

An Epigraphical Survey with Reference to the Settlements around Palipbothana Megalithic Burial Site

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Introduction

The region with the Palipbothana Proto-Historical Megalithic burial site which located in northeast of Anuradhapura and the oldest kingdom in historical Sri Lanka formed in the Rajarata Dry Zone, may have been an area where the Kingdom of Anuradhapura was nourished for an extended period. Ancient inscriptions can be introduced as one of the most important and influential sources revealing the history of this area, and inter-valley region between Malwathu Oya that joins the sea to the northwest, Yan Oya, which joins the sea from the east coast and Ma Oya valleys. This study aims to provide a basic account of the ancient inscriptions found in the Palipbothana inter-Valley. It intended to examine the meaning of the inscriptions in general rather than to examine all the inscriptions one by one.

The Transition from the Proto-historic Period to the Early Historic Period

Due to the rapid growth of political institutions and social and economic patterns in Sri Lanka, several significant changes have occurred during the transition from the Proto-historical period to the early historical period. Some sectors such as agriculture, animal husbandry and craft production have developed during this period. During this time, people have made greater use of land and marine resources to meet those needs. Thus it is clear that as the need for resources grows for utility, people are motivated to seek resources. As a result, people have migrated to coastal areas to discover marine resources, dry zone plains searching the relevant fields for agricultural production, and mountainous areas searching for mineral resources.

A civilized tribe based on kinship needed methods to show their relationship with the pioneer for their identity. It was necessary to declare that kinship for property ownership, marriage relations so on. It was also necessary to show the hierarchical identities of a social system graded as agrarian societies, craft societies, and commercial societies. Due to this, 'kinship' became economically and socially important to this society. It was also politically significant as it had an impact on the formation of governing bodies.

There was a need to control over surplus agriculture and production, maintain an exchange pattern and relationships that govern to provide security for individuals in a

competitive trade economy. These institutions may have controlled the essential elements of the production pattern such as land, enterprise and capital. It requires leadership and a structure of administrative officers who are obedient to leadership. A developmental stage here can be traced to the association of megalithic settlements during the Proto-historical period.

By the early historical period, it can be assumed that the people who migrated to this country from India and the indigenous people of this country were gradually mixed. They may also have exchanged positions of government. The presence of a significant number of early-Brahmi inscriptions, especially in the field of megalithic culture, provides evidence that society has been evolving and that mass mixing has taken place. Based on these facts, it can be assumed that at the time of the transition from the Proto-historical period to the early historical period, Sri Lanka was inhabited under the same governance pattern as a unitary community of local and foreign people. Thus, it seems to have been fair to this inter-valley region as well.

Proto and Early Historical Periods of the Palipothana Inter River Valley

It seems that the remarkable changes which took place on the island during this period affected this inter-valley region as well. The region strongly influenced by the technologically and creative sector, which has developed steadily since the proto-historic period. Some of the mineral raw materials required for technological design and hard rock are readily available in the area. As a result, they may have been interested in the area since the proto-historical period.

Factors Leading to Inter-valley Settlement

An important point that becomes clear when examining the settlement pattern of this period is that the extent of the expansion of their settlements in this inter-valley region. Proto-historical settlements associated with this region show a high tendency of the settlement distribution. There are several reasons for this.

Since the proto-historic period, there is evidence that people have sought natural resources for agro-based economic processes and moved to arid regions. One of the reasons for their stability in the area is finding the resources and migrating to the hinterland along the dry zone waterways, where they could quickly obtain the resources and facilities they needed from the inter-valley zone.

Natural rock caves and tributaries feed this inter-valley region. Examination of the inscriptions reveals that this inter-valley area's settlement pattern over the upper part of the Ma Oya starts between the two river valleys of Malwathu Oya and Yan Oya, where the upper part of Ma Oya, starts from Kahatagasdigiliya area. Alternatively, it is associated with the drainage pattern. The Palipbothana area, which is in the dry zone usually receives minimal rainfall. Therefore, settlements may have established in the early stages of topography, such as natural waterways and foothills. During heavy rains, they may have taken advantage of the abundant natural rock. It is possible to think that these caves had owners and were inherited due to Buddhism's as the earliest historical inscriptions carved in the caves were donated by them and offered to the monks. A large number of such inscriptions are evenly distributed in this area. Handagala, Nattukkanda, Galkandegama and Rasnakawewa are among the early Brahmin inscriptions in the Palipbothana Megalithic burial site. From these inscriptions, it is possible to inquire the contemporary society in this region when the burials were in operation. C.W. Nicholas reported 27 cave inscriptions in the Handagala temple (Nicholas 1953: pp. 221-4). He pointed out that the inscriptions date back to the second and first centuries BC, but did not attempt to delve deeper into their meaning.

The currently identified and published inscriptions are given under the locations below with their original meaning for the ease of use.

Early Brahmi Inscriptions

(A) **Handagala vihara** (IC. Vol. i: pp. 10-11)

120 (1) Parumaka-Naga-puta-Tisaha lene sagasa

The cave of Tissa, son of the chief Naga, (is granted) to the Sangha.

121(2) Sagasa lene Bata-Citagutasa puta Velusa lene parumaka masa lene

The cave (is given) to the Sangha, the cave of Velu, son of lord Cittaguta, and the cave of ma the chief.

122(3) Butadataha lene

The cave of Buddhadatta.

123(4) Gapati-Velu-putana tini-batikana sagasa Bata-Dataha lene

The cave) of the three brothers, the sons of the householder Velu, (is given) to the Sangha. The cave of lord Datta.

124(5) **Bamana-Suga-puta-Pusadevasa ca Datasa ca lene sagasa**

The cave of Phussadeva, the son of the Brahmana Sunga, (is given) to the Sangha.

125(6) **Parumaka-Abijhiya lene Cuda-Tisaha lene sagaya niyate**

The cave of the chief Abijhi and the cave of Culla-Tissa are dedicated to the Sangha.

126(7) (1) **Bata-Sataha lene parumaka-Abaha lene sagasa**

(2) **agata-anagata-catudisa-sagasa**

The cave of the lord Sata and the cave of the chief Abhaya, (are given) to the Sangha - to the Sangha of the four quarters, earlysent and absent.

127(8) (1) **Parumaka-Canisata-Sumana-putaha parumaka-Patakana-Satasa**

(2) **sagasa**

(The cave) of the chief Patakana Sata, son of the chief Canisata Sumana, (is given) to the Sangha.

128(9) **Bata-Nagaha lene sagasa Mataligamika-puta gamika-Tisaha lene**

The cave of lord Naga (is given) to the Sangha. The cave of the village-councillor Tissa, son of the village-councillor of Matallgama.

129(10) **Bata-Nagaha lene**

The cave of lord Naga.

130(11) **Parumaka-Bama-puta parumaka-Tisaha lene sagasa**

The cave of the chief Tissa, the son of the chief Bhama, (is given) to the Sangha.

131(12) **Parumaka-Tisa-putaha lene sagasa dutakaha**

The cave of the son of the chief Tissa, (is given) to the Sangha, of the envoy.

132(13) **Bata-Nagaha lene sagasa**

The cave of lord Naga, (is given) to the Sangha.

133(14) **(Na)gaha lene sagasa**

The cave of lord Naga, (is given) to the Sangha.

133a(15) (1) **Parumaka-Samudaha lene agata-anagata-**

(2) **sagasa**

The cave of the chief Samudda (is given) to the Sangha, earlysent and absent.

(B) **Brahmanayagama** (IC. Vol. i: pp. 12-13)

147(1) **Bata-Abijhigutaha lene**

The cave of lord Abhiji-gutta.

148(2) **Parumaka-Data-jhita parumaka-baginiya-Nadikasa jhaya parumakalu-Samanaya lene agata-anagata catu-disa-sagasa dine**

The cave of chieftainess Samana, daughter of the chief Datta and wife of Nandika, nephew of the chief, is given to the Sangha of the four quarters, earlysent and absent.

149(3) **Gamika-Nagaha lene sagasa dupatake**

The cave of the village-councillor Naga, (is given) to the Sangha. (Granted also are) two allotments.

