosa to compose his works freely.<sup>110</sup> Prof. B. M. Barua is pained at the readiness with which the Mahāvihāra monks granted Buddhaghosa's request. In his opinion the Ceylonese monks did not consider the adverse effect that this will have on Sinhala language and literature and even on their own position. It is certainly regrettable that they elevated Pāli into an eminence from which to look down upon their own language and literature.<sup>111</sup>

It is also unfortunate that the present-day Sinhala scholars do not realise the gravity of the matter. Ratmalānē Sri Dharmāpāma, Principal of the Vidyllankara Pirivena, the great savant who flourished early in this century, was one of those who had realised it. In the Introduction to his own edition of *Kāvyaśekara* he says: "Buddhaghosa's commentaries helped the cause of development of the Dhamma but at the same time harmed the Sinhala language and literature in no small measure". Martin Wickrema singhe agrees with the above statement.<sup>112</sup> Prof. D. E. Hetthiaratchi also agrees with it and observes that Buddhaghosa's commentaries went a long way to help the Dispensation but at the same time dealt a fatal blow to the Sinhala literature which had to surrender the eminent position it held.<sup>113</sup>

It is no wonder that some scholars who elevate Buddhaghosa to the position of second Buddha object to any criticism being levelled against him. As pointed out by Prof. Barua and as granted by all scholars,<sup>114</sup> Sinhala is an Aryan language. If it was so developed in the centuries before Christ as to permit not only inscriptions but also philosophical works like *Alaṭuvā* being written in it, it certainly was very rich and pliable.

We have endeavoured to establish that the Sinhala had a literature of their own in countries before Christ and that the number of their literary works far exceeded what we know of. We have also explained how that vast literature perished, on account of foreign invasions, the competition between Mahāvihāra and Abhayagi Vihāra, the prominence given to Pāli by Buddhaghosa as the language of the Buddha which persuaded even Sinhala monks to compose works in Pāli.

## Notes:

1. Nicholas, C. W. - *Palaeographical Development of the Brāhmi Script in Ceylon from 3rd century B. C. to 7th century A. D.*; (University of Ceylon Review, (UCR.) Vol. VII, No. I. pp. 60 - 65); *The Titles of the Sinhalese Kings as recorded in the Inscriptions of 3rd c. B. C. to 3rd c. A. C.*; (UCR. Vol. VII, No. 4, pp. 225 - 249); Fernando, P.E.E-UCR. Vol. VII, No. 4, pp. 282 - 302.; Karunaratne, W.S. - *The date of the Brāhmi Inscriptions of Ceylon*, (Prof. Paranavitana Felicitation Volume, Colombo, 1965, pp. 243 - 250); Wijeratne, D. J. - *History of Sinhalese Noun*, (University of Ceylon, Colombo, 1956, p. xxv.); Paranavitana, S. - Ceylon Journal of Science (CJS.) Section G. Vol. II, p. 202.
2. Wickremasinghe, D. M. de. Z. - *Catalogue of the Sinhalese Manuscripts in the British Museum (CSMBM) 1900*, Introduction p. x.
3. Mahāvamsa (Mv.) Ch. vii, 50-52.
4. Mv. Ch. vii, 58.
5. Mv. Ch. viii, 3.
6. Mv. Ch. x, 48-50.
7. Mv. Ch. xxii, 15-16.
8. Mv. Ch. xxxii, 26.
9. *Pūjāvaliya* (ed. B. Saddhathissa, Colombo, 1930) p. 723.; *Sinhala Thūpavaṃsa* (ed. Porf. D. E. Hetthiaratchi, Colombo, 1948) p. 165.
10. Mv. ch. xxvii, 6.
11. Mv. ch. xv, 173.
12. CSMBM, Introduction, p. x.
13. Malalasekara G. P. - *The Pāli Literature of Ceylon*, 1982, London, Refrinted 1958 Colombo. (PLC.,) p. 45-46; CSMBM., p. x.
14. Mv. ch. xxxiii, 50-51.
15. The Tripiṭaka Doctrine which was thus handed down by oral tradition of these Great Elders was recited and reduced to writing by five hundred Saints who sant down in *Alu Lena* in the country of Mātula under the protection of a certain chief. - *Nikaya Saṃgrahaya*, (ed. D.P.R. Samara nayake, 1960, Colombo) (Nks.) p. 73.
16. Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Ceylon Branch (JRASCB.), xxxvi. p. 58.
17. Archaeological Survey of Ceylon Annual Report (ASCAR), 1933, p. 14; Fernando. P.E.E. - *Palaeographical Development of the Brāhmi Script in Ceylon from 3rd c.B.C. to 7th c.A.D.*; UCR. Vol. VII, pp. 282-301.; *Ancient Inscriptions in Ceylon (AIC)*, No. 2, 1946, p. 17.; see also note 2.
18. ASCAR. 1933, p. 14, 34.

