

INTERPRETATION OF SOURCE MATERIAL FOR THE STUDY OF RELATIONS BETWEEN SRI LANKA AND THAILAND PRIOR TO FOURTEENTH CENTURY*

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INTRODUCTION

THE recorded history of Thailand begins with the founding of the first independent Thai Kingdom in Sukhōthai, in the late 13th century. Its history from 14th century onwards, has been satisfactorily documented with the help of abundant source material, both literary and archaeological. Hence we have at our disposal, a not so complicated picture of what happened in the political and cultural spheres of that land during the period from 14th century onwards, with fairly established chronology. As such history of contacts between Sri Lanka and Thailand during that period could be arranged in chronological sequence and historians have done so to a satisfactory degree.

But the study of the subject relating to the period prior to 14th century is quite different, for not only are the source material rare, sporadic and clouded with myths and legends, but also as mentioned earlier, the history of Thailand itself is yet to be documented satisfactorily.

On the other hand Sri Lankan history of the corresponding period is relatively clear and comprehensively documented with established chronology. This has been done with the help of the bulk of information furnished in literary and archaeological sources. So, our primary task is to discover relevant evidence, if any, in whatever form, in the dark period of Thai history and to identify their parallels in the clear picture of Sri Lankan history prior to 14th century.

In 1986, when I was in Thailand, engaged in a research programme, I happened to discover, in Prachinburi, 150 kilo meters to the east of Bangkok, three Pali stanzas from a Sri Lankan Pali poem, quoted in an inscription dated 683 Saka Era corresponding to 761 A.D. This discovery was announced in an article published in the *Journal of the Siam Society*, 1988, Vol. 76, under the title "The Noen Sā Buā Inscription of Dong Sī Maha Bō Prachinburi", and also in the *Vidyodaya Journal of Social Science* Vol. 1, part, 1, 1987, under the title "Telakatāhagāthā in a Thailand inscription of 761 A.D.". Subsequently a comprehensive examination of this evidence was presented in a paper, by me at the 11th conference of IAHA held in Colombo, August, 1988, under the title "New evidence on

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cultural relations between Sri Lanka and the Dvāravatī Kingdom in Thailand", which was published in the **Vidyodaya Journal of Social Science**, Vol. 2, Nos. 1-2, 1988.

This being precise and concrete evidence for the existence of Buddhist relations between the two countries, I wish to set the upper limit of the period under survey in this paper, as 8th century A.D. This paper therefore, attempts to discover, interpret and compare the source material available in both countries, pertaining to contacts between the two countries during the period from 8th century A.D. to 13th century A.D.

PART I

CANDRABHĀNU EPISODE

I find it easy to approach the subject, working backwards from 13th century to 8th century. The information contained in Sri Lankan sources about the appearance of a Jāvaka King in the political scene of Sri Lanka in the mid. 13th century, is a convenient entry to the topic. Although this episode has been examined by various scholars for over the last seven decades, some points and arguments still call for further interpretation and elucidation. It is therefore, necessary to arrange this information in chronological sequence in order to identify the points that need more clarification and further analysis.

I.1 Candrabhānu in the Pujāvaliya and the Culavaṃsa

The most contemporary source is the *Pujāvaliya*, a literary treatise which was composed in Sinhala language, in 1266 A.D., and with a few details added in 1271, perhaps by the same author. The author was a leading Buddhist monk who was patronized by the ruling King Parākramabāhu II (1236 - 1271 A.D.). In the 34th chapter, after a brief account of the succession of the Sinhala dynasty up to his time, the author narrates, in detail, the current events during the time of the ruling monarch, Parākramabāhu II, which undoubtedly would have been witnessed by the author himself. The relevant information is as follows, "in the eleventh year of the king (1247 A.D.) a king by the name of Candrabhānu and a great army of Jāvakas, armed with poisonous weapons, having landed in different ports, under the pretext that they were Buddhists, started to ravage Lanka, and the King fighting fierce battles beat and chased them away."¹

Having narrated various other activities of the king, at the end of the chapter, the author says, that Candrabhānu, who was formerly beaten, having later collected many Tamil soldiers from Pāndya and Coḷa, landed in Mātota with the Jāvaka army, and having won over to his side, the Sinhala soldiers in Padī, Kurundu, Mānavatu, Gōna, and Debara paṭana etc., he

marched to Yāpahuva and demanded the scared tooth relic and the bowl relic together with the royal dominion at the threat of war. Then the son and the nephew of the king after fierce fighting beat them and drove them away.²

However it is noteworthy that this account of the second invasion seems to have been added after 1266 A.D., when perhaps the same author rounded off his narration in 1271.³

The relevant part of the **Cūlavamsa**, which is the main chronicle of the Island was composed, during the time of Parākramabhāhu IV (1302 - 1326 A.D.), who was a grandson of Parākramabāhu II. The author of this part, in dealing with the period of Parākramabhāhu II, has borrowed the **Pujavaliya** account in toto and translated into Pali verse. However he has added one fresh information, that Virabāhu, the nephew of Parākramabhāhu II, having repulsed the first invasion went to Devapura and made offering to God Uppalavaṇṇa.⁴ The dates of the two invasions recorded in both sources, have been established as the first in 1247 A.D. and the second in 1262 A.D.