150(4) **Gamika-Naga-puta-Sumanaha lene pataka sayo**

The cave of Sumana, son of the village-councillor Naga. Six allotments.

151(5) (1) **Sumana-teraha lene.**

(2) **sagasa**

The cave of the elder Sumana (is given) to the Sangha.

152(6) **Parumaka-Sivaha lene catu-d(i)sa-sagasa**

The cave of the chief Siva is given to the Sangha of the four quarters.

153(7) **Parumaka-Sivaha lene sagasa**

The cave of the chief Siva (is given) to the Sangha.

154(8) **Damaguta-terasa sadivihariya Data-terasa (le)ne catu-disa-sagasa**

The cave of the elder Datta, pupil of the elder Dhammagutta, (is given) to the Sangha of the four quarters.

155(9) **Anada-teraha lene sagasa**

The cave of the elder Ananda, (is given) to the Sangha.

156(10) **Parumaka-Nadika-jhita parumaka-Sona-jhaya upasika-Roniya lene sagasa dine**

The cave of the female lay-devotee Roni (Rohini), daughter of the chief Nandika, and wife of the chief Sona, is given to the Sangha.

157(11) (1) **Ka(di)tiha lene agata-anagata**

(2) **cadu-disa-sagasa**

The cave of Kaditi (is given) to the Sangha of the Four quarters, earlysent and absent.

158(12) (1) **Ima lene (2) sadaya lene parumaka Pusaha ca (3) gamika Majhimaha ca (4)Raginaya Tisaha ca (5) gamika Tisaha ca (6) gamika Abaha ca**

This cave is a co-donation of the chief Phussa, and the village-councillor Majjhima, and Bhagineya Tissa, and the village-councillors Tissa and Abhaya.

159 (13) (1) **Ba(ta)-Na(ga) ha ca bata-Sumanaha ca bata-Sumana-gutaha ca**

(2) **parumaka-Data-jhiya upasika Rama lene sagasa aga(ta) - (3) anagatasa (4) samani Palaya ca Asa-Dama-gutaha ca (5) raha ca**

The cave of lord Naga, and of lord Sumana, and of lord Sumanagutta, and of the female lay-devotee Rama, daughter of the chief Datta, is given to the Sangha of the four quarters, earlysent and absent. Also of the nun Pala, and of the Venerable Dhammagutta and of raha.

160(14) **Calala-lene nama agata-anagata-catu-disa-sagasa**

The cave named Calala, (is given) to the Sangha of the four quarters, earlysent and absent.

161(15) **Parumaka-Sagayamataha lene**

The cave of the chief Sagaya, the Minister.

161a(16) **Gamika-Pusaha lene sagasa**

The cave of the village-councillor Phussa (is given) to the Sangha

161b(17) **Sumana-samaniya lene catu-disa-sagasa**

The cave of the nun Sumana, (is given) to the Sangha of the four quarters.

161c(18)(1) **(Upa)sika Anudiya (u)phas(ika) Citaya**

(2) **Gami(ka)-Kadasiva-putaha Gamika-Tisaha visare**

The vihara of the female lay-devotee Anudi, of the female lay-devotee Citta (and) of the village-councillor Tissa, son of the village-councillor Kala-Siva.

161d(19) **Kabara-Pusaha Malaha**

Of Phussa, the ironsmith, and of Mala.

Nattukkanda (IC. Vol. i: pp. 13-14)

166 (1) **Parumaka Nadika-puta parumaka-Mitaha lene Ma (ha) -Sudasane agata-anagata-cadu-di(sa)-sagasa dine**

The cave (named) Maha-Sudassana of the chief Mitta, son of the chief Nandika, is given to the Sangha of the four quarters, earlysent and absent.

167(2) (1) **Bata-Mitadevaha lene**

(2) **Bata-Metadevaha lene Manapadasane agata-anagata catu-disa-sagasa dini**

The cave of lord Mittadeva. The cave of lord Mittadeva, named Manapadassana, is given to the Sangha of the four quarters, earlysent and absent.

168(3) (1) **Erakapi-gamika-puta gamika-Tisa-puti Utiya lene agata- anagata-catu-disa-sagasa dine**

(2) **Damarajhasa upata (Symbols No. 15 and 16b)**

The cave of Uttiya, son of the village-councillor Tissa, son of the village-councillor of Erakapi, is given to the Sangha of the four quarters, earlysent and absent. The upright slab of Dhammaraja.

169(4) **Parumaka-Velu-putana lene agata-anagata catu-disa-sagasa**

The cave of the sons of the chief Vely, (is given) to the Sangha of the four quarters, earlysent and absent.

(C) **Galkandegama** (IC. Vol. i: pp. 14)

170(1) **Parumaka-Upali-puta parumaka-Cataha lene**

The cave of the chief Chatta, son of the chief Upali.

171(2) **Piyakapasana-bojhika parumaka-Narayagutaha lene sagasa**

The cave of the chief Naraya-gutta, the proprietor of Piyaka-pasana, (is given) to the Sangha.

172(3) **Gamika-Kitaha lene**

The cave of the village-councillor Kita.

173(4) **Sumana-teraha ca gamika-Uti-putana do-batikana lene**

The cave of the elder Sumana, and of the two brothers who are the sons of the village-councillor Uttiya.

174(5) **Paremaka-Sigutaha lene sagasa**

The cave of the chief Isigutta, (is given) to the Sangha.

Later Brahmi Inscriptions

(A) **Handagala** (IC. Vol. i: pp. 89-90)

1125(1) (1) **Parumaka Bakiniya-Velaha lene**

(2) **Ahali-puta Parumaka-Dataha lene sagasa**

The cave of the chief Bhagineya Vela. The cave (also) of the chief Datta, son of Ahall, (is given) to the Sangha.

1126(2)(1) **Parumaka-Digapiyika-Tisaha lene**

(2) **catudisika sagaye niyate**

The cave of the chief Digapiyika Tissa has been dedicated to the Sangha of the four quarters.

1127(3) **Parumaka-Godaha marumakanaka Utaliya-mataya upasika-Humanaya lene**

The cave of the female lay-devotee Humana, mother of Utali, grandson of the chief Goda.

1128(4) **Sidha (1*) Panadaka Cuda-Haneyaha puta Majaka-Abaha lene saga niyate**

Hail! The cave of Manjuka Abhaya, son of Cuda-Haneyaha, the Superintendent of Trade, has been dedicated to the Sangha.

1129(5) (1) **Naka-nakaraka-vapi-hamika upasaka-Dataha lene upasaka-Huma ca lene**

(2) **sagasa**

The cave of the lay-devotee Datta, proprietor of the tank of Naka-nakaraka, and the cave also of the lay-devotee Huma, (is given) to the Sangha.

1130(7) Anulapi-vapi-hamika parumaka-Maha-Vebaliya lene sagasa

The cave of Maha-Vebali, the proprietor of the tank of Anulapi, (is given) to the Sangha.

1131(6) Nav(i)kaha mataya upasika-Samaniya lene catu-disa-sagha patithapite

The cave of the female lay-devotee Samani, mother of the mariner, has been established for the benefit of the Sangha of the four directions.

1132(8) Nakodapika-vapi-hamika parumaka-Mahadataha puta parumaka-Digadataha lene saghasa

The cave of the chief Dighadatta, son of the chief Mahadatta, the proprietor of the tank of Nakodapika, (is given) to the Sangha.

1133(9) Mita-teraha bakiniya upasika-Ruvalaya lene catu-disika-sagasa

The cave of the female lay-devotee Ruvala, younger sister of the elder Mitta, (is given) to the Sangha.

1134(10) (1) Data-teraha mataya upasika-Tisaya lene jeta-puta-Tisaha eka maca-tana

(2) parumaka-Paditaha putaha catu-disika sagasa.

The cave of the female lay-devotee Tissa, mother of the elder Datta, and one bed-place of (her) eldest son Tissa-of the son of the chief Pandita - are given to the Sangha of the four quarters.

1135(11) (1) Upatisa-teraha baginiya lene agata-anagata catu-disa-saghave

(2) niyate

The cave of the younger sister of the elder Upatissa has been dedicated to the Sangha of the four quarters, early sent and absent.

