

The King Vijaya of Thiri-Mingala Kyun

Maha Wi Za Ya Zyat Taw



Vijaya King

THE COMING OF VIJAYA

Introduction: - The story of **Vijaya** – (Wizaya in Burmese) is a well known story that relates about the continuation of *Buddha sasana* that Buddha had assigned to Sakka¹:

“ Buddha spoke to *Sakka*’ who stood there near him: ‘**VIJAYA (Wizaya)**, son of king *Sihabahu*, is come to Lanka from the country of Lala, together with seven hundred followers. In Lanka, O lord of gods, will my religion be established, therefore carefully protect him with his followers and Lanka”

It is a well known story that has been played at every **Zat (Play)** in Burma. It is legendary story that relates to the establishment of Buddhism outside of the main continent of India.

THE COMING OF VIJAYA

N the country of the **Vangas** in the Vanga capital there lived once a king of the Vangas. The daughter of the king of the *Kalingas* was that king's consort. By his spouse the king had a daughter; the *soothsayers prophesied her union with the king of beasts*. Very fair was she and very amorous and for shame the king and queen could not suffer her.

Alone she went forth from the house, desiring the joy of independent life; unrecognized she joined a caravan traveling to the Magadha country. In the Lala

¹ **Sakka** – the King of Deva – The King of Tavatimsa Heaven

country a lion attacked the caravan in the forest, the other folk fled this way and that, but she fled along the way by which the lion had come.

When the lion had taken his prey and was leaving the spot he beheld her from afar, love (for her) laid hold on him, and he came towards her with waving tail and ears laid back. Seeing him she bethought her of that prophecy of the soothsayers which she had heard, and without fear she caressed him stroking his limbs.

The lion, roused to fiercest passion by her touch, took her upon his back and bore her with all speed to his cave, and there he was united with her, and from this union with him the princess in time bore **twin-children, a son and a daughter**.

The son's hands and feet were formed like a lion's and therefore she named him ***Sihabahu*** (*Thiha Bahu*), but the daughter (she named) ***Sihasivali*** (*Thiha Thiwali*). When he was sixteen years old the son questioned his mother on the doubt (that had arisen in him): 'wherefore are you and our father so different, dear mother?' She told him all. Then he asked: 'Why do we not go forth (from here)?' And she answered: 'Thy father has closed the cave up with a rock.' Then he took that barrier before the great cave upon his shoulder and went (a distance of) fifty yojanas going and coming in one day.

Then (once), when the lion had, gone forth in search of prey, (Sihabahu) took his mother on his right shoulder and his young sister on his left, and went away with speed. They clothed themselves with branches of trees, and so came to a border-village and there, even at that time, was a son of the princess's uncle, a commander in the army of the *Yanga* king, to whom was given the rule over the border-country; and he was just then sitting under a banyan-tree overseeing the work that was done.

When he saw them he asked them (who they were) and they said; 'We are forest-folk'; the commander bade (his people) give them clothing; and this turned into splendid (garments). He had food offered to them on leaves and **by reason of their merit these were turned into dishes of gold**. Then, amazed, the commander asked them, 'Who are you?' The princess told him her family and clan. Then the commander took his uncle's daughter with him and went to the capital of the Vangas and married her.

When the lion, returning in haste to his cave, missed those three (persons), he was sorrowful, and grieving after his son he neither ate nor drank. Seeking for his children he went to the border-village and every village where he came was deserted by the dwellers there in.

And the border-folk came to the king and told him this:

A lion ravages thy country; ward off (this danger) O king!' Since he found none who could ward off (this danger) he had a thousand (pieces of money) led about the city on an elephant's back and this proclamation made: 'Let him who brings the lion

receive these!' And in like manner the monarch (offered) two thousand and three thousand. Twice did Sibabahu's mother restrain him. The third time without asking his mother's leave, Sihabāhu took the three thousand gold-pieces (as reward) for slaying his own father.

