

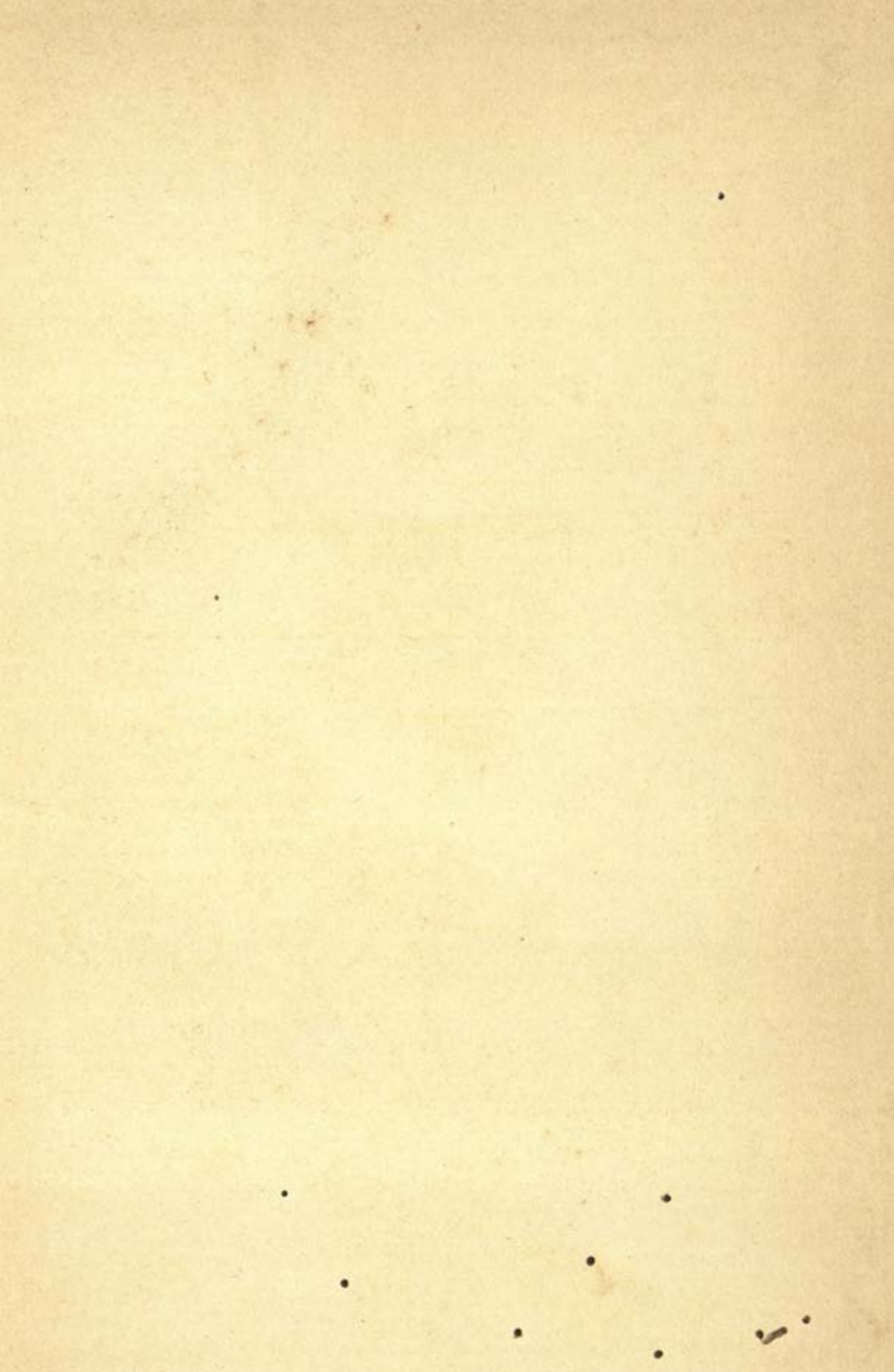
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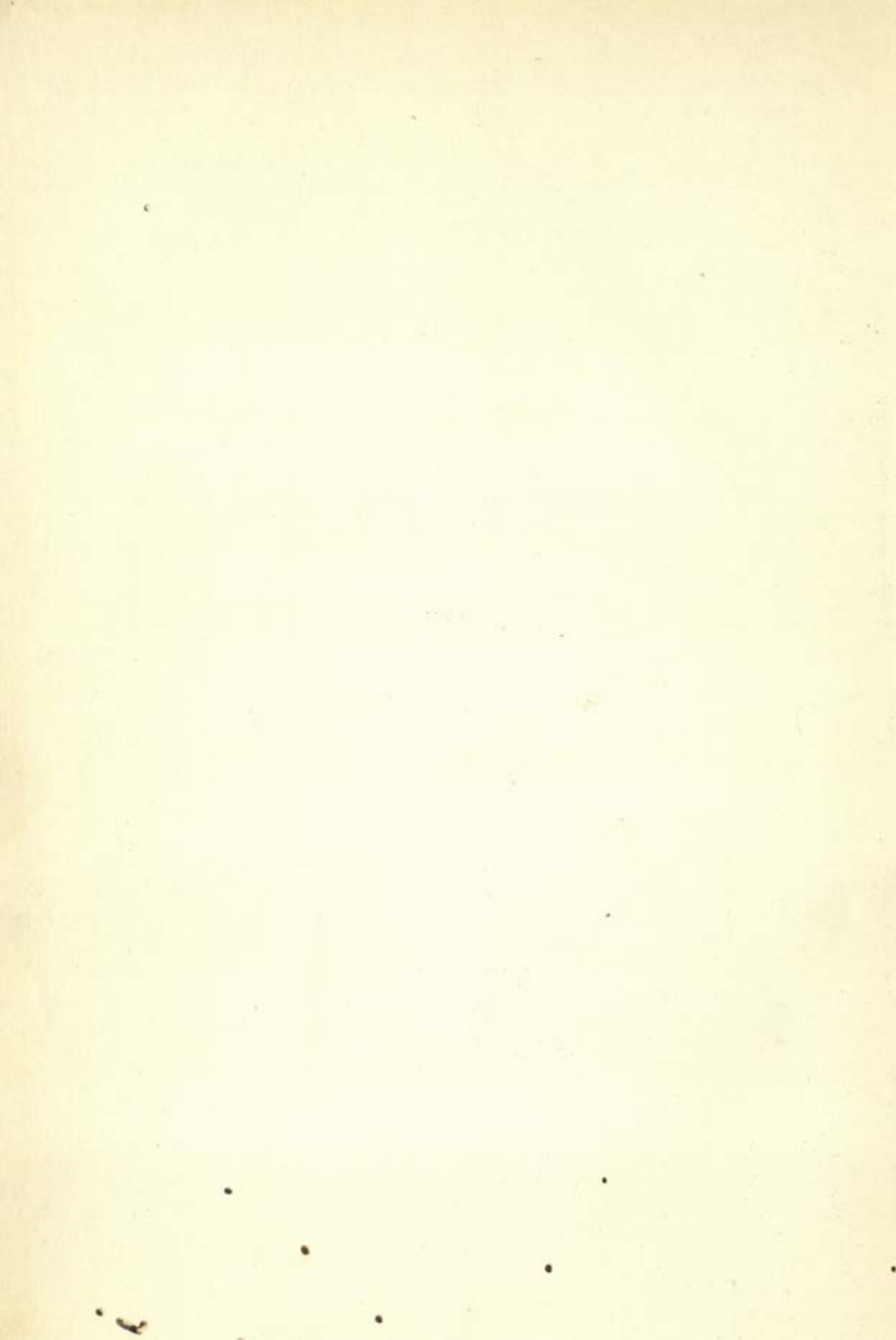
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EXORCISM AND THE ART OF HEALING  
IN CEYLON





# EXORCISM AND THE ART OF HEALING IN CEYLON

BY

PAUL WIRZ

WITH 51 PLATES AND 55 TEXT FIGURES

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W. Wirz



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## FOREWORD

This work is the result of repeated periods of residence in Ceylon, mainly on the south coast in the neighbourhood of Galle, or to be more exact, in Dodanduva (seven miles north-west of Galle) which I had chosen as my place of residence. It contains my own experiences and reports from the natives themselves, i.e. descriptions of the kaleidoscopic variety of ceremonies which I was able to see in various places, as well as the explanations and the legends on which they are based which the conducting exorcists related to me. Of course, not all the medicine men who were considered could explain themselves properly. Here as elsewhere only a few have the ability to say what they know, coherently and to the point. Because of the intrinsic nature of the subject, there can be no question of any exhaustiveness in the treatment, for the legends as well as the related ceremonies deviate from each other considerably and some of the ceremonies are limited to a quite definite territory. This book makes no pretence at being strictly scientific. Its purpose is to acquaint a wider circle of intelligent readers, in a readily understandable form, with the world of thought and the numerous ancient ceremonies which exist undisturbed side by side with Buddhism and which are carried out with good or bad intentions. Those who wish to go into the various questions more deeply can refer to the extensive literature that exists about Ceylon.

As far as the way of writing the Sinhalese words is concerned, I have, except for some deviations, followed Clough's Singhalese-English Dictionary as closely as possible. Any differences between the pronunciation of d, t, l, n, and s have been disregarded, long vowels are printed with a line over them, and v has everywhere been substituted for w, also in placenames.

The drawings of the figures in the text were made by a young Sinhalese from Dodanduva.



## THE SINHALESE POINT OF VIEW REGARDING THE ORIGIN OF AILMENTS AND DISEASES

Every people, no matter how primitive, how poor materially or spiritually, has a certain, perhaps imperfect and vague, conception of the origin of diseases. One may come across the most curious conceptions or even contradictions, but some idea of the origin of diseases is always there and it usually looms large in the whole attitude to the various problems of life and existence of people at a low level of culture. The Sinhalese, with which we are here exclusively concerned, are no exception in this respect. Their whole life, thinking, and striving is, as can be noticed even after a superficial acquaintance with them, always taken up by constant precautions, defences, and compensations, by a constant fight against invisible forces and foes of all kinds, against a host of spirits and demons, against pernicious powers arising from the planets and constellations, from natural phenomena and cosmic forces, and last but not least, against the evil eye and evil magic practised by wicked and insidious people to the harm and ruin of others. However, the Sinhalese are not quite defenceless against all these attacks from within and without.

Knowledge, acquired by centuries of experience and recorded in numerous documents, the practice of magic, exorcism, and astrological wisdom, most of which is inherited from India but some also being traced back to much earlier connections with the neighbouring peoples of the Indian mainland and archipelago, have all contributed in moulding the medical science of the Sinhalese into a unique form and system.

Very much has been written about the medical science of the Sinhalese. There is a number of books such as *Materia Medica* by Attygalle, mentioned later, in which the very numerous vegetable, animal, and mineral remedies and their uses are enumerated. Other works exist dealing thoroughly with healing as a part of medical science, without, however, mentioning anything about the occult nature of the native medical science. A great number of other works is concerned with this aspect, most of which are written in the Sinhalese script and language on palm-leaves, and are as good as inaccessible to people not learned in the language. They discuss the origin of the illnesses caused by the invisible powers and forces and their treatment with the help of invocations, rites involving offerings, and complicated ceremonies, which we can simply place in the realm of occult science and which cannot stand up under a real scientific explanation. For the Sinhalese, however, the one is just as much a science as the other. To them, each is a science in itself and both medical science and occultism have their acknowledged rights and it will never occur that the two branches of science come into conflict with each other.



In the ceremonies mentioned, one comes across the most diverse conceptions and ideas. Besides the Pantheon of spiritist beliefs in demons and ghosts, there exist ancient animistic conceptions as well as grotesque growths of Hinduism and Buddhism. Finally, even they do not lack a definite scientific knowledge which likewise is age-old and which in the course of time has acquired a considerable reputation without, however, conflicting with the host of gross superstitions and ghosts.

In Ceylon, no less than by the people of neighbouring India, the sphere of pathology and medical science is extraordinarily large. At any rate, it is by no means inferior to that of the Balinese, about which we are well-informed through the well-known monograph of W. Weck<sup>1</sup>. On the contrary, one may say that the Sinhalese with their almost fantastic abundance of different practices and ceremonies occupy a unique position and that in this respect they are hardly surpassed by any other people.

As medical practitioner in our sense, the Sinhalese know only the *vedarāla*<sup>2</sup> who, indeed, also corresponds most nearly to what we understand as a "medical practitioner" or better "natural healer". His knowledge is acquired partly from the above-mentioned books and writings and partly from an experienced teacher. In addition, they naturally seek to extend their horizon through their own experience and to pass on the knowledge so gained again to others—his pupils. The *vedarāla* is one of the best known figures in every Sinhalese village and is consulted or called upon in all possible cases of illness.

Further, we have the *ḍura* or *kattadiya*, the exorcist (or devil-charmer), who is no less prominent than the *vedarāla*, although by no means so respected a personality. This is also due to the fact that he belongs to a lower, less honoured caste. His knowledge rests on completely different foundations. It is not an empirically gained knowledge, nor one that is acquired by practical experience and passed on by his ancestors; it is an inherited spiritual property, without any real basis, but which is nevertheless acknowledged and carried on. It is only among the "Moderns" that doubt and contempt are expressed about this old inherited spiritual property and that is, after all, to be found everywhere. For most of these "moderns", however, it is only the desire to show an outward superiority, while fundamentally they are and think exactly like all the others. The domain of the *ḍura* is the one with which we shall be mostly occupied here. In reality, it is a religion, an age-old folk-religion, belief in demons and spirits, mixed with ancient animistic conceptions and practices (as we find everywhere in India and especially in the Indian archipelago) and with beliefs in occult powers originating from the stars and the universe in general.

Besides the *ḍura* there is the *bandhanaya* who is also concerned with the per-

<sup>1</sup> Wölff. Weck, *Heilkunde und Volkstum auf Bali*. Ferd. Enke Verlag, Stuttgart 1937.

<sup>2</sup> *Vedarāla* is derived from *veda* = knowledge, philosopher. It is, however, only a general term. In speech the expressions used are always "*veda mahateja*" = great master, or "*veda hami*" = venerable master.

formance of occult and magic ceremonies, based mainly on astrological wisdom. His territory is thus actually that of astrology and he is occupied with everything to do with the exorcising or rendering harmless of bad or unfavourable influences coming from the stars and constellations as well as from the zodiac and moon-houses. He also undertakes the production of the corresponding amulets which are of very great significance to the Sinhalese.

Then we have the *kapuā* (or *kapuvā*), again quite another personality. He enjoys a somewhat higher reputation than the *ḍura* and *bandhanaya*, but less than the *vedarāla*. He also practices medical science, although only in a certain manner or a certain part of it. He is a "servant of the Deities", i.e. a priest, a people's priest of the old pre-Buddhist religion, which we can simply call "Hinduism", even though it differs from present-day Hinduism in many respects. The *kapuā* has at his disposal a more or less considerable store of knowledge on which his activity is based.

His activities, like those of the *ḍura*, have an occult character and are exercised in all possible cases, particularly when danger of infectious diseases is present. Like the *ḍura* he deals with ghosts and demons, but comes into contact with superior deities upon whom he calls and to whom he makes offerings and whose favour he strives to gain by performing the traditional rites and ceremonies. Indeed, the *kapuā* considers himself to stand higher than the *ḍura*, on whom he looks down with a certain contempt, which is not to be wondered at. They both believe that their own theories and practices are the only true and correct ones. In reality, they are both concerned with quite different spheres and view-points and it never happens that an argument arises between the *ḍura* and *kapuā*.

But the people busying themselves with the woes and welfare of their fellow-men is not yet at an end. There are still the astrologers (*ganitaya*)<sup>1</sup> and the fortune-teller (*sāstra-kariya*)<sup>2</sup>. Also these practise with occult sciences which always touch on the problems of medical science. Each one does it in his own way, according to directions and methods taken over from his ancestors and further developed. They have been put down on palm-leaves, but are unfortunately widely scattered and are not accessible for everyone. They keep their fund of knowledge very carefully which they do not give away to anybody, just as they guard their manuscripts which can only be bought with difficulty. The pupil copies those of his teacher and preserves them since they represent an almost priceless treasure. He would rather go hungry and starve than light-heartedly exchange one of his manuscripts for money.

And now let us return to the *vedarāla*. He is a man in whom everyone trusts and is the nearest to what we can consider as a medical practitioner. In contrast to all the others he is not concerned with occult things, although he is no less convinced of the successful activities of the *ḍura*, *bandhanaya*, and *kāpua*, than of his own. His knowledge, acquired and extended in the course of centuries, is recorded in

<sup>1</sup> *Ganinava* = to count, reckon, calculate. The *ganitaya* mostly calculates horoscopes.

<sup>2</sup> *Sāstra-kariya* = interpreter of symbols and scripts, one who knows about scripts (*sāstra* = symbol, character, science; *kariya* or *karya* = origin, motive, action).



numerous documents and is, therefore, essentially unchangeable. It is the old Indian folk-medicine to which more attention is again being paid although it seemed for a time that it would have to give way to modern medical science. To-day there are numerous schools in India and Ceylon in which this *Ayurvedic* is taught, and also hospitals which enjoy great popularity. An ordinary village *vedarāla*, however, cannot ordinarily boast of such a schooling and training and most of them remain poor bunglers their whole life. But the main point is that their knowledge rests on a real foundation and this, no doubt, contributes to the reputation which they enjoy everywhere.

As in our medical profession, there are many kinds of specialists among the *vedarāla*. One will deal only with internal illnesses, another exclusively with surgery, still others with the treatment of skin diseases and abscesses, and the *sarpa-vedu* deal with snake-bites and know the remedies for them. It goes without saying that there are veterinary surgeons (*gana-vedu*) for horses, cows, and dogs, etc. Most *vedarāla* have their own chemist's shop, the stock of which consists mainly of herbs, roots, barks of trees, seeds, plant and animal oils and fats, and also animal substances, minerals, and metals. These products serve as constituents of remedies (*ausādea*, singular; *ausāda*, plural; or *behēd*, singular; *behēta*, plural), when they are not themselves used individually without further preparation as remedies. The collection of herbs is usually the business of the *vedarāla*, although other people also do it. They are called *behēd badu kada-kariya*, herb collectors. Again, others collect and sell animal products or minerals which are used as medicines. There are *vedarāla* who know about the preparation of different oils and who cure their patients with them (*tēl-vedu*, oil *vedu*); others are particularly concerned with the preparation of remedies from metals (*sinduram behēd*).

When a *vedarāla* is called to a patient, he goes immediately and as often as is necessary. He supplies the patient with the remedies and gives the instructions necessary, and directions as to diet, etc. The *vedarāla* does not belong to a definite caste but in general it is only people from higher castes who become members of this profession. In any case, as has already been mentioned, he stands socially far above the "devil-charmer", the *kapuā*, and the astrologer. Occasionally, one meets with a woman *vedarāla*, who, of course, only deals with female patients, but their number is small.

## THE ART OF HEALING IN ANCIENT INDIA AND CEYLON

As in neighbouring India, medical science and healing were earnestly practised in Ceylon, as early as the beginning of history. In a description of the old royal city Anuradhapura by Pandukabhaya in 377 B.C., it is mentioned that five hundred chandalas (people of a low caste) were entrusted with keeping the streets of the city clean, and another one hundred and fifty were charged with keeping the cemeteries in order. In the city itself, sheds were erected for housing the patients, and



of a later king, Dutugemunu (101 B.C.), it is reported that he had eighteen hospitals built. He also wrote a famous work on medicine, the *Saratha-sangraha*, which served as a text-book for a long time. Another Sinhalese king, Buddhadasa (341 A.D.), is said to have had considerable medical knowledge, which made him famous far and wide, and to have had numerous hospitals constructed which were run by doctors paid by the state. A hospital which, for that time, was very big, was built by Parakrama Bahu the Great (1164—89 A.D.). It could house several hundred patients. Each patient was given a male or female servant and strict rules were laid down as the behaviour of the patients and hired personnel. Parakrama Bahu did not neglect to see that the young people, who had dedicated their lives to the medical profession, received the most careful and thorough training possible. This made the doctors of that period famous far and wide. Everything possible was done to increase the medical knowledge of the doctors and to further medicine in all directions. It is of particular interest that a doctor of that time left an accurate description of diabetes and also made the observation that the urine of diabetic patients contains a high percentage of glucose.

It is natural that the development of medical science and knowledge in India had a great effect on that of neighbouring Ceylon. The classic works of the Indian scientists Charaka and Susruta were of particular importance and as a consequence symptomatology was much more thoroughly studied and a great number of remedies for combatting diseases was discovered. The knowledge of anatomy was, for that time, astonishingly great and the doctors could be proud of it and take advantage of it. On the other hand, however, as is only to be expected, much nonsense was believed in and taught. The idea that the causes of many illnesses are foreign bodies which in one way or another manage to enter the body and which must be removed by the doctor goes back, in particular, to Charaka; Susruta's teaching dealt with sprains and dislocations.

The greatest figure in the old Indian science is, without doubt, the famous Jivaka, who was of royal descent and a contemporary of Gautama Buddha, and lived thus in the sixth century B.C. He is said to have gained his medical knowledge in the then famous city of Taxila, which later became a centre of science. It is told of him that, after seven years of study, he asked his teacher when he would be able to practice medicine independently. Instead of answering his question, his teacher told him to go and collect all plants within a seven mile range which were of use in medicine. After several days Jivaka returned and said that there was no plant which could not be used in one or another illness—in other words, every plant is a remedy—a dogma which he later extended to the animal and mineral kingdoms.

The methods and remedies as employed by Jivaka were most extraordinary and his manner and kind of diagnosis is proof of his great shrewdness. Operations were also carried out with great skill, including Caesarian sections and treatment of cranial tumours, an accurate description of which Jivaka left behind. Considering the times, he also performed great things in the field of psychological medicine.

With the appearance of Buddhism, the study of anatomy and medicine seems to have suffered many set-backs and in inverse ratio to the rate with which the new teachings won ground. However, another branch of this science made gratifying progress instead. Great attention was paid to remedies and the teachings of *ahimsa* and the nursing of the sick and infirm were made of the first importance. The new teachings introduced the protection of animals as a consequence of the awakened sense of sympathy and understanding in the living world around them. It was in the time of kind Asoka that medicine began to extend itself, to be effective practically as a philanthropic science all over the country and also to fertilize successfully neighbouring Ceylon.

### THE REALM OF THE ART OF HEALING

According to an experienced *vedarāla*, to whom I am indebted for a great part of the material collected, the whole field of medical science comprises eight branches which have the following names:

1. Saliya,
2. Salakiya,
3. Kaya-jigisha,
4. Bhūta-viya,
5. Kaumāra or Bhrutiya-jigisha,
6. Agada tantra,
7. Vadi-karana-tantra,
8. Rasāyana-tantra.

To the first group belong all surgical treatments with whatever instrument, e.g. scalpels, scissors, needles, etc.<sup>1</sup>

The second group includes injections which must be done by the so-called "*salaki(ya)*".<sup>2</sup>

The third group, the "*kaya-jigisha*" (*kaya* = body; *jigisha* = emulation), is that of internal ailments, particularly infectious diseases such as dysentery, typhus, cholera, malaria, etc., but also those of the mind and the nervous system, insanity, etc. These originate through infection, wrong nourishment, colds, drinking impure water, and through the eating of unclean food.

In the fourth group, "*bhūta-viya*", are all illnesses (*viya*) which are caused by ghosts and demons, the *bhūta* and other beings<sup>3</sup>, also those which certain gods

<sup>1</sup> The expression "*saliya*" is not quite clear.

<sup>2</sup> The *salaki(ya)* is a kind of *vedarāla* who chiefly or exclusively administers injections.

<sup>3</sup> The *bhūta* are certain demonic beings who are believed to live in trees, stroll about the bush, and who molest the people whom they meet. They are, however, very much less spoken about than the other demonic and ghostly apparitions, the *yakku*, *raksho*, and *prêteo*. The *yakku* and the *prêteo*, in particular, are a menace to men, and must therefore be restrained and appeased by various offering rituals. The most dreaded ones are the *yakku* (singular masculine = *yakka*; singular feminine = *yakkini*, plural feminine = *yakkiniyo*). Another name for them especially



decree as punishment for an offence (*dēviyo-dōsa* = epidemics sent by the gods), illnesses caused by the unfavourable influence of the planets and constellations (*graha-lēda* = planet-diseases), and finally those which are due to the "evil eye" or "evil talk" (*vas-dōs*). These illnesses are treated by the *ḍura* (*kattadiya*),\* the *bandhanaya*, or even by the *kapuā*, but never by the *vedarāla*.

The group "*kaumāra*" or "*bhrutiya-jigisha*" comprises the illnesses of children and infants. They are caused by incorrect nourishment, colds, or heredity. They are dealt with by the *vedarāla*.

The "*agada tantra*" (*agada* = medicament; *tantra* = treatment) are symptoms of poisoning caused by animal or plant poisons, or rotten food, etc.

By "*yadi-karana-tantra*" (*vadi* = wise, learned; *karana* = body, organ, cause, motive; *tantra* = treatment, medicine, spell) is understood sexual weakness, impotence. The treatment of this group also belongs to the *vedarāla*.

Finally, to the "*rasāyana-tantra*" (*rasāyana* = elixir of life; *tantra* = treatment, medicine, spell) belong the chronic illnesses which are incurable or which only in exceptional cases can be cured, i.e. if the disease is not yet too far advanced. Among them are cancer, elephantiasis, beri-beri, leprosy, syphilis, etc. For these diseases special remedies must be used, whose composition is known only to the *vedarāla*,

common in the formulae (*mantra*), is *yaksha*(*ya*) and feminine *yakshini*. In the following, however, we shall employ the name most generally used in the everyday language, i.e. *yakka* and *yakkini* (plural: *yakku* and *yakkiniyo*, respectively) which are thought to correspond to the older Elu form. The most diverse ways of spelling *yakka* and *yakkini* are found in the literature, e.g. *yakka*, *yaka*, *yakha*, and *yakini*, *yakhini*, *yakinna*, and for the plural: *yakku*, *yaku*, *yakun*.

They are demons who, according to the legends, originate in the northern part of the country, the *Uttarakurudivaina*, obeying one king or chieftain, named *Vesamunu-rajjuruvu* (p. 30). At the same time, the belief is widely held that these *yakku* roam about everywhere waiting for people in order to make them ill, to rob them, or to play tricks on them. Their only hope is that of being appeased by the presentation of offerings, or, as it is called, "being given food". It is said that in former times the *yakku* used to kill and devour people, until the highest deity, *Sakra* (i.e. *Indra*), along with *Buddha*, opposed their behaviour and called them to order. Since the *yakku* were very powerful they finally reached an agreement to the effect that, in the future, the *yakku* might still afflict men with illness but only until the affected person had arranged an offering which they had to accept, so to speak, as a substitute or compensation for the recovery. This idea forms the basis of all ceremonies concerning the *yakku* as well as the other evil powers.

According to another tradition, the *yakku* (demons) were, in addition to the *naga* (snakes), the original inhabitants of Lanka (Ceylon). The first ones lived principally in the centre of the island where they had built a town *Lankapura*, while the *naga* mostly lived in the northern and western parts of the country, which was named after them *Nagavipa*, Snake-land. With both these peoples, but particularly with the *yakku*, king *Vijaya* was the first to come into contact when in the year 543 A.D. he was driven from India to Ceylon. Even the names "*yakka*" and "*naga*" are said to have been due to him.

Of considerably less importance are the *raksho* who, like the *bhūta*, are to be conceived as spirits and who completely lack a historic background such as is ascribed to the *yakku*. In the legends they likewise play a subordinate part and they are hardly to be counted among the demons who cause illnesses.

Lastly, the *prēteo* (singular = *prēta*) are the ghosts of the deceased, i.e. the spirits of the dead (*manes*). Their role is less important than that of the *yakku*, although they are often mentioned in the same breath. In certain cases they may be dangerous to men, but on the whole, they are easier to deal with than the *yakku*.

and which are very expensive. They are complex metal alloys and amalgams in which mercury plays an important part.<sup>1</sup>

As can be seen, this classification is by no means precise and leaves many questions open. The designations are in part not clear and they appear to refer more to the remedy used than to the disease itself. A better classification, likewise from a *vedarāla*, comprises the following groups:

1) The *saririka-rōga*, i.e. diseases which originate in the body itself (*saririka* = bodily, pertaining to the body). They are caused by bad blood and bad body-fluids, or through exhaustion following on incorrect or deficient feeding, untimely baths, colds, entering an unclean or offensive-smelling place, uncleanliness in general, and finally, through poisoning.

Generally speaking, a disease which belongs to the *saririka* category can be traced to a disturbance of the three humours (*tun dōsa*) [wind = *vāta*; bile = *pita*; mucus = *slēsmā* (singular, *sema*)], i.e. to a change of the ratio of these three to one another. Hence attention must be paid, first of all, to the re-establishment of the correct ratio or equilibrium. An excess of wind causes intestinal disorders, convulsions, fever, as well as swellings of organs or parts of the body (elephantiasis, goitre). An excess of bile gives rise to many internal diseases, particularly those of the intestines and stomach, and also to skin ailments, etc. An excess of mucus accompanies disorders of the lungs and respiratory organs, and also of the intestines and urogenital system. However, according to Indian medicine, a conflux of two or all three humours results, just the same, in diseases: the former are called *samsārga*, and the latter *sannipāta*<sup>2</sup>.

The most important diseases of the *saririka* group are: diarrhoea (*visujika*), haemorrhoids (*arisās*), jaundice (*pandūa*), dysentery, (*atisāra*), elephantiasis (*barāva*), testicular tumours (*andavāya*), paralysis (*pakyagata*), goitre (*talukantaka*), asthma (*suāsa*), consumption (*kāsa*), and enuresis (*diyaveḍyāva*).

2) The *manasika-rōga*, i.e. mental disorders (*manasika* = mind, thinking, reflections). These arise through fright, excitation, mental strain, or strong emotional shock. They can be cured by treatment of the mind.

3) The *angantuka-rōga*, i.e. temporary ailments. Here is included external injuries due to falls, blows, accidents, and fractures (*keḍima*).

4) The *sahāya-rōga* (*sahāya* = of one blood, born together), i.e. diseases which are transmitted from the parents to the children; principally leprosy (*kabara*),

<sup>1</sup> Such a remedy is called "rasāyana" (*rasā* = mercury; *āyana* = way), as mercury is the chief ingredient. It is an elixir of life which is applied in very serious and hopeless cases of illness. The preparation of this medicine is known to only a very few *vedarāla* and because it is most precious and is sold at a high price, its application is, of course, limited.

<sup>2</sup> This doctrine is explicitly treated in T. A. Wise, *Commentary on the Hindu System of Medicine*, Calcutta 1875. This author relies principally on the *Bhavaprakasa* of Bhavamisra, published in 1845 in Calcutta by Jibananda Vidyasagara. The ancient Greeks had a similar conception but they distinguished four humours of the body.



sypilis (suadabinduma), hookworm (kaduvegan), and also baldheadedness (isakēs-kalina) and breaking of the voice (svarabida).

5) *Ummāda-rōga* (ummāda = frenzy, madness). The disorders belonging to this group are of quite a different character and, in contrast to the foregoing ones, are caused by the yakku, raksho, and the prēteo, through the unfavourable influence of the planets and constellations (graha-lēda), also as punishment from the gods (dēviyo-dōsa) and finally by the activity of an evil magic (kodivina). In the latter case the yakku are again concerned. It can be seen that this is a very wide field which is not easily defined and which is looked after by the ědura, the bandhanaya, and the kapuā, but never by the vedarāla. All kinds of diseases and symptoms may be included in this group, even those which could just as well be grouped in one of the former categories, because the classification is not founded on the diseases themselves but much more on their causes. It is true that the ummāda-rōga, as their names suggest, are generally emotional and spiritual diseases, i.e. chiefly psychical disorders; however, all internal ailments may be included here and ascribed to the yakku, prēteo, dēvatāvō, etc. While diseases of the first four groups always have a visible or at any rate a known cause, this is generally not the case with those of the ummāda-rōga. Here we come to the field of occult science which educated Sinhalese may look upon with amusement, but which is acknowledged and approved by the common people as much as the modern infirmaries and hospitals which do not form by any means the last shelter to those ill beyond hope. One may quite well say that the ědura and the kapuā still remain the last refuge of the average Sinhalese. We shall see later on that this is not without a certain justification.

The main difference between the ummāda-rōga and the other groups of disorders is that the former are in general not clearly described diseases with definite symptoms as, for example, is the case with most infections, but much more an indisposition showing disturbances of an undefined or unknown nature, more often mental than physical. We therefore ought to speak not of diseases but of disorders. Only such illnesses which occur as epidemics, chiefly cholera and smallpox and, in earlier times, bubonic plague, and which are usually considered to be due to a deity, can be called diseases in this special sense. The symptoms of the ummāda-rōga are lack of appetite, vomiting, aches in the head and in the limbs, convulsions, fainting fits, distended stomach, diarrhoea, but a real illness is seldom to be found. We shall see later the principles on which the decision as to the cause of a disease is based and how a diagnosis is reached. Nevertheless a certain arbitrariness must be admitted and, of course, contradictions are not uncommon. It is rare that two answers the same are obtained. In any case, the declaration of a vedarāla never coincides with that of an ědura or a kapuā. What the one places in the group of diseases caused naturally, the other ascribes to demons and ghosts or to occult powers. But that is not the point at issue. We cannot and may not expect from these people, who in spite of the high degree of their culture and who in many respects



still lag behind, logical or even scientific reasoning. It would also make no sense to try to bring the different diseases into a definite scheme so that one could say for each one how it has developed and what its real cause is. The general state of health, and the many other conditions under which the patient lives, how he lives, what he did before his illness, where he was staying, and his horoscope, are all decisive factors. The Sinhalese believe that everything imaginable can be deduced from the horoscope which is for them of almost priceless value. They would rather give up anything else than not have it cast.

As can be realised from the designation of the various diseases already given, there is a whole series of general terms which are difficult to translate or to paraphrase.

Diseases in general and without reference to their causes are called *lēda* or *asanipu*. Diseases which can be traced to a natural cause and which are therefore treated by the *vedarāla* are called *rōga* (*rōgaya*). Diseases caused by the *yakku* are quite generally called *yak-lēda*, and correspondingly those due to the *prēteo*, *prēta-lēda*. The *sanni(ya)* occupy a special position and will be dealt with later on. Diseases, particularly epidemics and those which are considered as having been sent by the gods, are named *dōsa* (*dēviyo-dōsa*), while disorders originating from the planets are referred to as *lēda* (*graha-lēda*). Finally, there are the *vas-dōs* whose causes are the evil eye, evil talk, or merely evil thoughts.<sup>1</sup>

Epidemics are in general also known as *vasangata*. They are traced back to the most diverse causes, such as the *yakku*, *prēteo*, the bad influence of the planets, from continuous drought with consequent famine (*pe-uma*), but most often from the gods as punishment for some offence. The number of different designations, as can be seen, is very great, which need not surprise us when we realise the importance the Sinhalese bestow on the occupation with the various agents of illnesses.

As far as the above-mentioned *sāstra-kariya* is concerned, three different groups may be distinguished, each of which consists of eighteen diseases. The first group comprises the so-called *valipu dabata*, i.e. the eighteen convulsion diseases (*valipu* = to tremble); the second the "*jura dabata*", the eighteen fevers, and the third includes the "*māya dabata*", the eighteen mental disorders or derangements due to illusions (*māya* = illusion). As has already been said, it is less a question of real disease than an indisposition or some kind of disorder, most often of a psychical nature.

Grünwedel has described in detail the alleged origin of these *sanni(ya)*.<sup>2</sup> According to him it is a *Tadhbava* form of the Sanskrit word *sannipāta*, belonging to the *Dravida* dialects, and is through that taken over into the Sinhalese lan-

<sup>1</sup> *Vas-dōs* is derived from *vaha* (*vasa*) = poison and *dōs* (*dōsa*) = illness, pain. It is traced back to three different causes: *es-vaha* = venomous eye, i.e. evil eye; *kāthā-vaha* = venomous mouth, evil talk; and *hō-vaha* = poisonous thinking. They produce abscesses, eruptions all over the body, fever, and diarrhoea.

<sup>2</sup> Grünwedel, *Singhalesische Masken*, p. 86 ff.

guage.<sup>1</sup> Their real causes are said to be eighteen so-called *sanni(ya)-yakku*. Each one is affected with one or more symptoms or disorders of the body or even infirmities, which he is able to transmit to the person he is pursuing. Following another conception, however, their mode of working consists in a general action, a complete affliction of all the organs and a collective action of the three humours. A quotation from Grünwedel's book shows this unequivocally, "There appears now heat, now freezing, pains in the joints and in the head; the eyes become watery, cloudy, reddened, and hollow; the ears buzz and ache; the throat feels as if covered by bristles; fatigue produces apathy, confused speech, panting; lack of appetite and fits of dizziness occur; the tongue feels burnt and prickly; the abdomen wastes away (?); blood, bile, and phlegm are vomited together; the head begins to shake; thirst, lack of sleep, pains in the chest set in; sweat and other excretions are eliminated seldom and in reduced amounts; the limbs grow thin, though not excessively; the throat wheezes; blue-red blisters and circular rashes occur, also dumbness, inflammation of the body openings, heaviness of the abdomen—all these things is the fever which is caused by the collective action of these three humours."

All this, as we have said, refers to the eighteen *sanni-yakku*, while in the case of other *yakku* the picture is quite different. A psychic agitation, fits of worry, spasms, or even delirium following on frights, generally precede a general indisposition (if it develops so far). What then follows is again seldom a definite illness but much more an indefinable feeling of being unwell, or more a mental disturbance which shows itself in one way or another and which may lead to all kinds of complications.

### THE DIAGNOSIS

When a person becomes ill he sends, first of all, for the *vedarāla*. The *vedarāla* comes to see the patient, makes the diagnosis, dispenses certain herbs or remedies, and explains the régime he must undergo. If the remedies do not help and no improvement takes place, another cause of the illness is presumed which cannot be treated by the drugs given. It is then assumed that the patient is being pursued by the *yakku*, the *prēto*, *vas-dōs*, or an evil spell, a *kodivina*; the next turn is therefore for the soothsayer, the *sāstra-kariya*. One goes early in the morning to see him, so as to avoid being seen and as stealthily as possible, in order to prevent from the beginning evil talk and suspicion, because there might be a *kodivina* involved. Usually two or three of the patient's relatives visit the *sāstra-kariya* to receive his advice. On the way they buy a bunch of fresh betel-leaves, about forty of them, lay a small silver coin on top, twenty-five or fifty cents, perhaps even a rupee (according to their means), and present it to the *sāstra-kariya* without saying a word. They

<sup>1</sup> This *Tadbhava* form was caused by an erroneous division of the Sanskrit word, in which "-pāta" was softened to "vāta" and subsequently identified with the Sanskrit word "vāta" (Grünwedel, p. 86).



say neither their names nor that of the patient, nor from where they have come, nor where they live. No words are exchanged; no questions are asked. The *sāstra-kariya* accepts the bundle of leaves, lifts the uppermost leaf and examines it closely. He follows the course of its veins, counts them, and also looks at the back of the leaf. But the whole time he remains wrapped in silence. Only after some time does he begin to speak, without having asked even one question. He will tell them from where they have come, whom they met on the way, what has led them to visit him, and finally certain things concerning the patient. "Am I right?", he asks them. "Yes, you are", they answer, and it is only then that the conversation is begun, but without wasting words. "A kodivina is concerned", says the *sāstra-kariya*, "or yakku or vas-dōs".

"The kodivina has been buried ten paces from the house near the well, three months ago. The patient can still be helped but the greatest speed is necessary. A "sūniyama-tovilē" must be arranged, to destroy the kodivina and to deprive it of its power. Do you know an *ḍura* who can do it?"

