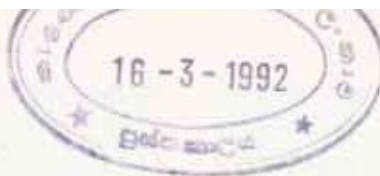


The Kiri Oya Valley

ANURA MANATUNGA



The Kiri Oya is a small stream about 30km long which springs from Nuvaragal-kanda of the Alahara mountains, and flows to the Minneri-vava. The area under survey is within the Kiri Oya basin from Nagolla-vava up to its confluence with the Pihimbi-ala. This survey is mainly confined to the west bank of the Kiri Oya and its tributaries which flow across the western plain. The eastern side of the stream has not been subjected to a close study due to the difficult terrain, which includes mountains and dense forest.

The Kiri Oya flows roughly from north to south within the study area. It flows through a mountainous valley for a distance of approximately 5km till it reaches the Vavala-vava. From there it flows through flat land fed by its main tributaries: the Kosgaha-ala (south), the Dehigaha-ala, the Makarayavalaulpota-ala, the Kosgaha-ala (north) and the Pihimbi-ala from the western plain, and the Dalukgaha-ala from the eastern mountains.

The western plain of the Kiri Oya valley lies about 600 - 700m above sea level and is undulating terrain. The main geomorphological feature of this plain is the Gallinda kanda which rises about 200m from the surrounding plains and spreads over a distance of 3km parallel to the stream in the northern section of the study area. The other distinguishing feature of the area is an outcrop of isolated hills that lie close to the stream.

The flood basin of the river on its eastern side is much narrower than on the west, because the Konduruvava mountain range abuts its banks. This mountain range is the boundary between two major geographical zones of Sri Lanka: the Anuradhapura peneplain and the Polonnaruva peneplain (Erb 1970). The Konduruvava mountain range breaks at two points within the study area opening passes between these two peneplains, one between Peikkulama and Migasvava and the other between Dikkanda-ala and Ihakuluvava. These two passes have been long used as access paths from the Sigiriya region of the Anuradhapura peneplain to the Alahara-Minneriya region of the Polonnaruva peneplain.

A band of crystalline limestone which is about 3500m wide is the main rock formation of the western plain. The eastern mountains are mainly made up of charnockite rock. Several places, specially at the banks of the Kiri Oya, show the presence of quartzite (Vitanage, 1958).

Climatically, the Kiri Oya valley belongs to the Dry Zone, which receives an annual average rainfall of

165cm. The main source of rainfall is the northeast monsoon, which blows roughly from mid-October to mid-February. The average temperature of the area is about 80°F (Vitanage 1958; Perera 1984).

The western plain is mainly scrubland, with species of dry lowland tree types. These scrublands have been denuded through the years by *chena* cultivators who adopt the 'slash-and-burn' method of land-clearing for subsistence agriculture. The upper reaches of the Kiri Oya, the Konduruvava mountains and some of their valleys are covered with dense wet deciduous forest. But some of the inter-mont valleys and the low lying areas between the river and the foothills are covered with *patana* grasslands. During the last two or three decades, squatters have cleared and cultivated the banks of the Kiri Oya at several points between Nagolla-vava and Peikkulama.

The history of the study area goes back at least to the formative period of Sri Lankan civilization in the early Anuradhapura period, i.e. circa 3rd century BC - 1st century AC. The two rock-shelters with early Brahmi inscriptions at the Vavala monastery (site 22) indicate clearly that it was a Buddhist monastic settlement belonging to the early historic period (Ranawella 1984: 210-211). The rock-shelter sites at Alakolavava (site 21), Dehigaha-alakanda (site 14), and Gallindakanda (site 38) might have belonged also to the same period. The presence of several rock-shelters with early Brahmi inscriptions at Sigiriya, Pidurangala and Kaludiyapokuna, just off the Kiri Oya valley, stands as evidence that the region was inhabited in the early Anuradhapura period (Ranawella 1984: 198-218).

One of the earliest tanks, Suratissavapi, built by King Saddhatissa (137-119 BC), seems to be located in or around the Kiri Oya valley (Nicholas 1963: 182). It has not yet been precisely identified. The monastery known as Dakkhinagiri vehera, also built by King Saddhatissa is identified as the monastery at Kaludiyapokuna (Paranavitana 1932: 257). The gigantic Minneri-vava, built by King Mahasen (274-301 AC), spreads across the Kiri Oya at some distance down-stream of the survey area. Legends assign the abandoned channel known as Kappu-ala, flowing from Vavala towards Sigiriya, and all the tanks around the Kiri Oya to King Mahasen (Fernando 1914: 71). Today King Mahasen is worshipped as a god, known as Minneri Deviyo, and there are two *devalas* in the area consecrated to him at Diyakapilla and Gallinda.

An inscription by King Kitsirimevan (301-328 AC), son and successor of King Mahasen, has been found at the Vavala monastery. The subject of the inscription is a grant to the monastery of a paddy field, and the benefits from taxes from a tank. We could conjecture that the tank referred to in the inscription is the Vavala-vava, which spreads across the Kiri Oya, close to the monastery.

The emergence of Sigiriya as the capital city in the time of King Kasyapa I (477-495 AC) must have greatly affected this region. The Kiri Oya is only about 10km east of Sigiriya and most of the sites in the Kiri Oya valley can be observed from the summit of the Sigiriya Rock. However, the inter-connection between the capital city and the neighbouring river valley is not yet properly established. It is known that limestone for construction work at Sigiriya was transported from the Diyakapilla, Illukvava, and Gallinda areas of the Kiri Oya valley. It can also be assumed with a degree of certainty that the road linking Sigiriya with Polonnaruva and Rohana traverses through the study area across the Kiri Oya.

In King Kasyapa's time, a powerful individual named Dathapabhuti of the Lambakarna clan, who had been in the service of the King, had 'in ill-humour betaken himself to Meraliyavagga and dwelt there' (cv 39, 44-46). Hereafter, this area is mentioned several times as having been the refuge of dethroned kings and heirs to the throne and other individuals who fell foul of the reigning monarchs. Meraliyavagga, also known as Merukandara Rata or Merukandara Malaya Rata, is identified as the mountainous area including the upper Kiri Oya valley (Nicholas 1963: 111). Hence, it can be questioned whether the whole Kiri Oya valley ever came under the sway of King Kasyapa even though it lies in close proximity to Sigiriya.

