

A Historical Study of Some Aspects of Marriage Institution in Sri Lanka from 13th Century to the End of the 15th Century AD

Dr. N. A. Wimalasena (Ph.D.)
Senior Lecturer, Department of History
University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya
Sri Lanka

Abstract

Some scholars have dealt with marriage of different periods in history. M. B. Ariyapala in his work on the Society in Medieval Ceylon as depicted in the Saddharmaratnāvali and other Sinhalese literature of the thirteenth century, published in 1956 compared some passages in his sources with those of the Anuradhapura period. Similarly the Culture of Ceylon in Medieval Times, a posthumous work of W. Geiger contains two pages on Social Organization and Caste System during the Anuradhapura period is briefly discussed. Geiger's study is based almost exclusively on the main chronicle. H. Ellawala has done for example research into the period from the fifth century BC to the fourth century AC. He has tried to analyze the marriage system of early Sri Lanka under the family organization. He has described marriage under the subtitle of traditions pertaining to the age of marriage in Indian society, relationship of the ideal marriage partners, types of marriage in Indian society, equality of birth as the most important factor for a marriage settlement, polygamy and polyandry, divorce and re-marriage, marriage outside the normal practice, polygamy in Sri Lanka society and widow marriage. But he says that the numerous lithic records which are still not deciphered are studied carefully and a systematic archaeological survey is made on the sites of early settlements of this country, this analysis will remain incomplete. S. B. Hettiaratchi has done it very widely from about the fourth to the tenth century AC. This period is generally known as the later Anuradhapura period. He has allocated a chapter on the marriage system to the relevant period. He has done it under the themes of age of marriage, the customs of marrying daughters, cross-cousin marriage, the selection of marriage partners, and functions of marriage, love marriage, marriage of the ordinary people, dowry system, political influence and marriage. In this study, an attempt is made to study the some features of marriage and society from about the thirteenth century AC to the end of sixteenth century AC under some sections of marriage and society. The research is mainly based on primary sources. Wherever necessary material will also be obtained from limited secondary sources on the social history.

Keywords: Marriage, Primary sources, Qualifications, bride, bridegroom, matrimony

1. Introduction

The history of human society is nothing but the description of the evolution and diffusion of various institutions designed toward perpetuation, maintenance and survival of society. The institution of marriage occupies a unique place in the realm of institutions and it is this institution which is instrumental in perpetuating human society through regulations of conjugal and filial ties. The institution of marriage is as old as creation of the world. As a social institution, it has taken different forms in different societies from time immemorial. The chief sources of our knowledge about the institution are the literary and archaeological data which give us a glimpse of the picture regarding progress in this sphere.

1.1 Qualifications of marriage partners

S. B. Hettiaratchi has pointed out the qualifications of the marriage partners such as age, caste, the consent of the parents and the mutual love and understanding of the two partners etc. (Hettiaratchi, 1988: 55). Quoting H. Ellawala, Hettiaratchi has pointed out that the general rule adopted by the Hindu writers was that the bride should be three or more years younger than the bridegroom and this rule was generally followed by the people. (*Ibid.*, 55). The maiden and the youth were normally at the age of around sixteen and twenty respectively, when they married. We find that these rules were observed in the Indian subcontinent and in Sri Lanka.

Hence, the Smrtis composed during the Gupta period adopted as a general rule that the bride should be three or more years younger than the bridegroom in the Indian subcontinent. (*Manu Saṃhitā*, 1909: V. 12; *Gautama Dharma Sūtra*, 1917: IV; *Yagñavalkya Smṛti*, 1926: I. 52; *Āpastamba Dharmasūtra*, II, 6, 12).

According to Buddhist sources the boy's age at the time of marriage is generally given as sixteen (*solosavassakālē*). (*Jātakatṭakathā*, Vol. VI, 1964: 72, 363). But it seems probable at least in the case of the kṣatriyas and the Brāhmanas and all those who left their homes for education at that age, (*Jātakatṭakathā*, Vol. II, 277; Vol. III, 122; Vol. IV, 237; Vol. V. 127, 210) that twenty was the age of marriage, and that girls sometimes seem to have married at the age of sixteen. In the Asilakkhana Jataka reference is made to a princess who was given in marriage when she was sixteen years old. (*Jātakatṭakathā*, Vol. I, 1962: 455-458). The *Dhammapadaṭṭha commentary*, which can be assigned to the fifth century AC, tells that people should be mature before commencing married life and sixteen was considered the adult age for a girl to be given in marriage. (*Dhammapadaṭṭakathā*, Vol. II, 1911: 217).