1136(12)(1) Parumaka Bamanaha puta

(2) danukaya-Gutaha lene

(3) sagasa

The cave of Gutta, the maker of bows, son of the chief (named) Brahmana, (is given) to the Sangha.

1137(13) **Upasika-Rugaya lene upasika-Tisaya lene upasika-Sivaya maca-tana agata-anagata catu-disa-saghasa**

The cave of the female lay-devotee Tuga, the cave of the female lay-devotee Tissa, and the bed-place of the female lay-devotee Siva, (are given) to the Sangha of the four quarters, earlysent and absent.

1138(14) (1) **Parumaka-Gudaha abaka uvasika-Hujataya lene**

(2) **catu-disika-saga**

(3) **ye niyate**

The cave of the female lay-devotee Sujata, wife of the chief Guda, has been dedicated to the Sangha of the four quarters.

1139(15)(1) **Upasaka-Abaha mala uvasaka-Sagaha ca uvasika-Kaliya ca**

(2) **saga niyate dasa-parikare uvani(kite)**

Dedicated to the Sangha, by the lay-devotee Sangha, younger brother of the lay-devotee Abhaya. Requisitioned (regarding the service) of slaves have been provided for.

1140(16) (1) **Parumaka-Abaha putaha parumaka-Gudaha**

(2) **lene catudisika-sagaya**

(3) **(niya)te**

The cave of the chief Guda, son of the chief Abhaya, has been dedicated to the Sangha of the four quarters, earlysent and absent.

(B) **Nattukkanda** (IC. Vol. i: p. 90)

1141 **sa puta lapana-Tisaya puta kav(i)-Hajhayaha puta Tisaha lene (sagasa) dane** The cave of Tissa, son of the poet Hajhaya (Sanjaya), son of the scribe Tissa, son of has been granted to the Sangha.

(C) **Galkandegama** (IC. Vol. i: pp. 90-1)

1142 (1) Tisa-tera katu dine mata-pitaye Ayada-Abaha marumakanaka gamika-Sumaha lene The elder Tissa having made it, the cave of the village-councillor Summa, grandson of Ayada-Abhaya, was granted for the benefit of mother and father.

1143 (2) **Upasaka-Palaha lene catu-disika-sagaya niyate**

The cave of the lay-devotee Pala has been dedicated to the Sangha of the four quarters.

1144(3) Upasika Makiya dora

The door of the female lay-devotee Maki.

1145(4) (1) Sidham (I*) P(e)h(e)kara-gamakahi

(2) **Sumaha lene Mala-Tisaha lene**

(3) **cad(u)-dhisaya biku-sagah=ataya niyate**

Hail! The cave of Summa of Pehekaragamaka (and) the cave of (his) younger brother Tissa, are dedicated for the benefit of the community of Bhikkhus of the four directions.

Investigation

The Social Status of the Inter-valley region of the Contemporary Period as reflected in the Inscriptions

From the earliest Brahmi cave inscriptions found in this valley, one can gain an insight on Palipothana Megalithic burial with reference to the social structure as a Proto-historic and an early historic site. Although the primary purpose of establishing cave inscriptions was to donate and offer caves to monks, these facts can be revealed by personal names, adjectives, and inscriptions. It is important to state those points separately hereby.

By the Proto-historical period, the indigenous people of Sri Lanka seemed to have inhabited in various regions according to their cultural characteristics. These natives belonged to three main tribes known as *Yaksha*, *Naga*, *Deva*, and there were various social strata that existed between those tribes. It is possible that such natives also lived in this area at this time. It is also clear from the cave inscriptions that several tribes from India inhabited Sri Lanka, and some also lived in this area.

Ethnic Groups or Tribes

According to literary sources, there have been several migrations to Sri Lanka from different parts of India since the sixth century BC. In addition to these migrations, there may have been several migrations before and after. It is conceivable that the settlers may or may not have mixed with the indigenous people and created their settlements in resource-rich

areas. Several cave tribes that came and established settlements can be identified from these cave inscriptions.

The Parumakas

The people with the name "*Parumaka*" mentioned in the inscriptions of this inter-valley area must have belonged to the most wide spread and the oldest social group living in the area. Inscriptions show that the Parumakas were not limited to one particular function in contemporary society. Accordingly, it seems that the Parumakas have acted following social needs. It can be explained that it was intertwined with social, economic, political, and religious spheres. They were also involved in the political and administrative process (Seneviratne 1989: 108; Sitrampalam 1986/87: 13). Accordingly, the people of the ancient caves in the area can be considered as those who enjoyed the traditional ownership of the resources and managed them. It has pointed out that the highest positions in the state emerged after the amalgamation of several aristocratic units were given to the ancient aristocrats of the area (Gunawardana, 1978, pp. 262-267).

From the early and later Brahmi inscriptions of this inter-valley region: Person names like *Parumaka Bamana*, *Parumaka Guda*, so on can be identified. One of the main points that emerge from the new settlements revealed by the early and later Brahmin inscriptions of this inter-valley is that the Parumakas has been the leading ethnic group in the region. According to the Handagala inscriptions, the Palipothana Megalithic burial site has a large distribution of descendants of aristocrats in the surrounding settlements. The inscriptions reveal that they have provided leadership to various sectors in the region. Two of the Handagala later Brahmi inscriptions, revealed that two Parumakas of this area had served as tank owners. *Anulapi Vapi Hamika Parumaka Mahavebaliya* and *Nakodapika Vapi Hamika Parumaka Mahadata* are mentioned (IC. vol.i: Nos... 1130, 1132). *Vapi Hamika* here means the person responsible for the role of the tank. In another early Brahmi inscription, it mentioned a Brahmin who was a *Parumaka*. However, his name was not mentioned in the inscription but his profession (ibid. vol. i: Nos... 1130, 1132).

These inscriptions well confirm the identities of the nobles who inhabited the area. At the same time, information about their relatives is essential. Handagala early and later Brahmi inscriptions give an idea of the generations of the *Parumakas* or chiefs who lived in the Palipothana peripheral. In one of the inscriptions, chief *Naga's* son is named as chief *Tissa* (ibid. vol. i: No. 120). In another inscription, the son of Chief *Vanishatha Sumana* mentioned

as the Chief *Patakaka Sata* (ibid. vol. i: No. 127). It appears that two names have been used instead of the individual names of these chiefs. It was mentioned in another inscription as chief *Tissa*, the son of chief *Bama* (ibid. vol. i: No. 130). Handagala later Brahmi inscription mentioned *Vela*, the chief's sister, and another part of the same inscription mentioned *Ahali's* son as chief *Data* (ibid. vol. i: No. 1125). According to the name *Ahali*, she seems to be the mother of the chief *Data*. Another inscription mentioned a chief named *Digapiyika Tissa* (ibid. vol. i: No. 1126), and perhaps *Digapiyika* is the village where he lived. Finally, an inscription mentioned Uthali, the son of *Sumana*, the grandson of chief *Goda* (ibid. vol. i: No. 1127). According to this inscription, three generations are mentioned here. One of the inscriptions here mentioned, chief *Deega Danta* as chief *Maha Danta*, who was a tank steward. Since the same name calls the father and son, it may be the same name or lineage of that generation (ibid. vol. i: No. 1132). It revealed that *Gutta* was the son of an unnamed chieftain who practised Brahmanical status (ibid. vol. i: No. 1136). In another inscription here, the wife of chief *Guda* referred to as *Hujatha* or *Sujatha* (ibid. vol. i: No. 1138). In another inscription of the same inscription, chief *Guda* is the son of chief *Abaya* (ibid. vol. i: No. 1140). From these cave inscriptions, it is clear that two or three generations of certain nobles continued to wield that social power.

Nattukkanda early Brahmi inscription also mentioned a *Parumaka*, known as Chief *Velu* (ibid. vol. i: No. 169). Galkandegama inscription in the Palipbothana subdivision, somewhat close to Nattukkanda, mentioned about the chiefs. Inscription refers to chief *Chatha*, the son of chief *Upali* (ibid. vol. i: No. 170), and another inscription mentioned the chief of *Isigutta* (ibid. vol. i: No. 174).