The people name a well-known *ḍura* of the village. "No", says the *sāstra-kariya*, "it would be better to find another one who is more suitable for this case".

That is more or less what the *sāstra-kariya* says to them, or he will say it is a *vas-dōs*, or an illness sent by the gods or caused by the influence of a certain planet. In the latter case they are recommended to go to an astrologer (*ganitaya*, *kēndra-kariya*) so that the horoscope of the sick person can be investigated closely in order to find out which planet is exerting an unfavourable influence. If it is a *dēviyodōsa*, then the people are told they must go to the *kapuā* so that the latter can perform the appropriate ceremony. But he may say that it is certain *yakku* to whom the patient has fallen victim, and that a *sanniya-yakuma*, an *iramudun-pidenna*, or other ceremony must then be celebrated. Possibly, the *sāstra-kariya* at once names a favourable day for holding the ceremony.

The people consulting him say practically nothing the whole time, asking no questions and adding nothing to what they have been told. They return home and carry out the instructions they have received.

The *sāstra-kariya* is believed to be able to read everything from a betel-leaf which has been presented to him, or from the palm of the hand. He thus has the ability of soothsaying, and his profession is that of an adviser. Of course, people come to him in other cases to ask his opinion and to hear what he says.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> There are, in fact, three different methods according to which a *sāstra-kariya* may work. That which I have described above is called *pena* and the person who uses it is the *pena-sāstra-kariya*. Another person is the *reka-sāstra-kariya*, who is experienced in palmistry. The third one is the *jōti-sāstra-kariya* whose profession is much the same as that of an astrologer (*ganitaya*). He draws his conclusions from the actual position of the planets and from the astrological tables. He first measures the length of the shadow of the person who has come to consult him and computes how many times the length of his foot is contained in that measure. Then he asks him to name a bird and a flower. Finally, he makes his calculations with the help of his astrological tables. The difference between the *ganitaya* and the *jōti-sāstra-kariya* is that the former usually occupies him-



Another figure is the *añjanan-kariya*, the clairvoyant, who by certain means is in a position to see and know things which otherwise cannot be seen or known. Also the *añjanan-kariya* is occasionally asked for an opinion in cases of illness, particularly in complicated situations, e.g. where it is thought that a *kodivina* is concerned and details of it are needed.

It is somewhat different if the patient does not feel so bad and only suffers from a slight indisposition. In such a case, the *ḍura* is generally asked directly, or the astrologer is sent for if it is thought that the influence of a planet is involved, which simplifies matters considerably and is also cheaper. Only in serious situations and when a number of ways has been tried without result, is the *sāstra-kariya* consulted. Besides, the *ḍura* and *ganitaya* can be visited at any time as no secrecy is necessary. The *ḍura* listens to what is told him and then indicates the time he will come to the patient's house. There, he first of all makes his diagnosis, examines the patient, and asks him a few questions. He wants to know, above all, where the patient stayed before his ill-health, what he did, etc., and on the basis of the answers received and the state of the patient he says that it is the work of the *yakku* or *prṛteo*, to whom an offering must be presented. He will also say that the patient has come into contact with a certain *yakka* or several *yakku*, or that he has imprudently eaten something baked or fried, through the odour of which the *yakku* have been attracted, or that his house is haunted by a *prṛta*, and that it is tormenting him. The *ḍura* will never say that a *graha-lṛda* or a *dṛviyo-dṛsa* is responsible, since these do not lie within his sphere of activity. He will recommend the performance of a *sanniya-yakuma*, an *iramudun-pidenna*, or another ceremony, or if it is an easy case, he may first have recourse to a *tṛl-matrima* or a *nṛla-bandhima*. In more serious cases, if a more extensive ceremony is intended to be performed later on, he ties a so-called *ṛpa-nṛla* to the patient in order to prevent the illness progressing and to inform the *yakku* that a more comprehensive offering ritual can be expected. After some time the *ḍura* returns to the patient to see how he is and proposes that the ceremony be fixed on this or that day.

In contrast to the *sāstra-kariya*, who only offers his advice based on his intuitive perception, and the *ganitaya*, who merely examines the horoscope, the *ḍura* makes his own diagnosis which, however imperfect and arbitrary it may be, will always amount to making the performance of a great ceremony necessary. In fact, it is only possible for the *ḍura* to give one diagnosis, namely, in the case of malicious poisoning of the patient or, as they consider it, falling victim to a so-called *andumak*. This is the most frequent kind of *kodivina* and consists in the offering of a betel-leaf or some other object on which a spell has been cast, to the person who is to be afflicted. Soon after, the person becomes unwell, which is accompanied by nausea

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self only with casting horoscopes (*kṛndra*), while the *joti-sāstra-kariya* is accustomed to being consulted by people and asked for advice. However, he often executes both professions at the same time. The man who casts horoscopes is also called *kṛndra-kariya*.

and diarrhoea. This always points to a kodivina. In this case the *edura* makes the following diagnosis:

He takes a strip of a young, still-unfolded palm-leaf and smears a mixture of five kinds of oil on it and at the same time also on the patient's stomach<sup>1</sup>. He then puts the strip of leaf round the body of the patient as if measuring it with a tape and cuts it off so that its length corresponds accurately to the circumference of the body. Having done that, he lays the strip aside, speaks a formula, and makes another measurement. If, in the meantime, the circumference of the patient's body has increased, i.e. if the strip is now somewhat too short, it is an infallible sign that the patient has fallen victim to an *andumak*. On the other hand, if the circumference has remained unchanged, it means that the indisposition has another cause.

### THE EXORCIST AND THE PEOPLES' PRIEST

As we have seen, there is a whole group of personalities which is concerned with the occult side of medical science and which takes part in the performance of the numerous ceremonies<sup>2</sup>. The diagnosis is dealt with by the soothsayer (*sāstra-kariya*), the clairvoyant (*añjanan-kariya*), and the astrologer (*ganitaya*), while the removal of an illness is the occupation of the "devil-charmer" or exorcist, of the magician who exorcises the planets, the signs of the zodiac, and the moon-houses, of the maker of amulets and talismans, and finally, of the peoples' priest who plays the part of mediator between the deities and mankind. From a social point of view, all these people belong, of course, to quite different grades, and it never occurs that they encroach on the territory of another. Most of them belong to different castes even, or better said, to different groups of castes, which determine the social differences. Although the caste mind in the Sinhalese is not nearly so well developed as is generally the case with the Tamils and Hindus, the significance of the caste is, nevertheless, by no means slight. Everyone avoids intercourse with people of a lower caste as far as possible, looks down upon them, and feels himself socially very superior.

The "devil-charmer" or exorcist is, at least in the southern coastal region, generally called the *edura*, while in the central part of the island the designation *kattadiya* (and also *kattari*) is usual<sup>3</sup>. Another is the *bandhanaya* (*bandhana* = to bind, to tie) whose task it is to confine the demons and evil forces and so make them harmless. Finally there is the *santiya-kariya*, who is particularly familiar with astrology and who is concerned with the related ceremonies. Actually the ranges of

<sup>1</sup> The following five oils must be mixed: coconut oil (*pol-tēl*), castor oil (*erandu-tēl*), sesame oil (*tala-tēl*), oil of *Azadirachta indica*, a *Meliaceae* (*kohomba-tēl*), and bees' wax (*mi-tēl*).

<sup>2</sup> The general name for any kind of ceremony is *tovilē* or *toilē*; he who conducts and performs them is called *tovilē* or *toilē-kariya*.

<sup>3</sup> On the west coast, north of Colombo, another common name is *yakdēsa* (from *yakka* and *dēsa* = to preach, exhort).



these three professions are difficult to separate from each other. Essentially, it amounts to this, that they are each responsible for the performance and conduction of quite definite ceremonies, which, as we shall see, have entirely different origins.

Completely distinct is the *kapuā* or *kapurāla* (*kapu* = to cut)<sup>1</sup>, the peoples' priest, whose task it is to get into touch with the deities and to entreat them to stop illness or epidemics they have sent.

Each of these persons thus has the knowledge and the ability to conduct and perform certain ceremonies which concern the *yakku* and *prēteo*, or certain deities. They can, therefore, in a certain sense be considered to be the mediators between mankind and the *yakku*, the *prēteo*, or the gods, respectively.

Dealing first with the *ḍura*, it can be said that, besides the village astrologer, the *ganitaya*, and the medical man, the *vedarāla*, he is without doubt one of the best-known figures in a Sinhalese village. His task is to deal with all the many *yakku* and *prēteo*, to exorcise them, to make offerings to them, and to move them to release the person made ill by them from his sickness and make him healthy again, and to see that they accept the offering made to them. The *ḍura* generally belongs to one of the lower castes, such as the *karave* (fishermen), the *hakami* (land workers), the *beravāyā* (drummers), and the *duraya* (chair men). Most often, however, at least in the southern coastal area, they are of the first caste. It is only seldom that a person from a higher caste carries out this profession, which, in contrast to the calling of the *vedarāla* and, of course, that of the *kapuā*, is looked down upon by the public with some contempt. On the other hand, the *bandhanaya* usually belongs to the caste of the *oli* (potters), and, in a few cases, to the *beravāyā* (drummers). He limits himself, in conformity with his professional class, to the performance of those ceremonies in which an image modelled in clay or loam is necessary<sup>2</sup>. These models are called *baliya*, which leads to these ceremonies also generally being called *baliya*. Another ceremony carried out by the *bandhanaya* is the so-called *gara-yakuma* which could just as well be carried out by the *ḍura* although in practice it never is.

There is thus no rivalry between these two medicine men and there never occur disputes or quarrels between them; one can just as little say that the one professional class stands higher or is more respected than the other. They do only what they have learned from their father or teacher without bothering about the knowledge of the other. But there are always some who deride the ceremonies of the other, call them humbug, and who think that only those they do themselves are the right ones.

<sup>1</sup> Pertold explains *kapuā* as "one who cuts"; originally, therefore, a barber, or perhaps "one who cuts or kills the sacrifice".

<sup>2</sup> Such, at all events, was the original usage. To-day, however, the scope of the one overlaps that of the other and vice versa, and it happens that a *bandhanaya* leads and performs ceremonies which, strictly speaking, belong to the *ḍura*, and conversely.



To quite another category of "medecine men" belong the *kapua*<sup>1</sup> whom we may call most nearly, as has been explained above, a peoples' priest. He is responsible for the numerous small temples, the *dēvālaya*, which still exist all over the country as relics of the old pre-Buddhist religion. They form the homes of one or other Indian or local deity and there they are worshipped and it is there that the people bring their offerings<sup>2</sup>. As is well-known, Buddhism makes no objections to this. On the contrary, many *dēvālaya* form a definite integral part of the Buddhist temples in Ceylon. In every larger *vihāra* there is also a shrine and often a small space which is devoted to the local and Hindu deities and where the images are to be found. This practice is said to have been established at the time when most of the Sinhalese kings married Tamil women who clung to their religion and insisted that the Hindu deities were also worshipped.

The original significance of the *dēvālaya*, however, seems to be quite different. Many *dēvālaya*, since most of them are not just anywhere, were built at sacred places. It also occurs that an old dilapidated *dēvālaya* was torn down and rebuilt elsewhere. Most of them lie either on some rocky hill or, at any rate, on a raised spot, but never near houses or by a roadway. Generally, but surprisingly, according to the inhabitants, where there is a *dēvālaya* there is a colony of cobras or vipers to be found. This seems to suggest that these temples were originally dedicated to a snake cult.

Every *dēvālaya*, as mentioned above, is in charge of a *kapuā*, i.e. a priest, whose duty it is to keep the temple in order, to make offerings regularly to the gods, and as occasion demands to perform the ceremonies which fall within his sphere of activity. In addition, in some, though not all *dēvālaya* of the high land, an offering ceremony takes place once a week in the late evening hours, in which the *kapuā* when presenting the gift-offerings calls on the gods and lets them come into him, i.e. goes into a trance, and gives advice to the villagers present and answers questions asked him. So the *kapuā*, in fact, exercises also the profession of a shaman and it is part of his profession to be able to put himself into a trance at any time. Here, as with the *ḍūra*, the breathing of the smoke from burning wood plays an important role. One will not be far wrong, if one assumes that the *kapuā* formerly had, at least under certain circumstances, something to do with the snakes, i.e. was a priest of the snake cult. Besides, there is much that points to a well-developed snake cult being at the basis of the old pre-Buddhist religion. In Polonnaruwa, and also in Anuradhapura and Mihintale, the pits or tanks are still to be seen to-day, in which the snakes were kept, and in these places clay vessels have been brought to

<sup>1</sup> The general form of address is "kapurāla". Another, more respectful address is "rāla bāmī", used for people of a higher social rank.

<sup>2</sup> *Dēvālaya* is from *dēva* = deity and *ālaya* = house, hall. An abbreviated form is *dēvala* or *dēvola*, or even shorter *dēvol* (see p. 152). Following Eitel (Handbook for the student of Chinese Buddhism), a *dēvālaya* is a place in which a *dēva* is worshipped—a general name for all Brahmanical temples.

light which have reproductions of snakes on them. They were thus doubtlessly somehow connected with the snake cult, for in these receptacles they received their food.

Like the yakku, the deities also cause diseases, as has already been said above, mostly in the form of infectious diseases or epidemics (*dēviyo-dōsa*), as punishment for some offence of the people. They are then presented with offerings and ceremonies are performed so that they, pacified in this way, may stop them. Since the kapuā is trusted with the ritual of these offering ceremonies, it goes without saying that he conducts the ceremonies also in cases of illness, outbreaks of epidemics, and contagious diseases. They are carried out in quite a similar way as in the case of the yakku, i.e. recitation of mantra, offering of gifts to the *dēvatāvō*, with subsequent performances of ritual dances and sprinkling of the patient with yellow-root water.

Although the field of activity of the kapuā may appear to be just as sharply defined as those of the *ḍura* and *bandhanaya*, even here there are certain ceremonies which fall into the sphere of the one or the other and which show a quite similar character and course of ritual. Thus there is actually no question of a clear-cut division. Neither can it be said that the kapuā has nothing to do with the yakku, or the *ḍura* or *bandhanaya* with the *dēviyo*. This lack of defined boundaries is also made clear by the fact the legends refer in the same way to the *dēviyo*, the yakku, *raksho*, and *prṛteo*. A clear separation between all these beings does not exist; the yakku and *raksho* occasionally change themselves into deities and conversely the deities take the form of lower demons or enter into the most diverse manifestations. Thus, I can only repeat that a clean division between the fields of activity of the kapuā and of the *ḍura* and of the *bandhanaya* can not at all be made.

It is difficult to obtain a clear view of all the numerous ceremonies which are performed by these three men. However to give some idea, I have divided them into three groups corresponding to the three groups of "medicine man". The first group of these ceremonies includes those performed and led by the *ḍura*, the second those of the *bandhanaya*, while the third comprises those carried out by the kapuā. This classification may be defective in many ways but it seems to me to be the only practicable one. The ceremonies could also be divided according to the origin and cause of the diseases and epidemics by the yakku, the *prṛteo*, the influence of the planets, the *dēviyo* and evil spells, but such an arrangement would be much less clear. The natives, of course, know nothing about such a classification into definite groups. It is often very difficult to obtain precise information from them about the cause of an illness. Only too often one gets the impression that they have no clear conceptions of the origin of an illness, or how the yakku, *prṛteo*, *dēviyo*, and the unfavourable influences of the planets work. On the contrary, the views about these things are extremely vague and confused and are often contradictory. Moreover, it happens fairly frequently that the illness is attributed by quite different causes at the same time so that the ceremony performed must take into



account the whole of the causes and possibilities. For these reasons the ritual becomes most complicated and, therefore, unsurveyable for anyone who is not used to the whole way of thinking of the natives and especially of the people who conduct the ceremonies. Most of the ceremonies and, above all, also the mask dances, originate from the Malabar coast. The Malabar influence has, since time immemorial, been very great, since from olden times a lively traffic has existed between Southern India and Ceylon which has favoured the exchange of cultural wealth, material as well as spiritual. Thus it is that the Sinhalese have always been very receptive to everything that came from India.

### THE DEVIL CHARMER AND THE CEREMONIES PERFORMED BY HIM

It is not difficult, but it takes a long time, to become an *ḍura*. Anyone can succeed provided he has sufficient interest and some talent for the profession. The apprenticeship is, it is true, rather long. Generally, the apprentices are selected and prepared for their vocation at a very early age, although in most cases the son learns it from his father. Usually, every *ḍura* has one or more novices who receive their training from him. They have to assist, right from the beginning of their instruction, in the performance of ceremonies, which is the best opportunity for them to learn their profession.

The pupils are called "*golēa*"; the teacher is always addressed as "*gurunānsē*" by his pupils. In the beginning the pupils come daily for instruction, later less often, but they always have to help in ceremonies conducted by their master.

When a pupil appears for the first time for instruction, he brings with him some rice-cakes for his master, some rice prepared with coconut-milk (*kiri-bat*), bananas, and also always a betel-leaf (*bulat*), in which between two and four rupees in silver coins is wrapped. The bringing of such small presents (except for the money) is repeated from time to time.

The instruction begins with the learning of the so-called *sūtra-mātra*, the rules of the dance, which consists of five different poses, the so-called *mātra*. They have the following names: <sup>1</sup>

- I. *Ek-mātra* (first *mātra*). The dancer bends his knees a little, stretches the arms in a graceful attitude, the thumbs and forefingers touch one another and form a circle, the other fingers being spread out a little.
- II. *Dēk-mātra* (second *mātra*). The body is somewhat bent at the knees, the heels touch each other, and the feet point in opposite directions.
- III. *Mudun vatamandali* <sup>2</sup> (third *mātra*). Turning around oneself.
- IV. *Siya pāda* (a hundred steps), fourth *mātra*. This one is, in its turn, composed of four separate *mātra*:

<sup>1</sup> *Sūtra* = rule, prescription; *mātra* = to overcome the gravity of the body.

<sup>2</sup> *Mv-ḍga* = top, peak, point; *vatamandali* = whirl, whirlwind.



- (a) a forward step is made with the right foot which is then stamped vigorously on the ground;
- (b) the left foot is moved a little backwards and to the side;
- (c) the right foot is again stamped on the same spot;
- (d) the left foot is stamped and is placed beside the right foot so that the heels touch one another as in the *dēk-mātra*.

V. *Geju mātra* (little bell), fifth *mātra*. The dancer goes on tip-toe and moves his legs in a shaking motion.

After these five *mātra* is learned the thirty-two *tāla* or *vānam* i.e. the rhythmic movements of the arms, legs, feet, and hands to the accompaniment of a drum<sup>1</sup>.

The invention of this dance, the five *sūtra-mātra*, and the thirty-two *tāla* is traced back to a blind man from Anuradhapura. It is related that he danced before the image of the Kataragama-deity in the hope that his sight would be returned to him.

He visited the *dēvālaya* at *Deundāra*<sup>2</sup>, dancing the whole way, and arriving at the temple of the deity had his sight restored. He then wrote everything down and gave the book to the deity of Kataragama.

Another legend relates that a bhikshu (Buddhist priest or monk), who was born again as an elephant, put himself at the head of a large herd of elephants who inhabited a swampy district. In the same swamp there lived a gigantic crab (*kakuluvā*) which bore the name "Maha svarna karkatahaya". It was sixteen yodum long and the same in breadth<sup>3</sup>. Every day the elephants crossed the swamp and every time the crab grabbed one of the hind feet of the last elephant, dragged it into the water, and devoured it. The bhikshu-elephant became aware that the herd was growing smaller everyday and at length he said to the others; "Let me go last so that I can look after the other ones better". So when they were going through the

<sup>1</sup> *Tāla* or *vānam* = time, rhythm. Both expressions are taken from the Sanskrit. In our case, they mean rhythmical dance movements or measured steps. Each one of these thirty-two *tāla* has its own particular name. In Sinhalese they are as follows: the *gadhamā-t.* (consisting of three different steps), the *gangadhara-t.*, the *vesamunu-t.*, the *ṣelihi-t.* (named after a bird), the *gira-t.* (parrot t.), the *veddi-t.* (vedda = archer), the *bujangha-t.* (named after a bird), the *kukurū-t.* (kukurū = cock), the *gurulā-t.* (garuda-t.), the *hasti-t.* (elephant t.), the *turūnga-t.* (horse t.), the *dhenu-t.* (ox t.), the *būruvā-t.* (donkey t.), the *giju-lihi-t.* (seagull t.), the *grāha-t.* (planet t.), the *sivarāji-t.*, the *vishnu-raga-ta.*, the *āsva-t.*, the *dorotupāla-t.*, the *bhadra-kali-t.*, the *malitorga-t.*, the *nalunatiya-t.*, the *srivira-t.*, the *dandikāla-t.*, the *volambadhenu-t.*, and the *garuda-t.* Besides these names, there are just as many in Sanskrit which, however, will not be enumerated here.

The technique of dancing of the Sinhalese exorcists, the *ḍura*, *bandhanaya*, and *kapuā*, is without doubt of Indian origin, but it has in the course of time developed quite distinct forms so that we may reasonably speak of a Sinhalese dancing style. The Vedic Indians acknowledge Shiva as the master of the art of dancing, and he is said to have devised the one hundred and eight various dances and dancing poses. According to the legends, however, the art of dancing goes back to the *aspara*, singing to the *gāndharva*, and instrumental music to the *kināra* (cf. Havell, *Indian Sculpture and Painting*, p. 57, and Popley, *The Music of India*, p. 7).

<sup>2</sup> Known to-day by the name "Dondra-head".

<sup>3</sup> One yodum is equal to sixteen English miles.

swamp the next day, the crab wanted to seize the last elephant as was its custom, but the bhikshu-elephant saw it in time and smashed it under his feet. The dead crab floated to the mouth of a river but it was so big that it dammed up the water causing a flood. The people who lived by the river did not know what happened and began wailing and lamenting. Sakra heard their wailings, came down to the earth and dragged the dead crab to heaven, and so allowed the waters to flow again. He charged the sons of *Gāndharu*-*dēviyo* with the making of two drums out of the huge claws of the crab and when he began to beat them his children<sup>1</sup> danced to their accompaniment. So was the drum (*beraya*) invented; they measured one yodum in length. The *Gāndharu* taught the gods how to beat the drums and instructed them in the various rhythms and ways of playing the drums. They also taught the twenty-one "*sural*", i.e. the ways of stamping with the foot and jumping to the different *tāla*, how the body must be turned and whirled, and the positions the body, arms, and legs must take up.

Moreover, they composed the sixty-four "*sandahan*", or verses, which are recited along with the dances and the music of the drums, and also the two hundred and sixteen "*vandamanang*", or hymns, which are delivered in praise of Buddha.

It is not until later that the novice learns the various mantra, the knowledge of which makes it possible for him to perform and lead a ceremony independently. This, however, takes many years of instruction. He learns the mantra more by continually listening to and assisting at the ceremonies performed by his teacher, than through instruction.

#### THE TIMES FOR THE HOLDING OF THE CEREMONIES

For the performance of every great ceremony, be it by the *edura*, the *bandhanaya*, or the *kapuā*, a favourable day must always be selected, since not any day is suitable. The influence of the different planets and especially the influence of *Mārea*<sup>2</sup>, who changes his place in the sky according to the day of the week, may counteract the effect of the mantra and hence make the results of the ceremony useless.

The most careful attention is therefore paid to ascertaining the direction in which *Mārea* is to be found (*Mārea sulama* = to look for *Mārea*), since the *edura* and his assistants, while reciting the mantra, may under no circumstances face in that direction. The following table gives the various directions:

On Sundays	<i>Mārea</i> is in the north ( <i>uttara</i> ),			
„ Mondays	„	„	„	north-west ( <i>vayamba</i> ),
„ Tuesdays	„	„	„	south ( <i>dakuna</i> ),
„ Wednesdays	„	„	„	south-west ( <i>nirita</i> ),

<sup>1</sup> They are the *gāndharva* of Indian mythology, the masters of music (*gāndharva-veda*).

<sup>2</sup> *Mārea* or *Māraya*, the evil, the mischievous one, the leader of the demons and all destructive powers, Buddha's great adversary. Under the name "*Māruva*" he is regarded as the personification of death (see p. 70).



„ Thursdays	„ „ „ „	west (basnā),
„ Fridays	„ „ „ „	north-east (isāna),
„ Saturdays	„ „ „ „	east (nēgena).

In holding a *yāga*- of *santiya*-ceremony it is considered best if Mārea is in the east, the *ḍura* thus facing west when speaking his mantra. Conversely, for other ceremonies east is preferred. In the case of a *kodivina* (evil spell) the mantra is spoken facing the south. Moreover, attention must be paid to the moon-houses (*nēkata*; Sanskrit = *nakshatra*). On no account must a ceremony be performed on the *rehēna*- of *keti-nēkata*. Although any day may be selected for the carrying out of a ceremony, it is thought that Saturdays and Wednesdays are the most auspicious, since on these days the *yakku* are extremely hungry and, therefore, most likely to yield to a summons. In no case may a ceremony take place on the days of a full or new moon, or on the days of the first and last quarters of the moon, as on these four days the mantra are ineffective. Presumably, these prohibitions have their origin in the fact that these four days are Buddhist holidays and particularly the days of the new and of the full moon are consecrated to Gautama Buddha. The holding of ceremonies and the recitations of mantra are absolutely incompatible with Buddha's teachings, as can be seen from the various writings. Nevertheless, all these things have been able to continue right up to the present day without seriously coming into conflict with the Buddhist doctrine (cf. p. 235).

When performing an exorcism ceremony the *ḍura* must be very careful about the *samayāma* or *samayān*, i.e. the hours at which the *yakku* are most likely to appear (*disti* = to appear). Not all hours of the day or night are equally probable; there are four especially likely hours. In every night-watch (there are four of them) there is one hour which is best suited for the exorcist to summon the *yakku*. The first watch begins at nightfall and is called *bēnda-samayāma*, i.e. "evening-samayāma". It is at this time that the *yakku* are accustomed to gather together (*samagamatā* = assembly). The second watch is the *maha-samayāma*, i.e. the "great samayāma", at midnight, and is of the highest importance for the summoning of the *yakku* at the ceremonies. The third is the *eliya vena jame-samayāma*, the hour of dawn; finally, the fourth samayāma is called *iramudun-samayāma* (at noon) and is particularly suitable when the *yakku* are called during the day<sup>1</sup>. It is believed that the *yakku* can only be successfully exorcised and summoned by the offering of gifts and speaking of a formula, a so-called *mantra*, at these four times. All these actions, which are the most important part of the ceremony, must be carried out according to well-defined rules and directions, which have to be painstakingly observed.

When the day for the performance of the ceremony has been fixed, the necessary arrangements are begun at once. These are postponed only if in the meantime

<sup>1</sup> The name *samayāma* is also used with reference to the *yakka* who is summoned or who appears. Thus one speaks, for example, of a "Maha-sohona-samayāma", a "Kalu-kumāra-samayāma", etc. In the same way, the term "samayāma" is employed for the deities who are usually summoned at a ceremony, e.g. "dēvol-samayāma" when a *dēvol-madua* is performed (cf. p. 156).



someone has died in the patient's house or if one of his daughters (living in the same house) unexpectedly menstruates for the first time. The ceremony must then be postponed for at least a week and the whole house purified with cow-dung and lime.

Before the *ḍura* leaves his house to perform a ceremony, he always puts a betel-leaf with some powdered sandalwood, on which a spell has been cast, in a corner of his loincloth. This is called *bandun-bulat* (sandalwood-betel-leaf) or figuratively "*raya vayastha*", i.e. "royal friend". It is to protect the *ḍura* from any kodivina which may be directed against him<sup>1</sup>, and also against the influence of the yakku, *prṭeo*, and other evil spirits, since he is exposed to the greatest extent to such dangers<sup>2</sup>.

On the day on which an *ḍura* or *bandhanaya* is going to perform a ceremony, he may have no sexual intercourse, because this might weaken the effect of the mantra. Furthermore, he must not eat pork, as this is considered to be unclean and may likewise have an unfavourable influence on his work.

#### THE FIRST *ḌURA*

Oddissa or *Oddisea Irsiya* is mentioned as the first *ḍura* and lived on the *Ajaakuta-parvataya*, a mountain in Northern India. The sister of Mahavishnu, Manipāla-dēvinānsē, had become ill, bewitched by a kodivina which Mārea had put on her. Nobody could help her. Mahavishnu, in his despair, sent for Oddisea Irsiya, one of the seven learned men, and asked him to help her. They agreed upon a day, a Tuesday afternoon, on which Oddisea was to come to the Uttarakurudivaina. He had a small palace of banana stems made, twelve arm's lengths square, and when it was ready it was decorated with young coconut- and areca-leaves. He then told the people to collect various herbs and flowers, small lemons and tuberous fruits. When night had fallen, Oddisea appeared, armed with a long sword. He ordered Manipāla-dēvinānsē to take a bath, to anoint her head with oil, and then to go into the little palace. One hundred and eight rings made from creepers were put round her hands and feet and also her neck, and then the rings were cut one by one while a mantra was recited. When the last ring was cut, a viper (*polanga*) came out of the patient's mouth. With a well-aimed blow of his sword, Oddisea cut the snake in two. He then sprinkled yellow-root water over her and she was completely well again.

The *Irsivarayo*, the pupils of Oddisea, wrote down his teachings, and the *ḍuro* still learn from this book to-day. Oddisea was one of the seven wise men and possessed powers of magic. He had ten pupils whose names were Danheng-vantari,

<sup>1</sup> An *ḍura* faces such jeopardy at all times since he himself is accustomed to enact the kodivina for a corresponding payment.

<sup>2</sup> No less imminent is the danger which threatens him from the yakku, *prṭeo*, etc. with whom he has immediate intercourse.

Singhasanku, Vetala, Bahōt, Kalidāsa, Kashyāpa, Kiyāta, Varahanura, Narain, and Gathakar. Later they spread the teachings of the master further. Oddisea was also the founder of the "prana aksara", the doctrine of the seven thousand seven hundred and forty-seven (7,747) syllables, and of the "mantra sāstraya" <sup>1</sup>.

### VESAMUNU-RAJJURUVO, THE KING OF THE DEMONS

According to the Indian conception, there are four worlds, corresponding to the four cardinal points, in the midst of which there arises the mountain *Mēru* and which are inhabited by different beings <sup>2</sup>.

In the south (*dakshina*) is the *Jambudvīpa* <sup>3</sup> where *Virudha-dēviyōraja*, the monarch of the kumbhanda and the prēteo, is <sup>4</sup>. In the west (*basnāhira* = sunset) lies the *Aparagodani*, and here *Virupaksha-dēviyōraja* rules over the snake people, the naga. *Purvadēvidēsa* is in the east (*nege-nahira* = sunrise) and the *gandabharu-yakku*, who live there, are governed by *Varan-dēviyōraja* or *Dbritirashtra*. Finally, in the north (*uttara*) is the main empire of the yakku, the *Uttarakurudivaina*, and here *Vaisravana Vesamunu-dēviyōraja* [also called *Kuvēra* (or *Kubēra*) *Vesamunu-dēviyōraja*] holds sway <sup>5</sup>. Another, but less-used, name for this last king is *Yakraja*. This king of the north, who is the greatest and most powerful of them all, is owed obeisance not only by the other three but also by the whole of the yakku, raksho, asura, gandhara, kumbhanda, prēteo, and naga, etc. — in short, by all the beings who inhabit the four worlds.

All in all, there are the following:

300,000	<i>gāndharu-yakku</i> ,
600,000	<i>garuda-yakku</i> ,
10,000	<i>asura-yakku</i> ,
80,000	<i>brahmina-yakku</i> ,
20,000	<i>vetali-yakku</i> ,
20,000	<i>mahipula-bahīrava-yakku</i> ,
40,000	<i>raksho</i> ,

<sup>1</sup> According to Indian mythology the seven great learned men (*hata rishi*) or penitents have been transformed into the seven stars of the Great Bear. By their steady repentance they ultimately gained a power that was in no way inferior to that of the gods. They are also looked upon as the ancestors of the brahman sacerdotal families and as the authors of the vedas.

<sup>2</sup> See Bleichsteiner, *Die gelbe Kirche*, p. 148.

<sup>3</sup> Following the cosmography of the ancient Indians, this is the name given to the country at the centre of the universe, owing to the abundance of jambu-fruits which are growing there. The Buddhist interpretation, on the other hand, is that it is India, especially the region where Buddha lived and worked.

<sup>4</sup> The prēteo (singular prēta) are the souls of the deceased. After ten years they go to live in the bush and become *kumbhanda*, a kind of demon distinguished by their gigantic form.

<sup>5</sup> According to the Indian mythology he is the god of wealth, enthroned on the mountain Kailasa.



20,000,000 bhūto,  
100,000,000 prēteo,  
90,000,000 pisaktiya.<sup>1</sup>

Vesamunu-rajjuvo is of enormous height — ten yodums. His body is blue and he has three eyes, the third one being in the middle of his forehead. On his head he wears a crown; in his right hand he has a sword, one yodum in length, and in his left hand a shield as large as the moon. When he looks at someone sharply, the look of his third eye can split their head into seven parts and he can kill anybody with his sword. It rushes after the enemy of its own accord and then returns to his hand. A further weapon, which he hurls at his enemies, is a sharp throwing ring (*ayampatraya*). Generally, he rides a blue-coloured horse which is sixteen yodums long. He has in his possession sixty carriages filled with jewels, which on certain occasions he wears about his body. There are many legends related about Vesamunu-rajjuvo. The following is told about his origin:

Once upon a time, there lived in Northern India a Brahmin, named Kuvēra, who owned seven sugar mills. He gave the molasses from one of his mills to a bhikshu with the idea of doing a good deed and earning merit. Later, he also gave the molasses of the other mills away, and continued doing this for twenty years till he died. He was re-born in one of the heavens, *chatur maharajika dēviyaloka*, and then received the name Kuvēra-dēviyoraja. After he again died, he was born for the third time in Uttarakurudivaina. By a marriage he became very rich and had a palace and a large garden. In this garden there grew a strange tree, called *kapruka* (or *kaptura*, also *kalpa*-tree), which not only brought forth the most diverse fruits but everything else that might be wanted. The people who lived in this land were a thousand years old, but here also there were yakku who persecuted and tormented them. At night they used to sit on the people and use them to ride on. Therefore, Buddha and Sakra<sup>2</sup> offered Kuvēra-dēviyoraja the sovereignty over the yakku and gave him a third eye and a sword, which could kill anyone at a great distance. So he became the ruler of all the yakku in all the four parts of the world. With his host of yakku, bhūto, and prēteo, Vesamunu-rajjuvo persecuted mankind uninterruptedly from then on with illnesses, epidemics, and all kinds of plagues, giving his subjects his orders and sending them out to spread harm everywhere<sup>3</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> There are said to be as many yakku, raksho, bhūto, and prēteo as the number of goat-hairs which will go into a cube of side four fathoms. This number is called "bimbara" by the Sinhalese. It is also maintained that there are so many yakku, etc. that the world would perish if it were invaded by only half of them.

<sup>2</sup> Sakra (from *sakra* = to possess power), identical with Indra, the head of the inferior deities and ruler of the *svarga*.

<sup>3</sup> Another residence of the yakku is the *Sakvala-* or *Parasakvala-gala* (Sanskrit: *chakra-vala*), mystical mountains which surround the supposedly disc-shaped world (*chakra* = wheel, disc) as a ring. One day, so the legend relates, Buddha resolved to go to the *Sakvala-gala* to reason with the yakku, since they wanted to undertake a campaign against mankind. Sakra warned him and offered to accompany him but Buddha refused his proposal and decided to go alone. But Sakra did not desist from cautioning him and trying to dissuade him from his purpose. Buddha went



## THE YAKKU WHO SPREAD ILLNESS

Before we concern ourselves with the ceremonies themselves, it is necessary to give a short sketch of the most important and the most frequently met with yakku who spread disease. The principal ones are the following:

The *Hiri-* (or *Riri-*) *yakka* (i.e. the blood-yakka),  
 the *Maha-sohona-yakka* (i.e. the great cemetery-yakka),  
 the *Sūniya-* (or *Hūniya-*) *yakka*,  
 the *Kalu-kumāra* (i.e. the black prince),  
 the *Vāta-kumāra* (i.e. the round prince),  
 the *Kalu-yakka* (i.e. the black yakka),  
 the *Aimāna*,  
 the *Atura-sanniya*, and

the *Kōla-sanniya*, also *Sanni(ya)-yakka*, i.e. the illness-yakka, commanding eighteen other subordinate yakku, who, together with the *Kōla-sanniya*, form a closer group of actual illness-yakku, the *sanniya-yakku*. They occupy a special place, insofar as in ceremonies they are represented by masked persons and their appearance forms in a certain sense the dramatic climax of the *sanniya-yakuma*-ceremony (named after them). Moreover, each of these yakku is represented by a distinct mask and often also by a distinct dress. His appearance is accompanied by a dramatization of mythical episodes and spoken dialogue. On the other hand, the representations of these yakku can be very different as there are quite different conceptions of the yakku among the people. As we shall see later, most yakku can assume various shapes or manifestations, so-called *avatāra*, and they may appear as a person or an animal or a *raksha*. Each of these *avatāra*, however, is confined to a certain time of the day. So, for example, it is said of *Maha-sohona* that he can transform himself into ten different *avatāra*, while the *Hiri-yakka* is restricted to seven and the *Kalu-kumāra* to only three.

Each of these yakka may cause a certain disease, or rather an indisposition, a

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his way, notwithstanding. He had assumed the form of an old beggar. On the *Sakvala-gala* there were as many yakku as drops of water in the ocean. When he arrived there the yakku asked him what he wanted. Buddha only asked them for shelter for the night, but they refused to listen and bade him go his way. Buddha continued his entreaties; any little space, he said, would suit him. At last, the yakku sent him to see their leader (*senapati*) and so he was allowed to pass the night on a small spot of rock. When it began to grow dark, Buddha made his halo (*rasmina mahalava*) radiate a little so that the stones became warm. A weird sensation seized the yakku. They went to their leader, the "*rakusunan senapatu*", and reported what had happened. But he did not believe them, for how could the old beggar have managed to do such a thing? Meanwhile it grew hotter and hotter, and already the rock began to glow. All the yakku came running and threw themselves at Buddha's feet and entreated him to spare them. "We are poor miserable creatures", they cried, "feeding on slime and spittle". Buddha had pity on them. "I will spare you", he said, "but only on one condition: when you have struck somebody with illness and the *ḍura* summons you, you have to come and accept the offering which you are presented with. Afterwards, you must leave the men alone whom you have been pursuing and restore them to health again".

disorder, physical or mental, in the person he means to strike. But, as we have seen, it is more a question of an indefinable indisposition than of a definite illness, although it may sometimes be based on a distinct illness such as typhus, dysentery, malaria, or tuberculosis, etc. In all the legends it is related that the yakka concerned has had permission from the highest deity, Sakra, or from Gauthama Buddha, to afflict people with diseases, but only on condition that they are restored to health when an offering, combined with the performance of a ceremony, is presented. The illnesses caused by the Kala-sanniya and his associates are, in contrast to the harm due to the other yakku, generally physical in nature. They arise from disturbances of the equilibrium between the three humours, which are usually called sanniya. Very often they are purely physical defects such as blindness, deafness, and paralysis, etc.