I. 2 Candrabhānu of Tambalinga in the Hatthavanagalla Vihāra Vamsa (Hvv.)

The other contemporary source is the **Hatthavanagalla Vihāra Vamsa**, composed perhaps on a date earlier than that of the **Pujavaliya**. This work, written in Pali has a short account on Parākramabāhu in which there is a passing reference to Candrabhānu. According to that "Candrabhānu had deluded the whole world by showing that he was serving the world and the religion. He was possessed of abundant military train and was determined to take possession of the sovereignty of Lanka and had come from Tambalinga country with feudatory rulers. Parākramabāhu sent him to the abode of the exterminator. (*antakabhavana*)⁵

This being the only reference to Candrabhānu in the **Hvv.**, it is not clear whether the author mentions the first invasion of 1247, or the second of 1262, or both. The wording of the account suggests that it deals with only one invasion. Amaradasa Liyanagamage who made an exhaustive study of the sources pertaining to this period, thinks, that the author of **Hvv.** has taken the second invasion into account. His assumption was based on the fact that the death of Candrabhānu in the battle was implied in the account.⁶ However it must be noted that neither **Pujavaliya** nor the **Cūlavamsa** in dealing with the second invasion mentions that Candrabhānu lost his life. Both **Pv.** and **Cv.**, more specifically, say, that he fled defenceless. The expression '*antakabhavanam upaniya*', meaning 'having sent him to the abode of the exterminator', used in the **Hvv.** has to be taken metaphorically. More over the careful observation of the sequence of events as recorded in the **Hvv.** makes it clear that the author refers to the first invasion in 1247 and not the second.

I.3 Candrabhānu, The lord of Tāmbralinga in the Jaiya inscription

The vital information furnishad in the *Hvv.*, which the other two sources lack, is the mention of Tambalinga as the country from which Candrabhānu hailed. The long drawn controversy among the scholars over the identification of this Candrabhānu of Tāmbralinga country mentioned in Sri Lankan chronicles, was settled for ever, with the discovery of the famous **Jaiya inscription** and interpretation given to it, by George Coedes in 1918 and in 1927 respectively. This inscription in Sanskrit, dated in Kaliyuga Era, 433, i.e. 1230 A.D., introduces a Candrabhānu, described as the lord of Tāmbralinga.⁷ Tāmbralinga is the Sanskrit form of Tambalinga mentioned in *Hvv.* On the basis of this evidence it has now been generally accepted that Tambalinga mentioned in the Sri Lankan chronicle is the Ligore region in Southern Thailand with Nagara Sri Dharmaraja, Nakhon Si Thamrat, as its capital and that Candrabhānu was the ruler there.

I.4 Story of the Sīhala Paṭima in the Jinakālamālī (Jkm)

The story of the Sīhala Paṭima, recorded in the **Jinakālamālī**, has been considered as having a bearing on the Candrabhanu episode. This chronicle composed in 1516 A.D. by Ratanapañña Thera, a Buddhist monk of the Lanka Vamsa in Chiangmai, is an anthology of legendary tales based on historical information.

According to the **Jinakālamālī**, "the king of Sukhodaya, Rōcarāja, after a lapse of 1800 years from the passing away of the Buddha, in the year 618 of the Saka Era, came down to Siridhamma Nagara and met with the ruler there. Having heard of the wonderful account of the Sinhala image from the king of Siridhamma, he asked whether it was possible to go there. Siridhamma rāja said "not possible, because four powerful divinities namely, Sumanadeva raja, Rama, Lakkhana and Khattagama protect the Island of Lanka. Then the two kings jointly sent an envoy to Lanka."⁸

G. Coedes suggested that Candrabhānu mentioned in Jaiya inscription was the same king referred to as the king of the Siridhamma nagara in the **Jkm**. He was of the opinion that Candrabhānu having experienced, in the first expedition, the difficulty in securing the Image by force, due to Lanka being protected by powerful divinities, as reflected in the *Cv.* account of Virabāhu paying tribute to God Upulvan after defeating Candrabhānu, allied himself with the king of Sukhodaya, and sent a royal messenger to secure the image by peaceful means. Senarat Paranavitana is in agreement with Coede's interpretation.⁹

However some prominent scholars seem to be reluctant to accept this interpretation. Nila Kanṭha Sāstri, following him Amaradasa Liyanagamage

and W.M. Sirisena are among them.¹⁰ Their reluctance seems, due mainly, to chronological consideration. Liyanagamage contends that the two dates given in Buddhist Era and Saka Era as the date of sending the envoy, do not tally with each other. While B.E. 1800 yields 1256 A.D. (1800-544 = 1256), S.E. 618¹¹ yields a result different from 1256. This is obviously due to wrong calculation made in converting Saka Era into Christian Era. Saka Era in this context is not Maha Saka Era, which needs an addition of 78 for conversion, but Cula Saka Era which needs an addition of 638 for the conversion into Christian Era. When so added, it comes to 1256 A.D., the same result as in the case of B.E.