Some of the structural remains at the Kiri Oya valley sites show that they could belong to the late Anuradhapura period i.e. post 5th century AC. The ruins at Nuvaragala Kanda (site 57) could belong to the type of forest monasteries that flourished in the late Anuradhapura period (Bandaranayake 1974: 118-119). The remains at site 17, Dehigaha-alakanda, seem to belong to a *Pabbata vihara* that also flourished in the same period. The monastic remains at Gallindakanda (site 38), may be identified as the Veluvana vihara that was built by King Aggabodhi II (604-614 AC) for the Sagaliya Nikaya (cv 42.43). From descriptions given in the Culavamsa, we can accept that the Veluvana vihara was located between Sigiriya and Minneriya. And the term 'Veluvana vihara' means 'the monastery of the bamboo forest'. That Gallindakanda is situated between

Sigiriya and Minneriya and is covered with a bamboo forest may not be co-incidental. King Jetthatissa (628 AC) had given an area called Kukkulavitti to the Veluvana vihara (cv. 44.49). The sense of the term Kukkulavitti seems to be conveyed in the words 'kukurumahangodavala kandattaluma' the present name of the site at Gallindakanda. *Kukkula* and *kukuru*, the first parts of the two words seem to be similar in sound and somewhat close in meaning, while both *vitti* and *kadattaluma* mean, 'a pass'. The present ruins are at the pass that must have been used to cross Gallindakanda to go towards Minneriya from Sigiriya.

At KO. 34 near Peikkulama there is a badly weathered inscription, with only a few letters remaining here and there, which can be palaeographically assigned to the sixth or seventh century. A partly worn *attani pillar* inscription belonging to the period of King Udaya II was found at the Peikkulama tank bund. Both these inscriptions are not of much help in identifying the events of history, but they prove that there had been activity in this area in the period to which they belong.

The first Sinhala King at Polonnaruva, Vijayabahu I (1055-1110 AC) gave Merukandara Rata to Prince Veravamma when the prince married his daughter Yasodhara (cv. 59.27). The place called Vapivatata in the Merukandara Rata could be identified with a high degree of probability as the place presently known as Vavala (Nicholas 1963: 111). It is also mentioned as the place to which Prince Parakramabahu sent his commander, Rakkha, with his troops to prepare for fighting against Prince Gajabahu of Polonnaruva.

Some other places mentioned in the Culavamsa in connection with Prince Parakramabahu's wars, could be identified as having been in the locality of the Kiri Oya. The oft-mentioned Galkanda, Galkadulla or Silakanda, which means 'the rocky mountain' is suggested by Codrington to be the Konduruva mountain (Codrington 1922: 69). This mountain seems to have been the boundary between the domains of Polonnaruva and Dakkhinadesa before they were united by King Parakramabahu. The place called Porogahaalikada might be located near this boundary, since it is mentioned that Prince Parakramabahu, washed his bloodstained sword and rested there before entering the place called Janapada in Polonnaruva, which was in Prince Gajabahu's domain.

The Culavamsa refers to Demalianga and Opanamika, the two places that Prince Parakramabahu is said to have reached when he returned after a night's journey from the palace of Prince Gajabahu of Polonnaruva, seem to be located close to the Kiri Oya valley. According to Nicholas' identification the place called

Kayanagama was at Peikkulama-vavala within the Kiri Oya valley. He suggests that the place called Vikramapura should also have been located near the Nuvaragala Kanda (Nicholas 1963: 112, 113). Both these places have been mentioned as the scenes of battle in the wars of Prince Parakramabahu against Prince Gajabahu of Polonnaruva.

The collapse of Polonnaruva and the shifting of the kingdom to Mayarata in the 13th century seems to have been a major catastrophe to the advanced settlements in the area around Anuradhapura, Polonnaruva, and Sigiriya within Rajarata. Most of the settlements in the Kiri Oya valley would have been abandoned and the forest grown over after the 13th century evacuation. Textual, epigraphical, and structural evidence remain silent about the region from the 13th century until the 17th century i.e. the beginning of the Kandyan period. However, it is not clear whether the whole area was abandoned, or whether some settlements did exist as small hamlets during this period.

Even in the Kandyan period, the settlements in the Kiri Oya valley do not seem to have been as advanced as those of the Anuradhapura and Polonnaruva periods. The Kiri Oya valley was not in close proximity to the city of Kandy. Further it was situated in the Dry Zone, which was not developed in the Kandyan period, although at that time, the trunk route linking the capital city of Kandy, and the eastern port of Trincomalee, passed through the Kiri Oya valley crossing it at Peikkulama. Travellers have described this part of the road as 'a forest area' and Peikkulama is mentioned as an important halting place between Nalanda and Minneriya.

Pybus, the first English ambassador to Kandy, who used the road in 1695, mentions the Kiri Oya as 'Pal Aru', the direct Tamil translation of 'Kiri Oya' which means 'the milk stream' (Pybus 1958: 41). The second English ambassador to Kandy, John Andrews, who visited Kandy in 1795 and 1796, says that there was no water on the first 14 miles from Minneriya until they met 'a running stream of clear good water' which can be identified as the Kiri Oya at Peikkulama (Lewis 1917: 66). John Davy who visited Trincomalee from Kandy in 1817 mentions that 'there were only three inhabited spots, Gonava, Nayakumbura and Peikkulama between Nalanda and Minneriya'. He further says that 'each of these has a little paddy ground that affords crops annually, and is the chief support of the few families whom ties of nativity still bind to these little enviable spots' (Davy 1821: 285).

The Almanac for 1817 says 'Peikkulama was deserted many years ago on account of its insalubrity' (Jevors

1899: 202:203). In 1818, at the time of the great Kandyan rebellion a British detachment led by Capt. Philip de Latre was attacked by the Kandyans led by Pilimatalava at the Kiri Oya, probably near Peikkulama (Pieris 1950: 251).