Opinions on the way in which the yakka really causes the illness are divided and obscure. According to one conception, merely meeting a yakka is sufficient to bring on an illness or indisposition. It is believed that each yakka prefers a certain place which he haunts, only at certain times of the day or night, waiting for people in the guise of a man or an animal. Places preferred by the yakku are big old trees, desolate gardens, mountain caves, but there are also yakku who haunt the village streets, market places, or the shore where the fishermen work, and who are thus not afraid of crowds. The yakku are thought to radiate some kind of injuring force, which causes its dangerous effect at a great distance, so that no direct contact is necessary. On the other hand, the belief is also held that the yakku, e.g. the Hiri-yakka, like vampires, suck the blood of man or devours his flesh and entrails, thus preventing the person from eating and condemning him to wasting away. Another opinion is that the yakka simply gives the person whom he meets a terrific fright, thus producing a mental shock which is the real cause of the ensuing organic disorder. A detailed description of such an incident is reported by Gooneratne and by Grünwedel<sup>1</sup>. Even to-day, similar occurrences are not infrequently found. I myself came across numerous analogous cases in which men and women, who had suddenly become ill, in all earnestness maintained that they had met a yakka at a certain place and time, who scared them so terribly that they were not able to recover until a sanniya-yakuma- or an iramudun-pidenna-ceremony had been performed.

This is the explanation of the unshakable confidence of the natives (and also of some Europeans!) in the beneficial effects of the various ceremonies. It may be that in cases of mental disorders they really have proved effective but, on the other hand, I have known cases in which patients who, on undergoing a sanniya-yakuma- or an iramudun-ceremony, went into such convulsions that after the end of the treatment they collapsed dead.

<sup>1</sup> Dandris de Silva Gooneratne, *On Demonology* (Journ. of the Ceyl. Br. of the R. As. Soc. 1865/66).

A. Grünwedel, *Singhalesische Masken* (Int. Arch. Ethn. VI p. 84).



## THE HIRI-YAKKA

He is occasionally called *Riri-* or *Siri-yakka*, which signifies blood-yakka. Like most yakku, he comes from Northern India. His father was called *Valiya-rajjuravo*, and his mother *Sitaprāha Mesēri*. At the time of her confinement, she lost a great deal of blood and the child itself appeared in the clot, but it was so tiny and delicate that it did not measure more than a finger's breadth. It was a boy, who later never attained adult size, but remained a dwarf. Nevertheless he had extraordinary physical strength and none could equal him in this respect. Very soon, however, he developed all kinds of evil habits. He attacked people, bit through their carotid arteries and sucked their blood which flowed out. They began to be afraid of him and to avoid him, and it was believed that he was a yakka. The people then went to the *Saman-dēviyo* and entreated him to help them. *Saman-dēviyo* summoned the *Hiri-yakka* and asked why he harmed the people. *Hiri-yakka* answered, "I was born out of the blood of *Sitaprāha Mesēri* and I was ordered by *Vesamunu-rajjuravo* to kill people, so I am only doing what I was told". Then *Saman-dēviyo* reasoned with him for a long time, to try to convince him that what he did was bad and that he had to stop it, but it produced just the opposite effect. *Hiri-yakka* became angry, began to shout and stamp the ground, swelled into giant form, and became "*raksha vesak*". So *Saman-dēviyo* ordered him to be put in irons and to be bound to the sun-wheel where he eventually surrendered. *Saman-dēviyo* let him free but only on condition that from then on he would not seek to take people's lives, but would satisfy himself with making the people ill and then only three times a day, viz. in the morning, in the afternoon, and in the evening, and that he would make them better again when they brought him an offering. Thus, *Hiri-yakka* had to yield to the orders of *Saman-dēviyo*. However, he then increased his efforts to pursue people at the three stipulated times of the day, in order to receive their offerings.

It is believed that *Hiri-yakka* causes, in particular, fever, ague, chest and abdominal pains, burning of the eyes, headaches, and also delirium. The offering presented to him must always consist of a hen's egg prepared in a special way, to which is added some rice and yellow-root (*kahā*).

The belief is further held that *Hiri-yakka* can assume eight different forms (*avatāra*) in his pursuit of men, and this is also the reason of the fear felt for him. He is in the habit of going everywhere and mixing with the people, now in one shape, now in another, so that one is not safe from him anywhere. These eight forms are:

1. As "*Avamangala Hiri-yakka*" in the shape of a dog, a cat, or a pig, he wanders about fresh graves which he digs up in order to devour the bodies or suck the blood.

2. As "*Iramudun Hiri-yakka*", he is to be seen in the village at noon (*iramudun*) as a small man with long flowing beard and hair.



3. As "*Totopala Hiri-Yakka*", he is to be seen as a fisherman, wandering on the shore where the fishing boats lie or where the fishermen are busy with their nets. Sometimes he also sits with a fishing rod on the bank of a lagoon or river.

4. As "*Kadavara Hiri-yakka*" he frequents the ponds, rivers, and canals (kadavara = canal, grave) where the people usually fish and occasionally he is heard to whistle without anyone seeing him. He is blamed if no fish are caught, since he frightens them away.

5. As "*Sipada-kariya Hiri-yakka*", he is heard singing (sipada = to sing) without being seen.

6. As "*Maru Hiri-yakka*", he is heard clapping his hands without being seen.

7. As "*Sobōn Hiri-yakka*", he roams about cemeteries (sohōn), throws stones at people (gal gahima), and makes noises (hol makrima), but he is never to be seen.

8. As "*Gōpala-yakka*", he wanders with a stick in the neighbourhood of grazing cows in order to steal their milk and to afflict the owner of the cows with illness, depriving him of speech so that, like the cows, he can only low and moo. Therefore, anyone will avoid going to his cows if he sees near them a strange man, armed with a stick<sup>1</sup>.

Thus, in all these eight manifestations Hiri-yakka can be dangerous for men, but the form most feared is the one he assumes at mid-day, when he wanders round the village streets and market-places as a small man with dishevelled hair and beard.

#### THE MAHA-SOHONA

Next to the Hiri-yakka, the most feared is *Maha-sohona*, who may best be called the "great cemetery devil".

The following is a long legend about his origin:

In the year 2030 (Buddhist chronology) there was a king Parakrama-Bahu, who lived and reigned in Polonnaruwa. He was also called Jayasēna-yakka and not only the people feared him but also the gods. In the many battles which he fought, he was always victorious. Later on he received the name Maha-sohona.

At that time there was a district Runuraha in Lanka which was ruled over by king Kavan Tissa. Among his commanders he had a man, extremely able but of short stature, who was called Gotembara. After king Kavan Tissa died, he was succeeded by Dutugemunu who waged a war with Elāla of Anuradhapura, the king of the Tamils. Later, Dutugemunu was also engaged in a war with Gotembara, the Sinhalese being thus in a general conflict with the Tamils. Gotembara was the victor. He decided to celebrate his victory with a feast to which he invited

<sup>1</sup> Frequently, this Gōpala (gōpala = shepherd) is not conceived as a manifestation of Hiri-yakka, but as a separate yakka, in which case there are only seven avatāra of Hiri-yakka counted.

all his warriors. Upon hearing this, Jayasēna set out at once to see what was happening, and took three thousand of his soldiers with him. He hoped to be invited to the feast and also to have the chance to declare himself to Gotembara's wife with whom he had fallen in love. Neither did he neglect any opportunity of courting her. The consequence was that she fell ill under the influence of the yakka. When he heard this and found out that Jayasēna had committed adultery with her, Gotembara challenged him to a duel which was to be held at Yugahapitiya, near Polonaruva in the country of Jayasēna. However, Gotembara considered the whole thing as a trifle and, thinking himself certain of victory, made no preparations, while Jayasēna brought with him a crowd of combatants. One morning, as Gotembara, clad only in his loincloth, was going to bathe, he remembered that it was the day of the duel. One of the gods warned him and advised him not to go to the duel as it would mean his certain death. But Gotembara paid no attention to the warnings. When he reached the place, he found an enormous army of men which Jayasēna had brought with him. Jayasēna presented a formidable aspect, a big strong man in full armour, while Gotembara, small and insignificant, faced his adversary completely alone and unarmed<sup>1</sup>. Nobody thought other than that the fight must be decided in a few moments in Jayasēna's favour. But it was not so! Gotembara cleverly avoided all the blows that Jayasēna aimed at him, and going back a step or two, took a run, sprang eighty feet into the air, and gave his opponent such a blow with his foot that the latter's head flew off his shoulders. In this way he vanquished his adversary in a short fight. Jayasēna was lamented and buried by his relatives. A friend of his, Senaseru hāmuduruvo (Saturn), who was playing football when he heard of Jayasēna's death, set out immediately to attend the funeral. On the way he met a wolf which he killed. He cut off the head and took it with him. When he came to the spot where the duel had taken place, the people were already preparing to bury Jayasēna. Then Senaseru hāmuduruvō took the head of the dead wolf, set it on the headless body of Jayasēna, while at the same time reciting a suitable mantra. The body was thus brought back to life as a yakka, with a human body and a wolf's head, who from then on haunted cemeteries where he attacked people who came to bury their dead, and dug up and devoured the corpses. In this form he was henceforth known as Maha-sohona. Senaseru hāmuduruvō gave him all kinds of instructions and, among other things, advised him never to get mixed up in any duels, but rather to stay in the cemetery and to wait till people came with their dead and then to attack them with impunity.

Gotembara took the head of Jayasēna and returned home where he celebrated with a feast. Dutugemunu heard of it and decided to get rid of Gotembara once and for all, as he saw in him an ever-growing menace. When the feast was in full swing Dutugemunu surprised him with an army in full array. Desperately, Gotem-

<sup>1</sup> On the other hand, other traditions depict him as a giant (yōdhayā).



bara sprang into the sea, but the gods helped him to reach Gejaruta-parvataya safely where he lives to this day.

However, Maha-sohona remains wandering about the cemeteries, waiting for the people to bury their dead and he afflicts them with illnesses, as he is forbidden by the gods to kill them. But, like the Hiri-yakka, he must make the people well again if they present him with offerings, amongst others, with a live cock which he may devour, and rice cooked in a skull.

He can be met with at any hour of the day but particularly at night, in the graveyard. He can appear in ten different forms (*dasa avatāra*), i.e. as a wolf (*vrkayā*), a pig (*ūru*), a dog (*ballā*), a bull (*gou*), a virgin (*kanyā*), an old man (*mānusha*), a giant (*raksha*), a *narasingha*, a snake (*naya*), and finally as a *Maha-avatāra* (great manifestation). He is known under seven different names, which are used on various occasions, namely *Dāya-sohona*, *Lē-sohona*, *Puluta-sohona*, *Kadavara-sohona*, *Hiri-sohona*, and *Dala-sohona*, but ordinarily he is simply called *Maha-sohona* or *Maha-sohon*.

Also where three roads cross each other, *Maha-sohona* has the habit of occasionally staying and waiting for passers-by. People therefore avoid resting at cross-roads and especially eating anything cooked or baked, as the smell may attract the yakka. Other favourite places are slaughter-houses and the places where cattle are killed. Furthermore, one may come across him in desolate and neglected gardens and in rocky retreats, and he is also fond of frequenting public bathing places. However, his favourite place is always the cemetery (*sohōn*). It is also said of him that he steals after people who carry weapons, particularly hunters, and, like the *Hiri-yakka*, he is fond of the company of fishermen and waits till they have thrown out their nets and finished hauling the catch in. He is constantly attended by "*Kaluvēdi-dēvatāva*", so-called because he always carries his bow and arrows with him like a *vedda*. *Maha-sohona* gives his orders to his companion and servant, i.e. to lie in wait for people and to let him know when he has tracked down a sacrifice. *Kaluvēdi-dēvatāva* is also in the habit of killing the animals of the forest for his master. At Hambantota, near *Tissamaharāma*, *Maha-sohona* has a large hunting ground, which actually belongs to the female deity *Dēvi-Mangra*, who has granted him permission to hunt in her territory and to collect the honey, on condition that she receives half the booty.

The most diverse illnesses are ascribed to *Maha-sohona*, amongst others, cholera, dysentery, and small pox. Offerings for him, consisting of rice cooked with yellow-root, and blood from a live cock, must always be prepared in a skull, since he is accustomed only to eat out of such a dish and to devour carcasses.

#### THE SŪNIYA-YAKKA

The *Sūniya-yakka* is, like the *Maha-sohona*, *Hiri-yakka*, *Kalu-kumāra*, and *Sanniya-yakka*, one of the most dreaded yakku. He has eight different names: *Sri Adhanta-kumāra*, *Naga Oddissa-kumāra*, *Sanniya Oddissa-kumāra*, *Garunda Od-*

dissa-kumāra, Velamba Oddissa-kūmara, Sūniya-dēvatavā, and Sūniya-yakshini, but he is usually just called Sūniya- (or Hūniya-) yakka.

Also this yakka may appear in ten different forms (avatāra), namely: as raksha, Yogi, donkey (būruvā), naga, narasingha, wolf (vrkayā), god (dēva), viper (polanga), "Tamil with five tresses of hair hanging down his back" (demalā sedapolu pahak), and finally as a woman shadowed by a cobra (nagakanyā = serpent-maid).

The Sūniya-yakka is always addressed by the *ḍura* in the most respectful and deferential manner as "Sūniya-dēvatavā".

Moreover, it is said that this yakka has twelve wives, all yakkiniyo, who always accompany him and help him to make people ill. Their names are: Takari, Makari, Yami-yama, Dutti, Kala-raksha, Asēni-visēni, Irugal-kandi, Nanahrupi, Puspa-kumāri, and Tiloka-dēvi.

Sūniya-yakka is pictured as riding a white horse, surrounded on all sides with cobras and with numerous snakes which wind themselves around his body, with a sword in his right hand and a brazier in his left (text fig. 1). This representation is based on the following legend about him:

A long time ago there was a town in Northern India, called Dēvunuvara. Here reigned a king named Panduhas-rajjuvo with his queen Tuserin-bisavun. One day, in the eighth month of her pregnancy, she went to the lotus pond to bathe. There she saw a large beautiful lotus flower, floating on the water. She picked it and enjoyed its fragrance. And thus it came to pass that the child she was bearing grew up to be an extremely handsome boy. After her bath, the queen returned home. Then, all kinds of queer desires began to take hold of her (*dola dukha*). She longed to copulate with cobras and other snakes, and she took a huge cobra with her into her bedroom. The king came to know about this and was very much disturbed. He called a brahman to consult him. The brahman said, "The child will grow up to be a very cruel person. Everyone will go in fear of him and he will be the horror of the whole population".

A second and a third brahman were asked but they both answered the same. Then the king enquired about his own fate and the brahman replied, "When the child is seven years old, he will disappear into the forest and capture all kinds of snakes, drink their blood and absorb their venom. Through this he will acquire supernatural powers. After this, your son will set off for another country, wage war and kill people. Six kingdoms will he conquer, among them that of his father, whom he will kill to make himself lord of the country".

Such were the words of the brahman, but the king would not believe his prophecy.

The child was born and grew up. He was extremely handsome and was the pride of his father. However, when he was seven years old, he secretly left his father's house and went into the jungle to a big termite's nest (*humbāha*). Here there lived four times four and twenty cobras. The lad caught them and wound them round





Fig. 1. Sūniya-yakka.

his waist, arms, and legs. Then he caught a viper, raised it to his mouth and drank the blood and venom, thus becoming endowed with supernatural powers. He wound another, very long snake, a "mahakala naga", round his whole body from feet to neck, and another one round his loins. Thus equipped, he mounted a white horse which was eight feet tall and fifteen feet long, took in his right hand a sword fifteen feet long and in his left a fire-pan, and resolved to return home and overthrow his father. In the meantime he had become a powerful yakka. The god Sakra-dēviyo saw him coming and asked him what his intentions were. He said he was going to Naraloka to kill people. Sakra begged him to desist from his purpose, but in vain. Finally, Sakra promised to endow him with a power to make people ill, but at the same time he must promise to revere Buddha and to obey him. Further, he must promise to restore to health the people whom he made ill, when they brought him an offering. After much resistance he agreed, and Sakra endowed him with the promised power (*varanuduna*). So he became Sūniya-yakka, but his proper name is *Adhanta Oddissa* or shortly *Oddi*<sup>1</sup>.

The legend about this Sūniya-yakka is also related in another form, as follows:

In the time of Kashyāpa Buddha, there was born in Sagala Puranura (near modern Madras) a yakka. At that time there reigned a king, Sagala Narendrarajjuruvo, whose consort was named Tusarinam-bisava. Their child grew up to be a yakka. Even as a small boy he distinguished himself by his unusual behaviour and gifts. From his infancy he had a great preference for snakes of all kinds, which were his only playfellows. When he grew up he set out for the Himalayas. There he discovered a termite's hill, from which he took a lot of cobras and wound them round his body, so that it was entirely wreathed in snakes. In his mouth he placed two vipers (*polanga*), took a fire-pan in one hand and in the other a mighty sword, fifteen feet long and as broad as a banana-leaf. Thus supplied, he mounted a white horse and assembled seven thousand yakku round him, who appointed him to be their leader.

During this time, Kashyāpa used to preach in his temple which had four gates. One day he was preaching as usual, Sūniya-yakka came in one of the gates and began to roar terribly. He had come to entreat Buddha to give him a power which would enable him to make people fall ill. Mugalang-Hāmuduruvō, one of Buddha's disciples, went to see who was making the noise. Seeing the yakka at one of the gates, he asked him what he wanted. "I have come", answered the yakka, "to ask Buddha for a power to make men ill, so that they will present me with offerings." "You have come in vain", replied Mugulung, "for my master will never fulfil your wish. You had better return to where you came from." He then had the door of the temple shut, and the yakka went back to the Himalayas. But he returned on one of the following nights and showed himself at another gate of the temple. Once more he began to roar terrifically. Buddha heard the noise and sent Mugalang to see who

<sup>1</sup> On the coast of Malabar the art of black magic is called "odi", the medicine man "odiyan".



was there. "There is a man at the gate, the same who came several nights ago." answered Mugalang. "He has come to ask you for the power to make men ill so that they will present him with offerings." "Tell him to leave" said Buddha, and ordered the temple-gates to be closed again. Once more, Sūniya-yakka returned to the Himalayas, but reappeared a few nights later for the third time at the temple door, making a loud noise, as before. But this time he asked for food, pretending to be suffering from continual hunger. Buddha, however had him put in irons and sent to the *avichiya narakadiya*, the bottommost hell, where the devils were to torment him.

While Mulanga went to execute Buddha's order, Buddha changed his mind and was sorry to have issued such a command, for he could not hurt anybody. He therefore called Mulanga back and said to the yakka "You shall not suffer, and your wish will be fulfilled, but only on one condition: There is a place, Tammananuvara, where all the yakku live. There you shall go. In that place there lives a certain *ḍura* who possesses a certain mantra. You will do whatever this *ḍura* tells you to do. If he recites his mantra to summon you, you will come at once and receive the offering presented and restore immediately the health of the person you made ill. The *ḍura* will say the following mantra: "Dēviyanga, Buddhunga! Vesamunu-rajjuvo      anakiya.      yak-ḍura      dolaha      pidenni      devi".

to forbid	exorcist	twelve	offerings	divine
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at the same time keeping at hand the offering prepared for you."

The yakka promised to do as Buddha told him and went away. Sūniya-yakka is able to produce the most diverse diseases, especially internal ailments, indigestion and intestinal disorders, accompanied by nausea and convulsions. Above all, he likes to harass women, causing internal indispositions, sterility, and complaints during pregnancy. However these things are mostly ascribed to the Kalu-kumāra and his accomplices.

#### THE KALU-KUMARA AND HIS ASSOCIATES

One of the yakku, most dreaded by women and girls, is the *Sanniya Kalu-kumāra*, or shorter *Kalu-kumāra*, the "Black Prince". He is thus called because of his black, or rather, his blue-black colour. There are various legends told about him, the most well-known of which is as follows:

"A long time ago, there lived a king in Anuradhapura who was called Puotala-rajjuvo, with his wife Mutumala-bisavun. She was childless, but the king adopted the son of a laundress who used to wash at court and who was the king's clandestine mistress. The boy was called Nilaya and distinguished himself by great intelligence; but as he grew up, it appeared that he was also possessed of unusual physical strength, so that people afterwards also called him *Nila maha-yodbaya*, "the huge giant". The king was a very kind monarch, and very popular on account of the interest which he took in the welfare of his subjects. During his father's reign, the country had been overwhelmed by Panji-rajjuvo, sovereign of a powerful

state in Northern India, who had carried off twelve thousand people as prisoners.

One evening, Puotala-rajjuruvo was wandering through the streets of the town, when he heard a woman crying in a small cottage. He marked the house and on the following day sent a messenger to find out the reasons for the woman's lamentations. The man discovered that the cottage was inhabited by a widow whose two sons were among the prisoners abducted to India, and who was inconsolable because she foresaw their early death. Sympathizing with her sorrow, the king promised to see that her two sons should soon be liberated again.

The king had a big, heavy walking-stick which nobody but himself was able to lift. One day, however, the king discovered the stick upside down on the spot where he used to leave it. Greatly surprised, he made inquiries as to who could have done it and who had entered his room during his absence. None of the servants could tell him anything other than that nobody had been in the room except the boy, and that it must have been he who had reversed the heavy stick. The king sent for the boy without delay and asked whether it had been he who had put the stick upside down. Ashamed, he confessed that he had done it and to the king's amazement demonstrated on the spot that he had the strength to lift the stick. Puotala-rajjuruvo resolved at once to keep the boy in his palace, bestowed high titles upon him, and made him a general in his army. From then on, he was called Nila-mahayodhaya, and was feared by everybody.

Soon afterwards, the king decided to undertake a campaign against Panji-rajjuruvo, to be carried out by Nila-mahayodhaya, and which would have as its main purpose the liberation of the twelve thousand Sinhalese taken into captivity by Panji-rajjuruvo. So, Nila-mahayodhaya, at the head of a strong army, set off at once for India, taking the king's heavy stick with him as his only weapon. When they arrived at the northern point of Ceylon, he struck the water with his stick, so that it fell back allowing the whole army to enter India dry-shod. Unhindered, they entered the country of Panji-rajjuruvo, vanquished him after a short struggle, and liberated their country-men. Moreover, they took twenty thousand prisoners who were afterwards brought to Ceylon.

Along the borders of Panji-rajjuruvo's realm, however, there extended another strange country, which was inhabited only by women, and which, for this reason was called "Istripura" = Country-of-the-women. Unaware of any danger, Nila-mahayodhaya resolved to go to this country of Amazons, about whose strange inhabitants he had been told. However, upon reaching their capital, he was at once surrounded by all the women. Each of them wanted the strong young man for herself. They dragged him hither and thither, pulled his arms and his legs from his body and finally, completely tore him to pieces. Nevertheless, he was reborn as a yakka, who henceforward pursued women and girls, lying in wait for them, and afflicting them with diseases and ailments of all kinds. Moreover, he saw to it that they remained childless, killing and devouring the unborn children. He was named *Nila madana Kalu-kumāra*, or shortly *Kalu-kumāra*.



Kalu-kumāra is able to appear in many different forms (avatāra). He is said to be able to assume the shape of a woman, an ape, a dog, a cow, or a raksha. Generally, however, he is described and represented as follows: He has a crown on his head, a cobra on each of his shoulders, large round eyes, a huge mouth with fangs, and carries a baby between his teeth whom he is about to devour. He has four arms and four hands, holding the following things: in his two right hands a sword and a bow, in his left hands an arrow and a cock. A formidable cobra is wound round his waist. Thirty-two wives surround the yakka, embraced in his arms. Between his legs squats an ape which serves him for riding. He is four feet tall and his body is blue-black; he is therefore named Kalu-kumāra.

Furthermore, he is said to be an excellent elephant-hunter, and he is occasionally pictured as such. For this season, he prefers also to live in the jungle where there are wild elephants which he is used to hunting. When he has killed an elephant with his golden bow and arrow, he drinks its blood; but according to another tradition, he devours it on the spot from head to heels. He is thus often found represented devouring an elephant<sup>1</sup> (see text fig. 2).

As already mentioned, this yakka persecutes woman and girls exclusively and leaves men alone. Therefore, any exorcism ceremony held on behalf of a woman or a girl, must include the presentation of a particular offering in honour of this yakka. He is accused of causing menstrual disorders, loss of blood (lē-mala; literally: secretion of blood), leucorrhoea (kili-mala; literally: secretion of uncleanness), troubles during pregnancy, and of tormenting women and girls with erotic dreams in which he sleeps with them. Besides, it is his fault when women are prevented from giving birth, as he is in the habit of feeding upon unborn children.

When a ceremony in his favour is arranged, Kalu-kumāra demands a great offering, which is to be prepared in a particular manner and consists principally of rice and rice-cakes, different curries, bread-fruit, and seven kinds of fish, both salt-water and fresh-water ones.

### *The Vāta-kumāra*

An accomplice of the Kalu-kumāra is the *Vāta-kumāra*. His father was a bhikshu who lived in Boksella near Onuradhapura, and was a friend of king Asoka. His birth fell on a especially happy day of the revati-ṇekata and mina-rasiya. At the age of seven, the boy entered a monastery and was named *Sidharta*. Later on, he built a round cottage (vāta-dage) on a hill near Kurunegala where he continued to live as a hermit. One day, when rambling about the neighbourhood, he was surprised by a thunderstorm and fell down a cliff, breaking one of his ribs. This caused him, henceforth, to be continually ill-humoured and to grumble at his fate. He went to Uttarakurudivaina to see Vesamunu-rajjuruvu and to receive his commands.

<sup>1</sup> Maha-sohona is likewise said to devour elephants and is occasionally represented in this form (cf. Trautz, fig. 124).



Fig. 2. Kalu-kumāra as an elephant hunter.



"I was a bhikshu" he told Vesamunu-rajjuvo, "and have nothing left; so I ask you to give me the opportunity of making people ill in order to obtain their offerings."

Vesamunu-rajjuvo fulfilled his desire and gave him the authority to persecute women and to afflict them with all kinds of ailments. He thus became a dangerous yakka and assumed the name of *Sidharta Vāta-kumāra*, or in short *Vāta-kumāra*. He then first went to Anuradhapura to plague the queen. She became ill and nobody could help her. The astrologers and medical men were consulted, but without avail. "She is being afflicted by a yakka" said one of the wise men, "but I do not know what to advise for the queen's illness." One night, however, the queen had a dream and was told what to do:

She was to present an offering to the yakka who was causing her ailment. She must get eight quarts of rice which were to be prepared in the following manner: One quart of rice must be cooked with coconut-milk (*kiri-bat*); one quart must be baked into rice-cakes (*keṇuma*); two more quarts must be stamped into meal and a pie (*āgala*) made of the dough; another quart, to furnish another pastry (*atirasa*). All these, together with the rest of rice, must be put into a bowl of clay, ornamented on the inside (*ṇebiliya*, *korasa*) and in addition seven kinds of fish, five kinds of seeds (beans, peas, rice, sesame, mustard), roasted together in an earthen dish or a pan; furthermore, a young unripe bread-fruit, and five different curries. A frame in the shape of a small cottage, adorned with two coconuts with reddened husks and a coconut-blossom, must be erected to cover the offering. Having performed the advice given in her dream, the queen was cured again.

In contrast to *Kalu-kumāra*, *Vāta-kumāra* appears in only one form, but according to the circumstances and to his place of stay he has various names: *Andun-kumāra*, *Sandun-kumāra*, *Sapumal-kumāra*, *Puspa-kumāra*, and *Totu-* (or *Toteya-*) *kumāra*<sup>1</sup>. Like his accomplice, *Kalu-kumāra*, he afflicts exclusively women and girls, striking them with insanity and provoking various internal ailments and physical disorders. He is also blamed when newborn babies die, as he has the habit of devouring them immediately after their birth. His body is said to be ash-coloured; he wears a white gown, a garland of flowers round his neck, and a cobra as a girdle round his waist. He is corpulent and short of stature<sup>2</sup>. He is generally represented with four arms and with a stag in his mouth, for deer-hunting is his passion and he devours the stag which he has killed from head to heels. The animal on which he rides is a dog which also assists him in hunting.

### *The Kalu-yakka*

He also is an associate of *Kalu-kumāra* and of *Vāta-kumāra*, and was a son of

<sup>1</sup> *Totu* = ferry, ford; *toteya* = ferryman. In this form, *Vāta-kumāra*, as the name indicates, frequents river-crossings, waiting for women and girls who want to be ferried across the river.

<sup>2</sup> Owing to his rotund figure, he is also called *Vāta-kumāra* (*vāta* = round). According to another interpretation his name derives from the round house which he had built for himself.

king Vijaya and of the yakkini Kuvēni<sup>1</sup>. His real name was *Gaja-Bahu*, but he is usually called Kalu-yakka, because of the black colour of his body. The reason is that he was born on the most unlucky day of the week, the month, and the year, i.e. on a Saturday of pusa-ṇkata, of makāra-rasi, and with the new moon. In contrast to Kalu-kumāra and Vāta-kumāra, he pursues not only women and girls, but also men; for this reason, he must be respected by an offering when any ceremony

<sup>1</sup> With king Vijaya, who came to India about the year 500 A.D., begins the history of Ceylon, although a great deal of the tradition is legendary.

Vijaya was the eldest son of king Sinha-Bahu of Lala, a district in Northern India corresponding to modern Bihar. Sinha-Bahu's mother was a princess of Vanga (Bengal), and is said to have been married to a lion, i.e. that her husband belonged to another race whose name was "Siha" or "Sinha" (lion). In Sinhapura, the capital of Lala, Vijaya became leader of a gang, the members of which had committed countless frauds and acts of violence. People complained to the king and he reprimanded his son twice. But when Vijaya did not improve, the people demanded his condemnation, and the king decided to banish him. So Vijaya and seven hundred of his adherents were at once put on board a ship and left to their fate. Their wives were embarked on another ship and the children on a third. The three ships, however, sailed off each in a different direction. Vijaya with his attendants landed somewhere on the east coast of India, but as he was afraid of the natives the party re-embarked and reached Lanka (Ceylon). At that time the island was inhabited by men about whom practically nothing was known. Their way of life was extremely primitive and they were called simply *yakku* and *naga* (snakes) by the people who had come from India, i.e. by Vijaya and his men. The first-mentioned lived in the centre of the island, their capital being called Lankapura. The naga, on the other hand, inhabited the northern and western parts of the island, which for this reason was called "Nagadvīpa", i.e. Snake-land. It was these people whom king Vijaya came across first. He landed on the north-west coast, near modern Puttalam. According to the tradition this happened on the day of Buddha's death in the year 543 A.D., but historical research puts it about 60 years earlier. Tired and weakened by the long voyage, the new-comers first settled for some time on the shore. It is told that when they wanted to lie down on the ground and touched it with their hands, the soil had the colour of copper. For this reason they named the unknown country *Taprapanni* (copper-coloured), which was later made into *Taprobane*, the name for the whole island.

Soon after landing, Vijaya saw a bitch who, wagging her tail, approached him and licked his feet. Thereupon she disappeared immediately again into the bush. He concluded that there must be human beings living nearby and he despatched his warriors, one after another, to explore the region. After a short time, the first of them came to a pond where he saw a beautiful woman sitting under a tree spinning cotton. This was the yakka-princess *Kuvēni* who had transformed herself into a bitch and watched the arrival of Vijaya, about which she had already learnt through an omen. *Kuvēni* immediately seized the tired and exhausted man and took him off to a cavern where she kept him prisoner. When the man failed to return, Vijaya sent another one into the bush to see where the first one was, but he did not return either, for *Kuvēni* had likewise taken him to her cavern and was keeping him in captivity. And so, one after the other met with the same fate, until Vijaya, having lost all his warriors in this way, set out for the bush himself to investigate the fate of his companions. Following the footprints of the others, he also arrived at the pond where he saw *Kuvēni* sitting under the tree. Suspecting that the woman had killed all his men, he grasped her by the neck, but she prostrated herself at his feet and implored his indulgence. She even promised to return his men if he would marry her. At first, Vijaya refused to do so, but afterwards he agreed to her proposal and married her, whereupon she liberated his friends whom she had kept prisoner. In this way, Vijaya became lord of the country and afterwards founded a town which was named *Tamanna-nuvara*. A number of sons and daughters were born to Vijaya and *Kuvēni* who, like their mother, were yakku and yakkiniyo, and persecuted people and took their lives.

According to another legend, Kalu-kumāra, Nila-madana-Kalu-kumāra, and Vata-kumāra were also sons of *Kuvēni*, thus establishing their connection in a more simple way.



is performed, be it on behalf of a man or a woman. He causes headaches, fever, rheumatic pains, abdominal diseases, and occasionally, in women and girls, menstrual disorders. However, other maladies, such as phthisis, consumption, and paralysis, are also attributed to him. He produces evil dreams, particularly ones about snakes, and itchings over the whole body.

He is pictured with four arms, the face of a raksha, large round ears, two formidable fangs in his mouth, and a cobra wound round his waist. He rides a bull.

#### THE AIMĀNA-YAKKA

Among all the yakku who are represented in the sanniya-yakuma-ceremony, by masked or unmasked performers, the *Aimāna-yakka* occupies a very special place. He comes from a rather low caste, and as a result does not enjoy the same respect accorded the other yakku. On the contrary, he is spoken of with some contempt, and the offerings which are presented to him are poor and carelessly prepared.

There is a long story related about this origin, which may be told in short as follows:

Once upon a time, a man called Desaguru and his wife Andīma came from Kashirata (Benares) to Lanka. They were soothsayers and wanted to settle down near Anuradhapura. At that time, Parakrama Bahu reigned in Polonaruva. The king heard about the two people and resolved to go to see them in order to have his future foretold. He went into the bush where the soothsayers were living, and upon seeing the young fair woman, he was seized by a strong passion. On the following day, the king sent a messenger to have Andīma brought to his palace where she was to live. She afterwards became the king's favourite wife. But the other sixteen wives felt slighted and conceived a scheme to do away with Andīma. When, soon afterwards, the king went on a campaign, they gathered all their jewels and hid them in order to tell the king on his return that Andīma had robbed them. The king believed this story and ordered that she be killed and impaled, as used to be done with criminals. However, she was already pregnant, and during the execution she gave birth to a boy. The child was taken to the palace and brought up there. When he grew up, he heard one day about his mother and her fate and took it so much to heart that he died from grief. In the meantime, Andīma had been re-born, and again in Kashirata. She once more gave birth to a boy, who was a re-incarnation of her former child. The boy thrived rapidly and distinguished himself, already in his youth, by his extraordinary strength. When he was sixteen years old, he came to *Tammāna-adaviya* on the west coast of the island of Lanka. In this place, there lived three yakkiniyo. They were called Rati-kandi, Gini-kandi, and Mini-kandi, and were the daughters of Kuvēni and of king Vijaya (see p. 39). Accompanied by these three yakkiniyo, the boy went to Vesamunu-rajjuruvu in Uttarakuruvaina and asked him to grant him permission to take revenge on Parakrama-Bahu for the death of his mother of his previous life. Vesamunu-

rajjuvo granted his desire and bestowed on him the power. So he became a yakka and was henceforth called *Aimāna*<sup>1</sup>. Together with the three yakkiniyo, he then set out for Polonaruva. When they arrived, the king was informed that four people, one man and three women, had come from abroad to see him. But he refused to let them enter the palace and gave orders that they be sent away. Then *Aimāna* recited a mantra so that the queen became ill. She grew increasingly thin, lost her beauty, and remained childless. The king consulted the brahmins but they did not know what to advise him. They could only tell him that the queen had fallen victim to a yakka. Ultimately, there appeared one who recommended that the king prepare offerings and pronounce the following mantra: "Dēviyange, Bud-dhange anakiya Patini-dēviyo". The king followed this advice and the queen recovered again.

#### THE ATURA-SANNIYA

He was born in Visālā-maha-nuvara (i.e. Russia) and his mother was already dead and abandoned at his birth. At that time, it was not yet customary to bury or burn the corpses, as is done nowadays. They were carried into the bush and left. Owing to this strange circumstance, he already possessed supernatural powers when he was born, and was thus a yakka. When a child, he was already given to devouring corpses, and as he grew up, he began to lie in wait for living persons in order to devour them. He gathered other yakku around himself, eventually a whole army of 7,700, and placed himself at their head. He selected a number of the most able from them to whom he gave his orders. With this army, Aturu-sanniya roamed through the country, killing people and devouring them. At the same time, a famine (*durbbhiksha*) broke out and the people died in crowds. The yakku pounced on the corpses and devoured them. On seeing the evil caused by Aturu-sanniya and his gang, Gautama Buddha went to see Isvara, and both of them deliberated as to how an end could be made of the yakku's doings. They discussed the matter with Vesamunu-rajjuvo, and the three of them descended to earth by Aturu-sanniya, who had just fallen asleep. He was awakened by the radiance of Gautama Buddha's halo; but he felt only the heat which emanated from it, without seeing anybody, for the three of them had remained in front of the house. When one of his servants reported that three men were standing outside, who had presumably come to beg for alms, Aturu went to the door himself and saw the three waiting. Buddha approached him slowly and Aturu grew afraid. "What do you want?", he asked angrily, blocking the passage. Buddha replied "I know that you are very powerful as I also know about your birth. You were born out of a corpse and you feed upon human flesh. Stop doing it! That is all I wanted to tell you."

<sup>1</sup> According to another conception, *Aimāna* became a *prēta* and was afterwards made chief (*senapati*) of all *prēte*, with whose assistance he persecuted people and struck them with illness. In a third version he is called *yakka-prēta* and is assigned a position between both the yakku and the *prēte*.



"My mother", answered Aturu, "was tortured and killed by the king. I am going to take revenge and that is why I have come here!" They argued for a long time. Again and again Buddha entreated Aturu-sanniya to desist from his doings, but Aturu did not yield. At length, Buddha directed upon Aturu and his companions five differently coloured rays from his head. The rays burnt into their skins and they began to lament and to cry for mercy. But Gautama Buddha said; "You must leave this place and stop your doings. However, I will concede you one favour: you may make people ill, but you must not take their lives. You must, however, return their health to them when they turn to you with mantra and when they present you with offerings which you will receive as a reward."

Aturu promised to obey, and since that time he only afflicts people with diseases such as cholera, fever, and others. On the other hand, men who have fallen ill, dedicate a sanniya-yakuma-ceremony to him and present an offering which must be composed of the following ingredients: five kinds of seeds, rice, and curry, which must be placed in a special basket of leaves, a so-called *tātuva*.

In outward appearance, Aturu-sanniya is entirely black. He wears a crown on his head, and his forehead is, like the Hindu custom, smeared with the cow-dung ashes. Curls adorn his head and round his neck he wears a string of pearls. He has four arms, and carries a bow, arrows, and a trident in his hands.

#### THE KŌLA-SANNIYA AND HIS ASSOCIATES

Kōla-sanniya is the leader of the eighteen real sanniya-yakku (dahata sanniya-yakku), who again occupy a special position and who may, properly speaking, be regarded as illness-spreading yakku<sup>1</sup>. Yet, they not only affect people with numerous diseases and bad health but, in reality, are the very personifications of these ailments and maladies. We shall see later on how this is to be understood. However, before that we have the legend which is told about Kōla-sanniya himself:

"Once upon a time, there lived in Northern India a king named Sangapāla-rajjuvo, and a queen, Asupāla-kumāri-kavi. While the queen was expecting a child, she longed for a manga and sent one of her maids for some of the fruit. The servant did as she was told, and asked the queen to let her have one of the fruits. But the queen did not fulfil her wish and ate them all herself. The maid felt deeply offended and resolved to take her revenge. She went to the king who lived in another palace, and said, "Your consort has conceived a boy. She will be confined in ten months, but you are not to see your son. The queen will have him brought to her brother's house, who will bring him up, and when he is grown he will seek your life." Such were the servant's words and the king believed her. He sent for one of his executioners and ordered him to hang the queen. Following the custom

<sup>1</sup> They are always respectfully addressed as "sanniya-dēvaṭāṃ", i.e. as deities.

of that time, she was hanged on the *puberiga-tree*<sup>1</sup>, but before her death she gave birth to a boy. The king had the child brought to his palace where he was to be carefully attended by a nurse. Later on he was called *Vadakamana-kumāra*.

