

# A Study of the Distinctiveness of Colophon in the Manuscript Literature in Sri Lanka

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**Abstract:-** The aim of this study is to identify the distinctiveness of Colophon, ‘Samamāpti vākya’ in the Manuscript Literature in Sri Lanka which has been evident since the 6th century BC. According to the Encyclopaedia of Britannica Colophon is an inscription placed at the end of a book or manuscript and giving details of its publication—e.g., the name of the printer and the date of printing. Colophons are sometimes found in manuscripts and books made from the 6th century BC on. In the world manuscript literature, in Medieval and Renaissance manuscripts, a colophon was occasionally added by the scribe and provided facts such as his name and the date and place of his completion of the work, sometimes accompanied by an expression of sincere thanks for the end of his task. As far as Sri Lanka is concerned the history of Ola-leaf manuscripts traces back to the 6<sup>th</sup> Century BC and until the third Century BC, Ola-leaf manuscripts were used and with the introduction of printing press by Dutch in 1737, Ola-leaf manuscripts writing were gradually disappeared. However, there is a very rich collection of Ola-leaf manuscripts in the National Museum of Sri Lanka, in Buddhist temples and in some personal libraries throughout the country which are rarely accessed by the scholars for reference. This study was conducted through the content analysis of Colophons in those Ola-leaf manuscripts originally available in the National Museum of Sri Lanka. According to the finding of this research, the distinctiveness of colophon could be identified in several ways. The nature of the implications of these colophons can be analysed under several categories. Hence, Colophon could be considered as a resource for social reporting and its paramount importance for identifying the social stratification and beliefs of contemporary Sri Lanka society is noteworthy.

**Key words:** Ola-leaf manuscripts, Colophon, Distinctiveness, Resource, Social reporting

## I. INTRODUCTION

There is evident to prove that Ola leaf manuscripts have been used in Sri Lanka since the 6th century BC. Until the 3rd century BC, Ola-leaf manuscripts were used in writing daily correspondence. But with the rapid growth and popularity of literary writing during this period, the use of the sculpture for large-scale writing began. With the writing of Ven Mahinda thero, ola-leaf manuscripts were extensively used for large scale religious and linguistic writings. Accordingly, from the 6th century BC to the 19th century, the art of ola-leaf manuscripts in Sri Lanka continued. The arrival of the Dutch in 1764 and the introduction of the printing press in 1737 led to the demise of the Ceylon ola-leaf manuscripts writing. But at present, there is little or no traditional ola-leaf manuscript writing in Sri

Lanka. However, there is a very rich collection of ola-leaf manuscripts in the National Museum of Sri Lanka, in Buddhist temples throughout the country and in some personal libraries in the country which are rarely accessed by the scholars for reference due to the existing unfamiliarity particularly due to the propagation and the development of printing technology up to the standard of modern digital printing.

## II. DISCUSSION

Sri Lanka is a country with a long literary tradition. Historical information on the compilation and production of the bibliography of the island is more ancient than all the literary traditions of the region except Sanskrit. The earliest recorded evidence of the compilation and production of books in Sinhala, the main language of Sri Lanka, as well as the religious language, the Pāli and the Sanskrit language, dates back to the third century BC ( Godakumbura ; 1996 ).

Most of the island's recorded manuscripts are related to folk religion outside the realm of classical literature. These manuscripts are mainly in the custody of temples in the island and are the manuscripts of the traditional elite and craftsmen. Foreign scholars who have studied the local culture during the British colonial period in Sri Lanka were the first to review these manuscripts, forcing them to be collected in a systematic and orderly manner. This has resulted in the preservation of Sri Lankan Ola-leaf manuscripts in the major libraries of several European countries.

With the inauguration of the Colombo Museum in 1875, the collection of manuscripts as well as the copying of copies of them in the associated library seems to have been an exercise. It is headed by HCP Bell, the first Archaeological Commissioner of Sri Lanka. WA de Silva has formally categorized and catalogued the collection of leaf manuscripts in the Colombo Museum.

The local manuscripts of European libraries are also often listed as catalogues. A few formal directories can be found in this regard. The British Library's collection of Sinhala books was published as The Catalogue of the Sinhalese manuscripts in the British Museum by Dr. DM de Z Wickremasinghe in the year 1900. Catalogue of the Hugh Nevill Collection of Sinhalese manuscripts in the British Library by KD Somadasa consists of five volumes. Directory of Sinhala Manuscripts at the Royal Library, Copenhagen, Denmark, by CE Godakumbura as The Catalogue of Ceylonese Manuscripts

should be noted. The English manuscript in the Denmark Copenhagen Royal library, The Catalogue of Ceylonese Manuscripts of C. E. Godakumbura, The Catalogue of the Sinhalese manuscripts by KD Somadasa, is available in the Library of the Wellcome Institute for the History of Medicine kept in the Wellcome Institute, United Kingdom. The Sinhala Manuscripts Directory of the Colonial Office Collection, London by J. Wijeyeratne and Ananda Kulasooriya should be noted. Apart from the systematically deposited and recorded manuscripts, a large number of manuscripts of temples and personal possessions can be found in various parts of the island, mainly in the country. Mainly, the collection in the Library of the University of Peradeniya and the Colombo National Museum Library can be extensively used for formal research. These manuscripts are important, not just on their antiquity. The literary and sociocultural significance of the contents of them represent the socio-cultural and emotional status of the inhabitants in the island. The only South Asian nation with a record of more than two thousand years of history and a living literature that has existed continuously for one thousand five hundred years is a vast heritage of Sinhala literature. Many works have been repatriated to foreign countries and some of them appear to be owned by the general public.