Major Forbes, who is known as the first to record the ruins at Sigiriya, mentions that he halted at the post-houses of Nayakumbura, Gonava and Peikkulama, when he visited Polonnaruva from Kandy (Forbes 1840:394). Since, he says, Nayakumbura was the only village in 'a damp and dreary jungle at this part of the road', it can be believed that there were no settlements even at Peikkulama by that time.

After 1833, when the new cart-road was made to Trincomalee, the old road via Peikkulama was neglected. However, even after 1833, some travellers have gone via Peikkulama to Minneriya (Tennent 1860; Brohier 1934: 28-33). We do not know whether they used the old road or took some other way. Today, there are two footpaths from Peikkulama towards Minneriya. One is via Migasvava and the other is via Dikkanda-ala. These two roads have been in existence at least since the late 19th century. They are indicated in the early topographical maps prepared in 1897 (Grinlinton 1898: map).

Peikkulama is not inhabited today, nor has it been populated within living memory. Dikkanada-ala was populated by a few families until they re-settled in new colonies at Kondurava in the 1930's (Samaranayake 1982). Today, there are five *purana* villages, namely Gallinda, Illukvava, Diyakapilla, Kosgaha-ala and Alakolavava in the Kiri Oya valley. Gallinda, the village at the northern end of the study area, is very important in an ethnological sense, as it is a *Vadda* village (Seligmann 1911). Gallinda was the home of 60 *Vaddas* in 1891, but it was totally deserted by 1931 (Brow 1978:201). Today there is one *Vadda* family who according to them are the sole survivors of the three *Vadda* families who migrated to this village about fifty years ago from Rotavava, another *Vadda* village near Minneriya. The present *Vadda* family who are the only inhabitants of Gallinda village carry on the traditional ritual duties at the *devale* of the village.

All the other *purana* villages are occupied by the lower ranks among the *Govigama* people. These villages have been changing through the last two decades but still retain many of their primitive characteristics. They are situated in the scrubland linked with each other only by gravel roads and footpaths. Other than these *purana* villages, there are two other new settlements at Vavala and Mailattava established about 20 and 10 years ago respectively, and settled with people brought from outside the region.

Method of Survey

The preliminary work on the sites included interviews with the villagers. This entailed walking through the territory under survey along the banks of the Kiri Oya and its tributaries. Talking to the residents was useful as their knowledge was helpful in locating sites. The numbering of the sites was done according to the sequence in which they were found. The sites were located with the help of the Survey Department topographical maps and aerial photographs. Random sampling was done at the sites, and photographs were taken of general views of each area.

Characteristics and classification of sites

The identifying of sites was based on the presence of a fair quantity of potsherds, iron slags, stone work, brickbats, rubble, drip-ledge shelters, and inscriptions. Of the 58 sites thus identified, 50 of them were not known before the survey. While some of the sites seem to have been used for several purposes, or have changed their purpose from time to time, others could be categorised as settlement sites, monastic sites, iron production sites etc. according to artefacts found.

An overall view of the site plan suggests that the main factor determining the location of sites was the availability of water. Almost all the sites are located close to a perennial stream or spring. Another feature is the location of some sites at the confluence of the tributaries with the main river. It is also significant that each of the major pottery sites was located in close proximity to a tank or a stream. This feature common to the existing *purana* villages points to the fact the settlement sites that survived over a long period of time were those associated with tanks. It is remarkable that the network of footpaths that link the existing *purana* villages pass through most of the sites identified. It is quite possible that many of these link-paths would have been in existence at the time when the now extinct settlements were peopled.

Monastic sites were generally located on barren ridges of fairly high elevation. This enabled a view of the surrounding area and settlements. The larger monastic sites were situated close to one or more large settlement site, indicating that the more prosperous settlements could maintain a large monastery.

The iron slag sites provide evidence that the Kiri Oya valley settlements were once highly-developed in large-scale production of iron. In the Kandyan period and the colonial period, i.e. post 16th century, such sites are not evident. So the sites identified would have belonged to the Anuradhapura or Polonnaruwa periods.

Cursory observation of pottery samples also indicate that they most likely have belonged to these two periods.

SITE CLUSTERS

After the site map was plotted it was clearly seen that the sites identified were in close proximity to each other in groups or clusters. So, to facilitate study the Kiri Oya sites (KO) were divided into eight clusters from south to north viz.

1. Vavala cluster
2. South Kosgaha-ala cluster
3. Dehigaha-ala cluster
4. Peikkulama cluster
5. North Kosgaha-ala cluster
6. Diyakapilla cluster
7. Illukvava cluster and
8. Galinda cluster

A few sites did not fall into any particular cluster and they were dealt with individually or described along with the nearest.

Vavala cluster

The Vavala cluster contains eight sites including two monastic sites (KO. 8, 22), two large settlement sites (KO 52, 53) and one large iron production site (KO 54). All these sites are located below the Vavala-vava, the largest tank in the Kiri Oya valley. The Vavala-vava, the Kiri Oya, the Kosgaha-ala, the Kappu-ala and several perennial springs keep this cluster of sites well watered. KO. 52 and 53 of the Vavala cluster are among the few major settlement sites in the Kiri Oya valley. KO. 54 is one of the major iron production sites and it is the only site where we found real iron fragments other than iron slags. KO. 22, the Vavala monastery, is the largest rock shelter site in the Kiri Oya valley.

South Kosgaha-ala cluster

Sites north of the Vavala cluster, belong to the South Kosgaha-ala cluster. It contains seven sites, which include four pottery sites (KO. 1, 2, 3, & 5), two iron slag sites (KO. 4 & 7) and one rock-shelter site (KO. 21) but none of them can be classified as large or major sites. These sites are distributed southwards from the Kosgaha-ala which is the only perennial tributary to feed the Kiri Oya. KO. 4, one of the iron slag sites of this cluster, contains a flat rock with 'conical holes' which is interpreted as having been associated with the iron production site (Mogren, above. cf. Parker 1909 : 221-234). On a small hill close to the other iron slag site (KO. 7) there is a flight of quartzite steps leading to the hilltop. The site KO. 6, southeast of this cluster, is an interesting site rather isolated at a glade valley which goes into the Konduruvava ridges east of the Kiri Oya.