An examination of the meaning of the chief or first meaning of the *Parumakas* means that they are so named because they are the oldest and most widespread major ethnic group in the country. It is clear from the focus on the inscriptions of the *Parumakas* that their distribution in the dry zone of the North Central and Eastern Provinces is relatively high compared to other ethnic groups. Accordingly, these aristocrats were the leaders of the civilized early settlers in the Rajarata dry zone. Sudarshan Seneviratne says that *Parumaka* also means the traditional leader (Senaviratne 1989: p. 108). It is why the later kings used the adjectives *Maparumaka*, *Mapurumuka* and *Mapurumuka* to refer to themselves (IC. vol. i: Nos... 26, 11, 12, 16, 17 ; vol. iii: Nos... 5, 19, 27, 28, 31 ; vol. v: Nos... 2.1, 3.2, 6.1, 10.5, 12.7, 14.9, 20.15, 21.16, 23.18, 34.1, 35.2, 36.3, 38.5, 39.6, 50.17). Those kings may have emphasized that they had traditionally had the right to rule (ibid. vol. i: lxxiv).

Nandimithra Lineage

Several important early Brahmi inscriptions are found in Nattukkanda, can be known as a suburb located in the south of the Palipbothana Megalithic burial site. One of the most essential historically significant inscriptions is the cave inscription entitled '*Parumaka Nadika Putha Parumaka Mithaya Lena*' (ibid. vol. i: No. 166). It means that the cave of chief *Mithra*, the son of *Nadika*, the chief, was sacrificed to the monks who had not come. The historical significance of this inscription is that it revealed who the friends were. Accordingly, his father was a river named *Nadika*, and he has acted as a *Parumaka*. According to this inscription, it is clear that the son inherited the dominion of the father. Cave inscriptions with the same meaning have found in several places on the island. These inscriptions can be found in Kudumbigala, Erupothana and Maha Alagamuwa (ibid. vol. i: Nos... 498, 328, 233a). Explaining these inscriptions, Paranavithana has said with an in-depth investigation that *Nandi Mithra* is one of the ten great giants involved in the war victory of Prince *Dutugemunu* (ibid. vol. i: lxx-lxxi). Paranavithana has stated that *Nandimithra* was a master of the war and may have used it as an official emblem. Here are some examples of why he is called *Nandimithra* in the chronicle. That is, the combination of the father's name with his own confirms that it happened. According to the legends that have uncovered about *Nandimithra*, this area closely associated with his life. An early Brahmi inscription on Brahmanayagama, about 16-18 km away, mentions *Nandika*'s wife *Sumana*, the chieftain, and her father, the chief *Data* (ibid. vol. i: No. 148). The information in this inscription revealed that *Mithra* or *Nandimithra*'s mother is a chieftain named *Sumana*. Several other inscriptions in the same place mentioned that generation (ibid. vol. i: Nos... 156, 159). Accordingly, it is possible that *Nandimithra*'s and his mother's homelands were located in this area close to the Palipbothana Megalithic burial site. Even today, there is a strong belief in the folklore associated with this area that the people of Palipbothana and its environs descended from the *Nandimithra* giant. It was also learned that the people of Palipbothana do not have close relations with the people of some of the surrounding villages due to their pride in their descendants. Thus, from an archaeological point of view, it is clear that there is a close connection between the information contained in the inscriptions found at places like Nattukkanda and the legends. The giant tombstone found at the Palipbothana Megalithic burial site may have belonged to such an aristocratic family or aristocracy. Further study needed in this regard.

Investigations into the inscriptions in the suburbs surrounding the Proto-historic Megalithic burial site in Palipbothana suggest that the area leaders were the leaders of the

early settlers. Accordingly, they can consider as the first colonists in this area. Accordingly, this group may have been the founders of the Palipbothana Megalithic burial site. Furthermore, an inscription made by *Nandimithra* himself, who was the commander of King Dutugemunu's, at *Nattukkanda* confirms that a social condition could be associated with a more powerful political leadership which built around the region's leaders from proto-historic periods.

The Batas

Inscriptions confirm that a group of people known as the *Batas* also played an essential role in establishing the settlements associated with the Palipbothana Megalithic burial site. It is because the *Batas* show the second distribution in addition to the *Parumakas*. Only two early Brahmi inscriptions in Handagala mentioned the generations of *Batas*. In the inscription, the son of a bata named *Chittagutta* mentioned as *Velu*. The other inscription mentions *Bata Naga*, who confirms that he was the village headman for *Mataliha* (ibid. vol. i: No. 121). His son Tissa also continued his father's career as a village headman.

Nattukkanda, Rasnakawewa and Nattukkanda inscriptions also use the adjective *Bata* (ibid. vol. i: Nos... 116, 126, 128, 129, 132, 167). Also, many inscriptions with reference to *Bata* have received from various parts of Sri Lanka. Thus, the word '*Bata*' is mentioned in Sri Lankan inscriptions, probably from the *Bharathas*, a famous tribe in India at this time. Paranavithana says that this is a word from the Sanskrit word '*Bharathra*' (ibid. vol. ii: *Bata* in Glossary-Index). Therefore, these *Bharathas* can be referred to as the '*Bharata*' tribe in India. It is clear from the inscriptions bearing this adjective, that they were widespread in many parts of Sri Lanka.

However, it is not yet clear to which ethnic group the term '*Bata*' was used. There are different opinions about this term. Henry Parker defined it as 'worker' (Paker 1981: p 29). At one point, Paranavithana also referred to the term as 'honourable;' (Paranavithana 1928-33: p. 192); Wickramasinghe mentioned *Bata* as 'brother' (EZ. vol. i: 141) and Anura Manatunga as 'monk' (Monthly lecture by the Archaeological Society of Sri Lanka, November 2, 1993). However, it is clear that the '*Bharata*' tribe, also known as the '*Bata*', whom established settlements in several places in the area under the study. Sudarshan Seneviratne states that the name '*Bata*' gives an idea similar to the name '*Baratha*'. Barata is a group of people who amassed marine resources and created a variety of them (Senaviratna 1987).

The Handagala inscriptions on *Batas* mention them only in the early Brahmi inscriptions. A century and a half later, the later Brahmi inscriptions are written in the same place mention the *Parumakas*, but nothing is said about the *Batas*. Early Brahmi inscriptions on *Batas* suggest that the tribal name carried forward. That is to say, and although the father is mentioned as a *Bata* in the inscriptions, the son does not use the same name as the *Batas* (IC. vol. i: No. 121, 128). Many inscriptions refer only to one generation of *Batas*. The gradual disappearance of the *Bata* name in the region may have been due to their gradual entry into the lavish society that was now emerging. Examination of the personal names of the *Batas* also reveals that the names are closer to the Indian pronunciation than to the local pronunciation. Accordingly, they may have functioned as an extended group of people who migrated from India and gradually merged with the indigenous people led by the *Parumakas* to join the general society. However, the fact that they have acted with dignity in the community is confirmed because one of the *Bata* mentioned in the Handagala inscription and the son acting as the village headman. The fact that the *Batas* and the *Parumakas* worked together is confirmed from the inscription entitled as '*Bata Shataha Lene Parumaka Abha Lena Sagasha*' which mentioned a cave offering together with the chief of the *Batas* named *Naga* and *Abaya* (ibid. vol. i: No. 126). Nattukkanda also mentions *Batas* in an earlier Brahmi inscription and tells about a *Bata* named *Mittadeva* (ibid. vol. i: No. 167).

It is possible that the descendants of these *Batas* are some periods mentioned in the Handagala later Brahmi inscriptions without using the tribal name and using common names such as *Upasaka*, *Upashika* and *Gapathi*. By not using the name *Bata*, they may have entered the general society. These inscriptions reveal that some of those who used such standard titles have worked in responsible high-ranking professions. *Datta* confirms that a worshiper was the officer in charge of the *Nakanakaraka tank* (ibid. vol. i: No. 1129), and he may have been of *Bata* descent.

The Nattukkanda, which is a later Brahmi inscription near Palipbothana, written without any tribal name, mentioned four generations. The name of the first generation has erased, and his son *Tissa* has identified as a painter. The third generation of his son *Hijaya* or *Sanjaya*, was known as a poet. The cave was dedicated to *Tissa*, the son of a *Hijaya* representing the fourth generation. (ibid. vol. i: No. 1141).

