

Judicial Administration System in Ancient Sri Lanka: A Review of Primary Sources

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The Administration of the Justice is one of the major features of a modern state. Generally, at present the ordinary people understand the power of the state through the power of the court system in a country. The court is obviously the majestic symbol of the power of the state. According to the primary sources, there was a well established judicial system in Sri Lanka as well as in South Asian region.

The central objective of this paper is to identify and analyze the significant features of the judicial administrative system in ancient Sri Lanka and Indian sub continent. In South Asia as well as in Europe the administration of justice was not a crucial part of the state's agenda in early times. But *Kautilya's Arthashastra* shows that since 4th century B.C. there were formal judicial organizations. The *Dharmashastra* and *Nitishastra* literature also confirmed it. The *Mahavamsa*, the great chronicle of Sri Lanka also reveals more important facts about this subject. Inscriptions too, give data about the judicial administrative system of South Asian region.

The research methodology used in this paper is observing the primary sources to understand the judicial administrative system in this region. Finally the findings of the research will show the fundamental principles followed by South Asian regional jurisprudence are similar to the modern principles of the subject. Some of those are as follows:

1. The king's power was controlled by the judicial system
2. The delay of the laws` was condemned
3. There was a jury system consisting of learned and impartial men
4. Accused was normally entitled to the benefit of doubts.

Key words: *judicial administrative system, South Asian region, primary sources, jury.*