Dehigaha-ala cluster

This cluster is formed along the Dehigaha-ala tributary that joins the Kiri Oya about 1 km north of the South Kosgaha-ala confluence. Among the sites of this cluster, two sites KO. 14 and 17 found on the low mountain ridge called Dehigaha-ala kanda near the Dehigaha-ala confluence are significant.

KO. 14 is a monastic site with four rock-shelters belonging to one phase of its existence. It also shows evidence of having been used for secular purposes as a large-scale iron production centre. KO. 17 is also a monastic site with ruins of some free-standing buildings. It seems to be a *Pabbata vihara* that belongs to the late Anuradhapura period. It can be assumed that KO. 14, the earlier monastic site, would have shifted to KO. 17 when that monastery was taken over for the purpose of iron production.

Alakolavava village is upstream of the Dehigaha-ala tributary and surrounded by some sites and four ancient tanks. The rock-shelter (KO. 21), assigned to the South Kosgaha-ala cluster, has been used by the people of this village in the Kandyan period and in later times too, as their village temple.

Peikkulama cluster

Sites located between the Makarayavalulpota-ala and Peikkulama tank have been considered as another cluster of sites viz. the Peikkulama cluster. At one of the largest settlement sites, Idallavala (KO. 20), located at the west bank of the Peikkulama tank (KO. 58) is a badly eroded inscription. A quarry site, a probable brick kiln and a few other pottery sites are also included in this cluster.

The Kiri Oya flows through a barren gorge between Peikkulama and North Kosgaha-ala village. No sites were seen in this part of the Kiri Oya valley. This may be due to the barrenness and inadequacy of land space available for a settlement to develop. There is yet another, broader valley east of the Kiri Oya and the adjacent mountain ridge towards the north of Kosgaha-ala village. This valley was also inspected, but no sites were found except for KO. 36 close to the North Kosgaha-ala village. This was perhaps due to the lack of permanent water in this valley. However, the ancient route from Peikkulama to Minneriya via Dikkanda-ala may have been through this valley.

North Kosgaha-ala cluster

This cluster of sites is formed around the Kosgaha-ala village that is close to the North Kosgaha-ala confluence. The village is remote and isolated, with only six inter-related families living there. The tank called the Vannigamaya-vava lies above the village, supplying water to the paddy fields spread between the tank and the Kiri Oya.

Among the sites of the North Kosgaha-ala cluster, KO. 26 is the most interesting. It has a few mounds associated with a large quantity of iron slags and a few brickbats. The site to the east of Kiri Oya (KO. 36) is also an important site since it is on the Peikkulama-Minneriya route.

There is a very large settlement site about 2 km downstream from the North Kosgaha-ala confluence at Dikkanda-ala (KO. 29). This site seems an isolated site, since it is located rather off the North Kosgaha-ala cluster and there are no other sites located in the vicinity.

The area between Dikkanda-ala and the Pihimbi-ala confluence was not investigated due to the thick jungle and lack of time. This part of the Kiri Oya and the valley which goes eastwards through the mountains at Dikkanda-ala are worth investigating even in the next season.

Diyakapilla cluster

This cluster of sites is formed along the Diyakapilla-ala (upper reaches of the North Kosgaha-ala), and its branches, above Vannigamaya-vava, around Diyakapilla village. This village is an existing *purana* village, with about 30 families resident. There is a *devale* consecrated to Minneri Deviyo (God Minneri) at this village. The present building is a recent construction of wattle and daub. There must have been a long association between the village and the *devale* since the name of the village relates to rituals of this *devale*.

Among the sites, KO. 32 at Diyakapilla village is significant because a terracotta figurine of a primitive type was discovered here. KO. 24, is also notable as it is a ruined monastic site.

Illukvava cluster

This cluster of sites is north of Diyakapilla and on the plain west of Gallinda Kanda. The Pihimbi-ala rises on the western slope of Gallinda Kanda and flows through this plain to join the Kiri Oya. The inhabitants of the *purana* village at Illukvava, have been resettled in a remodelled village at a new site, but the '*purana gammandiya*' still remains where the village originally stood. There are four ancient tanks around this village, two of them still in use, while the other two are abandoned. An interesting terracotta site below one of the tanks (KO. 44) had been found by accident when earth was removed for the renovation of the bund in 1957 (Deraniyagala 1957). There are two large settlement sites (KO. 42 & 43), on either side of the Pihimbi-ala close to the tanks. The site at Gallinda Kanda (KO. 38) is a large monastery site which may have been the main ritual centre of this cluster of sites and perhaps of the North Kosgaha-ala and Gallinda clusters too.

The Pihimbi-ala below Illukvava could not be inspected due to the thick scrub and the wild elephants

සමස්තයක්

ම. ලේඛන ප්‍රකාශන (වි. ඊ. කේ. ඊ.)

ම. ලේඛන,

that frequent the area. However, two more sites (KO. 40 & 47) off Illukvava, along the Pihimbi-ala were found. One of them is below Gallinda-maha-vava (KO. 40) and the other is near the confluence of the Pihimbi-ala and the Kiri Oya.

Gallinda cluster

This cluster of sites is located around the Gallinda village, north of the Illukvava cluster. This village is the only *Vadda* village in the Sigiriya-Dambulla region (Seligmann 1911). At the beginning of this century there had been three families resident here (Ibid). Today this village has only one family. This family continues to conduct the rituals to God Minneri at the village *devale*. The present *devale* is a recently made wattle and daub shrine. But its wooden carved door frame appears to be a work of art of the Kandyan period.

There is a perennial spring rising from the limestone bed at Gallinda. The name Gallinda, which means 'stone well', is also derived from this spring. There is a small pottery site (KO. 39) bordering this spring. Of the other two sites, one is a small monastery (KO. 46) and the other, Veheragodalla (KO. 45) is difficult to categorise. It has some heaps of limestone rubble lying on a hill northwest of the Gallinda spring.

