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Administration of the Udugampola Sub- kingdom : A Historical and Archaeological Legacy

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Abstract

This paper aims to bring forward with a new perspective on the remaining factors concerning the historical and archaeological backdrop of Udugampola sub Kingdom of the Kotte kingdom existent in the history of Sri Lanka. A trail of provincial administrations ruled by deputies under the guidance of the king can be observed at certain periods in the history of Sri Lanka. Such an administrative divisions were called a UpaRajadhani or Sub- kingdoms. Udugampola at the Gampaha District is one of such sub- Kingdoms of the Kotte Kingdom. The available historical sources such as the battle of Alakeshwara in Rajaawaliya provide proof for the fact that king SakalakalaWallakabahu ,the son of Veeraparakramabahu VIII of Kotte had ruled this region, during the Kotte period. The palace of the king of Udugampola was at the premises of present Uttararama temple, where a pond and remnants of a moat is still being identified. However this legacy is diminishing with each passing day. In the spotlight cast over prominent ancient kingdoms such as Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa, the value and importance of ancient sub- kingdoms like these with archaeological significance stands diminished. With very limited discussion about these sites, the possibility to be forgotten over time threatens the existence of their evidence.

Introduction

It becomes evident that the Gampaha District is a collection of important heritage sights when exploring the many archaeological remains scattered over the entire district. The MaligagodellaUttararama PuranaVihara of Udugampola holds a special place among these, since

many archaeological remains and features of the kingdom are still to be found in and around this site. The area of this vihara which currently falls under the Minuwangoda Division in the Gampaha District was called Dasiya Paththu of Uthuru Aluthkuru Korala in the past. This Vihara becomes an important historical site due to evidence found in ancient texts of Rajavaliya and AlakeshwaraYuddhaya that cite a sub kingdom which was reigned by King Sakalalawallabha, son of King Veera Parakramabahu.

The location where the Vihara stands today was historically the location of the Royal Palace of this sub kingdom. Remains of the royal pond and protective moat can still be found around the vihara. Names depicting various tasks and services attached to the royal palace are still found from surrounding areas. Maligagodella was where the Royal Palace stood. Apart from that, Kehelbaddara was where kehelibandirala (royal flag bearer) used to live. Udugampola was where prince Utthiya stopped, having travelled upstream of (Udugambala) the river. Veediyawatta was the promenade where the annual royal parade of Sakalalawallabha took place. A place where a small stream fed into the royal water garden is Dolaagatha. (Dola – small stream) and a place where the king rested twice a day is Devalapola. The place where the highest graineries of the king's treasury stood is called Maabodala (MahaBudalaya – Great Treasury) The most important fact is that these place names are used to date.

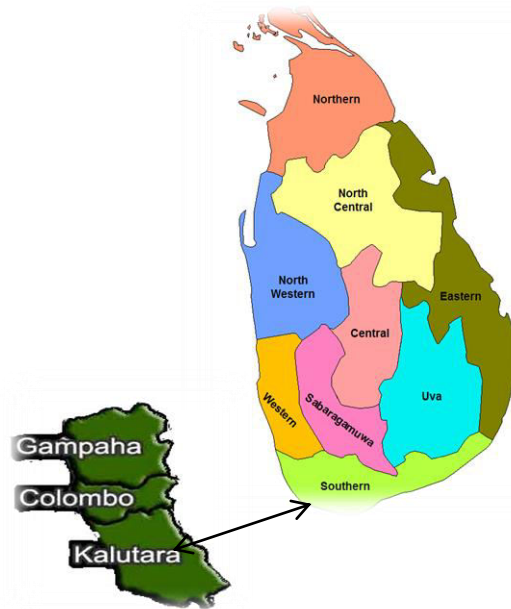
Two places at close proximity to Maaligagodella are Maabodala and Aswana. A rivulet off of Maabodala tank was crossed with a Dam (Wana) at Kalawana and the exit Dam was named Aswana (Exit Dam – As wana) Maabodala, Maligagodella and Aswana are said to have had royal palaces and the royal pond is said to have been fed by the Aswana Dam. Remains of this Dam can be found to date. The queen of King Sakalalawallabha is said to have committed suicide by jumping into the Aswana Dam. The place where the queen's jewels (mini ruwan) were found is Minuwangoda and her head was found at Galoluva (Oluva - head) while remains of her innards were found at bokkamulla (Bokka – Intestines/innards) These place names stand relevant to date. The royal goldsmiths and jewel makers were said to have lived in Hendimahara. A place where many fish of the variety called 'pethiya' in Sinhalese were said to have been found -as the result of a flood in KudaOya- is named Pethiyagoda. Relatives of the royals are said to have lived at the city entrance in Doranagoda and reptiles for the royal family were bred at Naiwala. The King's flower garden is said to have been at 'Pitakotuwa' and farmers who cultivated paddy for the king are said to have lived at Govigama. (Govi - Farmer)