Their second objection to **Jkm.** version is that the date 1256 A.D. does not fall in line with the date of Candrabhanu's second invasion, which calculated with the help of Pandyan inscriptions could well be a few years later than 1256 A.D. some time between 1258 - 1262.¹² It should be remembered that the date, as given in the **Jkm.** need not necessarily be the date of Candrabhānu's second invasion. According to **Jkm.** it was the date of sending the envoy jointly by two kings. The envoy's mission and that of Candrabhanu cannot be one and the same, for, that of the envoy was a peaceful one whereas Candrabhānu's was an aggressive one. Moreover the envoy and Candrabhanu are two different personages, for, one of the kings who sent the envoy was Siridhammaraja himself who was correctly identified by Coedes as Candrabhānu. As such the envoy's mission and Candrabhānu's mission have to be treated as two separate and totally different events, which took place at two different times.

The other objection to **Jkm.** version, raised by them, is the legendary nature of the origin of Rocaraja, the king of Sukhodaya. This, of course is reasonable, but it can also be argued, that the king involved in the Candrabhānu episode is not Rocaraja but Siridhammaraja. The historicity of Siridhammaraja is established by the phrase '*Chandrabhānu'ti Siridhammarājā*', meaning "the king of Siridhamma called Candrabhānu", occurring in the Jaiya Inscription.¹³ As stated by these scholars, it is true that there was no king by the name Roca in the line of Sukhodaya dynasty, but the existence of a ruler on the throne of Sukhodaya by this time, is proved by the information containing in Sukhodaya inscriptions No's 1 and 2.¹⁴ As such the objections to **Jkm.** as a means of interpreting Candrabhānu episode are not sustainable.

1.5 A Campaign of Political Propaganda

But there seem to be certain elements of exaggeration and propaganda lying behind this story. Whether these elements are infused by the author or whether they are inherent features of the story itself, cannot be discerned with certainty. When considering the political ambitions of kings of both countries at this time one is tempted to inquire whether this story reflects a campaign of deliberate political propaganda of the day. If so who was behind it and for what reasons, need careful examination.

A Propagandist tone can be noticed on the very wording of the account appearing in the **Jkm.** "the king of Siridhamma narrating to the king of Sukhodaya, wonderful stories about the Buddha image in Sri Lanka, and the difficulty in obtaining it, for Lanka being protected by four powerful gods" etc. Some of the wonderful accounts that king Siridhamma would have intimated to Roca rāja, can be seen in the preceding paragraph of the **Jkm.** "700 years after the demise of the Buddha, the king of Sri Lanka wished to see the Buddha in physical form. Then as resolved by 20 Arahantas, living in Sri Lanka, at the time, a Nāgarāja appeared in human form and showed the Buddha in full grace. The king being over joyed directed the sculptors to cast an image after the model shown by the Nāgarāja. The image so cast, was like living Buddha. The king, his sons, grandsons and descendants worshipped the image for generations".¹⁵ Such were the reports that seem to have reached the ears of the king of Siridhamma, and through him the king of Sukhodaya.

More fascinating news is presented in the **Sihinga Buddha Nidāna**, based on which the **Jkm.** seems to have been composed. **Sihinga Buddha Nidāna** is a complete detailed history of the Sihala Paṭima. It was composed by a monk called Bodhi Ransi from Chiangmai or Lampun, some time between 1420 - 1457 A.D. **Sbn.** again was based on a Thai chronicle called **Tamnan Phra Sihing** which was supposed to have been composed some time between 1404 - 1420 A.D. This original is no more extant.¹⁶

In the **Sihinga Buddha Nidāna**, it is said that when the Image was in the process of being cast the king having noted the negligence of one craftsman at work, hit him with the "mīna danḍa", (fish stick) and as a result, one finger of the image was disfigured. The king being worried over it, was about to melt the Image and cast it afresh, when the 20 Arahantas intervened and predicted that the image in future would go to Jambudipa and a pious king there would repair the finger and worship the image until it returned to Lanka". These fascinating stories about the sacred and miraculous nature of the Image in Sri Lanka would have certainly kindled the interest of Sukhodaya king.

Who was the King of Sukhodaya and what were his ambitions? As observed earlier, according to the information contained in inscriptions 1 and 2 of Sukhodaya, the ruler on the throne circa 1256 A.D. could well be either Indrāditya who liberated Sukhodaya from the Cambodian empire or his son Ramkamheang. Ramkamheang according to inscription 1, was busy in consolidating the authority of Sukhodaya by winning over the people under the main banner of Theravada Buddhism. The propaganda about a Buddha Image with miraculous powers in Sri Lanka and about the prophesy that he would possess it, would have provided an ideal vehicle for him to hold sway over the adjacent territories. Indeed that was the case after he obtained the image from Sri Lanka.

