THE ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF SANSKRIT LITERATURE IN SRI LANKA.

Other than India, among other countries in the field of Sanskrit literature, Sri Lanka has gained a leading position. In view of the extensive knowledge of the Sanskrit language among the Bhikkhu and lay scholars of Sri Lanka, in respect there were independent Sanskrit compositions aggregating to a large number. Countries like China, Tibet, and Myanmar (Burma) made their respective contributions by composing commentaries or writing explanations and commentaries on what had been published in India.

The exact period when Sanskrit language was used in Sri Lanka, is difficult to ascertain. Although the Pali language, the scriptural language of Theravada Buddhism was propagated widely in Sri Lanka, Sanskrit, the scriptural language of Vedic Hinduism had no such progressive widespread in Sri Lanka. There is no factual evidence, in the pre-Buddhist era of Sri Lanka, prior to the Asoka Buddhist missionaries in the 3rd century B.C., which language was in Sri Lanka. However, in pre-Buddhist Sri Lanka (prior to the 3rd century) there were human settlements with sustainable food production. Hence, there was no need for the migrating Aryans to start afresh an agriculture based culture and civilization. This becomes very evident from the Jataka stories narrating the previous lives of Gautama Buddha as an aspirant to Buddhahood (Bodhisatva), through innumerable millennia was born and lived in the sub-continent as human beings and birds and animals. These narratives give us a glimpse of the Unsaid sub-continent, of bring something of he
modern world, with rulers, capitalists, merchants, farmers, and laboring classes, road transport, etc.. The island of Sri Lanka, from the northern Jaffna peninsula and the South Indian coast is presently only around 22 Km away. It is said that in the early periods there was a stone bridge connecting the northern region of Sri Lanka with South India. The present gap of 22 Km is caused by progressive washaways. Thus, the Indian influence on Sri Lanka both on culture and civilization could be termed as the bone of the bone. Thus the language which was originally used only for conversations was later adopted in writing by the creation of a particular script, this script is modeled according to the body parts of birds, as unlike other animals the birds are free to fly to any land or country and thus language is like a bird that enjoys the freedom of movement. Therefore, it could be justifiably convincing that the Indian languages and the original languages or languages of the early inhabitants of Sri Lanka, like the birds of a feather flock together, fraternized with one another to develop a common language. It is in this phase of the development of Sri Lankan languages, the role of the Indian language, Sanskrit, has to be examined.

In order to gain proper insight into languages of the Indian sub-continent and as earlier described Sri Lanka being the bone of the Indian culture and civilization it is of paramount importance to study the Indus Valley civilization (5000 B.C.). In the excavations done in 1946 in Harappa it has been revealed that every city had a religious and administration machinery which indicate that it was a centralized form of administration. In the excavations at Mohenje
too, these remains have come to light. Both are new in Pakistan Teri. The cities' infrastructure too, reveals from the foundations there were storied mansions, high roads and byroads with a proper drainage system. As regards their religious persuasions, these people believed in life after death. The dead were buried in wooden coffins and for the use of the departed in their next plain of birth, razors, mirrors and cakes of their cherished food too, were kept beside the dead body. As regards religious rituals, they had the belief that the dead were reborn as spirits of the trees, as evidenced by metal slabs stamped with trees, a one horned animal (unicorn) and also of Mother God. All the buildings were done in kilns burnt bricks.

The Aryans migrated from the present day Iran. The word Aryan means noble. The Aryans defied nature, namely water, wind, rains, etc. They created their own religion with a pantheon of gods such as Varuna, Indra, Mithras, etc. Their Vedic Hindu religious text, Rig Veda, datable to 1500-900 B.C., composed of 1028 mantras (verses for chanting) and is the oldest religious text in the world. A century or little later they supplemented with three other Vedas, Sama, Yajir, and Atharva. These Vedas amplified the Rig Veda and laid the manner of chanting mantras. The Yajurveda is again subdivided into 'Krushna' (Black) and 'Shukla' (White). The text of each Veda is divided into Four parts Viz. Mantra, Brahmana, Aranyaka and the Upanisad. The Upanisads being the end portionsof each Veda are called ‘Vedanta’. Then there were 'yaga' and 'homa' as religious rites and rituals. With the migrations of the Aryans, the Indus Valley people moved to southern regions of India and they came to be
known as Dravida, meaning people of the south. Their language became Tamil, with a script of its own, similar to the Indus Valley script. Hence Tamil is one of the oldest languages of the world. The term Sanskrit means 'refined language' it is called 'gairvani i.e. 'language of the gods'.

The Aryans next move was to structure the society of India, into one of four-tiered caste hierarchy (Catubbanavaggo), namely:

1. Brahman, the intermediaries between man and god, who held the prerogative of chanting mantras on behalf of the faithful to gain blessings from the pantheon of gods;
2. Sashtriya, rulers and warriors;
3. Vessa or Vaishya, traders and the merchantile bourgeoisies, who engaged themselves in land and overseas trade, as well as money lenders, bankers and chiefs of the guilds of craftsmen; and finally
4. The Sudras, the marginalized laboring class. Herein, wanna (Sanskrit: varna) literary means color or complexion. This Vedic-system could be reckoned as the Indian version of racism. Im mundane issues the Kshtriyas rank first in political, social and economic fields.

In the recent past, when Mahatma Gandhi was planning to leave for England to qualify as a Barrister-Law, the Brahmins adopted this dictum on him and downgraded him from his princely caste of Gujarat to a Sudra. On return after qualifying Mahatma Gandhi had to undergo a ceremony called pramanaya to be readmitted to his princely caste.

The recorded history of Sri Lanka, in terms of the Sri Lanka Mahavamsa
(Great Chronicle), the first part of it (Chapter I – xxxvii, 50) is ascribed to the ‘there’ called Mahanama who lived at Dighasandasenapat-Pirivena in Anuradhapura, then capital of Sri Lanka about the fifth century. The second part (Chapter xxxvii, 51) was written by Dhamakitti There of the 13th century AC, probably the then capital of Sri Lanka, Polonnaruwa. The Mahavamsa is based on several sources. At the very outset (Mahavamsa i,2) Mahanama says that there was a history on the same subject written by the ancients (poranehi) which was full of facts such as repetitions and unnecessary details. Undoubtedly what he refers to is Dipavamsa, which served as a working base for Mahanama. In addition he had made use of whatever was handed down by tradition. In addition there were certain records kept in royal families, and also in the house of the rich, known as punna-pusthaka, 'merit books', in which various meritorious deeds were recorded. There was also Mahavamsa-tika, a commentary of the Mahavamsa of 8th or 9th century.

1.1. Arrivals of Aryans to Srilanka

All these texts state that a group of Aryans exiled from India led by Vijaya, 500 in number sailed to Sri Lanka and established themselves at Tambapanni-nagara (483 – 445 B.C.). Vijaya befriended Kuveni, who was engaged in spinning and established himself as the ruler, thereafter Upatissa as Regent at Upatissapgama (445 – 444 B.C.), followed by Panduvasdeva (444 – 414 B.C.), then Abhaya (414 – 394 B.C.) who established the capital at Anuradhapura. There are records which state that there were Brahmins in the royal courts to conduct Brahmanic rites and rituals. There are references to the
worship of yakshas and yakshinis. The word 'yaksha' does not connote man-eating demons, but a corrupted form of the Sanskrit term 'yajna' fit for worship. There had been shrines of the yakshas, Citta, Kalavela Cittaraja, etc.. The only plausible conclusion is that this form of worship was conducted by chanting mantras by Brahmins. Presently too, Veddas of Sri Lanka, the aborigines too have the cult of worshiping 'Nae-Yakku', relative yakshas, in the belief their departed kinsmen are reborn as yakshas, in hills.

1.2. Great Buddhist Councils:

Lord Goutama Buddha having completed his 45 years of Dhamma mission, at the age of 80, walked along with community of Bhikkhus and Venerable Ananda from Rajagaha, capital of Magadha kingdom from Gijjakuta, a distance of 657 Km. Taking one year staying at Rajagaha Gijjakuta – Rajagaha Ambaplsi grove – Nalanda Pavzrik, a mango grove – Pataligrama – crossing Ganges River – Kotigrams – Gnatigrams – Vaishali mango grove – Beluwagama - (45th Rains Retreat, the last) Bhandagama – Hattigama – Ambagama – Jambugama – Bhogzagara Ananda Cetiya – Pava – crossing Kukkutha River – crossing Hiranyavati River – finally Kusinara and attained mahaparinirvana at Kusinara Malla King's Sala Grove. Now at that time Arahant Maha Kassapa was traveling on the high road from Pava to Kusinara with a large community of monks, 500 in all. Then he left the road and sat down at the foot of a tree. Meanwhile a mendicant ascetic who had picked up a mandarva flower in Kusinarawas traveling by that road. The
Arahant Maha Kassapa saw him coming. He asked him, “Do you know our Teacher, friend?”. “Yes, friend, I know him. The monk Gautama attained final nibbana seven days ago. That is how I got this mandarva flower”. Some of the Bhikkhus who were not free from lust stretched out their arms and wept, and they fell down and rolled back and forth. The others who had realized that formations are impermanent, kept themselves calm. But there was one sitting in the assembly called Subhadda (not the last disciple of the Buddha), who had gone forth in old age. He said to these monks, “Enough, friends, do not sorrow, do not lament. We are well rid of the Great Monk. We have been frustrated by his saying, 'This is allowed to you. This is not allowed to you.' But now we shall do as we like and we shall not do as we do not like”, (Digha Nikaya 16; Vinaya Culavagga 11:1). Arahant Maha Kassapa knew that in the future there would be distortions of the Dhamma taught by the Buddha and after three months of the Mahaparinirvana of the Buddha, under his chairmanship.

1.3. The First Great Buddhist Council:

This first great Buddhist council was held with an assembly of 500 Arahants. Venerable Ananda, the former chief Attendant to Lord Buddha and his brother-in-law in lay life. Venerable Ananda attained Arahantship just one day before the convening of the assembly, three months after the mahaparinirvana of the Buddha, under the royal patronage of King Ajatasattu of the Magadha kindgom. The site of the council was at the foot of the Vaibara hill in Rajagaha, at the mouth of the Sattapanni cave, not in the cave as it was not larger enough to accommodate such a large assembly. The king had a
pavilion built at the opening and even today one can see at a certain height, square holes made in the rock face to hold the cross bars and beems of the pavilion. Further for medical facilities, Buddha's physician, Jivaka's hospital and the groves he donated to the Buddha were at close quarters. There were also water facilities. The selection of the location was primarily due to the fact this area had no human settlements and the area was belted by five high rise rocky mountains: Isagili, Vebhara, Pandava, Vepulla, and Gijjakuta. This provided perfect silence and tranquility for the conduct of such a large assembly. The name Isagili is a corrupted form of Isigriha, or residence of risis or sages, and it is recorded that in the past 500 Buddhas resided in this mountain. Further at the time of the Buddha, these mountains were the abodes of Jain ancestors, Ajivakas and other wandering ascetics, as this region was highly suited for meditation, away from the hustle and bustle of the capital city of Rajagaha, of the Magadha Kingdom.