The *Dhampiya Aṭuvā Gātapada* of the tenth century AC, speaks of a girl who had come to the age of sixteen (*solos häviridi viya ättī*) when she was about to be given in marriage. (*Dhampiyā Aṭuvā Gātapada*, 1933:167). Again it mentions fifteen or sixteen as the suitable age for girls to be given in marriage. (*Ibid.*, 66, 118). The *Saddharmaratnāvali* of the thirteenth century AC, which is relevant to our period, writes that having remained with her parents up to the age of sixteen, entered the bonds of matrimony, as this was already the marriageable age. (*solos häviridi vanaturu demāpiyan aturehi randā evakaṭa saraṇa hindina vayasā heyin saraṇa gosin*) (*Saddharmaratnāvali*, 1985: 317). And again, when the girl attained the age of sixteen, she was given in Marriage. (*solos häviridi vayasāṭa pämiṇi kalhi*). (*Ibid.*, 290). But, Hettiaratchi questions that whether fifteen or sixteen was the norm for girls. He says;

Most probably it was an ideal age rather than a statement of practice. In present Sri Lanka twelve or thirteen is considered as the normal age of puberty of girls. According to Medhatiti, this was the puberty age of girls even in ancient India. Also the Smrtis, with reference to pre-puberty marriage in the Indian subcontinent, determined the twelfth year as the latest limit for a girl to remain a maiden. This suggests that the Smṛti writers considered that twelve years was the normal age of puberty for girls. Therefore, if fifteen or sixteen was considered the ideal age for girls to marry in ancient times and it follows that parents at that time also desired that their daughters should remain unmarried at least three years after attaining puberty. This desire certainly exists today among the parents in Sri Lanka. But we know that this is by no means a regular practice. (Hettiaratchi, 1988: 56).

According to some stories, though they are of Indian origin, found in Sinhalese literary sources, there are certain requirements for a marriage. For example, Mugalan Maha Thera Vastuva of *Saddharmaratnāvali* mentions that a wealthy person who has reached the marriageable age had asked his parents to find a suitable bride for him. (*Saddharmaratnāvali*, 1985: 596). According to Kāli Yakkhiṇī story, a woman who expects to enter marriage, should know how to run domestic affairs and manage servants. (*Ibid.*, 88). Pūrṇavardhana was advised as *jāti sari tānakin vicārā* according to the Visākhā Vastuva. Cakkhupāla story mentions that two Pālas were married women from suitable families and that they were separated from the parents' house. (*Ibid.*, 332). Marriage was done under the qualifications of suitable castes, area, age and wealth etc. as mentioned in the Māgandiyā story. (*Ibid.*, 199). Sangharakkhita Thera, thought of engaging in home activities by disrobing. (*Ibid.*, 277). Match brokers or *Mangul kapuvās* ask even today whether or not the girls are accustomed to domestic affairs. The above mentioned facts are revealed according to Rihal Tissa Story which was relevant to the Sagam dora of Ruhunu Janapada in Sri Lanka. This story is related to an Upāsaka from Ruhunu Raṭa. The parents inquired into the caste and family of the man and gave their daughter in marriage accordingly 'jāti gōtra vicārā'. (*Saddharmālaṃkāra*, 1954:609). Another story of *Saddharmālaṃkāra* tells that the caste is also referred as *taman hā samāna velanda kulayakin rūpa sammpannavū kumārikā kenekun genavut*. (*Ibid.*, 653). Father of Visākhā talked about Setṭhi Migāra's wealth. (*Saddharmaratnāvali*, 1985: 335). The custom of expecting wealth of both parties is followed even today. This means, parents were very keen the bridegroom can maintain the wife or not. A story of *Saddharmaratnāvali* supports this concept. (*Saddharmaratnāvali*, 1985: 758).

This story reveals how a potter decided to give one of his daughters in marriage to his student, who, he was certain, was very skillful in the art of pottery. *Pujāvali* also mentions the same view that *nissihilpī tānāntaṇṇa apa daruvan nodemha* as the meaning of we do not give our daughters, to persons who do not have any knowledge of any industry. (*Pūjāvali*, 1965: 146).

This view is also shown in the Jaṭila Thera Vastuva. *mū anarḡha keneka, kotānaka uvat rāki ganiti, tamange vāḍiviya pāmiṇi duvaṇiyan unṭa pāvā devālā...* (*Saddharmaratnāvali*, 1985: 941). Marriages of persons from different religions were not accepted, because that may disrupt the family life. Bahudhana Siṭāna was very unhappy about the marriage of his daughter and the son of Sumana who was from other religion. However, marriage was done. But after the marriage, the wife could not perform religious activities; because permission was not given by the husband. It is mentioned in the *Saddharmaratnāvali*. (*Saddharmaratnāvali*, 1985:744).

