

An investigation on the felicity of “Buddhabana Prathyakshaya” in the course of identifying religious information during the Kandyan era

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“Buddhabana Prathyakshaya” was a controversial prose composed in the Kandyan era. Fr. Jacome Goncalvez who arrived in the Ceylon in the year 1705 AD to promote catholic culture in this country was the author of this book. It was published with the intention of converting Buddhists into Catholicism which consisted of two main parts, namely “Prathyakshaya” and “Buddhakshethraya”. The first part is devoted to criticizing Buddhism and Lord Buddha’s character inexorably while the second part consisted of examining the origin of Buddhism and the manner in which it expanded in the countries such as China, Japan, Burma and Ceylon. However, many catholic erudite have stated that the above text does not contain any idea or opinion that causes pain of mind in any other religionist. Fr. Goncalvez has written this book in a fundamentalist background where all religions other than Catholicism are considered heretical religions. There are numerous analytical expressions scornfully demeaning the Buddhist teaching, Buddhist rituals, rites and observances causing severe pain of mind in Buddhists without knowing the essence of Buddhism as a religion. But, when considering the criticisms aimed by Fr. Goncalvez, impartially regarding the facts appearing in “Buddhabana Prathyakshaya” it explicitly materializes that certain allegations pointed out by Fr. Goncalvez reveals the real nature of Buddhist environment of the Kandyan era. Accordingly, the objective of this study is to explore the possibility of associating “Buddhabana Prathyakshaya”, a text composed against the other religious with opponent attitudes, as a rich source of identifying religious information of Kandyan era.

Keywords: Buddhabana Prathyakshaya, Jacome Goncalvez, Buddhakshethraya, Fundermentalism, Opponent attitudes