A large number of literary works have been destroyed in various political and natural disasters that occurred in Sri Lanka at different times. This period can be cited as the period of the Vohāratissa reign of Ceylon (209-231), Mahasen (274-301), Māgha (1215-1236) Rājasimha (1518-1593) and the period of Portuguese rule. There are undoubtedly thousands of rare valuable books, and so far no trace of the chronology of the Anuradhapura period or the Polonnaruwa period has been found. Due to the various political and natural events that occurred in Sri Lanka at different times, no manuscript to date to the Anuradhapura or Polonnaruwa period can be found. It is difficult to see how hard it was to preserve the textbooks during the most catastrophic periods. The following colophon of the ola book in Great Mahāvagga Pāḷi at the National Museum Library, Colombo provides example for the above.

*śrī buddha varṣayen dedahas tunsīya pansālis vana varṣayehi navan māsayē dī imgrīsi golla nuvarāta ādā pōyageyi pīlit samaga aḍu vāḍiya dē āragena giyadā mē pot vahansē kerehi gauravayenut śāsanayaṭa upakāra piṇisat raṁbukana sōbhita unnānsē vana mā visin āragena hantānē kālē harahā pāravessan karagena āvāya. mē pota balā vadārana kenek maṭa piṁ denavā hodayi.* In the month of Navamī in the year 2345 Buddha Era (BCE), when English people came to Kandy known as Nuwara, on the day cloths and other stuff were taken, to help Buddha Sāsana travelled and with utmost respect brought this book through the forest Hantāna, by I, Ven Rambukkana Sobhītha. It is good, someone who looks at this book offer me merits.

At the end of ancient texts, it was customary to keep a record of the author's bibliography, year, etc., as well as the copyist and patron. This is called colophon. Various interpretations

can be found in this regard (International Journal of Buddhist Thought and Culture).

The word “colophon” is used since classical European antiquity to describe the formula at the end of a text or a manuscript. There is no exact equivalent to this term in ancient India with the exception of the Buddhist term ‘*Nigamana*’. The relevant terms are discussed in a brief introduction. The history of colophons in ancient India begins already during the time of the oral text transmission in early Buddhist texts. Next, the earliest written colophons are found in inscriptions. As soon as the first manuscripts survive from ancient India, some colophons, which are mostly as fragmentary as the manuscripts themselves, come to light. Colophons are missing.

No comprehensive book on this subject can be found in the history of literature in Sri Lanka. There are over 100,000 collections in the private collections of museums, temples in Sri Lanka. There are over 5,000 in the Colombo National Museum Library and over 3000 in the University of Peradeniya. A selected sample of all these subjects has been used for this study.

This Ola books can be divided into religious books (*Tripitaka*), history and traditions such as grammar, poetry and art, where the concluding verse of the Bibliography is unique. The nature of the implications of these colophons can be analyzed under several categories. In the past, the time period, clan, caste, the names of those who served in the administrative services during the colonial period, provincial and local information in Sri Lanka, the end of the works are presented in the form of recitation and admonition, as well as sentence patterns and metaphysical theories. To understand this study more clearly, it is academic to analyze colophon under following categories.

### III. SPECIFYING THE TIME

There are number of colophons which indicate Time particularly the auspicious times.

For instance, the culture of printing greatly contributed to the spread of different cultural characteristics in the life of the people. Merely protecting these cultural features is one of the most important factors in identifying a nation's identity. There is a direct link between the auspicious and the ‘*bulat*’- betel (kind of leaves which are offered some one on an auspicious time to respect). One of the main rituals of giving betel- in the year celebration was to respect the parents.

*(śrī māna āraccigē jūṣē pērarā, siṁhala avurudu maṁgalyaya)* It is customary in the Sinhala folk tradition to perform good times at important moments in daily life. The beginning to work at auspicious time was carried out (*Silvā ṭī bastiyan da, avurudu mālaya 1891*).

*Siṁhala samājayē yahapat kaṭayutu ārambha karana laddē suba vēlāvakini-* The good work of the Sinhala society was started at auspicious time (*Vijēsēkara, 191*).

The term *Suba Vēlavakini* denotes the meaning with an auspicious time.

The date and time of the annotation of the bibliography have been dated by various methods. Tradition has it that it is customary to mention the zodiacs, etc. The history of Sri Lanka also depicts various auspicious times for the construction of ancient places of worship (*Mahavamsa - 30. Chapter 31*).

/ *Kanyā ravi visibhāgayaka sitē nākata hā diyavaka nam tithiyak vu śani dina/ Satur day*, which is the auspicious day of the twenty-two virgin minds, the name of Diyaavaka (*Buthsarana 6. B.3*) *rāsi doḷahē ek rāsiyaka kanyā rāsiya , sitē nākata āti senasurādā dina-* The constellations of one of the twelve zodiac signs, the auspicious day of Saturday( *875 butsarana 6. B.3*).

*Bakmasa sikurādā pūse nākatim pām vu satpēlakaṭa svargastha vūha.*

*apēral māsayē pūse nākat dina maraṇayaṭa pat vūha – Demised (went to heaven) on pūse auspicious time in April(1874 Kaḍayim pota - sirilaka kaḍayim pota-22.Q.15).*

It has become a common practice to use the AD-(*Anno Domini Nostri Jesu Christi*), Buddhist Era (BE) and general practice.

Eg: (*kristu varṣayen ekdahas aṭasiya anutunaṭa pāmiṇi varuṣayehi oktōmbara nam māsayehi visipasveni dina liyā nima karaṇa laḍī ( 1893 Oktōmabar masa 25 veni dina liyā āta)( 292 Sāleyya sūtra nidāna pāṭhavarṇanā va.6).*

In the following instance the terms “*Kristu varṣa, buddha varṣa denote AD*”-(*Anno Domini Nostri Jesu Christi*) and Buddhist Era (BE). The term “*Kristu varṣayen ekdahas aṭasiya anutunaṭa denotes 1894 AD*”.

