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The Historicity of Sihalavatthu

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Introduction

The Sihalavatthu or the Sihalavatthupparāṇa is one of the oldest surviving sources, the credit for discovering this goes to Mr. K. D. Somadāsa, the assistant librarian of the University of Ceylon. He received the initial copy of Sihalavatthu in Burmese as he made a list of palm leaves in the monasteries of the Southern province in Sri Lanka. Mr. K. D. Somadasa handed over the same to Ven. Polvattē Buddhadatta to get it translated into the Sinhalese characters. When the book was found, it was crumbled down owing to the dilapidated state of the manuscript. Having translated the manuscript Ven. Polvattē Buddhatta published an article in the Silumina newspaper. Having read the newspaper article, Ven. Hunupitiye Saddhammañāṇāṅkara handed over a copy of Sihalavatthu in Burmese, which was in his possession. The above manuscript was copied by him when he was in Burma in 1923. Due to the untiring efforts of Ven. Polvattē Buddhadatta, another Burmese manuscript of Sihalavatthu was found in the Mahākappinna Mudalindārāmaya in Vālithara in Sri Lanka (2014: viii). Following the due clarification, Rev. Polvattē Buddhadatta is credited with publishing this manuscript. This was a Pali work written in Burmese (Sihalavatthupparāṇa, 1959: ix)