When the prince grew up, the king gave orders that his mother's fate was to be kept concealed from him; but one day, he learnt it from a stranger and from that very moment it continued to trouble his thoughts. Soon afterwards he went secretly to see Gautama Buddha and told him what he had heard about the fate of his mother, and at the same time vowed to avenge her death. He died however, when a youth, but was re-born through a queen in *Visālā-maha-nuvara*. His murdered mother had likewise been re-incarnated in *Mandana-nuvara* where king *Vijitranam-rajjuruvu* and his consort *Suterita-dēvinānsē* were reigning. This queen gave birth to a girl, who was *Asupāla-kumāri-kavi*, the mother of *Vadakamana-kumāra*, re-born. This girl was called *Padmi-mantri* and was married when she was sixteen to the king *Sangsu-rajjuruvu*, the lord of *Visālā-maha-nuvara*. She bore a son, the same *Vadakamana-kumāra* who was thus born for a second time.

Before her confinement the queen had three strange dreams. She saw a cobra sleeping in her bed, the sun rising in great splendour, and finally, the moon with many stars. Astrologers were summoned to the palace and consulted as to the meaning of these dreams. The first one said, "The dream of the cobra means good luck. The queen is going to have a boy." The second said, "The dream of the rising sun means bad luck. The queen is going to have a boy who will be very cruel. He will associate with yakku and raksho and will torment and kill people." The third astrologer declared, "The dream of the rising moon and stars indicates good luck. The queen is going to have a boy who will be a benevolent and wise monarch."

Soon afterwards, the prince was born, and the king saw that his son was educated with the utmost care. He was a handsome boy and was called *Kōla kumāra*<sup>2</sup>. Even at an early age, he displayed unusual physical strength, but also seemed to have command of occult powers, about which his father did not know. Only when he was older, did this begin to be known and did it come to the king's ears. He began to seek contact with yakku and raksho, and leaving the palace soon after, set out for the north country, and gathering 4,000 yakku around his person he made himself their leader. Out of this army he selected eighteen of the strongest and most able as his lieutenants, each one of whom was to afflict people with a certain illness, ailment, or infirmity, from which most of them derive their names. They were the following:

<sup>1</sup> Such a tree in the centre of a big square formerly indicated the spot where criminals were executed. They were hanged from the branches of the tree and cut to pieces; others were impaled or quartered. The procedure was of the utmost cruelty and refinement. There exists a detailed report about it by Robert Knox who was kept in captivity in Kandy for twenty years by a Sinhalese king.

<sup>2</sup> *Kōla* is also the name for Saturn. According to Clough's *Sinhalese-English Dictionary*, *kōla-sanniya* is a mucous secretion in the throat which brings about death by suffocation (*cholera morbus*).



- 1) The *Kana-sanniya*, the blind-making sanniya (kana = blind).
- 2) The *Kora-sanniya*, the lame-making sanniya (kora = lame).
- 3) The *Gini-jala-sanniya*, (fire-water-sanniya), the sanniya with fire on his head who afflicts people with fever and ague.
- 4) The *Vedda-sanniya*, the sanniya with the bow (like a vedda)<sup>1</sup> who causes bubonic plague.
- 5) The *Demalā-sanniya*, the Tamil sanniya who torments people with hallucinations and bad dreams.
- 6) The *Kapala-sanniya*, the sanniya who spreads insanity among men.
- 7) The *Golu-sanniya*, the sanniya who makes people dumb (golu = dumb).
- 8) The *Biri-sanniya*, the sanniya who causes deafness (biri = deaf).
- 9) The *Māru-sanniya*, the sanniya who causes delirium.
- 10) The *Amuku-sanniya*, the sanniya who makes people vomit continually.
- 11) The *Gulma-sanniya*, the sanniya who infects people with parasitic worms.
- 12) The *Dēva-sanniya*, the sanniya who makes men suffer from small pox, cholera, typhoid fever, and other epidemic diseases<sup>2</sup>.
- 13) The *Naga-sanniya*, the sanniya who brings people evil dreams, especially those of snakes (nagas).
- 14) The *Murtā-sanniya*, the sanniya who causes people to swoon and to lose consciousness (murtā, corrupted from murchchā = unconsciousness, swoon).
- 15) The *Kāla-sanniya*, the sanniya who causes black death (kāla = black death).
- 16) The *Pita-sanniya*, the sanniya who affects the bile (pita = bile). The illnesses which he produces are continuous sleep, headaches, vomiting, terrible dreams.
- 17) The *Vāta-sanniya*, the sanniya who causes flatulence (vāta = wind). The illnesses which he produces are insane behaviour, shaking and burning of the limbs.
- 18) The *Slesma-sanniya*, the sanniya who affects the mucous element (slesma = mucus). The maladies which he produces are mucous secretions from the mouth and the anus, and secretions mixed with the urine, attacks of anxiety, and epileptic fits<sup>3</sup>.

With his army of yakku and their eighteen chieftains, Kōla-sanniya, as he was

<sup>1</sup> Vedda = hunter, as the original inhabitants are also called by the Sinhalese.

<sup>2</sup> Epidemics and plagues were generally believed to be punishments by the deities (cf. p. 140); however, the above-mentioned yakku are charged with the dissemination of the diseases, and the yakku have to receive and execute the order.

<sup>3</sup> There is, however, no unanimity as to the names of these eighteen sanniya, the so-called "dahata sanniya" (see also Grünwedel, Int. Arch. Ethn. VI, p. 75). Besides purely local differences in their naming, several of these sanniya have two or more names. Often, Kōla-sanniya is also included among the "dahata sanniya", and according to another conception, he himself is one of these eighteen sanniya, who at the same time enjoys a leading role. In this case, the number of his attendants would only be seventeen. Another interpretation suggests, however, that the "dahata sanniya" are only different manifestations (avatāra) of Kōla-sanniya. Frequently, Kōla-sanniya is also identified with, and is considered to be, a special manifestation of Hūniya- (or Sūniya-) yakka, who will be dealt with below (see also Grünwedel, p. 74).

henceforward named, resolved to take his revenge on humanity. But first of all, he wanted to return to Visālā-maha-nuvara, the country of his father, in order to punish the king and his subjects. The yakku assailed the men and struck them with diseases, infirmities, and all kinds of plagues without mercy, so that they pined away and died without being able to offer the least resistance against the ailments and epidemics. Then, Kōla-sanniya and his accomplices went to Lanka with the intention of afflicting its inhabitants likewise. Here they tried to construct a fence to keep the invaders off, but it proved useless and nobody was able to do anything.

At that time, these people were not yet Buddhists nor were they interested in Buddha although they had heard of him. But now, in their distress, they turned to him and entreated him to assist them. Gautama Buddha, however, refused to listen to their prayers: nevertheless, the people persisted with their supplications and even their king joined in the petitions. At last, Gautama Buddha took pity on them and came to Visālā-maha-nuvara, accompanied by five hundred of his attendants. They had a long, tiresome way before them. Many rivers had to be crossed, but no sooner did they come to a river, than the waters gave way spontaneously and they could pass over the river-bed dry-shod. When they came to Visālā-maha-nuvara, they met with complete confusion. Corpses filled the streets and poisoned the air. Moreover, the country was affected with drought and dryness. When Buddha appeared, it began to rain and the water washed all the corpses into the river. In this way, the country was soon made clean again.

Upon seeing Buddha approaching, the yakku took flight; some of them, however, fell on their knees before him and began to worship him. Buddha ordered food to be given to them and sent them to another country beyond the Sakvala-gala. Thus, all the yakku left the country. Then Buddha summoned his attendants and told them to sprinkle holy water (*pirit vatura*) everywhere so that everything would be made clean again. After that, he preached to the people and taught them to recite the "ratana sūtra". In this way, the people were converted to Buddhism.

Another version of this legend is interesting, because it mentions the so-called "sanniya-vidiya" a small cottage or construction of leaves, which must always be erected for the sanniya-yakuma and which is thought to represent, as it were, the "dwelling of the yakku" (see p. 48). This legend may be told briefly as follows:

"Once upon a time, there lived a princess named Ariyagat-kumāri. A sun-beam fertilized her, and she became pregnant. After some time, she gave birth to a shapeless piece of flesh. Her relatives did not know what to do about it and the king ordered the thing to be placed in a pot and carried to the river "Naranjanang-ganga". There it was to be placed in the water, so that the pot might drift away to the sea. At the same time, Gautama Buddha also went to the river to meditate. He saw the pot floating on the water and took it out. The pot was tied up in a cloth, and in opening it he saw the piece of flesh which in the meantime had divided itself. He brought the vessel, together with its contents, to his temple and hung it up. When he examined it again after some time, there were two children lying in



the pot, a boy and a girl, sucking their fingers. Buddha brought them up and they grew. When they were sixteen years old, Buddha wanted them to marry so that he would be rid of them. But the people said with one voice, "How can we wed our sons and daughters to these children who have no parents and whose origin we do not know!" So, there was nothing left but for Buddha to have the two children marry one another. He led them into the woods, far from anywhere, built them a cottage, and left them to their fate. Soon after, the young woman became with child and gave birth to twins, who, in their turn, married each other and likewise brought forth twins who married one another. And they multiplied until, at last, they filled the whole wood and took possession of the whole country which was called afterwards *Maha-nuvara* = large country<sup>1</sup>. Some time later, they elected a king from among them, who was named *Sangapāla-rajjuvo*; his consort was *Asupāla-kumāri*.

Soon afterwards, the king had to go to war. His wife was already pregnant, but the king was unaware of it. When he returned, the time of her confinement had already come. The king was enraged, for he assumed that the queen had had intercourse with another man. He inquired and asked his servants but nobody could tell him anything. One of the maids, however, hoping to be highly rewarded, made up a story and informed the king that, while he had been away, a stranger had slept with the queen. The king trusted the maid and gave the order for the queen to be brought to the place of execution, i.e. the square with the *puberiga-tree*, and had her hanged and cut to pieces. But the child remained alive; he fed on the flesh of his mother and grew. Even when the boy was bigger, he fed exclusively on corpses and on all the criminals who were put to death. All this led to his becoming a *yakka*. One day, he heard of his mother's tragic fate and how the king had her killed. He resolved to avenge her. He went to the king's palace, in front of which grew a big *nuga-tree*. He dug a hole under the tree, hid in the ground, and lay in wait for the people who wanted to enter the palace. He overpowered them, dragged them to his cave, and devoured them, as many as a hundred men in a day and even more. So it went on, day after day, and gradually the whole town became empty. Nobody was able to offer any resistance, let alone master him.

*Dēo Guru-Buddha* came to know about this *yakka* and was full of wrath. He went to *Maha-nuvara* to see the *yakka*, who was henceforth called *Rajamula Kōla-sanniya*. When he saw Buddha coming, he displayed a blazing flame hoping to intimidate him, but Buddha was not afraid. He went straight to the *yakka* and reprimanded him, and commanded him to stop his wicked deeds. Then, he went to see the king and told him to erect a booth to house offerings for the *yakka*, a so-called *mēsa*, under the *nuga-tree*; and to fill it every day with food so that the *yakka* might eat and keep quiet and desist from persecuting the people. Buddha also

<sup>1</sup> *Maha-nuvara*, or *Visālā-maha-nuvara*, is the name for Russia, which, according to the Indian conception, was supposed formerly to be one large wood. *Visālā* or *Visālāpura* is the old Indian town *Ujaini*.

conferred with Sakra, who brought red rice (*ratu hal*), prepared it in front of the palace-gates and brought it to the *mēsa* as an offering for the yakka. Buddha then returned to the yakka and told him that he must stop pursuing people and eating human flesh. Certainly he might afflict people with diseases, but when they presented him with offerings he must give them back their health. The yakka had to yield, whether he liked it or not. From then on, he was called *Kōla-sanniya-yakka*, or simply *sanniya-yakka*, because he spreads diseases (*sanniya*) among people. He is, however, respectfully addressed as the *Rajamula Kōla-sanniya-yakka*, i.e. he is given the title of a king, to whom honour must be paid <sup>1</sup>.

### THE SANNIYA-YAKUMA-CEREMONY

The *ḍura* selects the day on which the ceremony will be held, for not every day is favourable. To begin with, the patient's horoscope must be consulted and, above all else, the quarter of the compass in which *Mārea* is to be found must be ascertained. The *ḍura* now tells the patient and his relatives of his findings, who are then to make the necessary preparations. These consist in the procuring of certain herbs and roots, especially a large quantity of small lemons (*dēhi*), young palm-leaves (*gokkola*), as well as banana-stems which are needed to make the receptacles and the stands for the offerings. Other wild herbs and leaves however, are brought by the *ḍura* himself. At the same time, the honorarium is agreed upon which is fixed according to the circumstances and situation of the patient. It varies between fifteen and fifty or more rupees. But for this as well as for other ceremonies there is a rule: the higher the fee, the greater the number of the actors and the more elaborate and careful the performance of the ceremony. If the cost of the ceremony must be kept low, all the inessentials are omitted, the dances are shortened, and the number of yakka-actors is reduced.

An *ḍura* seldom executes a ceremony alone. He is accompanied by at least one or two assistants who help him with the arrangements and also with the performance of the dances. They may be his pupils or, if he has none, other persons. As a rule, however, two or three *ḍuro* perform the ceremony jointly, distributing the various roles among themselves and relieving one another throughout. Likewise, there must be at least one drummer present for every *sanniya-yakuma*, since drums are indispensable to the performing of the dances and are inseparably connected with them (see Pl. II, fig 2).

The ritual always takes place at night. It begins in the evening when darkness falls, and continues till day-break; it thus lasts thirty Sinhalese hours. In many cases, however, the *sanniya-yakuma* is not celebrated alone, but is combined with

<sup>1</sup> The diseases caused by the *Kōla-sanniya* are, in contrast to those caused by the other yakku, mainly physical in nature. They are due to disturbances in the equilibrium of the three humours (see Clough's *Sinhalese-English Dictionary*: "*sanniya*"). Very often it is a question of defects such as blindness, deafness, dumbness, etc.



another ceremony, the *sūniyama*, so that the latter follows the performance by night of the *sanniya-yakuma*. Thus, both together last a night and the succeeding forenoon. While the *sūniyama*-ceremony may take place both at night and during the day, the *sanniya-yakuma* must always be held at night. The reason for this is, as we have already seen in one of the preceding chapters, that there are quite definite times when the *yakka* is called and when the *yakka*-actor plays his part.

The arrangement is generally as follows:

Usually, all ceremonies and dances are performed directly before the house in front of the terrace, where the patient is seated. If the weather is bad or if rain threatens, the scene is covered by an awning or a sail, or they erect, when circumstances allow it, a simple roof of leaves. To one side of the space where the dancing takes place, there is the so-called *sanniya-vīdiya*<sup>1</sup>, a square construction of banana-stems and coconut-leaves provided with a simple roof of leaves and divided into different parts inside, quite often having even a small door, but in most cases not. According to the directions, this *sanniya-vīdiya* ought to be on the north side of the place, but this rule is seldom observed. There are also directions as to the size of the construction; it must be seven arms's lengths long and the same in width. The *yakku*-actors enter the dancing-scene one after the other from this *sanniya-vīdiya*, and they retire to it after their act. Inside the *sanniya-vīdiya*, there is a high square stand of palm-leaves and banana-stems, which is erected so that it can revolve on a rice-pounder driven into the earth. This is the so-called "*sanniya-kūduva*", i.e. the *sanniya*-nest, and is to hold the offerings for the *sanniya-yakku*<sup>2</sup> (see pl. XXXII, fig. 53).

On the other side of the place or at some distance from it, there is the "*kumāra-vīdiya*", a stand to hold the offerings for another *yakka*, the *Kalu-kumāra*, and his associate, the *Vāta-kumāra*, but only when the patient is a woman or girl<sup>3</sup>. This *kumāra-vīdiya* is made by inserting several sticks into the ground and fixing a square stand on them, which is reached by a little ladder of seven rungs made of pieces of banana-stem. From the four corners, there hang split coconut-leaves (*gokkola*), and in the centre of the stand is erected a short stick with three or five branches from which two young, red-coloured coconuts (*ṭemili*) and a coconut-flower (*pol-mal*) hang. This pronged stick is tied to a longer stick, rising above the offering-stand, whose tip is joined to the four corners of the square

<sup>1</sup> *Vīdiya* (Sanskrit: *vīthi*, *vīthikā*) indicates something like street or a house on the street. Others, however, maintain that in this case *vīdiya* means a palace or house. Others again connect this *sanniya-vīdiya* with the legend of the *Kōla-sanniya* and interpret it as the *nuga*-tree under which he dug his cave to live in (p. 46). This tradition is meant to be remembered by the tuft of seven different kinds of leaves which is always attached to the *sanniya-vīdiya*.

<sup>2</sup> Another designation for this stand, derived from the Sanskrit, is "*dantāṅg dastimā*". But there seem to be no legends connected with the *sanniya-kūduva*.

<sup>3</sup> Sinhalese scholars maintain that the name "*kumāra-vīdiya*" is also quite inaccurate. *Vīdiya* means, as we saw, street, and not palace, as others affirm. The correct name for this offering-stand is "*kalu-kumāra-mēsa*" but it is rarely used. The designation "*kumāra-vīdiya*" has gained complete acceptance, and also the expression "*sanniya-vīdiya*".



Fig. 1. Preparations for a sanniya-yakuma-ceremony.  
The sanniya-vidiya being constructed.





Fig. 2.

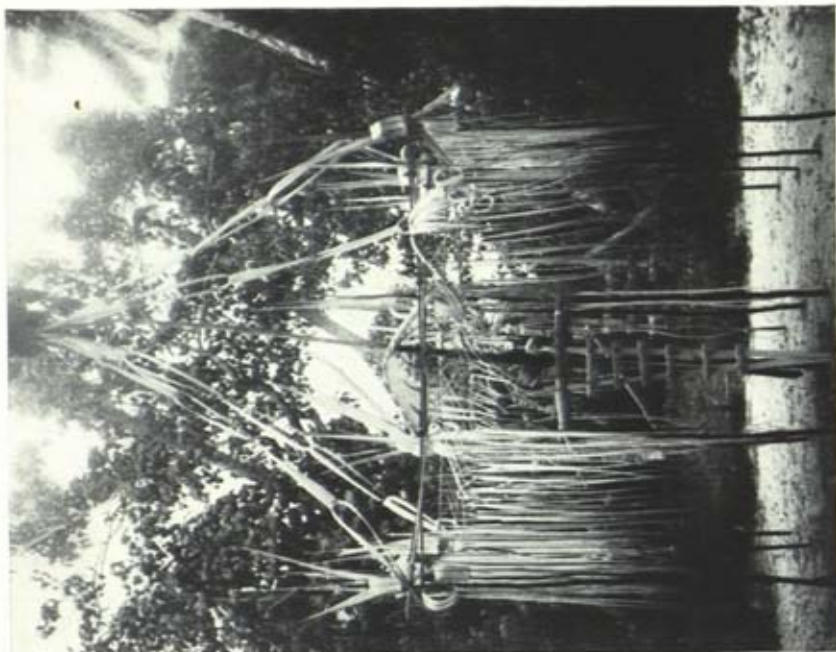


Fig. 3.

Fig. 2. Most of the ceremonies which are conducted by the exorcist are accompanied by the music of drums. Often, there are two or more drummers who beat their instruments together or alternately. Time and rhythm are constantly changing and follow strict rules for each dance and each rite. In the background is the *misa* for the reception of the offerings.

Fig. 3. The completed *kumāra-vidiya*.

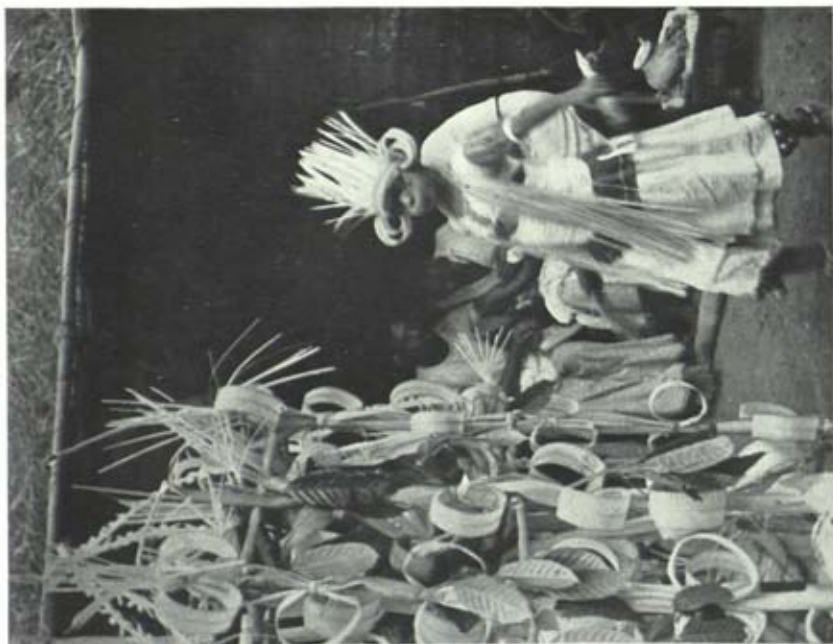


Fig. 4.

Fig. 4. Young "devil-dancer" at an "iramudun-pidenna-ceremony". He is already a very experienced dancer, able to perform even the most difficult roles; however, he has not yet learned to recite the legends and the mantra which accompany the ritual.

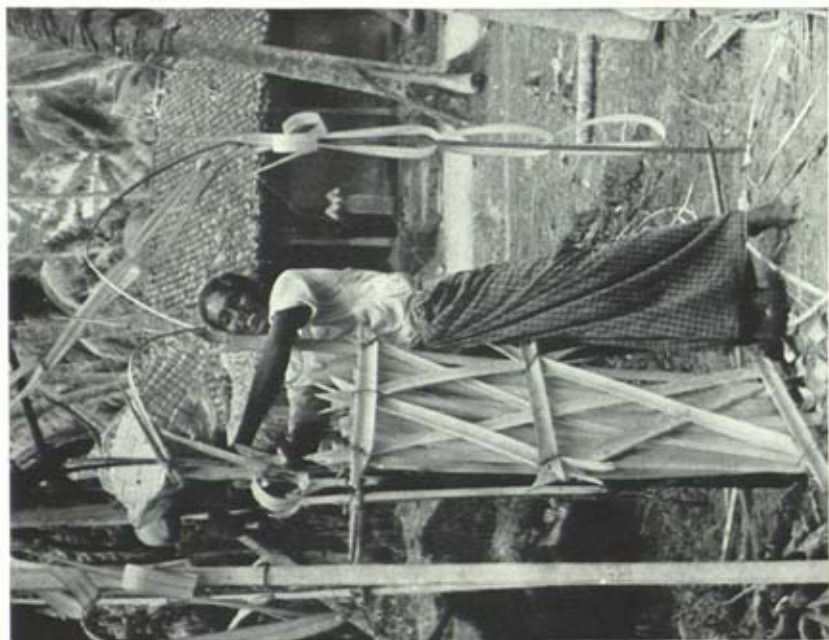


Fig. 5.

Fig. 5. Preparation of the kumara-vidiya for an impending sanniya-yakuma.



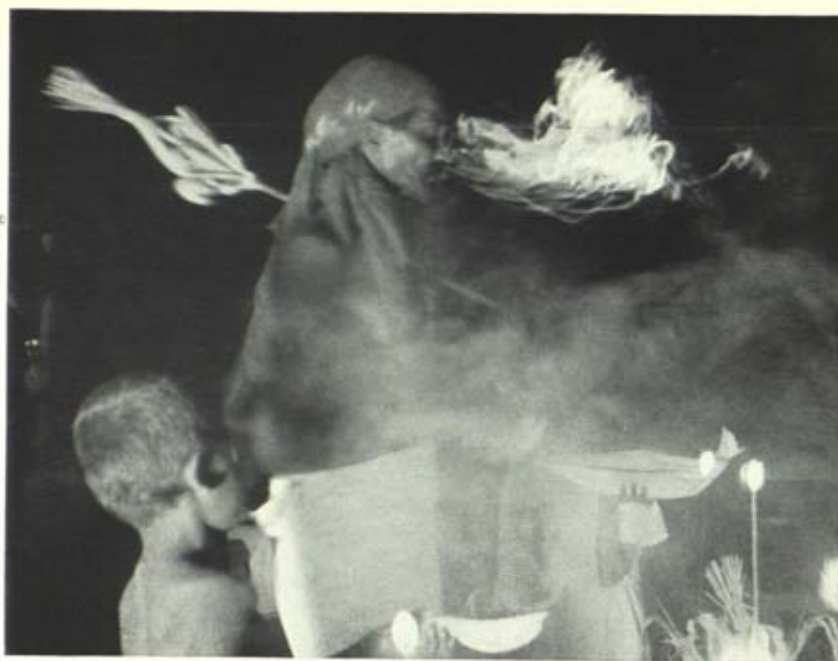


Fig. 6. The *çdura* summons the *yakku* and *prêteo* (flashlight picture).



Fig. 7. In front of the chair with the offering for a certain *yakka*, the exorcist utters his incantations and entreats the demon to accept the gift.

offering-stand by garlands of young coconut-leaves<sup>1</sup>. The stick is, furthermore, tipped by a tuft of leaves, composed of nine different twigs of the following trees: *nā-gaha* (ironwood-tree), *dēl-gaha* (wild breadfruit-tree), *ūna* (bamboo), *bō-gaha* (*Ficus religiosa*), *pol-gaha* (coconut-palm), *nuga-gaha* (*Ficus atissima*), *ēhela-gaha* (*Cassia fistula*), *pūga-gaha* (*Areca catechu*), *rukat-tana-gaha* (*Alsonia scholaris*). This is because these trees are thought to be the favourite dwelling places of the two yakku<sup>2</sup> (Pl. II, fig. 3).

Finally, the "mal-yahanāva"<sup>3</sup> must be mentioned. This is a small but high stand, decorated with *gokkola*, on which are fixed four oil-lamps (*meti-pana*) that burn the whole night through, and where flowers (*mal*), coconut-flowers (*pol-mal*), and grains of rice are placed. This offering-stand is for the Lord of the four parts of the world (*Sataravaram-rajjuruvo*) (see p. 23, 24), but it is not erected for small ceremonies.

Although, as a rule with the diseases caused by the yakku, only one definite yakka is responsible for the illness of the sick person, yet, whenever a sanniya-yakuma or other great ceremony is performed, the whole of the yakku must be honoured by an offering. For the disease-spreading yakku are thought to form a unity (*samāgama*), and are present as a whole when a ceremony is performed. Moreover, their envy would be provoked if only a single yakka were venerated by an offering, and such an offence must at all costs be avoided. For the same reason, the *prēteo* must also always be considered by a great gift, the *prēta-pidenna*, which should on no account be forgotten at any extensive ceremony. The offerings presented to the yakku are quite definite, and precise directions exist concerning the composition of the offering for any particular yakka and about the receptacles and vessels in which it must be contained. An offering destined for a yakka must always be presented in a so-called *tātuva*, a basket- or plate-shaped receptacle of young coconut-leaves (*gokkola*), but in some cases it must be made of clay. The *tātuva* for the Hiri-yakka, for example, always consists of a square plate of leaves, divided into five parts, i.e. in five equal, square sections. The sections of the *tātuva* for the *Aimāna* are always triangular, and that for the *Maha-sohona* always round in shape. The receptacle for offerings for the *Kōla-sanniya*, however, is a round plate made of wickerwork, likewise decorated with *gokkola*, and that for the *Kalu-*

<sup>1</sup> This offering-stand can be traced to the legend about *Vāta-kumāra* (see p. 36), and ought therefore correctly to be called "*vāta-kumāra-vidiya*". But people always use the term *kumāra-vidiya*, for it is actually intended for the two yakku, the *Vāta-kumāra* and the *Kalu-kumāra*, who as we saw, are always mentioned together. The offerings for both of them are always presented in a common *tātuva*, to be described later on. One of my informants asserted that this *kumāra-vidiya* ought to be triangular (as the directions are said to indicate) and not square, i.e. the table ought to have the form of an equilateral triangle. This, however, is never actually the case. As to the dimensions, the directions are: the table must be six arm's lengths high, the stick in the centre eighteen arm's lengths tall. Furthermore, care must be taken that this *kumāra-vidiya* is always erected on the north-west side of the place.

<sup>2</sup> Another conception has it that *Vāta-kumāra* built his house of the wood of this tree.

<sup>3</sup> *Yahanāva* = carriage, car, vehicle.



kumāra and the Vāta-kumāra, as we have already seen, consists of a round earthen dish, decorated on the inside with indented gokkala, resembling a crown (p. 38). Finally, the offering-stand for the prēte, the so-called *prēta-pidenna-tātuva*, may be described. In size it is much larger than the other ones, and its shape is that of a square stand on four feet which extend above into four long rods, tied together

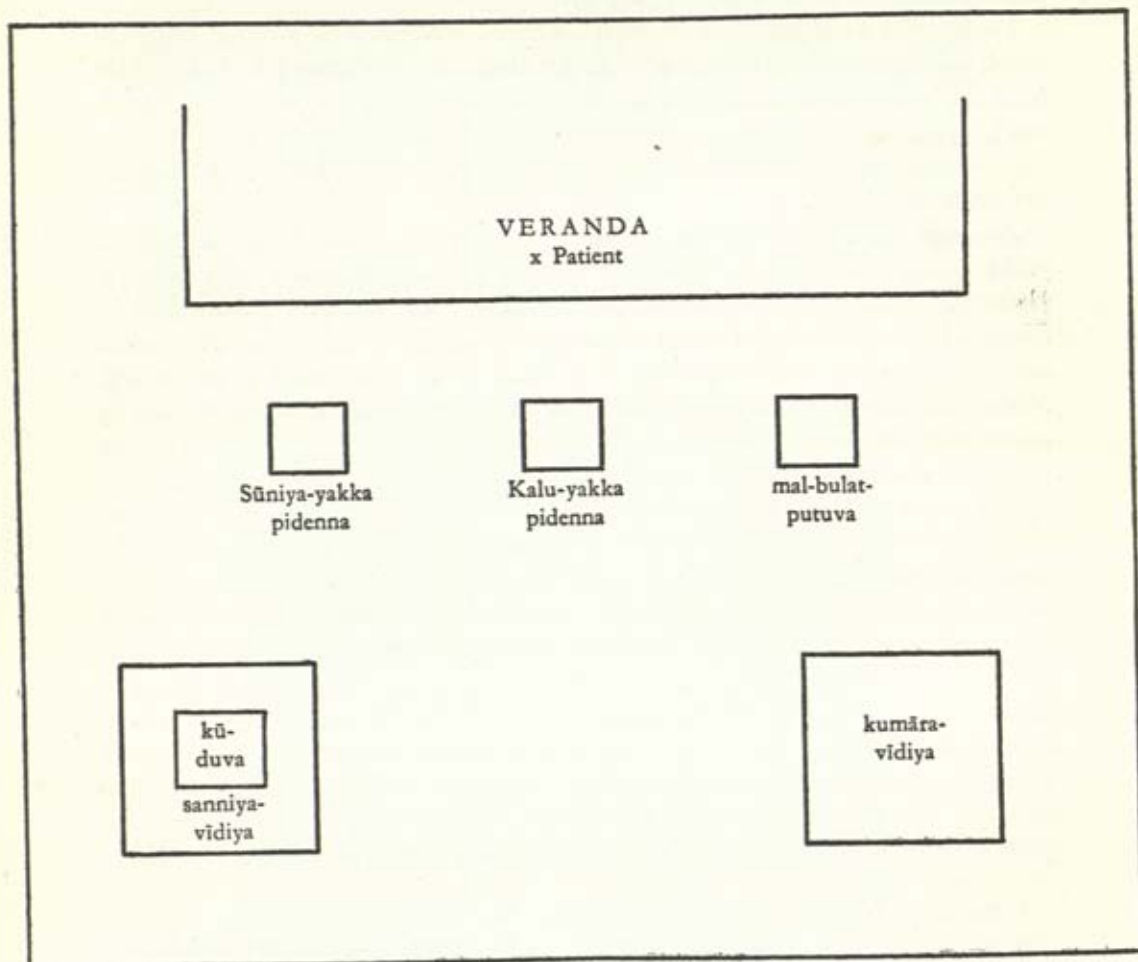


Fig. 3

over the centre of the offering-receptacle proper and forming an arrangement for carrying it (Pl. XLVII, fig. 81). We shall come back later to the *prēta-pidenna-tātuva* (see p. 187). The usual arrangement is as follows (text fig. 3):

The patient, clad in a clean white cloth, sits on a chair or lies on a mat on the front porch of the house. Two or three other chairs (*putuva*) are at his side. On

the first one is the offering for the Sūniya-yakka, the Sūniya-yakka-pidenna, and on the second the offering for the Kalu-yakka, the Kalu-yakka-pidenna. On the third chair are placed some flowers (*mal*), a few betel-leaves (*bulat*), a small pot with yellow-root water (*kahā-diyāra*), and an areca-flower as a sprinkler. It is, therefore, called "*mal-bulat-putuva*", flower-and-betel-leaves-chair. Such a "*mal-bulat-putuva*" is indispensable in any ceremony<sup>1</sup>. The small pot contains water with a little yellow-root, which, through prayers to the deity, has become endowed with purifying powers, and is therefore used to sprinkle the patient. The assistance of the gods must also always be made certain, because it would otherwise be impossible to summon the yakku. Above every yakka there is a superior deity whom he has to obey implicitly and who sees to it that the inferior yakka does not transgress the authority conferred upon him by the sublime deity or by Buddha. Thus, Sūniya-yakka is subject to Mahavishnu, Maha-sohona to Kataragama-dēviyo, Hiri-yakka to Saman-dēviyo, Kalu-kumāra to Nata-dēviyo, Aimāna to Dēvol-dēviyo, and Sanniya-yakka and Kōla-sanniya to Isvara<sup>2</sup>. These deities, accordingly, play the role of helpers, and are usually the first to be summoned by a present of flowers<sup>3</sup>. For this purpose, a certain mantra is recited, i.e. a formula in which the wording must have a very definite form and in which certain expressions and forms of address must be observed in order to ensure its efficacy. We shall come back to this mantra later on<sup>4</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Another small, but somewhat higher stand of bamboo or sticks of wood, erected for the same purpose, is, on the other hand, called *mēsa* (the Portuguese word for table) (see pl. 2). In some cases, the offering for the yakka must be placed on a rice-pounder (p. 68).

Another instrument, just as indispensable for the *ḍura* and *bandhanaya*, is the so-called *igaha* (arrow), a kind of magic wand or arrow. It is a round stick about one metre in length, decorated at one end with folded strips of palm-leaves and panicles of areca-palm flowers. Moreover, a copper coin wrapped in a piece of cloth is always tied to it as an offering (*pandura*). While performing the ritual the exorcist has the *igaha* close at hand the whole time. At times, he dances with it, but he uses it particularly to wave over the patient in order to sweep away the adherent germs of illness (Fig. 5).

<sup>2</sup> If, however, the *prēteo* are to be summoned, one has first to secure the assistance of Sūniya-yakka, for this yakka is superior to all the *prēteo* and they must obey him absolutely (cf. p. 188).

<sup>3</sup> These deities do not accept other offerings; they detest food. This is also the reason why the *mal-bulat-putuva* must always be placed at some distance from the offerings for the yakku. Another expression for *mal-bulat-putuva* is *mēsa*, but it generally indicates a somewhat bigger offering-stand in the form of a small table placed on four sticks inserted in the floor and which, accordingly, is higher than a *mal-bulat-putuva*.

<sup>4</sup> The act of summoning a deity, a yakka, or the *prēteo* by pointing out to them their offerings is called *disti*. The devil-charmer, as well as the *ḍura*, the *bandhanaya*, and the *kapuā*, use a small bamboo whistle (*vasdanda*, fig. 4 and pl. 17) to call the yakku and the *prēteo* (there exists a legend about the origin of the whistle), but never to summon a deity. In the last case, a small bell (*gantāra*, pl. 20), or the shell trumpet (*bakgediya*) is used, but only in ceremonies led by the *kapuā* or a *santi-kariya* (see pp. 124, 127, 155, 161). The legend about the whistle is as follows:

Mangarā-dēviyo, the father of Kataragama-dēviyo, once went to Māya-rata (a part of Lanka), accompanied by many attendants. A great many of his men died on the way. When he arrived, Mangarā-dēviyo killed the animal on which he had ridden, a bull, and made a whistle out of its wind-pipe. When he put the whistle to his lips and made it sound, his dead followers were



The ceremony begins with the so-called "heṇḍa-samayāma" (evening-appearance), a dance executed by three or four persons who are supposed to represent the yakku at their evening-dance or their assembly.

They wear short skirts, generally a red one and several white ones, on top of each other, and a short jacket decorated with pearls. Their waist is tightly bound with a white cloth. On their heads, they wear a kind of a crown, likewise trimmed



Fig. 4. Bamboo whistle (23 cm long, 1.5 cm in diameter).

with pearls. During their dance, they carry tufts of leaves (samara)<sup>1</sup> in their hands, which they substitute later on by burning torches soaked with oil. The dancing grows wilder and more furious, accompanied by the rolling of the drums, and by the throwing up and catching again of the torches. The torches are also flung to and fro among the dancers. Soon, the dance takes the form of wild leaps, and shakes, turns, and whirls of the head, the arms, the hands, and, finally, of the whole body. Now and then, one or the other of them will throw himself to the ground, only to jump up immediately, and other similar acrobatic feats

restored to life. Since that time, the devil-charmers use a small whistle of bamboo (vasdanda) to attract the yakku and the prēteo which, however, must first be perfumed with dummala and consecrated by the following mantra:

"Om namō!			Mangarā-svāmi		vahānsē	Māya-rata	vedāta	miakāla
Om, glory to Buddha!					reverend		come	died
navasiyasetṭvak			Mangarā-sēnāva		dēvasindaka	ran-mimā	mara,	ugurudanda
970			attendance (army)			gold-coloured	killed	wind-pipe
			of Mangarā-dēviyo			buffalo		
kāda	ran-bata	pana	kokhandalu,		tēnedi	navasiyasetṭvak		
taken	gold-coloured	reed	made		thereupon	970		
Mangarā-sēnāva			neḡita	sitin	anubhāven,	adatmage	batagaha	nada
followers of Mangarā			rose	waited	mighty	from to-day	bamboo	whistle voice
asa	mana	sitin	yakun-yakaniyang		bata-ira	paenaturu		
listen	near	wait	male and female yakku		sunset (West)	as long as the sun shines		
maandageṣu			tēnedi		igila-igila	comes comes		
when I call them			thereupon		quickly quickly	vara-vara,		
			appears appears			ēsvaha' "		

<sup>1</sup> Samara is the Sinhalese name for the yak, the wild grunting-ox of Tibet (Sanskrit: chamara). In former times, they used real yak-tails (samara-valga) for such ritual dances, both in Lanka and in neighbouring India. Here and there, one may still find such yak-tails with wooden handles, still kept as ritual objects or even more as curiosities in the dēvālaya and Buddhist temples. The expression samara has, however, in the course of time been transferred to the tufts of leaves or to the bunches of young split coconut-leaves which have been substituted for the yak-tails. Young areca-blossoms are also used for the same purpose. It is said that only in the santiya-ceremony are samara-valga still occasionally used (see p. 120).

There are individual and group dances, but always in a very definite style and according to a fixed rhythm. The dance consists of a series of traditional movements (vānam) of the arms, the legs, and the body, performed with great exactness. The beat (tāla) of the drum accompaniment also follows precise rules.

follow each other with great rapidity. Meanwhile, a long dialogue starts between the yakka-actor and one of the drummers which goes something like the following:<sup>1</sup>

Yakka: "What is going on here? What does this noise mean, *gurunānsē*?"

Drummer: "Somebody has fallen ill."

Yakka: "What are you going to do about it?"