The Gamikas

The villagers were another elite group spread across this inter-valley region. Five inscriptions related to them have been found at Rasnakawewa, Nattukkanda and Galkandegama. 'Gamika' can be defined as '*Gampathi*' or the head of the village. Saddhamangala Karunaratne interprets it as the head of a village or settlement (EZ. vol. vi: p53). It may be created from the royal name '*Gamini*'. They have also worked in various fields. However, they may have acted primarily as village chiefs.

One inscription in Galkandegama mentioned a villager named *Kitha* (IC. vol. i: No. 172), and another inscription mentioned *Sumana*, the eldest of the two children of a villager named *Uttiya* (ibid. vol. i: No. 173). Accordingly, it confirmed that the villagers have also been operating in the area around Palipbothana. The ancient Brahmi inscriptions at Rasnakawewa, northeast of Palipbothana, do not mention the *Parumakas* but only the villagers and the *Batas*. Accordingly, it can be assumed that there was no distribution of power of the Parumakas associated with that region. One inscription mentioned a worshiper named *Soniya*, the wife of *Anudi*, a villager (ibid. vol. i: No. 115). Another inscription mentions that the son of a villager named *Bamali* was named *Abaya* (ibid. vol. i: No. 117). It mentions a worshiper named *Tissa*, who may have been Abaya's wife. Another inscription described a villager named *Upali* (ibid. vol. i: No. 1189).

One inscription in Rasnakawewa mentioned the actions of a villager named *Maha Tissa* and a villager named *Naga* (ibid. vol. i: No. 116). A grandson of *Gamika Sumana* mentioned in a Galkandegama post-Brahmi inscription also states that Abaya had gifted a cave made by a senior named *Tissa* to his parents (ibid. vol. i: No. 1142). Another inscription mentions *Sumana* and his younger brother *Tissa* in a textile village (ibid. vol. i: No. 1145).

Social Practices

The Gpathi

It was a commonly used adjective in Sri Lanka during this time. The acronym *Gpathi* found in a Handagala inscription (ibid. vol. i: No. 117). *Gpathi* is the name given to the *Gahapati*, the householder or head of the household. Accordingly, it is clear that the head of the household in this area also had a prominent place in society. Some periods *Gahapati* may be the head of an affiliated family.

The Upashaka and Upashika

Those who used this adjective may have lived in this area. The *Upashaka* is called the worshipper or devotee (ibid. vol. i: No. 123). It is a term used to refer a member of a religious institution. In means of, those who have gained social acceptance in terms of enlightenment. It is clear that there was a huge respect for them with the using of such a term in contemporary society. Several inscriptions in this area refer to it as *Upasaka*, and the name *Upasika* used to refer to the triple gem took refuge (ibid. vol. i: Nos... 1129, 1131, 1133, 1134, 1137, 1138, 1143, 1144). These names may refer to people who took refuge in the Triple Gem. Accordingly, the aristocracy of the contemporary society directly involved in religious activities may have called this name.

Kinship or Relationship

Kinship or relationship is a rope that binds the individual together with society from time immemorial. Kinship affects the place an individual should have in society. The other point is that this kinship has been used very strongly in the continuous lineage. By the early historical period, the relationship between the relatives of Sri Lanka may have been solid. Early Brahmi inscriptions show how a person used kinship at this stage to express his status. For example, the social status of the father and the status of the father influenced the shape of the son during this time. The father's role is exalting in the continuous flow of a generation and the fact that patriarchy was also active in contemporary society may have led to the mention of the father's name instead of the mother's name. Masculinity seems to have been active in modern society. The kinship was mentioned in large number of the early historical inscriptions found throughout the island. It was a tradition to show the past generation of the cave owner, especially in the offering of caves to the monks. Most of the inscriptions mention only two or three generations, but some inscriptions mention more than that. Many of the inscriptions near the studied area of Palipbothana, mention the kinship of each person, such as the son. In several inscriptions on the *Nandmitra* lineage found in Brahmanayagama, which is somewhat closer to this area, the *Jhaya* refers to the daughter. The *Jhita* used to refer the wife were mentioned in a Handagala early Brahmi inscription (ibid. vol. i: Nos... 148, 156, 159), *Tini Bathikana*, used to denote three brothers (ibid. vol. i: No. 123), and the same two Brahmi inscriptions the cousin *Bakiniya* is found (ibid. vol. i: Nos... 1127, 1128). The Handagala and Galkandegama inscriptions mentioned the name of the *Manumaraka* which used to refer the grandson (ibid. vol. i: Nos... 1127, 1142). This evidence confirms the

existence of formally established kinships in the settlements associated with the Palipbothana. Accordingly, kinship formation has been active at various levels since marriage.

Ownerships or Rights

Ownership means the existing right to something. Inscriptions on rights can also glean from early historical inscriptions. It reveals information about the owners of caves, tanks and villages in particular. Inscriptions found in the area also provide information on the owners and several claims. Many of these inscriptions refer to the offering of cave owners to the cave community. Inscriptions in the area show some instances where women-owned the caves.

According to two Handagala Brahmi inscriptions, it revealed that two aristocrats of this area had served as tank controllers. *Anulapi Vapi Hamika Parumaka Mahavebaliya* and *Nakodapika Vapi Hamika Parumaka Mahadata* are mentioned (ibid. vol. i: Nos. 1130, 1132). Vapi Hamika here refers to the person responsible for or in charge of the tank, as mentioned above.

Several other inscriptions mention the village administrative ownership during the village leadership. It is clear from the Nattukkanda cave inscription that *Erakapi Gamika* was the leader of that village (ibid. vol. i: No. 168). An inscription in Galkandegama mentioned a ruler of an area called *Piyakapashana* (ibid. vol. i: No. 171).

Professional Names

Some of the people who lived in this area can also be identified from the occupational status in some of the inscriptions. Handagala mentioned several such professions in early and later Brahmi inscriptions. For example, the *Dutaka* in one of the inscriptions means messenger (ibid. vol. i: No. 168). Alternatively, it could be the king or someone at a place on behalf of the government or an ambassador. The reason for mentioning that profession in the inscriptions seems to be that it was a superior profession. One inscription mentioned a *Panadaka* (ibid. vol. i: No. 1128). The post of Trade Superintendent is known as *Panadaka*. Another inscription mentioned a sailor, and the post is called *Navikasa* (ibid. vol. i: No. 1131). Handagala inscription revealed about a Bowman too (ibid. vol. i: No. 1136). Most likely, he will be a leader in a series of crafts on bow making. Cave inscriptions at Handagala near the Palipbothana Megalithic burial site revealed some information about the various occupations in contemporary society. In both the inscriptions, it mentioned *Vapi Hamika* or the officer in charge of the tank or the tank officer. Mentioning of this position in three cave

inscriptions (ibid. vol. i: Nos. 1129, 1130, 1132) in the same place confirms that the tank administration in the area around Palipbothana was more formal in contemporary society.

Names of the Places

According to the chronicles, the Aryan migrations around the sixth century BC established colonies in different parts of the country in the individual's name (Mv.: vii). It suggests that names refer to villages and towns on the island during the early historical period. Several cave inscriptions mentioned the names used for the settlements in this inter-valley, dating back to the earliest historical period. Among the place names mentioned here are the so-called cities, which may have developed as administrative centres in those areas. The city of *Nakanakara* or *Nakanaga* mentioned in the Handagala inscription may be one such area (IC. vol. i: No. 1129). The village is generally considered an area controlled by a *Gampathi* (villager) with public facilities. *Mathaligama* mentioned in an early Brahmi inscription of Handagala is probably the oldest village in the area (ibid. vol. i: No. 128). A *Gamika* rules the village of *Erakapi* which mentioned in the Nattukkanda inscription (ibid. vol. i: No. 168). An inscription in Galkandegama mentioned a village called *Pohekaragama* which was built on the professional quality of textiles (ibid. vol. i: No. 1145). The names of these towns and villages confirm that the area with the Palipbothana Megalithic burial site is an area with an organized settlement.