In the foregoing discussion, it can be inferred that caste, wealth, status and education were treated as major considerations with regard to the select on a bridegroom whereas cleverness in the household was for selecting a bride. These criteria were not considered when a man or a woman selected a bride or bridegroom themselves. *Saddharmaratnāvali* records a plot to kill husband named Dhanuggaha by wife who was fallen love with a robber. (*Saddharmaratnāvali*, 1985: 861). In the Story of Paṭācārā when parents try to get their daughter married to a wealthiest person, Paṭācārā tells her lover to take her away, if he really loves her. (*Ibid*, 539). Sometimes a couple had to be obedient to their parents and the parents thought that it was their duty and responsibility giving their children in marries at the proper age. There are some instances where the consent was given by parents to children's wishes. Kāli Yakkhiṇī story mentions that parents finally expressed their willingness for their disobedient son's marriage. (*Ibid*, 88). Nandika Upāsaka Vastuva hints that parents had a right to get their younger children married. (*Ibid*, 734). These kinds of marriages surely did not give any happiness as contracted merely considering economic advantages. Children agree to parents' views, due to their respect to the parents. It is revealed by the Uttara Vastuva. It mentions the unsuitability of being obedient to parents' consent. Here, the opinion of W. A. de Silva should be mentioned. He mentions:

The position of women is further seen from the fact that monogamy was a definite institution. There is no mention of any other form of marriage. Women had freedom in choosing their husbands... In the first place a suitor invariably inquires personally from a woman whether she was married or unmarried, if unmarried the woman's consent to marriage was sought from her direct and the parents and relatives agree to the marriage without demur. Once married, they set up a separate house and did not live with the parents of either. (De Silva, 1928: 70-71).

Selecting a husband by a woman was not favored as mentioned earlier, the normal practice was that the arrangements were made by parents and they got the consent of the couple after that. It was a major function of parents in the decision of the marriage of their children, if there was no love affair or any other arrangement. *Saddharmālaṃkāra* elaborates that God Śakra came as a handsome youngster, proposed a marriage to a beautiful lady. She answered with the following words:

Ebas asā kumārikāvō swamīni numba vahansē kīye kāranamaya; mē lōkayehi purushābharāṇayak nāti strī janayō kotek ābharāṇa pālandagena siṭiyahu vī namut nohobanahumaya. Yam striyakaṭa gehimi purushayeku nātnam vāndambu tānāttī yāi nindā beneti; esē vū vāndambu tānāti siyalu dukaṭa bhājana vannīya; esē vī namut magē mavpiya dedena taman enatek mā metāna siṭiṇṭa kiyā avavāda koṭa giyāhuya; demavpiyo nam daruvaṇṭa vāḍa kāmāttōya. Esē vū demavpiyange bas nogivisa situwak kala daru kenek ātnam esē vū nokīkaru daruvō melova noyek vyasanayaṭa pāmiṇa paralova durgatiyaṭa pāmineti. Idin magē mavpiya dedenā topa kerehi iṇṭa kivū nam indimi; esē anu nodannāhu vīnam topa hā samaga novesemiy kīha. (*Saddharmālaṃkāra*, 1954: 609).

This story was relevant to the Rōhāṇa region and firstly God Śakra came to inquire about the woman. Secondly, it is not confirmed that a proposal was not directly made by a youngster. It can be understood that children were obedient to parents and the marriage of children was in the hands of parents. Nandirājavastuva of *Saddharmālaṃkāra* further confirms the above mentioned point. A Sēnāpati had asked Nandiya who is to become the king, whether he would marry one of his seven daughters. He informed that to all seven daughters and six daughters expressed their unwillingness. They did not know about Nandiya. But the youngest daughter answered as mentioned below. Demavpiyan nam daruvaṇṭa ēkāntayenma vāḍak misa avāḍak vanna nokāmāttāha; ebāvin magē mavpiya dedena yam bandu kenekunṭa mā pāvā dennem eya yahapat vē. (*Saddharmālaṃkāra*, 1954: 180).

It confirms from these two passages that the selecting a marriage partner was the duty of parents. It is no doubt that parents asked the young prospective couple's willingness of each other. A youth had not proposed a marriage directly to a young girl unless there had been a love affair between them. Even in situation of a love affair, it can be seen that a proposal was firstly sent to parents. It is depicted in the stories of Svarnatilakā and Kāñcanadēvi. *saraṇa vicārā nila kalaha; vāḍiviya pāmiṇi daruvaṇṭa sudusu tānin saraṇa genvā pāvā div āt kaḷaha.* (*Saddharmālaṃkāra*, 1954: 258, 213).

Although the main criteria for marriage were such as caste, wealth, beauty and handsomeness, the cleverness of relevant household affairs and husband's profession, other external features also affected the selecting a woman for marriage. Minister Sanghā married a woman because of the beautiful manner she walked, even if it was rain she did not run. (*Saddharmālamkāra*, 1954: 664). Some stories of *Saddharmaratnāvali* tell that some female lovers went from homes to meet their lovers and exchanged love letters. This does not mean that children were not obedient to the parents. Youth society consumed their right of youth. When a youngster proposed to Kiñci Sanghā in a story of *Saddharmālamkāra*, she expressed her unwillingness to the proposal due to the respectfulness and being obedient to her parents. (*Saddharmālamkāra*, 1954: 638-639)