At this council, Arahant Mahinda recited all the sutras discoursed by the Buddha and with the consensus of the assembly, they were codified into, Digha Nikaya, Majjhima Nikaya, Samyutta Nikaya, Anguttara Nikaya, and Khuddhaka Nikaya. The Buddha discoursed in the language of Magadhadesha, Ardha-Magadhi, later called Pali, meaning 'the kind'. These languages had no script of their own. Thereafter Arahant Upali recited the entire Vinaya (Discipline) and it was codified into Mahavagga, Cullavagga, Parajika, Pacittaya and Parivara. The Abhidhamma, which the Buddha had discoursed to his mother Maha Maya Devi in Tustita Heaven where she was reborn, is a later
1.4. **Second Buddhist Council**:

About a century later in the fourth century B.C., during the time of King of Pataliputra, a group of monks known under the generic name of Vajji Bhikkhus, residing at the Mahayana monastery in Vaishali, raised the following ten points of indulgence which perturbed the orthodox authorities. The ten points were:

(1) A monk may carry salt in a horn to season unsalted food when received;

(2) A monk may take his midday meal up to the time when the sundial shows two fingers' breadth beyond the meridian;

(3) A monk going into the village after his meal may eat again if invited to;

(4) Monks residing in the same locality may meet together on Uposatha days (i.e., New and Full Moon Days) in separate assembly;

(5) Monks may act on the decisions of an incomplete assembly on the supposition that the concurrence of the absentees can be obtained later;

(6) The example of the teacher or preceptor is sufficient authority for the actions of the pupil;

(7) Unchurned milk may be taken after noon;

(8) Unfermented palm wine may be drunk;

(9) A mat for resting upon need not be of the prescribed size if it is without a fringe;

(10) A monk may accept gold and silver.
Under the guidance of Venerable Yasa, Revata and Sabbakarmi, the three leading thera’s of the day the Second Great Council was held at Vaishali and the ten points raised by the Vajji Bhikkhus were condemned as false and heretic, and they infringed the ‘pacittiya’ rules of Vinayapitaka. The heretic Vajji Bhikkhus left for Kashmir and held their own council, and inaugurated a new sect called Mahasanghika (or Mahasangiti). The following century saw the rise of eighteen sects in all, including the various schools of original Theravada. Thus the heretic monks came to be known as Mahayana and opted for Sanskrit as their spiritual language, while the orthodox monks continued with Pali, and the Mahayanists (the great vehicle) called them Hinayana or Lesser Vehicle,

1.5. The Third Buddhist Council:

The region of the King Asoka of the Maurya Empire of India, who being remorseful of his genocidal annexation of Kalinga in his eighth regal year (269-232 B.C.) became the golden era of Buddhism in India. Under his patronage, his preceptor Venerable Upagupta (Maha Moggaliputta Tissa) convened the Third Great Buddhist Council at Pataliputra, the capital of the Maurya Empire, and having rehearsed the entire Tipitaka, under the patronage of King Asoka, dispatched nine Buddhist missions headed by erudite Bhikkhus and groups of Bhikkhus to the following regions in India as well as to other countries. The nine Buddhist missions are as follows:

(1) Gandhara and Kashmira, Kashmir and is northern and western countries, including that is now Afghanistan, and some central Asain countries, under
the leadership of Arahant Majjhantika with a group of monks;

(2) Yonaka (Ionia) including the Greco-Bactrian States of Europe, modern Israel, Syria, Iraq, and Egypt under Arahant Maharakkhita and a group of monks. The leader was a Greek;

(3) Cina-Himavanta, China and Himalayan countries of Ladakh, Himachal, Nepal, Tibet, Bhutan and Sikkim under the leadership of Arahant Majjhima and five other monks;

(4) Suvannabhumi, Burma, and other South East Asian courtiers of Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Malaysia, Indonesia, and Vietnam, under Arahants Sona and Uttara and a group of monks;

(5) Sri Lanks, Under Arahant Mahinda (son of Emperor Asoka) and five other monks, forming a chapter for ordination and high ordination rites to be conducted;

(6) Mahimsakamandala, modern India's Karnataka State, and the Deccan States, including Andhra Pradesh under Arahant Mahadeva and a group of monks;

(7) Maharatta, modern Maharashtra State of India and Madhya Pradesh of India under Arahant Maha Dhammarakkhita and some monks;

(8) Vanavasi, the southern part of India, Karnataka, Goa and including Kerala under the Arahant Rakkhita and a group of monks; and

(9) Aparantaka, western India, including modern Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Pakistan under the Arahant Yonaka (Greek) Dhammarakkita and some monks.
Emperor Asoka purified the Maha Sangha as said in his Saranath Pillar Edict. The Maha Sangha occurred during the time of the Buddha, which he rectified. The Saranath Pillar Edict in Brahmi script reads as follows. The English translation of it is:

1) Devanampriya...
2) Pataliputra...
3) The Sangha cannot be divided by anyone.
4) But indeed the monk or nun (bhikkhu or bhikkhuni) who shall break up the Sangha, should be caused to put on white robes and to reside in non-residence.
5) Thus this edict must be submitted both to the Sangha of Bhikkhus and Bhikkunis.
6) Thus speaks Devanampriya.
7) Let one another copy of this very edict remain with you deposited in your office and deposit yet another copy of this very edict with the lay-worshippers.
8) These lay-worshippers and others on every fast day, will come to the fast day service in order to be inspired with confidence in this very edict and to understand it.
9) And as far as your districts extends dispatch an officer everywhere according to the letter of this edict.
10) In the same way cause your subordinates to dispatch an officer according to the letter of this edict in all the territories, surrounding forts. (Epigraphy
1.6. Anuradhapura Period:

Of all these nine Buddhist missions the most successful was one to Sri Lanka, wherein Sri Lanka King Devanampiyatissa (247-207 B.C.) embraced Buddhism, the first King to do so outside India. Arahant Mahinda met King Devanampiyatissa, when he was on a deer hunt, on Poson Full Moon day (June) at the site presently called Mhintale Hill. This deer hunt was a sort of parcel of Vedic Brahmanic ritual of honoring the rain god, *Pañjuna*, which indicates that there were Sanskrit based Vedic practices and rituals were in existence in Sri Lanka even in the 3rd century B.C. And the King had Brahmins as preceptors. King's nephew Uttara entered the Order thus establishing the Bhikkhu Sasana in Sri Lanka. Arahant Mahinda's sister Sanghamitta Theri, came to Sri Lanka with a sapling of the Sri Maha Bodhi at Buddha Gaya, which was ceremoniously planted in the capital city, Anuradhapura and King's sub-queen Anula entered the Order of Bhikkunis, originating the Bhikkhuni...
Sasana in Sri Lanka. Arahant Mahinda, obtained from his father, King Asoka, some sacred relics of the Buddha (bone relics) and arranged the building of the first stupa in Sri Lanka enshrining them, the Thuparama at Anuradhapura. The King had the Mahameghavana Park, at the name indicates it was a location where Vedic Brahmanic rituals were held for the rain god, Pajjuna; donated to Arahant Mahinda to convert it to a holy location.

Arahant Mahinda arranged members of eighteen craft guilds which included weavers, musicians, sculptors, masons, etc., that were necessary for the building of Viharas and even he would have arranged even cooks to come as there was a difference in food between India and Sri Lanka then as now. These craft guilds in India functioned under Vysyas (merchant, bankers) and 500 Vysyas too were brought down for financing the construction of monasteries and stupas in Sri Lanka. Having completed their tasks, (they came along with their family members) entered the Order of Maha Sangha. The present Vessagiriya cave complex in Anuradhaura city, was their abode after entering the Order. There are even today 24 caves with donatives inscriptions by their family members. Probably their family members and other Vysyas, who did not enter the Order, settled in Sri Lanka and their descendants are still there in Sri Lanka with their family names as 'Hetti' or 'Setti', such as Malwa Hetti, Athauda Hetti, Laduwahetti, Adihettim Lekuhetti, Kudahetti, etc..

On completion of the basic needs of a Buddhist society, the King Devanampiyatissa inquired of Arahant Mahinda whether Buddha Dharma had taken root in Sri Lanka. The response of Arahant Mahinda was only when a
son of Tambapanni (Sri Lanka) enters the Order, studies the Vinaya and preaches the Vinaya, then only Buddha Dhamma would take root. (Rasavahini). In order to meet this requirement Arahant Mahinda established the first Buddhist educational institute in the world, the Mahavihara at Anuradhapura. Arahant Mahinda having come at the age of 32, lived in Sri Lanka and passed away in Sri Lanka at the age of 80 and his sister Theri Sanghamitta a year later passed away. Arahant Mahinda spent 48 years and Theri Sanghamitta 49 years serving the Buddha Sasana in Sri Lanka. The Mahavihara, progressively became the leading Buddhist educational institution, with three degrees, of five years each and those qualified were conferred the title 'Bhanaka' recite, of the respective sections of the Tripitaka.

There were various interpretations of the original Dhamma and the far-seeing Mahatheras, under the patronage of a local chief, assembled at Aluvihara, Matale (Central Provence, Sri Lanka) and for the safety of the Tripitaka and its commentaries committed to writing in the first century B.C., as the King at Anuradhapura Vattagamani Abhaya (29-17 B.C.) having defeated the Tamils and reoccupied Anuradhapura after fourteen years and the king had demolished the Giri monastery of the Niganthas (Janis) and built at the very same location the great Abhayagiri-vihara, pre-fixing his name to it and he was not in favor of the Mahavihara Bhikkhus. This Abhayagiri-vihara was bent towards Mahayana and welcomed Mahayanist monks such as Vaitulyavadins, Vajrayanists, who were opposed to Theravada Buddhism. This Vihara was more like a polytechnic, in addition to normal education monks
were trained in metal and jewel craft to turn out images of gods and Buddha as well. By this time the Sanskrit based Mahayanist monks had established themselves Andhra in so that India and they had their own centers of monasteries such as Amravati, Nagarjunakonda, etc. and maintained close contact with Mahayana sect in Sri Lanka.