Names of Irrigation and Agriculture

Several tanks can be identified in this inter-valley region from the reflection of Early and later Brahmi inscriptions. Among them, the tank in *Naka nagara*, the tank called *Nakodapika Vapi*, the tank called *Anulapi* or *Anulawapi* and *Erakapi* or *Erakavapi* (ibid. vol. i: Nos... 1129, 1130, 1132, 168).

Other Social Information

One of the socially and religiously essential points mentioned in a Galkandegama later Brahmi inscription is, that a cave was prepared and offered to the parents (ibid. vol. i: No. 1142). The Handagala temple inscription mentioned Parumaka Bamana (ibid. vol. i: No. 1136) and he may be the sacrificial or guardian of a temple.

Chronology

Archaeological excavation of the Proto-Historical Megalithic Cemetery which located above Palipbothana tank, have yielded scientific carbon-14 dates for Bone-Organic Sample No. 2/60905. That sample was taken in BC and it was revealed that it belong to 369-165 (Beta Analytic Radiocarbon dating Beta - 586186, 18/03/2021). The present-day it belongs to the period between 2318 and 2114 today. When we look at the mean value here, it now records 2190 years. Accordingly, it confirmed that the burial site has been in operation since 369 BC. It confirms that human settlements in Palipbothana and its suburbs date back to 2300 years ago. This scientific dating is significant as it reveals the latest scientific information about the settlement of this inter-valley region. It confirms that by the end of the Proto-historic period, the area moved towards a complete and permanent settlement. Archaeological evidence from the area can be reconciled, especially with the macro-technological cultural transformation patterns associated with the capital of Anuradhapura. Accordingly, the resource zones in these suburbs may have gradually grown while the urbanization centred on the capital continued to grow relatively.

Another critical factor in the scientific chronology of the Palipbothana Megalithic burial site is the ability to match these dates with some of the inscriptions found at the site. According to the chronological order of the country, the period between 369 - 165 BC is from King *Pandukabhaya* to the beginning of King *Dutugemunu*. With reference to the chronological and inscriptional sources, *Nandimitra* was the chief of the *Dutugemunu* dynasty (161-137 BC), which associated with Nattukkanda, very close to the Palipbothana Megalithic burial site and Brahmanayakanda, a short distance away. The scientific chronology received for Palipbothana is from the middle to the last period. Accordingly, the early historic settlements revealed by the Palipbothana Megalithic burial site confirm that it was a settlement process that was still in progress during the *Dutugemunu* period. Handagala, Nattukkanda, Galkandegama, Rasnakawewa near Palipbothana and Brahmanayakanda in the distance are some of the early Brahmi inscriptions that reflect information about the social organization that existed during this period. Further it confirms information about the social structure. However, it is an extension of the existing social order and not a new beginning.

Early Historical Period

Inscriptions found at various places in the Anuradhapura period confirm that the settlement distribution in this inter-valley region was high by the second half of the first

century AD. Information on the paddy fields in the later Brahmi inscriptions found in places such as Thamaragala (IC. vol. ii: No. 63), Herath Halmillewa (ibid. vol. ii: No. 114), Nattukkanda (ibid. vol. ii: No. 141), Rasnakawewa (ibid. vol. ii: No. 153), Kumbukwewa (ibid. vol. ii: No. 154), Pahala Usgollewa (ibid. vol. ii: No. 83), Pahala Thammennanawa (ibid. vol. ii: Nos... 82, 155), and so. It indicates that a self-sufficient society was existed in this inter-valley zone for the first hundred years. King *Gajabahu* made the Thamaragala inscription I (114-136 AD) (ibid. vol. ii: No. 63), King *Vasabha*, and King *Bathiya Tissa* (143-167 AD) made the Pahala Thammennawa and Pahala Usgollewa rock inscriptions (ibid. vol. ii: Nos... 82, 83). These inscriptions mention the donation of tanks, canals and paddy fields to temples in the revenue area. Both inscriptions showed a village called *Majimagama* in this zone. The Kumbukwewa rock inscription also mentioned this village (ibid. vol. ii: No. 154).

Many tanks, canals, numerous paddy fields and estates of various names mentioned in the inscriptions at the above places confirm that the Palipbothana and the surrounding area have continued to develop. The temples are known as *Honagiriya*, *Naka Pavatha*, *Marapagiriya*, and *Majimagama* found in. These inscriptions can be considered as the monastery complexes where the inscriptions found. Accordingly, it seems that these temples started as cave temples in the last period of the proto-historic period and gradually developed into temple complexes parallel to the development of the settlements. These inscriptions revealed that as the villages' population gradually increased while the existing temples expanded into wider monasteries and new temples sprang up.

Medieval and Post-historical Period

The pillar and slab inscriptions from the period provide evidence that the settlement associated with the Palipbothana suburbs continued to grow during the Central and post-Anuradhapura periods. In particular, according to the pillar inscriptions at Thamarawewa (ibid. vol. v: No. 30.25), Kirigallawa (ibid. vol. v: No. 40.7), Halmillawetiya (ibid. vol. v: No. 87.36), Kunchikulama (ibid. vol. v: No. 88.37), Ambagaswewa (ibid. vol. v: No. 89.38) and Nambakadawewa (ibid. vol. v: No. 115.25) and the *Wewelketiya* (EZ. vol. i: No. 21), has been located within an area of 10 Kilometers from the Megalithic burial site. Thus, it is possible to understand the social environment that existed in the postwar period.

According to the Thamarawewa Piller inscription, *Sulinnarugama* village has been declared and assigned or sacrificed as the village of the *Senevirad Pirivena* (IC. vol. v: No.

30.25), which was located close to the Palipbothana Megalithic burial site. As mentioned in this inscription, the village was exempt from many rules and regulations, including central government taxes. Since the Kirigallewa pillar inscription situated in a very close area to the location of this burial site, it possible that the area around the Palipbothana burial site belonged to the administrative zone called *Angamkuliya* mentioned in it during that time. *Itmarugama*, a village in the administrative zone, was exempt from many laws, including central government taxes, as mentioned in the previous inscription (ibid. vol. v: No. 40.7). More importantly, it is the deportation order that violates these rules. It is because it reflects the idea of protecting the independence in decision-making that existed in the village. However, many pillar inscriptions found in various parts of the island reveal that each village was covered by the above rules when awarding temples. Nearby, Halmillawetiya¹ and Kunchikulama² Pillar inscriptions mentioned an area called *Holupelekuliya*. The Kunchikulama inscription mentioned a village called *Gavarolagama* in that area.

¹ **Original translation of Halmillawetiya pillar inscription** (IC. Vol. v. p. 273)

On the second day of the waxing moon in the month of Poson (may/June) in the sixteenth (regnal) year of His Majesty Kasub Sirisangbo, the brother of the Great King Uda Abhaya, who made the Malamandalas in the Province of Ruhuna, which is situated in the Island of Sri Lanka and which (possesses) accumulated wealth, fame and power, subject to one rule and made them his possessions.

Whereas it was ordered that the immunities of the Council be granted in respect of Kalagamwehera, situated in Loholupala-kuliya, belonging to the Vadara-Pirivena which is attached to the Mangul-Pirivena of the Abhayagiri-vihara, that the Kuli-Melaksi officers shall not enter any place within the eight main quarters of the four boundaries (of that vihara); also the Governors of Districts and the Governors of Provinces shall not be admitted here; Directors of Public Works shall not enter; the Perenattu officers shall not enter; the officials of the Two Secretariats and of the Two Treasuries shall not enter; carts, oxen, buffaloes, and domesticated elephants shall not be appropriated; Mangdiva and Pediva tax shall not be exacted; all the places which are located outside the former main boundaries and are being enjoyed (at present) shall be included; those who have come here having committed murder (elsewhere) shall not be expelled (from the billage); and those who enter this village after committing murder (elsewhere) shall not be admitted; also I, Sakara of Mulavasa and I, Kotta of Ataragalla, who both came by commission of Mekappara-vadarum Senevirad Vadura; we the aforementioned persons having gathered together granted the aforesaid immunities as commanded, (and have set up these Attapi pillars in accordance with the orders of the Supreme Council.) Should there be anyone who violates these commands, may he become a crow or a dog.