19. Taladara nagaha puta devana lene agata anagata catudisa sgasa - Vessagiri (2 c.B.C.)
20. Epigraphia Zeylanica (EZ.) Vol. I, p. 14.
21. CSMBM., pp. x -xi.; PLC., pp. 45 - 46.
22. CSMBM., p. xi.
23. CSMBM., p. xi.; PLC. pp. 45-46.
24. *Parakumbāsirita*, (1953, Colombo.) 12-14.
25. These legends are best illustrated by the poem 'Ankota Hatana'. For account of the poem, see JRASCB Vol. XXIV, p. 55.
26. *Silappadikāram* (ed. V. Saminathaaiyar, Madras. 1920) pp. 30, 589.
27. Nilakanta Sastri, K. A. - *The Colas*, (2nd. Edition, Madras, 1955) pp. 53ff.
28. University of Ceylon, History of Ceylon (UHC.,) p. 184.
29. Godakumbura, C. E. - *Sihalese Literature* (SL.) (Colombo, 1955) pp. 284-285.
30. Jayasekara, U. D. - *Gī - Kavē Vagatuga* (Associated Printers Ltd., Colombo, 1962) pp. 37-39.; PLC., p. 50.
31. Adikaram - E. W. - Early History of Buddhism in Ceylon, 1953, Colombo (EHBC), p. 10.
32. *Vesaturu-dā-Sanne*, (ed. Prof. D. E. Hetthiarachchi) (VDS) Intro. p. 10
33. PLC., p. 92.; Law, B.C. - *A History of Pali Literature*, Vol. II, (London, 1933) p. 276.
34. *Vesaturu-dā-Sanne*, Intro. p. 12; EHBC., p. 13.
35. UHC. pp. 47 - 48.; 98.
36. *Mahāvamsa - Tīkā (Vamsatthappakāsinī)* (ed. Batuvantudava & M. Nanissra, Colombo, 1895) pp. 22, 28-29.
37. Mv. Tīkā. p. 22.
38. Mv. Tīkā. p. 28.
39. Ibid. p. 29.
40. *Vamsatthappakāsinī (Mahāvamsa Tīkā)* (ed. G.P. Malalasekera, PTS, London, 1935) p. 109.
41. Sannasgala, P. B. - *Sinhala Sāhityavamsaya*, (1964, Colombo) p. 48.
42. Having listened to the Tūpavamsa at the terrace of Ruvanvali and having made suitable offerings to the preacher. -EZ. Vol. IV., p. 256.
43. *Vimuttimagga* (ed. G. Siri Ratanajoti & K. Siri Ratanapala, Published by the Govt. of Ceylon, Colombo, 1963) preface, p. xv.

44. *Vimuttimagga*, p.xv.; Similarities between the Chinese version of Vimuttimagga and Visuddhimagga, see, J.PTS. 1917 - 1919, pp. 69ff.; PLC., pp. 86-87.
45. The editors have not adduced any historical evidence in support of this conclusion.
46. Sadésabhāsāya Kavīhi Sīhalé - Katampivaṅsaṅ Jinadantadhātuyā "The Chronicle of the Tooth Relic of the Conqueror was composed by the poet of Ceylon in the language of their country" (*Pāli Dāthāvamsa*, (ed. Sīlānkara, Alutgama, 1914.) 10 verse.
47. "Kalāguru Sulupā - Vāsīu kulunu nuvana yut  
Kalanamite Viyatuṅ - Gati Piyum Lakunu 'ē' "  
Piyum Gī Etc. in the book of learned Kalanmit resident Kalāguru Sulupā and who was endowed with compassion and wisdom. *Siyabaslakara* (ed. Nanasiha, Colombo, 1964) v. 15.
48. *Siyabaslakara*, v. 19.
49. (i) Having worshipped the teachers of characteristics of poetry such as Brahma, Sakra, Jupiter, Sage Kāsyapa, Great Vāmana and Dandin. - *Siybaslaker*, v. 2.  
(ii) Ancient teachers also do not say. -Ibid v. 14.  
(iii) Ancient works which were brief. -Ibid v. 3.
50. *Sidat - Sangarā Vistara Sannaya* (ed. Ratmalāné Siri Dharmārāma, 4th Impression, Colombo, 1931) pp. 9 - 10. The existing work of that name is said to belong to Dambadeni period. *Mayura Sandēsa* also belongs to Gampola period. The aforesaid verses in Sidat-Sangarāva appear to be excerpts from some other works bearing the same names than the existing *Mayura Sandēsa* and *Kavsilumina*.
51. *Pārani Sanna Sahita Kavsilunimna*, (ed. Prof. M. B. Āriyapāla Colombo 1965) v. 213.
52. *Sidat - Sangarā - Vistara - Sannaya*, p. 50.
53. Ibid. p. 113.
54. Ibid. p. 114.
55. Ibid. pp. 83, 88.
56. Ibid. p. 29.
57. Ibid. p. 49.
58. The excerpts from Sidat Sangarāva suggest that they were in Gī-metres. In that case this old *Mayura Sandēsa* can very well be the oldest *Sandēsa* ever written in Sinhala. If that is so, the history of *Sandēsa Literature* goes back to the Anurādhapura period.
59. Nks. p. 81.