1.7. **Brahmanism in Ancient Ceylon**:

It is not certain as to when Sanskrit came into usage. Sanskrit language of the Vedic Hindu era, did not propagate in Sri Lanka, as it was the case with Pali, the language of the Theravada Buddhism in Sri Lanka. There is no concrete evidence, namely in the pre-Buddhist period, which language was in use in the country. In the pre-Buddhist era, language of Sri Lanka has not been discovered adequately through researches. However, historical records, in the form of texts authored, it is evident that in the pre-Buddhist era, Sanskrit was propagated in Sri Lanka could be adduced also the exchange of ideas, namely of Sanskrit origin, give credence to the usage of Sanskrit in the island. Although, as the records indicate the written history of the country begins with the arrival of Vijaya, In the earlier periods history is presented through folk tales and legends, which are primarily based on seeking the intervention of various Vedic gods to solve the problems faced by the people.
Explaining 'Plebeian Religious Needs', Max Weber says, “Plebeian religious needs the needs for emotional experience of the super-worldly and the emergency aid in external and internal distress; needs which arise out of the recurrent crisis of life and which could be satisfied by two possible types of sociology, magic or a savior” (The Religion of India, Don Martindale (Glencoe, Illinois 1958) pp. 236-37).” This theory is applicable to the so called religious cults of pre-Buddhist Sri Lanka too, and these saviours were in the Vedic Hinduism as given in the Vedas. In the pre and post Buddhist periods, even today the Buddhists who are 70 percent of the total population of 20 million, are not exceptions to the above quoted statement and after their religious rites, they transferred merits accruing to gods with a social gatha or stanza. Therefore, these legends and folk tales cannot be dismissed as such. However, in the Indian epic, Ramayana, authored by Valmiki dealing with the abduction of Sita the wife of Rama by Sri Lanka King Ravana and recapturing her with the assistance of the monkey battalion of Hanuman cannot be disregarded as regards the early history of Sri Lanka. The Lankapura mentioned in the epic Ramayana mirrors that King Ravana had knowledge a good of Sanskrit. The following statement by Hanuman manifests that King Ravana had a knowledge of Sanskrit: “In case I like a Brahmin makes statements to Sita, he would fear that I am Ravana:. Hanuman therefore thought for himself in that way.

“य़दि वचम् प्रदस्यमि - द्विजितिरिव सन्स्क्रुतम्।
अवनम् मन्यमनमम् - शति हृति भवशिष्यति।”

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Ramayana also says that in Sri Lanka there were rakshas as of the Brahmin genre or Brahman rakshyan and they followed the Vedic rites and rituals\(^2\). It is not because of the reference that of the Sanskrit relationship of India with Sri Lanka since it is said that Ravana used Sanskrit language. The two Ayurvedic medicinal works of Indian origin, said to be authored by King Ravana of Sri Lanka in Sanskrit, namely 'Arkaprakasha' and 'Kumaratantra'. Although the Ravana legend gives a clue that prior to the arrival of Vijaya in Sri Lanka, Sanskrit language was in use. However, there is no definite indication what this Sanskrit language was. The reason for this is that by either 6\(^{th}\) or 5\(^{th}\) century BC, the time Vijaya is supposed to have arrived in Sri Lanka, Sanskrit language, though had its first composition, the Rig Veda, the language grew but the language had not reached a very high standard. The Great Sanskrit grammar work- Astadhyayi' authored by grammarian (Sanskrit) Panini in the 4\(^{th}\) century B.C. And with this grammatical work Sanskrit reached the highest status it deserved, being a language that had its one language and script the Rig Veda, the oldest religious text of the world, as mentioned previously. Later grammarians of India, authored commentaries on the Panini's work, namely Katyavana (Vattika) and Patanjali with his 'Mahabasyath' (2\(^{nd}\) Century B.C.) and Jayadithya and Vamana authored Kashika (7\(^{th}\) Century B.C.). Among the many commentaries these were the most remarkable contributions for the growth of Sanskrit. The grammatical work of Panini had been influenced by ancient grammatical works too. Thus it could be rated that Panini's grammatical work is the most outstanding work in any ancient culture
and civilization. This grammatical work lays down nearly 4000 grammatical rules and it was owing to this outstanding work of Panini that among the naturally developed Prakrit languages of India, that Sanskrit gained the name ‘Sanskrit’ meaning 'refined language'. (A. L. Basham- The Wonder that was India – Sedgwick and Jackson, London, (1962) pp. 487-491).

The Sanskrit language was systematized by Panini, gave it the pride of place among the languages that were in use in western India. Sanskrit was used by the clergy, the Brahmins and progressively it became the language of the administrators too. During the periods of Mauryas and Guptas the Indian tribals used Pakrit was enacting royal decrees. The first most important tribe that used Sanskrit were the Saka tribes of Udeni kingdom. Although there are just a few Sanskrit inscriptions, the extant Sanskrit inscription is Rudraman's Girnar (Gujarat) inscription (Ibid p. 79). A language develops widely if it is easy to be spoken and committed to writing, only when a language is simple and devoid of strict rules and traditions. The grammatical presentations of Panini were highly scholarly and hence Sanskrit failed as a language in common parlance (Ibid p. 490). Despite these restrictions, Sanskrit never became a dead language. As this language was used by rulers and scholars as such those of the lower strata of the society too gained knowledge of it to some extent. Thus it became the lingua franca of India. Even today learned Brahmins from all quarters of India meet at their shrines and converse in Sanskrit, which they honor as god's language.

There are immense recorded evidences that Sanskrit was wide spread in
Sri Lanka during the pre-Buddhist eras. In terms of the Sri Lanka Great Chronicle (Mahavamsa) the first recorded evidence is the reference to Brahmins. The Mahavamsa refers to Vijaya as the first kink of Sri Lanka. Among his associates was Brahmin Upatissa. Further Mahavamsa says the preceptor of King Pandukhabhya was Brahmin Pandula. Mahavamsa also says that King Pandukabhya (377-307 B.C.) consulted in planning the first capital of Sri Lanka. Anuradhapura, architect Pandula's son Chandra, who was later his preceptor (purohita). It is clear that in the sign names such as Panduvasudeva, Girikhandasiva etc., had a Vedic Hindu influence. In the same chronicle, King Devanampiyatissa (247-207 B.C.) in the mission he sent to Emperor Asoka under his nephew Maha Aritta, had a preceptor who was a Brahmin. When the southern branch of the Sri Maha Bodhi at Buddha Gaya was brought to Sri Lanka by Arahant Mahinda's sister there Sanghamitta, and enroute from the port of call in northern province Jambukolapattana to Anuradhapura that this group stayed at the Brahmin village of Tivakka. There are instances of various religious sects of Buddhist India, that had reached Sri Lanka during the pre-Buddhist era. For instance such sects such as Sambhanda had been in Sri Lanka. The above references indicate that during the pre-Buddhist eras Brahmins lived in Sri Lanka. Therefore it is justifiable to conclude that there were Vedic religious traditions and Sanskrit that had existed in Sri Lanka.

During the Anuradhapura period, (377 B.C.-896 A.D.) Sanskrit was a
powerful factor in the formulation of the lifestyles. There were two such forces: brahmanic influence and Theravada Buddhism influence\textsuperscript{10}. Among the two the brahmanic force occupies a special status. As mentioned previously, the brahmanic force was active since the pre-Buddhist eras. In the scenario where the brahmanic force was highly active in the royal courts literary works, naturally originated. Therefore such works would have been composed in the Sanskrit language.

Whatever the language in which Buddhism was preached by the missionaries of Sri Lanka, led by Arahant Mahinda, this language would have been easily understood by the people. During the time of Asoka's Buddhist missions, the language in use in India was Prakrit with close affinity to Sanskrit, rather than Pali\textsuperscript{11}. In surmising these factors, it needs to be accepted that in the pre-Buddhist eras of Sri Lanka Sanskrit language has had high status on the island.

During the first or the end of the second centuries of the Christian era, King Kanishka, who ruled in northern India and during these regal years, the Mahayanists held their own first Buddhist Council. Consequently, Mahayana Buddhism scripted in Sanskrit was propagated by Mahayanists in India as well as in other regions and even overseas. King Kanishka extended his total patronage for this exercise. Mahayana Buddhism reached Sri Lanka during this period. With this the propagation of Sanskrit too took place in Sri Lanka. With the periodical migrations of Mahayana sects, new Buddhist sects too sprang up. After the establishment of Mahavihara, exactly two hundred years, ten months
and ten days, King Valagambha (Vatta Gamaniabhaya – 43 B.C., with a break of 43 – 29 B.C.; Tamils usurped the Anuradhapura kingdom and Anuradhapura (retired 29 – 17 B.C.) destroyed the shrine of Giri (Nigantha – Jain) and in the very same location founded the Abhayagiri Mahavihara and donated it to the Tissa ther. With this Abhayagiri Mahavihara became the centre of Mahayana Buddhism¹².

The pupil of Tissa ther, Bahula Tissa along with 500 bhikkhus left the Mahavihara took up residence in the Abhayagiri Mahavihara, and having joined his preceptor commenced his activities. During this time Dhamaruci bhikkhus of the Vajjiputtaka of India came from the Pallarama Vihara and joined the Abhayagiri bhikkhus. Thereafter bhikkhus of the Abhayagiri came to be known as bhikkhus of the Dhammaruci Sect¹³.

Mahavihara became a fertile ground for Pali literary works and similarly, Abhayagiri became a centre for Sanskrit literary works and Mahayana Buddhists scriptures in Sanskrit. Consequently Sanskrit based Vajrayana, Nilapata, Darshana, etc., of the Mahayana philosophy began to be propagated in Sri Lanka. Generally the Abhayagiri resident Dhammarucika, Dakshinagiri resident bhikkhus called Sagalikayan came to be known as Vaitulyavadins and their Dharma text or philosophy was Viatulya Sutra or Vaipulya Sutras¹⁴ These Texts were scripted in Sanskrit. The Mahayanists international language too was Sanskrit. The Abhayagiri, which accepted Mahayana, were naturally drawn towards Sanskrit language and its literary works.
The venerable Moratuwe Sasanaratana Maha Thera, tracing the reasons for the propagation of Mahayana in Sri Lanka says, “Mahayanists found it easy to propagate Mahayana in Sri Lanka and Mahayananism spread itself immediately, was due to their usage of Sanskrit language.” The Chinese pilgrim monk Fa Hian, who came on a pilgrimage to Sri Lanka during his long journey in India as well as Afghanistan in the 5th century AD, in his travel records make mention of Abhayagiri Vihara bhikkhus conversing in Sanskrit.

The outstanding Mahayanist scholars, such as Dinnaga, Nagarjuna, Asanga, Vasubandhu, who were great exponents of Mahayana Buddhist philosophy and their works were done in Sanskrit. Naturally the Mahayanist followers in Sri Lanka in order to gain an access to these works had to have knowledge of Sanskrit and they studied Sanskrit to a great extent. Sanskrit language which till then had been an exclusive prerogative of Brahmins, with the Abhayagiri Vihara bhikkhus adopting Mahayana, the Sanskrit language became more popular. Sanskrit language was rich in worldly sciences and culture. In order to gain literary fluency of Sanskrit it became one of the avenues to gain such knowledge fluency. Consequently, amongst the Mahayana bhikkhus, Sanskrit language became widespread among them.

