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A HISTORY OF THE TOOTH RELIC WITH  
SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ITS POLITICAL  
SIGNIFICANCE (c. A.D.300 - 1500)

by

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ABSTRACT

The history of the Tooth Relic during the first eleven centuries since its arrival in Ceylon forms the subject of this monograph. Chapter One begins with an introduction which surveys previous studies on the subject, aims and limitations of the present study, and then proceeds to examine the relevant sources from the point of view of their historical value. Chapter Two examines the historicity of the tradition recorded in the Dat̥hāvamsa and explains the manner in which this text took its present form. The theme of Chapter Three is the history of the Tooth Relic until the end of the Anurādhapura period. The location of the Meghagiri-vihāra and the place where the Relic was first displayed are discussed here in detail. Subsequently an attempt is made to evaluate the Relic's position in the religious life of the Island. The history of the Relic during the next five centuries is examined in Chapter Four. The reasons why the characters of Mānābharaṇa, Sugala and Vira Alakṣvara were distorted in our sources, the interpretation of the term rājyāntara and the reasons which determined the Relic's importance are examined here in detail. The political significance of the Relic is dealt with in Chapter Five. The major part of this chapter is concerned with the

discussion of the Tooth Relic as a decisive factor of kingship from c.A.D.1000 onwards. In Chapter Six the income and resources of the Tooth Relic as well as their administration are examined. A discussion of the ritual of the Relic as recorded in the texts, partly in comparison with that of the present Tooth Relic temple at Kandy, is the theme of Chapter Seven. This is followed by the conclusion which brings out the principal results of this study.



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