Drummer: "We will give him a medicine."

Yakka: "That will not be of any use! There is no point in it! Give me twelve presents and I will cure him. But I must have my reward".

The dance is continued for two to three hours in the most diverse variations and then suddenly stops. Before the end, one of the yakka-actors appears with a rice-pounder (*mōlgaha*) in his hand. He first dances for a while, then, still dancing, he approaches the patient and places the stick at the latter's feet. Thereupon, another dancer comes with a red coconut (*temili*), likewise dancing, and in the same way puts the coconut at the patient's feet. Then a third, a fourth, and a fifth one come with a leaf of the *dēvikaduru*-tree (*Tabernoe montana dichotoma*), a leaf of the *telambu*-tree (*Sterculia foetida*), as well as the stalk of a creeping plant *hirāsa* (*Vitis quadrangularis*). All these things are put at the patient's feet and remain there the whole night until the ceremony is over<sup>2</sup>.

A short pause is made while the yakka-dancers take off their costumes. Then, the two offerings on the chairs, the *Sāniya-yakka-pidenna* and the *Kalu-yakka-pidenna*, are taken to the *kūduva*. Soon after, another offering is brought which is intended for the *Hiri-yakka*. The *ḍura* now seizes a mat, kept ready for the purpose, dances with it for a while, passes it through the fumes of a brazier, and utters a mantra. After that, he spreads the mat in front of the patient, dancing the while on it and continuing his reciting. Finally he lies down on it. More mantra are uttered, and a censer is carried round the *ḍura* lying on the mat. The patient is given a clean white

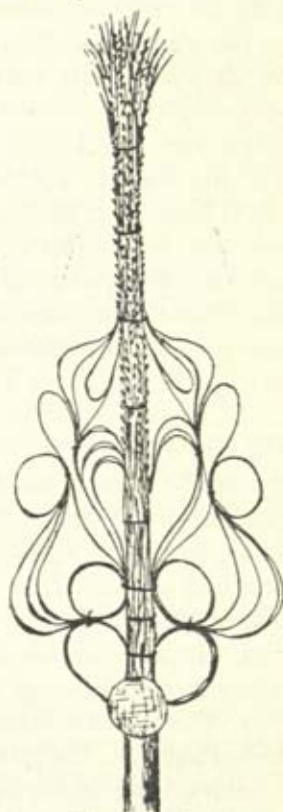


Fig. 5. *Igaha*  
(ca.  $\frac{2}{3}$  natural size).

<sup>1</sup> Each of the performing yakku usually carries on such a discourse with one of the drummers, recalling to the listeners all kinds of episodes from the legends. The yakka-actor usually addresses the drummer as "*gurunānsē*", i.e. venerable master.

<sup>2</sup> This is the customary procedure in all ceremonies. The various objects have a purely symbolic meaning, that of a barrier erected between the patient and the yakku.



cloth in which he ties a copper coin in one of the corners as an offering (pandura). The *edura* is then covered lengthwise with the cloth, leaving only his head bare. A raw egg and a ring are taken out of a coconut shell and the egg placed in the ring. A small mat is laid over the stomach of the *edura* who is still lying on the floor. The coconut shell with the egg is then placed on the mat and the egg heated from below with a small torch until it becomes hard. At the same time, the top of the egg is crushed and some rice and minced yellow-root stuffed into it. When the egg is hard, it is squashed and put into the offering-basket for the Hiri-yakka. In the meantime, another *edura* continues uninterruptedly the recital of mantra, plays the little bamboo whistle, and summons the yakka, the whole time dancing round the *edura* on the floor. The latter likewise carries on pronouncing mantra to make the Hiri-yakka come. After a while, a dancer enters who represents the yakka. With a torch in his hand, he dances round the *edura* who is still lying on the floor, first slowly, then quicker and quicker, until he receives after a while the offering prepared for him and carries it to the *kūduva* <sup>1</sup>. Soon after, another gift is brought, a woven-plate with rice, ingredients, flowers, etc., for the Maha-sohona <sup>2</sup>. Again the *edura* utters a mantra, perfumes the offering with powdered resin, sounds his whistle, and summons the Maha-sohona, "Come! Look, here is the offering we have prepared for you!"

After a while, Maha-sohona condescends to appear. The drums are rolled anew in the quickest tempo, as always happens when a yakka-actor appears. Like all yakku, he comes out of the sanniya-*vidiya*, dances at first around the stand, then in wild jumps and turns over the scene. Hereupon, he begins to turn, shake, and roll his head, his arms, and his whole body, in ever quickening speed, so that the spectators are hardly able to follow his movements. Finally, he spins like a top over the whole arena and begins again to leap and jump. He then squats down before the drummer who asks from where he comes. A long dialogue takes place between the two of them, ending in the yakka's receiving his offering, the Maha-sohona-pidenna, which he likewise carries to the *kūduva*.

Sometimes the offerings for the Hiri-yakka and Maha-sohona are presented together. Where Maha-sohona is, there is Hiri-yakka also, and they are generally mentioned together. The gifts for both of them must be prepared on the very body of the *edura*, lying on his mat, the offering for Hiri-yakka always in a hen's-egg, that for the Maha-sohona, however, in a human skull, which has been obtained from a grave-yard (Pl. XXVI, fig. 42). The offering consists of some red (blood-coloured) rice with trimmings, but is not complete without a few drops of blood from the sacrificed cock. For that purpose, a piece of the comb is cut off. These

<sup>1</sup> Hiri-yakka does not always appear. It depends entirely on the circumstances. Only the *edura*, of course, is able to decide whether the patient had anything to do with this yakka or not.

<sup>2</sup> Maha-sohona, on the other hand, practically always appears. An offering must at all events be prepared for him. Formerly, this yakka-actor used to appear in a wolf's mask, but to-day this form is only seldom met with (fig. 86).

two yakku demand blood and would refuse any other offering. Some blood smeared on a leaf and the leaf placed by the rice in the skull, and a similar blood-stained leaf stuffed into the egg for the Hiri-yakka are, however, quite sufficient. The *ḍura* has to remain stretched out on the mat without moving, and continues reciting mantra, until the whole ritual is finished. He is then carried off like a corpse, while the offerings are placed on the *kūduva*. He pretends to be dead in order to make Hiri-yakka and Maha-sohona come, for these two yakku are always present when somebody dies and they only wait till the corpse is carried to the cemetery. Thus, the two yakku are thought to be cheated.

After the preparation of the offerings, both of them appear, perform their dances, and throw powdered resin about them which is set ablaze in the flames of the torches. Then, they receive their gifts, after the *ḍura* has been carried behind the house or into the bush, together with the mat on which he had been lying. The Hiri-yakka and the Maha-sohona are followed by the *Aimāna*. An offering for him has likewise been prepared, a modest little gift, consisting in a simple rice-fan with flowers, areca-blossoms, rice, and other ingredients, because the *Aimāna* is little respected. He is, so to speak, a beggar among the yakku, and by his origin rather a common fellow. His offering is first placed on a chair by the patient's side and the *ḍura* then dances for a while to and fro with a burning torch in his hand. He lures and calls the yakka with his whistle, pointing at the gift prepared for him, and the yakka does not hesitate long in appearing at the door of the *sanniya-vīdiya*. His face is painted white and is framed by a long white beard and whiskers. On his head is a three-pointed cap, folded from a white cloth<sup>1</sup>. Long fangs protrude from his upper jaw<sup>2</sup>. He is clad in a white loincloth and a white jacket, and when walking he leans on a short stick painted with red and white rings (Pl. IV, fig. 6). His eyes twinkle continually. He hobbles towards one of the drummers and as usual one of the long dialogues takes place between them:

"I am come from Kashirata", he tells the drummer," and am by profession a soothsayer. I would like to return there, but I have no money. Neither have I anything to eat."

"We have prepared an offering for you" replies the drummer, "but first you must restore this woman to health." "This I will do", returns *Aimāna*, beginning to improvise a dance with the torch in his hand. Soon afterwards, he receives his gift which is carried to the *kūduva* like the other ones, and takes his leave.

Two fresh offerings are now brought forward, destined for the *Kalu-kumāra* and the *Vāta-kumāra* who are now summoned, but only if the patient on whose behalf the ceremony is performed is a woman. These two yakku afflict only women and girls, while leaving men and boys unmolested. If, however, the patient is a man, the dance with the double-torch which we are going to describe, is performed

<sup>1</sup> The three tips of the cap are supposed to indicate *Aimāna*'s three *yakkiniyo*; the *tātuva* devoted to him likewise has three sections.

<sup>2</sup> These teeth are made from  $\frac{1}{2}$  shell and are inserted between the upper lip and front teeth.



by one, or even two, other yakku, i.e. by the Hiri-yakka and the Maha-sohona, who, in this case, play the principal parts in the "*maha-samayāma*".

This scene, which in a way is the climax of the ceremony and which is always performed at midnight, is generally called "*maha-samayāma*". It is looked forward to with a certain excitement, for these yakku (sometimes it is only acted by one) dance not only with torches in their hands, but also hold double-torches, burning at the two ends, in their mouth between their teeth; for that reason they are also simply called "*dēpata-vilakku*" or "*dēkana-vilakku*", "those with the double-torches" (see Pl. VI, fig. 10 and Pl. VII, fig. 11). Their appearance and their dance require exact preparations and their frenzy surpasses all else. This dance is continued till the yakka-actor who quite often sooner or later works himself up into a state of extreme ecstasy, breaks down completely exhausted and unconscious. The preparations consist, principally, in the yakka-actor thrusting his face for some time in the fumes of the incense. Powdered resin is thrown into the brazier, and the performer inhales the sweetish smoke in deep draughts (see Pl. V, fig. 8 and 9). Soon, his whole being is markedly changed. His eyes become glazed, his limbs begin to shake, his feet stamp the floor incessantly, and he cannot keep still for a single moment. Even at the beginning of the dance, it is evident that he has reached a state not very far from being in a complete trance, and this very condition enables him to continue the "devil's dance" which then follows, for fifteen minutes, half an hour, or even longer—a feat which he could hardly perform in his normal state.

We shall deal first, however, with the costume of these yakku-actors. It again consists of several very short skirts, white and red, put on one over the other, with a short tight jacket and a white sash wound tightly round the waist. The face is partly painted black and the eyes are frequently outlined in white. On the head is a crown of young palm-leaves. Finally, mention must be made of a long tail, made of young split palm-leaves, hanging down the neck and fixed by a cloth wound round the head. At certain stages of the dance, the actor seizes the tail, half of it in each hand, and whirls round and round at a furious pace. The outfit is completed by ribbons about the calves which have bells sewn on them. The same kind of ribbons, incidentally, are worn by the other yakka-actors.

While the yakka has his face in the fumes of the incense, two of his assistants are occupied in preparing the double-torch which is one arm's length long. It is a stick, about 40 cm long, wrapped at both its ends in oil-soaked rags. The other torches, used by the *ḍūra* and his attendants, are made in the same way<sup>1</sup>. The moment he lifts his face out of the incense, the yakka-actor is given the burning torch so that he can take it between his teeth by the middle. The stick has previously been decorated with two strips of palm-leaves, plaited in a worm-like

<sup>1</sup> Two kinds of torch are generally distinguished; firstly, the big torches (*paṇḍama*) which the dancers, the yakku-actors, and also the exorcist use when performing their rituals, and secondly, small thin torches (*vilakku*) which are tied to the *tātuva*, intended for the yakku and the *prēteo*, and which are an indispensable part of the offering.



Fig. 8 and 9. Before the dance the *edura* thrusts his face in the incense and inhales the sweetish smoke of the resin in large gulps.





Fig. 10. The "maha-samayama-dance", during the performance of a sanniya-yakuma; the actors with double-torches in their mouths and torches in their hands (flashlight picture).



Fig. 11. "Maha-samayāma" (flashlight picture).



Fig 12. Dance of the actor who represents the yakka, with his torches, during the performance of "maha-samayāma".





Fig. 13. Overwhelmed by his ecstasy, the yakka-dancer bites through the throat of the sacrificed cock.



Fig. 14. One of the sinniya-yakku appears. He wears a mask, carved out of wood, with shaggy hair and beard, and clothes of leaves. He walks supported by sticks which are tipped with tufts of leaves (flashlight picture).





Fig. 15. The Amuka-sanniya, the yakka who suffers from continual vomiting and diarrhoea.



Fig. 16. Enter Aimāna. He has a long white beard and a cap with three points but no mask.



Fig. 17. The ɛdura with a pipe and torch in his hand, summoning one of the yakku



Fig. 18. The Kana-sanniya, the blind yakka (flashlight picture).





Fig. 19. The "Amuka-sanniya" telling the bystanders his story (flashlight picture).

pattern, and with a hibiscus blossom. When the dancer holds the stick in his mouth, these decorations give the impression of two formidable rows of teeth and a red tongue protruding from the mouth (see text fig. 6). As soon as the dancer begins to inhale the fumes, the drummers start beating their drums in a quite definite rhythm and the yakka-actor begins to stamp his feet, unable, as we have seen, to keep quiet even for a moment. Hardly has he seized the torch with his teeth, when the dance begins. At first, the dancers move around with stamping steps, then they stop, facing each other. Each of them seizes part of the tail hanging down from his head, half of it in each hand, and begins to swing it with a rotatory motion. After a while, the head commences rotating likewise, and finally the whole upper part of the body joins in the movements. Ultimately, the arms, head, and body whirl round with unbelievable rapidity, so that it is not possible to follow them, and nothing can be distinguished except two glaring circles of fire from the burning double-torches. The spinning-round is continued until complete exhaustion; but throughout two assistants stand at the side of each "dancer" who hold him if he

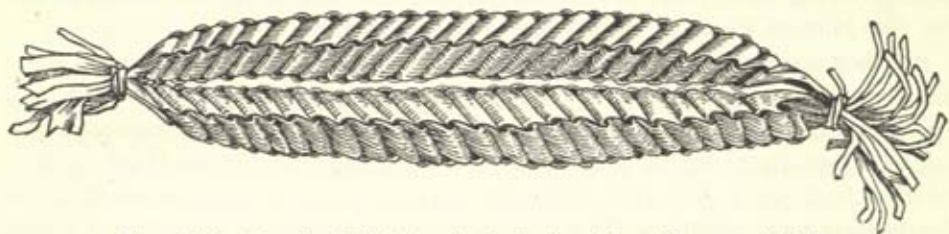


Fig. 6. Mouth-mask of plaited palm-leaf strips (about  $\frac{2}{3}$  natural size).

threatens to fall down and who take care that the torches do not burn his face. In an emergency, they sprinkle his chest and face with water to cool him, so that, soon refreshed by a short rest during which he leans against the *vīdiya*, he can resume his "dance". Frequently, the two dancers take turns. While one of them is "dancing", the other rests till it is his turn again, and so they continue until both of them break down. Not infrequently one or both of them collapse unconscious, so that the dance reaches its end suddenly. "He is now possessed by the yakka" is the general belief which, of course, considerably raises the dancer's esteem among the spectators. But this does not always happen, and it seems that not every "dancer" knows how to achieve this state of utmost ecstasy; apparently, this can be accomplished only after long years of exercise. However, they are always in a state of rigor and insensibility, and they do not feel any pain when the torches burn their skin. They do not recover until some time after, and then only to resume their roles at once.

If the patient is a woman or a girl, a procession now follows around the *kumāra-vīdiya*, led by the *ḍura*. First, the patient walks under a canopy consisting of a white cloth, the four corners of which are held by four of the attending people. In his hands, he carries the offering prepared for the *Kalu-kumāra*, a round earthen



vessel with decorations on the inside, filled with the gifts: rice with other ingredients, flowers, betel-leaves. Moreover, twelve small lighted torches are placed in it and round the edge palm-leaves which are cut in a peculiar way. The whole has the aspect of a crown. Its form is traditional for the *tātuva* for a *Kumāra*, i.e. a prince. They walk round the *vidiya* once or twice, accompanied throughout by the *ḍura*'s recitations. The *tātuva* is then placed on the join of the *vidiya*, whereupon the *ḍura* severs the "*ḍa-nūla*", the string with the seven knots which the patient wears around his neck, and puts it into the offering-bowl. If the patient is wearing a second *ḍa-nūla* round his waist, it is also cut but instead of being added to the offerings in the *vidiya* it is kept apart. The cock, too, is now brought to the *vidiya* and put beside it on the ground; afterwards, it is fetched again to be offered to the other *yakku*.

Next, the patient's head is sprinkled with yellow-root water by means of an areca-flower, to the accompaniment of mantra, and some water is poured into his hands to wet his forehead; he then returns to his seat, or chair, or mat. So far, we have given the description of the ceremony connected with the *Kalu-kumāra* and the *Vāta-kumāra*, executed on behalf of a female patient.

Another short pause follows. Meanwhile, it is between half past two and three o'clock, and the hour has arrived to summon a number of other *yakku*, in particular, the entire group of the eighteen *sanniya-yakku*, so that each of them can receive his gift and promise to do his best to make the patient better again. Three *yakku*-princes (*kumāra*) appear first, clad with the most precious costumes which show clearly their royal parentage. They begin dancing individually, at a suitable tempo and with a certain dignity, relating at the same time the legend of their origin. Then several other dancers enter, emerging one after the other from the *sanniya-vidiya*; each of them dances a few rounds with some object in his hands and is then relieved by the next one. They have their faces painted black, wear clothes of leaves about their loins, but are without masks. The first carries a coal-pan (*angura* = coals) and continually throws some powdered resin (*dummala*) on the glowing coals, the second has a torch in his hands, the third a little vessel with yellow-root water (*kahā-diyāra*), the fourth a small pot with coconut-blossoms (*pol-mal*), the fifth dances with a piece of cloth (*salu*), the sixth with a red-coloured coconut (*ṭemili*), the seventh with a box of betel (*dalumūra*), the eighth with a stick (*muguru*). They often call attention to themselves by a peculiar costume, by funny gestures, or by some other special characteristic, nor do they lack a certain humour. One will appear with his trousers bulging shapelessly and behaving like a circus clown, another one will amuse the spectators with his caustic jokes, a third one will chuckle continually to himself. These *yakku*, with their black paint, their more or less old appearance, and their funny behaviour, are the forerunners of the *sanniya-yakku* who have still to appear and whose belongings they carry. They play the parts of servants, and each of them holds some kind of object: a censer, a coconut, a betel-box, a pot of yellow-root water, etc. They represent no particular individuals

and hence bear no names. The group as a whole symbolizes the yakku-army of Vesamunu-rajjuruvo, ready to receive and execute his orders. This scene is called simply "pēla-paliya", which may best be translated by "dance-suite" or "musical show" (pēla = one after another, paliya = dance of the yakku-actors). In reality, it is only interposed for diversion and has no deeper meaning.

This pēla-paliya is then followed by the group of eighteen sanniya-yakku, the chieftains of the yakku-army; each of them spreads a certain disease, ailment, or infirmity among mankind. Before them, however, appear two other yakku who always preceded in order to prepare the way. The first of them is the *Aturu-yakka*, who wears a red and black mask without jaws and a loincloth of gurulla-leaves, as worn by most yakka-actors. The other one is *Kaluvēdi-sanniya*, whose mask is nothing but a huge pair of jaws carved out of wood and tied to his head. His task is that of dividing the sacrificed cock among the sanniya-yakku who now follow. This yakka is, as a consequence, also called *Kukurū-sanniya* (cock-sanniya). Immediately on entering the dancing-stage, he throws himself on the cock lying on the floor, tears it apart, and begins seemingly to bite through its throat and suck its blood.

As mentioned above, not all of the eighteen sanniya-yakku are usually shown, owing to lack of time and because Kōla-sanniya, their leader, must always make his appearance before sun-rise. It depends in each individual case upon the circumstances, but mainly on the time at their disposal, how many of these sanniya-yakku are acted. At all events, the most popular and best-known of them, namely: the Māru-sanniya, the Amuku-sanniya, the Kana-sanniya, the Golu-sanniya, and above all the Kōla-sanniya, must never be omitted. The last-named, of course, is attributed the main role as the leader and commander. For this reason, we shall describe only a few of the favourite yakku and their roles in the sanniya-yakuma. Like the other yakku-actors, these sanniya-yakku usually enter the dancing-place from the sanniya-vidiya. With few exceptions, they all wear the same kind of costume: the loin-cloth of gurulla-branches<sup>1</sup>, a black fur thrown about the body, and ribbons with bells sewn on about the calves. Only the masks distinguish the different yakku<sup>2</sup>. It is completed by a black wig and a black beard. The entire behaviour of the eighteen yakku is also quite different from that of those already described. Whereas the latter excel chiefly by their phantastic dances and their acrobatic tricks, the main

<sup>1</sup> Leea sambuccina.

<sup>2</sup> The masks are called *vēsa-muna* or *vēsmuna* (Sanskrit: *veśa mukha*), i.e. "false face". They are made by the mask-carver, the *vēsmuna-badama*, who very often is also an *ḍūra*. Vesamunu-rajjuruvo is said to have been the first mask-carver, hence his name. The most common material for making masks is the wood of the *kaduru*-tree, an Apocynaceae, the fruit of which is very poisonous. Pertold also mentions ironwood (*Mesua ferrea*), the wood of *kōs-gaha* (*Artocarpus integrifolia*), and that of the *margosa*-tree (*Azadirachta indica*). Callaway's "Yakkun Nattanawa" gives sandalwood (*handun* or *sandun*) as another material used. There is no ritual connected with the making of the masks, nor are there any special preparations. Three or four quite different kinds of masks are distinguished, according to their use. Grünfeld in his study "Singha-lesische Masken" and Pertold in "The Ceremonial Dances of the Singhalese" give a detailed description of the various masks.



point in the performance of the sanniya-yakku is the long dialogues with the drummers, the "gurunānsē"; these conversations always have a satirical-humorous content, and this part of the sanniya-yakuma enjoys great popularity with the spectators. Moreover, these discussions always refer to particular episodes in the legends so that the whole bears the character of a theatrical performance put on for general amusement, rather than that of a serious ritual ceremony. Most of these yakku act as if they themselves were afflicted with the disease or the infirmity with which they strike people, and many of them are reflected in the form of their masks. One of them will complain of headaches, another of vomitings and excessive diarrhoea, the Kana-sanniya appears as a blind man, and the Golu-sanniya as dumb; Māru-sanniya acts a lunatic. As can be seen, each one of them represents in an obvious, frequently even riotous, manner the illness of which he is known to be the cause. We shall now see how these scenes are performed:

The *Kora-sanniya*. He wears a red and black mask, black wig and beard, the usual loin-cloth of leaves, and a black fur thrown about the upper part of his body. He carries a stick tipped with a tuft of gurulla-leaves in each hand. Shaking with laughter, he enters the place with his back towards the spectators, and then suddenly turns round.

"Is there anything to eat, gurunānsē?", he asks one of the drummers with a smile. "I have come to see whether you have any food for me. I am the eldest of my seventeen brothers," he continues, sitting down on the floor at the side of the drummer still grinning. Then he tells from where he has come and what has happened to him. After a while, he gets up again and asks the patient for his offering: two bags of gurulla-leaves with some rice, red flowers, and a small oil-soaked wick, which is lit when handed over. This is the customary offering for each of these eighteen yakku, and is always presented personally by the patient.<sup>1</sup> As soon as the yakku receives the bags, he passes them for a moment through the fumes of the brazier at hand, which is revived by some dummala thrown into it to stimulate the smoke. Solemnly promising recovery and health to the patient he utters the following mantra:

"Ōm namah, shivaya namah!				mayam	dahata,	valipu
				mental disorders	18	convulsion diseases
dahata,	jura	dahata	upan	Kora-sanniya	devatavageng,	paminitja
18	fevers	18	born		god-like,	caused by him
dōsa	ekvenuva,	dekvenuva	tunvenuva,	dēviyana,	buddhunga,	
illnesses	for the 1st time	for the 2nd time	for the 3rd time	by the deities	by Buddha	
anubhava      nivarangana      tīndu."						
glorious	hindrance	end				

which may be freely translated:

<sup>1</sup> According to the rules, a special offering ought to be prepared for each of the eighteen sanniya-yakku. However, this is generally not done. A detailed report about the composition of this offering is to be found in Grünwedel, *Int. Arch. Ethn.* VI, p. 77, so that I shall not go into it further here.

"Om, honour to Buddha, honour to Shiva, the eighteen mental disorders, the eighteen convulsion diseases, the eighteen fevers, caused by the god-like Kora-sanniya, the diseases produced for the first, the second, the third time, may they be put to an end by the help of the deities and of glorious Buddha."

Immediately afterwards, he goes back to the sanniya-vīdiya, where he came from, singing: "dehena, dehena"<sup>1</sup>.

The *Vedda-sanniya*. He wears a costume similar to that of the preceding yakka, but his mask is a little different and he carries a bow and arrows in his hands. This yakka, like the vedda of the primaeval forests, always has his weapon with him (hence his name) so that he can shoot all that crosses his path. So he throws himself at once upon the sacrificial cock to pierce it with his arrow. Then he sits down near the drummer and tells him his adventures.

The *Māru-sanniya*. He is the most dreaded of the whole group, and must never be neglected. He is the yakka of madness, and behaves accordingly like a madman in the worst state of frenzy. From far away, he announces his approach by loud roarings, shakes the pillars of the vīdiya and climbs from behind on to the cross-beam of the door, where he remains sitting. He has a little bow in his hand with the arrow ready in position, which at the same time represents a triple-torch (dunu pandama = bow-torch). He wears the same costume as the preceding yakku, but has no mask, only a black dishevelled wig and beard (Pl. XIV, fig. 21). To make up for lack of a mask, he has his face entirely blackened and displays an imitation set of teeth, made of mother-of-pearl, which stick out between his upper front-teeth and his lips. From time to time, he lets out a terrific roar, takes a sudden leap down from his seat, and runs right and left across the place, as if in a state of extreme frenzy. At the same time, he continually throws powdered resin all round, igniting it at once with his torch, so that red flames shoot up from all sides and the whole place seems wrapped in fire. At length, he seems to come to, takes a seat near the drummer, and enters into a long amusing conversation. "I have come from Colombo", he says, "I even went first class. When I wanted to buy my ticket and thrust my head through the office-window, the booking-clerk threatened to throw me out. I did not need a ticket, he said to me. The first class would be right at the head of the train, immediately behind the locomotive. When the train arrived, I entered the car just behind the locomotive but it was full of coal. I was made quite black all over. When we stopped at a big station, I went to the "rest-house" where some Europeans were having their dinner. I hid under the table and collected the waste. It was a fine meal. And now I want something from you, for I am hungry again." With these words he gets up, receives the two leaf-bags, holds them over the brazier, utters a mantra, and retires to the vīdiya.

<sup>1</sup> "Dehena" is a magic word or exclamation sung or uttered by all the yakku taking part; it assures the patient after he has presented the yakka with his gift, of his recovery. As a token of this, the yakka passes the īgaha over the patient's head or even his whole body. Then, all the by-standers join in the exclamation in order, as it were, to confirm it. In a similar way, people sing at the profane kolam dances "ana, ana, ana-a".



The *Amuka-sanniya*. He looks frightful, wears a black mask with a movable jaw, a wig, a beard, a fur-wrap, and a loincloth of leaves. He groans and laments, complains of stomach-aches and of continually having to vomit, and that he suffers from diarrhoea. He carries a stick with a tuft of gurulla-leaves. Groaning, he sits down by the drummer, and immediately vomits on to a banana-leaf which is kept ready for the purpose (Pl. X, fig. 15, and Pl. XII, fig. 19). He asserts that he is ill beyond hope, and that he consulted a doctor who gave him two bottles of medicine. He has drunk them through his nostrils and has applied enemas to himself with a syringe. He then stirs the filth which he has just vomited, with his fingers. "That is fine food", he says, addressing the gurunānsē and offering it to him. One might even prepare a "dāne" (a meal distributed to the bhikshu of a monastery) from it, he says, handing the leaf with its vomited contents to the gurunānsē. He then vomits again and asks for a chamber-pot as he is no longer able to hold out. After a while, he gets up, asks for his offering, and goes away.

The *Kana-sanniya*. He wears a yellow painted mask with hollow eyes, to suggest blindness. In one of his hands he carries a stick with a tuft of leaves, while he waves the other one around pretending to be annoyed by flies. He then blows his nose with his fingers and wipes them off on one of the nearest spectators. Thereupon, he sits down by the drummer's feet (Pl. XI, fig. 18). "I have contracted many debts", he says, "I bought myself a piece of land." With these words, he produces a strip of a palm-leaf which he pretends is the proof of his debts, and shows it to the gurunānsē. "This place is no good", he continues, "and I suppose you have nothing to eat here?" "If you cure our patient", answers the gurunānsē, "we shall give you food." "I will do that", replies the yakka, who gets up and receives his gift, the two bags of leaves.

The *Golu-sanniya*. He wears a simple brown mask and runs around as if in a frenzy. Somebody pulls at his clothes, and he draws a knife from his belt and rushes upon the offender. "When I get him, I am going to kill him!", he shouts. He then dances a while with his knife drawn and demands money for his dance from the gurunānsē. He is promised a gift if he heals the patient. He promises to do so and is handed his two bag of leaves.

The *Demalā-sanniya*. He wears a small brown mask, a white shawl round his head, and a white cloth wound crosswise about the upper part of his body. He speaks only Tamil. "I have come from Colombo", he says, "where I own a house. I am now going to Ratnapura on business." He pretends to have lent somebody money and that he must see that he gets it back. He then pantomimes how the Tamil washes himself, how he cleans his teeth with his fingers, and how he performs his prayers. Thereupon, he dances a little, asks for his offering, the two bags of leaves, and promises to cure the patient.

The *Dēva-sanniya*. He wears a small white mask, skilfully carved, with a head-piece the shape of a crown. His clothes too, are peculiar. On his shoulders he carries a stick with two tufts of gurulla-leaves hanging down. With nimble steps,

he trips across the place. He assures those present that he is able to cure certain epidemics, such as cholera, small pox, etc. His house is a temple (*kovil*), he says, and he is a friend of *Patini-dēvi* and of *Dēvol-dēviyo*, and is expected to be present at the *gam-madua*, the *dēvol-madua*, and the *pan-madua* rites (cf. pp. 155, 156, 165). As he is always the last *yakka* to appear before the *Kōla-sanniya*, he receives all the bags which are left.

The *Kōla-sanniya*. He is, as was explained, the leader and the greatest and most important of the whole group of the seventeen or eighteen *sanniya-yakku*, and hence always makes his appearance last, in order to receive the lion's share of the offerings. According to tradition, however, he is allowed to do so only directly before sun-rise. The performance of a *sanniya-yakuma* is therefore arranged, as far as possible, so that he enters immediately before the sun rises. After the show of dances and pantomimes, the ceremony then terminates with the presentation of this offerings.

This *yakka*-actor wears a crown of palm-leaves, and round his waist, a square frame of banana-stems, supplied with four triangular vessels to take all the offerings intended for him (text fig. 7).

His face is covered by a mask quite different from the other ones, which extends above into two cobras<sup>1</sup>. The *Kōla-sanniya*, like the *Kalu-kumāra*, thrusts his face into the incense for a considerable time before his appearance, in order to be prepared for the dance. Two boys then place themselves before the patient, each of them provided with a rice-pounder (*mōlgaha*), which they hold crosswise in front of them (Pl. XVI, fig. 25) to suggest a fence or barrier which is to separate *Kōla-sanniya* from the sick person. This is the fence (*kadahata*) which, according to legend (see p. 45), Gautama Buddha had erected to keep the *sanniya-yakku* off people, after they had been expelled beyond the *Skavala-gala*.

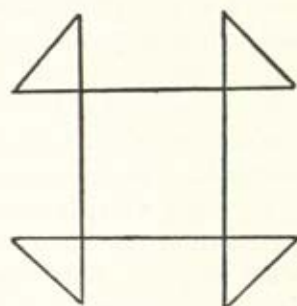


Fig. 7.

Now enters *Kōla-sanniya*, dancing ecstatically to the music of the drums. He turns and twists, dancing hither and thither, and his movements grow visibly more grotesque. He then tries to break through the railing which separates him from

<sup>1</sup> There is a large kind of mask, half life-size and fully sculptured, which represents *Maha-Kōla-sanniya* holding one or two of his victims in his hands and accompanied by his eighteen attendants in the form of eighteen smaller face-masks, symmetrically arranged on both sides of their leader. Such masks are nowadays to be seen only in museums (fig. 83, 84, 85). The last specimen probably disappeared from Ceylon a long time ago and even the *eduro* hardly knows anything about them. It cannot be decided with certainty whether these huge and heavy things were really worn as masks or whether they were merely exhibited at the performance of a *sanniya-yakuma*. According to Pertold, they may well originally have been used as masks by adjusting the lower central mask (the one representing the *Kōla-sanniya*) in front of the face but later on the sculpture may have served simply as an exhibit.



the patient. He tries to step over it, but the two guards keep him back. He thereupon attempts to force his way, but does not succeed that way either. For his third attempt, he has recourse to a ruse. He offers the two sentinels a banana and a rice-cake as a bribe, but even that is of no avail (Pl. XV, fig. 23). Finally, he tries another trick. He says to the guards, "Buddha has granted me permission to come and go where I please." But the guards shake their heads and refuse to believe him. They want to see a written order from Buddha. He should go to see Gautama Buddha, ask for a letter, and return with it.

So, according to the legend, Kōla-sanniya went to Gautama Buddha, asked for the document, and returned with it to show to the guards. Exultantly, he displayed it to them, but he had not read it himself beforehand. Now, however, he began to read it to them, but the farther he read, the more disappointed he grew. "Kōla-sanniya", said the writing on the palm-leaf, "may descend to earth, but only to cure people and to receive the offering which they have prepared for him. He must return before the sun rises." Stuttering, he broke off reading these last words and burst into lamentations.

The scene is acted in strict conformity with the tradition<sup>1</sup>. Kōla-sanniya unfolds a strip of palm-leaf with writing on it and begins to read (Pl. XVI, fig. 24). Suddenly he stops and bursts into tears, while the two guards rejoice at his obvious grief. Disappointed and dejected, he now turns to the patient and is given the offerings which had been intended for him, fruit, rice-cakes, rice and other ingredients. Some of these things are put into the four receptacles of his "belt", others in his crown of leaves, and the cock is thrown across his shoulders.

Burdened with all these gifts, he now performs a last wild dance, throwing a great deal of powdered resin around him which takes fire with a great blaze (Pl. XVII, fig. 26). Wilder and wilder he dances around the kūduva, which is laden with all the offerings and which in the meantime has been brought out of the vīdiya and put in the middle of the space. He flings powdered resin continually in its direction, as if he wants it to go up in the flames. Then all of a sudden he stops dancing. The *ḍura* carries the kūduva with all its offerings behind the house or into the bush and the Kōla-sanniya follows him. There, he takes off his crown and his "belt", as well as his other ornaments (the mask has been removed before), and deposits the whole outfit on the kūduva which is now left there for good and which will soon be taken possession of by the dogs and crows. With that, the ceremony has come to its end.

#### OFFERINGS PRESENTED BY PREGNANT WOMEN TO KALU-KUMARA

As Kalu-kumāra pursues mainly pregnant women, they are naturally on their guard against his attacks. For this purpose, they prepare an offering for him which

<sup>1</sup> According to this tradition, the Kōla-sanniya is also called Kadhata-yakka.

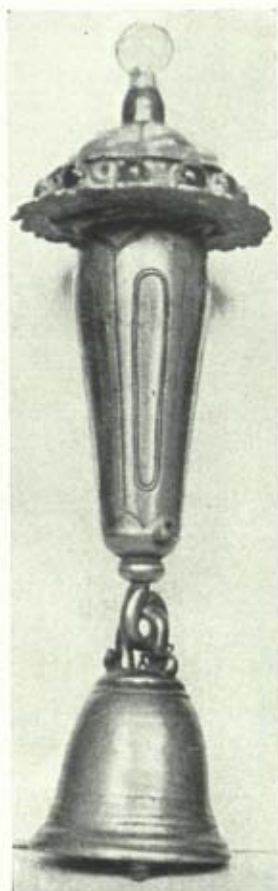


Fig. 20. Small brass bell with skilfully worked handle, used by a kapuā during the ceremonies. Length 22.7 cm.





Fig. 21. Maru-sanniya appears on the roof of the sanniya-vīdiya, holding a triple-torch in his hand (flashlight picture).



Fig. 22. Kōla-sanniya being crowned.



Fig. 23. Kōla-sanniya offers a banana to the children who bar his way, and asks them to let him pass.



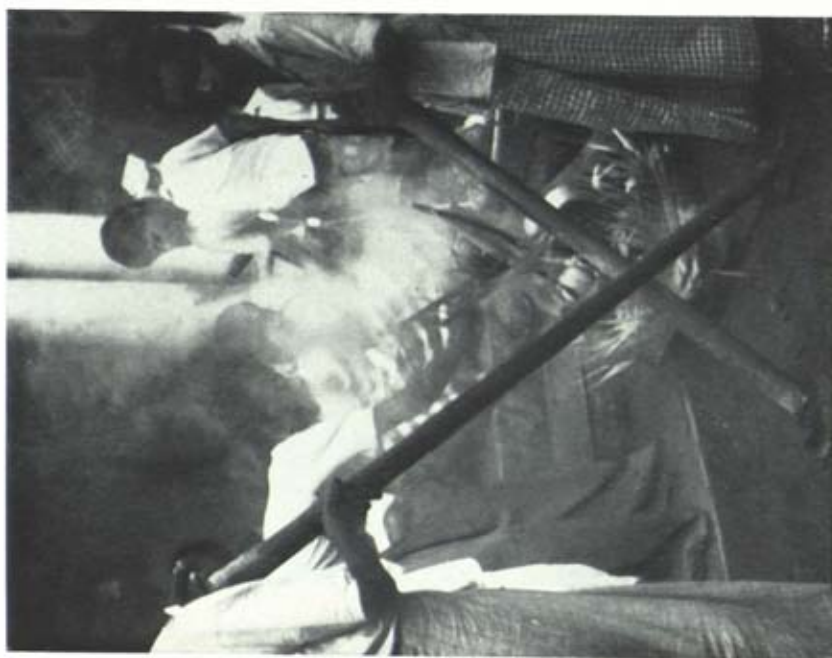


Fig. 24. The fence which is to keep Kôla-sanniya off the patient.  
On the floor, the offerings intended for the yakka.



Fig. 25. Kôla-sanniya is about to read the piece of writing of  
Gautama Buddha.



Fig. 26. At a sanniya-yakuma-ceremony. Kōla-sanniya's last dance round the kūduva.





Fig. 27. A painting being done for a sūniyama-ceremony. The figure of the yakka, portrayed on a bright white piece of banana-stem, is intended as a decoration for the "atamāgala".

must be made up of the following: a raw egg, a handful of unhusked rice, red flowers, some powdered resin, a betel-leaf with a copper coin, and a piece of sandalwood; all this is put into a new, small, unused pot (*mutiya*), and covered by an earthen dish (*ṇḇiliya*) ornamented on the inside. The whole is suspended from a support (*gok-atu uriya*) made of coconut-leaves, in the room where the pregnant woman sleeps and where she will be confined. Beforehand, however, a "mal-bulat-putuva" must be built. The pot with the offerings is placed on it, and the *ḇdura* in charge of the performance begins to utter his incantations. Dummala incense is burned, while the *ḇdura* points to the offering in order to attract the *yakka*; it will not, however, be handed over before the child has been safely delivered. Sometimes, the *ḇdura* goes further and promises the *yakka* that he will hold a great ceremony (*sanniya-yakuma*). The patient is then sprinkled with yellow-root water and the vessel with the *pidenna* is hung over the bed of the pregnant woman. A small torch is also tied to it but is not lighted.