There were eight forms of marriage among the Hindus: namely; the Brahma, the Daiva, the Ārṣa, the Prajāpatya, the Āsura, the Gāndharva, the Rākshasa and the paiśāca. (*Manu Samhitā*, 1909: II, 27-37). The **Brahma** form means the gift of a daughter by the father, after decking her with ornaments, to a man learned in the Vedas and of a good character, whom the bride's father himself invites. **The Daiva** form means that the gift of the daughter as above was to a priest who officiates at a sacrifice, during the course of its performance. According to the **Ārṣa form**, father gives his daughter in marriage to the bridegroom, after getting a cow and a bull. Father gifts a daughter to a bridegroom by addressing "May both of you perform together your Dharma" according to the **Prajāpatya form**. The **Gāndharva** form is that in which the mutual love and consent of the bride and bridegroom is the only condition required to bring about the union. The **Rākṣasa** form describes the capture of the bride by force. The **Paiśāca** form is one in which the man seduces, by stealth, a girl who is sleeping, intoxicated, or disordered in intellect. As has been pointed out by H. Ellawala, all these forms of marriage included in three forms which can be mentioned as Marriage arranged by guardians of parties, Svayaṃvara marriage and Gāndharva marriage. (Ellawala, 1969: 74). The most approved and the commonest form of marriage was that arranged by the guardians of both parties between the two families of the same caste and equal rank.

Marriage was very essential in the maintenance of the family system. When the time of marriage age comes, according to the tradition, parents were expected to get their daughters married. In the marriage system of a daughter, there were some social customs in ancient Sri Lankan social structure. Although caste, wealth, education, status, etc. of the male life partner were considered in the daughter's marriage, the attitude towards woman was the cleverness as a housewife in the husband's house. Searching of the duties of a husband was a prime responsibility of a wife. Even though, it was not our period, *Sīhaḷavathhuppakaraṇa* mentions the story of Tissa.

Karomi te gharāvāsam narānam esā dhammatā
Saṭṭam jagganatthāya yāsā tuyham bhavissati.
(*Sīhaḷavathhuppakaraṇam*, 1959: 1).

According to this expression, wives have been expected to tend the bodies of husband. This may have remained unchanged during the period under survey. The woman who is marrying a husband should expect to work in the house and give orders to the servants. The story of Kāli Yakkhiṇī in the *Saddharmaratnāvali* tells as *gei karmānta vicārā karavālanṭa koṭalanṭa taram kenekun* (*Saddharmaratnāvali*, 1985: 75). It means that the mother-in-law expected a clever girl enough manage household affairs and command service of servants.

1.2 Love marriage

Even though parental consent or caste was considered the prime requirement for a marriage, some marriages were concluded without the permission of parents. Examples of these can be gleaned from the *Mahāvamsa* and other literary works. Some of those are not relevant to our period. But it should be noted here, that tradition would have continued to exist in the period under survey. Examples of such marriages are Unmāda citrā- Dīghagāmiṇī and Svarṇapāli -Pandukābhaya as well as Vihāramahadēvi, King Kāvantissa and Sāliya -Asoka mālā. Saliya loved Asokamālā, due to her beauty and not because of her caste. The author of *Mahāvamsa* describes that Queen Anula (48-44 BC) married five men whose names were Cōranāga, Siva, Vaṭuka, Darukāṭitissa and Niliya respectively. *Mahāvamsa* mentions that she had a cruel mind and was dangerous. But the author of *Mahāvamsa* does not say that there was a right to marry without considering caste and race as well as her fearfulness and social freedom to marry any person. This status would have existed after the thirteenth century. There are some instances to show that people did not depend only on the caste for selecting a suitable life partner. Kings Candamukasiva and Mahānāma had Tamil queens and King Mahinda III and King Vijayabāhu I married a Kalinga Princess. (*Mahāvamsa*, XXXV. 48; XXXVIII. 1; LIV.9; LIX. 30). King Vijayabāhu married Tiloka sundari who was a descendent from Kalinga dynasty, because she was a very beautiful and very soft lady.

Not only the women of court mentioned above, but ordinary women also had a right to select their life partners without the consent of the parents. *Rasavāhini* for examples, mentions that a woman called Hema, loved a man at her first sight and married him. Sumana married a minister of King Duṭṭhagāmaṇi. Although a woman tried to marry a monk, it was unsuccessful and therefore she starved to death. (Buddhadatta, 1951: 149-150).

1.3 Cross- Cousin marriage

The preferential marriage among the Sinhalese is the marriage of cross-cousins or Ewessa cousin's i. e. man married his father's sister's daughter or mother's brother's daughter. The cousins were called *āvassa* (a term probably derived from *awasya*, necessary or obligatory.) We see this marriage was coming down from ancient times. Sawers notes marriage cannot be contracted between parties in any nearer degree of relationship than that of first cousins being the children of a brother and sister. This however is the most common and is considered the most becoming matrimonial union that can be made. But the children of two brothers cannot inter marry nor can the children of two sisters, their offspring being considered respectively brothers and sisters for each other. Incestuous marriages and such intercourse between the sexes are penal but such matters were not inquired into publicly. If the parties were of superior rank the King inquired into privately and reprimanded the parties or awarded punishment without assigning the reason. The chief pursued the same course with similar cases among the commonalty in the provinces. (Sawers' notes on the laws of marriage, Hayley, 1923: appendix 37).