Under the circumstances he and the king of Siridhamma Jointly sent an envoy to Sri Lanka to secure the image by peaceful means. It may well be possible that this envoy would have been associated with Candrabhānu in his first expedition and thereby had intimate knowledge about Lankan political and cultural trends. On the other hand it is also possible that he was instrumental in kindling ambitions of Sukhodaya King by propagating wonderful stories about the image.

However his mission in Sri Lanka would not have been so easy, as the animosity created by Candrabhanu's first invasion would have been still fresh in the memory of the Sri Lankan king. Undoubtedly the envoy would have had to look for new strategies to persuade the Sri Lankan king to agree for negotiation.

Political trends in Sri Lanka, by this time were similar to those in Sukhodaya. Just as Sukhodaya, Dambadeniya, the newly founded capital was just emerging as the main centre of political activities. Parākramabāhu II, the son of the founder of the capital was consolidating his power in and around Dambadeniya, just as Ramkamheang was doing in Sukhodaya. Parākramabāhu was busy in rallying public support around him to rid the northern Lanka of Māgha, who was in occupation there since 1215 A.D. Parākramabāhu brought the sacred Tooth relic to the capital and made a grand festival. He purified and unified the Sangha and in order to improve the quality of the order he was searching for learned and pious monks from abroad. It was at this time that news reached him about a pious elderly monk possessed of miraculous powers, living in Tamalingamuva.

1.6 Dhammakitti Mahathera of Tamalingamuva in the Pujāvaliya

"Among twelve thousand monks, living in Tamalingamuva, there is a certain Maha Thera, called Dhammakitti. When he walks along begging for alms, there sprang up lotus flowers in front of him" says the **Pujavaliya**,¹⁷ One can easily note again the propagandist tone in this wording, just as in the **Jkm.** account on Sinhala Buddha Image. Could it not be possible that this news was made up and passed on to the king by the royal messenger from Tamalingamuva who would have been in Sri Lanka by this time; as a strategy to prepare the mind of the king for negotiations.

We observed that the king by this time was searching for pious monks from abroad. It is possible that he became covetous of this famous Dhammakitti and was anxious to get him down to Lanka.

There was the envoy from Tamalingamuva already in Sri Lanka for the king to initiate negotiations to get down Dhammakitti Thera. On the other hand the envoy also would have been awaiting such an opportunity to approach the king in connection with the Image. The possible outcome would have been an agreement to exchange Dhammakitti Thera for the sacred Image.

Sri Lankan sources do not divulge the exchange directly. But mention is made that king Parākramabāhu, sent princely gifts and religious gifts, that included perfumed water that washed the sacred tooth relic, to the king of Tambalingamuva and invited Dhammakitti Thera to Lanka.¹⁸ Paranayitana has suggested that the sacred Buddha Image would have been included among the religious gifts sent by the Lankan king. Perhaps in return for this Image, the king of Tambalingamuva would have agreed to send the Thera Dhammakitti to Sri Lanka. (CM., P. 79)

Summing up the whole story, as recorded in the sources of both countries, we find that second king of Sukhodaya, in the newly founded Thai kingdom by the mid. thirteenth century, was busy in consolidating his power over the adjoining territories. Similarly in Sri Lanka, king Parākramabāhu II, ruling from the newly founded capital, Dambadeniya, was busy with canvassing public support of the Buddhist populace. A wonderful story about a Buddha Image of Sri Lanka spread from southern Thailand to Sukhodaya and as a result king being covetous of obtaining it, jointly with the king of Siridhamma, sent an envoy to Lanka. Subsequently a fascinating story about a saintly monk of Tamalingamuva country, reached the ears of Lankan king who, at that time was searching for such monks from abroad. He too became covetous of obtaining the Thera. It appears as if a certain middle man seemingly a media expert of the day, arranged a shrewd deal to fulfill the wishes of kings of both lands. The middleman most probably was the envoy sent to Lanka from Tambalinga.

I.7 Crystal Sand Chronicle on Candrabhānu and Siridhammanagara

There is only one more source, to my knowledge, found in Thailand, other than the Jaiya inscription, and **Jkm.**, which contains reference to Candrabhānu and his connection with Siridhammanagara, and that is the **Crystal sand chronicle**, the chronicle of Siridhammanagara. This source deals with the origin of the Nagara, -of course clouded with legends- and relates the history of Siridhammanagara at least upto 1540 A.D., the last date mentioned in it. The date of the composition is not clear. D.K. Wyatt of the Cornell University, who edited and translated the chronicle believes the date to be within 17 century.¹⁹

If, however, the chronicle were composed prior to the discovery of the Jaiya inscription, at a time when the name Candrabhanu, and its association with Siridhammanagara was not known in Thailand, the references made in the chronicle are of extreme importance for the interpretation of Candrabhānu episode, for they are the only other references than those in the Jaiya inscription, found in Thailand.