*kristu varṣa, buddha varṣa hā sāmānya vyavārahaya bhāvitayaṭa gānīma sulabava sidu vi āta. kristu varṣayen ekdahas aṭasiya anutunaṭa pāmiṇi varuṣayehi oktōmbara nam māsayehi visipasveni dina liyā nima karaṇa laḍī. Completed writing in the month of October 25<sup>th</sup> A.C( 292 Sāleyya sūtra nidāna pāṭhavarṇanā w.6).*

Buddhist Era (BE) can be seen in some documents without the use of the AD-(*Anno Domini Nostri Jesu Christi*). For instance, *Buddha varṣa dedahas sārasiya tudus varuṣayaṭa pāmiṇi bakmāsayē dī nettipakarāṇa nam pota liyavā nimakoṭa evana laḍī.*

The term in the above example *Buddha varṣa dedahas sārasiya tudus varuṣayaṭa pāmiṇi bakmāsayē dī denotes* Buddhist Era (BCE)2414 in April, *Neththapatim* was written 1230 (*Nettipakarāṇa Nettigandha (p.9).*

It is evident in the following example that the author of the book *dhātu pāṭhaya* concludes his work indicating the year (*kristhu varṣa 1797-1797 AD*), month (*māyi masa-in the month of May*)date (31) and the place (*Anurādhapurayē dī ya-I Anuradapura*)

Eg: *Kristhu varṣa 1797 Māyi masa 31 Anurādhapurayē dī ya (May 31, 1797 in Anuradhapura) ( 2070 dhātu pāṭhaya Y11).*

The term *Varṣaisa* is an original Sanskrit term used to indicate the meaning of the ‘Year’.

The term in Sinhala ‘*Avuruddē*’ is used to denote the meaning ‘*In the year*’.

E.g.*Varṣa 1867 Avuruddē liyā nima Kalāya .sata ekvā dahas satsiya asu aṭē avuruddē uduvak māsē pura diyakalak rividina dī ya(551 Sāma Jātakaya 85- k. 19).*

*Dakuṇu disāvē gāllē grhastha pravṛjjita sabhāmāṇḍakavaru visin śrī buddha varṣayen dedahasārasiya tudus varuṣayaṭa pāmiṇi bakmāsayē dī maha vansa ṭikā nam mema pota liyavā nima koṭa evana laḍī.* The book “ *Mahā vamsa ṭikāva*” was written and completed in the month of April 1913. *Mahā vamsa ṭikāva - vamsasatthapakāsini.* It seems that Poets have wished to indicate specific year, month and the date.

*saka karanā dahas satsiya nava vasi nā*

*doḷa sakinā vaka pura anura buda di na*

*masa posonā ranasara nama yutkala na*

*sita semanā nimakala kavi sivu padi na( 2172 anurāgamālaya 7. H.3).*

The first line of the first stanza, *Saka karanā dahassatsiya nava vasi nā* denote the year 1709 and the term *Buda di na* means on Wednesday in the twelfth day of *Posonā* means in the month of June.

Although the common practice of indicating date is Mondays and Tuesdays etc, the poets have used the traditional terms like *śani dina* which means Saturday and *Guru dina ta*, the traditional term in Sinhala Calendar for Thursday.

*kavikara kīvat sa`dahan muniguna edi na*

*nisi sata sōka suvapat vena lesa so`di na*

*devi sāma belen aḍaviya gevamin gosi na*

*śani dina sela cētiya dāgoba vadi na (761 aṭamasthāna vandanā W. A. D. 8 -192&*

*am rada vasin dedahas sārasiya ya ṭa*

*van sada matin sataḷis devana vasara ṭa*

*pun sada poson pasaḷosvaka guru dina ṭa*

*man so`da pasan kavi satsiya aṭa satu ṭa(1537 Teruvan lakara 69 -1-5 ).*

The uniqueness of the traditional Sinhala writings is that they end their work or writing with the blessings of a deity, a blessing, or good wishes. It is one of the unique features of Sri Lankan culture.

*Sidat saṅgarāva niimi -(sidat saṅgarāva was completed) siduvēvā- Subavēvā- nirōgi vēvā( Wish you a best and healthy*

life!)( 2150 Sidat Saṅgarāva A .H.2).Vadāḷa dharmaya nuvaṅṅāttāvu satpuruṣayan visin asā sita tabāgena nopamāva pinkam koṭa hāa satvayan visin nivan dakinṅa utsahā kaṭayutu - kosāmbāevata nimi (1079 Kosāmbāevata Nimi 6.D 3).(Good people should bear in mind the preached doctrine and try to attend Nirvāṅa without delay) Siddha rastu- Wish you all the best as you wish!)

Throughout this study it was found that the writers have used both derived form from Sanskrit likenimi to denote the completing of the task and the Sanskrit original tems like niḥitamwith the same meaning in similar situation . The term āsivisopama Suttam niḥitam- Siddharastu!.( āsivisopama sutta is completed. – Siddharastu!.-Wish you all the best as you wish!)(126 sivismopama sutta 85k 1).Bāla paṅḍita sūtrapadaānum nimi - Siddha rastu! (Completion of the Bāla paṅḍita sūtrapada is over. Wish you all the best as you wish) ( 130 - 6 . q .5) mehi arthavakṣamāna prakārayen asā svarga mōkṣa sampat sādīmaṅa utsahā kaṭayutu (May attend heaven mōkṣa with these meaning) ( 114 Ālavaka sūtra nidāna pāṭha varnanāvaw.6 ).It has also provided some kind of awareness to the people and has given them a way of completing their work.

Ruhunu raṭa upannot saura vīrya āttē ya . piḥiṅ raṭa upannō alapa svalpa sit āttō ya. Sauravīrya bala āttē ya. - mesē data yutu lamkā vistaraya nimi( 1898 Lamkā vistaraya

- L .8 ).(If you born in Ruhunu Rata there would be solar vigor.

The natives of the Pihiti raṭa are very few.Equipped with energy and power. - Here is the description of Ceylon).