60. Sāhitya, Vol. IV. (Govt. of Ceylon, Depart. of Cultral Affairs) 1951) pp. 12 - 16. See for Āsankavatī Jataka, Pansiyapanas Jātakapota, pp. 687-690.
61. Sāhitya, Vol. IV. p. 16.
62. EZ. Vol. I. pp. 1. ff.
63. EZ. Vol. IV. p. 282.
64. PLC., p. 46.
65. EZ. Vol. I, p. 43.
66. *Majjhima-Nikāya*, Vol. I (ed. Siri Dharmārāma and Siri Dharmānanda, Vidyālankāra Tripitaka Series, Kelaniya, 1946) Introduction by Yakka-  
duvè Siri Pragnārāma, p. 21.
67. Majjhima Nikaya Samannésanā, p. 24.
68. Ibid. pp. 25-26.
69. EZ. Vol. III, pp. 177-178.
70. Wickramasinghe, Martin - Simhala Sāhitye Negīma (10th impressioin  
Maharagama, 1963) p. 27.
71. Sinhalese Etymological Dictionary (SED), (ed. Prof, Wilhelm Geiger  
and Sir D. B. Jayatilaka) Vol. I, Part. I, Introduction p. xvii.
72. Paranavitana, S. - Sigiri Graffiti Vol. I, Part. V. see Grammar.
73. Simhala - Sāhitye Negīma, p. 29.
74. Mv. ch. 80, 54-79.
75. *Pujāvaliya*, (ed. Mābopitiye Medankera, 1932) ch. xxxiv, p. 690.
76. *Rajāvaliya*, (ed. B. Goonasekara, 1926, Colombo) p. 256.; PLC,  
p. 206ff.
77. Nks. pp. 73-74.
78. PLC. pp. 42-43.; UHC., 245ff.
79. Nks. 74-75.; Mv. ch. xxxvi, III-112.
80. Nks. p. 75.
81. Ibid p. 77.
82. Ibid pp. 76-77.
83. Mv. ch. xlviii, 68.
84. Nks. pp. 76-77.
85. *Buddhaghosuppatti* (ed. James Gray, London, 1892)
86. Mv. ch. xxxvii, 224-248.
87. PLC., pp. 79-80.

88. In the opinion of Prof. Malalasekera, this Revata Thera might have been one of the residents of Monastery which King Kitsirimevan (301-328 A.D.) built in India for the benefit of Ceylonese monks. - PLC., pp.80-81
89. Also see Dr. Udaya Mallawarachchi, - *Influence Des Jāthka Kathā Sus La Littérature Sinhala*, Ph. D. Thesis (Un Published, Sorbonne 1971 Paris.) Chapter II, which discusses Sīhalatṭkathā, in detail.
90. See Introductions to *Dīghanikāyatṭhakathā*, *Majjhimanikāyatṭhakathā*, and *Anguttaranikāyatṭhakathā* and other commentaries by Buddhaghosa
91. Rahula, W. - *History of Buddhism in Ceylon*, 1966 Colombo (HBC).. Introduction pp. xxiv-xxv.
92. Buddhaghosuppatti, p. 55ff. The suggestion made here dose not appea to be tenable, in view of the fact that Sinhala annotation of *Visuddhimagga Sannaya* written during the Danmbadeniya period refers to *Sīhalatṭhakathā*.
93. Buddhaghosuppatti, p. 60.
94. Samanthapasadikā (PTS). (Smp). beginnig.
95. HBC., pp. XXIV - XXVI.
96. Mahāvamsa Tīkā (PTS) p. 193.
97. HBC., pp. XXVI - XXVII.
98. PLC., pp. 98 - 99.
99. Buddhaghose patitṭhante pannavantā pi ye janā Tesam pannāpabhā n'atthi Rāhu-mukhe va Candimā, *Buddhaghosuppatti* p. 66.
100. *Encylopeadia of Religion and Ethics* (ERE) (ed. James Hastings, New York, 1925) Vol. I. pp. 885e- 887.
101. PLC., p. 102.; ERE. Vol. I. p. 887.
102. Ibid pp. 103 - 104.
103. Ibid
104. This point will be discussed by Dr. Rāhula forthcoming publication on Pāli Literature.
105. M. Samannésanā pp. 19 - 48.)
106. Ibid p. 59.
107. Ibid. p. 20.
108. PLC., pp. 103 - 104.
109. Barua, B. M. - *Ceylon Lectures*, 1945, Calcutta. pp. 87 - 88.
110. Ibid pp. 87 - 88.
111. Ibid. p. 88.
112. *Sinhala SāhITUodaya Kathā* (Galkissa, 1932) p. 20.
113. *Vesaturu dā Sannaya*, Introduction. p. 3.
114. *Ceylon Lectures*, p. 88