According to this source, Candrabhānu was the epithet used by the younger brother who was also the heir apparent, of the ruling king, of Siridhammanagara whose regnal name was Sri Dharmasokaraja.²⁰ When

king Dharmasoka died, his younger brother Candrabhānu became king in Saka, 1200, 1278 A.D.²¹

According to this chronicle the Siridhammanagara was first founded at the place where Prince Danta Kumāra and Hemamāla landed on their way from Sri Lanka.²² Due to an epidemic the ruler and the populace left the city and traversing eastwards through the jungle for seven days, they came to a great oblong beach side where they decided to build the new city. Four Brahmins drew up a map and the ruler sent it through them together with hundred men, to Lanka for the approval of the Lankan king. Lankan king was very pleased and sent them with a Buddhist monk called Buddha Gambhīra, for the religious services in the new city. This Buddha Gambhīra, according to the chronicle, became the chief advisor on planning and founding of the new Siridhammanagara.²³ This episode is obviously a legend based on the founding of the Nagara. We do not have any information about this in Sri Lankan sources. But the story at least reflects that Siridhammanagara had contacts with Sri Lanka since its very inception.

1.8 Problem of the identification of Tambaraṭṭha

There is still a confusion as regards the identity of Tambaraṭṭha. This term was used in the *Cūlavamsa* as a synonym for Tamalingamuva which was used in the *Pūjāvaliya*, to denote the country from which the saint Dhammakitti was invited. Paranavitana has drawn attention to the use of Tamalingamuva in the later Sinhalese works, in place of Tambalinga, the term used in the Pali *Hatthavanagalla Vihara Vamsa*, as the country from which Candrabhanu came. Argues Paranavitana, "the sinhala name Tamalingamuva being thus the equivalent of the Pali Tambalinga as well as Tambaraṭṭha, it follows that the Tambalinga country was also known as Tambaraṭṭha. In fact, Tambaraṭṭha appears to be an abbreviation of Tambalingaraṭṭha.²⁴ Having so argued he maintains that Tambalinga, other wise known as Tambaraṭṭha was a flourishing centre of Theravada Buddhism in the Ligure region during the eleventh to thirteenth centuries and that there existed a long tradition of peaceful coexistence between Sri Lanka and that country. He quotes three instances as evidence for such a conclusion.

First is the reference found in epigraph datable to 1111 - 1132 A.D., to a great dignitary of Lanka by the name Ananda who was instrumental in purifying the order in Tambaraṭṭha. Second is the reference made by Buddharakkhita Thera, the author of *Jinālakāravannanā* in the mid. 12th century, that he was one who received consecration at the hands of eminent scholars in Lanka as well as in the Coliya Tambaraṭṭha. Third is Anuruddha Thera's statement found at the end of his *Paramatthavinichaya*, that he was born in the Kāvīra nagara in the Kāncipura country and wrote that work while residing at a city named Tanja in Tambaraṭṭha. Referring to

the view accepted by some scholars that Tambaraṭṭha is a region in South India, since Tanja can be identified with Tanjore, Paranavitana supports his case by quoting many place names in the Malay Peninsula of which the word Tanjon (meaning cape) forms the first element of Tanjanagara.²⁵

Liyanagamage having recognized the strong resemblance of the term Tamalingamuva used to denote the home of Dhammakitti by the authors of *Pv.* and the *Daladāsirita*, to the term Tambalinga used in the *Hv.* as the country of Candrabhānu, says, that "it would point in favour of Paranavitana's identification, which, though criticised by Nilakanṭha Sāstri, seems to rest on a sound basis".²⁶

R.A.L.H. Gunawardana, in his exhaustive study of Paranavitana's *Ceylon and Malayasia*, has drawn attention to the interpretations offered for the phrase Coliya Tambarattha by Paranavitana as the 'Cola country and the Tambaraṭṭha', and by Nilakanṭha Sāstri as the "Tabmaraṭṭha of Colas". Gunawardana prefers the second; i.e. Tambaraṭṭha in Cola, or belonging to Cola. Paranavitana's rendering as Cola country and Tambaraṭṭha, however is not suitable in the context. Gunawardana has one more reason to believe that Tambaraṭṭha was situated in or close to the Cola country. According to him 'Tanja in Tambaraṭṭha', mentioned in the *Paramatthavinichchaya* could very well be identified with 'Tanchai' which was the capital of the Cola country in the 13th century. "The evidence before us seems to favour the view that Tambaraṭṭha was in South India", concludes, Gunawardana.²⁷

On the other hand the interpretation of 'Coliya Tambaraṭṭha' as 'Tambaraṭṭha of the Colas', still lends support to Paranavitana's view that Tambaraṭṭha was identical with Tambalinga in the Ligore region in the Malay Peninsula. It is well known that Kaṭāha, i.e. Kedah in the Malay Peninsula was conquered by Rajendra Cola as indicated in his inscriptions. It had been under the Cola hegemony for some time until at least the reign of Kulottunga I. In such a situation it is possible that the Ligore region, was known to Sri Lankan chroniclers as Coliya Tambalingaraṭṭha meaning Tambalingaraṭṭha of the Colas, and that the term Tambaraṭṭha was used by the author of *Cūlavamsa* as an abbreviation, as surmised by Paranavitana. As such the identity of Tambaraṭṭha still calls for more research.