They presented the `youth to the king, and the king spoke thus to him: *`If thou shalt take the lion I will give thee at once the kingdom.'* And he went to the opening of the cave, and as soon as he saw from afar the lion who came forward, for love toward his son, he shot an arrow to slay him.

The arrow struck the lion's forehead but because of his tenderness (toward his son) it rebounded and fell on the earth at the youth's feet. And so it fell out three times, then did the king of beasts grow wrathful and the arrow sent at him struck him and pierced his body.

(Sihabahu) took the head of the lion with the mane and returned to his city. And just seven days had passed then since the death of the king of the Vangas. Since the king had no son the ministers, who rejoiced over his deed on hearing that he was the king's grandson and on recognizing his mother, met all together and said of one accord to the prince Sihabahu *`Be thou (our) king'*.

And he accepted the kingship but handed it over then to his mother's husband and he himself went with *Sihasivali* to the land of his birth. There he built a city, and they called it *Sihapura*, and in the forest stretching a hundred yojanas around he founded villages. In the kingdom of *Lala*, in that city did Sihabāhu, ruler of men, hold sway when he had made *Sihasivali* his queen. As time passed on his consort bore twin sons sixteen times, the eldest was named *Vijaya*, the second *Sumitta*; together there were thirty-two sons. In time the king consecrated *Vijaya* as prince-regent.

Vijaya was of evil conduct and his followers were even (like himself), and many intolerable deeds of violence were done by them. Angered by this the people told the matter to the king; the king, speaking persuasively to them, severely blamed. His son. But all fell out again as before, the second and yet the third time; and the angered people said to the king: *`Kill thy son.'*

Then did the king cause *Vijaya* and his followers, seven hundred men, to be shaven over half the head and put them on a ship and sent them forth upon the sea, and their wives and children also. The men, women, and children sent forth separately landed separately, each (company) upon an island, and they dwelt even there. The island where the children landed was called *Naggadipa* and the island where the women landed *Mahiladipaka*. But *Vijaya* landed at the haven called *Suppāraka*, but being there in danger by reason of the violence of his followers he embarked again.

The prince named VIJAYA, the valiant, landed in Lanka, in the region called Tambapanni on the day that the Tathagata lay down between the two twins like sala-trees to pass into nibbana.

Here ends **The Coming of Vijaya'**, in the Mahavamsa, compiled for the serene joy and emotion of the pious.

The King Vijaya

WHEN the Guide of the World, having accomplished the salvation of the whole world and having reached the utmost stage of blissful rest, was lying on the bed of his Nibbana; in the midst of the great assembly of gods, he, the great sage, the greatest of those who have speech, spoke to *Sakka*' who stood there near him: **VIJAYA** (*Wizaya*), son of king *Sihabahu*, is come to Lanka from the country of Lala, together with seven hundred followers. In Lanka, O lord of gods, will my religion be established, therefore carefully protect him with his followers and Lanka.

When the lord of gods heard the words of the Tathagata he from respect handed over the guardianship of Lanka to the god who is in color like the lotus.

And no sooner had the god received the charge from *Sakka* than he came speedily to Lanka and sat down at the foot of a tree in the guise of a wandering ascetic. And all the followers of VIJAYA came to him and asked him: 'What island is this, sir?' 'The island of Lanka, he answered. 'There are no men here, and here no dangers will arise.' And when he had spoken so and sprinkled water on them from his water-vessel, and had wound a thread about their hands he vanished through the air. And there appeared, in the form of a bitch, a *yakkhini*² who was an attendant (of *Kuvanna*)³ (*Kuwana*).

One of (VIJAYA's men) went after her, although he was forbidden by the prince (for he thought), 'Only where there is a village are dogs to be found.' Her mistress, a *yakkhini* named *Kuvanna*, sat at the foot of a tree spinning, as a woman hermit might.

When the man saw the pond and the woman-hermit sitting there, he bathed there and drank and taking young shoots of lotuses and water in lotus-leaves he came forth again. And she said to him: "Stay! Thou art my prey!". Then the man stood there as if fast bound. But because of the power of the magic thread she could not devour him, and though was entreated by the *yakkhini*, the man would not yield up the thread. Then the *yakkhini* seized him, and hurled who cried aloud into a chasm. And there in like manner she hurled (all) the seven hundred one by one after him.