Site description

A brief description of each site found in the Kiri Oya valley is presented below. This description is inadequate, but as the main concern for this season was to plot the sites, details were collected only to identify them. Hence, their size and dimensions, the catchment areas, inter-connections between sites and the problems of chronological order are not dealt with.

KO. 1: Is located at the western bank of the South Kosgaha-ala, south west of its confluence with the Kiri Oya. Potsherds and a few brickbats were found scattered at the site. Most of them had been unearthed when tilling for cultivation.

KO. 2: On the same bank of the south Kosgaha-ala, south of site 1. Only a few potsherds were present. Most of them were at spots where the soil had eroded.

KO. 3: East bank of the South Kosgaha-ala further to the south of KO 2. Only a few potsherds were seen.

KO. 4: West bank of the south Kosgaha-ala, upstream of site 3.

A considerable number of potsherds and iron slags were scattered around. A flat rock with six 'conical holes' can be seen at this site.

KO. 5: West bank of the South Kosgaha-ala, north of KO. 4. It is directly opposite KO. 3 on the eastern bank. Some potsherds were to be seen.

KO. 6: Open savanna valley, surrounded by thick

forest, east of the Kiri Oya. Potsherds were scattered over a large area, but they were not very numerous. A small tributary flows along this valley to join the Kiri Oya. At this site there is a perennial spring in the river bed.

KO. 7: Located between the South Kosgaha-ala and the Kiri Oya. Iron slags were heaped at three places at this site. This may have been done by the present-day farmers. A few potsherds were also to be seen. There is a small hill east of the site. It is surrounded by terraces and there were three dressed quartzite stones, which may have been steps of a ruined building probably situated at the top of the hill.

KO. 8: Vahakotteyaya, at the eastern bank of the Kiri Oya, about 200m below Vavala-vava. Pillars of an old building were found. There were also brickbats and tile pieces. A few potsherds were also seen here and there. Finds indicate that it had been a Buddhist monastery.

KO. 9: Eastern bank of the Kiri Oya, north of KO. 8. The site is surrounded by the Kiri Oya and its tributary. A few potsherds appeared where the eroded earth slopes towards the streams.

KO. 10: South of Nagolla-vava, the southern most site visited. There is a pillared building which looks like a ruined monastery. A considerable number of tile pieces, and a few potsherds were scattered around the pillars.

KO. 11: East of the Kiri Oya at the Kosgaha-ala confluence. The site is demarcated on three sides by the meandering Oya and on the other side by the foot of the mountains. The site appears to be inundated by the flood waters of the Oya in the rainy seasons. Potsherds were scattered here and there at the site. Only one piece of iron slag was to be seen.

KO. 12: Between the Dehigaha-ala and Kiri Oya at the Dehigaha-ala confluence. The land is an abandoned paddy field now covered with scrub. A collection of large blocks of iron slags could be seen at the site. A few potsherds were also scattered about.

KO. 13: The eastern bank of the Dehigaha-ala, southwest of site KO. 12. Dehigaha-ala has a few springs near the site. A small brook joins it at a point close to the site. A few potsherds and a piece of iron slag were found.

KO. 14: Site in the southern part of the Dehigahaala-Kanda, which is just north of the Dehigaha-ala tributary. The presence of four dripledged rock-shelters shows the site to have been an early Buddhist monastic centre. One of the caves contains a series of mortices or postholes which indicate a plan of a wooden platform. Another cave has lime plaster remains on its roof. Potsherds were found at these three rock shelters. A flat boulder west of these rockshelters has six 'conical holes'

arranged as at KO. 4. A large number of potsherds were spread on this boulder and the surrounding area.

Further west, there is a large mound of earth mixed with charcoal and ash. Several heaps of large iron slag blocks were associated with this mound. Hence the site seems to have been converted to an iron production centre at some phase or other. A depression in the earth, similar to a pond is seen between the mound and the boulders on the east. A ridge of earth which resembles a rampart, is seen at the south, towards the Dehigaha-ala tributary. If it is in fact a rampart, it can be assumed that the site was fortified at one time in history. When considering the production of iron and the presence of the rampart, it can be assumed that the site was used as a fortification as well, since it is naturally suited for such a purpose (see Manjusri 1989).

KO. 15: At the eastern bank of the Kiri Oya near the Dehigaha-ala confluence. Potsherds and one or two pieces of iron slag could be seen. KO. 51 is on the same stretch of land as this site further down stream.

KO. 16: West bank of the Kiri Oya and south of Makarayavalaupotha-ala at its confluence. The site is an abandoned paddy field between the stream and the Dehigaha-ala-Kanda on its northern side. A noticeable feature of this site is several low mounds which look like collapsed huts. They may have belonged to the farmers who cultivated the paddy lands in the near past, but the potsherds scattered in the fields seem to be older.

KO. 17: Site at the northern section of the Dehigaha-ala Kanda which lies above KO. 16 Nikaatu-ala, a small dried-up tributary of the Kiri Oya from Dehigaha-ala Kanda, lies between KO. 14 and 17. The ruins at the site clearly show that it had been a Buddhist monastery belonging to the late Anuradhapura period. A moulded stone flower-altar about 335 x 140cm, with some pillars around it could be indicative of a *Bodhigaha* of the monastery. Other pillar structures, which look like ruined buildings are also seen in the vicinity. When considering the signs of a shift of purpose in the neighbouring site 14, it can be assumed that when the monastery KO. 14 was given up for an iron production centre, the religious centre was shifted to KO. 17 where it continued to function, as a shrine and dwelling place for the monks who resided there.

KO. 18: A small pottery site at Valikadayaya between the abandoned Hirivadunna-vava, and Alakola-vava, further southwest of KO. 14. A branch of the Dehigaha-ala flows by this site, but was only a dry bed at the time of the visit. Potsherds were found scattered about the site.

KO. 19: A small pottery site at Valikadayaya between

the abandoned Hirivadunna-vava and Alakola-vava further southwest of KO. 14. A branch of the Dehigaha-ala flows by this site. It was a dry stream bed at the time of visiting.