PART II

NISSANKAMALLA EPISODE

II.1 Kambojas in Polonnaruva

Leaving thus the identity of Tambaraṭṭha unresolved, let us now proceed to consider certain references to Kamboja found in Sri Lankan sources. We find mention about Kamboja and Kamboja people in the inscriptions of king Nissankamalla, 1187 - 1196 A.D. This ruler is reputed to have the largest number of epigraphs, more than 35 in number, that a Sri Lankan king had ever recorded. In his inscriptions he professes that he came from Sinhapura in Kalinga, on an invitation by Parakramabahu the Great, and was trained in sciences and having held high offices in succession ascended the throne duly. His parents were Sri Jayagopa Maharaja and Pārvati Mahādevi.²⁸ Although he was thus a declared foreigner, he was able to rule Sri Lanka for over nine years without any major disturbance. This, he managed to achieve by planned and constant propaganda carried out through his numerous inscriptions.

One of the inscriptions of Nissankamalla mentions a '*Kamboja Vāsala*' in Polonnaruva.²⁹ '*Vāsala*' Means a gate-way to a street, thus indicating the existence of a separate street for the 'Kamboja' people in Polonnaruva. To have a street named "*Kamboja Vāsala*" in the capital, indicates, that there was a considerable Kamboja community in Polonnaruva enjoying high social position. We witness a similar practice current during the 18th century in Sri Lanka. The dynasty that ruled Sri Lanka during the time was of Malabar origin. A host of Malabar relatives of the king were living in the capital. There was a separate street for them named Malabar street. Likewise during Nissankamalla's time also, there would have been a considerable Kamboja people in Polonnaruva to assign a separate street in their name. In another inscription at Ruvanveliya cetiya in Anuradhapura, Nissankamalla mentions that he bestowed on Kamboja people, gold, cloth and whatever they wished, in order to prevent them catching birds.³⁰

Commenting on this, Paranavitana says that these Kamboja people, came along with Nissankamalla from his original place, Sinhapura, and were employed as his bodyguards, and that they were in the habit of catching birds and selling them to supplement their income from military service. This habit of catching birds, being unusual and foreign to Sri Lanka, he would have discouraged this practice by compensating Kamboja people with gifts.³¹

We find references to '*Kaboja*' and '*Kabojjyana gotha*', meaning "Kamboja and Kamboja Guilds" in the early Brahmi inscriptions belonging to three centuries in the Pre-Christian Era. This Kaboja has been

identified by scholars as a region in the extreme North-Western part of India. After that, until we come to 12th century A.D. Sri Lankan sources contain nothing about Kamboja. There is no evidence that Sri Lanka during this period had dealings with North Western India. Kamboja associated with Sri Lanka in the 12th century, should therefore, be another region of that name and that was Kamboja in South-East Asia.

II.2 Kamboja, in Central Thailand

By the middle of 12th century the most powerful kingdom in South - East Asia was Kamboja with Angkor as its capital. In 11th century central Thailand, where it is believed to have flourished a rich civilization, under the name of Dvāravati, seems to have become an easy prey to the advancing Cambodian empire.

By the time of Jayavarman VII, the most powerful Cambodian emperor, also Nissankamalla's contemporary, the whole of central Thailand seems to have been under the Cambodian empire. Based on the Chinese sources, it has been accepted that the Khmer power by this time had extended to the west as far as Ramaññadesa, and to the south as far as Jaiya.³² It is therefore, reasonable to believe that the whole area starting from Ramaññadesa, spread through central Thailand to Cambodia would have been known to Sri Lanka, during this time, as Kamboja.

In fact such a supposition is justified by the fact that even to the Northern Thai chroniclers the lower Maenam basin was known as Kamboja. For the authors of Northern Thai chronicles, such as *Cāmadevivamsa*, *Sihinganidāna*, *Jinakālamāli* refer to the regions of Sukhodaya, Lopburi, and Ayodya as Kamboja.³³ It is therefore possible that the host of Kambojas living in Polonnaruva in 12th century were people from Central Thailand and not from Cambodia proper. We heard earlier Parānavitana's suggestion that these Kambojas would have been accompanied by Nissankamalla to serve as his bodyguards. While agreeing with Parānavitana in general, we can now, in the light of the facts mentioned above, suggest that Nissankamalla could be a prince from a royal family in Central Thailand, deviating slightly from Parānavitana's premise that he was a prince from the Ligore region.

II.3 Sinhapura in Central Thailand

If we argue in favour of such an inference we have to search for a Sinhapura in the lower Maenam basin, for Nissankamalla constantly refers to Sinhapura as his native place. There are of course two Sinhapuras in this region, not one.