² **Yakkhini** – female Yakka – **yakkha**: One of a special class of powerful "non-human" beings -- sometimes kindly, sometimes murderous and cruel -- corresponding roughly to the fairies and ogres of Western fairy tales. The female (*yakkhini*) is generally considered more treacherous than the male.

³ **Kuvane** – One of the Deva of the four Kings – who rule over the Yakkha.

And when they all did not return fear came upon VIJAYA; armed with the five weapons he set out, and when he beheld the beautiful pond, where he saw no footstep of any man coming forth, but saw that woman-hermit there, he thought: 'Surely my men have been seized by this woman.' And he said to her, 'Lady, hast thou not seen my men?' 'What dost thou want with thy people, prince?' she answered. 'Drink thou and bathe.'

Then was it clear to him: 'This is surely a *yakkhini*, she knows my rank,' and swiftly, uttering his name, he came at him drawing his bow. He caught the *yakkhini* in the noose about the neck, and seizing her hair with his left hand he lifted his sword in the right and cried: 'Slave! Give me back my men, or I slay thee!' Then tormented by fear, the *yakkhini* parlayed him for her life. 'Spare my life, sir, I will give thee a kingdom and do thee a woman's service and other services as thou wilt.'

And that he might not be betrayed he made the *yakkhini* swear an oath, and as soon as the charge was laid on her, 'Bring hither my men with all speed,' she brought them to that place. When he said, 'These men are hungry,' she showed them rice and other (foods) and goods of every kind that had been in the ships of those traders whom she had devoured.

(VIJAYA's) men prepared the rice and the condiments, and when they had first set them before the prince they ate all of them.

When the *yakkhini* had taken the first portions (of the meal) that VIJAYA handed to her, she was well pleased, and assuming the lovely form of a sixteen year old maiden she approached the prince adorned with all the ornaments. At the foot of a tree she made a splendid bed, well covered around with a tent, and adorned with a canopy. Seeing this, the king's son looking forward to the time to come, for her to be his spouse and lay (with her) blissfully on that bed; and all his men encamped around the tent.

As the night went on he heard the sounds of music and singing, and asked the *yakkhini*, who was lying near him: 'What means this noise?' And the *yakkhini*: 'I will bestow kingship on my lord and all the *yakkhas* must be slain, for (else) the *yakkhas* will slay me, for it was through me that men have taken up their dwelling (in Lanka).'

And she said to the prince: 'Here there is a *yakkha*-city called [Sirisavatthu](#); the daughter of the chief of the *yakkhas* who dwells in the city of Lanka has been brought hither, and her mother is to come. And for the wedding there is high festival, lasting seven days; therefore there is this noise, for a feast multitude is gathered together. Even to-day do thou destroy the *yakkhas*, for afterwards it will no longer be possible.'

He replied: 'How can I slay the yakkhas who are invisible?' 'Where so ever they may be,' she said, 'I will utter cries, and where thou shall hear that sound, strike! And by my magic power shall thy weapon fall upon their bodies.'

Since he listened to her and did even (as she said) he slew all the yakkhas, and when he had fought victoriously he himself put on the garments of the yakkha king and bestowed the other remnant on one and another of his followers.

When he had spent some days at that spot he went to **Tambapanni**. There VIJAYA founded the city of **Tambapanni** and dwelt there, together with the yakkhini, surrounded by his ministers.

When those who were commanded by VIJAYA landed from their ship, they sat down wearied, resting their hands upon the ground and since their hands were reddened by touching the dust of the red earth that region and also the island were (named) Tambapanni. But the king Sihabāhu, since he had slain the lion (was called) Sihala and, by reason of the ties between him and them, all those (followers of VIJAYA) were also (called) **Sihala**.

