

An Examination about the Name "Asakdākava", which is Considered as an ancient Jātaka Poem in Sinhala

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"*Jātaka poems*" is a prominent genre in Sinhalese poetic literature. It is believed that ancient poets intended to put *jātaka* tales into verse due to an instruction in *Siyabaslakara*. According to it, poems should be based on the life of Lord Buddha. Several *jātaka* stories were put into verse while more than one *jātaka* poem was written based on the same *jātaka* tale in some situations. On the other hand, some *jātaka* poems were composed based on *jātaka* stories in Mahayana.

According to Sidath Sangarā Purāna Sannaya, some phrases in Sidath Sangarāwahave been quoted from a poem named "*Asakdākava*." The author of Sidath Sangarā Purāna Sannaya clearly states that those phrases could be seen in *Asakdākava*. Terms such as "*Asak*", "*Asakdākava*" "*Asakdākav*" and "*Asakdā*" have been used to mention that book in manuscripts and the published edition of Sidath Sangarā Purāna Sannaya. Translating Sidath Sangarāwa to English, James De Alwis states that "*Asakdā*" is a poem which no longer exists.

This research has demonstrated that it is not clear whether *Asakdākava* is a *jātaka* poem. According to *Nikāya Sangraha*, there was a poet called *Asakdāmala* during the reign of king Agrabodhi. Some critics argue that *Asakdākava* is written by *Asakdāmala*, while it is based on *Āsankhavatī jātaka* tale according to some critics. This depends on the question whether the word *Asakdākava* has been formed by *Asak + Dākava* or *Asakdā + Kava*.

Using the quotations in Sidath Sangarāwa, researcher tries to compare those ideas with *Āsankhavatī jātaka* tale. The ultimate goal of this research is to examine whether *Asakdākava* can be identified as a *jātaka* poem or whether it can be identified as a work by the poet *Asakdāmala*.

Keywords: *Asakdākava*, *Jātaka poems*, Sidath Sangarā Purāna Sannaya, Sidath Sangarāwa

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