How did this marriage of *āvassa* cousins originate among the Sinhalese.? For the answer, we have to go the Mahāvamsa. The first recorded cross cousin marriage among the Sinhalese is that of Dīghagāmaṇi and his cousin Princess Citta. The son of this marriage, Pandukābhaya married Suvannapāli, the daughter of his uncle Girikandasiva. In late years too, we see kings or princess marrying their *āvassa* cousins. E.g. daughters of Vijayabāhu I married his sister Mitta's sons. It has been said that Dīghagāmaṇi and his cousin were children of Sakyans who came to Sri Lanka. Hence origin of this custom as the practice of cross cousin marriage was common among the Śākyans. According to the *Mahāvamsa*, king Suddhodana and Queen Mahāmāyā were first cousins. There were other cross cousins marriages in the line. Prince Siddhartha himself married his first cousin Yasōdharā. Geiger has commented on this cross cousin marriage of sākyans and gives earlier instances of such marriages.

The Sākya princes and their retinue who came to Sri Lanka went into the composition of the Sinhala race and thus the institution came to Sinhala society from early times. After the Sinhalese became Buddhists, The Buddha came to be regarded as the most perfect human being. He was Anuttaro and whatever he did was correct, Buddhists would like to follow his life in the last birth and earlier lives and his example as given in the jataka stories came to be studied. Geiger's comments in this connection are very relevant. He says that the Buddhists were always very fond of handing down tales of the life and deeds of the Buddha and his disciples and other saints of the ancient church history. (Geiger, 1960: 71). Hence, it was arose the origin of the sinhala marriage of *āvassa* cousins. Bryce Ryan in this field research too found the justification for cross cousin marriage based on the Buddha's example. He writes that it is interesting to note that in some localities it is believed that cross cousin preference has sacred sanctioning. Several villagers have pointed out to the writer that the custom was established by the Buddha and hence is sacred to them. (Ryan, 1953: 31).

The much popularity of this kind of marriage can be seen from several stories. Nandika Upāsaka Vastuva shows that a person called Nandika married his cousin Rēvati, although she was a non-believer of Buddhism. (*Saddharmaratnāvali*, 1985: 734). Sujātā tells that *mama mē Magha mānavakayaṇṭa sessavun sē novemi. Nāndi mail saranaya, un kaḷa pinkamak ātnam mā kalēya.* (*Ibid.*, 260). This expression hints that Sujātā had much right, because her husband was her cousin. The statement *nā sambandhaya nisā apagē putanuvāṇṭa saraṇa pāvā duna mānava* of Uttarā kathā Vastuva in *Saddharmaratnāvali* shows that it was an additional qualification as the relationship of cousin for marriage. (*Ibid.*, 744).

The terms related to the Sinhalese kinship should be discussed in this connection. According to that, the word *bādāṇi (nānā)* was used for the daughter of father's sister and mother's brother. And the word *mailanu (māmā)* was used for wife's father and mother's brother and the term *nāndi* was used for father's sister and wife's mother. The same word *bānā* is used for the son of the sister of the father, the son of the mother's brother and the daughter's husband. Even today, the term *nānā* is used for the wives' sisters. It is hinted that society gave permission to marry *nānās*. Society consented the marriage with a *nānā*, if a man's wife died. On the other hand, even today it can be heard the marriage of a widow with the husband's brother. Father's brothers have been classified as elder father and younger father.

We can imagine that these kinds of marriages prevailed frequently in the past. Although it is an Indian story, the description of the origin of Śākyas inferred that there were cross-cousin marriages.

magē malun heyin topage mailōya. Unge dū ātnam topaṭa bisō karavai... avāṣya bānan heyin genavut pāvā dunamanā tāna kala dāma yahapati. (*Ibid.*, 315).

This describes the carrying away a princess *bādāṇi* (*nāṇā*) by the prince cousin. *Mailanuvō* the father of princess was very happy, because he was *avashya* or *āvassa* cousin of him. The marriages with brothers and sisters are not heard of. We have no information about the categories of *svayamvara* and marriage by purchase. The statement *aya viyadam karavā un tamangē putanuvanta genvādī* shows that the cost of a wedding was borne by the bridegroom's father. (*Ibid.*, p. 546.). Therefore, Ariyapala tells this type of marriage where the bridegroom's party bears the full cost, if the other party is not in a position to do so, and where one party promises to pay off debts of the other party if the marriage is agreed upon, is not unknown today and may have been known in the past; but we have no definite proof of it. (Ariyapala, 1968: 300).

From the above examples, it may also follow that cross-cousin marriages were preferred by people during our time.