Poetry writers have also used various methods of ending their work. Some designers believe that attening enlightenment is their only wish. In Buddhist tradition, enlightenment is the supreme position a person can attain. The first line **mē livu pinpu rā** of the following poem indicates that this poet has considered his literary creation as a great merit.

mē livu pinpu rā

vida savu sāpat nita rā

novāda biya sasa rā

mama da budu vemmāyi lovtu rā( 1085 kurudharma kāvya x.7) .

Given their patronage to public works, it seems that such people were blessed.

narani`du buvanēka yana nama niri`du ve ta

pura idu sada sisira got kālumen dimu ta

suranidu karuṅu kaḷuniṅ raṭa devu ve ta

parasi`du ulagallē māti`duṭa vēya seta(2175 aṣṭanāri sandēśaya A B 1) .

Wish Very Famous Ulagalle Matheeda all the best!

The writer of *kostantīnu haṭana* also concludes his work with blessings for the king and with of Sri Lanka. For instance the term *raju digā vēvā* means the King may live long or wish the King a long life!

raju digā vēvā

rupunaṭa nigā vēvā

sirilagā vēvā !

*sirin muḷu lova vagā vēvā* ( 1882 *kostantīnu haṭana M . 6* ) . Long life to the King, disgrace to his enemies, good will to him, and every success to Sri Lanka!

*Sandēshaya Kāvya* (Sanskrit) or “Message poetry” is an incident in which an animal carries a message from one place to another. Such a mission can be accomplished with the expectation of blessing or blessing on many kings or nobles (*Godakubura 204*).A common theory for every message poetry could be observed here.

ē bōtul tedāti savanidugen pera ma

lābē kal sāma suba āsiri bō ma

kobōnil miture samagiva siyagā ma

nobōkal yehen pavatuva sāpa sē ma(2255 *Nīlakobō Sandēśaya A.M .17*) .

The author blesses the creature *Nilakobo*, who lives here. The literary creator of *Daḷadā Aṣṭakaya*, a literary piece of work to respect the Tooth Relic has designed it with sound effect and ends it in a manner paying homage to the Tooth Relic.

E.g:

pūjita kula pūjita nūpa pūjita siri kamalā

pūjita hara pūjita hari pūjita vidhi nimala m

pūjita sura pūjita nūpa pūjita kula nipuṅam

śrī gautama dāṭhāmuni pranamāmita saraṅam(905 *Daḷadā Aṣṭaka x. 1*) .

The writer of *Bālōvādāya* request to live embracing his advises.

me kiyana lesaṭa pāvatilā siṭapa llā

sakiyena mebas muduṅen gena piḷiga llā

ratiya kavaṭa bas pamaṅak nokiya llā

bātiyen māla ōvādē dānagal lā(787 *bālōvādāya A.G.7*) .

Accept these good things from the top. Do not say jokes or erotic things. Accept these warnings with the utmost caution)

The ultimate wish of the author of the *uraga jātakaya* is the animals in all their spheres of blessing will get the merits given by him.

*bavageyi paṭan ajaṭākāsa hīnka ra*  
*mehetuḷa vaṭina hāma sakvalaval nohā ra*  
*diyagoḍa upan savsat kara nit satara*  
*mama dena mepin anumōdanvan pavara( 589 uraga*  
*jātakaya A.Q. 13 ).*

The Silo Poetry , a retrospective of the first merit oriented first function called ‘*gaṃgārōhaṇa piṃkama*’ in the ‘*Nilvalā*’ river, *Mātara* conducted by *David de Saram Mudali* ,a resident of Matara as an advanced devotee in the early 19th century is called ‘*Gaṃgārōhaṇa varṇanāva*’(Vanarathana1994. 237) . Though according to the text, it is named as ‘*Gagaru vanana*’(‘*Gaṃgārōhaṇa Varṇanāvala*1998: 2 *Silōva*), the silo poetry is known as ‘*Gaṃgārōhaṇa Varṇanāva*’A great number of scholars who lived in the 19th century contributed to the debate called ‘*Savsat dam Vādayaṭa*’ as it was recognized as an important scholarly debate.

When it comes to public opinion and public opinion, the argument seems to be not just for academia but for race as well(*Guttilla Kāvyaṭa Varṇanāva,xxii*).In the end, the author makes a wishful speech to all beings.

*amaduru sasun babalatvā nova atu ru*  
*tama tama veta satura sat vetvā mitu ru*  
*hāma kal vāsi ladin sas vetvā susa ru*  
*hāma sat jayamagul vetvā sita asu ru( 2192*  
*Gaṃgārōhaṇa Kavi .69.1.4 ).*

Let the Śāsana shine in all cases. Let the enemies be friends. Let raining all the time. Let every animal be with every success!

The poem based on Buddhist concepts concludes with a special blessing on the mankind and all the living being. The intention of the author of the *Ruvan Sūtra Sāntiya* is to wish with the blessings of the Buddha invoked in the Sinhala Buddhist society.

*Sūtra bīlā rā kala soḷasak budun nasana sita*  
*nāgāgiriā munidu damanaya karaga ta*  
*pālā visi niyen dōsa meyin durala ta*  
*mēlā gen yānidha bhūtāni belen se ta (289 ruvan sāntiya 55*  
*- E.I ).*  
 Let all these blame go !

#### IV. PERSON NOMENCLATURE

Names of persons can be found in Colophons. Various titles, hierarchies, clans, etc., can be found by personal names in use in real time. Showing caste and class is an individual social need. Their caste hierarchy is reflected, especially in the use of personal names. Experts discuss a caste hierarchy in traditional Sri Lankan society.

In every society, several social strata are evident, which are based on the relationships and connections within the society(Dictionary of the Social Sciences, (Ed), Craig Calhoun2002, 233). Caste is one of these (Silva 1973, p. 263). Analyzing the statement, institutions are one of the central concerns of the functionalist tradition, in so far as they concretize.According to E.R.Leach (1960, p.1) the term caste is used in two different contexts. In an ethnographic context, it refers exclusively to a system of social organization peculiar to Hindu India. In a sociological context, it may denote almost any kind of class structure of exceptional rigidity.Caste is basically considered as a cultural or structural phenomenon(Ibid, p. 2)Important social functions.