Thus the whole ceremony forms a solemn promise with the purpose of gaining the *yakka*'s favour and preventing malevolent interference on his part. The ritual, performed after the child's birth (provided the *yakka* has been promised one), has, of course, nothing to do with illness or disorder. It is held, in a way, only out of gratitude that everything has gone so well, and in compliance with the promise made.

### THE VANDA-BISAVUN HATDENA AND THE RATA-YAKUMA CEREMONY

Among the assistants of the *Kalu-kūmara* are also seven *yakkiniyo* whose origin is related in the following legend:

A long time ago, a fire broke out of the *Mahamēru-parvataya*, one of the Himalaya mountains, and many *yakku* and a queen, named *Ridi-bisava*, were brought forth with the fire. Together, they wandered about the Himalayas. One day, the queen met the god *Mahabrahma* who happened to be staying on earth at that time. *Mahabrahma* was pleased with the beautiful woman and intended to take her to wife. In the course of time, she gave birth to seven daughters. But then *Mahabrahma* forsook her and returned to the *Brahmaloka*. Left to her own devices, *Ridi-bisava* joined the *yakku* again, and her daughters became servants of *Vesamunu-rajjuvo*. They remained with him for several years, but resolved one day to ask him for an order (*varama*) and for the authority to be able to pursue men like the other *yakku* and to afflict them with illness. *Vesamunu-rajjuvo* granted their request willingly and conceded them a "varama"; they should associate themselves with *Kalu-kumara* and persecute women and girls. But their power must be limited. The seven *yakkiniyo*, however, paid no attention to this condition and began to



abuse their power<sup>1</sup>. As a result, Vesamunu-rajjuvo sent for them one day and threw them into his jail, the *asura girikota*, where he kept them for twelve years and where they suffered great hunger. Released from their confinement, they were deprived of their "varama" and endured great want. They therefore resolved to apply to Dipankara-Buddha and ask for another "varama" to be granted them.

To attain their object, they employed a ruse. They decided to present Dipankara-Buddha with a gift. They made a garment out of cotton which they themselves had grown, spun, and woven into cloth. With this garment, which they had made themselves, they appeared before Dipankara-Buddha and brought forward their petition. However, Buddha said, "Your intentions are villainous. I shall never give you the power of seeking peoples' lives. But to help you, I will permit you one thing: I will authorize you to make women barren so that they cannot give birth to children. But then you must wait till you are offered a present, which you shall accept and forthwith enable the women, whom you have rendered barren, to bear healthy children." The yakkiniyo promised to observe these conditions and were thus granted a new "varama" by Dipankara-buddha. Hereupon, they once more joined Kalu-kumāra and continued to pursue women, depriving them of the ability of bringing children into the world. Hence, they are called "*Vanda-bisavun hatdena*", "the seven queens who make women barren", or "*Kiri-ammala-hatdena*", i.e. "the seven nurses".

#### THE RATA-YAKUMA-CEREMONY<sup>2</sup>

Its course is similar to that of the sanniya-yakuma, but the yakka-actors do not wear masks. It is frequently combined with a kumāra-pidenna and a bali-ceremony, in which case a clay model of Kalu-kumāra is made, for, as we have seen, the Vanda-bisavun are closely connected with Kalu-kumāra and belong, so to speak, to his attendants.

On one side of the place where the "dances" of the ritual are performed, a partition, the "*rata-yakuma-vīdiya*", corresponding to the sanniya-vīdiya, is erected. It has the shape of a square fence, constructed of banana-stems and palm-leaves open at one side, and covered with a roof of the same material.

Along the inner walls of this enclosure, seven small offering-stands or tables (*mēsa*) are symmetrically arranged, intended for the "*Vanda-bisavun hatdena*" (see text fig. 8). On these *mēsa*, flowers, betel-leaves, panicles of areca-palm blossoms, grains of rice, and some sandalwood are laid, and on each also a small clay oil-lamp (*metipana*). Moreover, a *vīdiya* of the usual shape is erected for

<sup>1</sup> Others, however, maintain that the seven daughters of Ridi-bisava are not true yakkiniyo. The *ḍura* always addresses them, like their mother, as "bisavun", i.e. queens, or as "kumāri", i.e. princesses. Their real names are: Nāmal-kumāri, Somal-kumāri, Idamal-kumāri, Pijamal-kumāri, Sapimal-kumāri, Vadamal-kumāri, and Siddamal-kumāri. Collectively, they are named the "*Vanda-bisavun hatdena*", i.e. "the seven queens who make women barren".

<sup>2</sup> Rata = foreign country.

Kalu-kumāra. The following offerings must be prepared: a tātuva for the Sūniya-yakka, another one for the Kalu-yakka, a third one for the Hiri-yakka, a fourth one for the Kalu-kumāra, a fifth one for the Aimāna, then a prēta-tātuva, and finally a so-called "*nava-mala-tātuva*" (nine-flowers tātuva), with nine sections, for Ridi-bisava, the seven Vanda-bisavun, and the Kalu-kumāra. A live cock must likewise be at hand as a common sacrifice for all the yakku and yakkiniyo. The ceremony is conducted by one or two *ḍura*, assisted by three or more helpers, who perform the dancing-parts, and by two or three drummers.

The ceremony is opened by the "*henda-pidenna*", the evening-offering, which is the first thing that has to be presented to all the yakku collectively (*yakku-samayangama*). Then follows the offering for the Kalu-yakka and the Sūniya-yakka. The two offerings are placed before the patient, sitting on the porch

of the house, and close by there is a *mal-bulat-putuva* with flowers, betel-leaves, and a small vessel of yellow-root water with a sprinkler. Accompanied by mantra and recitations, the offerings are presented, while the *ḍura* dances to and fro with a torch and a fan in his hand. He wears ribbons decorated with bells about his calves and his dance is accompanied by the music of drums.

Ultimately, one of the two tātuva is passed once or twice over the head of the patient, the *ḍura* promises him recovery from his bad condition, and the two offerings are then put aside. Directly afterwards, the *Hiri-yakka-pidenna* is brought. Reciting without interruption, the *ḍura* begins dancing; he holds a rolled-up mat in his hand, passes it several times through the smoke of the coal-pan, which has had some powdered resin thrown into it, spreads the mat on the floor, lies down on it, and covers himself with a white cloth in one of the corners of which the patient has tied a copper coin as a money-gift for the yakka (*pandura*). The egg is now prepared, as described above, as the main part of the offering for the *Hiri-yakka*, and is then crushed and laid on the tātuva.

This tātuva is then placed on the *ḍura* prostrate on his mat, while another *ḍura* with a torch in his hand performs dances around the one lying on the floor; both of them utter mantra without stopping, summon the yakka, and alternately sound the bamboo whistle. Finally, also this tātuva is moved several times to and fro over the patient's head and put aside.

In the meantime, two or three other persons prepare for the ensuing scene. They put on white loincloths and short white jackets similar to those worn by women, and wind long white scarves tightly round their bodies. A red cloth covers their head, and a long tail of split palm-leaf strips hangs down their neck. These dancers represent the *Ridi-bisava*. One of them turns to one of the drummers and asks him what is going on here, and a long discussion thus arises centring round the patient.

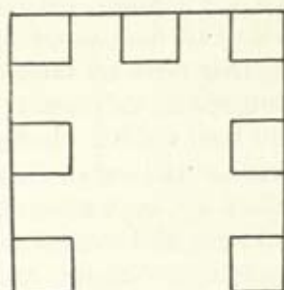


Fig. 8



At the same time, the legend of Ridi-bisava and her seven daughters is related and acted and danced in pantomime. Quicker and quicker the rolling of the drums sounds, announcing the beginning of the dance, while the *çdura* incessantly blows his whistle. Powdered resin is thrown into the coal-pan to perfume the rata-yakuma-*vidiya*. Everything is wrapped in biting, sweetish fumes. The reciting of the mantra, the blowing of the little bamboo flute, and the perfuming with incense of the *vidiya* are to make the Ridi-bisava descend. Soon afterwards the dance starts.

That there are three dancers, is of no importance; there could just as well be two or even only one. It is the usual yakka-dance, consisting of wild leaps, turns of the head which gradually spread over the whole upper part of the body, and simultaneous whirling of the fancy hair-tail with both hands. Or he spins himself round like a top, until exhausted and relieved by another dancer. Now and then, two or all three of the actors dance together or perform, to the rhythm of the drums and standing on one spot or kneeling, all kinds of grotesque movements which require long years of practice. The most diverse dances follow each other, lasting for about two hours.

Then, one of the persons dances with a white cloth on his head, and assisted by one of the others, spreads it (*uduviyana* = to spread out) on the roof of the *vidiya*. It is perfumed with powdered resin, and a handful of resin is thrown three times into the *vidiya* and set on fire with a burning torch, so that, for a moment, the whole *vidiya* appears enveloped in a blaze of flames. The dance of the three "bisavun" is continued with burning torches in the actors' hands and after a while a discussion is held between one of the dancers and a drummer about the white cloth which has been spread out on the roof of the *vidiya* and perfumed. We hear that it is to represent nothing other than the Mahamēru-parvataya with the fire breaking out of it and the yakku and Ridi-bisava appearing in the flames.

Numerous small torches are stuck into the front part of the *vidiya* and the "nava-mala-pidenna" is brought forth. First, the *çdura* dances a little while with it, adds a vilakku, places it on a rice-pounder<sup>1</sup> in front of the patient, utters a mantra, and perfumes it with dummala.

Now, one of the Vanda-bisavun appears and begins to perform a number of every day acts which raise general laughter and which do not lack a sense of the comic. They are comprised under the name "*doloha-pēla-paliya*", the twelve actions. A woven plate is brought with a number of articles used for the personal toilet and attractiveness, as well as imitation jewelry made from palm-leaves and pieces of banana-stem. It is placed before the white-clad Vanda-bisava, who wears a long tail of palm-leaves hanging down from the back of her head. She now begins to make her toilet; she washes the long tresses hanging down her back, first with lemon-water, then with ordinary water, adds a second "fake" braid of hair, plaits the two of them, winds them into a knot, sticks a long hair-pin into it, dons her necklace

<sup>1</sup> An ordinary chair, such as is generally used for putting the offerings on, would be too unclean, for the Vanda-bisavun are queens and not *yakkiniyō* in the usual sense.

and bracelets, powders her face, and examines herself in the mirror. While doing this, she chatters the whole time with one of the drummers, explaining to him each one of her actions. She then sits down on a mat and another person, likewise in white clothes, symbolizing Dipankara-Buddha, takes his seat opposite her. Without moving or saying a word, he sits in the position of one meditating while the Vanda-bisava uses the articles placed before her for a number of other actions which are fully understood by whoever knows the traditions. A little tree, made of palm-leaves, represents a cotton-shrub. The Vanda-bisava fetches some cotton out of the artistic capsules which adorn the little tree, cleans it with cotton-cleaner, loosens it, spins a thread out of it with a spindle, and imitates the movements of weaving. She then hands her partner a white cloth representing the dress which Vanda-bisavun presented Dipankara-Buddha and in return for which he granted them the "varama". After that, the two of them retire and the *ḍura* begins reciting a long mantra, meanwhile perfuming the nava-mala-pidenna afresh. After a while, Vanda-bisava re-appears, now dressed in a white cloth which also covers the head. She carries a doll in her arms and sits down on a stool which has been kept ready for her. A basin of water is brought and she begins carefully bathing and washing the baby, cleaning its eyes and ears, anointing its little head with oil, just as is done with a new-born baby. She then offers it the breast, rocks him to sleep, and finally passes it to the patient who receives it like a real child. Vanda-bisava, on the other hand, is presented with the gift prepared for her.

In this way, the ceremony comes to its end, unless combined with a Kalu-kumārapidenna. As the interference of this yakka is generally taken into account, and he is, in this case, entitled to an offering, the combination must be regarded as being the rule. Frequently, a clay figure (*bali*) of this yakka is made as well, and a so-called bali-ceremony takes place, which will be described later on in a separate chapter.

### THE SUNIYAMA-(OR HUNIYAMA-) CEREMONY

Beside the sanniya-yakuma, the *sūniyama* is the most often celebrated of the more extensive ceremonies and, indeed, is often combined with the sanniya-yakuma and performed following it. In this case, both rituals are considerably abridged and it is arranged that both of them together do not last longer than sixteen hours (or forty-five Sinhalese hours).

The *sūniyama*, on its own, is always performed at night, beginning after darkness sets in and ending at day-break. However, combined with the sanniya-yakuma it is held in the small hours of the morning and forenoon, and so organized that it finishes at noon.

Judging by the methods used and by the ritual, the *sūniyama* has nothing in common with any of the other ceremonies. Its origin seems likewise to be entirely



different, but that in no way excludes its being joined on to the sanniya-yakuma or other ceremonies.

While the sanniya-yakuma consists of theatrical representations of mythological traditions, the sūniyama-ceremony is principally of magical significance and consists in a series of magic practices.

It is without doubt South Indian in origin, and it is performed in quite a similar manner also by the medicine men of the Malabar Coast.

#### THE FIRST OCCURRENCE OF AN ILLNESS CAUSED BY A KODIVINA

Like the sanniya-yakuma and the other ceremonies, the sūniyama is also founded on a mythological tradition, i.e. on the legend of the first occurrence of an illness as a result of a kodivina (enchantment) exercised by Mārea. The story has already been mentioned, at least parts of it, in a former chapter. Here it will be reproduced completely:

In former ages (*kalpa*), the world was repeatedly destroyed and each time rebuilt. The sun destroyed it seven times, by drying it up completely. The wind destroyed it three times, and once a deluge of rain. When the deluge broke out, the waters rose to Brahma's heaven (*Brahmaloka*). Mahabrahma dropped a lotus-seed into the water which sank until it reached the surface of the earth. There it germinated and produced a lotus-plant whose stalks soon reached the *Brahmaloka* and developed leaves and flowers on the surface of the water. Two Brahmans began to pick five flowers for the five Buddhas. Shortly afterwards, the waters retreated and the two Brahmans descended by one of the lotus-stalks to the earth. They found themselves surrounded by complete darkness. At that time, there did not yet exist sun, moon, or stars; there were neither animals nor plants, and hence nothing to eat. There was nothing but mud, and that they ate.

Then desire arose in them, and one of them became a man and the other a woman. One day, the moon, the sun, and the stars began to shine upon the earth, and then there appeared the nine planets and the twelve signs of the zodiac. Then the two people, man and woman, knew one another, and procreated children who populated the earth. In the course of time, people began to observe the course of the stars, to cast horoscopes, and to devote themselves to soothsaying.

When the number of people had become very great, they resolved to elect one as their king. They assembled and chose a woman for their queen who should from then on reign over them. She was called *Manipāla-dēvinānsē* and afterwards married a man, named *Mahasammata-rajjuvo*, who became king. But there were still other men who had desired *Manipāla-dēvinānsē* as their wife, among them *Vasavarta-Mārea*, the Lord of the hell<sup>1</sup>. To achieve his purpose, he thought of a

<sup>1</sup> *Mārea* or *Māraya* (also called *Māruva*) is known as the cousin and great adversary of Buddha. He represents the "evil principle", appears as leader of the demons, and is looked upon as the personification of Death (*māra* = death, dead, dying). *Māruva* is the *Elu* form of *Mārea*. However, *Māruva* is frequently understood as not being identical with *Mārea*, and it is believed that

ruse. At that time a great war was being waged, in which the king also participated. Before leaving, he ordered his servants to look after the queen in his absence and prevent any stranger from entering the palace. Mārea waited until the king had taken the field with his army, and going round the palace several times, he at length discovered an unguarded door through which he could enter unhindered. Unnoticed, he approached the queen's room. He changed his voice and began to speak like the king to make her believe that her husband had returned. It was night and the queen was asleep. She awoke when she heard Mārea speaking and really thought the king had come back. She called her maid and told her to open the door, but the servant refused absolutely to carry out the order. Mārea, waiting at the closed door, heard the discussion and angrily resolved to try something else. He fetched water from the hell (*akupēna*), and casting a spell on it, flung it at the palace. A viper (*polanga*), eighteen feet long, appeared and forced its way into the palace into the royal apartment where it bit the queen's breast. Thereupon, her body grew ugly and became covered with abscesses. The servants rushed up, but they were too late. Experts and physicians were consulted, but nobody could help. The whole household lamented in confusion. Soon afterwards, the king returned and was told what had happened. He resolved to apply to the gods, but they could not help either. They advised him to go to the ten learned men who were experienced in mantra<sup>1</sup>. The king followed the suggestion, invited the ten learned men to his palace, and each one gave his opinion.

The first said, "Mārea has recited a mantra." The second said, "Yellow-root water (*kahā diyāra*) must be prepared to wash the queen." The third said, "We must cast a spell on a twig of a manga-tree and pass it over the queen." The fourth said, "Small lemons (*dēhi*) must be fetched and cut above the queen's head." The fifth said, "A 'hat adiya-tindua' (seven-steps-ceremony) must be performed, i.e. the queen must pace out seven steps on seven lotus-blossoms." The sixth said, "One hundred and eight different creeping-plants must be placed round the

Mārea is Buddha's enemy and cousin, the evil one, whereas Māruva is the guard of the beyond with the task of fetching the dead and sending those of them who have led an evil life to one of the hells (*narakadiya*). This interpretation is, of course, erroneous and both names indicate one and the same personality.

Many legends tell of Mārea and his conduct towards Buddha, but they are of minor interest as far as the topic at hand is concerned. His original name was *Dēvidatēra-unānsē*, and he was one of Buddha's disciples who, however, deserted his master and resolved to go his own way, the way of evil. Thus, he became a regular adversary of Buddha's, endeavouring to cause him harm whenever he had an opportunity. Like Buddha, Mārea also founded an order, the order of the "evil principle", and gathered adherents round him. In time, each had his followers and his temple where he preached his doctrine, had a favourite disciple, a leader to whom he gave his orders, and a deputy. Buddha's temple was called *Detavanarama Buddhuhāmoduruvō*, and Mārea lived in *Rajjuvanganarata*. Between both countries was a space of one *yodum*, i.e. sixteen miles.

<sup>1</sup> The names of these ten learned men have already been given (p. 22). They were the disciples of Oddisea Irsiya and the ministers of king *Vikkramadatta* who lived in Northern India. According to another version, there were only nine learned men who were collectively called "*nava ratna mandalaya*", i.e. "magic circle of the nine gems".



queen's body and then cut through one by one (*vēl-valatu-tindua* = illness-chains-ceremony)." The seventh said, "The queen herself must cut a *hondola-ala* (wild yam-root) (*hondola-ala-tindua* = wild yam-root-ceremony)." The eighth said, "The queen must cut a young unripe pineapple (*anasi-tindua* = pineapple-ceremony)." The ninth said, "The queen must cut a pumpkin (*puhul*) (*puhul-tindua* = pumpkin-ceremony)." Last of all, the tenth said, "We must build a little palace (*vidiya*)<sup>1</sup> of a definite shape, where the queen shall go to have the last five of the *tindua* performed on her."

These were the words of the ten learned men, and the king resolved to obey their advice and orders at once, upon which, the queen recovered her health again.

A somewhat different version of this legend is as follows:

The first human couple was created by Sakra as the ancestors of mankind. They multiplied and the earth was populated by them. Very soon, however, disagreement arose among them and they quarreled, for they had no sovereign or justice.

Everyone wanted to rule and there was nothing but conflicts. Sakra saw how the people grew violent and flew at each other, and decided to appoint them a monarch.

He let a crown fall down from heaven, and the person on whose head it settled should be king. This lot befell Mahasammata, a direct descendent of the first couple. So he was called to be sovereign and assigned the title of "Chakravati". Sakra gave him an elephant on whose back he could fly through the air, and everyone paid him honour. Later, he married Manipāla-dēvinānsē, the sister of Mahavishnu. They lived in a palace with eight doors. One day, Sakra called Mahasammata to heaven where all the gods had assembled for a feast. Vasavarta-Mārea came to hear about it. He would also have liked to join in the festivities, but had not been invited. Manipāla-dēvinānsē was distinguished by unusual charm, and Mārea resolved to seduce her while her husband was absent. At night, he tried to find his way to the royal apartment where the queen had remained alone with her maid. He imitated the king's voice to make her believe that her consort had returned. The queen was really deceived and bade her servant open the door. But the maid was suspicious and tried to dissuade her mistress. Hence, Mārea grew very angry and resolved to take his revenge. He went to the Nagaloka, obtained the poison fang of a serpent, and took it with him. Then he caught a little lizard (*gēta-polanga*), stuck the poison fang in its mouth, and made it creep through a crevice in the queen's room. The small animal with its tooth reached the apartment,

<sup>1</sup> It is usually spoken of as *sūniya-* or *hūniya-vidiya*, although, as has already been said, this name is incorrect and is better avoided. *Vidiya*, means nothing more than street and not, as is often (from lack of knowledge) maintained, palace or house. The expression "*atamāgala*" is better, octagon, but this likewise is only correct in a certain sense. We shall see later on that there is a whole series of different forms of this "*sūniya-vidiya*", every one of which has a different name. *Atamāgala* is only the name for one particular shape. Another term is "*mandalaya*" (derived from *mandala* = mystic diagram, magic circle) which, however, refers only to the diagram on the floor in the inside of the booth, drawn or outlined with ashes. To avoid misunderstandings, the usual expression and the one which is always employed, "*sūniya-vidiya*", will be used here.

scratched the queen's skin, after which it hid in her genitals. The queen fell ill, became thin, lost her beauty, and her body was covered with sores. Nobody knew how to help her. Her brother, Mahavishnu, notified the king who at once came back and gathered all the brahmins and learned men to consult them. But they could not offer him any advice.

"Evil magic (kodivina) has been used", said Sakra, "and there is but one remedy. On the Ajaakuta-parvataya, there lives a wise man, named Nagapata-rusiya; we must ask his advice. Who will go to see him?" But nobody dared, for there were three thousand yakku living in that area. Sakra was of the opinion that it was the duty of the queen's brother, Vishnu, to fetch the learned man. So, at length, Vishnu was persuaded to go. He assumed the shape of a louse and reached Nagapata-rusiya without being delayed. Upon his arrival, he changed back into his former appearance and was welcomed by the wise man who asked him why he had come. Mahavishnu then related all that had happened and entreated the learned man to descend to the earth in order to help the queen. So the two of them set out and came at once to her. "A kodivina has been applied", said the wise man, "Mārea has ordered a yakka, the Vina-yakka, to afflict the queen with disease. We must exorcise this yakka and make him harmless." Thereupon, Nagapata sought for the kodivina, and having found him, threw him into a fire together with the yakka. And so, the queen was restored to health.

Nagapata-rusiya was one of the seven wise man (*rusiyavarū hatdena*) who had come from the Uttarakurudivaina, the country of the north<sup>1</sup>. He was the first to perform a *sūniya*-ceremony and to destroy a kodivina, the one which Mārea had applied to Manipāla-dēvinānsē, the sister of Mahavishnu. Afterwards, however, Mārea transferred the art of "black magic" to a certain yakka, the *Sūniya*- or *Hūniya*-yakka, and it was this yakka who from then on pursued people with illness. For the same reason, the ceremony was subsequently called *sūniyama* or *hūniyama*<sup>2</sup>.

#### THE PROCEDURE OF THE SŪNIYAMA-CEREMONY

The ten wise men whom king Mahasammata had consulted on account of his consort's malady, had explained in detail what had to be done to give the queen back her health. The ceremony was carried out exactly according to the instructions.

<sup>1</sup> The names of the seven learned men are: Naga-Oddi, Viduruopula, Tedigal, Alavāka, Viduru-guru, Oddissa, and Nagapata. They were later sent down to earth by Sakra to fight the yakku.

<sup>2</sup> This legend is also told in another form: When Manipāla-dēvinānsē had fallen ill and the king had asked all the brahmins for their advice, seven wise men had also come from Northern India. They had a knowledge of astrology and mantra and went at once to the palace to see the queen and to find out what had happened. They then proposed to the king that a ceremony be performed for the queen. The king agreed and in the course of the ceremony, when the wise men were uttering their mantra, all the yakku turned up and, on receiving their offerings, hastily took to flight. The seven wise men had come from Vadinga-dēse (Benares) and the ceremony performed by them was henceforth called after that place *Vadinga-patuna*.



It is, in reality, made up of sixteen parts, so-called *tindua* (corrections, devotions to duty), which, enumerated in the order observed by the *ḍuro*, are as follows:

- I. The "*bat-adiya-tindua*" (seven-steps-ceremony). The patient has to take seven (symbolical) steps on seven lotus-blossoms which are placed at regular intervals on the back of a cobra. (The cobra is outlined on the floor with cow-dung ashes. The lotus-blossoms are made out of pieces of banana-stem and young cut-up coconut-leaves). The seven steps are to suggest the seven first paces of Buddha when a child.
- II. The "*dēhi-tindua*" (lemon-ceremony). A large number of small lemons (*dēhi*), one hundred and eight all told, are cut through above the patient's head by means of a pair of areca-scissors (*dēhi-keṇima* = to cut through lemons).
- III. The "*veḷ-valatu-tindua*" (tendrils- or chain-ceremony). Nineteen rings (*veḷ*, *veḷa* = tendrils, creeping-plant) are made out of lianas or other creeping-plant (in keeping with the tradition, it ought to be one hundred and eight different creeping-plants), and wound round the patient's hands, feet, neck, etc. and cut through with a pair of areca-scissors (*veḷ keṇima* = to cut through tendrils). At the same time, a crown of the same sort is put on his head and also cut through.
- IV. The "*hondola-ala-tindua*" (yam-root-ceremony). A wild yam-root (*hondola-ala*) is cut through at the feet of the patient.
- V. The "*anaka-tindua*" (pineapple-ceremony). Above the patient's head, a young unripe pineapple (Sanskrit: *anaka*; Sinhalese: *anasi*) is cut through.
- VI. The "*nālikēra-tindua*" (coconut-ceremony). A young red coloured coconut (*nali*, *ṭemili*) is cut through.
- VII. The "*telambu-, hirāsa-, and dēvi-kaduru-tindua*". A *telambu*-leaf, one of *hirāsa*, and one of *dēvi-kaduru* are cut through.
- VIII. The "*kadēl-tindua*" (taro-ceremony). The root of a taro (Sanskrit: *kadēl*; Sinhalese: *haburu-ala*) is cut through.
- IX—XVI. The "*atamāgala-tindua*". Eight small lemons (*dēhi*), stuck on the tips of little sticks in the corners of the *atamāgala*, are cut through above the patient's head. The cutting of each lemon is considered as a separate *tindua*.
- XVII. The last and most important of all the *tindua* is the "*alu-puhul-tindua*" (pumpkin-ceremony), performed by the cutting of a *puhul*-pumpkin, the peel of which is covered with a grey powder resembling ash.

Usually, only sixteen *tindua* (*solasai-tindua*) are counted, and the seventeenth is considered as a separate entity as "*nayaka-tindua*", i.e. "most prominent, most important *tindua*". As will be explained later on, the *sūniyama*-ceremony is performed not only in cases of diseases caused by the *Sūniya-dēvatāvā*, but also in those due to a "*kodivina*", a malicious, magic influence. For a *kodivina* always also means the

interference of the Sūniya-yakka. The course of the ritual in the two ceremonies is almost the same, the differences being slight.

If a sūniyama is performed for a patient whose illness was caused by a yakka, the sixth and eighth tindua are left out.

Each of the tindua is accompanied by a corresponding mantra, and there are just as many different mantra as tindua. Thus we find a "hat-adiya-mantra", a "vel-tindua-mantra", a "dehi-tindua-mantra", etc.

The ritual is always performed by an eḍura, whose task it is to make all the preparations necessary for the ceremony, to procure the herbs necessary, and to make the offerings; he also constructs the sūniya-vīdiya, more or less skilfully according to the circumstances and the level of the caste to which the patient belongs. On the other hand, the patient has to procure the rice and fruit (lemons, pumpkin etc.), as well as to supply the materials for building the sūniya-vīdiya and the other ingredients of the offerings.

As far as the sūniya-vīdiya is concerned, a special construction is specified for each of the four main groups of castes (brahmans, kshatriya, vaisya, and sudra). The material for the construction is furnished by the concentrically arranged, splendid white and yellowish parts of the stem of the banana, and by young white and light green coconut-leaves (gokkola); the latter are exclusively employed as decoration.

The sūniya-vīdiya for the sudra always has an octagonal (ata-māgala) ground-plan. In reality, however, the basis is not an octagon in the ordinary sense, but two squares, one on top of the other, corresponding to the yantra outlined on the ground. The vīdiya itself has the shape of a square booth or pavilion, with a more or less artistic roof and an entrance at each of the four sides, but without windows or further decorations such as is the case with the vīdiya of the other castes.

The sūniya-vīdiya of the brahmans is called *solos-māgala*. Its ground-plan is characterized by four squares, one above the other, so that it has a sixteen-sided shape. The erection is richly decorated with gokkola and paintings and has eight entrances and four windows. Each of the four sides is made into a door.

The *suris-māgala* of the kshatriya is based on six squares, one above the other, i.e. having twenty-four angles. It is still more elaborately ornamented than the one mentioned above, has twelve entrances and eight windows. In the same way, each of its sides is used for a door.

The most sumptuously adorned of all is the vīdiya of the vaisya. It is called *sinkasāna* and is based on twelve squares, one above the other, so that its ground-plan has forty-eight angles. It has three floors, is supplied with a great number of entrances and windows, and is very richly ornamented with gokkala and paintings.

Thus strictly speaking, the name *atamāgala* refers only to the first-mentioned form of vīdiya but it is also generally applied to the other styles. In any case, it is allowed for the other three castes, as well. As a rule, it is erected on the porch of the house, or in a spacious room, if available. It may even be put in the open air



immediately in front of the house, under a roof of leaves. The whole of the sūniyama takes place in front of it and in it.

Generally, considerably less care is taken with the arrangement of the vīdiya, if the ceremony is combined with a sanniya-yakuma, than if it is performed alone. But everything ultimately depends upon the fee being paid. The more fortunately situated the patient's family, the higher the fee fixed, and consequently, the more scrupulously and carefully the ritual is executed. More attention is also paid to the construction and decoration of the vīdiya. The same can, of course, be said of all other ceremonies. The minimum fee which may be asked for the performance of a sūniyama-ceremony, or of a sanniya-yakuma-ceremony combined with a sūniyama-ceremony, is about ten rupees. The average, however, is about fifteen or twenty rupees, which, of course, includes the expenses of the ḍura and the reward for the drummer and the assistants. Like the sanniya-yakuma, this ceremony requires at least one drummer and two assistants. Sometimes, there are two or even three ḍuro who take part in the various roles, especially when a combination of the sanniya-yakuma and the sūniyama is celebrated.

An indispensable detail of the preparations is the drawing of a yantra in the innermost square of the sūniya-vīdiya. It must be outlined with special ash which must be made up from the following ingredients: cow-dung ash, ash from the leaves of the bō-tree (*Ficus religiosa*), ash from the leaves of five different kinds of oranges and lemons (dēhi, nasvarang, dodama, hinasa, ambuda), some powdered sandalwood, and finally a little gold-dust (scratched from an English gold sovereign). They are moistened with some perfumed water and mixed into a

dough; this dough is ground to powder after being heated. The powder is then scattered on the floor of the vīdiya to form the yantra (see fig. 9). Although that is the prescription, in most cases ordinary cow-dung ash is thought to be sufficient. Only wealthy people who are disposed to pay the ḍura a high fee, see to it, that the established rules are strictly observed. After the yantra is drawn, it is covered with a mat on which, later on, the patient takes his place.

Other preparations are then made for the various offerings. There must be offerings for the Hiri-yakka, the Maha-sohona, the Sūniya-yakka, the Sanniya-yakka, and, if the patient is a woman or a girl, for the Kalukumāra too. Each offering is placed in a special tātuva, one for each particular yakka. Further, a live cock is obligatory as a common sacrifice for all the yakku. The prēteo must also be remembered, and so a separate prēta-tātuva is build for

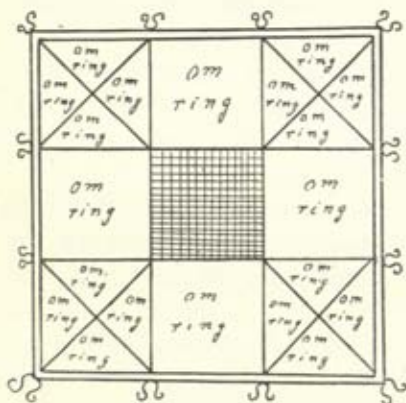


Fig. 9. Atamāgala-yantra.

The prēteo must also be remembered, and so a separate prēta-tātuva is build for

them, supplied with all kinds of food imaginable, with dainties, and various other things. Sometimes, for all these offerings a special stand is made, a so-called *pehenduma*, in the form of a square cage decorated with gokkola. Its lid is made of trellis-work on which the gifts, i.e. the *tātuva*, are put. Even the lords of the four parts of the world must not be forgotten. They are presented with a little offering, consisting of flowers and some rice with spices, which are placed on banana-leaves in the four corners of the *atamāgala*.

Unless combined with a *sanniya-yakuma*, the ceremony begins at night-fall, or in the early hours of the morning. It is opened by summoning the various *dēvatāvō* and then the *yakku*, showing them the offerings which have been arranged for them. The deities are, as usual, looked upon as mediators or helpers to urge or force the *yakku*, who owe them absolute obedience, to appear.

The patient is seated on a chair or a mat, seven paces from the *atamāgala*. Reciting the mythological legend, the *ḍura* now outlines, or rather scatters with the cow-dung ashes (or with the expensive ash mixture), a winding cobra on the floor, with its head pointed towards the *atamāgala* and its tail towards the patient. At both sides of the head and of the tail, small magic squares are drawn to ward off the evil spirits in the four winds and to prevent them from exerting their bad influence. Then, seven "lotus-blossoms" are distributed at equal intervals on the sketch of the snake. They consist of cylindrical parts of a banana-stem, each between about ten and fifteen centimetres in height, in which notched clippings of young palm-leaves are inserted, forming a small basket. This is to suggest lotus-flowers (*pādma*) (see Pl. XIX, fig. 28). Each of these lotus-blossoms is, in turn, placed on a *kaduru*-leaf, and each little basket contains a red flower (*ratu mal*), some rice, a betel-leaf with copper coin wrapped in it (*pandura*), and a small unripe lemon (*dēhi*). The lemons are now cut above the patient's head, one after another with *areca*-scissors, while a mantra is being uttered <sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> The cutting of small unripe lemons, so-called *dēhi*, is an action which forms a part of most of the ceremonies. Occasionally, it is even performed alone. The lemon plays an important part in the therapeutics of nearly all the peoples of the Indian cultural sphere. The Sinhalese have the following legend about the origin of the lemon-tree and the use of its fruit for ritual purposes:

At about the time that *Sidharta Gautama* should become a Buddha, when he was sitting under the *bō*-tree where the Revelation was made known to him, an old man, called *Sotinam Brahman-ya*, approached him, among others, eager to present the Enlightened One with a gift. As he had nothing but eight tufts of grass (*kusa tanah*), he offered them to him, shy and humble.

*Gautama Buddha* accepted the gift and spread the grass evenly around the tree so as to form a soft carpet. Soon afterwards, the green blades began to take root and sprout, and the Illustrious One sat down on this fresh green carpet. All the gods assembled to do him honour. Suddenly, the earth burst open, and the goddess of the earth, *Polāva Mahikāntāva* (*Polāvamihi*), made her appearance, offering the Illustrious One a diamond of gigantic size, which should form his throne. It was three arm's lengths long and the same in width and thickness. When *Vasavarta-Mārea* saw the diamond, he was seized with extreme envy and thought of a ruse to gain possession of the jewel. He consulted his friend *Bimbāra*. *Mārea* had a big elephant called *Giri Mekela*, which he made drunk with sixteen pots of palm-wine in order to kill Buddha. With this purpose in mind, he himself mounted the elephant and, at the head of a big army, he went to meet *Gautama*



Before the cutting and simultaneously with the first words of the mantra, the lemon is seized with the scissors and held against the patient's head, now and then stroking him in a downward rubbing movement with the lemon gripped in the scissors (Pl. XIX, fig. 29). At intervals, the *ḍura* turns towards the spectators with the call "*avadanavā*" (to salute, to wish a long life), inviting them to prophesy for the patient good luck and a long life, whereupon they break out into a loud "*eeeh*". The rolling of drums is indispensable, but it is stopped as soon as the recitals begin, and is not taken up again until the lemon has been cut. The parts of the lemon, together with the "lotus-blossom" and the other contents of the little basket, are then put into a sack; only the copper coin is expected, which the *ḍura* or his assistant takes with them. Now, the patient draws the chair or stool he is sitting upon, a little nearer the *atamāgala*, so that he is sitting immediately in front of the next "lotus-flower", and the *ḍura* wipes away that part of the contours of the snake which has already been passed by the patient. It goes on in this way until every one of the seven lemons has been cut and the drawing of the snake has been completely removed. The patient is now sitting directly in front of the *atamāgala*. Access to it is still obstructed by a white thread stretched crosswise before the entrance; this "shutting" of the passage to the *atamāgala* is, however, frequently done only now and not beforehand<sup>1</sup>. Following this, a ripe coconut is split in two by one heavy stroke of a bush-knife (*kṛṣṇa*), and it is observed how the two parts of

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Buddha. All the gods were assembled around Buddha, but when they saw Mārea coming, they were seized with panic and took flight. Only Buddha remained calm, sitting under the tree without moving. Mārea's warriors began hurling their spears and arrows at Buddha, but they fell at the feet of the Sublime One without causing him harm, and the elephant on whose back Mārea had ridden also approached Buddha peacefully and lay down at his feet to worship him. Thus, Mārea knew that he was beaten, and fled. He made another attempt to win the diamond with the assistance of his three daughters. But when they came before Buddha trying to seduce him by their charms, the earth suddenly opened and the goddess appeared once more flinging curses at Mārea and his daughters. So, Mārea's daughters also took flight. But while the goddess of the earth was pronouncing her curses, some spittle fell from her mouth on to the ground and on that spot a lemon-tree sprang up which had four branches and bore altogether nine fruits. One of them was picked by a man called Nādadēsa, the other eight, however, were taken by Mahakala-Nagaraja, king of the Naga, who took them to Mahaloka and guarded them in a precious vessel.

Vasavarta-Mārea, using a *kodivina*, had made the queen Manipāla-dēvinānsē ill, and Oddissa said that small lemons should be procured in order to remove the *kodivina* and rid of its influence (see p. 22). But nobody knew where to find the lemons, for, at that time, they were the fruit of a still unknown plant which nobody had yet seen. All the gods were consulted, but in vain. Only Sakra knew. "Go to the Nagaloka and see Nagaraja", he said, "and there you will find the lemons". But who was to go to fetch the desired fruit? Ultimately, Mahavishnu, brother of Manipāla, resolved to go to the Nagaloka. Moved by his request, Nagaraja finally gave him seven lemons, just sufficient for the "ceremony of the seven steps", while he kept the eighth one for himself. Oddissa then performed the *sūniyama*-ceremony with these lemons, i.e. he used them for the "*hat-adiya-tindua*", the "seven-steps ceremony", during which the seven lemons were cut above the queen's head.

<sup>1</sup> The sequence of actions which now follow, is not always the same. A great deal of arbitrariness prevails in this respect, and each *ḍura* follows his own discretion. If time presses, all inessential actions are left out and the mantra, too, are considerably shortened.

the shell fall down. The respective conclusions are then drawn as to the effects of the ritual on the future health of the patient<sup>1</sup>.

The *prēta-pidenna*, the offering for the souls of the deceased, is now brought along and placed at the entrance of the *atamāgala*. A number of small torches (*vilakku*) are lighted and placed near the offering, and around the several small oil-lamps which are also lighted. The patient's seat is directly before the *atamāgala*. The *prēte* are summoned, the *ḍura* using his small whistle, then recitations take place and the *tātuva* is perfumed by incense. The patient deposits a copper coin wrapped in a betel-leaf, the customary *pandura*, on this *tātuva* as well as on the following ones, and to the accompaniment of a mantra the *tātuva* is taken to the bush or the shore and left there.