S. B. Hettiaratchi, referring to the H. W. Tambiah's argument, says that the system of cross cousin marriage came from North India to Sri Lanka. (Hettiaratchi, 1988: 59). Tambiah argues this according to the opinion of Āpasthamba Dharmasūtra. Hettiaratchi shows examples that this was existent in North India. King Ajātasattu married Vajirā, the daughter of his father's sister. (*Ibid.*, 59). The Dhammapada commentary refers to a householder of Magadha named Māgha who married his maternal uncles' daughter named Sujāta. (*Dhammapaṭṭkathā.*, Vol. II, 1906: 265). Ananda tried to marry his father's sister's daughter named Uppalavannā. (*Ibid.*, Vol. II, 49). A number of Jataka stories refer to this type of marriage. (*Jātaṭṭakathā*, 1962: Vol. I, 457; Vol. II, 1963: 327; Vol. VI, 1964: 468) Therefore, Tambiah's opinion is not supported by evidence. Hettiaratchi says that before Tambiah, B. N. Sharma has denied that the system of cross-cousin marriage was confined to South India. (Hettiaratchi, 1988: 59). It would be wrong he writes, to suppose as some have done on the basis of Mēdhātiti that such marriage were confined to South India, for Upamitibhava Prapancakathā, which represents the conditions in Western India, mentions this marriage as of frequent occurrence. Further, he gives a number of examples in order to prove that this was a very ancient tradition in the western part of India. Therefore, it is possible to suppose that the cross cousin marriage was widely spread in the Indian subcontinent and it would have influenced the marriage institution in Sri Lanka.

1.4 Monogamous marriage

A major aim of marriage is procreation of children. Ulakuḍayadēvi who was the daughter of King Parākramābahu VI, wife of the Minister Nannūru tunayā (*miṇi sanhas*) had no children. (*Sālaḷihīṇi Sandēśa*, 1972: v. 102). Therefore, a message was sent to God by a Salaḷihīṇi (Indian Maina). Candravati another daughter of the same king did not have children and a Pigeon had been sent to God requesting a son. (*Parevi Sandēśa Vivaraṇaya*, 1958: v. 203). The Sandēśaya also requested a husband for Sandavatie. Therefore, there were demands from Gods not only for sons but also for husbands.

As has been pointed out earlier, a major aim of marriage was procreation of children. Therefore, if they did not have children during the certain period of their marriage life, they performed in some rituals for getting children. According to *Padyacūḍāmaṇi*, Māyā engaged in some rituals for Gods, (*Padyacūḍāmaṇi*, 1939: v. 77) According to the *Sālaḷihīṇi Sandēśa*, God fulfilled such a request similarly to Ulakuḍayadēvi. (*Sālaḷihīṇi Sandēśa*, 1972: v. 103). The Navagamuva Dēvālaya is a major place for requesting Gods for such aims. This dēvāla was dedicated to the Goddess *Pattini* and its history goes to Kotte era or beyond.

The women who had no children especially sons worship a Goddess named Shashti from the Vedic age. Even now, especially she is worshiped in Eastern India. She was noticed firstly in Hindu books attributed to the eight and ninth AC. She was called *daru dēvangana* (Goddess of children) as well as *Dēvasenā* who is a queen of Skanda. Earlier, she had been considered as eating children, though in due course, she was considered as the Protection Goddess of children as well as Goddess of delivering children. Her vehicle is cat. Her statues were created as showing eight children. Shasti cult did not migrate to Sri Lanka but *Pattini* cult was stabilized in Sri Lanka from the period of Anuradhapura. Therefore, it can be suggested that worshipping of God and Goddess was introduced by India.

Totagamuve Sri Rahula thera requested from God Vibhāsana on behalf of Ulakuḍayadēvi's husband. Sālaḷihīni Sandēśa mentions that she got a son after one year of sending the message according to the Sinhalese months. (*Sālaḷihīni Sandēśa*, 1972: vv. 108-109). This incident is captured with the folklore of Vihāramahadēvi who was the mother of Duṭṭhagāmaṇi Abhaya. When the Sangha thero at the Tissārama preached (*Mahāvamsa*, XXII. 25-28) dhamma to Vihāramahadēvi, he tells her that she has a wealthy life in this birth, because she had done a lot of meritorious activities in the last birth. Vihāramahadēvi tells the thera “ Bhante, what use of wealth devoid of children.” Sangha Thera tells Vihāramahadēvi to meet the ill novice at the Silāpassaya Pirivena. (*Ibid.*, XXII. 25-28). She met the novice and requested him to conceive in her womb. But, the thero gave no consent. She finally donated four requisites to the Maha Sangha and went to the palace. On her way, the novice died and conceived in her womb. (*Ibid.*, XXII. 28-41; *Vamsatthappakāsini*, Vol. II, 1935: 432-436). This incident was revealed to the King and both of them funeral accorded a grand ceremony.

As has been pointed out by S. B. Hettiaratchi, Sandēśa poems in the fifteenth century have the same view which existed Before Christ as mentioned in *Mahāvamsa*. Difference is only the methodology and the history of the princess.