² **Original translation of Kunchikulama pillar inscription** (IC. Vol. v. p. 276)

Hail! On the day of the ... moon in the month of in the (regnal) year of His Majesty (Kasub Sirisangbo, the brother of the Great King Udaya Abha, who made the Malamandalas in the Province of Ruhuna situated in the Island of Sri Lanka and which (possesses); accumulated wealth, fame and power, subject to one rule and made them his possessions.

Whereas it was ordered that the immunities of the Council shall be granted in respect of Gavarolagama, situated in Loholupala-kuliya, which had been given as ordered (by His Majesty) to the Mangul-Pirivena of the Abhayagiri-vihara, to the effect that the Governors of Districts and the Governors of Provinces shall not enter this village; also the Melati officers shall not enter; carts, oxen, buffaloes, and domesticated elephants shall not be appropriated; also milc cows and village oxen shall not be appropriated; the Perenattu officers shall not enter,; those who may come here after having committed murder (elsewhere) shall not be retained and provide them with protection. (I,) Mandiya of Nilavasa, and (I,) Kudu-Pasakka Sen, who (both) came from the Court of Justice on the day Pirittirad Dapula, the President of the Court of Justice, was sitting (in session,) (I,) Mekappara Sakara of Mulavasa, and (I,) Mekappara Vilakka of Bendva, who (both) came by commission of Varad Mahasiva of Ri....., the Commander of the Bodyguard; (we), the aforesaid royal officials, after having

Wewalkatiya inscription³ mentioned important facts that confirm by the middle of the Anuradhapura period, where they were administratively aligned regions and villages in the

excluded the previous religious endowments, granted the aforementioned Council immunities and have set up these Attapi pillars.

³ **Original interpretation of Wewalkatiya slab inscription** (EZ. Vol.i. pp. 243-5)

The inscription is one of King Siri Sangabo Abhay, and he can be no other than Mahinda IV. Apart from palaeographical and linguistic considerations, a comparison of the birudas alone, by which this king and his parents are referred to in his Mayilagastota inscription, the Mihintale tablets, the Vessagiri slab No. 2, the slab near the 'stone-canoe,' the two foregoing Jetavanarama inscriptions and in the present record will make this fact quite clear. Mahinda's full name was Siri Sangabo Abha Mihindu, his mother's was Dev Gon Bisso-rajna, and his father was known by the two biruda titles Abha Salamevan and Siri Sangabo Abha.

The two aksaras, in line 4 which give the number of the regnal year in which this Wewalkatiya record was incised are unfortunately not very clear. They look exceedingly like na and va. If this be the correct reading, the wording of the date would be Siri-sangbo Abhay Maharaj-hu sat langu (nava) vana havuruduychi Undvap sand pere ad mashi dasa pak dasas, 'on the tenth day of the first half of the (lunar) month of Undvap (Nov.-Dec.) in the (ninth) year after the great king Siri Sangabo Abhay raised the canopy of Dominion. This is word for word the same as that in the Vessagiri record of Mahinda IV (circa 1026-1024 AD), with the exception of the name of the month of Binera (Aug-Sept.). Our inscription, therefore, is probably later only by three months.

The subject-matter is the administration of criminal justice in the dasagama of Kibi-nilam district in Amgamkuliya in the Northern Quarter. As such it is an important epigraphical document. It furnishes us with some definite information concerning the Sinhalese law relating to 'crimes and wrongs,' criminal and delicta, and also concerning the administrative methods that must have prevailed in the Island during the tenth and eleventh centuries AD. At the outset we are confronted with the technical term dasa-gama, of which the meaning is ambiguous. We know that gama is Skt. grama, 'village.' But whether dasa should in the present instance be connected with P. dasa, 'ten' or with dasa, 'a slave,' it is difficult to decide. The fact, however, that the dasa-gama attan, inhabitants of dasa-gama, seem from the context to belong to a class higher in the social scale than that of the ordinary serfs with hardly any proprietary rights, as well as the expression dasa-gamat ekeka nayakayan, 'each chief of the dasa-gama,' suggests the possibility of the existence of a system of dividing the country for administrative purposes into groups of ten villages as prescribed in the Hindu Law Books of Manu, Visnu and others. Compare also the term dasa-gramika in the Khalimpur Plate of the Buddhist king Dharmapala-deva. According to the late Professor Kielhorn, it probably means 'an officer in charge of a group of ten villages.' On the other hand, the absence of any reference to such a system in Sinhalese literature so far as we know, and the occurrence of terms such as sivur-gam (Skt. civara-grama), 'villages that supply robes to the priesthood,' gabadagam, 'royal villages,' and ninda-gam, 'villages assigned for the exclusive use of the grantee,' lead us to think that dasa-gama may after all be nothing more than a village occupied by the serfs attached to a temple. Whatever the actual significance of this term may be, we learn from the inscription that within the dasa-gama justice was administered by means of a Communal Court composed of headmen and responsible house-holders subject to the authority of the King in Council, 'the Curia Regis.' In its democratical character, this tribunal differs from the Courts prescribed in the Hindu Law Books unless the judicial assemblies mentioned by Narada include such an institution. This village court was empowered to carry into effect the laws enacted by the King in Council and promulgated by his ministers. It could, for example, investigate cases of murder and robbery, exact the prescribed fines from law-breakers, and in certain cases even inflict the punishment of death. Moreover, the collective responsibility which lay upon the inhabitants of the dasa-gama for producing offenders within a limited time, the fine imposed upon the whole community in case of failure, the system, of compensation for offences, and the surety required for good behavior as stated in lines 15-19, 35-37 remind us strongly of certain administrative features of the Saxon and Norman periods in English history, such as the institutions of tithing and frank-pledge and the bot and wite. Another point of resemblance to early English administrative methods is to be seen in the references both here and in other tenth and eleventh century inscriptions to royal officers who, like the itinerant justices or members of the Curia Regis of the Norman kings, went on yearly circuits in the country not only to settle important disputes but also to promulgate new laws and to see that the Government dues were properly collected.

In the present inscription we read in lines 41-45 that the measures for the administration of criminal justice in dasa-gama which were enacted by the King in Council were promulgated by the following four members of his Curia: Goluggamu Raksaim Kudasenu, Meykappara Kuburgamu Lokohi, Katiri Agbohi, and Kundasala Arayan. In the preparation of the following text and translation I had before me an ink-estampage supplied by the Archaeological Commissioner (Mr. H.C.P. Bell) and the faulty transcript published in the A.I.C.

area around the present-day Palipothana. According to these inscriptions, Angamkuliya and Holupelakuliya may have been the primary administrative zones. (EZ. vol. i: No. 21). King *Siri Sangbo Abhaya* shown here, is none other than king *Mahinda IV*, maybe 956-972 AD. King *Mahinda IV*'s full name was *Siri Sangbo Abha Mihindu*, and the nicknames knew him of his mother *Dev Gon Biso-Rajna* and his father *Aba Salamevan* and *Siri Sangbo Aba*.

This inscription discussed the administration of a criminal justice in *Dasagama*, which was a unique village in the Kibinilam District in the *Amgamkuliya* area at the north of Anuradhapura. This *Amgamkuliya* area also mentioned in the Kirigollewa inscription⁴, which belongs to the earlier period. Therefore, this inscription can be considered as an important inscription during the study of this research area. This inscription is very important to us as it provides the specific information on the Sinhala law relating to crime in the administrative systems of the country, during the tenth century AD. Meanwhile, in the implementation of these laws in the decade mentioned here, one can get an idea about the transformation that has taken place in the post-Anuradhapura period in the area around the Palippapothana Megalithic burial site.