The flexibility which such practices imply might suggest that the Sinhalese caste system stems from the Indian counterpart. But this is not the case, where the Kandyan region is concerned. In the Kandyan region the typology of labour specialization and the way in which members of different castes are bound together by the obligations of ritual and economic service is entirely in accordance with the orthodox Indian pattern (Ibid,p. 4).As already mentioned caste is a structural phenomenon and a concept which has worldwide application. Caste can only be recognized in contrast to other castes with which its members are closely interacting in a network of economic, political and ritual relationships (Ibi,p. 5).

According to social environment, every caste had a duty assigned to it by tradition. Evidence indicates that the *rājakāriya* system was also linked to the caste system and the self-sufficient economic system in the medieval society rested on it. There was no intermarriage or partaking of meals amongst members of different castes (Nandadeva,p. 7).By the time of the British rule, the caste system was still on the decline in the coastal areas, but in the Kandyan kingdom, the traditional caste system was strongly prevalent(Adagama, p. 4).Many scholars who have analyzed Sri Lanka’s history of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, state that a large number of castes were prevalent at the time. In analyzing the caste system in Sri Lanka, some have endeavored to prove that the Sri Lankan caste system was a legacy of the Indian caste system. However, Ananda Coomaraswamy argued that the local caste system was adapted to suit the indigenous system of the time for it to become practicable (Kumaraswamy,1958). Yet, by the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, the caste system was based on professional status. *Rājakāriya*, a compulsory service, was the mechanism which made caste service and land tenure complementary. Everybody except the ‘*Sangha*’ ( Buddhist clergy) were bound to perform *Rājakāriya*, which was of three kinds. Firstly, the compulsory labour useful to the public, free of payment, for fourteen days or less, and military service during a war. Secondly, the caste services for the state, temples or individuals. Thirdly, the annual land tax or *Kadarājakāriya* paid to the treasury as a part of a mythically assured agreement with the first ruler (De Silva 2006, p. 79). The *Rājakāriya* system was operated based on the caste system.

*Janavamsaya*, believed to be written by a Buddhist monk in the 13<sup>th</sup> Century, is considered to be the earliest writing to list the various Sinhalese castes and also details of the work or duties that each caste was expected to perform (*Janawanshaya*, 1886), (14165. H. 4. 1. 4 – British Library).

1. *Goviyo* – *Vellālayo* - *Handuruvo*(Farmers, Cultivators)
2. *Kamburu-Navandanno* (Blacksmiths, Iron Melters)
3. *Vaduvo* (Carpenters)
4. *Hannāli* (Tailors)
5. *Radav* (Dhobbies, Washermen)
6. *Āmbattayo* (torch bearers) .Karanavamiyo (Barbers)
7. *Sammarayo* (Leather Workers )
8. *Durāvo* (Toddy Tappers)
9. *Kumbakārayo* (Potters)
10. *Karāvo* (Traditional Fishermen)
11. *Vāddo* (Hunters)
12. *Beravāyo* (Tom-tom Beaters)
13. *Hakuruvo-Vahumpura* (Jaggery Makers)
14. *Hunno* (Lime Burners)
15. *Pannayo* (Grass Cutters)
16. *Vamannayo* (Iron Melters)
17. *Gahalayo* (Executioners)
18. *Vāvaduvo* (Cane Weavers)
19. *Paduvo* (Palanquin Bearers)
20. *Malakārayo* (Gardeners)
21. *Kinnarayo* ( Weavers)
22. *Rodiyo* (Outcastes)
23. *Baliyā* (Dancers)
24. *Indrajālikayo*-(Magicians)
25. *Chandālayo* (Scavengers, Beef eaters, Garbage Cleaners) (Kumarswāmi 1958, pp. 20-21).

An analysis by John Davy reveals that the above mentioned caste system has undergone change in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century (Somarathna, 1967).

01. *Vaiśya Vamsaya* (High Caste / Nobles)
  - Govi Vamśaya* (Farmers)
  - Nilamakkāra Kulaya* (Nilames/Govt.officials)
02. *śrudra Vamsaya* (low castes)
  1. *Karāva* (Fisher folk)
  2. *Durāva* (Toddy tappers)
  3. *Chariya* (Goldsmiths, Silversmiths, Blacksmiths)
  4. *Hannāli* (Tailors)
  5. *Badahāli-Kumballo* (Potters)
  6. *Āmbattayo-pannikkayo* (Palanquin Bearers)
  7. *Radav* (Dhoby-Vashermen)
  8. *Hāli-Halāgama* (Weavers)
  9. *Hakuru* (Jaggery Makers)
  10. *Hunu* (Lime burners)
  11. *Pannayo* (Grass Cutters)
  12. *Villi Durai*(Bearers)
  13. *Dada Vāddo* (Hunters)
  14. *Padu* (Iron Weeds ))

15. *Berava* (Tom-tom Beaters)
16. *Nādi*(Suppliers of boxes & winnowing fans for the king)
17. *Pallaru* (Stone Carvers)

According to Bryce Ryan (p.94), by the 19<sup>th</sup> Century it was shown that there were numerous castes like *Govigama*, *Karāva*, *Salāgama*, *Durāva*, *Navanandana*, *Hannali*, *Hunu*, *Rodi*, *Wahumpura*, *Panikki* , *Pannaduraya*, *Beravā*, *Oli*, *Kinnara* and *Kavikāra*.

Caste consciousness in the minds of people is manifested throughout history. It can be seen that caste played a prominent role in society during the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17th Centuries. Robert Knox mentions that caste differences depended not on material values, but along blood lines. The higher castes could be distinguished by name and dress from the rest (Knox 1989, p.199), Ordinary men wore a piece of cloth that fell little lower than the knee. Women dressed the *sari* that was twisted round the chest and draped down from the shoulder (Knox 1989, p. 199).Individuals belonging to the lower castes have also made their name appear in the book, indicating that they are at the bottom of the Sri Lankan caste hierarchy.