Therefore it is evident that Udugampola and surrounding areas hold great historical value and attest to a well established and successful sub kingdom. The style of reign in the kotte era was to divide the kingdom into parts, allowing the royal princes to reign over a particular area. During the 16th century, the Kingdom of Kotte was divided into 5 areas. The area including Kotte and Colombo was ruled by the King VeeraParakramabhahu VIII. Specified tasks and professions were divided among various clans. The King's Parasol carriers were called Muthkudawijesuriya. Warriors were called Ranatunga. Accountants were called HettiPathirana and advisories were called Bamunuarachchi. These were assigned by the King. Pottery, Jewelmaking, Astrology,

Drumming were all assigned to various clans, displaying clear stratification. Due to the symbiosis of these tasks and relevant clans, the sub kingdom used to be a self sufficient entity. However, these traditional enterprises are on the decline at present, due to challenges brought about by many changes in the economic and social structures. The area originally belonging to the royal palace has receded into 2 acres approximately from a square mile, giving way to new development projects, housing and various political needs etc.

Geographical Background

Sri Lanka is an island in the Indian Ocean having a central location and in close proximity to india. It's land area is about 65610 sq. k.m. Western province includes three districts. Gampaha, Colombo, Kaluthara



The geographical boundaries were as follows

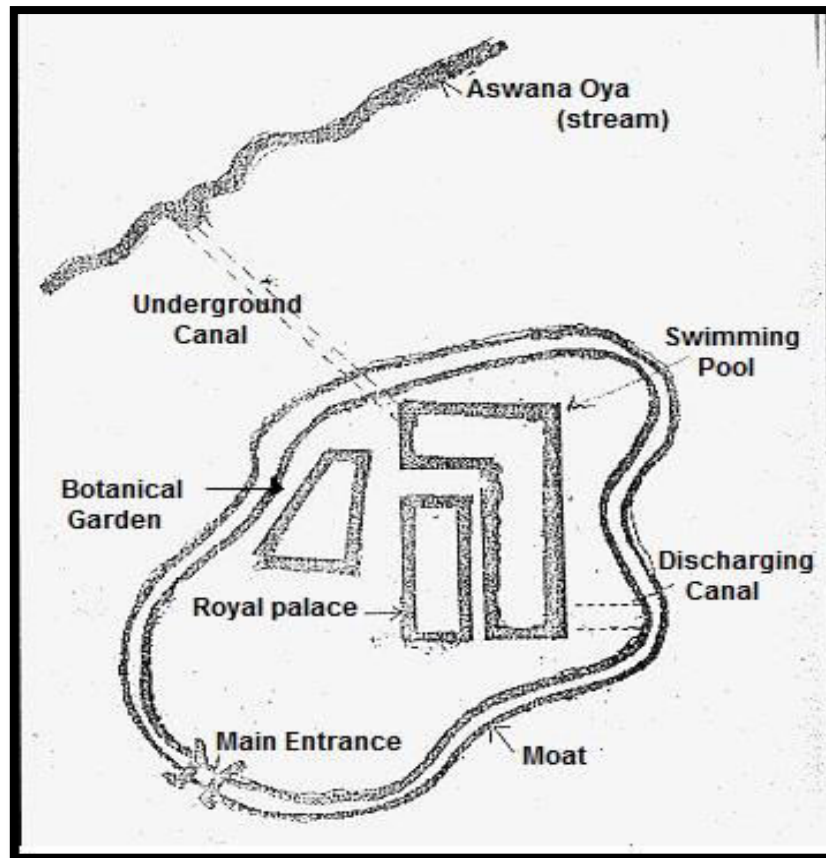
- Ma Oya by North
- Kalani River by South
- Indian ocean by West

Background

Although Udugampola is more of a rural nature at present it can be proved to have

been a developed and well established sub kingdom surrounding the Capital of Kotte, with a substantial spread. The spread of this sub kingdom can be defined as follows, taking into consideration historical geographic factors; Bound by Kelani river from the North, Ma oya from the South, Indian Ocean from the West, The Mountain range bordering Sabaragamuwa and western provinces from the East. These being the four boundaries, the palace is believed to have been built at the center, where present day Maligagodella is.

When exploring the historical context of the Udugampola sub kingdom, texts dating beyond the kotte era are yet to be found. However, as evident by the discovery of 1048 gold coins with the sun and moon signs used in the Anuradhapura era in an area called 'Korasa' in close proximity to Udugampola, it can be argued that perhaps a civilization that used coins etc have been in the area from before the Kotte era.



