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A Study of the Sentence Endings of Historical Palm Leaf Manuscripts; With Special Reference to the Special Palm Leaf Manuscripts Collection of Petiyagoda Paramartha Dharmakara Piriwen Viharaya

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Abstract

Palm leaf manuscripts had been a very famous historical method of writing material in Ceylon and in many other South Asian Countries. With the arrival of Arahath Maha Mahinda Thera, Sri Lankans initiated the characteristics of a moral civilization of Sinhalese. They could enrich their knowledge by chirography. In Sri Lanka, many people used to write knowledge on palm leaf manuscripts which should be preserved for the future generations. Sinhalese has preserved Lord Buddha's original preaching by writing through Palm leaf manuscripts, in a few languages called Pali, Sinhala and Sanskrit. They have written many religious books using Palm Leaf Manuscripts. Not only religious books but also literature books and grammar books including Astrology, Ayurvedic Medicine, Esotericism and all valuable knowledge books belong to Sinhala, Pali Sanskrit languages. Suraweera states that, many of old palm leaf manuscripts were written on the life of

the Buddha and Buddhist doctrine. It can be identified that there are two categories of doers of old Palm Leaf Manuscripts. One is the authors and the other one is the copiers. Both of them have mentioned very special ending sentences at the end of those historical manuscripts. Some authors have mentioned that they may be able to collect merits and some mentioned they may attain Nirvana. Accordingly, this study is based on the qualitative research methods to explore what is expressed by the sentence endings of selected old traditional Sinhalese Palm Leaf Manuscripts with special reference to the Special Palm Leaf Manuscripts Collection of Petiyagoda Paramartha Dharmakara Piriwen Wiharaya, Kelaniya, Sri Lanka.

Keywords: Ending sentences, Palm Leaf Manuscripts, Old Sinhalese Books, Sri Lankan Chirography