*Sudhakuru Gedara Bhāmadīyā Pota yi*.This is the book of ‘*Sudhakuru Gedara Bhamadiya*’(1106 *Mahabanikman Sakaskaḍaya* w.A.D .8 – 222 ).*Karuṇagollāgama Upāsaka Durayā Liyavāpu Dampiyāvē Gāthā pot Vahansē* nimi. (This is the book on *Dampiya Gatha* written by *Karuṇagollagama Duraiya*) (76 *Dhammapada* 85 - M 19)*Nārāmbuddē Bali ādurā mepot vamsē makuddala hāla mōmbagē vidānarāḷaṭa kiya livu pot vahansē* (This is the book written to Vidhana Rala by *Nāranbudda bali ādurā*)(218*Dhammacakkapavattana sūtra pada ānuma*. 22 B .7 ). Here, the name “*Sudhakuru*”, “*Durayā baliādurā*” (“*Berava* caste) appears to be the low caste representation.

Based on Nur Yalman’s search study in the Baddegama area, ‘*berava*’ caste has been identified as the lowest caste. This study shows that the high caste people identified *berava* as one group of people (*Eka minussu*) (Nur Yalman, 1967). Names they inherit from generations are used by them as surnames. ‘*Beravā*’ caste is one of the most sought after artistic caste, as they were the traditional horoscope readers, textile weavers and devil dancers (Ryan pp.93-124).

*Huruḷu paḷātē ulagallakōralē ulagallē padimci ecām bī davulāgala kōrālagēpotē piṭapata ya.liyā nima kalē 1901 juni 20 dina*’ (This is the book of Daulagala Korala who resides in *Ulagalla Korale* in *Huruḷu Province*. Completed 1901)(1309 *Patmāvati Kathāva* 22.M. 6). *Siddharastu!*Wish you all the best as you wish!

*Siddharastu!* - Wish you all the best as you wish!

*Kalāgam paḷātē kalā gam kōralē korasagallē seneviratna - gombara mudiyansēlāgē appuhāmi kōrālagē potē piṭapata ya* (A book by Seneviratne Mudiyansēge Appuhamy of *Korasagolle, Korale, Kalagam Province*)( 496 *mahājanaka kāvyā* 7.f. 11).

*śrī suddha sakarāja varṣa pramānayan ekavā, dahas satsiya navānuvaṭa mema varṣayehi navammaṣa pura satavaka lat śani dina medavaṣa aṣavidē nākatim mē pota liyā nima keruvē* ( Saturday on the auspicious time of Navam Pura, 1790)( 2322 vadankavi pota 82 - L 23).*Buddho bhagavānan vana sēka- nava guṇa sanna ya varṣa* 1846 k vu *avuruddē dī livuvāya.puṁci rāla mama ya. Puṁci rāla mama ya. Śaka varṣa 1768 avuruddēlivu navaguṇa pot vahansē* ( 1220 Navaguṇa Sannaya 85 ).

The name of the teacher or the generation of some of the people seems to have been regarded as a matter of honor. This can be seen in the monks' nomenclature. Here, the names of the Bhikkus who were more prominent in the local society than the names of the most prominent monks can be observed.

In the 19<sup>th</sup> Century there were many conspicuously prominent personalities among the Buddhists clergy. *Vāliwitiye Saranamkara Saṅgharāja Thero* who had a close relationship with the community of monks was an outstanding personality in the contemporary field of education. *Walane Siddhārta, Gālle Medhamkara, Hikkaduwe Sumangala and Ratmalāne Dharmārāma* were among the other distinguished theros. When initiating *Vidyodaya* and *Vidyalankara Pirivenas, bhikkhus like Hikkaduvē Sumangala, Ratmalāne Śrī Dharmārāma, Weligama Sumangala, Dodandūvē Piyaratana, Welitota Wimalasāra, and Waskaduve Sri Subīta* rendered a yeoman service in protecting traditional education. At the beginning, only oriental subjects were taught in the pirivenas. There were other *bhikkhus* who represented this generation of outstanding monks. Among them were *Morapitiye Attadassi, Denipitiyē Sangharakkhita, Walānē Sārānanda, Ratmalānē Sumanatissa, Galagamuvē Buddharakkhita, Baduraliyē Dirānanda, Pānadurē Khemānanda, Tiymbarahenē Wimalatissa, Ratmalāne Wipulatissa, Walānē Dhammānanda, Godigamuvē Saranatissa, Kollupitiye Sunanda and Arukgoda Silānanda* who contributed in various ways to promote the cause of Buddhism (Gunatilake 1927, p. 101). During the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, Venerable *Mohottiwattē Gunānanda* stood out as a radical personality. In this background, poets tried to depict in poetry that these *bhikkhus* had broken away from the traditional *bhikkhu* society and were very progressive. *Uturu disāvē nuvara kalāviyē basnāira paḷātē kandarākōralē mihintalā vihāravāsi vu udammaḍu apē nāyaka sthavirayan vahansēgē gōlayā tilakarātna kumārasēkhara baṅḍārālāgē appuhāmi vana mama visin anurādhapurē dedaveni ējanta hāmuduruvaṅṭa liyā dun mihintalā varṇanāva nimi* ( 1921 Mihintalā varṇanāva 7.H.7) .Here the term 'ējanta hāmuduruvaṅṭa' is used as a honourific usage for the second chief of *Anurādhapura* (1921 *Mihintalā Varṇanāva* 7.H.7). *Anurādhapurē isurumuni vihārē galhenē saṅgharakkhita terun nānsēgē potē piṭapata ya- liyā nima kaḷē varṣa ekadās aṭasiya anuaṭē agōstu masa da.* ( Copy of the Book of the Sangharakkhita Thero of the Galhena of Isurumuni, *Anuradhapura Buddha Rājavaliya* (2311 *Tisara Sandēśaya* A.B.8).