Here and there did VIJAYA's ministers found villages. **Anuradhagama** was built by a man of that name near the Kadamba river; the chaplain Upatissa built Upatissagama on the bank of the Qambhira river, to the north of Anu radhagama Three other ministers built, each for himself, Ujjeni, Uruvela, and the city of Vijita.

When they had founded settlements in the land the ministers all came together and spoke thus to the prince: 'Sire, consent to be consecrated as king.' But, in spite of their demand, the prince refused the consecration, unless a maiden of a noble house were consecrated as queen (at the same time).

But the ministers, whose minds were eagerly bent upon the consecrating of their lord, and who, although the means were difficult, had overcome all anxious fears about the matter, sent people, entrusted with many precious gifts, jewels, pearls, and so forth, to the city of Madhura in southern (India), to woo the daughter of the Pandu king for their lord, devoted (as they were) to their ruler; and they also (sent to woo) the daughters of others for the ministers and retainers.

When the messengers were quickly come by ship to the city of Madhura they laid the gifts and letter before the king. The king took counsel with his ministers, and since he was minded to send his daughter (to Lanka) he, having first received also daughters of others for the ministers (of VIJAYA), nigh upon a hundred maidens, proclaimed with beat of drum:

'Those who are willing to let their daughter depart for Lanka shall provide their daughters with a double store of clothing. They shall then place them at the doors of their houses. By this sign shall we (know that we may) take them to ourselves.'

When he had thus obtained many maidens and had given compensation to their families, he sent his daughter, bedecked with all her ornaments, and all that was needful for the journey, and all the maidens whom he had fitted out, according to their rank, elephants withal and horses and waggons, worthy of a king, and craftsmen and a thousand families of the eighteen guilds, entrusted with a letter to the conqueror VIJAYA. All this multitude of men disembarked at Mahatittha; for that very reason is that landing-place known as Mahatittha.

VIJAYA had one son and one daughter by the yakkhini; when he now heard that the princess had arrived, he said to the yakkhini: `Go thou now, dear one, leaving the two children behind; men are ever in fear of superhuman beings.'

But when she heard this she was seized with fear of the yakkhas; then he said (again) to the yakkhini: `Delay not! I will bestow on thee an offering by (spending) a thousand (pieces of money).' When she had again and again besought him (in vain) she took her two children and departed for **Lankapura**, though fearing that evil should come of it.

She set the children down outside and went, herself, into that city. When the yakkhas in the city recognized the yakkhini, in their terror they took her for a spy and there was great stir among them; but one who was violent killed the yakkhini, with a single blow of his fist.

But her uncle, on the mother's side, a yakkha, went forth from the city and when he saw the children he asked them:

Whose children are you?' and hearing that they were **Kuvanna**'s he said: `here, has your mother been slain, and slay you also if they see you: (therefore) flee swiftly!'

Fleeing with speed they went from thence to the Sumanaküta. **The brother, the elder of the two, when he grew up took his sister, the younger, for his wife, and multiplying with sons and daughters, they dwelt, with the king's leave, there in Malaya. From these are sprung the Pulinda**

The envoys of the Pandu king delivered up to the prince VIJAYA the gifts and the (maidens) with the king's daughter at their head. When VIJAYA had offered hospitality and bestowed honors on the envoys he bestowed the maidens, according to their rank, upon his ministers and retainers. According to custom the ministers in full assembly consecrated VIJAYA king and appointed a great festival.

Then king VIJAYA consecrated the daughter of the Pandu king with solemn ceremony as his queen; he bestowed wealth on his ministers, and every year he sent to his wife's father a shell-pearl worth twice a hundred thousand (pieces of money).

When he had forsaken his former evil way of life, VIJAYA, the lord of men, ruling over all Lanka in peace and righteousness reigned, as is known, in the city of **Tambapanni**, thirty-eight years.

Here ends the Consecrating of VIJAYA', in the Mahavamsa compiled for the serene joy and emotion of the pious.

References:

1. Mahavamsa –

The Great Chronicle of Lanka - Translated from Pali by Wilhelm Geiger