The ground plan of Udugampola sub-kingdom(Hewapathirathna,2000)

However the first written evidence on Udugampola and its sub kingdom therein is found in a text called 'AlakeshwaraYuddhaya' a sub text of 'Rajavaliya'. It has clear evidence of Udugampola Sub Kingdom. 'Thereafter the eldest of the great king was coroneted as the king Dharma Parakramabhahu. Another reigned in Katupitimadampe as Thaniyaan Walla. Another reigned as

Sakalawalabha in Udugampola' Thus the evidence of a kingdom and the ruling order can be identified. Udugampola can be identified as a sub kingdom surrounding the central Kingdom of Kotte. The text Rajavaliya also has written evidence of the king Sukalawalabha of Udugampola sub kingdom and his younger brother. According to the text, the brothers had defeated a foreign threat in the form of Dravidian pearl diver named 'Adhiraasaraayan Mudaliyar' who had operated illegally in halawatha and claimed elephants by the power of his illegally amassed wealth. 'Name of Mudaliyar who was pearl diving illegally, claimed many elephants to his name, having sailed with many to Halawatha. King Sakalawalabha, having heard of this, departed from Udugampola..... having won the war, alighted upon Jayawardhana Kotte in attendance to the king Dharma Parakramabhahu, were given many accolades and arrived upon his own city' The author of the AlakeshwaraYuddhaya states that it is King Sakalawalabha who was sent to defeat the coup which arose from SatharaKoralaya against the king.' Upon hearing that the king of Udarata has given rise to many complications throughout satharakoralaya, King Dharma parakramabhahu sent for his brother King Sakalawalabha... visited King Dharma parakramabhahu and alighted upon Udugampola with many praises and accolades' It is also written in Rajavaliya that it was Sakalawalabha who assisted and stood by the King of Kotte when Portuguese arrived in Sri Lanka. He was selected to investigate the nature of Portuguese and report to the king 'King Chakrayudha, I shall go and see from my own eyes how they are..' It is evident that the king undertook this mission with the addition of a name 'Chakrayudha' referring to the same person, as he was instrumental in the protection of the King of Kotte in many instances. Hence the special name 'Chakrayudha' (protective weapon) This can be confirmed through records of the historian Valentine s well. A tablet discovered near Negombo, in Kadirana also attests to the handing of benefits by the new royal palace in Udugampola in which now reigns a Sri Vijayabhahu whose predecessor was a Lord Chakrayudha. ' ..eight years following Sri SanghaboChakravarthi in Aluthkuru Korala Udugampola...' Evidence especially that of written text can be statet to prove of the sub division system of the kingdom and the existence of a Sub Kingdom in Udugampola.

However, the end of the King Sakalawalabha seems unclear as recorded evidence cannot be found of this fact. As evidenced in the Alakeshwara Yuddhaya, Dharmaparakramabhahu calls upon Sakalawalabha to rule the kingdom of Kotte, which he does not accept. It further states that the King Sakalawalabha passed the throne to his younger brother and departed to Udugampola once more. ' Having considered few factors, called upon his younger brother to reign and upon carbonating him as Vijayabhahu and handing over the armies and the kingdom to him, alighted upon Udugampola City' It is proven that the Udugampola mentioned here is the same place.

Reasons for the king to not accept the throne can be perceived as follows;

1. As stated in the Rajavaliya, the king being born of a sister of the queen who was brought in from Keerwella.
2. The king not having married from a royal lineage.

3. The king being of old age at the time.

Though further posthumous evidence of King Sakalalawallabha are not to be found, the existing evidence indicate a well structured and successful reign. As historic texts attest, King Sakalalawallabha was instrumental in safeguarding the Kingdom of Kotte. The remains of the protective moat and royal bath pond indicate the king safeguarded his own sub kingdom as well. The king's bath is the largest of the kind to be used by a king. The dam that brought fed the pond is still to be found near the Aswana temple though not in working condition due to blockages in underground waterways.



Pathaha
(swimming pool or bathing pond)

Two sons of king attempted to kill him by setting up pointed wooden stick under the bathing pond. But king saved his life. Today it is a barren land.

Toilet Base



The Resting Stone For Bathing



The royals of ancient times considered it a priority to safeguard and provide for the kingdom before engaging in warfare. King Sakalalawallabha too was responsible in developing several tanks such as the Korase Wewa, Nagaha Wewa, Goda Wewa according to legend. Though

historical evidence to the end of King Sakalalawallabha's reign are not found, it can be assumed that the general calamity towards the end of the Kotte Era affected the Udugampola sub kingdom as well.



Aswana Dam

With the onset of development and modernization, the heritage of Sub Kingdom of Udugampola which is believed to have been founded in the 1400's has come to be challenged in many ways. Weaknesses in heritage management has led to further deterioration of this national heritage that should be secured for the benefit of future generations.

Conclusion

History is not a fiction. It is a record of activities of human beings, based on acceptable factors. According to the all type of evidences Udugampola sub-kingdom also had been playing an important role in the Sri Lankan history. The time has come to preserve and look after our inheritance for the future generation. It is the duty of country people and more over the relevant authorities. Sri Lankan heritage is the heritage of world also.

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