Since the beginning and the end of Anuradhapura period, is was already shown that it had reached a very high status as far as language was concerned. Therefore, the outstanding Sanskrit works of India became popular with the Sri Lanka readers, could be surmised with the adduced above reasons. During the time of King Mahanama (406 – 428 AD) the grammarian Venerable
Buddhaghosa, who came from Mordacetaka village of Andhra Pradesh, in order to translate the Sinhala commentaries into Pali and various factors he has pinpointed, manifest that the Indian epics were very popular in Sri Lanka. In his commentary on Digha Nikaya, he uses the word 'sampapphalapa' (fruitless talks) and describes it as follows,

“Anattavinnanappakayavaci – payogasamuttapika akusala chetana sampappalapho so asevani mandataya appasavajjo, asevana mahantataya maha savajjo tassa deva sambhara, bharata yudha sitaharanadi nirartaka katha purekkhara, tatharupi kathakatancha16”.

Herein what is important to us is the section, “tassa deva sambhara...” Its meaning is: “That (sampappalapaya) is composed of two sections,” namely: engaging in wars of Sitaharana and listening to them is fruitless and narrating such stories. Here Bharata Yuddha means Mahabharata epic, and Sita Harana, the Ramayana epic. This indicates that the two extraordinary epics were very popular in Sri Lanka. This statement of Venerable Buddhagosa, who even composed the massive Visuddhimagga in Pali, that the epics Mahabharata and Ramayana, and other popular Sanskrit texts, were treated as fruitless, as a clue to the Mahaviharaa bhikkhus made an effort to dispense them with which gives a shadow of their intentions.

Sanskrit Verses on the Mirror wall of Sigiriya:

It is well known by the verses on the Mirror Wall of Sigirya, Central Province of Sri Lanka, incised between 8 – 10 centuries AD, that Sanskrit was very widely known in Sri Lanka. These were not from erudite poets but those
who came to enjoy the beauties of Sigirya frescoes, just common folk. In about a hundred of these verses, the introductory invocation is in Sanskrit ‘Svasthi’ (17). In these verses we come across names like Kirtivarman and Sri Harsha, which are Sanskrit names. We come across verses composed and incised by a person named Vajravarman.

“फिनपयोधरहर - ललितसरसरचति ततुमद्य।
नलिन्दविरतनन - केसमू मनोरम रम॥”

The following verse indicates those who composed the verses had the influence of the Indian emissary poetic work Meghaduta, namely:

'अन्दिमि हिमि वल - तोगोसिन् अएय नविमुनन।
पिरिबुन् पग मलसुन - दवि तो हदहव किय किययि॥'  

Professor Senarath Paranavitana, the leading historian and archaeologist of Sri Lanka cities these verses wherein the Sanskrit embellishments were widely employed.

There is still another vital factor that Sanskrit literature was well known, namely, the Siyabaslakara composed by Silameghavanna (833-853 AD). It is also seen that the Sanskrit poetic influence in the Siyabaslakara, which is a Sinhala language translation of Dan din’s Kavyadarsaya. Prior poetic works of Sanskrit became popular in Sri Lanka, the Siyabaslakara itself provides the data. The poet of the Siyabaslakara says that his work would provide to those who had not had an insight into Sanskrit and to those who are not aware of any previous works, his work will be of great use.

'Deretas kiyami – peragat sekevinidu vuu
Herein the poet uses the term 'Gods Language' in respect of Sanskrit, which was the oldest terminology in India to describe Sanskrit. Herein 'kav lakunu' is Kavyadarsha itself. Through numerous examples it could be concluded that the still extant Sinhala literary works of the ancient Anuradhapura period, and in the composition of Sinhala literary works, there had been both Pali and Sanskrit literary influence.

The Dampiya Atuwa (commentary) glossary of King Kassapa V (913-923 AD), had had an influence of Sanskrit literature. The king had used Sanskrit terms very widely, namely,

'Meyin dharma ratnayehi buddha bhava hetuvatva lakshana guna dakva pramanarahase kiuu vet',

'bhagyagni karanakota sariragata tejo dhatu davamin nesena se kiyu vet'

The following terms indicate the manner in which grammatical rules are illustrated according to the Sanskrit norms.

'Bha deepthau'

'Ghayila harshakarshe'

'aticaritva – ati purva charati sevanarthamahi'

Each and every example in the pre-Buddhist era right through the Anuradhapura period reveals that Sanskrit language was in use. With the migration of Aryans, Sanskrit witnessed a development and along with the migration of Mahayana Buddhism, there was certainly a development in the
composition of Sanskrit literary works. The scholars both bhikkhu and laymen who excelled as scholars would have produced new works in Sanskrit. However, other than the still extant Anuradhapura literary works, there had been a large number of works as evidenced by inscriptive and other literary works.

The bronze slabs recovered from Indikatuseya at Mihintale\textsuperscript{27}, and bronze slabs recovered from Vijayarama confirms the above facts. Mihintale Trikayasthava inscription discloses that Mihintale and its environs were held by Mahayanists\textsuperscript{28}. The bronze slabs of Indikatuseya and Vijayarama reveal that the Buddhists at that time Sanskrit works were very popular and that the Buddhists during that period accorded to them reverential homage. Extracts from these Sanskrit Dharma works were incised on slabs and enshrined in stupas as 'Dharma Dhathu' or Relics of Dharma. In many of the bronze slabs recovered from Indikatuseya, has incisions of Mahayana Pannavinsatisahashhrica, Prajnaparamita texts first chapters\textsuperscript{29}. Another 15 bronze slabs are extracts from 'Kashyapa Parivarta'\textsuperscript{30}. This establishes that Mahayana Dharma texts, which the Mahayanists revered in the highest order, many in numbers.

It is observed that author of Nikayasangrahaya, Venerable Devarakshitha Jayabahu Maha Thero, who lived in the 14\textsuperscript{th} century had known large number of texts of Tantric and Mahayana. He has mentioned in this Nikayasangraha names of different texts, “Varna Pitaka (commentary), Mayajalatantraya, Bherukaddbudaya, Tatvasangraha, Angulimala Pitakaya,
Samajatantraya, Rattapalagarpitaya, Mahasamayayattava, Vajraghandharakalpa, Ratanakuta Marichiguhayakalpa,”31. It could be imagined that among these Sanskrit works some were authored by Sri Lankan Scholars.

However, among of the Sanskrit works that were produced based on Mahayana Buddhism, what is now extant are a few Sanskrit inscriptions and a handful of Sanskrit texts with Abhayagiri Vihara as the centre. When conflicts arose between the supporting kings of Mahavihara and Mahayana institutes including Abhayagiri these texts have been either lost or destroyed.

**Sanskrit Inscriptions:**

The oldest Sanskrit inscriptions of the Anuradhapura is the Kuchchaveli inscription32. This inscription is on the face of a rock beside Kuchchaveli sea coast, which is a fishing village in Eastern Kaddikulam area, 21 miles north of Trincomalee. Professor Senarath Paranavitana's opinion is that this inscription is of the 5th-8th centuries AD. The objective of this is by incising a stupa on the rock is to attain Buddhahood.

**The second Sanskrit inscription :**

The second Sanskrit inscription Anuradhapura was discovered at Tiriyyaya. Tiriyyaya is situated 29 miles north of Trincomalee. This place is also called Kandasamimalai and a Vatadage and remains of a monastery and the inscription is on a massive rock. This belongs to 8th and 9th century AD. The author of the inscription is not known and the stupa found here is called Girikanda. The inscription states that this stupa was built by the two merchants
Tapassu and Bhalluka enshrining the sacred hair-relics of the Buddha, which they got as a momento from the Buddha when they met him at Rajayatana tree, in Buddha Gaya, where Buddha was spending his seventh week after Enlightenment. The two merchants had listened to the Dharma preached by the Buddha and became his first two disciples, taking only refuge in the Buddha and Dharma. The Sangh was not established then (6th century BC).

The third inscription:

The third inscription too was found at Mihintale. The author of this inscription is unknown. The inscription concludes with 'Bhikkhubhir bodhisatvagunakara', with no other appellations to it. This inscription is incised on a rock near the Ambasthala Sela Chaitya. This inscription called Trikayasthava and it connotes that the three-fold Buddha physique (Trikaya) is being worshipped and this idea is given slokas (stanzas) composed and inscribed on this rock.

Still another inscription:

There is still another inscription found at Abhayagiri environs, which is of vital importance. Earlier it was called the Jetavanarama inscription. In view of the fact this inscription was discovered from the grounds of Abhayagiri Vihara which was the centre of Mahayana and as such it carries the description of the ways and means of management of the Vihara.

Bronze slab inscriptions:
In addition, in a few of the bronze slab inscriptions recovered from Mihintale Indikatuweya there are Sanskrit inscriptions. Professor Senarath Paranavithana opines that these are extracts of a Mahayanist text. Further still another inscription in Sanskrit Nagari script was found in Rajagiri Cave Hill in Mihinitale. The Sanskrit inscriptions of the Anuradhapura period are:

- Kapararama slab inscription
- Anaulumandava Slab inscription
- Tiriyaya Rock inscription, and
- Abhayagiri bronze inscription.

**Great Poets of the Anuradhapura Period**

The most accomplished and respected and with a versatility in critic assessments of Indian poetical works and a playwright, Rajasekera, the poet, who lived in the 19th century gives the following comment on the creations of Sinhala poets of the then Anuradhapura period, in Sanskrit:

'झनस्व वक्सुधसुतिर्
मनिसुतिश्व रोहनः।
नन्यत्र सिन्हल द्विपन्
मुक्त सुतिस्व सगर्खः: ॥' 37

Quoted in Mahjavamsa.

The above appreciation of Rajasekera, in that the residents of Sinhaladveepa in the Anuradhapura period and their literary works are more than those of the entire world in their highly tasteful poetic renderings. This
appreciation finds confirmation in the poetic works of the Anuradhapura period. Wimala Wijesuriya, makes mention of some great poets of the Anuradhapura period, who composed in the international language of Sanskrit of the time, that endowed was special honor.

**Great poets of the Anuradhapura period:**

1. Aryadeva (Catusshataka, Tittavisuddhiprakarana)
2. Sinhala Ratana Shri Gnana (Kavya Lakshana – poetic features)
3. Mahanama Sthavira (Buddhagaya Inscriptional sloka)
4. Mana Sun-King Son of Sinhala Kumaradasa (Janakiharana, Shri Ghanananda Kavya)
5. Bhishagisvara Sinhaladhisvara Buddhadasa (Vaidyasarartha Sangraha)
6. Anuradhapura Poet Dhiranaga/ Bhadanta Dhiranadapada (Kundamala, Subhasitavali)
7. Arya Shurapada

Some among them were born and bred in Sri Lanka and had devoted themselves for the creation of works in the Sinhaladesha, as described by Wimala Wijesiriya.

