
UNREVEALED INTANGIBLE ARTEFACTS OF ANCIENT AVIATION OF SRI LANKA W.S.R TO THE AERIAL ATTACK: A CONCEPT PAPER

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ABSTRACT

Undebatable miracles and mysterious nature blended ancient civilizations' technology existed one of the tropical regional countries and is being located near to the Indian continent identified as Sri Lanka. Because of the unique features it has been ranked as one of the leading top tourist destinations of the world. It has an unbroken one of the world largest events covered written history, such as the great chronicle *Mahawamsa* which covered from 6th century BC to 19th century AD. In 21st century with the globalization of the world, aviation industry is being popular day by day. But this industry was not a new concept to Southeast Asian people, because there are ample such information spread over prehistory and history in the symbolized inscriptions manner and texted formats respectively. Furthermore, there are secured oral traditional information related to the ancient aviation industry and associated sites in Sri Lanka, which have been brought from generation to generation by local communities. Hence this study was conducted to reveal these intangible data related to the ancient aviation of Sri Lanka directly or indirectly and to promote it globally. Research data were collected through literature studies, personal interviews. Gathered data were read critically, analysed systematically and interpreted based on the 21st century aviation technology and industry information. Some evidences were found especially regarding to the concept on aerial attack which had been mentioned in the ancient Sri Lankan literature, belonging to latter period of first kingdom of Sri Lanka, Anuradhapura or early period of medieval kingdom of Sri Lankan, Polonnaruwa. The aerial attack is a military terminology meaning of airstrike or air ride is an offensive operation carried out by an aircraft. It is the air to ground attack aiming the enemies' strategically important locations. *Sir Load Hugh Trenchard* is considered as the founder of above aerial attack and strategically bombing concept of the 20th Century. But the time period of the Sri Lankan ancient literature which gives the same concept for some extend is older than the *Trenchard* period. The study also answered the question of whether the same technology existing now a days, and views and thoughts were narrated to draw the conclusion of this study.

Keywords: Ancient Aviation, Aerial Attack, Intangible Artefacts, Oral traditions, Sir Load Trenchard

INTRODUCTION

Sri Lanka is an island which is close to the Indian continent and is recognized as the great miracles land. How is it a miracle? Question's and answers have led to the mysterious ancient technologies and unbelievable geniuses lived nature blended ancient civilizations, recorded one of the tropical regional countries in the Indian Ocean. Because of the unique features, it has been ranked as one of the top leading tourist destinations of the world. It has an unbroken record of being one of the world largest events covered by history, such as the great chronicle '*Mahawamsa*' and its' extended chronical '*Chulawamsa*' etc., which covers the 6th century BC to 19th century AD. In the 21st century, with the globalization of the world aviation industry, this subject of matter is popular day by day. But this industry was not a new concept to Southeast Asian people, as there is ample information spread out over prehistory and history in the symbolized inscriptions manner and texted formats respectively.

METHODOLOGY

Hence this study was conducted to reveal these intangible data, related to the ancient aviation of Sri Lanka directly or indirectly and to promote it globally. Research data was collected through literature studies and personal interviews. Furthermore, there are secured ancient oral traditional information related to the ancient aviation industry, and associated sites in Sri Lanka, which have been brought from generation to generation by local communities. Gathered data were read critically, analysed systematically and interpreted, based on the 21st century aviation technology and industry information.

RESULTS

In the results some evidence was found, especially regarding the concept on aerial attacks, which had been mentioned in the ancient Sri Lankan documents. The aerial attack identified in 20th century is now an established concept of the world, it is military terminology, which gives the meaning of airstrike or air ride. It is an offensive operation carried out by an aircraft (air to ground attack) on strategically important ground locations. But there is an undisputed masterpiece in classical *Sinhala* literature, known as '*AMAWATURA*' (The Flood of Nectar), the author was Layman *Gurulugomi*. In this ancient document the chapter '*Taming of the Ascetic*', clearly mentions the above 20th century modern concept of aerial attack, and capturing the states or countries far away from location of origin. The name of the aircraft, '*Kasthavahana*' made of '*Dimbul*' trunk, which is hard but very light weight timber. The meaning of the word, '*Kasthavahana*' is derived from two meaningful *Sinhala* words, '*Kasth*' and '*Vahana*', '*Kasth*' meaning wooden and '*Vahana*' meaning a chariot.