The author of *Mahāvamsa Tīkā* presents the interpretation of this biological birth. He does that basically from the association of Mahā tanhā sankhaya Sutta of Mūla Pannāsaka in the *Majjhima Nikāya* and the commentary. There are three prerequisites which should be fulfilled in order to conceive a child. They are mating of the husband and wife, wife should be a menstruating woman (*utunī*) and the reaching of the Gandhabba. (Bhikkhu Gñāṇamōli and Bhikkhu Bōdhi, 2001: 1233). The commentary has interpreted this that womb has made by a large amount of blood to make conceive. It causes the Vatthuisuddhi. After that, the male and female should get together. It will have the effect for seven days. During that time, conception will take place by even touching her organs of the body and touching of hair. According to that, the novice who was ready to do pattānumōdanā merit emerged in Vihāramahadēvi's womb, when she was traveling home. Menstruation of mother means the menses season of the mother. Gandhabba means the person who is expected to reborn. The husband and wife coming together could be interpreted as having sexual intercourse. The meaning of this passage is method of becoming pregnant according to the kamma. (*Vamsatthappakāsini*, Vol. II, 1935: 436). Ulakuḍayadēvi heard the Dhamma as Vihāramahadēvi. It is mentioned in the *Kāvyasēkhara* as follows;

Sasiri laka siri	sanda
Ulakuḍaya raja dū	sonda
Pada bānda kiyana	lada
Mebana āsuvō sitin mana	nada (<i>Kāvyasēkhara</i> , 1946: XV. 23).

Not only that, Sri Rahula thera wrote the *Kāvyasēkhara* at the invitation of Ulakuḍayadēvi.

Utum mebisō	sanda
Hela basini nisi pada	bānda
Kiyanuwa baṇak	sonda
Kelen ārādhana	mananada (<i>Kāvyasēkhara</i> , 1946: I. 22).

Ulakuḍayadēvi who was very sad due to the lack of children like Vihāramahadēvi, may have told her husband about it. There are very important questions; the year of marriage between Ulakuḍayadēvi and Nannūrutunayā, year of birth of children and age gap of both. Although some problems cannot be resolved, some questions can be discussed successfully. Ulakuḍayadēvi heard the preaching from the *Kāvyasēkhara* at the age of 34 of King Parākramabāhu's reign. (*Kāvyasēkhara*, 1946: XV. 21). That is 1445-46. *Purāna Nāmāvali* was done by Nannūrutunayā in 1421 before 24 years of 1445. It mentioned in the *Purāna Nāmāvali*.

Sakavasinekdahas tunsiya te	sālisa
Neka sanda kiraṇa van yasa pataḷa dasa	desa
Siri pā piyum piḷimal raja nāmū	hisa
Pārakumbā nirindu dasavana vesak	masa
Memā naranidun nisi lesa dadas arina	sanda
Nannarutun miṇi sanhas mātindu	sanda
Para vāḍa yedī teruvan mudunatā	pāḷanda
Kaviyen kelē nāmāvaliya	mananada

(*Purāna Nāmāvali*, 1951: vv. 285-286).

At the time when *Nāmāvali* was composed by the Nannurutunaya his age was 20, Ulakuḍayadēvi heard the Dhamma at his 44 years. The child was born after two years of hearing Dhamma (1447 AC). He was 46 years old at that time. It seems that Ulakuḍayadēvi was 30 years or close. According to that, there is an age gap of 15-16 between Ulakuḍayadēvi and Nannūrutunayā.

King Parākramabāhu VI enthroned at 16. If he married in his 20th year, Ulakuḍayadēvi may have been born after one year. Then it means that she was born in the fifth regnal year of King Parākramabāhu VI. That should be the longest age that can be given to her. If 1412 is considered as the consecration year of her father, her year of birth fall into the regnal year of 1417. She delivers the child in between 1447-1448. According to that, her age may have been 30-31 years and she and her husband's age gap should be 15 or 16 years. If she married at 16 years, it would have been in 1428 AC. Therefore, a time of about 17-18 would have been named by 1445-46 which was the year in which the *Sālaḷihini Sandēśa* was sent. The child was delivered after one year from this. (*Sālaḷihini Sandēśa*, 1972: vv. 108-109).

Both of them were very sad, because there was no child even after the marriage for a long time. Therefore, they thought the kingship will go automatically to the Prince Sapumal's faction. R. Tennakon emphasizes that in fact, it would have been brought to the notice of the God. Sri Rahula thera saw Ulakuḍayadēvi who was very sad for want of a child and he took steps to help Ulakuḍayadēvi by worshipping the God, Vibhīšana at Kelaniya. But, it should have been done by her husband. Sri Rahula thera knew the custom. Therefore, it was done by the name of Minister Nannūrutunayā.