*Nuvara kalāviya palātē kādākōralē pādīyamkaḍavala pansalē vāḍa vasana pallēkāgama dhammānanda sobhita sthavira mahā sthavirayan vahansēgē poten piṭapat karagannā ladi- liyā nimakalē varṣa ekdās aṭasiya anunavāyen desāmbu masa dahaveni rividina diya – Siddharastu!.* (Wish you all the best as you wish!) (Excerpted from the book of *Pallekagama Dhammananda Sobhitha Thero of the Padaiyakadawala Temple in Kavadukorale, Nuvara Kalaviya*. Written on Sunday, December 10, 1899.)

*Saṭbhāṣā paramēśvara tripiṭaka vāgīsvara śrī rājaguru galaturumula mahā svāmipādayāgē pradhāna śiṣya vu parākramabāhu vilgammula mahatera sāmīn visin paḷamu mayura nam mahā kavīhu visin kaḷa sūryasētra satakayaṭa amutukala artha Vyakhyāyayi* (1515 *Sūrya śatakaya* 85- K. 21). (Parakramabahu Wilgammula Maha Thero, the chief pupil of Tripitaka Visharadha Rajaguru thero, who dominated over six languages, has compiled the etymology to the 'sūrya stōtra śatakaya' of first poet called 'Maura'.

At the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century coastal societies were headed by *Mudaliyars, Muhandirams, Korales, Headmen* and other feudal leaders holding powerful ranks. They were entrusted with a wide range of duties such as collection of taxes and even handling of judicial matters, etc. Since those were ranked as 'high' according to the caste system they were honored and elevated to a high status. Thus, they were able to exercise power and control over the general public (Gooneratne 1970, p. 116).

*Gāllē talpottuvē vāḍa visu sat dat vāligama dhammajōti svāmin vahansē visin dhanavat sāmsan da ābrev vijayaguṇaratna mudalitimāṭa yāv prabandhayayi.* ( 2269 *prabandhayak* ) , *muttāva heṭṭirālaṭa diyavāṭikanden pahaḷa lābunāha - siddha rastu.* ( 2435 vittipota ) Caste hierarchy prevailing in society clearly shows that this was a struggle between high and low castes. *govikula, karāva* and *salāgama* castes were considered as the main castes, while *berava* caste occupied the 15<sup>th</sup> hierarchal position (Ryan pp. 93- 94).

*Majjima disāvē yaṭinuvara gagapaḷāta kobbēkaḍuvē palela valavuvē nohot mahavalavuvē rājapakṣa rāja karuṇā navaratna vikramasimha disānāyaka mudiyansēlāgē lokubaṅḍāra galbaḍa kidibaḍa dekōralē ātuḷuva paraṇa kuru paspalāta lābī karavana raṭē mahatmayā, visin satara kōraḷe saha sīnā kōraḷet samaga mahalekam miṭi aḷut kara liyā nima kaleya. varṣa 1888 k vu oktombra masa pahalosveni dina dīya* ( 1986 *Satarakōralē lēkam pota mahā lēkammiṭiyaj.* 13). *tammiṭagoḍa puṁcirāla vana mama ya, pinpet piṇisa livu sutraya nimi* ( 192 *Dhajajga sūtra sannaya saha pada ānuma* 6 .k. 10).

In this analysis, the names of *Walawwa, Mudiyanse, Rate Mahaththaya* and others show high caste representation. Various administrative posts during the colonial period can be found here. It is noteworthy that the names of various duties which have existed since ancient times are evident. *tennakōn mahā sēnādhipatingē muttāvāna visidāgama siṭiya suriyabaṅḍāragē kālakriyāvēdī iṭa sōkayaṭa pāmīni aya visin*

kiyāpu kavi sivupada - siddha rastu( 2023 Tuḍugala vīdāgama pāvāti baṅḍāravaliya x9).At the end of the document, the names of the colonial rulers are also shown in a very dignified manner.

E.g: *Lamkādhpati garutara govāṇidōru utumāṇana vahansē visin lōkābhivrdhhiya sadahā kolompurayehi tabā vadārana* (The Hon. Governor of the Sri Lanka)(1901 *Madhurathappakāsī - bōdhi vaṁśa sannaya* F 5) ( 1832 *Bōdhivaṁśa* p.6 ).

Significantly, honorific terms are used before the name to convey esteem, courtesy, or respect for position or rank when used in addressing or referring to a person.

Eg:*Gauravanīya ech.sī. pī bāl mahatāṅgē simhaḷa lipi karunek vu sāmīyel kīrti ratna vana mā visin kristu varuṣayen ekadās aṭasiya anuhatarak vu janavāri masa pasveni dina liyā nimakaraṇa laḍī. Anurādhapurayē dī ya.Ālagamuvē paṁsalē piṭa pataya (garutara si pi bāl mahatāṅgē lipi karunek vu sāmīyen kīrti) ( 1863 Jana vaṁśaya lōka nitiya 7.k.8).*

*Huruḷupaḷātē mahahapatāna kōralē vāgollā kaḍa paṁsalē potē piṭapatayi. Gauravanīya ec sī pī bāl komasāris unnānsēgē simhala liyannek vu yu ḍabliv ūm kīrtiratna vana mā visin kri. va ekadahāsa aṭasiya anupasveni varṣayehi apēral masa aṭaveni sadu dina divābhāgayē ekolaha pamaṇa velāvaṭa liyā nima karaṇa laḍī. ( I am WWM Keerthirathne, a Sinhala clerk of the HCP Ball Commissioner, who completed the writing on 11th April, 1895 at about 11 noon)( 1989 Sērāvila vistaraya A.Q.4 ) ( 2028 Vanni rājāvaliya A.R. 18 ).*

It is noteworthy that many poets write their names at the end of their work. Here the poet mentions his name as Dr Don Mathes.