DISCUSSION

The *Gurulugomi*'s '*AMAWATURA*', which praises, the supreme virtues and the power of the Lord *Buddha*. Historians and epigraphist's opinions of this masterpiece of *Sinhala* literature was not the translated one from other source, and it might belong to the latter period of *Anuradhapura*, the first kingdom of Sri Lanka, or the early period of medieval Kingdom of Sri Lanka, *Polonnaruwa*. According to *Martin Wickramasinghe* (*Sinhala* author of the 20th

century in Sri Lanka) repeatedly pointed out that this text had been created by author himself, he justifies his ideas with reference to the writing style of Gurulugomi's *Sinhala* (native tongue)ⁱ. If it is the author's own creation, how did he know or imagine such an advanced concept; without having any reference, or did he get some special 'Ola' leaves inscriptions which were, not considered, while the great chronicle '*Mahawamsa*' inscribed. The great chronicle '*Mahawamsa*' content had been focused only for Buddhism and Buddhist cultural historical information in Sri Lanka. Furthermore, he claimed that '*AMAWATHURA*' is an intellectual, who cares more for reason than emotion. Written style of '*AMAWATURA*' is suitable for private, thoughtful and intellectual readingⁱⁱ. It is revealed that some of the 20th & 21st centuries concepts were established in ancient Sri Lankan civilizations, more than 1000 of years from the present date.

But the known past, the concepts of the aviation world of present day, as a military and civil aviation fractions have taken place after the invention of aircraft of *Wright* brothers and airborne in 1903 Dec 17. The *Wright* brothers faced many challenges to achieve such an invention in the 20th century. Their remarkable point was Military services formed as an Air Force to support arms services in the world. The name *Sir Lord Hugh Trenchard* was coming to the screen under this circumstance. *Trenchard* was a General of the British army. After World War-1, most of the aircraft were mainly used for the purpose of goods transportations to the land and sea engaged arms services. *Trenchard* has pointed out the requirement of separate Air arms services to British government, other than the spare aero operation branch or fraction of the land and sea arms services. With this concept, *Trenchard* has been described as a father of *Royal Air force*, and promoted to the highest ranked Marshal of the Airforce, furthermore he pointed out the aerial attack and strategic bombing concept to enemy territory before ground troops marched, this was stated in the year 1921.

Sir Load Hugh Trenchard is considered as the founder of above aerial attack and strategical bombing concept of the 20th Century. But the time period of ancient documents of Sri Lanka which gives the same concept for some older period than the *Trenchard* period. But these two different periods representing aviation technology might be not the same technology, definitely two difference platforms of aviation technologies. The most important point conceptually, both of them are almost the same. Hence this concept presented during the ancient period of Sri Lanka is the most important point to be understood in the thinking and imaginary capacity of the *Gurulugomi*. There is another document of *Gurulugomi*, which gives us the identical unique knowledge of astronomy. The '*DHARMAPRADEEPIKA*' has been identified and considered as *Gurulugomi*'s first poem, by Sinhala linguistics and historians. In this ancient document it is clearly mentioned about the size of an asteroid which is free falling from the lowest planetary system of the universe. The time period for the asteroid to reach Planet Earth and the distance to be covered is clearly identified by *Gurulugomi* poem.

CONCLUSION

There are many questions, to be discussed. How were this information acquired by *Gurulugomi* and ancient people? Is the same technology in existent now or any different? Views and thoughts of the above can be answered in the ongoing research work. The research-work is to establish active aviation tourism by establishing Aviation Archaeology in Sri Lanka. But it is confirmed that if anyone visited at least any sites of ancient kingdoms of Sri Lanka at

least one time, he or she would feel or realize that some unfilled gaps about the untouchable, unexplainable ancient technology existed during the civilization of one of the great tropical regional countries in the Indian Ocean.

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