

Vijaya: The Dawn of Ancient Sri Lanka

In the annals of ancient history, the name Vijaya shines brightly as the legendary founder of the Sinhalese kingdom of Sri Lanka. His arrival on the island's shores marked the beginning of a rich and vibrant civilization that would leave an enduring legacy for centuries to come.



Vijaya: Ancient Times Sri Lanka by Julie Sykes

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The Prince from Bengal

According to ancient chronicles, Vijaya was a prince from the Kalinga kingdom in eastern India. His father was Sinhabahu, a lion-faced prince, and his mother was a princess named Suppadevi. As a young man, Vijaya was banished from his homeland after being framed for a crime he did not commit.

With a band of loyal followers, Vijaya set sail in search of a new home. They sailed across the Bay of Bengal and eventually reached the shores of Sri Lanka, then known as Tambapanni.

The Landing at Tambapanni

Upon their arrival in Sri Lanka, Vijaya and his followers encountered the local inhabitants, a primitive tribe known as the Yakkhas. Led by their chieftain Kuveni, the Yakkhas initially resisted the newcomers.

However, Vijaya's diplomacy and promise of marriage to Kuveni won over the Yakkhas. Vijaya and Kuveni were wed, and the two groups formed an alliance.

The Founding of Anuradhapura

With the support of the Yakkhas, Vijaya established the first permanent settlement in Sri Lanka at Anuradhapura. This city would become the capital of the Sinhalese kingdom and a major center of Buddhist culture and learning.

Vijaya reigned for 38 years, during which time he established a system of government and introduced various reforms. He also encouraged trade with other parts of India and promoted the development of agriculture.

The Birth of Buddhism in Sri Lanka

One of the most significant events during Vijaya's reign was the arrival of Buddhism in Sri Lanka. According to legend, a Buddhist monk named Mahinda arrived on the island in the year 247 BCE and converted King Devanampiyatissa to the new faith.

Buddhism quickly spread throughout Sri Lanka, becoming the dominant religion of the Sinhalese people. Anuradhapura became a major center of Buddhist scholarship and pilgrimage.

The Legacy of Vijaya

Vijaya's legacy continues to live on in Sri Lanka today. He is hailed as the father of the Sinhalese nation and the founder of one of the world's most ancient Buddhist civilizations.

Anuradhapura, the city he established, remains a vibrant center of Buddhist culture and a testament to the enduring legacy of this legendary prince.

The story of Vijaya is a captivating tale of adventure, intrigue, and the birth of a great civilization. His arrival in Sri Lanka marked the beginning of a rich and vibrant history that continues to fascinate us today.

In the pages of "Vijaya: Ancient Times Sri Lanka," you will delve into the myths, legends, and historical accounts surrounding this enigmatic figure. You will learn about his struggles, his triumphs, and the enduring legacy he left behind.

So come, join us on a journey back in time to the ancient kingdom of Sri Lanka. Discover the story of Vijaya, the prince who founded a civilization that would leave an indelible mark on the world.



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