According to the above mentioned facts, she invited Totagamve Sri Rahula thera to write *Kāvyasēkhara*. After writing the book, she heard the preaching. She heard the Dhamma after about 13-14 years of their marriage. It can be thought that she did all these activities to get a son. It is clear that these things happened two years before the birth of the son. She may have had a good personality to do all these things. On the other hand, there is no evidence of persons who worship Gods to give children just after the marriage. That will be the last attempt. Therefore, the opinion that she got the child when she was 20 years in 1447-8 of Somarathna cannot be accepted. (Somaratne, 1975:102). If we consider that she completed 20 years in 1447-8, the age gap of husband and wife may be 26 years. The opinion of Nilakantha Sastri which is trying to match this year and Vijayanagara incursions should be discussed.

However, a child was born due to the Sandēśa and he was called Prince Jayabāhu. They expected a son to challenge Prince Sapumal and they fought as expected earlier. (Tennakon, 1984: iv).

There is little evidence of the ordinary people's marriages, and it cannot be mentioned that the tradition of same caste of life partners existed in this period. Royalties and elites prepared mixed marriage system. Jayamahālāna who was considered as a descendent from the generation of Asōka married with Sunetrādēvi who was a descendent from Kalinga Dynasty. (*Pārakumbā Sirita*, 1954: xxv). A sister of King Parākramabāhu VI married a Tamil Pannikkal (Panikki). Panikki can be interpreted as Kṣatriya. Ulakuḍayadēvi married Nannūrutunayā. He was also a Tamil. But both of them are elites. The *Rājāvali* describes that Samudradēvi who was the daughter of King Madampe Taniyavallabha married a Cola king and she delivered two sons. (*Rājāvali*, M.dccc.xxxiii, 1833: 289; *Rājāvali*, 1900: 79; *Rājāvali*, 1923: 74; *Rājāvali*, 1926: 55; *Rājāvali*, 1997: 228).

Thus it seems that there were many elite Sinhala and Tamil marriages in the Kotte period. When Prince Dharmapala embraced Christianity, other chief members also embraced Christianity. (*dharmapāla raja dāka katakaragata kritusamayama dharmapala rajuṭa dī don jivan periyapandāra kina namīn kula vaddāgena eraja kula vadināviṭa kotte nuvara nātak pradhānivarun kula vādunāha*. *Rājāvali*, 1997: 230). With that some women of Kotte married with Portuguese especially from low castes. (*edā paṭan kotte nuvaranātak gānun pratikānuṇḍa sāmanī hīna jāti da āmbaṭṭa jāti da karā jāti da hannāli jāti da hāli jāti da durā jāti da goigei jāti da kotte nuvara prdhāna aya pratikānunge vastuvaṭa lōbha vela unṭa sāmanilā kula vādī bāndāgena unnāha*. *Rājāvali*, 1997: 230). Portuguese not only married with women in Kotte, but they married with women also close to the villages of sea. (*pratikānun kolomtoṭin paḍav gena mūda kiṭṭu gamvalin hira āllīma da...* *Rājāvali*, 1926: 64). A chief Portuguese married with a daughter of Udammiṭarāla and a wife of Vimaladharmasuriya I. (*Vimaladharmasuriya raju kolambaṭa venvelā āvidin bānda siṭi bisōvū udammiṭarālage dōṇikenek pratikānō udaraṭa yanṭa āriya tānadī balanen uḍa yanṭa nāriya nisā āpasu kolambaṭa āvit don pransisku kiyana pratikānuva devanu bānda unnāha*. *Rājāvali*, 1926: 71). Hence, Social status was considered as a main feature of the marriage system than the caste.

- Pemananda, Watuwatte (1923). *Rājāvali*, Maha Bodhi Press: R. P. Weerasinghe.
- Pemananda, Watuwatte (ed.), (1926). *Rājāvali*, Maharagama: Mahabodhi Press.
- Rayan, Bryce (1953). *Caste in Modern Ceylon*, New Jersey: Rutgers University Press.
- Senanayaka, G. S. B. (ed.) (1972). *Sāḷalihiṇi Sandēśa*, Colombo : Pradeepa Publishers.
- Somaratne, G. P. V. (1975). *The Political History of the Kingdom of Kotte 1400-1521*, Nugegoda: Dipani Printers.
- Sri Sumangala, Hikkaduve (ed.), (1946). *Kāvyaśēkhara*, Colombo: Ratnakara Press.
- Sri Sugunananda, Kudawelle (ed.), (1939). *Padyacūḍāmaṇi*, Alutgama: Vidyavilasa Press.
- Suraweera, A. V. (ed.), (1997). *Rājāvali*, (ed.). Colombo: Lake house Investments.
- Tennakon, R. (1984). *Siri Rahal Pabanda*, Colombo: M. D. Gunasena and Company Ltd.
- Wettasinghe Appuhamy, D. P. (ed.), (1951). *Purāna Nāmāvaliya*, Makumbura: Grantaloka Yantralaya.
- Wickramasinghe, K. D. P. (ed.), (1954). *Pārakumbā Sirita*, Colombo: M. D. Gunasena and Company.