The offering for the *Maha-sohona* now follows: some rice is prepared in a dish made from a skull, and likewise placed before the *atamāgala*, and finally the offering for the *Sanniya-yakka*. Both offerings are perfumed and, after the respective *yakku* have been summoned by the *ḍura*, are taken behind the house.

If the patient is a woman or a girl, an offering is also necessary for the *Kalukamāra*; it is a *tātuva*, shaped like a crown and supplied with the offerings peculiar to this *yakka*.

The threads preventing access to the *atamāgala*, are cut through, again with recitings and speaking of mantra, and the patient goes inside and sits down on a spread-out mat (Pl. XX, fig. 30 to Pl. XXII, fig. 34). However, before doing so, he is wrapped in a fresh white cloth, as if in a cloak; sometimes, this is done earlier, at the beginning of the "seven-steps-ceremony". When the patient has taken his place inside the *atamāgala*, the following things are laid at his feet: a rice-pounder (*mōlgaha*), a *telambu*-leaf, a *dēvi-kaduru*-leaf, a stalk of a *hirāsa*-plant, a wild yam-root (*hondola-ala*), and a red coconut (*ṭemili*). If the patient is a woman, some other things are also added, e.g. a mirror, a plait of hair, a comb, and several other things which Sinhalese women use for their personal toilet and attractiveness. Just as in the *sanniya-yakuma*, the first group of objects is here also intended to ban the disease or to exert a favourable influence upon the patient by

<sup>1</sup> The splitting in two of a coconut, carried out at most of the more extensive ceremonies, must always be arranged so that one half of the shell has the germ holes as its centre; this half is generally considered as the female one, while the other half is the male one. The male part is more appreciated and more valuable, as it can be used as a vessel; the female one serves for nothing but squatting on. Also, the male part must be treated with a certain respect. For instance, it must never be employed for a stool: only the female part of the shell may be used for such a purpose. Should either part, on being cut through, fall with its opening to the ground, it is a bad omen and the health of the patient will remain dubious. If, on the contrary, their inside parts point up, the omen is considered as favourable, and the patient will soon recover. If the female part lies with its shell next the floor, and the male with the inside downwards, it is a good sign for a woman patient, and a bad one for a man. Vice versa, the outlook is bad for a woman, when the female part of the nut falls with its interior to the floor, and good for a man, when the shell of the male half lies downwards (P. Wirz, *Die kultische Bedeutung der Kokosnuss bei den Singhalesen* (Verh. d. naturf. Ges. Basel, LI, 1940)).



the powers which emanate from them. The cosmetics and toilet articles, on the other hand, symbolize the patient's prompt recovery<sup>1</sup>.

Now, the *ḍura* dances with the rice-pounder, to the accompaniment of lively rolls of the drum. He wears bells tied about his calves, and continuously reciting, dances, now more, now less passionately, before the *atamāgala*; after a while, he puts the pounder back at the feet of the patient. In the same way, he resumes the recitations and dances with the *telambu-leaf*, the *dēvi-kaduru-leaf*, the *hirāsa-stalk*, the coconut, and the *hondola-ala*, which he then puts back again, one after the other. The dance is continued for a little longer with whirls and contortions of the body, with a burning torch in the hand, accompanied by the drum music swelling and dying down in turns, at times increasing to the most furious *prestissimo* and *fortissimo*. After the dance is finished, the first *ḍura* takes his costume off, while his partner takes over his part. (As a rule, two *ḍuro* share the roles, i.e. they relieve one another in turns, as is customary also in other ceremonies). A big, round rice-winnow is fetched on which are numerous rings (*veḷ*) of different sizes, plaited from strips of palm-leaves, a crown (*ohima*) made of the same material, and a large number of small unripe lemons. Now follows the "*veḷ-tindua*", the binding of the patient with the nineteen rings. One after another, they are put round his neck, wrists, and feet, and lastly the crown is put upon his head after it has been covered with a white cloth. All these actions are accompanied by ceaseless recitations, relating the mythological traditions in great detail and with all kinds of embellishments and comments (see Pl. XXI, fig. 32, to Pl. XXII, fig. 34).

A queer figure enters now, representing the *Nagapata-rusiya*, one of the ten learned men. He wears a saffron-coloured shirt, a turban on his head, and a black beard and whiskers. His outfit is completed by dark spectacles, necklaces of strung seeds, such as are worn by Indian *sadhus*, and a sun-shade (fig. 34 to 36). Meditating, he walks around the *atamāgala*, peers into it, throws a glance at the patient, and shakes his head. After a while, he commences a grotesque dance, performing all kinds of quaint movements which are not characteristic of Sinhalese dances. All in all, he behaves like a stranger who has come from far away. Finally, he hangs up his sun-shade and enters into a long conversation with the *ḍura*. He examines attentively the serpent's marks on the floor and counts them on his fingers. He then takes a betel-leaf, regards it minutely, follows the course of its veins, and again counts on his fingers. He resumes his meditations, then has a talk with one of the *ḍuro* at about the different diseases and the *kodivina*, and enumerates the different *yakku*. In the meantime, the other *ḍura* is sitting a little to the side, narrating the legend of *Manipāla-dēvinānsē*. Now follows another short dance, after which the learned man retires.

The nineteen rings or chains (*veḷ-keṭṭima*) and the crown (*ohima keṭṭima*) which

<sup>1</sup> The *hondola-root* seems to be one of the foremost things from which healing powers emanate. *Honda* means fortune, welfare, success.

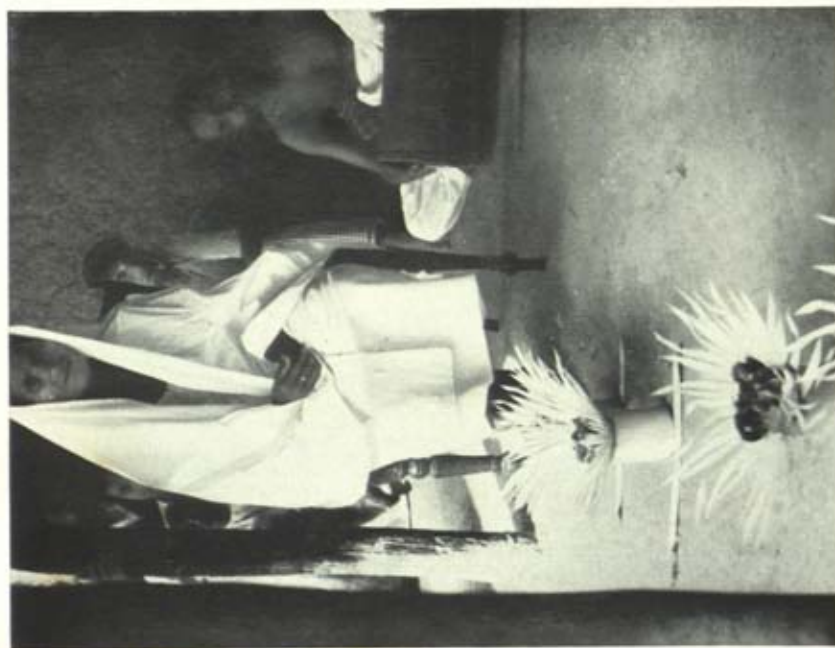


Fig. 28. The first act of the sūniyama-ceremony. The patient, wrapped in a white cloth, is sitting in front of the atamāgala. On the floor, the "seven lotus-blossoms" are arranged on the figure of a snake.



Fig. 29. One hundred and eight lemons are cut through above the patient's head during a sūniyama-ceremony.





Fig. 30. The patient inside the atamāgala.



Fig. 31. The patient, seated in the atamāgala, cuts the various roots and herbs. The ḍura, sitting directly before the log, recites mantra without stopping and throws dummala into the fire-pan at the side.

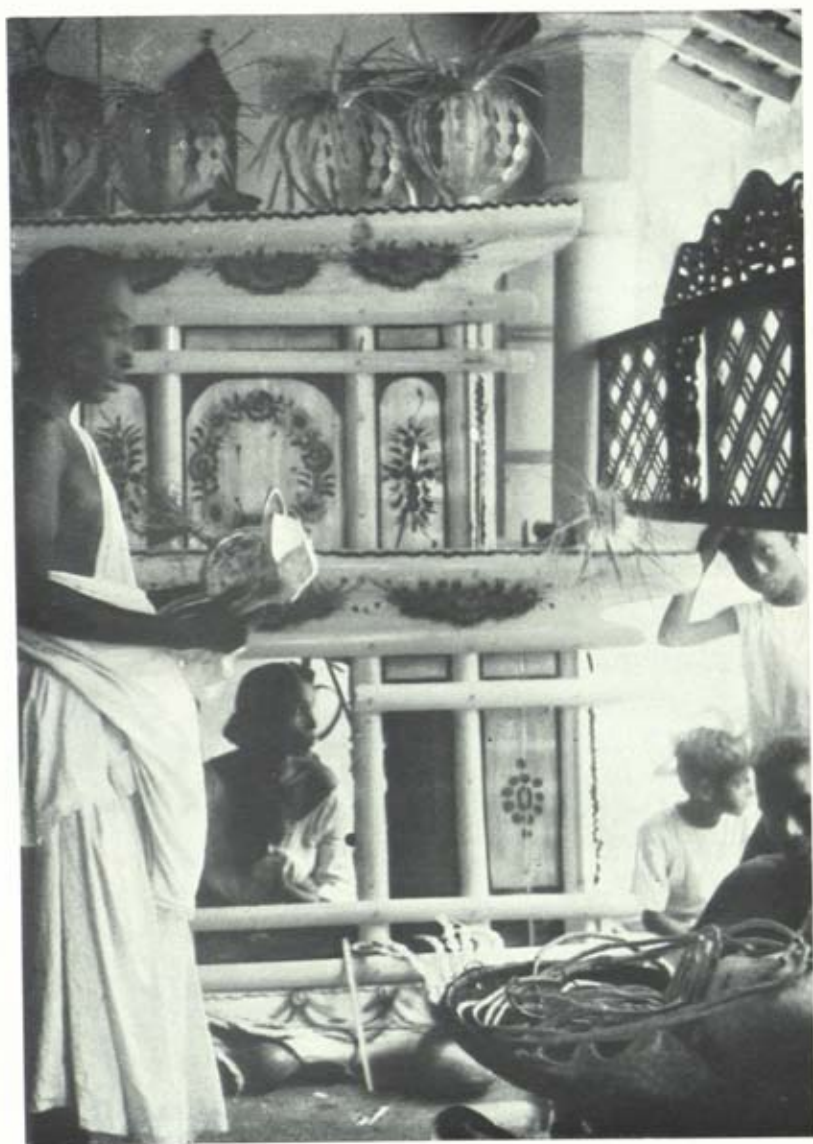
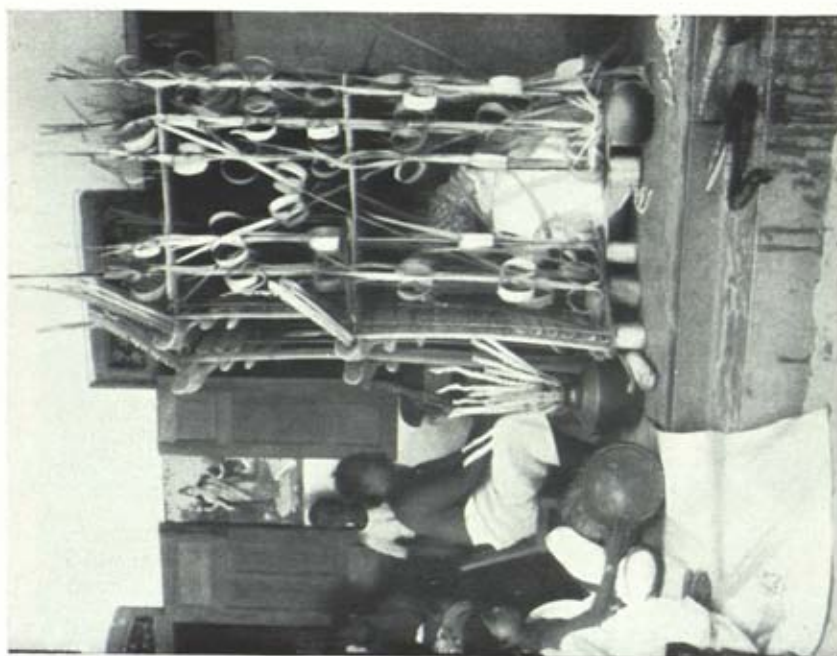


Fig. 32. Scene from a sūniyama-ceremony. The patient is seated in the atamāgala. On the right in the foreground, the rice-winnow is seen with the rings which are being put on the patient. On the left, the ɛdura is standing with the crown in his hand.





Figs. 33 and 34. The patient has entered the atamāgala and the fifty-four rings are put on by the çdura.

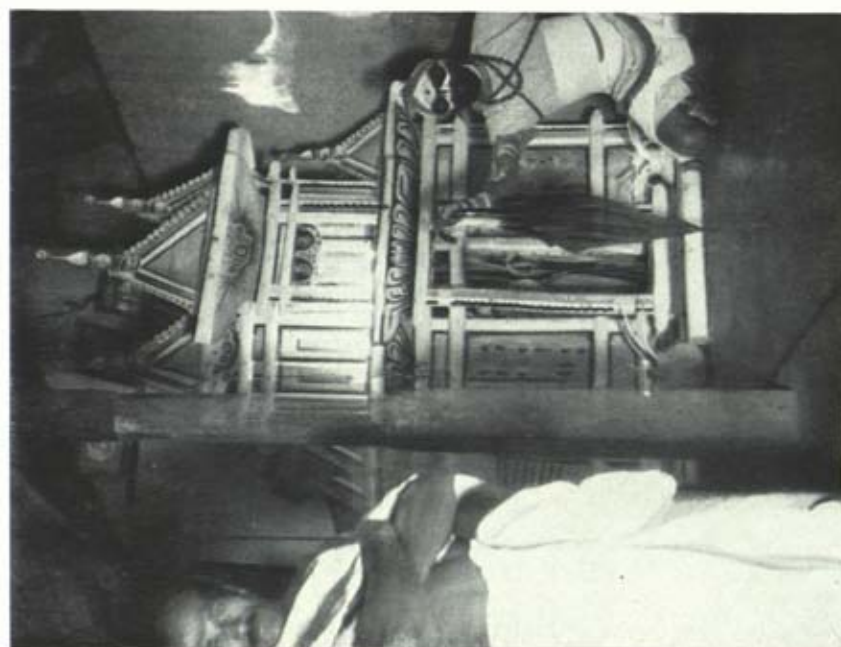


Fig. 35. Enter Nagapata-rusiya, one of the "seven learned men" who, according to the tradition, is the founder of the sūniyama-ceremony. On the left, the ēdura conducting the ritual (flashlight picture).



Fig. 36



Fig. 37

Figs. 36 and 37. The Nagapata-rusiya actors during a sūniyama-ceremony.





Fig. 38. The *edura* has stretched himself out on a mat, and covered himself with a white cloth. On his stomach are placed coconuts, blossoms and a pumpkin which is now going to be cut through.



Fig. 39. The pumpkin is cut through. The patient takes hold of the handle of the knife, the *edura* its blade. By now, the *edura* has also covered his face and utters mantra continuously.

adorns the patient's head, are cut through, again to the accompaniment of recitations and mantra. Here also, the *ḍura*, who performs this part of the ceremony, uses areca-scissors. The cut pieces are put into a sack kept ready for the purpose. This done, a great many more lemons are cut through, always above the patient's head, while a mantra is uttered<sup>1</sup>. The total number of the lemons cut through must be one hundred and eight all told (Pl. XIX, fig. 29). However, this number includes the seven lemons of the "hat-adiya". This part of the ceremony is followed by the cutting of the *hondola-ala*, the pineapple, and the two leaves. For this, a log is put in front of the *atamāgala* and then the objects are laid on it one after the other (Pl. XX, fig. 31).

The *ḍura* hands the patient the "kēṭa", the hilt of which he has to grip tightly. While the *ḍura* places its edge on the object to be cut, he pronounces the mantra and throws some *dummala* into the fire-pan to stimulate the smoke. Then a single blow is struck. In this way, first the *hondola-root*, then the *telambu-* and the *dēvi-kaduru-leaves*, the *hirāsa-stalk*, and the unripe pineapple are cut, everything being put into the sack lying ready. This *tindua*, too, is now finished and the last act follows: the cutting of the pumpkin, always carried out on the *ḍura's* stomach.

But first of all, he dances for a while, reciting throughout, with a mat in his hand, and passes it a few times through the smoke of the coal-pan. He then spreads it out directly before the *atamāgala*, lies down on it fully stretched out, so that his head almost touches the *atamāgala*. He covers himself with a cloth in which the patient has knotted a copper coin as a *pandura* for the demons. Continuing his recitations, from time to time strewing *dummala* into the coal-pan as incense, the *ḍura* remains lying on his mat, while a fairly big round offering-basket is now placed on his legs, representing the so-called *samāgama-pidenna*. This offering is intended for the whole of the *yakku* (*samāgama* = union, entirety), i.e. for the *Sūniya-yakka*, the *Hiri-yakka*, the *Maha-sohona*, the *Sanniya-yakka*, the *Aimāna*, and if necessary also for the *Kalu-kumāra*. Afterwards, this *samāgama-pidenna* is placed in the *pehenduma*. A tuft of panicles of the coconut-palm is spread out on the *ḍura's* stomach, then a silver coin wrapped in a betel-leaf, and lastly, the pumpkin on top<sup>2</sup> (see Pl. XXIV, fig. 38).

<sup>1</sup> Sometimes, a ring and a lemon are cut in turn, and then the rest of the lemons.

<sup>2</sup> Only a so-called ash-pumpkin (*puhul*, *Benincasa cerifera*) may be used, a kind of pumpkin whose fruits are covered with a gray ash-like dust. A legend about its origin can be related shortly as follows: After *Sakra's* wife had been buried, a creeping plant with nine tendrils sprang up from her grave. Each of the tendrils grew in a different direction and each of them bore a fruit of a different kind of pumpkin or cucumber.

The tendril growing towards the east (*neṅena*)  
 The tendril growing towards the south-east (*akuni*)  
 The tendril growing towards the south (*dakuna*)  
 The tendril growing towards the south-west (*nirita*)  
 The tendril growing towards the west (*basnā*)  
 The tendril growing towards the north-east (*iṣāna*)

bore a *rasalabu* (melon).  
 bore a *kekira* (kind of cucumber).  
 bore a *tiyambara* (kind of cucumber).  
 bore a *diyalabu* (*Lagenaria*).  
 bore a *soralabu* (kind of cucumber).  
 bore a *titta-komadu* (small bitter kind of cucumber, *Cucumis colocynthis*).



But first of all, the *ḍura* seizes the pumpkin with his two hands and holds it for some time in the air, while the patient touches it with his forehead. Then, it is held against the patient's feet, and he touches it with his toes. It is now held three times in the smoke of the coal-pan which has again been supplied with *dummala*, then, once more in the air, and the patient touches it again three times with his forehead. The *ḍura* puts it on his stomach, i.e. on top of the panicles and the betel-leaf with the coin. The big knife is adjusted, the *ḍura* on his mat seizing the blade with both his hands, and the patient, squatting in the *atamāgala*, seizing the handle (Pl. XXIV, fig. 39). Incessantly uttering mantra, the *ḍura* now gradually presses the knife deeper and deeper into the flesh of the pumpkin, until it is completely cut through and falls apart in two halves. The cutting of the pumpkin has now completely destroyed the last elements of the disease. The *ḍura* gets up<sup>1</sup>. The two parts of the pumpkin are put into the sack, and the last dance begins. To perform it, the *ḍura* first perfumes his face with incense and inhales great gulps of the fumes of the powdered resin thrown into the coal-pan.

The drum rolls in quick tempo, such as generally announces the beginning of a dance, and with increasing excitement the *ḍura*, too, commences stamping his feet. Then, the dance proper starts.

In utmost agitation, almost in ecstasy, the *ḍura* now runs around the *atamāgala*, shakes its walls, here and there tearing pieces out of them, and finally hacks it to pieces with his knife.

With this dance, the *ḍura* is supposed to glorify his victory over the *yakku* and *prṛteo*. The *yakku* and *prṛteo*, it is said, now take to flight and return to the "udagun parvataya".

The remains of the demolished *atamāgala* are put into the sack and thrown into the sea or a river. Following the traditions, the *atamāgala* must be destroyed before the sun rises, but this is only seldom carried out. If the ceremony has been performed after a *sanniya-yakuma*, this in itself makes it impossible to finish in time. Thus, the patient is at last freed, and the *ḍura* utters his final mantra, sprinkling the other's head with yellow-root water. He then takes a torch, goes into the patient's house, and flings powdered resin into every corner; its flames purify the

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The tendril growing towards the north-west (*vayamba*) bore a *gon-kekiri* (kind of cucumber, *Cucumis pubescens*).

The tendril growing towards the north (*uttara*) bore a *vāṭalabu* (*Lagenaria*).

One of the tendrils, however, grew straight upwards, and from it hung a *puhul-pumpkin* (*Benincasa cerifera*). It was covered with gray ashes and grew towards the heaven of *Iṣvara*. The god was exceedingly happy and pleased at seeing it and rubbed some of the ashes on his forehead. But the fruit was used for the *sūniyama*-ceremony to cure *Manipāla-dēvinānsē*, whom *Vasavarta-Mārea* had made ill with his *kodivina*.

<sup>1</sup> Sometimes, the *ḍura* remains lying on his mat for a while and his assistant waves the "Igaha" over him as if sweeping something off. After each sweeping movement, he beats the sacrificial cock at his feet, in order to brush the "impurities", i.e. the evil powers and influences which have passed to the *ḍura*, off him on to the cock.

house from the yakku and pr̥teo who might still have kept themselves hidden in it somewhere.

### THE "EPA-NŪLA" AND THE "NŪLA-BANDHIMA"-CEREMONY

"*Epa-nūla*" means something like "thread of security"<sup>1</sup>. The first action which the *ḍura* performs on the patient in order to prevent an aggravation of his malady, i.e. as it were, to limit the disease, is always to tie a string with seven knots, made from seven cotton-threads, on to him. The tying on of such an *ḍpa-nūla* represents, so to speak, the preliminary to the subsequent extensive ceremony (*sanniya-yakuma*, *sūniyama*, *rata-yakuma*, *iramudun-pidenna*, *kalu-kumāra-pidenna*)<sup>2</sup> which is always connected with the offer of a considerable gift to the different yakku. So, the *ḍpa-nūla*-ceremony always implies a promise that, within a certain time, an extensive ceremony with offerings for the yakku will be performed. In the meantime, the yakku are supposed to be satisfied by this promise and to let the patient alone. Such a promise given a priori, must be kept at all costs. The immediate performance of an extensive ceremony may be delayed for several reasons. Often financial reasons play a part, for the celebration of the more extended ceremonies is always expensive. Moreover, a favourable astrological moment must always be chosen. Sometimes, people wait to see what course the illness is going to take, especially when things are doubtful or when the patient's health is not so bad and recovery may be expected within a short time. The *nūla* must on no account be removed before the ceremony has taken place. Only the *ḍura* is authorized to cut the *nūla* during the performance of the promised ceremony. Dare points out that the tying and cutting of a knotted string is made use of in many regions of India as a magic act<sup>3</sup>. The most diverse conceptions are connected with it. Generally speaking, by the tying of a knotted string powers are confined, which are released on its being cut through.

A *nūla* is made for one week (*sumanaya ekai*), for three weeks (*sumanaya tunai*), for one month (*māsa ekai*) or even for three months (*mās tunai*), but this is the longest time and must not be exceeded. Should the ceremony not be performed in the meantime, a new *nūla* has to be made and tied on, but may not be left in place for longer than a month; if a further delay proves necessary, the

<sup>1</sup> *Epa* = bail, security; *nūla* = thread, string.

<sup>2</sup> The expressions "*sanniya-yakuma-ta ḍpa-nūla*, *sūniyama-ta ḍpa-nūla*", etc. are therefore also used for this ceremony. The *ḍpa-nūla*-ceremony is performed, as already mentioned, without any special offerings for the yakku and without a so-called *tātuva*. One contents oneself with indicating the fact that a ceremony and offerings are intended. Only the sacrificial cock must be present, and a *nūla* with three knots is tied round one of its legs so that the yakku may be satisfied for the moment. The cock is then released but when the celebration of the "great ceremony" takes place the cock must again be used.

<sup>3</sup> Dare, *Magie blanche et Magie noire aux Indes*, p. 69.



patient may be given a third *nūla*, which must not be worn longer than a week <sup>1</sup>.

This ceremony is generally carried out in the evening after night-fall, but may also be performed at any other hour. It takes only a short time, hardly more than an hour. The performance of an *ēpa-nūla*-ceremony requires five different kinds of flowers, five different kinds of seeds (peas, beans, lentils, rice, and sesame), two kinds of little fishes (fresh and salt water), a small piece of sandalwood, a betel-leaf cut into five parts, and a copper coin; a little ball of yellow yarn is also needed by the *ēdura* to make a string with seven strands and having seven knots placed at equal distances. All these things are placed on a chair, the *mal-bulat-putuva* (flower-betel-chair), and the *ēdura* begins to utter a series of mantra, invoking the *yakku*. For a male patient, *Sūniya-yakka* is summoned, for a female one, *Kalu-kumāra*. One of the deities, the *Kataragama-dēviyo*, is also invoked to bestow upon the *ēpa-nūla* his power to overcome the influence of the *yakku*.

One of these mantra is as follows:

"Om sarar kadirap pilum tjejo gohora-gohoram, jōho-tarum tīrasaralaung kam-kaluva yayah."

"Om kadirap Perumala kalu valah kadah irang ayadas sura gurūlu meta velamana avani dēvasāra kidahalam sura gūrulu meta Kalu-kumāra dēvatava."

The *ēdura* now takes the *nūla* in his hand, moves it in a circle three times round the head of the patient, holds one end of the string in the air so that the other end touches the patient's head, and utters his final mantra. Thereupon, the string is wound twice round the neck of the patient and is tied (*nūla-bandhima* = to tie the string). It may not be taken off before one of the above-mentioned ceremonies has been performed, and then only by the *ēdura*.

Another ceremony, related to the *ēpa-nūla*, is the so-called "*nūla-bandhima*" <sup>2</sup>. It differs from the former only in so far as, in this case, several *nūla* are always required and without reference to any later performance of an extensive ceremony, so that they may be regarded rather as amulets.

<sup>1</sup> Nevertheless, exceptions to this rule seem to occur now and then. I was told of a case in which a *nūla* had been used for an old woman; she wore it round her neck for more than a year without the performance of the promised *sanniya-yakuma* taking place. Ultimately, the plan was completely given up.

There is, however, also another kind of *ēpa-nūla*-ceremony, one which is without reference to the future celebration of a big ceremony; it is called "*tātudima*" (*tātu* = to give). It corresponds to the "*nūla-bandhima*" which will be described later on, but is more powerful (*malahaga*). One also speaks of "*polos pēya*", i.e. fifteen Sinhalese hours (equal to six hours in our system). At such a ceremony, five or six *tātuva* are erected for the following *yakku*: *Hiri-yakku*, *Sūniya-yakka*, *Maha-sohona*, *Sanni-yakka*, *Aimāna*, and for *Kalu-kumāra* if the patient is a woman or a girl. A *mal-bulat-putuva* must also be arranged for the five deities (*Kataragama-dēviyo*, *Nata-dēviyo*, *Saman-dēviyo*, *Dēvol-dēviyo*, and *Mahavishnu*). The *nūla* must be made from seven threads for a man, and from nine threads for a woman, and must be loosely knotted seven or nine times, respectively. A second *nūla* of three threads is needed for the cock which, as the sacrifice, must always be at hand. The two *nūla* are then laid on the *mal-bulat-putuva* and are charmed and perfumed with incense (*jīvan karnova*). Now, each knot is charmed and tightened in turn, and the whole string pulled over yellow-root (*kaha geyamo*), enchanting it once more with mantra.

<sup>2</sup> *Banda* or *bandha* = to bind, to fix, to fasten.

Generally five *nūla* are worn by the patient, namely: two short ones about each of his upper arms and his wrists and a fifth crosswise round his chest.

As a rule, the "*nūla-bandhima*" is only undertaken in mild cases, e.g. when a person suspects that he has crossed the path of a *yakka* and been frightened, which is manifesting itself as fever, headaches, or sickness. The *yakku* which come into consideration here are, as so often, the *Hiri-yakka*, the *Sūniya-* and the *Sanniya-yakka*, and in the case of women and girls, the *Kalu-kumāra* and his accomplices. Often, a "*tēl-matrima*" is first performed, but if that has no effect, the *ḍura* will at once proceed to a "*nūla-bandhima*"-ceremony, of which there are two forms. The one, called "*doladīma*", in which an offering is prepared, and the other, the "*saṃāgamata nūla-bandhima*", with no offering.

The "*doladīma*" may be performed at any convenient time of the day or even in the late hours of the evening. A *mal-bulat-putuva* is erected for the five deities and a *tātuva* for each of the *yakku*.

A betel-leaf with a *pandura* (gift of money), some sandalwood, five kinds of flowers, a small lemon, and some rice and rice-cakes are placed on the *mal-bulat-putuva*, and a little clay oil-lamp (*meti-pana*) beside it. The *nūla* is also put on the offering-chair, on a banana-leaf together with all the other objects. Mantra are uttered, and the five deities are invoked: *Mahaviṣṇu*, *Isvara*, *Kataragama-dēviyo*, *Saman-dēviyo*, and *Nata-dēviyo*, who are regarded as the helpers of *Sakra*, the superior deity.

Generally, three or four *tātuva* are arranged: one of four sections for the *Hiri-yakka*, another one for the *Sūniya-yakka*, a third one for the *Sanniya-yakka*, and if necessary, a fourth one for the *Maha-sohona*. If the patient is a woman or a girl, a further *tātuva* must be prepared for the *Kalu-kumāra* and for the *Vāta-kumāra*. They contain some rice with seasonings, crayfish, shrimps, five kinds of flowers, five kinds of seeds, salt and fresh water fish, a betel-leaf cut into five parts, and a copper-coin.

The summoning of the deities is followed by that of the *yakku*. For a male patient, the *Hiri-yakka*, the *Sūniya-yakka*, the *Sanniya-yakka*, and perhaps also the *Maha-sohona* are summoned; for a female one, also the *Kalu-kumāra* and the *Vāta-kumāra*. Then, the *nūla* are charmed, one by one, and a number of knots are tied. This act is called "*nūla maturanavā*", i.e. charming of the string<sup>1</sup>. When all the "*nūla*" have been knotted and charmed, the "*nūla-bandhima*" proper is performed, i.e. the tying on of the *nūla*. But before doing this, each of the *nūla* has to be enchanted once more.

The *nūla* are then put on and knotted tightly. The patient wears them for three days, then they are cut through and thrown away.

At the *saṃāgamata*, as already indicated, no offering is presented; neither is a

<sup>1</sup> *Maturu* is the Elu form of *mantra* = mystic verses or formulae. *Maturanavā* = the pronouncing or uttering of such formulae.



mal-bulat-putuva erected for the deities. Instead, the *nūla* are charmed directly. They are kept for one and a half days and then thrown away.

As for the *nūla* proper, there are specific rules as to their preparation for each individual *yakka* and as to the number of knots to be tied in them. For the *Hiri-yakka*, a string with seven strands and having three knots is made and wound round the left wrist. The string for the *Sanniya-yakka* likewise has seven strands and has seven knots. It is tied round the right upper arm. For *Sūniya-yakka*, the string also has seven strands and seven knots, but it is worn round the body, or rather round the right shoulder. Women and girls, however, are given a string of nine strands with nine knots which is tied round the neck, on behalf of *Kalu-kumāra*.

### THE AVA-MANGALA-NULA

A string is also prepared and tied to the patient in particularly serious cases, when life is in danger. It is, as it were, the last attempt at saving a person's life, to be made when all other ceremonies have had no effect. In this case, the interference of the two most dreaded *yakku*, the *Maha-sohona* and the *Hiri-yakka*, is assumed. The *ḍura* who performs the ritual has to go to the cemetery in order to attain direct contact with these two *yakku*.

The ceremony always begins in the evening, after nightfall. Beside the offerings for the two *yakku* mentioned, gifts for the *Sanniya-yakka*, the *Sūniya-yakka*, the *Kalu-yakka*, and the *Aimāna* must also be presented, and if the patient is a woman or a girl, one for the *Kalu-kumāra*, as well. Mantra are uttered, and the patient is sprinkled with yellow-root water. Towards midnight, the *ḍura* and his assistants go to the cemetery, where they open a newly-made grave until the coffin is laid bare. The *ḍura* lies down on it fully stretched out, covers himself with a black cloth, and begins to utter mantra.

Three stones are put at his feet as a hearth for the preparation of the offerings for *Maha-sohona*. This offering consists of some red rice and a few drops of chicken's blood, and must be prepared, as already mentioned, in a human skull. The offering for the *Hiri-yakka* is also prepared on the *ḍura*'s body; it is composed of a raw hen's egg, the top of which has been pushed in, and which is coagulated with help of a little torch, after adding some rice and several drops of chicken's blood. Both offerings when ready are placed on the *tātuva* which has been brought along and it is then put on the *sanniya-vidiya* standing at the side. In the meantime, the assisting *ḍura* summons the two *yakku*, while the *ḍura* who is lying on the coffin charms a seven-stranded *nūla* with seven knots and hands it immediately to one of the people present so that it is brought to the patient and tied round his neck as quickly as possible. The person who brought the *nūla* to the patient returns to the graveyard and is given a second and a third *nūla* which have also been charmed in the meantime, and which are tied round both upper arms of the patient. Finally,

the *ḍura* on the coffin charms a fourth *nūla* which is to be tied to the *sanniya-vidiya*, and then the ceremony is finished. The *ḍura* now leaves the grave which is promptly filled in again. The *sanniya-vidiya* is placed on the grave and the sacrificial cock is killed and cut into four pieces; all the gifts, together with the parts of the cock, are finally put on the *sanniya-vidiya*. All those who accompanied the *ḍura* to the cemetery are now sprinkled with yellow-root water. They then return to the house of the patient, who is now assumed either to recover quickly or to die soon. The performance of this ceremony is supposed to settle the issue.

Furthermore, it is believed that the ritual is a dangerous venture for the *ḍura* who has to lie down in the opened grave; for, unless the entire directions are carefully observed and the mantra are correctly recited, it may easily happen that the *yakku* inflict severe injury on him. For this and other reasons, recourse is had to this ceremony only in an extreme emergency. As was remarked initially, it is the last effort which can be made on behalf of the patient, and its performance means recovery or death.

### THE "TEL-MATRIMA" (CHARMING OF OIL)

This is a little and very simple ceremony which is applied in mild cases, in a way, as "first aid" — if it is a question of the interference of *yakku*. The *ḍura* is called for in order to exorcize the *yakka*. The ceremony involves no preparations, no offerings are presented, and the ritual may be performed at any convenient hour.

A little coconut oil is poured into a cup or small vessel, some yellow-root and a small piece of sandalwood are added, and the *ḍura* charms it seven times with the following mantra:

"Om namō!	apaga	sambuddhu	rajjana	vahansa	nagaloka
Om, glory to Buddha!	our	Buddha-like	king	venerable	snake-country
uduviang	pāvāda	atuva	ran-temili	gedija	gennuva
under a white	on the floor	spread a	golden royal	fruit	bring along
cloth spread as		white cloth	coconut		
a baldachin					
ridi-kendiya	pen-vadana,	ran-kenjang	pen-vatkāra	egaha	ma-seka
silver vessel	fill with water	golden vessel	pour water into it	this tree	as it is
asuviyang	usagiya	ṭenedi	negenā-ira	atta	pala gata
80 arms long	high	at this time	sunrise (east)	branch	one fruit
Taruras-dēvatātā	neluvāya,	Budhuras-dēvatātā	leligasuvaya	ran-ketta	
name of a deity	pick a nut	name of a deity	shell a nut	golden knife	
binda,	ran-menikgal	tunak	pita tabah,	sandun	daring,
break to pieces	golden stones	three	place	sandalwood	light a fire
tēl	sinda,	ran-kuppiya	hatarakata	tēl ein,	eka kuppiya
oil	prepare	golden bottle	four	fill with oil	one bottle



Iri-dēviyanda	dunaya,	eka	kuppiya	Sanda-dēviyanda	dunaya	eka
sun-god	give	one	bottle	Sanda deity	give	one
kuppiya	Polāva-Mahikantāva-dēviyanda			dunāya,	eka	kuppiyaga
bottle	Polāva-Mahikantāva deity			give	one	bottle
adat-ma	maturana,	adat-ma	ayturu	yaga	una	esarāda
to-day I	charm with mantra	to-day I	for him	present an offering	fever	headaches
senēn,	guna	venda	lokuthera	Buddhunēn	varami".	
quickly	recovery	come	living beyond	Buddha	given order.	
			the world			

Freely translated it reads approximately as follows: Ōm, glory to Buddha! Our Buddha-like king of the snake-land, who stepped under a white baldachin on to a white cloth spread on the ground, had a golden-coloured coconut planted in the soil. He then ordered a silver vessel to be filled with water, the water to be poured into a golden vessel, and the coconut plant to be watered in order to make it sprout. A palm, eighty arm's lengths high, grew from it. The deity Taruras (a star-god) commanded that a nut be picked from a branch growing towards the east. The deity Budhuras had the nut shelled and cut into two pieces with a golden bush-knife. Three golden stones were arranged on the ground to make a hearth, and sandalwood was brought as fuel. The oil was then extracted from the kernel. One bottle was given to the sun-god, another one to the deity Sanda, a third one to the deity Polāva-Mahikantāva. The fourth bottle will be charmed to-day with mantra and presented on behalf of the patient by me. May his fever and his headaches quickly vanish, and may he recover his health by the power of Buddha who lives beyond the world."

The ḍura then dips three fingers into the oil and dabs the patient's forehead and both his temples three times, at the same time uttering the following mantra:

“Ōm, namō!	Polāva-mihi	dedūma	vahansē	Isvara-dēviyo		
Om, glory to Buddha!	deity of earth	said	venerable			
manusha-lokata	disti-la	belutanedi	noek	yakka-senāva		
human world	appeared	at that time	many	yakka-leaders		
dēva-sindaka,	Polāva-mihi	dedūma	vahansā	punkalāsa		
god-like	deity of the earth	said	venerable	earthen water-pot		
stapida	tagēna	apa	Buddhuru	rajjana	vahansēta	ṣṭakala
in the hand	hold	our	Buddha	royal	venerable	let him know
tanedi	vahansā	ran-tēliya	ganāva,	bat	udangara	siyelu,
at that time	venerable	golden dish	bring along	rice	fill	together with everything
yakun-yakshaniya	duru	keruna	anubhavang	adat	movunga	
male and female yakka	sent away		mighty	to-day	this	
sarvangeta	disti	veti	sitīna,	yakun-yakshaniya	duruva yanda	
body (patient)	appear		wait	male and female yakka	send away	
lokuthera	buddhunēn	varami”.				
living beyond the world	Buddha	given order				

This may be freely translated as follows: "Om, glory to Buddha! Polāva-mihi (the deity of the earth) said at that time that among mankind created by Isvara-dēviyo, many yakka-leaders had appeared. The venerable Polāva-mihi let our royal Buddha know at that time what ought to be done to dismiss the yakku and yak-kiniyo, and gave him a golden dish which he should fill with rice and other ingredients (as an offering for the yakku). So it is that we are here to-day once more expected to send away the yakku and yakkiniyo who are waiting for this (patient's) body and who are eager to take possession of him. So may it be done by the order of our Buddha who is living beyond the world."

