

## Rājovāda : An Admonition to a King

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Samatthe dhammakathike vicāretvā nimantiya  
Rājovādādi saddhamme sunanto so punappunam

(King Kirtti Śrī Rājasimha), sought out from among those . . . the appropriate preachers, invited them and listened ever and again to the *Rājovāda* and other portions of the sacred scriptures.<sup>1</sup>

In commenting on the above statement of the *Cūlavamsa* (*Cv.*) that King Kirtti Śrī Rājasimha (1747-1782 A.D.) listened to a learned discourse on duties of kingship, W. Geiger, in a footnote says<sup>2</sup> that the *Rājovāda* mentioned therein could be the *Rājavagga* of the *Anguttara Nikāya* (III, 147ff). A treatise named *Rājovāda-vatthu* is mentioned<sup>3</sup> by M. H. Bode as having been compiled by Nānābhivāsa Saṅgharāja of Burma sometime after 2326 B.E. (1782/3 A.D.). Very little is known of either the *Rājovāda* or the *Rājovāda-vatthu* of Ceylonese and Burmese traditions. From the title of the works it appears probable that the subject matter of these documents was related to duties of kingship or admonitions to kings on matters connected with statecraft.

Among the ola manuscripts preserved in Sir D. B. Jayatilaka Memorial Library, Y.M.B.A., Colombo, the one marked 17-2882 contains, among several others, a document written in the Pali language with a paraphrase in Sinhalese, containing as its subject matter *Rājovāda* (Admonition to King). The manuscript belonged to the collection of the late Sir D. B. Jayatilaka and so far as I am aware, it has not been published in any work known to me. It measures 14" × 2" and consists of 46 leaves of writing. The *Rājovāda* is confined to 16 leaves of writing (fifteen of which occupy both sides) and the sixteenth confined to the obverse only. In the sequel I propose to give a brief outline of its contents as they may be of interest to historians and others interested in the cultural, economic and political aspects of that particular period of Ceylon History.

1. *Cv.*, (Trans.) W. Geiger, Colombo, 1953 (Vol. II), p. 270 *Ūnapūraṇa sahitō Mahāvamsō*, ed. A. P. Buddhadatta-thera, 1953, p. 614.

2. *Cv.*, p. 270, n. 1.

3. M. H. Bode, *The Pali Literature of Burma*, London, 1909, p. 78.