One is Muang Sing in the Kanchanapuri Province in close proximity to Ramaññadesa. True, it is a folk name, but folk names are very often

based on vague memories of true historical facts. This large ruined city contains archaeological monuments attributable to 12th century, precisely Nissankamalla's time.

The other is Singburi located near Lopburi, the supposed capital of central Thailand during the Dvāravati period 7th to 11th century. Wat Phra Non Chaksi, an important monastery in this area, bears evidence of an ancient city of considerable extent. Ayodhyan annals refer to this place as Phra Nagara Singhapura, indicating that it had once been a Royal City. It is also noteworthy that the great Parinibbana image there, has been connected with a folk story of Sinhabāhu who built that statue to expiate his sin of killing his father, the lion.

This Sinhabāhu story is the first part of Vijaya story recorded in the *Mahāvamsa*, the great chronicle of Sri Lanka. Vijaya, the son of Sinhabāhu was the legendary founder of the Sinhala race. In Nissankamalla's inscriptions he emphasizes repeatedly that he belonged to the lineage of Vijaya, who colonized Sri Lanka, and became the first king of the Sinhalese, and for that reason Nissankamalla had a legitimate right to rule the Island. Thus the Sinhabāhu folk tale attached to Wat Phra Non Chaksi in Singburi and Nissankamalla's claim to the Lanka throne through the Vijaya dynasty seem to support the proposition that Singhapura of Nissankamalla could be Singburi in Central Siam.

Kālinga is connected with Sinhabāhu in the Vijaya story. At the time Nissankamalla went to Sri Lanka, there was a strong Kalinga clan there, which had been built up over at least two centuries. Being a complete foreigner, Nissankamalla would have realized the advantage of leaning on Kalinga and Vijaya in order to win over the Kalinga clan and to strengthen his legitimacy. Sinhabāhu's connection with Singburi would have supplied him with an ideal theme for his political propaganda. Thus it will be clear that there is a strong possibility of Nissankamalla's Singhapura being one of the Singhapura's located in the lower Maenam basin.

Such a hypothesis would seem at once a mere speculation. But interpreted in the context of Nissankamalla's relationship with Parākramabāhu the Great and the episode of the latter's expedition to Ramaññadesa, the hypothesis becomes reinforced as will be seen in the ensuing discussion.

II.4 Nissankamalla, Son-in-Law of Parākramabāhu I, (1153 - 1186 A.D.)

In one of the inscriptions, Nissankamalla claims that he was the "*bānanuvan*", sister's son or son-in-law of Parākramabāhu. The inscription says, "His Majesty Lord Parākramabāhu, being desirous of the continuance of his own lineage in the future also, sent (emissaries) to Singhapura, brought over His Highness son-in-law (of his) conferred (on him) his own title (Parākramabāhu) invested him with the insignia, of prince consort

and brought him up making him proficient in (the use of) weapons and in the sastras (sciences)."³⁴

As to how Nissankamalla became the son-in-law of Parākramabāhu, Parānavitana argues, "The chronicles are silent about any children of Parākramabāhu, but it does not necessarily prove that he had none.... There is indirect evidence in the *Cūlavamsa*, that there was a princess named Subhadrā, who was, closely related to Parākramabāhu. Among the numerous buildings of the Aḷāhna Pirivena at Polonnaruva, the chronicle mentions two stupas, the Rūpavati Cetiya and the Subhaddā Cetiya, (Cv. 78, v. 51) one of these was named after Rupavati the chief queen of Parākramabāhu, (Cv. 73, v. 142) the other, it is reasonable to infer, must have been named after a princess of no less consequence. No queen of Parākramabāhu of the name Subhaddā, is mentioned in any source, and it is likely, that the cetiya in question was named after a daughter of the great king, Kalinga Subhadrā Mahādevi, referred to in Nissankamalla's inscriptions could therefore be the daughter of Parākramabāhu".³⁵

II.5 Parākramabāhu's daughter for Kamboja in Central Thailand

Parakramabahu's involvement in Rāmaññadesa may be relevant in this context. One of the reasons for Parakramabahu to declare war against Rāmaññadesa, in 1165, was the interception of a Princess sent by him to Kamboja. Among a number of reasons for Parakramabahu's hostility,³⁶ this incident is given in the *cūlavamsa* as the last, which compelled the king to take immediate action against the ruler of Rāmaññadesa.³⁷ This indicates that the king had been concerned about this incident more than any other reason. The word used for the Princess in the chronicle, is '*rājakñnam*' meaning 'royal maiden'. Who could be the royal maiden, whose abduction made Parākramabāhu so furious as to declare war. Certainly one of his blood relations, i.e. a sister or a daughter. All the sisters of Parākramabāhu had been given in marriage to local rulers. Moreover at a time so late as 1165 it is extremely impossible that he had a sister to be introduced as Kañña, maiden. So the likelihood is that she was a daughter. We discussed earlier the possibility of Nissankamalla, the son-in-law of Parākramabāhu, being a prince of a royal family of one of the Sinhapuras located in the lower Maenam basin. We noted earlier that by this time Cambodian empire had extended westward upto Rāmaññadesa and that central Thailand, which was bordering Ramannadesa, was also known as Kamboja. It is therefore reasonable to believe that the mission accompanying the royal maiden was heading for the royal family of Nissankamalla in the lower maenam basin, to be wedded to Nissankamalla. The probability is that once the war ended the mission would have been accomplished and the daughter of Parākramabāhu, Subhaddā was married to Nissankamalla. Parākramabāhu later invited both and paved the way for Nissankamalla to succeed him and continue

his lineage. Nissankamalla introduces in high tone his queen as Kalinga Subhadrā Mahādevi, through whom he received the legitimacy for the throne of Lanka.