*In navas devkalā puḷuḷura maḍala nopamanavī pasa nnē*

*nan yasas āti mudalinhaṭa mekī kiyu kavi oppu den nē*

*pini usas oba depaya mula vāsa rūukena vāḍa karagana niti nnē*

*Bon Matesveda āduru nam yaṭat kīkaru mamāyi da nnē* (Written in 1871 .11.4 ( 228 Sethkavi Asna 69.1.4 ).

#### V. ADVISORY STATEMENT

Some authors prefer to note any instructional material at the end of their work. This is often seen in works written with religious intentions. Many poets, in particular, incorporated greetings and admonitions into their works(Goḍakumbura p. 233).

*Ebāvin pinvat satvayehi topa hāma visinidu eparidden hāmakalhi akusal nokoṭa matu svarga mōkṣa sampatti pratilābhaya kala mānavi. (Therefore, you men, do not disobey, but attain the divine and nibbāna in the next birth) ( 1654 Saddharmālamkāraya 85 - J.9 ).*

*mesē utkrṣṭa vu puṇya kṣetrayaṭa pāmīni kalhi tamāṭa dandīma nisā jīvītaṭa vināsayak pāmīnetat nuvaṅṅāttāvu pasunobāsa dandennāhu veti. ē paridden asā data yuttē ya( 900 daham guṇa 85 -B6 ) ( 918 dāna paricechdaya 616)." (When they come to this noble charitable field, they find themselves in a state of disaster, but wise personel do not give up. It should be heard and be convinced).*

*Minis lova raja bamuṇu velada govī yana satara vaṁśayehi ipāda sāpa vidinā kāmāti satpuruṣayō bohō sampattīn yukta vu raṭādanavuvāla ipāda suva vidinā kāmātiyā nam pānātipāta adattādāna kāmamithyācārya musāvāda surāpāna yanādi vu siyalū pavu durukoṭa pinrāuskoṭa devuloḷa baṁbalova s āpatvida amāmaha nivan dakinṭa utsahākaḷa mānavi. ( usas kulavala utpattīya lābimaṭa kāmāti nam paṁsil ārakṣā kala yutu yi(1994 Milidu Tarkaya).If one wishes to be born in higher castes, he should protect five precepts)*

*ādara bahumāna bhaktiprema upadavā nokodurā notannā anyavihita nova avikṣipta cittasantānāyēn yuktaḷa dharmāśravaṇaya kala mānavi. (manā sihikalpanāven yuktaḷa ma dharmā śravaṇaya kala yutu yi) (May the Dhamma of the Most Merciful devotees of the Dhamma be invoked without any alienation, but with discernment (Listen to the Dhamma with great care and consciousness?)*

Most poets end their work in a way that generates some suggestive thought.

Eg: *mekiyana lesaṭa pāvātilā siṭapa llā  
sakiyena mebas muduṇen gena piḷiga llā  
ratiya kavaṭa bas pamaṇak nokiya llā  
bātiyen bāla ōvādē dānaga llā ( 787 bālovādaya A.G 7 ).*

(Accept these admonitions without saying anything that will cause you to commit adultery)

The creator of the Matalan story is presented in a manner that highlights the concept of ‘karma’ found in traditional Sinhala Buddhist society.

*vanda maṭa koyida aru baḍa ---- ven dā  
duk vi`da daruvan kumaṭa vādi ndā  
pera akusal mama mehema kale ndā  
ada medukin kelesaka ivasa ndā ( 2231 Mātalan Kathāva 57. A.13 ).*

We are suffering today because of the disgrace of the previous saṁsāra.The first stanza of the following poem denotes that the villagers believe that God will protect them by doing deeds.

*visiek kavipada api datva navā  
adama vas āru damī matu rūukadena vā  
raṣṣākara api pinaṭa harina vā  
pināti devi apa pinaṭa harina vā( 2242 Nāmal Kumaru Upata 82- G .5) .*



The author of *Lōvādasagarāva*, a poetry book says that obtaining a human soul is a very rare thing and is constantly worshipping the Buddha.

*i`dina siṭina yana ena sata pennā tā na*  
*karana diriya noharina siradu me na*  
*vaḍana viriya atbava lada sāma tā na*  
*savana budun mam namadim mudune na( 2220*  
*Lōvādasagarāva,I L 5).*

## VI. CONCLUSION

In this research, it was found that colophons disclose various social and religious factors in Ceylon's history, the social stratification, like the cast system in the traditional Sri Lankan society; the names of Walawwa, Mudiyanse, Rate Mahaththaya and other high caste representation. Details of various administrative posts during the colonial period in Sri Lankan society (Then Ceylon) can be found. It is noteworthy that the names of various duties which have existed since ancient times are clearly evident. In the past, the time period, clan, caste, the names of those who served in the administrative services during the colonial period, provincial and local evidence in Sri Lanka are clearly manifested. Hence; colophons could be read as a historical depiction and social reporting.

The linguistic factors like the contacts and the influence of other regional languages like 'Pāli' and 'Sanskrit' are revealed which should be researched further with the etymology of Sinhala language and Sinhala grammatical structures.

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- [4] ( 875 *butsaraṇa 6. B.3*).
- [5] (*1874 kaḍayim pota - sirilaka kaḍayim pota-22.Q.15*).
- [6] ( 292 *sāleyya sūtra nidāna pāṭhavarṇanā va.6*).
- [7] (*nettipakarāna nettiḡandha (p.9)*).
- [8] ( 2070 *dhātu pāṭhaya Y11* ).
- [9] (*551 sāma jātakaya 85- K. 19*).
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- [12] (*1537 Teruvan lakara 69 -1-5 )* .
- [13] ( 2150 *sidat saṅgarāva A.H.2*).
- [14] ( 1079 *kosambāvata nima 6.D 3* )
- [15] (*126 āvisopama sutta 85 k 1*).
- [16] (*114 ālavaka sūtra nidāna pāṭha varṇanāvava.6*).
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