**Janakiharana : A Mahakavya :**

The still extant Anuradhapura great poetical work is Janakiharana. This is composed with Ramayana as the base narrative. This is treated as a work that had declined during a certain period of time. The first part of this work was edited by Venerable Ratmalane Dhammarama Maha Thera, with the assistance of an ancient terms inclusive commentary in fourteen Sarga. Later the entire Janakiharana with twenty sargas was discovered in India, which was
In the literary work 'Piyavara' in the words of Professor Senarath Paranavithana, as to who was the author of Janakiharana is mentioned as follows: “In the Culavamsa under the name Kumaradhatusena in the inscriptions Mahakumaradasa, Kumaradhira Sirisanghabodhi, in these names, King Kumaradasa this great poetical work was composed... in the Perakumbasirita, composed during the period of King Perakumba, the Sixth, makes mention of it.”

The Pujavali of (13th century AD) says that this work was done by King Muglan's son, King Kumardasa. In the Madras (Chennai – Tamilnadu) copy of the Janakiharana it is recorded: “Iti Shri Sinhalasya kumaradasasaya kruto Janakiharana Maha kavye vi: sati: sarga: samapta magamat.” In the edition of the Venerable Dhammarama there is a different rendering, namely: “Kumaradasasaya kruto Janakiharanaya maha kavyo ramabhisheka nama panchadasha: sarga”.

In terms of these evidences it is appropriate to conclude the name of the poet as Kumaradasa. As regards the life and times of the poet, Venerable Dehigaspe Pannasara Mahathera, identifies the poet as Kumaradasa who had his anointing in 515 AD, who was known by the substitute name King Kamuradhatusena. However, now positively it has been identified as the poet of Janakiharana. Paranavithana, in terms of the concluding Kavivamsa
Varnana, offers this opinion. Kumaradasa's father was Manitha, who is also called King Agrabodhi the Third, was one of his relative brothers. The sub-king of Agrabodhi (633-643 AD) was Manta. Kumaradasa was his son. King Kasyapa the Second, was the father of father. Manavamma was the king during the period (684-718 AD). Kumaradasa was a relative brother of Vanavamma. According to this information the poet of Janakiharana, Kumaradasa lived either in the 7th or 8th century AD.

**Sararth Sangrahe of King Inddhadasa :**

Sanskrit literary works, Ayurveda (medical sciences), painting architecture and subjects of this nature were created not only by Sinhala bhikkhus but also by the lay erudite Sinhala Pandit too. King Buddhadasa (337-365 AD) who gained the highest honor as a Sinhala sage, highly competent in the field of medical sciences both in India and Sri Lanka, is one such erudite scholar. The Ayurvedic Treatise Sararthasangraha authored by him enlightens his accomplished erudition. The western scholars such as Wilhelm Geiger, who translated Pali Mahavamsa and many other ancient texts into English and George Turn our, head of the Ceylon Civil Service, failed to direct their attention to the work, and many others who wrote about the Anuradhapura literature did not study this work and dispensed it as doubtful. Even Professor Paranavithana who in his work history of Ceylon University in his first part, in the first edition regarding Sanskrit literature had also ignored this Janakiharana. Punchi Bandra Sannasgala's work ‘Sinhala Sahitya Vamsa’, had made use of King Buddhadasa's Sararthasangraha, India's Ayurvedic
works, and Sri Lanka Ayurvedic methodology in authoring his work, The 
Sarartasangraha, composed of three parts is a work on Ayurveda published in 
1903. He has pinpointed that this work is by King Buddhadasa. Even Most 
Venerable Hikkaduve Sri Sumangala Mahanayaka Thero too has accepted this 
interpretation. It is doubtful whether as recorded in the Mahavamsa as to be a 
work of King Buddhadasa, is the identical work that was published. The 
author of this text called Upasanhara, wrote of King Buddhadasa as follows: 
“This royal dynasty that was deeply rooted in Tri-Sinhala and a descendant of 
the very same dynasty and lineage of the rulers such as Sri Sanghabodhi, King 
Buddhadasa authored this work.”. Venerable Dehigaspe Pannasara Maha 
Therom says that work is by this particular king. King Buddhadasa ruled 
during the period 388-397 AD, ‘Sarartasanghra’ is a huge work with 48 
chapters and with 2600 slokas. In recent times Ayurvedic Physician hailing 
from Matara and practicing at Colombo has re-edited this work and had 
translated into Sinhala language. In this edition there are 52 chapters.

**Works of Architecture :**

We come across works of architecture too in the early Anuradhapura 
period. Here the most important is, one that has been found in Sri Lanka, the 
oldest text on architecture, the one and only text is ‘Manjusri Bhashita’ was 
authored by Buddhadasa was composed in Sanskrit. Manjusri Bashita of the 
Mahayana tradition. The authorship of this work was attributed to Manjusri
Bodhisatva. In respect of this work Sri Lanka history authored Professor Paranavithana of Venerable Dehigaspe Pannasara who authored the work on Sanskrit literature had failed to give their attention to it. It may be that when they were composing their works they were not aware of this work, probably. The only manuscript of this work so far found is the Sinhala manuscript which he had edited and later translated into English language. In the Sinhala translation only what was written about architecture in the first three chapters. The section dealing with painting has still not been translated into Sinhala language. He states that Science of Architecture as a text is of Sri Lanka origin and he puts forward investigative facts and details.

This work deals with the ancient Buddhist Viharas architecture and the sculpted images. Among the works on these two subjects this work is of the highest degree of excellence. A special feature of this work is it that records the structure of Viharas and cultures. This work is in a total of eighteen chapters. The first three chapters deal with Science of Architecture, Vihara organization and their management. This section is titled as 'Vastu Vidya Sastra'. The remaining chapters, deal with 'Chitra Karma Sastra' (i.e. Science of Painting).

In the beginning of the text the origin of the Science of Architecture is dealt with in a short manner, titling it as 'Nama Sarvagnaya'. Buddha having learnt this science and Manjushri Bodhisatva for the well-being of humanity has preached it. Thereafter, a summary dealt with of the subjects is presented.

There is a diversity of opinion expressed by scholars as regards the age that this was produced with regard to ancient Mahayana Vihara architecture
and sculpture. However, Walter Marasinghe in an extensive research as regards to the age and time of this work states as follows: “My opinion is that it is possible to specify the time of its authorship between 5\textsuperscript{th} and 7\textsuperscript{th} centuries AD”\textsuperscript{51}.

**Jataka Mala – a Champu Kavya:**

Jataka Mala is a work of the Anuradhapura with verse and prose mixed 'champu Kavya'. This work is in Sanskrit having selected thirty-four Jataka stories from the Jataka Pali (stores), Namely from Vyaghra Jataka to Sataputra Jataka. It is accepted that its author was the layman pandit, who lived in 4\textsuperscript{th} - 5\textsuperscript{th} centuries AD, named Surapada. However, the European and Indian scholars who study Sanskrit Buddhist literature and its history are reluctant to assign Surapada as a Sri Lankan. In contrast, Venerable Jayabahu Maha Thera, who lived in Gampola Central Province, in the 14\textsuperscript{th} century in his work Nikaya Sangraha positively states that Surapada was a lay pandit of the Mahayana tradition hailing from Sri Lanka\textsuperscript{52}.

C.E. Godamumbura, the archaeologist too says the author of Jatakamala is Surapada. He says, “The Jatakamala an excellent champu kavya was authored by Surapada, whose name appears in Nikaya Sangraha too.”\textsuperscript{53} Venerable Kumburupitiya Vanaratana Nayaka Thero too confirms this view \textsuperscript{54}. Venerable Dehigaspe Pannasara Mahathera, who wrote on Sri Lanka literature does not accept that he is not a Sri Lankan author, by not having referred to it. However, that Jatakamala is a composition of a Sri Lanka pundit could be established through the close association of later period authors who composed
Sinhala and Pali texts. Gurulugomi, in his work Dharmapradipika included six verses of the 18th Kumbha Jataka of Jatakamala, and he also reproduces from the ancient Rupasiddhi Sannaya of Jatakamala, three verses too. Similarly of the Sri Lanka produced Hattavanagalla Vihara Wamsa, Jatakamala, about 20 verses have translated from Pali too have been included.

Several special Sanskrit works of the Anuradhapura authored by Sri Lanka scholars of the Anuradhapura in Sanskrit that endowed people of Sri Lanka and Sri Lanka itself, during the Anuradhapura, and not now found in Sri Lanka have been discovered in other countries.

**Ariyadevapada**

It is an established fact that Ariyadevapada was a Sri Lankan. In the Catu: Sataka, edited by Vidushekhara Bhattacarya, in the introduction says, Aryaveda having renounced kingship had got himself ordained as a bhikkhu, as a Sinhala king. The Tibetan Tibbatagrantha, positively states that he was a Sri Lankan.

**Catushatakaya**

The works of Ariyadeva is two in number, namely, Catuh and Cittavisuddhiprakarana. Of the two Catushatakaya is most important. Although the original work was supposed to contain 400 slokas, presently there are only 225 slokas. This work is free of inter-nikaya corruptive opinions, without distancing from Protyasamutpadaya, Sunyatavaya, Samsara and Nirvana,
through insight meditation (Vidarshana), namely impermanence (anitya), suffering (dukkha) and non-soul (anatma), which enables the understanding of the actual knowledge (yaabhuthadarshana) very logically that endows a person with Buddhist philosophy viz. ultimate fruit of Buddhist philosophy.

**Cittavisuddhiprakarana :**

His second work was Cittavisuddhiprakarana. This is testified to be a work of Ariyadeva, Subhasita Sangraha, Mahamahotpadya Hariprasad Sastris statement published in the page 175 of the Bengal Asiatic Society journal, verily establishes that it is positively a work of Aryadeva. Cittavisuddhi-prakarana criticizing Theravada and promoties Mahayana concepts.

During the last stages of the Anuradhapura period, namely 10th century AD, Ratna Shri jnana bhikkhu, having gone from Sri Lanka and residing in Bengal, as an additive text for Dandin's Kavyadarshaya, a text called ‘Ratna Shri Gnana Kavya Lakshana’ in Sanskrit. There is no appropriate understanding of Sinhala author Ratna Shri Gnana pada, who during the Anuradhapura period who brought very high recognition to Sri Lanka and the Sinhala race. The German scholar Professor Hyannis Beshard, says, Ratna Shri Gnana or Ratna Shri Pada is one who added creation of literature, a Sinhala poet, and that the text was not only locally but internationally too was widespread among the people.

