

Gender and Power
in the Premodern World



RELIGION, GENDER, AND POLITICS IN MEDIEVAL SRI LANKA

THE RECONSTRUCTION OF BUDDHIST KINGSHIP, ca. 1070–1215

by
BRUNO M. SHIRLEY

ARC HUMANITIES PRESS



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PREFACE

THIS BOOK HAD its origins as a dissertation, and so I first pay homage to my teachers: to my dissertation committee, Lawrence McCrea, Daniel Boucher, and Tamara Loos; to my language teachers, particularly Bandara Herath; and above all to Anne Blackburn, who believed in this project from its earliest inception. I am grateful to Alastair Gornall, who generously read every page of the manuscript and provided key interventions; to Trent Walker, who patiently answered many questions about Southeast Asian languages, texts, and inscriptions, and allowed me to cite forthcoming work; and to Tyler A. Lehrer, who accompanied me on several fieldwork trips. The index was prepared by Carlos Garcia-Jane. Miranda Abrahams, Sarah R. Meiners, and Ashleigh Pearson were kind enough to proof-read several chapters. My word limit does not allow adequate thanks to the many other friends and colleagues who generously answered questions and helped further shape my thinking. At Arc Humanities, I am grateful to Danna Messer, Tania Colwell, and to the anonymous peer reviewer, whose insights considerably strengthened the work. All errors remain my own.

The bulk of the research was completed during graduate studies in Asian Studies at Cornell University; the bulk of the writing was completed while a guest lecturer in Religious Studies at Te Herenga Waka/Victoria University of Wellington, and in Transcultural Studies at the Ruprecht-Karls-Universität Heidelberg. I am grateful to these institutions, and to my friends and colleagues therein, for their support. The American Institute for Sri Lankan Studies supported several fieldwork trips and provided a welcome home base in Colombo. I am grateful to the Postgraduate Institute of Archaeology, and particularly to Jagath Weerasinghe, for their flexibility during COVID-19 disruptions to fieldwork plans. I was honoured to carry out research for this project as an American Council of Learned Societies/Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Dissertation Fellow in Buddhist Studies. Open-access publication of the book was made possible through a further grant from the Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation Global.

Thanks are due, above all, to Natalia, without whose love and support this could never have been possible.

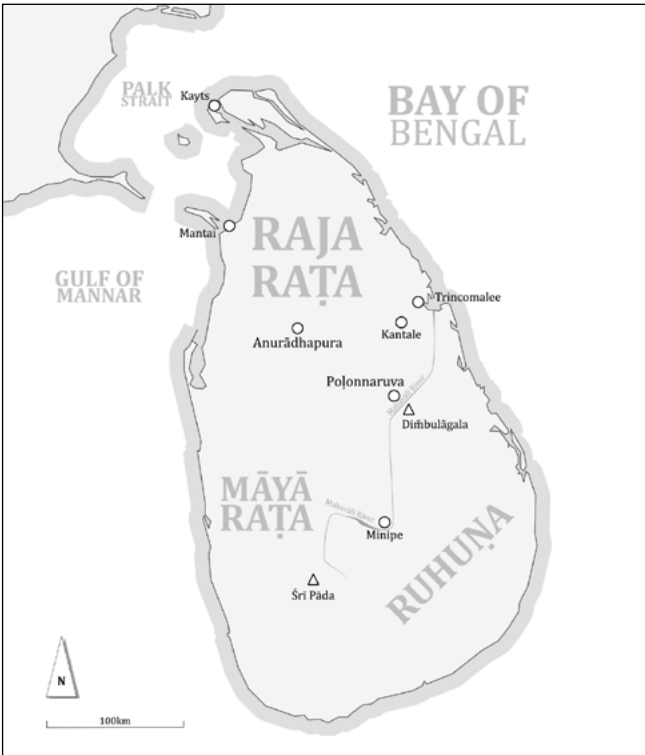


Figure 1. Map of Sri Lanka, showing relevant sites. Map by the author, using geospatial data from OpenStreetMaps, available under the Open Database Licence.

