

A historical review about the battle skills that the early Sinhalese used, with special reference to Mahāwamsa

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Abstract

In the long history of more than two-thousand-five-hundred years many foreign invasions and local invasions have taken place. Also, to retaliate these invasions, Lankan kings had taken well calculated decisions which were evident in their remarkable battle skills. King Vijaya (543-504 B.C.) had to do take decisions that included total discretion fight off the invasions and stabilize the island. King Pandukābhaya(474 – 367 BC) fought against his uncles using a special plan. King Kāwantissa (205–161 B.C.) had a great reputation for being the first king who had prepared an army to face their enemies. He took several steps for protection against the Tamils. King Duttagāmini(161-137 BC), apart from using the army personnel, has used Buddhist monks in the battle front. Also, the most significant factor is, Lankan kings had not used defensive strategies when compared to foreign invaders.

It is therefore, very important to study about how the early Sinhalese were keen to use battle skills. So I intend to do a historical review with textual analysis, in the Anurādhapura and Polonnaruwa periods, with special reference to the Mahāwamsa I, II and the Mahāwamsatīkā.

Keywords: Mahāwamsa, Mahāwamsatīkāwa, Battle Skills