**Mahanama :**

Venerable Mahanama, described as Mahavamsa sagara, in view of his authorship of Mahavamsa, who was also conferred with honorary Buddhist titles such as Lankadipaprasuta, prutulakulajaladhi and his Buddha Gaya
inscription has received the special attention of the literary community as well as historians. Dr. C.E. Godakumbura writes, “The Paryachudamani, the Buddha's Sanskrit biography was authored by the author of Mahavamsa, Venerable Mahanama. The Buddhagaya Sanskrit poetical inscription of Venerable Mahanama manifests the extensive knowledge of Sanskrit of a Sinhala bhikkhu.\(^5\)\(^6\)

**Nikaya Sangraha:**

Devarakkhita Jayabahu Dharmakeerti Maha Nayakathero, in his Nikaya Sangraha, states, “Sloka following Dharmakirtipada, Dhiranagapala/pada, Rajamurajiya, Kavirajasekera, etc.”, Dhiranagapala/pada and in the Kundamala a nataka, referred to as Anuparadhassya kaver Dhiranagasya krutikh Kundamala nama natakam samaptham” statement depicted statement, the lay pandit of Sri Lanka named Dhiranaga is another erudite who produced in local Pali, Sanskrit, poetical works. In the Kundamala no mention of an Anuradhapura is made in any other place it is to be understood what was meant was Anuradhapura and Araralapura is necessarily the city of Anuradhapura of Sri Lanka.

1.8. **Polonnaruwa Period:**

Anuradhapura commenced in 394 BC with Anuradhapura as the capital until the reign of King Aggabodhi VI (727-766 AD) with Polonnaruwa becoming capital under king Aggabodhi VII (766 AD), and thereafter it was the Polonnaruwa period. It is widely seen that in the Polonnaruwa period and thereafter Sinhala verse and prose that a person without wide knowledge of
Sanskrit was unable to write Sinhala grammatically, not only Sanskrit words but phrases of sentences may have been incorporated in the Sinhala language literary works. It is very clearly seen in the Sinhala inscriptions and in Sinhala texts there is the inclusion of Sanskrit slokas extensively.

The Vellaikara inscription of 1137-1153 AD period, carries a significant degree of information regarding the political management of the country. In this inscription both Sanskrit and Tamil languages have been used. This indicates as an inscription is for the reading of the common people, both Sanskrit and Tamil were well learnt and understood even by the common people of Jaffna Peninsula and the absence of Sinhala in the inscription means, there were no permanent Sinhala settlers in the region as such.

This inscription commences with was Sanskrit sloka:

“ट्रिन्शे भुविभुजख् परक्रम भुजस्यबेद तद देस्तस्,
स्रद्धचरद्रदधिकरिविभ्रुत नम्नमगेन्द्रन्तु।
उत्तुन्गन्वय सम्भवेन विदुस क्लुत्ज़्य् सत्किर्तितिति,
सैलन्तयतय दत्तविविधग्रमदिसम्खेयच्च्यते ॥”

King Nissankamalla (1187 – 1190 AD), who was always boastful of every action he did with long inscriptions more of a boastful nature than a reality, had set up a slab inscription and concludes the inscription with Sanskrit sloka. In two other inscriptions of this king set up in Polonnaruwa too carries Sanskrit slokas, probably Sanskrit being called the referred language as well as the language of the gods, this king, being highly boastful and bent on glorifying himself, probably wanted to drive home to the people that he was also highly learned in Sanskrit. These two inscriptions commence with
Sanskrit slokas. Further two slab inscriptions of the identical period discovered in the Polonnaruwa north gateway bears two Sanskrit slokas that mirror the Sanskrit poetic features to a great extent. The recreational arena (man dap) of King Nissankamalla rock inscription too commences with Sragdhara. During the time of King Sahassamalla, in a commemorative slab inscription of him being amounted as king, too carries two Sanskrit verses. It is abundantly clear that with the extensive usage of Sanskrit language in inscriptions, which are meant to be read and understood by both scholars and common people, that during the Polonnaruwa period, Sanskrit language had reached a very high standard.

During the Polonnaruwa period, Sanskrit literature was extended to various sectors. Dumbaragirivasi (Dimbulagala, Polonnaruwa) resident, Maha Kasyapa Thero, who brought about a unity among the different Nikayas of bhikkhus, during the reign of King Parakramabahu I, was a highly erudite bhikkhu. He being an authority on Sanskrit grammar and in terms of Chandravyakarana, the text called Balavabhodhana comprising of 479 sutras, authored this grammatical work on Sanskrit language. Though this work was modeled after the Chandravyakarana tradition, there is also a text still not published on Vyakhana. This is Buddhanaga Thero's Linartadipa or Patrikarana commentary. This was composed as a commentary to grammarian Gunakara's Patrikarana text; is referred to as such in the second sloka.

The Sanskrit works of this period was not confined only to Sanskrit grammar with the influence of Indian Sanskrit authors such as Mayura, Amaru, etc., poetical works and among these works the most excellent and the first
Sataka Kavya work in Sri Lanka first Sataka Kavya was Anuruddha Sataka. This was composed describing the qualities of the Buddha. The name of the text itself reveals that it was the work of the resident of Uttaramula institute Anuruddha Thero. His contains 101 verses. This work features specifically, Nirakula prakashana, Sadha Maduryayand Arthalavanya, namely authentic, phonetics and meanings specifications.

Still another work of the same genre is the poetical work Namasthasataka. This is done basing on Buddha's qualities and titles numbering 108, in poetry. The author of this text is still in known. Another work smaller than Namastasataka of this period is Buddhagajjaya. This is composed in a very simple form. This has been done for the benefits of novices in the study of Sanskrit resident in Viharas. This contains 41 verses composed in 14 vrutas. Though as small as Buddhagajjaya is, still another poetical work is Sakaskadaya. In this work almost ninety-five percent are Sanskrit words and the balance five percent Sinhala. It is not possible to date this small text. In view of the contents of this work and the language this is very similar to Anuruddha Sataka and hence it could be classified as a work of the Polonaruwa period.

The influence of Sanskrit literature on Sinhala literature was extensive. The work of King Parakramabahu of the 12th century AD, Polonnaru Kathikavata, is a work in Sinhala with a great deal of Sanskrit words. This is amplified in, “Mahasammatadi paramparayana suryavamsodhuta
In this extract which has 33 words, 26 words are in Sanskrit. This shows that, in the Polonnaruwa period Sinhala works were composed with extensive use of Sanskrit words.

**Mahabodhivamsa Getapada:**

Mahabodhivamsa Getapada (dictionary) (1153-1202 AD) is the work of an erudite sanskrit scholar of the Polonnaruwa period. This was done in order to rectify misinterpretations of Pali Bodhivamsa. In order to manifest the author’s erudition and his high standard of knowledge, in several places he has utilized his extensive knowledge of Sanskrit. There is seen numerous Sanskrit words and phonetic traditions in his work. This has long sentences and combinations of phrases. Pali words have been used in similar Sanskrit forms and sentences. In the examination of grammar he had followed the Sanskrit tradition. He has also quoted the grammatical rules expounded by Panini and Chandragomi. Herein one sees quotations with verses and prose from the Raghuvamsa, Janakiharana, Meghadhuta, Kadambari et al. For example:

"कुव सूर्यपपरभवो बंशः "... रघुवंशम्...1-2

शोहमजन्म सुद्धनम्... रघुवंशम्...1-5

"शुगन्धिसौगन्धिकगन्धहृद्यम् "... जानकीहरणम्...1-65

"तन्वशिःम शकिरदिशनापक्षवमिमध्रोमृति"... मेघदुतम्...
In the Mahabodhivamsa Getapada is seen a quotation of a Sanskrit sloka from Kadambari:

“खतुक्वन्नतो मलदयकख् : खल श्तुदन्त्यलन् भन्दन शुरुङ्खल इव
‘अनम्स्तु सशुद्वनविखि पदे पदे
अर्न्ति सनेत मनिनुपुर इव’ ” 74

This is a clear evidence that the author of Mahabodhivamsa has quoted extracts from Sanskrit works of Kalidasa, Kumaradasa, Bana, Harsha, Chandragomi and others. This shows that the contemporary literature was nourished to a great extent by Sanskrit works. The Venerable Sariputta Thero, who lived during the reign of King Parakramabahu I, and his work Abhidharmartha Sangraha sanna could be classified as a Sanskrit work. Although he has used language namely Sinhala mixed with Sanskrit, but however a special significance here is that he had given Pali terms a Sanskrit form.

Jataka Atuva Getapada, has made room for more Sanskrit forms of expression more than Dampiya Atuva. In the presentation of the features of grammar he has used immensely Sanskrit terms and Sanskrit phonetics. Some times in the Jataka Atuva, are seen Sanskrit slokas too. The works, Muvadevdavata, Sasadavata, Kavsilumina, poetical works in verse embellishments, contents and in glorifications, the influences of Sanskrit is very extensive. In these poetic verses one could observe widely, extracts from the Sanskrit poets such as, Kavsilumina Pabhavati's marriage festival description, is totally based on Aja-Indumati's entry to the home of
Raghuvamsa description, Kusa Lament from the Raghuvaṃsa's Aja Lament have been utilized in his composition by the author. Further the Sinhala works such as Ayurvedic medical sciences, astrology and grammar, have been greatly influenced by Sanskrit.

1.9. Dambadeniya Period:

With the decline of the Polonnaruwa emerged the Dambadeniya period, where King Parakramabahu II (1236-1270 AD) had his capital at Dambadeniya (central province of Sri Lanka). In the Dambadeniya period, the Sri Lankan pandit with the bhikkhus and laymen, to what extent they engaged themselves
in Sanskrit language and its literature are manifested by the primary texts of great numbers they utilized in their compositions. Gurulugomin in his work Dharmapradipika had utilized a number of Sanskrit texts. These various Sanskrit works are: Dharmakirtipada's Pramanachartikaya, Paryasurapada's Jatakamala, Shanthidevapada's Bodhicharyavatara, Chandagomin's Shishyalekha. In his work Gurulugomin included extracts from these works.

**Visuddhimarga Sanna:**

The Visuddhimarga Sanna, authored by King parakramabahu II, is one such Sinhala work. In the elucidation of facts of Dharma he had presented the opinions of Buddhist Sanskrit scholars, and he has also mentioned the name Venerable Buddhaghosa Thero's Saundaranandaya, Vasubandu's Abhidharmakosa. The names of Sanskrit scholars such as Nagabodhi, Didanaga, Jothipala, Rahulapada, Revata are mentioned of in this work. The following sentence indicates to what extent Visudhimarga Sanna, is indebted to Sanskrit,” Ihi priyasili pratipatti vatsala sushikshita mumukshiyogi janayahata pritityutpadanaya mukhyaprayojana chatusparisuddhi silayehi supratishtita vae adhisila shiddakota svacaritanukulava.”

During the Dambadeniya period not only on Sinhala literature but even in the composing of Pali texts, Sanskrit works have had a great impact. It is clearly seen in the presentation of the main character of the stories and also in their biographies. In the presentation of the biography of Hattanagalla Viharavamsa Sirisangabo biography, the descriptive account extracts from the
Sanskrit Kadambari prose sections have been translated and included. In the presentation of the Bodhisatva biographies too, twenty verses of Aryasurapada's Kadambari have been translated and included in Pali. In the examination of Hattavanagalla Viharavamsa prose and Jatakamala prose that this composition had Jatakamala as its guide.