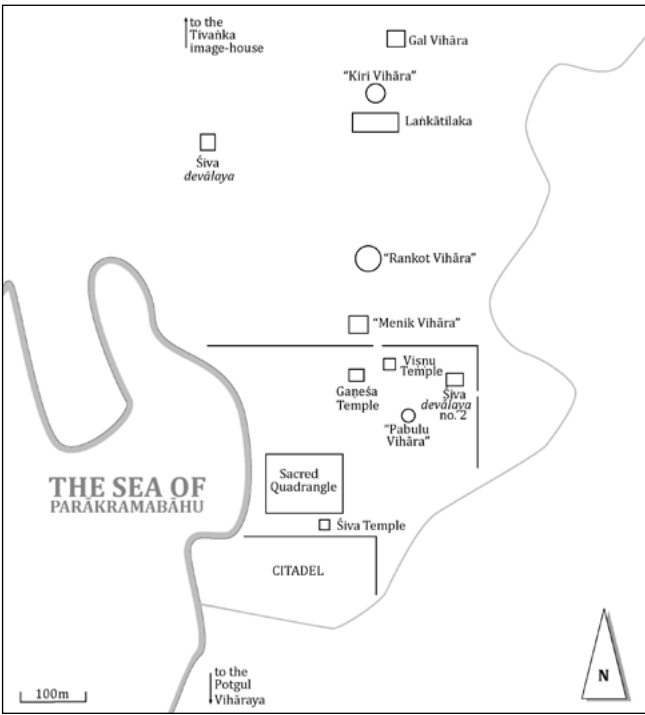


Figure 2. Map of Pojonnaruva, showing relevant sites. Map by the author, using geospatial data from OpenStreetMaps, available under the Open Database Licence.

CONVENTIONS

THE SOURCES IN this book move fluidly between four languages, each often containing variant spellings and loanwords. I note the original spelling in translations, but for consistency prefer the Sanskrit (Skt.) variants in-text. I note the Pali (P.), Sinhala (Sin.), and Tamil (T.) equivalents when relevant. These four languages are Romanized following ISO 15919, with two minor modifications. I use ä/ã rather than æ/ǣ for the sixth Sinhala vowel and, following Sri Lankan manuscript practice, I do not mark long ē and ō in Sanskrit and Pali (so Sin. *bōsat* but Skt. *bodhisattva*). Thai and Khmer are Romanized following Trent Walker's "Unified Transliteration System," which best preserves the etymological relationship to Pali and Sanskrit.

When possible, I present the names of individuals in Sanskrit (so Parākramabāhu rather than P. Parakkamabāhu or Sin. Pārakuṃba; Rājarāja rather than T. Irācarāca). When no Sanskrit name is witnessed, as in the case of some consorts and officials, then I use the variant favoured in their own inscriptions. For institutions which primarily operated in Tamil (the Cōḷa Empire, the Vēḷaikkāra merchant/mercenary guild) I use the Tamil variant of their names. I use modern placenames (in the common transliteration) only when referring to geographic areas (e.g., "in what is now Kantale"), and otherwise favour historical placenames in full transcription, based on the language predominantly spoken in that area (e.g., "the Kantaḷāy *brahmādeya*").

All translations are my own, unless otherwise noted. My translations of inscriptions are based on the editions in *Inscriptions of Ceylon (IC)* and *Tamil Inscriptions in Sri Lanka (TISL)* respectively, with any modifications noted in footnotes. I refer to inscriptions and their editions within these texts by volume and number (i.e., IC 6.12 is the twelfth inscription in the sixth volume); when citing the opinions of these texts' editors, I instead use volume and page numbers separated by a colon.

Dates follow those of da Silva's *History of Sri Lanka*.

