

THE CONTRIBUTION OF THE *BHIKKUS* IN THE PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION IN ANCIENT SRI LANKA (BEGINNING FROM THE 3RD CENTURY A.D. - 3RD CENTURY B.C.)

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Introduction with objectives

The stability and strength the power of intervention and commitment of the community of *Bhikkus* was a deciding factor for the safety and smooth running of the public administration machinery of ancient Sri Lanka. The *Bhikkus* and the ruler were not only the idealist forerunners in the dynamics of the field of politics of the social fabrique of Sri Lanka but also they were the carrier elements of the human culture. The *Bhikkuhood* and kingship which have not come up for open serious discussion in the historical society have topped up to be an open topic of discussion. Intervention of the *Bhikkus* in the fields of politics does not come within the purview of the attitudes of the *Bhikkus*. The *Bhikku* community established soon after the arrival of *ArahathMahindaThero* in Sri Lanka which spread all over Sri Lanka in

no time, the *Bhikku* Leadership become very vital in its task of manicuring and leading the local leadership to go hand in hand with the code of Buddhist ethics. The role played by the *Bhikkus* in their task to create an idealistic leadership, which is enveloped with special principles and aims laid down in Buddhism to go hand in hand with a code of ethics and discipline that is totally bound with the popular life, for the prevalence of the society, is not that small. By this research is, it is aimed to attempt putting emphasis on the systematic developments right through the six centuries in the field of politics, to do a critical study about politics during that time, and also of the role the *Bhikkus* played, after having entered the political field, and what type of impact they made on the political institution. Furthermore, the manner in which relationship were built between the *Bhikkus* and the ruler, the impact

the *Bhikkus* made on the polity, the service ruler, rendered for the ruler, and what were the kind of benefits the ruler yielded from that support, the intervention the *Bhikkus* made on the ancient days polity, their role and the response that society offered towards that intervention of the *Bhikkus* - all these are expected to be studied critically in this paper.

Methodology

In the way so as to how the various and multiple recorded media very regarding the integration of the material and spiritual concepts, in the same way their historical roots also are found deposited in multiple fields. In the same way, this research is recorded as a comparative study of archaeological facts and pre-colonial system of records, all integrated and merged. That we find written evidence since 3rd century B.C., so, we take that milestone as the starting point of our research as well. That we see the ending era of the records put down in *Brahmi* script in the 3rd century A.D., so, we take that milestone as the termination period of our study period.

Discussion

For sake of safety, stability and integrity of the prevalent administration machinery the peace, their sacrificial commitment and the mediation of the *Bhikku* factor played a very vital role. In the dynamic fabric of the Sri Lankan

society, the ruler did not come up as a prominent feature in the dynamic force as an ideal force in the historical human society, but the *Bhikkuhood* turned out to be an open topic with a touch of cultural traditions in the modern historical dialogues of that society. The mediation of the *Bhikku* and the dimension of his supervisory role and also the reaction to it by then society and also a detailed and critical approach to such topics will be the theme of this paper. Polity is a subject that is not welcomed in the *Bhikku* concept and tradition. But since the day of introduction of *Buddhasasana* in Sri Lanka, the services rendered to the *Sasanaby* the *Bhikkus* were enormous. The closeness of the relationships between *Bhikku* and the ruler was very very close. The non-formal cooperative approach of the *Bhikkus* to the political arena was one of the key factors that enforced the rulers to take the beneficial path. But was a disturbing factor in the ancient political field and at times it led to sentimentality and unruly and chaotic force. Polity does not come under the purview of the *Bhikkumat*titude. When one considers the services to the *BuddhaSasanarendered* by the rulers, in their capacity as rulers, from the days of the introduction of Buddhism into Sri Lanka, and also going on the close relationship that existed between the *Sangha* and the ruler, *Bhikkus* could not keep themselves cut off from that field.

With this the working of the *Bhikkhu* community, from the very early times, working so closely with the materialistic authority, comes up in the form of realistic, ideological and individualistic thoughts, with which step a special dimension is opened to analyzed the role vested in the *Bhikkus* to divert the political institution- which is a subordinate organization of the society- in the proper channels. How the *Bhikkhu* community prolongs connections with the political leadership in the presence of royal patronage and security brought to them by the ruler, will also be discussed from many angles. The ruler has looked after about the supply of the four requisites of the *Bhikkus*, has built Buddhist *Aramas* and *Viharas* for them, maintained and looked after the properties. *Bhikkus* have entered the political circle as the thinker. As the chief guide to the ruler and also have turned out to be the Teacher as well. Thus, the *Bhikkus* played their role as adviser's guides and consultants to rulers in the political circle, and also, they acted as the protectors of the rulers. One can see favorable as well as disastrous consequences arising from the *Bhikkhu* intervention into the politics, and the details in this field also will be gathered here.

Conclusion

Intervening of the *Bhikkhu* into the political field became a powerful backing for the authority and power

of the ruler going up immensely. It has tended to act directly and indirectly as well, both to freeze the pattern of the rule to a routine and tradition. In the same way, it was an effective force in feeding the rulers with a code of ethics and one that opened the ways and means of avoiding attacks and challenges to them shooting up from the open society. The cooperation extended by the rulers for the good of the *Sangha* community to the political institution and political leadership become a powerful force in shaping the leadership and the institution. But it also turned out to be a violent and sentimental force that disturbed the ancient political institution. Thus, the *Bhikkus* become the dynamic symbol of the force of the state balancing its historical political route. Also it has shown that those are dynamics and changing elements and also gifted them to the modern political fabrique.

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