**Subhidhalankara:**

The Venerable Sanghrakshita Thero composed the Pali text ‘Subhidhalankara’ as an explanatory and Chuttodaya, Pali prosody text during the Dambadeniya period. Of these two Subhodanalanka follows the poetic tradition of Dandi and Chuttodaya follows the Sri Khedarabhatti's Vṛttarātnakāra. In the composition of these works in addition to the above mentioned two texts, the author appears to have associated with explanatory texts of Vamana, Bharrtuhari, Ramasharman as well as pingala Chandasa Pingalanatha. It has to be mentioned that Sinhala grammatical works such as Sidat sangara have had the influence of Sanskrit grammatical works.

The above information reveals the popularity Sri Lanka Sanskrit literature, received in Dambadeni period. At the same time, Sanskrit language which was deemed a language that should be discarded, how much of popularity Sanskrit had gained in Sri Lanka also evident.

**Dhayivagna Kamadenu:**

Buddhist bhikkhus commenced the study of Sanskrit, during the reign of King Parakramabahu II (1236-1270 AD) a brahamanvamsa clan of bhikkhus named Anomadassi who also held the post of Sangharaga,
authored 'Dhayivagna Kamadenu'. This work deals with the astronomy and astrology. In ten chapters this work was edited three times. It is possible that this was authored by the head of the Pathiraja Pirvena, the author of Sidatsangara himself authored it. It is seen that in authoring the Dayivaggnakamadenu, the author had studied Varahamira's Vruhatsanhitaya, Parasara’s Hora sastra, Bhojadeva's Sarasvatikhantabharana, the ancient works on astrology. The texts of this nature depicts the entry of Sri Lanka entering into new fields of study. 'The Venerable Sariputta who lived in this period authored a commentary to Sri ‘Gnana's Panchitikalankara’. It is said that this scholar bhikkhu authored sumarixed Sanskrit grammar work named Padavatara.  

1.10. Kurunagala Period:

In the Kurunegala period which followed the Dambadeni period, due to the decline of languages, Sanskrit language too was not in a highly developed
status. We are able to gain information about erudite scholars such as the Venerable Vilgammula Sangharaja Mahathero, that Sanskrit literary works did exist to a certain degree. Works such as Sinhala Bodhiwamsa authored by Venerable Vilgammula, there is glamour of Sanskrit in Sanskrit works. In the Sinhala Bodhivamsa's conclusion there is a sloka composed in Sanskrit.

“Charita sucharita Sri Parakrantibahu
Kshitipatilaka kravujanaradhananditen
Sakala gunanidhana Sri Sarogramamula
Sthavirayativarenollasino Bodhivamsakh”

1.11. Sri Jayawardhanapura Kotte Period:

In the Sanskrit literature after the Kurunegala period, development did not arise during the Sri Jayawardenapura kingdom. This period was crowned
as the independent Sinhala literature period, due to numerous Sinhala literary works in various literary fields excellent works being produced. Similarly, Panchasikapradipa authored by head of the Totagamuwe Vijayaba Pirivena Venerable Sri Rahula Thero, is well known as the wide spreading of Sanskrit language in Sri Lanka. This work of 167 pages, some of the Sanskrit works we know only just by their titles had been perused by the author and with quotations from them this text is composed. The only work, Perakumba Sirita, is a prose poetical work, during the Kotte Kingdom is a creation of Sanskrit words fashioned according to Sinhala pronunciation. The only Sanskrit work of this Kotte period in the history of Sanskrit in Sri Lanka is the Indian Pandit Ramachandra kavi bharathi's Bhaktisadaka the Buddhist Sataka. In addition to these works the biography of Venerable Rammungoda Dipankara Thero's Vruttamalakhyaya, Vruttaratnaka, Vyakhyavat Vruttaratnakara Panchikava is composed in Sanskrit. This Vruttaratnakara Panchika is the work of Ramachandra.80

In the wake of the Jayawardenapura – Kotte period the stability of the ruler ship of Sri Lanka, and non-support of the invading foreign rulers, both bhikkhus and laymen not having mental freedom, were the reasons for the progressive decline of Sanskrit literature in Sri Lanka. Until the Kandyan period no high creation came to be produced.

1.12. Early Modern Period :

In the Kandyan period, under the royal patronage of King Keerthi Rajasinghe, under the leadership of Asarana Sarana Saranankara Sanghraja
Maha Nayaka Thero's with the regeneration of Buddhism there arose a new blossoming of literature, Several Sinhala and Pali language works were composed new creations arise and we come across many Sanskrit works generally known as Astaka. Among them, Venerable Karatota Dhammarama Thero authored Narendra Astaka, composed in Shardula vikridita Vrurta. As the name Astaka indicates here there are 8 verses. This work was done as Prasastha (glorification and dedicatory) to the brother of King Keerthi Sri Rajasighe (1744-1779 AD)

George Astaka is another creation of this period. Venerable Dehigaspe Pannasara Thero says, this work is also by Venerable Karatota Dhammarama Thero, as a valedictory to King George the Third of England. In addition, Dalada Astaka, Mangala Astaka, Namaskara Astaka, Vijendradi Astaka, Shirt Astaka were a few other works authored during this period. However, the decline of literary works of this period could not be overshadowed by these works.

In consequence of the development of the field of literature, Colombo Vidyodhaya Prirvena and Kelaniya Vidyalankara Pirivena came to be established. The Venerable Hikkaduwe Sri Sumangala Maha Nayaka Thero, Ratmalane Sri Dhammarama Mahanayaka Thero, Ratmalane Dhammaloka Maha Nayaka Thero, who had close associations with the newly established two Pririvenas, both bhikkhu and lay Pandit in order to nourish Sanskrit literature various works were produced by them. The head of the Vidyalankara Prirvena, Venerable Ratmlane Dhammarama as the poet Kumaradasa's
Janakiharana first copy had been lost, with the assistance of a Sinhala Padartha Sanna, with 11 Sargas, this I part of poetical work's was edited in 1899. This Thero, taking the path of Anubhutisvaracarya's Sarasvata Grammar authored Shiksha Sangrha Sanskrit grammatical work was authored. It was published in 1929 in six chapters.

In 1914, the head of the Vidyodhya Maha Privena, Venerable Kahawe Sri Ratnasara Thero, authored a Sanskrit grammar text. There are 168 Sanskrit slokas. This work was made into a handbook for many students of Sri Lanka studying for Sanskrit grammar. During this period as there was no Sinhala translation of the Sanskrit Sarasvatha grammar of Anubhutisvacharya, Venerable Kahawe Ratnasara Thero produced translated works with four parts called Sannas, under the classifications, Sanjana Sandhi, Nama, Karaka, Samasa, Taddita, Akhyata, and he had produced. The balance Krudanta version had been edited by Venerable Hegoda Dhamminda Thero as a translation.

Not only Sanskrit grammar texts, but in early 20th century Sinhala Vayidya Sastra a new text was composed. This work is Vaidyottamsa was published in 1919. The author of the work is a student of Venerable Sri Sumangala Thero's, J.S. Rajasundera Arachchi. This text comprises of 48 sections and 401 verses.

The Sanskrit literature that continues to be in Sri Lanka from the time Ravana period, details of works are not available until the 21st century. The first poetic work of Sanskrit to be authored is the Saddharmamakaranda’
authored by a bhikkhu named Dodangoda Dharmaskandha poetical work. This had been published in full in Sanskrit Devanagari script. This work in 25 chapters called Adyaya, deals with the ambrosia called Saddharmamakaranda. Asvagosha is the first to utilize subject-wise biography of the Buddha or any story connected with it in Sanskrit for a text. This Venerable bhikkhu in association with the Buddha's biography from birth to Enlightenment (Buddhahood) included in fourteen Sarga in the Buddha Carita Maha Kavya, Saundaranananda Maha Kavya, was composed in 18 Sargas (chapters). Although thereafter numerous writers though they used the biography of the Buddha and incidents antecedent to it, the first versified Sanskrit kavya based on Buddha's Biography is ‘Sadhammamakaranda’, is a well known fact.

The Saundarananda, a Mahakavya versified poetical work, could be evaluated as Buddhist Sanskrit work, as in its entirety it is composed completely structured on Pali Tripitaka (Theravada) and numerous other Pali works on Buddhism. The author very authoritatively and honorably clams that his work was done having had a deep insight into several works viz. Sutra, Vinaya, Abhidharma (the three sections of the Tripitaka) and the sub-sections of Tripitaka viz. Dighanikaya and Mahavaggapali.

- The commentaries of the Tripitaka viz. Visuddhimagga, Jataka Attakatha
- The broadly explanatory texts viz. Mahavamsa and Sambuddhadharmavilasini.

**Saddharmamakaranda :**
It is discernable that this work done under the inspiration and guidance, the Saddharmamakaranda is one that is created in Sanskrit according to the Pali tradition. The work contains 25 chapters.

“Namastasmay bhagavaterhate samyaksamabhudhaya”. The author following the tradition followed by Buddhist Sanskrit scholars in the task of commencing their works make a plea to their own individual protective god (1st adyaya) for benevolence and guidance and lead him to success in his endeavor, in the field of literature. This author too following the same age-old Indian tradition, still in continuation in India, in and authorship or works of arts and crafts and even in aesthetic arts of dance, music and theatre, firstly in his work in the following manner describes in detail the story of Sumedha ascetic, (the Gautama Buddha in his previous life as Sumedha ascetic meets Buddha Dipankara and gets the initiation (niyatavivarana) for Buddhahood, in the distant future) the perfection of the ten perfections (dasaparamita), obtaining the benediction at the feet of Buddha Dipankara for future Buddhahood, obtaining benediction of 27 previous Buddhas and these details cover from the first chapter to the fifth chapter. Thereafter the author presents the following events:

- The Bodhisatva descending from Tusita (Heaven of the Contented) and having his conception in his mother, Mayadevi's womb,
- The birth of the Buddha in Lumbini, of Kapilavastu (modern Tilaurakot of
Nepal Terai), the description of features, the renunciation,

- Donning the ascetic garments on the banks of Anoma river (now known as Habarorah just 30ft wide rivulet),

- The self-mortification at Uruvela (modern Dhungesvari, in eastern Champaran district, Bihar State, India),

- The richest merchant and banker's (Vaishya-setti) wife offering 'gana-payasa' (solidified cows milk) at Senanigama (presently Bakarour in Bihar State beside the Neranjara river),

- The defeat of Mara,

- The obtaining of Enlightenment (Buddhahood) (Svayambhu) at the foot of the Sri Maha Bodhi at Buddha Gaya (present Gaya district, Bihar State),

- The spending of seven weeks after Buddhahood in the close environs of the Sacred Bodhi tree at Buddha Gaya (45 days),

- The invitation of God Brahma for the first discourse, and

- The expounding of the first discourse Dhammacakkapavatta-sutta to the five ascetic associates of his at Uruvela (Kondanna, Bhadiya, Vappa, Mahanama, and Assaji) at Deer Park (Mighadaya) in Saranath Benaris/Varanasi (presently in Uttar Pradesh). These biographical narration as regards the Buddha are in the chapters 6 to the 15 chapter.