The meaning of *Dasa-gama*, one of the main villages mentioned here, is unclear. We know that *gama* is a term used for the unit called village. As Wickramasinghe points out, it is difficult to determine whether this is a 'ten' or a 'slave' (EZ. vol. i: p243). However, *Dasa-Gama* residents seem that, belonged to a higher social status than the ordinary people who have no ownership or are at a minimum. Wickramasinghe pointed out that according to Manu, Vishnu and other Hindu legal texts; there was a system of dividing the country into groups of ten villages for administrative purposes in ancient India (ibid: p244). The same system was in operation in Sri Lanka. It refers to the leaders of each of these decades. *Dasa Gramika* in the Kalimpur slab inscription of the Buddhist king Dharmapala-Deva can also be compared (EI. vol. iv: No. 34). According to Professor Kielhorn, it means 'an officer in charge of a group of ten villages' (ibid: p. 189). As far as we know, on the other hand it is not

⁴ **Original translation of Kirigallava pillar inscription** (IC. Vol.i. p. 113)

On the tenth day of the waxing moon in the month of Asela (June-July) in the second year after raising the canopy by his majesty Abha Salamewan; I, Kaliya of Maniila, and I, Agboyi of Gangulhusa, who bought came by Commission of Vadura the commander of the bodyguard, and I, Kudasala Hagavaya who came by Commission of Kasaba, the Senior Scribe and chief Guardian; we the aforementioned person having gathered together have set up these attani pillars, after having anointed (them) in accordance with the order issued by the Supreme Council, and the command of His Majesty to the effect that the members of the archery division, the Melacci tax collectors Mangadiva and Pediva officers shall not enter Itnarugama in Amgam-kuliya; also the officials of the royal household, Perelaki officers, the soldiers of the army, the officials of the Treasury, and Perenattiyam officer shall not enter; also cart, oxen and domesticated elephants shall not be drawn (for free survice). Should anyone violate these commands by entering this Village they shall be banished and they will be born as crows and dogs. Prosperity!

mentioned of such a village system in Sinhala literature so far leads us to think that Dasagama may be more specific to all than the villages assigned for the particular use.

These *Dasagama* may be similar to the methodology known as *Pattu*, which is an ancient administrative unit used from the Kandyan period until recently and still used today for special occasions such as the *Wanni Hath Pattu* and the *Demala Hath Pattu*. By the Kandyan period, the administrative region known as *Korala* was formed from a collection of this *Pattus* (Peiris 2001: 25). *Pattu* in Tamil is the term used for the number ten. Therefore, it is possible to imagine that a sub-administrative zone had ten villages in the usage of the name *Pattu*. If so, this decade tradition seems to have continued until the Kandyan period.

Whatever the true significance of this term, justice in the *Dasa-gamas* commandments was administered by a court of chiefs, in subject to the king's authority. Given its democratic nature, this tribunal does not differ much from the courts of early scribes in the Hindu law books. This village court was empowered to enforce laws enacted by the king in the royal court and promulgated by his ministers. For example, murder and robbery cases can be prosecuted, fines imposed on offenders, and in some cases even the death penalty. Moreover, the administrative features of the area strongly remind us of the fines imposed on the entire community if they fail to fulfil their collective responsibility for the safety of offenders within a limited period, the compensation required for offences and the guarantee required for good conduct. This inscription reveals that these villages' marriage laws or traditions are also specific to the village itself, while revealing the contemporary uniqueness of those villages.

The rules in force in these *Dasagama* are similar to the judicial process known as *Rata Sabha*, which was active in the villages of this dry zone known as Nuwarakalawiya during the Kandyan period. The *Rata Sabha* has taken an action on 25 wrongdoings, including village disputes and agricultural issues (ibid: 264-6). It consisted of the *Mohottalas*, *Liyandarala*, *Badderalala* and *Undirala* village aristocrats (Hettiarachchi 2019). Some of the functions and rules of the *Wariga Sabha* council that functioned in certain villages of the Rajarata dry zone were existed before eight decades ago from the Kandyan period, were resembled with *Dasagama*. The *Wariga Sabha* (Tribal Council) examines cases and issues related to marriage, caste, and others that insult the *Rata Sabha* council (Peiris 2001: 265). The village elders included *Badderalala*, *Gamarala*, *Wedarala*, also members of this council (Sources: Kumarasingha Mudiyanse, Nabadagaswewa, Age 85). The semi-independence of the riverine villages in the dry zone, can be traced back to a process that began in the early Anuradhapura period which continued throughout the middle ages and later.

Review

According to the social organization that existed in the country during the proto and early historical period, it was revealed that the society also formed in this inter-valley region associated with the Palipbothana. However, it can be seen that the process of social organization is different, heterogeneous and complex.

When this area is analysed, it becomes clear that in the early period, the ordinary people were the people who belonged to the group of people such as *Gapathi* (householder), *Upasaka* (worshippers). Inscriptions revealed that they had a place in society and possessed property. The third social structure is the constant parts of the civil and administrative spheres. The amount of property they own was also high. This place was belonged to the *Gamika*, *Parumaka* and *Bata* people. It is clear from their generations that they had an important place in society. Inscriptions confirmed that these groups held an operational leadership in various fields. Contemporary inscriptions and chronicles confirmed that the *Parumakas* belonged to this group, who emerged as the most powerful and were strong enough to maintain direct contact with political leadership.

An example of this is the *Nandimitra* mentioned in the Nattukkanda inscription was associated with the Palipbothana. At the top of the social structure there were the monks and the leadership. The monks hold the highest status in society regarding priesthood and they could amass the wealth through various donations. Political leadership holds a similar position. They had rights to the resources of the area itself. By the Kandyan period, the *Dissawe* and the *Wanni Unnahela* had reached this place in the dry zone of the Rajarata Nuwarakalawiya. Evidence can suggest that the social structure in this way had some effect on the future of society.

An examination of the early and later Brahmi cave inscriptions found at Handagala, Rasnakawewa, Nattukkanda and Galkandegama around the Palipbothana Megalithic burial site reveals that a formal social process has existed since proto-historic period. In that process, it is clear that the prevalence of parasites had remained high. Accordingly, it is possible that they had acted as the leading society in the area. They may have been the decisive force in the area. However, these inscriptions do not reveal a rift between the group or the *Batas* or the *Gapatis*.

On the contrary, they have always been collaborative, as some inscriptions reveal that these groups worked together. However, cave inscriptions confirm that in addition to the

Parumakas, the *Batas* and the *Gapatis* also played an essential role in this region. Often in the early stages, they formed their settlements, forming separate villages according to their clan or tribe. These inscriptions reveal that people themselves may have been at the forefront of all activities, including the leadership of the respective villages. However, cave inscriptions representing all groups in one place confirm that the aristocracy of those villages may have been involved in making the cave offerings to the monks. It is conceivable that this support may have existed even in the use of cemeteries during the contemporary society.

Investigations into the suburbs surrounding the proto-historic megalithic burial site in Palipbothana, suggest that the *Parumakas* initially inhabited the area. Accordingly, they can be considered as the first colonists of that area and this group may have been the founders of the Palipbothana megalithic burial site. Furthermore, an inscription made by Nandimithra himself, who was the commander of King *Dutugemunu*, at Nattukkanda confirms that a social condition could be associated with a more powerful political leadership which had associated with this region since the proto-historic period.

Although they may have formed separate tribes or ethnic groups in proto-historic periods, the tribal identities of each ethnic group may have changed dramatically as the various ancient ethnic groups in the country, including the *Batas*, gradually formed marriages with these chiefs. Thus, it may have first associated with tribes such as the *Bata*, *Gamika* and *Barata*, and the *Parumakas* have maintained their tribal identity for centuries. However, the inscriptions confirm that they too may have formed an everyday society by the end of BC. Thus, it is clear that the human settlements associated with the Palipbothana Megalithic burial site had intricately built from the beginning of the proto-historic period to the latter half of it.

However, later inscriptions confirm that the social process developed in the vicinity of the Palipbothana Megalithic burial site from the beginning of the Anuradhapura period which continued to evolve into the post-Anuradhapura period. It is clear that due to the stability and strength of the social organizations formed in the region during the 3rd-2nd centuries BC, that pattern adapted to the changes of the periods and continued until the end of the Anuradhapura period. The following inscriptions confirm this. Due to the political and administrative strength of the region from its inception to the end of the Anuradhapura period, the area seems to have functioned as an administrative region with distinctive features. These features are similar to many of the rules and traditions associated with the *Rata Sabha* and the *Wariga Sabha* in the dry zone of Rajarata during the Kandyan period and the colonial period. Accordingly, it can be seen that the semi-independent form of the area

around Palipbothana in the late Anuradhapura period was in some way active till the end of the Kandyan period and the colonial period. Accordingly, the social process in this region has been active as a continuous flow until recently.

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