

THE REGNAL YEARS OF VIJAYABĀHU III AND THE VIJAYĀBAHU KATIKĀVATA

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Vijayabāhu III established his authority in the Māyāraja (Pāli: Māyāraṭṭha) after freeing that region from the oppressive rule of Kāliṅga Māgha, who had invaded Sri Lanka in circa 1215 A.C.¹ Vijayabāhu administered the Māyāraja with Daṁbadeṇiya as his capital and thus became the first monarch of the Daṁbadeṇi dynasty.²

The *katikāvata* (code of disciplinary rules for *bhikkhus*) which he promulgated seems to have been referred to as the "Amutu *Katikāvata*" in the *Daṁbadeṇi Katikāvata (DK)*, which was a later code promulgated during the reign of Vijayabāhu's successor Parākramabāhu II (1236-70 A.C.).³ In later sources such as the *Nihāyasāṅgrahaya*, the *Saddharmaratnākara* and the *Rājaraṭnākara*, however, the term *amutu katikāvata* does not appear to specify any particular *katikāvata* as such. These sources state that king Vijayabāhu had a different *katikāvata* compiled.⁴ We may, therefore, propose that the *Amutu Katikāvata* referred to in the *DK* be named the *Vijayabāhu Katikāvata* as it had been promulgated during his reign.

Paying attention to these matters, this paper discusses two important historical problems: (i) the regnal years of Vijayabāhu III, with particular emphasis on the year of his accession, and (ii) the *Katikāvata* attributed to him.

The *DK* account dealing with the Vijayabāhu *Katikāvata*, contains a passage which is vital to our discussion. This passage says that since no monarch as devoted to the *śāsana* as Parākramabāhu I (1153-86 A.C.) had appeared during the thirty six years following

1. *History of Ceylon*, Vol. I, pt. II, (ed. H. C. Ray), Colombo, 1960, p. 616 (HC); *Ceylon Antiquary and Literary Register*, Vol. X, Pt. I, p. 44 (CALR).

2. HC., Vol. I, pt. II, Genealogical Table VII.

3. Cf. the phrase *Amutu Katikāvataṁ sarabhā*, "having aborned with the Amutu *Katikāvata*", Nandassena Ratnapala, *The Katikāvatas*, München, 1971, pp. 46, 47, 138, 139; *Katikāvataṅgāra*, (ed. D. B. Jayatilaka), Kelaniya, 1955, pp. 7, 8, (K).

4. Cf. the expression "Amutu *katikāvata*ṁ kavard", "having also gotten a different *katikāvata* to be compiled", *Nikāya Saṅgrahaya*, (ed. D. P. R. Samaranyake), Colombo, 1960, p. 88 (Ns); *Saddharmaratnākara* (ed. Kolonnava Sugunasara), Homagama, 1943, p. 292; *Rājaraṭnākara*, (ed. Welitara Saddhananda), Colombo, 1887, p. 43. The term "amutu" here in the construction "*amutu katikāvata*" is open to several semantic interpretations. The most common meaning attributed to it in strict conformity with the current Sinhala usage is "different", "another", and "new". In this derivation the term is understood as pointing back to the old Indo-Aryan term *āgantuka*. However, there are two other meanings, that are plausible in this special textual context. The term "amutu" can also be derived etymologically from old Indo-Aryan "*amutaka*" in the sense of "imposed", "superposed", etc. Another possible etymology is old Indo-Aryan "*āpṛtaka*" in the sense of "applicable again".