KO. 20: One of the largest pottery sites at the Kiri Oya valley, located at Idallavala on the western bank of the Peikkulama tank. Potsherds were scattered very densely on the surface, while the clay pits at the site show that there are some potsherds about 30cm below the surface. It was very interesting to see that there were some potsherds in the wattle and daub walls of a recently built hut at the site. However we could see only one piece of iron slag among the finds at the site. There are also three stone terraces, lying in a north-south direction roughly at about 20 m intervals from each other.

KO. 21: A drip-ledged rock-shelter located east of Alakolavava village, that has been registered as an 'Ancient Monument' by the Archaeology Department (Ancient Monument Register: 475). The residents of Alakolavava village say that this rock-shelter served as a temple until it fell into disuse and neglect at the beginning of this century. Unfortunately, the structural remains in the rock-shelter have been completely demolished recently by the villagers in the name of restoration. When the writer visited the site on an earlier occasion in December 1983, there were remains of wattle and daub walls which divided the rock-shelter into two compartments. The southern compartment, which is the larger one, was the shrine room of the temple. While the adjoining compartment appeared to be a dwelling place (Manatunga 1984). In the shrine room, there were remains of a pedestal or a foundation for a small statue, now missing. The two walls of the shrine room had been lime washed. Panels depicting the *Vesantara Jataka* and the *Suvisi Vivarana* adorn the walls. It is interesting that the panels of the paintings were only a few centimetres wide, and the style of the paintings showed characteristics of primitive folk art which existed in remote areas in the Kandyan period. The pigments of the paintings had peeled off and only a few patches and black outlines remain.

While the paintings of this rock-shelter belong to the Kandyan period, its history should be of much earlier date. It is situated in the same rock ridge as Vavala and Dehigaha-ala-kanda and so can be assigned to a much earlier period than the Kandyan period.

KO. 22: The monastery site at Vavala. It is situated on a rocky hill slope about 1km northwest of Vavala-vava. The monastery is a complex of six medium sized rock-shelters and some ruined buildings.

There are two early Brahmi inscriptions, and one

later Brahmi inscription, engraved in these rock-shelters. The latter has not yet been properly deciphered, but seems to belong to the period of King Kitsirimevan, on the subject of some taxes levied from a tank gifted to the monastery.

In one of the rock-shelters, a thick plaster-coated, brick and mud wall still remains. A torso of a small Buddha statue, smaller in style to those of the middle Anuradhapura period stands outside this rock-shelter. Potsherds, brickbats and tile pieces are common on the premises of these shelters.

KO. 23: A site south of Diyakapilla village and in the south bank east of the Diyakapilla-ala. The footpaths from the direction of North Kosgaha-ala and Illukvava meet at this site. An elevated earth ridge, such as a tank bund could be seen here. There were a few brickbats and pieces of iron slag associated with the elevated earth bund. This might be an indication of the presence of an abandoned tank built by damming the Diyakapilla at the site.

KO. 24: Remains of a monastery, to the north of the Diyakapilla-ala, about 150m northeast of KO. 23. There are four limestone slabs, arranged in a rectangle which might be an indication of a foundation of a building. There are also two small mounds, one short stone pillar, and a slab like a flower altar. There is a depression in the earth much like a dry pond near which a few brickbats and potsherds were also found.

A branch of the Diyakapilla-ala flows north at the site. It was dried up at the time of the visit, but there is a perennial spring known as the 'Velangaha Ulpota,' in the stream bed close to the site.

KO. 25: A site at North Kosgaha-ala village. There were potsherds at an uncultivated spot on higher ground than the surrounding paddy fields below Vannigamaya-vava. Some small pieces of iron slag were found in the yard of a homestead adjoining the paddy fields.

KO. 26: A site between the paddy fields of North Kosgaha-ala village and the western bank of the Kiri Oya. Several mounds with iron slag and brickbats show with certainty that the site had been an iron production centre at one time.

KO. 27: A site at the western bank of the Kiri Oya about 200m below KO. 26. It contains a few potsherds and iron slags, specially at the eroded places near the stream.

KO. 28: A mound with several brickbats and iron slag that may indicate a collapsed iron smithy, at the northern boundary of the paddy fields at North Kosgaha-ala village. It is between the North Kosgaha-ala and the Kiri Oya, but closer to the former than the latter.

KO. 29: One of the largest settlement sites at the Kiri Oya valley located at Dikkanda-ala. Potsherds were scattered very densely between the abandoned tank of Dikkanda-ala and the eastern bank of the Kiri Oya. A few pieces of iron slag were also among the finds.

KO. 30: A small pottery site on the Diyakapilla - North Kosgaha-ala road, near Vannigamaya-vava. Potsherds appeared due to erosion caused by a water course, which flows only in the rainy seasons, when the Dehigaha-ala that crosses the footpath to Vannigamaya-vava overflows.

KO. 31: Site at Diyakapilla village. A primitive type of terracotta figurine has been found on the northern bank of the Diyakapilla-ala, when a pit was dug for clay. Potsherds could be seen on the opposite side of the tributary. There is a perennial spring, rising from the limestone bed of the tributary, at the site. So sufficient water is fed to the stream bed at this part of its course even in the dry season.

KO. 32: Ruined structure in the valley, about 1km east of Peikkulama tank. There are two boulders on either side of the pass where the valley narrows. The ruins are on the southern boulder, indicating a square terrace, surrounded by semi-dressed stone blocks which hold three stone pillars and a large collection of brickbats that would belong to a collapsed building.

At the bottom of the other boulder are found a series of mortices in a semi-circular line. These might have served as the base of brickwork of a building associated with the boulder or perhaps, a large wall built connecting the two boulders.

There is a footpath that crosses the Kondurava mountains via this valley parallel to the stream that flows along it. The remains in the valley must have been in some way connected with this road - very probably as a fort or a pass that controlled and guarded the roadway.

KO. 33: A site south of KO. 20. Potsherds are scattered over a large area, but not as densely as in KO. 20. Observation of recent disturbance to the ground at some places, indicate that there are potsherds even below the subsoil.

There is an inscribed boulder at the southern end of the ridge lying west of the site. It has been badly eroded due to recent *chena* cultivation. Only a few letters remain. This inscription is totally illegible. The characters seem to be similar to those of the 6th or 7th century script of early Sinhala.