From the sixteenth chapter the narrative deals with the ordination of the three Jatila (fire-worshipers of Uruvela-Uruvela Kassapa, Nadi Kassapa, and Gaya Kassapa and their disciples as bhikkhus under the Buddha having listened
and knowledgeably comprehended the Dhamma,

- The Buddha performing miracles at the foot of Gandamadana (Gandabbha, presently in Uttar Pradesh) performing miracles,
- The great Demise (Mahaparinirvana), the cremation ceremonies,
- The veneration of the remaining bone-relics of the Buddha,
- Brahmin Dona, peacefully distributing the sacred bone-relics among the rival claimants (kings) having admonished them to be at peace,

and further there are largely biographical details of the Buddha and this narrative continues until the twentieth chapter.

In the rest of the five chapters are dealt with the Three Great Buddhist Councils held

- The dispatch of Buddhist missions by Emperor Asoka, the arrival of Arahant Mahinda in Sri Lanka
- And the establishment of Buddhism in Sri Lanka,
- The compilation of commentaries in Pali by the Indian (Andhra Pradesh-Morandacetaka Village),
- The Grammarians Venerable Buddhaghosha at Anuradhapura Granthakara Pirivena of Mahavihara and other prominent historical details of Buddha Sasana.

The Saddharmamakarandaya, composed in the Pali tradition in Sanskrit is one of excellent work in history of Sanskrit literature in Sri Lanka.

Subsequently, in the middle of the 20th century and in the last years of
the same century both bhikkhus and laymen made tremendous contributions for the development and stabilization of Sanskrit literature in Sri Lanka. In this progressive scenario, highly erudite bhikkhus, especially associated with Vidyodhaya and Vidyalankara Pirivenas, these two Privenas dedicated to monastic educational institutions, in the wake of founding the Parama Dhamma Cetiya Pirivena at Ratmalana by Venerable Valane Siddartha Thero in 1845 and followed by Vidhyodaya Pirivena at Maligakanda, Colombo by Most Venerable Hikkaduwe Sri Sumangala Maha Nayaka Thero and Vidyalankara Pirivena at Peliyagoda, Kelaniya in 1875 by Venerable Ratmalane Dhammaloka Maha Thera in 1875, witnessed erudite scholar monks such as Venerables Vidurapola Piyatissa Maha Thera, Balangoda Ananda Maiterya Maha Thera, Kekunawala Piyaratana Maha Thero and layman Ayurvedic Physician, Aryadasa Kumarasinghe, flag-bearer of Sanskrit and student of Mahamantinda Pirivena, Matara and Vidyodhya Pirivena, practicing as a leading ayurvedic Physician in Colombo and a versatile Sanskrit scholar, in association of the two Pirivenas Vidyodhaya and Vidyalankara, with their Sanskrit works embellished Sanskrit literature and gave it longevity in Sri Lanka. Among their contributions the most significant works in Sanskrit are as follows: The Venerable Kekulawela Piyaratana Thero's padyachintavali Maha Kavya and the manuscripts of late Aryurvedic Physician Aryadasa Kumarasinghe.

It is opportune to reproduce the following, wherein Buddhist laity in Sri Lanka who organized themselves in a voluntary and well organized mane for
the welfare of Buddhism and Buddhist culture, as that function was no longer being performed by the central Buddhist political authority.

This realization comes out clearly in a letter written by two prominent Buddhist laymen in Colombo, business entrepreneurs, Don Philip de Siva and Don Vekon Vikramatilaka Appuhami, to the editor of Sinhala newspaper Lakminipahana (published in the issue of 14 December 1864) suggesting the establishment of a college of Buddhist studies. The letter read:

Buddhism was introduced to Ceylon 2,200 years ago. From that time until the end of the Sinhalese kingdom fifty years hence, the kings of Ceylon took the initiative in maintaining Buddhism. The citizens of the country followed the leadership of their kings; it was not their practice to have organizations of their own for the maintenance of Buddhism. For this reason it is difficult nowadays to organize Buddhists for the purpose of maintaining their religion.

In the days when Buddhism was receiving the patronage of kings, there were ample opportunities for the pursuit of Buddhist studies. The kings appointed learned bhikkhus to the incumbencies of important temples, and made generous endowments for the benefit of both teachers and pupils alike.

But now, because of the absence of a Buddhist king and lack of experience among the Buddhist in organizing their religious affairs, there is a decline in all branches of Buddhist studies. Results of this process would be harmful not merely to Buddhists, but also to the population of Ceylon as a whole. Learning in Ceylon has always been closely associated with Buddhism;
a decline in Buddhist education, therefore, would soon reduce the masses to a condition of ignorance. It is the duty of all Sinhalese – not merely Buddhist – to take measures to avert this prospect.

A few of us have reasoned on these lines have decided to put forward the following plan for the consideration of all Ceylonese. If our plan meets with a favorable response, we shall take steps to implement it; if it does not, we shall abandon it.

Our aim is to establish a Buddhist college – for the benefit of all Ceylonese – for the purpose of teaching subjects such as Pali, Sinhalese, and Sanskrit. Buddhist texts, history, logic, medicine, and astrology. The following are the major features of our plan:

1. A capital of not less than £10,000 must be raised.

2. The Society of Committee of Trustees which raises that fund must deposit if in a bank and administer the interests.

3. A sum of not more than £200 should be spent on building the College (hall and residential quarters consisting of about twenty rooms) in a place not far removed from any part of the country.

4. About three or four teachers must be appointed to the college. Lay teachers, must be paid with moderate salaries the case of clerical teachers maintenance allowances must be handed over to their kapakaru

5. Students between fifteen and thirty years, who have already had some previous education, will be admitted to the college.
(6). The number of students to be given admission at anytime will depend on the interest due on the capital fund.

(7). In the case of clerical students, an allowance for the supply of their meals (only) will be handed over to a kapakaru. Lay students will be expected to provide for themselves; they shall not be required to make tutorial–gifts (gurupanduru) to their teachers at the conclusion of their courses of study.

(8). A special official should be appointed by the Society (which will manage the institution) to be in charge of monthly payments to teachers and (clerical) students.

(9). The teachers appointed should prepare courses of instruction; remove from the institution students whose general performance does not reach the required standards; and make arrangements to award small prizes to the students who perform well at the annual examinations.

(10). The prior consent of the Governor should be obtained to the effect that the government would take charge of the fund and use it to promote the teaching of Sinhalese – in the event of the failure of the College to continue its teaching functions. (The above is a somewhat abbreviated English translation of the original in Sinhalese)


This letter clearly reflects not only the growing realization on the part of a few articulate Buddhist lay leaders of the need for new voluntary...
organizations, but also the nature of their anxieties for new voluntary organizations, but also the nature of their anxieties over the feasibility of such measures. The anxieties were not altogether unfounded, for it took almost a decade to put into effect the plan proposed by Epa Appuhami and Vikramatilake Appuhami. Contributions were slow to come, and when the proposed college was finally established in 1873 (under the name of Vidyodaya Oriental College) a good measure of the financial burden had to be borne by its Committee of Managers (Vidyadhara Sabha) until the British government was successfully perused to make an annual grant from 1877 onwards. (Ven. Yagirala Prajnananda, Sri Sumangala Caritaya, 2 vols (Colombo 1947) op,cit).

It is not without significance that by far the most successful new organization of the time, the Vidhyadhara Sabha of Vidyodaya College counted among its members some of leading Sinhalese entrepreneurs hailing from the southern coastal areas of Sri Lanka, Galle and Matara (the hill country Siamese sect had become monastic landlords and the people of this area, were not enthusiastic either to promote Buddhism to education in Sri Lanka). The best known of them were Hewavitharange Don Carlis, haling from Hittatiya, Matara well established as a leading furniture dealer with his enterprise called Don Carlis, the father of Angarika Dharmapala, who founded the Maha Bodhi Society in 1891, to regain the control of Buddha Gaya from the Hindu Mahanta for the control of Buddhists, and his (Don Carolis') father-in-law, Lansage Don Andris Perera, who was a leading timber merchant too hailing from the
south and well established in Colombo. Of the others, Epa Appuhami (originator of Epa Panchanga Lita, which still continues as regards astological times and Wettasinghe Don Cornelis de Silva were joint owners of Lankabhinava Vistra Press (1864), Gurunnanselage Don Kakis was editor and publisher of a successful satirical newspaper, Kavata Katikaya (1872-1910).

Thus it would be seen the erudite bhikkhus of the coastal areas and the laity met with the objectives of the plan that was mentioned earlier for the propagation of education in Pali, Sinhalese, and Sanskrit, with their compositions, some of them well received Sanskrit works honoured and accepted by the literati of even India and Europe.

It needs to be mentioned that late Ayurvedic Physician, Aryadasa Kumarasinghe, who too hailed from south of Sri Lanka, Matara, translated the Kavaysekera of te Kotte period authored by Venerable Totagamuwe Rahula Maha Thero in Sinhalese was translated into Sanskrit be late Ayurvedic Physician of great rapport into Sanskrit and this could be deemed as the most significant manuscript of Sanskrit literature in Sri Lanka. In addition, various erudite poets of Sri Lanka, in the 20th century translated the highly esteemed Sanskrit classical texts with revised editions with commentaries and Sanskrit grammatical works. The Pali Text Society was established by the Englishman, Thomas Wilkiam Rhys Davids (1843- 1922) who began his services in Sri Lanka in the British Ceylon Services at the age of 21 also called in the vernacular as Prachina Bhashopakara Samagama, which still exist conducting Prachina Bhasha Pandit examination in a large measure. The erudite Sanskrit
scholar monks referred to above and Ayurvedic Physician Aryadasa Kumarasinghe, though they have rejoined the Wheel of Samsar still continue to the flag ships of the ocean of Sanskrit even in present times too. However, in the 1960's the first Lady Prime Minister of Sri Lanka Madame Sirimavo Bandaranaike with no forethought had Badiuddhin Mohamed, a Muslim as the Education Minister of her Cabinet who expunged the teaching of Pali, Sanskrit, History, Geography and Latin from the schools' curriculum, which were introduced by the British rulers dealt the fatal blow to the study of these subjects, and this expulsion, still continues, though the British had the study of Pali and Sanskrit as well as Latin from students in the arts stream from the sixth standard upwards inclusive of Higher School Certificate Examination for entry to Universities.
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