2.17 The First Recorded Peace Treaty in Sri Lanka

J.M. Sudharmawathie
Department of History, University of Kelaniya.

ABSTRACT

It has been noted that in Sri Lanka, unlike in India, there is very little literature written on Sri Lankan politics and social institutions. However, through chronicles, inscriptions and various other literary sources one can derive a comprehensive understanding of the socio-political institutions and their behavior in the country.

"Sangamu Vihara inscription" which is considered the oldest recorded treaty, sheds light on the religious and political setting in the country. The inscription records an agreement between Parakramabahu-I, who was one of the important kings in the Polonnaruwa kingdom and Gajabahu II, the ruler of Rajarata province of the island.

The treaty the main features of the treaty are as follows:

* The legal heir to the throne has to pass from Gajabahu to Prakkramabahu
* The nature of the link between the religion and the state
* The role of the Buddhist monk as counsellor for the state and society
* The intervention of Buddhist monks whenever there is political instability in the country.

Key words: inscriptions, Treaty