KO. 34: Stone quarry site at the middle of the ridge lying west of KO. 33. The cut marks on the boulders, and half split stone boulders are evidence of dressing. This could have been one of the quarries that supplied

necessary material for construction of the Peikkulama tank nearby.

KO. 35: A site east of the Kiri Oya and south of Peikkulama tank. Some brickbats were scattered at the site. One of them is of unusual size and shape. Generally, the bricks here seem to be overburnt. Hence, it can be assumed that this does not belong to a regular construction, but perhaps belongs to a dismantled brick kiln.

KO. 36: The only site found between Peikkulama tank and North Kosgaha-ala village, east of the Kiri Oya and west of its adjacent mountains. The Kiri Oya is about 200m west of the site and a small tributary of the Kiri Oya runs through the site. A breach of the mountain range, close to the site forms an isolated hill and two passes towards the North Kosgaha-ala village in front of the site.

There are potsherds scattered here and there at the site. No iron slag were noticed. The site might be of importance, since it is at the road from Peikkulama to Dikkanda-ala and it is close to the junction of roads from Peikkulama, Dikkanda-ala and North Kosgaha-ala.

KO. 37: Remains of a pillared structure, most probably a monastery, east of the Pihimbi-ala at Kakunagasgodavala - Kadattalama and Ilukvava. It is a building 4 x 3m containing 6 stone pillars, about 1 m in height. Brickbats and potsherds could be seen in the vicinity. There is a large pottery site (site 43), just south of this site, and between them there is a perennial spring that feeds a brook to the Pihimbi-ala.

KO. 38: The monastic site at Kukurumahangodavala - Kadattalama at Gallinda-kanda. There is a medium sized drip-ledged rock-shelter, enclosed with plaster-coated brick walls, and surrounded by a stone terrace in front. The roof of the cave is also plaster-coated. The floor is covered with bat droppings.

There are remains of a building below the rock-shelter. It would have been a columned building since there were several stone blocks with postholes that seem to have been used as the foundations or bases for wooden posts. The brickbats scattered here and there show that bricks were also used for this structure. There are some other remains which might have belonged to a paved pathway connecting two hilltops, above the rock-shelter.

The site commands a good view of several other sites below the mountain. The footpath that is currently in use to cross the Gallinda Kanda traverses over the site. The rock-shelter faces this pathway.

KO. 39: A small pottery site, just east of the Gallinda spring. The temporary huts on the trees around the

spring are used by game hunters. This spot is known as a good hunting ground as animals often come there to drink. The spring at Gallinda is well-known since it is located in close proximity to the present motorable road from Sigiriya to Moragasvava.

KO. 40: A site below the Gallinda-maha-vava. Other than a few potsherds lying below the dam of the tank, there is a large stone slab approximately 10m long and 1m broad.

KO. 41: A site about 300m north of the Vavala monastery on the west bank of the abandoned channel. Potsherds and a few pieces of iron slag were to be seen.

KO. 42: A large pottery site at the west bank of the Pihimbi-ala, east of the Iluk-vava and south of Alut-vava at Ilukvava village. Pottery was scattered very densely at the site but only one piece of iron slag was noticed. A piece of brownish chert which might be a waste particle off a stone tool is notable among the finds.

KO. 43: One of the largest pottery sites found in the Kiri Oya valley, at the place locally known as Kakunagasgodavala-Kadattalama in Ilukvava. It is on the eastern bank of the Pihimbi-ala, just south of KO. 37 and about 100m northeast of KO. 42. The dense accumulation of potsherds is remarkable at the site. One might see them in heaps at several places. However, it is significant that there was only one piece of iron slag among the noticeable finds.

KO. 44: Terracotta site, just below the bund of Ilukvava at its western end. The site was found by accident when earth was cut for renovating the tank bund in 1958 (Deraniyagala 1958 : 22-25). There are about 85 pieces of terracottas, including human and animal figures, now stored at the Anuradhapura Archaeological Museum. The figurines are primitive in style and seem to be connected with fertility cults. A detail description of these finds appears elsewhere in this report (Nandadeva below).

KO. 45: The site called Veheragodalla about 500m northwest of the Gallinda spring. There are several heaps of limestone rubble at the foot of a small hill slope. This rubble is a collection from the site itself. There is a limestone bed at this site. Some of the heaps of stones seem to have been disturbed, probably by treasure hunters.

Veheragodalla means 'the mound of the *stupa*'. Contrary to whatever the name means, these heaps cannot be identified as remains of *stupas*. There are two hypotheses: one that they are the burial sites such as the 'cairne burials' of South India, and the other, that it had been a Vadda ritual centre, as Gallinda is identified as a Vadda settlement. However, present knowledge on the site is not sufficient to determine its significance.

KO. 46: Ruined structure at Pattilava, between Galinda and Udavalayagama, west of KO. 45. It is a small rectangular building, about 4 x 3m containing nine stone pillars. The presence of a large old *Bo-tree* at this place shows that the ruins belong to a Buddhist monastery.

KO. 47: A site at the west bank of the Kiri Oya, some hundred meters north of the Pihimbi-ala confluence. Some potsherds had once been found below the topsoil when digging a hole for a fence post. The site was examined and it was noticed that there could be a considerable number of potsherds buried at the site. In the vicinity of the post hole, there were some potsherds close to the surface, but they seem to have been dug out from the ground.

KO. 48: A site at Alakolavava village close to the bank of the Pahala-vava. Potsherds and a few pieces of iron slag were to be seen there.

KO. 49: A site west of Pahala-vava at Alakolavava village. A few potsherds and some small pieces of iron slag were noticed below the top soil at the places uncovered where the soil was disturbed to cut drains.

KO. 50: A site at Makarayavalaulpota-ala confluence, west of the Kiri Oya and north of the Makarayavalaulpota-ala. Potsherds and a few brickbats and tile pieces were among the finds at the site.

KO. 51: A site at the eastern side of the Kiri Oya, north of KO. 15. KO. 50 and 33 are on the opposite side of the bends of the Kiri Oya. Potsherds and a piece of iron slag were to be seen among the finds. Potsherds were not many, but were scattered over a large area.