Having so concluded I wish to wind up this study at this point, without taking any more time to discuss a few stale data belonging to the period from 1165 to the evidence of 761 A.D. which I quoted at the beginning of this paper.

NOTES:

1. Pujavaliya, ed. by A.V. Suraveera, Colombo. M. D. Gunasena, 1961, p. 117
2. *ibid*, p. 135.
3. According to Suraveera this account is not found in all the Ola-Leaf manuscripts which he consulted for his critical edition of Pv. introduction, p. VI.
4. *Culavamsa*, cp. 88, 62 - 66
5. *Hatthavanagalla Vihara Vamsa*, ed. by C.E. Godakumbura, London, PTS, p. 32
6. Liyanagamage, A., *The decline of Polonnaruwa and the Rise of Dambadeniya*, Department of Cultural Affairs, Colombo, 1968, p. 17
7. G. Coedes, *Recueil des inscription du siam*, II, p. 27
8. *Jinakalamali*, Jkm., London, PTS. 1962, p. 87
9. Paranavitana, S., *Ceylon and Malayasia*, Colombo, Lake House, 1966, p. 78
10. Liyanagamage, A., *op. cit.* p. 135; Sirisena, W.M. *Sri Lanka and South-East Asia*, Political, Religious and Cultural relations from A.D. c. 1000 to c. 1500, PhD, Thesis, Leiden, E.J. Brill, 1978, p. 49
11. Liyanagamage, following Nilakantha Sastri, has taken Saka 718, given in the *Jkm.*, PTS. edition by P. Buddhadatta Thera. But G. Coedes and Prince Dhananivat have subsequently corrected it as 618, *JSS.*, Vol. I, p. 57, also see, Jayawickrama, N.A., *The Sheaf of Epoc of the conqueror*, PTS., 1968, p. 121, note, 1
12. Liyanagamage, *op. cit.* pp. 135, 152
13. *Recueil des inscription du siam*, II, p. 27, line 8
14. *Caruk Samaya Sukhotai*, Dept. of Archaeology, Bangkok, 1982, pp. 8 — 20
15. *Jinakalamali*, *op. cit.* p. 87
16. This information was furnished by Dr. Hans Penth, Director, Social Research Institute, Chiangmai University, Also read, Donald. K. Swearer, *Myths, Legends and History in the Northern Thai chronicles*, *JSS.* Vol. 62, part I, p. 69: For the Approximate date, see Coedes, *BEFEO*, XV/3, p. 6
17. *Pujavaliya*, *op. cit.* p. 118
18. *Pujavaliya*, *op. cit.* p. 117 and *Culavamsa*, *op. cit.* p. 84, Vv. 11 — 16
19. *Crystal Sand Chronicle* Ed. by D.K. Wyatt, Ithaka, Cornell University, 1973, p. 169, Notes 1 & 2
20. *ibid.* p. 87, Note 10
21. *ibid.* p. 94
22. *ibid.* p. 71
23. *ibid.* p. 76

24. Paranavitana, *op. cit.*, p. 79
25. *ibid.* p. 80
26. Liyanagamage, *op. cit.* p. 137
27. Gunawardana, R.A.L.H, Ceylon and Malayasia; A study of Professor S. Paranavitana's research on relations between the two regions, *University of Ceylon Review*, Vol. XXV, Nos 1 & 2, 1967, p. 17
28. *Epigraphia Zeylanica*, Vol. V. pt. I. most of his inscriptions are published in *EZ.* Vol. II
29. *JCBRAS.* X. p. 68
30. *EZ.* II, p. 78
31. Paranavitana, *op. cit.* p. 109
32. Briggs, Laurence Palmer, *The Ancient Khmer Empire*, N.Y. *American Philosophical Society*, 1951, p. 208
33. Griswold, A.B. & Presert Na Nagara, *JSS.* 56/1, p: 207, Note. 49
34. *EZ.*, V. 207
35. *EZ.*, Vol. V. p: 201
36. For a detailed discussion on these reasons read: Sirima Wickremasinghe (Kiribamune,) *Ceylon's Relations with South—East Asia*, *Ceylon Journal of Historical and Social Studies*, *CJHSS*, Vol. III, I, pp. 44 — 46
37. *Culavamsa*, ch. 76. Vv. 35, 36