

Amavatura and Butsarana: As a Peaceful Struggle against Hindu Culture

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wimsarap@gmail.com ABSTRACT

Hinduism was propagated rapidly in Polonnaruwa era. People who followed Buddhism were attracted by decorated and esoteric Hindu customs, faiths and beliefs. Buddhists gradually the Buddhism and became close to Hinduism to follow the esoteric rituals. Having observed this situation Gurulugomi and Vidyachakravarthi, two literary authors who lived in the contemporary society wrote two books called the *Amavatura* and the *Butsarana* with the purpose of protection of Buddhism. So that Buddhist community can understand what Buddhism and Hinduism are. This research paper will focus on how this could be a peaceful struggle and how it influenced to the people. This research paper is based on the *Amavatura* and the *Butsarana* and many secondary sources written on the relevant subject are to be used for the success of the research. Intellectual community is highly responsible for the development of a country and it is necessary to general community too take huge responsibility. Thus, Gurulugomi and Vidyachakravarthi wrote two books subscribing these two communities. Objective of the *Amavatura* is paying attention on intellectual community while *Butsarana* aims at the general community. Having showed the reality of both religions, authors emphasized advantages of Buddhism such as: The Buddha is the almighty god and all other gods are under his power, The Buddha is the only suited person for gaining, the merits that can accrue holding offerings to Buddha cannot accrue by holding offering any gods, the advantage of having worship to Triple Gem. Two authors motivated the people and pave the way to Buddhism using the literary movement. So completely it was a peaceful struggle that made by *Gurulugomi* and *Vidyachakravarthi* to protect the Buddhism.

Keywords: Amavatura, Butsarana, Literature of Polonnaruwa

Introduction and research problem/issue

Literature is reflected by the background of the contemporary society. Therefore, it is said that literature is something that comes with social experience. When we examine classical Sinhala literature it is clear that almost all literary works have come by the influence of social context. Especially, early part of the Sinhala poetry was greatly influenced by Sanskrit literature and maintained it toughly till the Kandy era, subsequently most poetry such as *Sasadavata*, *Muvadevdavata*, *Kavsilumina*, *Kavasekharaya* and *Sandesa Kavya* were composed according to the rhetoric theories. (*Wiyawardane, 2009*) Although Sinhala classical prose too affected by Sanskrit rhetoric theories, Pali literature is the main influences to start the Sinhala classical Prose literature. It is clear that examining books written in early part of the Sinhala Classical prose such as the *Sikhavalanda saha Sikhavalandavinisa*, the *Dhampiya Atuva getapada*, *Dharmapradepika*. There was many invasion and migration when the state sifted into Polonnaruwa. Especially Tamil invasion such as Kalinga Magha greatly affected to Sri Lanka in *Polonnaruwa* era. As a result of this, Hinduism propagated rapidly and the Buddhist was attracted by Hindu esoteric rituals. Two authors take stylus with the intention of stopping this by writing two books. So that, they were able to educate people about Hinduism and how Buddhism is important. This research paper is to find whether that literary struggle influenced to people and how was it succeed.

Research Methodology

This research which belongs to field of humanities, basically, focuses on literary sources. *Amavatura* and the *Buthsarana* are used as primary sources. And secondary sources such as books, research article that related with the topic will be used to achieve the research goals.

Results and findings

History shows that Sinhala culture has been influenced by Tamil culture in various ways since Anuradhapura era. But Polonnaruwa era deserved this kind of influence because of unstable political background and Sri Lanka was a colonial under Tamil leader such as *Kalinga Maga, Rajaraja*. (Sannasgala,1964:74,76) Therefore, Hinduism affects to all section of Sri Lankan culture. Specially, to religious sector. Hinduism has different kind of esoteric and decorated faiths and belief that people can be attracted. The Buddhist was impressed Seeing these kinds of rituals and they start to close Hinduism by leaving Buddhism. A number of Hindu temples increased while temples become isolated and existence of Buddhism became threatened. To stop this threat, Gurulugomi and Vidyachakravarthi used literature as a way to protect Buddhism and write two books called *Amavatura* threat and *Buthsarana*. Both authors selected a suitable subject that goes with their intention and stressed many facts as follows:

- The Buddha is the almighty god and all other gods are under his power □ The Buddha is the only suited person for gaining.
- The merits that can accrue holding offerings to Buddha cannot accrue by holding offering any gods
- The advantage of having worship to Triple Gem. (*Amavatura, 2004, Buthsarana, 2000*)

Two authors emphasized these things targeting both intellectual and general community. So that people can get to know about reality of Buddhism and Hinduism. And also, they used literary strategies to convey their messages to the people such as narratives, different kind of rhetoric, various type of language form that goes with the people knowledge.

Authors want people to be motivated by reading things and get them back to Buddhism.

This was an ideal way to answer this kind of struggle without shedding blood.

Conclusions, implications and significance

Considering the intension of *Amavatura* and *Buthsara*, fact that emphasized by the authors and the way authors used rhetoric and language it is clear that struggle that led by the literary writers of Polonnaruva era was peaceful. People also accept this rebellion with great interest. It is clear that almost all Sinhala classical books that were written after Polonnaruva have followed the same subject with different faces. If this literature movement was not accepted by the people other authors would have not followed the same subject. This kind of a literary movement shows a good sign how we deal with conflicts without making any harmful situation.

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