KO. 52: A large pottery site at Vavala, upstream of the South Kosgaha-ala. It is between the Vavala monastery (KO. 22) and the South Kosgaha-ala tributary. A perennial spring, well-known to the villagers, is situated west of the site. Potsherds were scattered very densely all over the site. Among them an object like a pinnacle or a lampstand had been found by one of the inhabitants. A few pieces of iron slag and a piece of brownish coloured chert which looks like a waste particle were among the finds. A small stone pillar was found on the opposite bank of the tributary.

KO. 53: Another large pottery site at Vavala east of KO. 52. A branch of the Kosgaha-ala flows through the site. Potsherds were scattered on both sides of this stream but there were fewer on the eastern side. Other than potsherds, one piece of iron slag and a piece of roof tile were among the finds.

KO. 54: A large iron production site at Vavala, about 300m South of KO. 53. There is a mound with a large quantity of iron slag and brickbats at this site. Other than iron slag there are some fragments of iron bars too. A flat rock with conical holes, as at KO.4 and 14,

lies north of this site, between KO. 53 and 54.

KO. 55: A small pottery site at Vavala. It is at the point where the Kosgaha-ala and the channel which comes from Vavala-vava join. There is a perennial spring on the bed of the Kosgaha-ala close to the site.

KO. 56: A small pottery site at Vavala, west of the North Kosgaha-ala at its confluence with the channel. Other than pottery, a few brickbats, a piece of roof tile and a piece of iron slag were found.

KO. 57: Monastery site at Nuvaragala at the source of the Kiri Oya. It is an important site as it is the earliest known. A visit to the site was not possible in the course of this survey. A full description of the site, published in the Bell reports, is reproduced as an appendix.

KO. 58: Ruins at the recently breached eastern sluice of Peikkulama tank. A stone paving is revealed on the tank bottom at the point where the sluice gate once stood. Broken pillars, and several brickbats, that may belong to the sluice are scattered at this place. The remaining parts of the bund show that it was terraced with the stone blocks. The Peikkulama pillar inscription (Paranavitana 1958) is said to have been found at this site.

Abbreviations

cv - Culavamsa

JRAS (>B>) - Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society (Ceylon Branch)

mv - Mahavamsa

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Ancient Monument Register* 1972, Ministry of Cultural Affairs.
- Bandaranayake, S. 1974. *Sinhalese Monastic Architecture*, Leiden.
- Bell, H.C.P. 1914. *Archaeological Survey of Ceylon - Administration Report for the year 1910-11*, Ceylon Sessional Papers.
- Blair, D. 1898. Report of the Topographical Survey in the Tamankaduva District, Annexure B, In *The Report of the Surveyor-General for 1898*.
- Brohier, R.L. 1934. *Ancient Irrigation Works in Ceylon*. H. 1 Colombo.
- Brow, James. 1978. *Veddha villages of Anuradhapura*, University of Washington Press.
- Codrington, H.W. 1972. (1922). Notes on Ceylon Topography in the Twelfth Century. JRAS (>B>) XXIX (75).
- Davy, John. 1969 (1821). *An account of the Interior of Ceylon and of its Inhabitants with Travels in that Island*. Dehiwela: Tissera Prakasakayo.
- Deraniyagala, P.E.P. 1958. *Administration Report of the Acting Archaeological Commissioner for 1957*.

- Erb, D.K. 1970. Landforms and Drainage of Ceylon. *The Ceylon Geographer* 20, 1-32.
- Fernando, W.M. 1914. Nuwaragalakanda In *Appendix D, Bell 1914*.
- Forbes, J. (Maj.) 1840. *Eleven years in Ceylon, comprising sketches of the field sports and natural history of that colony and an account of its history and antiquities*. London: Richard Bentley.
- Geiger, Wilhelm 1929. *Culavamsa* (trs). London: PTS.
- Geiger, Wilhelm 1950. *Mahavamsa* (trs), Colombo: Govt. Press.
- Grimlinton, F.H. 1898. Report of the Surveyor-General for 1899. *Ceylon Administration Reports for the year 1898*, Pt 11, B. 1-B.24.
- Jevens, R.W. 1899. *Manual of the North Central Province, Ceylon*. Colombo: Government Printer.
- Lawrie, A.C. 1896. *A Gazetteer of the Central Province of Ceylon*. Colombo.
- Lewis, J.P. 1917. Andrew's Embassies to Kandy in 1795 and 1796. *JRAS (C>B>)* XXVI 70, P2-17.
- Manatunga, Anura. 1984. *Alakolavava Len Vihanaye Citra*. Unpublished type-script presented to the Department of Archaeology, University of Kelaniya.
- Nicholas, C.W. 1963. Historical Topography of Ancient and Medieval Ceylon. *JRAS (C>B>)* New Series, VI Special Number.
- Paranavitana, S. 1932. Kaludiyapokuna Inscriptions. *Epigraphia Zeylanica* 3, P1.5 253-269.
- Paranavitana, S. 1958. *Administration Report of the Archaeological Commissioner for 1956*.
- Parker, H. 1909. *Ancient Ceylon*, London: Luzac & Co.
- Pieris, P.E. 1950. *Sinhalese and the Patriots*. Colombo: Apothecaries.
- Pybus, J. 1958. *The Pybus Embassy to Kandy 1762*, transcribed with notes by Rowland Raven Hart. *National Museums of Ceylon Historical Series 1*, P.E.P. Deraniyagala (ed.) Colombo.
- Ranawella, S. 1984. Epigraphy. *Sigiriya Project - First Archaeological Excavation and Research Report 1982*. S. Bandaranayake (ed.) Colombo: Central Cultural Fund.
- Samaranayake, S. 1982. *Economic Potential of the Rivers and Streams of Sri Lanka*. Peradeniya.
- Seligmann, C.G. and B.Z. Seligmann. 1911. *The Vedddhas*. Cambridge.
- Tennent, J.E. 1860. *Ceylon: An Account of the Island Physical, Historical and Topographical*. London.
- Vitanage, P.W. 1958. *Geology: Country Around Polonnaruwa*. Colombo: Geological Survey of Ceylon.