### THE IRAMUDUN-PIDENNA

This ceremony always takes place in the forenoon (*varuva*), so that it will be finished at noon (*iramudun* = at the zenith). Hence the name: "*iramudun-pidenna*", i.e. the noon-offering.

It is performed if the sick person has (allegedly) met with one of the following six yakku, who must therefore be presented with offerings: the *Kalu-yakka*, the *Hiri-yakka*, the *Sūniya-yakka*, the dreaded *Maha-sohona*, the insatiable *Aimāna*, and finally the group of the eighteen *sanniya-yakku*, led by their commander, the *Kōla-sanniya*, or as he is also called, the *Sanniya-yakka*. Each one of these yakku is regarded as responsible for a certain disease, or rather for a certain ailment which, however, cannot generally be precisely defined. Fever, ague, pains in the limbs, frequently accompanied by delirium, convulsions, or even fainting fits, set in. Sleepiness and exhaustion, or mental disorders with fits of madness may also occur. Illnesses, such as dysentery, consumption, kidney or bladder disorders, and a great many other morbid symptoms may present themselves. The general characteristic, however, is that no natural external cause for all these ailments, all these physical or mental disorders is to be seen; at any rate, it is not known to the natives. To ascertain the state of things, the *sāstra-kariya* who is consulted, generally tries to learn where the patient has been during the last days or hours, what he has been doing, and whether he may have met this or that yakka. The case is clear beyond doubt if the patient is able himself to admit of such an encounter, proving it by his observations or indications, or if he can adduce evidence to throw light on the situation. The horoscope, of course, is also examined thoroughly to see whether it can give any pointers, but the final decision in the case must be made by the *sāstra-kariya* himself.

The *ḍura* is then sent for and told that the patient most probably had an encounter with one of the afore-mentioned yakku and that an *iramudun-pidenna* must be performed. In the course of the next few days the *ḍura* returns and, while uttering the appropriate mantra, ties an *ḍpa-nūla* round the patient's neck so that the yakku may be temporarily satisfied and wait until they receive the offering which they are promised. At the same time, the day on which the ceremony is to be held, is fixed.



For each yakka an adequate offering (pidenna) must be arranged, a so-called *tātuva* whose form and composition has been described in one of the previous chapters (p. 49). A so-called *kūduva* (p. 48), which serves to hold the offerings, is also erected; further, a live cock must also be available as a common offering for all the yakku and as a substitute for the patient whose release and recovery is claimed by the *ɛdura* performing the ceremony. Moreover, a small earthen pot with yellow-root water to sprinkle the patient is required for the ritual. This pot, together with flowers and the betel-leaves, is placed on the *mal-bulat-tātuva* (flower-betel-tātuva).

Just as with the *sanniya-yakuma*- and the *sūniyama*-ceremony, two or three *ɛdura* usually take part in the *iramudun-pidenna* and divide the performance of the rite among themselves and relieve one another. In addition, there is a drummer and frequently one or two assistants or novices; their task is to lend a helping hand wherever it may be needed, and occasionally even to take over the dancing-roles or at least to contribute to their performance as far as they are already conversant with them. The fee for the ceremony is, on the average, five rupees; but it depends entirely on the particular conditions and circumstances, and for wealthy persons is, of course, much higher than for those less well off. However, three rupees is the allowable minimum.

The ceremony begins at eight or nine o'clock in the morning, after the *ɛdura* and his assistants have prepared the offerings and made all the necessary arrangements. First, the conducting *ɛdura* exorcizes and summons the various yakku, one after the other, with recitations, dances, and whistling on his little bamboo flute. Continually reciting and uttering mantra, he seizes the *tātuva*, one by one, calls the respective yakka and shows him his offering. He dances to and fro before the patient who, dressed in a clean white cloth, is seated on a chair or mat. Finally, he returns the *tātuva* to the chair which is kept ready beside the patient (Pl. IV, fig. 6 and 7). Now and then he approaches the sick person with the torch in his hand or with his magic wand, the *igaha*; pointing them forward or with strokes in a downward direction, he makes movements which suggest the assurance of quick recovery, and which are applauded by the spectators with loud exclamations of assent (Pl. XXVI, fig. 43). After each dance, the *tātuva* is held out to the patient by the *ɛdura*, who puts a copper coin wrapped in a betel-leaf on it, the so-called *pandura* (money offering). It is a contribution which the patient personally owes the yakka and which may on no account be omitted.

In the middle of the place a rice-pounder has been sunk into the ground and the *kūduva* is now placed on it so that it can revolve round itself. The cock and the offerings which have already been disposed of to the *Kalu-yakka* and the *Sanniya-yakka*, are put on it; the *ɛdura* plucks a few feathers from the cock, singes them, lays them on one of the *tātuva*, and begins to dance around the *kūduva* (Pl. XXXII, fig. 54). The *tātuva* for the *Maha-sohona* and the *Hiri-yakka* are now brought forward, put on pre-arranged chairs, and these two yakku are also summoned.

The iramudun-samayāma follows immediately. Represented as a dancing yakka with a double torch in his mouth, just as in the sanniya-yakuma, Maha-sohona enters the scene to receive his offering and the cock. The role is acted by one of the eduro or a novice. His body is tightly wrapped in a white cloth, he wears a white and red skirt and a short tight jacket. His head is covered with a cap, trimmed with coconut-leaves round the edge. Occasionally, a crown-shaped head-gear made of palm-leaves is worn instead. A long tail of young split palm-leaves hangs down the back. Round his calves are strips of cloth with bells sewn on. Finally, the eyes are outlined with black paint, and frequently, also the cheeks are painted black (Pl. III, fig. 4).

As a rule only a single yakka appears during this ceremony, occasionally two or more of them, and always the most dangerous and malicious of the six possible yakku, i.e. the Maha-sohona. In reality, however, the main part falls not to the Maha-sohona but to Hiri-yakka, the blood-sucker; he is always followed by Maha-sohona, for whenever Hiri-yakka is persecuting someone, Maha-sohona is always at his heels, eager to secure his share of the booty. He is, moreover, followed by the Kalu-yakka, the Sūniya-yakka, the band of the sanniya-yakku, and, of course, the Aimāna with his accomplices, the army of the prēteo. Each of them wants to get his portion, even when originally he is in no way connected with the illness of the person concerned, whose state may be attributed exclusively to Hiri-yakka. Because of this, every single one of these yakku as well as the prēteo must usually be presented with their offering, a tātuva. However, the main offering and also the sacrificial cock is received by the yakka who is to blame for the bad health of the patient.

Before the dance begins the yakka-actor has his face perfumed with dummala. He inhales the resinous smoke in great draughts, and as a result he is transformed into a state of rapture which generally, but only towards the end of the dance, develops into a complete trance (Pl. V, fig. 8 and 9). The drums roll quicker and quicker, in the special rhythm which always precedes and announces the beginning of this kind of dance.

Meanwhile, the double torch has been well soaked in oil and lighted. Two folded strips of coconut-leaves and a red hibiscus blossom are wound round it in the middle; the torch is then taken between the teeth so that it looks as if the yakka is sticking his tongue out of a huge mouth. Immediately afterwards, the dance begins. But the yakka-actor at first often dances for a while without his torch in order to shoot the cock with a little bow and his magic arrow, the īgaha. Usually he first runs several times round the kūduva, runs shrieking and as if in a frenzy towards the patient, strokes him from head to heels with the īgaha, sprinkles him with yellow-root water. He does all this to transmit the desired health to the patient and to show his benevolence and his satisfaction at the offering presented.

The dance itself with the double torch held in the mouth, is always opened, as mentioned above, by special *ṭrum* music, characteristic of the samayāma or the



yakka-natanavā, i.e. the yakka-dance. Beside the perfuming of the face and the inhalation of the resinous fumes, it is essential for the transformation of the dancer into a state of excitement and rapture which is not far from complete trance, and which may almost be called ecstasy. The dance begins with quicker and quicker skips from one foot to the other, turns and twists of the body, and whirls of the head until completely exhausted. In his hands the dancer holds burning torches or tufts of gurulla-leaves which he shakes the whole time; then he again grasps his little bow and the īgaha, a coconut, and finally a coal-pan. From time to time he takes a rest to recover his breath, but only a few moments, and the dance is taken up again with undiminished fire. Over and over again he dances round the kūduva, again and again he whirls his head and arms while holding the two parts of the tail which hangs down the back with his hands. Gradually these whirlings spread over his whole body. In the course of the dance, the dancer leaps towards the sick person, stretches himself out at his side without taking the torch out of his mouth, strokes his body with the īgaha, strews dummala around, and again begins running round the kūduva at a furious speed. He also dances through the whole house, throws dummala into all the corners and lights it in flashes with his torch, and rushes out of the door again, to collapse at once unconscious in the open air.

The original tendency seems indeed to have been that an experienced ḍura continued his dance until he literally broke down, i.e. was in a complete trance. This state is interpreted as a sign that the yakka has now really taken possession of the ḍura. But only the older ḍuro know how to reach it, for only many years of exercise and training enable them to attain this condition within a more or less reasonable length of time. The whole way of performing such a dance by an experienced ḍura is intended to induce a trance. Every moment one expects to see the dancer break down, but again and again his assistants prevent it by sprinkling him with yellow-root water and by cooling his face and body with water. Frequently, still another scene follows. Immediately before the climax of the dance, the actor rids himself of his torches, throws himself on the sacrificial cock which is lying on the floor, and in state of utmost excitement bites through its throat<sup>1</sup>. (Pl. VIII, fig. 13). The Maha-sohona-samayāma is followed by two more acts, one of which is performed in the patient's house, the other one in the open air.

They make a dummy of straw, coconut bast, or some similar material, and put it into the bed of the patient who is removed elsewhere. His relatives gather round, lamenting and wailing as if the patient himself were going to die (Pl. XXV, fig. 40). They believe that the yakku will be deceived by this expedient.

Meanwhile, the two ḍuro are busy with a stretcher (derahāva) which has been kept ready out of doors. It is made beforehand from banana-stems and the veins of coconut-palm leaves. They put the tātuva of Maha-sohona, Hiri-yakka, and

<sup>1</sup> Actually, the biting through of the cock's throat is generally only done symbolically, although, according to the directions, the cock ought to be sacrificed at that moment in the way mentioned.

Aimāna on its arched roof, which is richly decorated with split palm-leaves. Then, mantra are uttered, powdered resin is thrown into the coal-pan, and a mat is passed through the fumes evolved. This perfumed mat is put on the stretcher, and one of the *ḍuro* lies down on it, covering himself with the exception of his face by a white cloth. One corner of the cloth contains a copper coin which the patient wrapped in (Pl. XXV, fig. 41). Both *ḍuro*, the one lying on the stretcher as well as his colleague, continue their recitation of mantra. Powdered resin is flung about the stretcher, the *tātuva*, and the *kūduva*, so that, for a moment, everything appears enveloped in flames.

The active *ḍura* now begins to prepare the main part of the offerings for *Maha-sohona* and *Hiri-yakka*, a procedure which generally takes place on the stomach of the *ḍura* who is lying on the stretcher. The offering for *Maha-sohona* consists of some red rice and tamarind which must be heated in a skull or a piece of the cranium. That for *Hiri-yakka* is a raw hen's egg, the point of which has been broken open; some rice and yellow-root are pressed through the opening, and the whole is then also heated for a short time (Pl. XXVI, fig. 42). For this, a flat stone is placed on the *ḍura*'s stomach, and a ring, cut out of a coconut shell, serves as a little hearth on the stone to hold the egg. The egg is heated from beneath by a small torch until it is quite hard, and the rice in the skull is warmed in the same way. The hard-boiled egg is at once placed on the *tātuva* of the *Hiri-yakka*, and the skull with rice on that of the *maha-sohona*.

Both *yakku* are believed to be fond of strolling about the cemeteries looking for fresh corpses, and this is the reason why their offerings must be prepared on the body of the *ḍura* who is pretending to be dead. This dissimulation is meant to deceive and to allure the two *yakku* who are both in the habit of coming when a person is dying and the relatives are preparing the burial. This is the case, particularly with *Maha-sohona*; but the aggressive *Maha-sohona* is always followed by the more cautious and cowardly *Hiri-yakka*, just as a hyena steals after the lion, eager to snatch some left-overs from his meal. But the two *yakku* also want some fresh blood, especially the blood-thirsty *Hiri-yakka* who owes his name to this very predilection. To satisfy them, a point of the comb of the sacrificial cock is now cut off; two leaves of the *gurulla*-tree are smeared with a few drops of the blood and are subsequently put on the two *kūduva*. Lastly, the cock is also placed at the feet of the *ḍura* lying on the stretcher, as it forms the main part of the offering for the two *yakku*.

Now, the straw-puppet is removed out of the house, escorted by the wailing and lamenting of the patient's relatives, and is laid upon the *ḍura* on his stretcher (Pl. XXVIII, fig. 45 and 46). The *ḍura* still continues uttering his mantra which are now specially directed to the *Hiri-yakka*, who has meanwhile entered into the manifestation of the *Maru-yakka*. He and the other *yakku* are kept deceived by making them believe that the patient has really died and is going to be interred.



But this is possible only when the *ḍura* remains lying on the stretcher the whole time and recites his mantra without ceasing.

Meanwhile, it is already midday. This time must be rigidly adhered to, for it is only at this hour of the day that the *yakku* may be successfully exorcized and obliged to descend. The stretcher with the *ḍura* and the straw-puppet on it, and with the *tātuva* on its arched roof, is now lifted by the helpers and carried off to the bush (Pl. XXIX, fig. 47). The drummer and the second *ḍura* join the procession, but not the patient or his relations. Even now, the *ḍura* on the stretcher still continues uttering his mantra, holding the straw-puppet fast with both his hands during the carrying. One of the helpers carries the *kūduva* on which the *tātuva* will later on be placed. Both the stretcher and the *kūduva* are conveyed to the graveyard or else to the spot where the patient declares he met the *yakka*. Frequently, however, they content themselves with carrying the stretcher and the *kūduva* behind the house into the near bush, and leave them there.

Arrived at their destination, the *ḍura* gets up from the stretcher and puts the straw-puppet up against a tree, and at once sets it on fire with the torch which has been brought along, uttering more mantra all the time (Pl. XXIX, fig. 48). As explained before, the *kūduva* and the stretcher are left on the spot, but the *kūduva* is also frequently pulled up a tree and allowed to hang there. Finally, all those present are sprinkled with yellow-root water, and wet their foreheads to purify themselves.

Before the stretcher is carried off to the bush, the patient and his family who have remained behind in their house, are advised by the *ḍura* to read from one of the Buddhist scriptures, the "*atmidima sūtra*", or in other words, to perform a little *pirit-ceremony*.

### MANTRA ADDRESSED TO THE YAKKU

The following mantra are recited at a *sanniya-yakuma*, *sūniyama*-, and *iramudun-pidenna-ceremony* to request the patient's recovery from the *yakku*:

#### *Mantra for the Sūniya-yakka:*

"Ōm namō!		Odipra-dēse		Vadiga-rajjuruvanda		jātaka
Om, glory to Buddha!		name of a place		name of a king		born
Yanda-giri	bisavun	vahansege		kusayang	upan	vahansa
name of a	queen	venerable		out of her womb	born	venerable
kala	lēda	sanēn,	guna	venda,	Isvara-dēviyanen	varama".
given	illness	remove	recovery	come	•	given order.

*Mantra for the Kalu-yakka:*

"Ōm namō!		Kalukanda-dēse,		Kalukara-pakuna		vedavasas
Om, glory to Buddha!		name of a place		name of a water-pool		•
tanaya	karana	Maha	Kalu-yakshaya-yakshani,		Kaludatanang-pokuna	
son	of	the great	Kalu-yakka		water-pool	
isnana	kāra	velavata	Ira-dēviyana,	todu	povunen	pavanak
		at this time	sun-god	ear-rings		shake
lutanedi,	Maha	Kalu-yakshaya-yakshani		eda	dapanēva	
quickly	great	Kalu-yakka in your		that day	offering for the yaku	
		male and female avatara				
tuna	anubhaveng,	Kalu-yaksha-yakshani		kala	leda	sanēn,
	strong	Kalu-yakka male and female		given	illness	remove
guna	venda,	Ira-dēviyanen	varami".			
recovery	come	sun-god	given order			

*Mantra for the Kalu-kumāra:*

"Ōm, agvara		viravara,	Kadira-dēviyo,	anubhava	Vatuka
			Kataragama-deviyo	mighty	
Bahirava-avatāra,	Kalu-kumāra		dēvatātā	vara - vara,	disti - disti,
earth-goddess form				come, come	along, along
vara - vara,	namah".				
come, come	glory to Buddha.				
"Ōm namō!		Puotra-rajjuvo	vanta - jātaka	Vamutumala - bisavun	
Om, glory to Buddha!			born to	queen	
vahansa	kusayang	upan	Nila-madana	sanniya-Kalu-kumāra,	vara,
venerable	out of her womb	born			come
atasēṭadhasa	kota	nayakavu,	Dāla-kumāra	vara,	tisdahasa
68,000	number	leader		come	30,000
puspa - kumāra,	vara	dolosdahasa	kota	nayakavu,	Sanni-Kōla-kumāra,
handsome prince	come	12,000	number	leader	
Vesamunu	anung	vara - vara.	Namah".		
by him	come, come.	Glory to Buddha.			

*Mantra for the Hiri-yakka:*

"Ōm namō!		Sitapraha - bisavun		vahansa	Eraminikang-nura
Om, glory to Buddha!		Sita (wife of Rama)		venerable	name of a town
meḍin	vadina	gemandei	Rudru-tila	vetuna	lē-keṭien
out of which	came	while going	name of a pool	fell into it	blood some drops
upan	Hiri-yaksha-yakshani		kala	lēda	sanēn,
born	Hiri-yakka (male and female)		given	illness	remove
					recovery
					come.



*Mantra for the Maha-sohona:*

“Om namō!		atanang	Ando-mutna	Kumbakalung-samutnang		
Om, glory to Buddha!			on this spot	grandfather	great-grandfather	
Andira	maha-rusiya,		anunayang,	Somkara-bisavun	vahansege	
	great wise man		whom the honour	queen	venerable	
kusayang	upan	asuvatasiyak	asa-ṭti	tisdahasak	pirivara	ṭti
out of her womb	born	8,800 arms long	big being	30,000	attendants	having
siddha	Maha-sohon	dēvatavun	vahansa	kala	lēda	sanēn,
		divine	venerable	given	illness	remove
guna	venda,	hinsaka	peuna	Gotembara	dēvatavun	vahansege
recovery	come	dreaded	enemy		divine	venerable
varami”.						
given order.						

*Mantra for the Sanniya-yakka:*

“Om, namō!		Visālā-maha-nuvara, asu upala, kumāri-kāvi				devu
Om, glory to Buddha!						interred
pilisu	sohōn	upan	rajjamulu	Kōla-sanniya	dēvatāvā,	kala
corpse	grave-yard	born			divine	given
lēda	sanēn,	guna	venda	lothura		Buddhunēn
illness	remove	recovery	come	living beyond the world		Buddha
varami”.						
given order.						

*Mantra for the Aimāna:*

“Om, namo!		Kashirata	dēsa guru vanta	jātaka	andiman	
Om, glory to Buddha!		Benares	place	begot	as well-known	
kusayang	upan,	Siddha-Aimāna-dēvatāvā,	kala	lēda	sanēn	guna
out of the womb	born		given	illness	remove	recovery
venda, Vesamunu-rajjuruvo vanen, varami”.						
come		destroy	given order.			

## THE BALA-GIRI AND THE BALA-GIRI-TOVILE

The *bāla-giri*<sup>1</sup> are female demons (yakkini) who strike children with illness, complying with an order which Vesamunu-rajjuruvo gave them. In contrast, the other yakku are believed not to show ill will towards children.

<sup>1</sup> Bāla = child; giri = venerable, respectable. Another name for these female demons is “bālagrahi” or “bāligri” (bāla = child; graha = to seize, to govern, to subjugate).



Fig. 40. Scene during an "iramudun-pid:nna-ceremony". Instead of the sick person, a straw puppet is laid on the bed, and one of the relatives begins to chant lamentations. In this way, they intend to deceive the yakku (flashlight picture).



Fig. 41. The *ɛdura* has lain down on the stretcher, uttering his mantra without interruption. At the same time, his assistant is busy with the offerings.





Fig. 42. The offering for the Maha-sohona being prepared during an iramudun-ceremony. The *ɛdura* holds part of a skull in which he boils the rice, mixed with some chicken's blood.



Fig. 43. The *ɛdura* talking to the insane patient and stroking him with his "igaha" during an iramudun-pidehna.



Fig. 44. The patient beginning to rave. His relatives try to calm him. On the left, the *edura* holding his "igaha".





Fig. 45. The straw dummy being put on the stretcher.



Fig. 46. The stretcher with the straw dummy. At its side, lies the *çdura*, covered with a cloth. On top are the gifts for the *yakku*.



Fig. 48. The burning of the straw dummy.



Fig. 47. The straw dummy being carried to the cemetery.



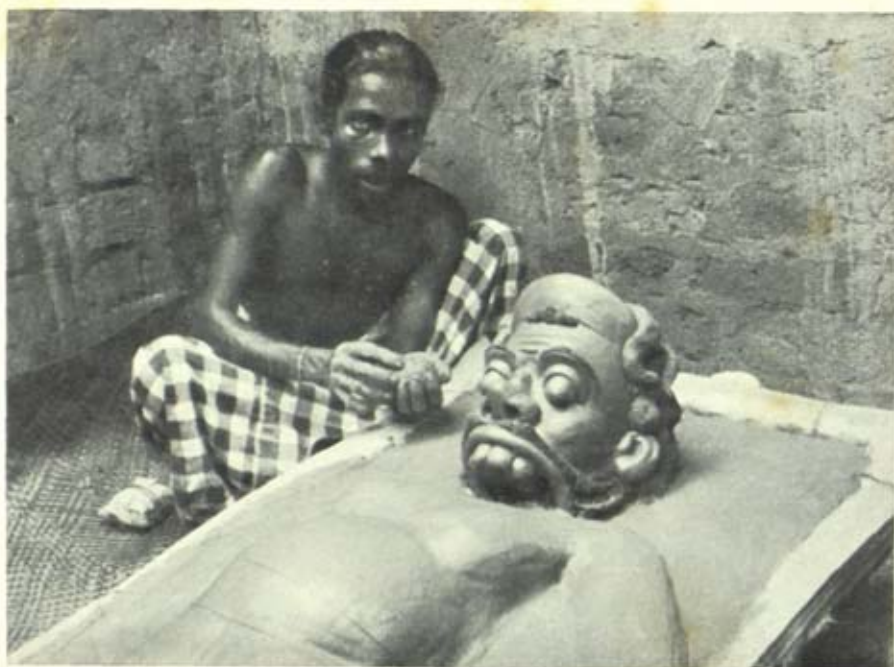


Fig. 49. An image of a yakka being made of clay for an ensuing bali-ceremony near Dodanduva.



Fig. 50. Painting a clay representation of a yakka for a bali-ceremony.

It is related that in a former epoch (*kalpa*) there were four hundred and seventy-four of those *yakkiniyo*. They came from the Uttarakuruvaina and attacked children. The little ones began to suffer from fever (*ūna*), diarrhoea (*adiram*), and vomiting (*vamana*); they were tormented with dreams, were restless, cried incessantly, grew thin, or their bodies became inflated and turned bluish.

At that time, so the legend continues, the child of king *Dhammapāla-rajjuvuo* (or, according to another version, the son of Gautama Buddha<sup>1</sup>) also fell a victim to these *yakkiniyo*, at the age of seven. The king applied to *Isvara* and asked him to intervene and restrain the *yakkiniyo*. *Isvara* acceded to the king's prayers and ordered all the four hundred and seventy-four *yakkiniyo* to be imprisoned in the *Ran-giri-dēvālaya*, the temple of the *Parasakvala*. The *yakkiniyo* raised a terrible outcry and implored *Isvara* to forgive them. *Isvara* hesitated long, but in the end he released eighteen of them on condition that they restored to health any child whom they afflicted with disease, when the child's parents presented them with a particular offering, namely: a figure of a child made from rice (*bat-baliya* = rice-figure). The *yakkiniyo* promised to obey *Isvara's* order and were granted their liberty; the rest of them, however, have remained imprisoned in the *Ran-giri-dēvālaya* right up to this very day.

These eighteen *bāla-giri-yakkiniyo* are called: *Alan-giri*, *Kāla-giri*, *Davāda-giri*, *Sōma-giri*, *Andun-giri*, *Sandun-giri*, *Pali-giri*, *Nila-giri*, *Yakānda-giri*, *Tēta-giri*, *Uda-giri*, *Sanda-giri*, *Dē-giri*, *Puspa-giri*, *Vāta-giri*, *Dēva-giri*, and *Bāla-giri*.

The first child they are said to have struck with illness, was *Rahula*, the son of *Sidharta*, the later Buddha. The child's nurse sent for an *ēdura* to help the child. He said, "It is certain *yakkiniyo* from the *Ran-giri-dēvālaya* who have caused the child's illness. We must perform a particular ceremony (*tovilē*) and make a *bat-bāliya* (rice-figure), a span in length as a gift". This rice-puppet must be offered to *yakkiniyo* instead of the child, along with rice-cakes (*kevuma* and *hakuru*), palm-sugar (*jāgri*), milk and honey (*kiri-penni*), and roasted rice (*pori*). All these must be presented on a tray, made of plaited palm-leaves, a so-called *tātuva*.

The offering is carried to the cemetery and deposited there. The whole ritual takes about two hours. The child is not bound with a *nūla*, nor are lemons cut above his head.

Corresponding to the age of the child, there is a different *yakkiniyo*, and the offerings must be prepared accordingly. There must always be a puppet of boiled rice, and for a child between one and two, also one of flour. The puppet must be of a certain size, according to the child's age; it is always supplemented by sweets, pastry, red flowers, and a little torch. For a child between seven days and one year, the puppet, made of boiled rice, must be as long as the span of a man's hand. It is put on a square plate of leaves, decorated with *gokkola*, and surrounded by red

<sup>1</sup> The mantra mentioned below refers to this version.



flowers; in addition there is some rice-cake, red sugar, and a small torch which is lighted at the performance of the ceremony. If the child is between one and two years old, the rice-puppet is a little larger and another figure of flour (piti) is added, together with flowers, rice-cake, red sugar, and a little torch. For a child between two and three, the rice-figure must be still larger, supplemented by various curries prepared from the leaves of the kēta-tree and cooked with sesame, seeds of the undu-plant (a kind of *Fleminia*), and grated coconut. These "vegetables" are called "melluma". The other parts of the offering are the usual. If the child is from four to five years of age, the rice for his puppet must be cooked in a new, unused pot. The figure must be made again a little larger, and supplied with a garland of red flowers round the neck. For a child between six and seven, two puppets are needed, one representing a man, the other a goat. The latter must be made from a special kind of fine grained rice, so-called mederi. Both figures are then put on a plate of palm-leaves, again completed by rice-cakes, flowers, and a small torch. Between eight and nine years, the offering is a rice-puppet of considerable size in which little flags of black-white-red paper are stuck. Further, there is rice-cake, various sweets, red flowers (ratu-mal), and a small torch (vilakku). The tātuva must be placed before the child and perfumed with dummala, while the following mantra is being recited: <sup>1</sup>

"Om, trailoka Bagavati namā".

Om, glory to the Illustrious of the three worlds.

"Om, havēla-havēla pata ēsvahā".

"Om ring madakari-yakshani	idambādi	grahang	muntji-muntji.
	rice-offering	illness	leave leave

Esvahā".

It is good.

"Om, namō!		Dharmapāla - bisavun		vahanse	kumāri-bisavun
Om, glory to Buddha!		Dharyapala queen		venerable	princess-queen
saddhenat	rajjuvo	malakanda	sakala	bisavun	saddhenat,
seven times	king	corpse	join together	queen	seven times
malakanda	pengasa	negitevu	anubhaven	aknyaven	adatma lamaya
corpse	sprinkle with water	bring to life again	mighty	gracious	to-day child
andanāva	dodanāva	ipilanengenava	hondu	mandu	ākara-vikāra,
crying	confused	trembling	unconscious	lifeless	bewildered
ūna-gini	jal ekpe	mukalayang	gūna	venda,	sihil venda,
fever	hot in an hour	in half an hour	recovery	come	cooling come
Dharmapāla-dēvinānsē		vahansegen	varami".		
		venerable	given order.		

<sup>1</sup> There exists a puskola (palm-leaf script) which explains in detail the ritual of this bāla-giri-tovilē. This document is called "kumāra tikisāva mahavēda pāla".

"Om namō!	Sri	Patinam-dēvatāvā,	duek-ṇta	eh	dēvatāvā
Om, glory to Buddha!		Patini-dēvi	daughter	of this	deity

duta	lain	tundenek	ęta	metana	me lamayata	ęti	lęda
daughter	children	for three	had	here	this child	having	illness
atana eh	lain	tundenata	deheti	palean".			
here children		for three	ready	leave.			

“Namō Buddha,	bandha	dharma	bandha	sanga	yang	kint-
	bind	doctrine	bind	congregation		
jivitang	palean	tosvaha <sup>3</sup> ”.				
	go away	be off!				

and then the following prayer (yadinna):

"Sasiri bara	Sri-lankani	pavara	Muni	kala	teding	eh Rahula
In former times	Ceylon	great	Buddha	mighty	been	son of Gautama

kumāruvan	ipida	mau	landa	kusing,	mehē	vadah	sad
prince	born	mother	woman	womb	adopted	brought up	seven
masa	pusvah	yana	kāla	māsa	andava	tadalēsa	uda-balung
months	thereupon	spent		months	crying	aloud	upwards
balavanin	vāta-balung	balavamin	nil-pahaya	karavamin	lē-pahaya		
look	around	to look	blue-colour	getting	blood-colour		
karavamin,	kiri	vamana,	adirāna	karavamin	manurusa	vamin	
getting	milk	vomit	diarrhoea	getting	know one's	mother no more	
meranga	dutu	kiri-ama	mēse	selakāra	sondata	Ran-giri-kovil	
this	seeing	nurse	this	recounting	beautiful	Ran-giri's temple	

Araghat-yakki-niyata	puḍu-pandura	dena	rangāta	bateng-bali	bilidena		
name of a yakkini	coin-offering	promise	to give	rice-puppet	instead of		
kēvuma	rasa	sakurēna	kīri	vendaru	ghitelina	noek	palavēla
rice-cake	try	red sugar	milk	butter	melted butter	many	fruits
gene	puja	tātuva	vene-vene	gokkpatin		pahan	
present	offering	offering-receptacle	one by one	decorated with gokkola		oil-lamp	
pandan	rangēna	ganda-suvānda	dummalina	dapapuda	disondima		
torch	in his hand	incense	powdered resin	to lie down	to arrange		
gosīna,	eten	sīta,	pevetma	ena:			
put on top	here	wait	remain				

Bāla-giri, Alan-giri, Kāla-giri, Davāda-giri, Sōma-giri, Andun-giri, Sandun-giri  
Bali-giri, Nila-giri, Yakānda-giri, Tēta-giri, Uda-giri, Ira-giri, Sanda-giri,  
Dēva-giri, Dē-giri, Puspa-giri, Vāta-giri.

Kinoki	yakinyang	mē-puja	lēba-gana	sondīn	isa		
all the other	specified yakku	this offering	let them take it	glad	head		
sīta	depat	telēna	dēsa	hēra	giya	tēdin	epāsva,
this	down to	foot	ma <sup>1</sup> adies	take away	went	quickly	from this day on



mepāsva	daskal	rakīta	dinēn	setkaretva	avāda;
from that day on	many thousands	live forth	day for day	healthy	long life
ayu bovēva".					
so may it be.					

According to another interpretation, however, the number of the Bāla-giri-yakkiniyo is not more than eight. They are: the Mademāda-giri, the Rēvati-giri, the Artamariya-giri, the Atbhūta-giri, the Nila-kutakāla-giri, the Dala-giri, the Ratikāma-dala-giri, and the Madana-kama-giri. They are likewise under the control of Vesamunu-rajjuvo from whom they have received the order to afflict children with illness. Like the other yakku they live in the Uttarakurudivaina. They cause bad dreams, torment children in their sleep so that they become restless and cry constantly. They produce fever and trembling of the limbs, rolling of the eyes, and confused speech. Here again we are confronted more by some general indisposition or indistinct disorders, more psychical than physical, than by exactly defined illnesses.

Following this second conception, the power of the giri-yakkiniyo begins with the third month of the child's life. From then on, the child is each month subjected to the influence of a different yakkini. After the twelfth month, this influence changes only from year to year, decreasing with advancing age, and finally disappearing at the eighteenth year.

A certain Indian pandit, called Varayogasari, taught people how to exorcize the yakkiniyo, and put his doctrine down in writing. In reality, however, he only gives us an offering-ceremony which is to be performed during the day within the limits of the customary ritual. The preparation of the offering is different according to whether the child is three, six, nine, eleven, or more months old, i.e. according to the yakkini who is exerting her influence over the child at the time in question. In addition, the following mantra must be spoken:

"Om namō! Narayanaya tailoka vīdiya vonai e jula-jula".

"Om ring! patsvata tailoka . . . (name of the yakkini)".

We shall now examine one after the other the scopes and activities of the different yakkiniyo and the composition of the offering required in each case.

With a child of three months of age the Mademāda-giri-yakkini is concerned. Her destructive influence causes fever in the child with its accompanying symptoms, and shortness of breath and frequently also abdominal or stomach pains. The following offering must be prepared: unhusked rice (kakul-hal), three kinds of flowers, and three torches which must be placed near by. The offering is placed at the side of the child's bed, and the above-mentioned mantra must be uttered one hundred and eight times. The offering is allowed to stand there for one day and one night, then it is brought to a big tree and placed at the north side of its trunk. Thereafter, the child must be perfumed with an incense prepared from the following ingredients: mustard seed (abā), a piece of a tranium (mini olukudu), hair

(isakeyiyā), flowers which were brought to the temple and laid there, another kind of seed (kumuru ṇa mada), hair of an ape (vanduru lom), and leaves of the kohomba-tree (*Azadirachta indica*). While doing this, the following mantra is uttered a thousand times:

“Om ring pad ēsvahā”.

A three year old child is also subject to the same yakkini, and the same directions must be observed.

Between the sixth and the ninth months of his life, and between his sixth and his ninth years, a child is under the influence of the Rēvati-giri-yakkini, and if he falls ill within these periods, it is generally ascribed to this yakkini.

In such a case, a puppet about a foot long is made of rice boiled with coconut-milk (kiri bat) and the mantra mentioned above is uttered. He is then perfumed with the same incense. A child of between nine and eleven months or years of age is afflicted by the Artamariya-giri-yakkini, who must be presented with an offering. Children who are persecuted by her, suffer from sleeplessness, stare, have fits of terror, and speak confusedly. For a nine months old child, a clay puppet is made, for one of ten or eleven months, a figure of “kiribat”. The offering must consist of five kinds of seeds (sesame, lentils, peas, a certain kind of bean, and unhusked rice) and of flowers. The seeds are mixed, roasted, and put on a tātuva. The above-mentioned mantra must be spoken one hundred and eight times. The offering is then carried to a termite hill where a cobra is assumed to live. After some time it is brought home and the child is again perfumed with the same powder.

A child twelve months or twelve years of age is under the influence of Atbhūta-giri-yakkini who makes the children of these ages suffer from fever, headaches, loss of appetite, hoarseness, gnashing of the teeth, and anaemia. The offering consists of boiled white rice, which is shaped into a puppet, as well as of flowers, surrounded by twelve little oil-lamps (pandama-dahatamai = twelve wicks). The same mantra is spoken one hundred and eight times, and the offering is carried off to flowing water. The child is then perfumed.

A child aged thirteen months or thirteen years is under the influence of Nilakutakāla-giri-yakkini and is subjected to similar ailments as one twelve months or years old. The offering is a puppet of rice boiled with coconut-milk and yellow-root, supplemented by the five kinds of seeds with which it must be cooked. The mantra is uttered one hundred and eight times and the offering carried to a cross-roads.

A child of fourteen months or fourteen years of age is smitten by the Dala-giri-yakkini. The gift for her must be composed of red boiled rice and five kinds of seeds, and is carried to a crossing of four roads. The child is then perfumed.

A child of fifteen months or as many years of age is under the sway of Ratikāmadala-giri-yakkini, who must be presented with a puppet made of boiled rice which has been dyed blue. Small fish and flowers complete the offering. After the



reciting of the mantra, the offering is carried to the crossing of four roads, and the child is then perfumed.

A child of sixteen months or years of age has to deal with Madana-kama-giri-yakkini. As an offering, black rice is cooked and shaped into a figure. Five kinds of seeds and five little oil-lamps are added. The offering is deposited at the crossing of four roads and the child is perfumed.

A child of seventeen months or years of age is susceptible to the power of all the Bāla-giri-yakkiniyo. They must be placated by an offering of rice of five different colours, seven kinds of vegetables, little fish and flowers. After repeating the mantra, it is carried to a lake of a river, and the child is subsequently perfumed.

With the eighteenth year of age, the influence of the giri-yakkiniyo is completely at an end. But, all the more, the young person is hence exposed to the pernicious influences of the illness-spreading and epidemic-bearing yakku, to planetary interference, to the evil eye, evil talk, and last but not least to the evil spell (kodivina), any one of which can only be counteracted by the performance of an appropriate ceremony.

### THE GRAHANIYA-YAKKINI

While the Bāla-giri torment and disquiet children, the Grahaniya-yakkini strikes them with real illnesses which, on account of their originator, are called *grahaniya-lēda*.

The following legend tells of the creation of this yakkini:

Vesamunu-rajjuvo's nephew, the Pūrvaka-yakka, had married the daughter of Naga-rajjuvo, king of the snake-country (Nagaloka). They had a daughter, called Randati, who distinguished herself by her peculiar behaviour right from her early childhood. When the girl was seven years old, she left her parents' home and went off to the bush where she roamed about aimlessly for years. One day, she met the god Isvara who took care of the homeless girl and adopted her. She lived with him several years as his servant; but one day, Randati expressed the wish to go to the Nagaloka, the world of mankind. Isvara had no objection. The girl, however, went instead to the Uttarakurudivaina to see Vesamunu-rajjuvo requesting that an order (varama) be given her. Vesamunu-rajjuvo granted the request, and so Randati became a yakkini, Grahaniya-yakkini, pursuing from that time on the lives of young children. She then joined the eighteen Bāla-giri and wandered together with them through the Himalayas. There, they met the Dala-kumāra playing with pebbles (datu) with Senaseru (Saturn). These two demons addressed the women and asked them what they intended to do. They said they had come to the Himalayas to have a look at the country. But Dala-kumāra told Grahaniya-yakkini she had better go to the palace of the queen Manipāla-dēvinānsē and make her son ill. Grahaniya-yakkini followed the advice and struck Manipāla-dēvinānsē's son with disease. The child's mother cried and lamented. Vishnu, her brother,

heard her weeping and, assuming the shape of a woman, went to console her. He said he would restore the child to health. But Manipāla-dēvinānsē had lost all hope. So, Vishnu resumed his real form, took his sister and her son and went with them to the Isvara-bhavana, the heaven of the god Isvara.

When they arrived there, Isvara bade his consort Umayangana try to heal the child. "How can I do it?" replied Umayangana, "since I do not know his illness." But Vishnu told her, "The yakkini who has made the child sick is the adopted daughter of Isvara and was his servant for many years. Now let him try to manage her." "What ails the child?", asked Umayangana further. "He is suffering from fever, headaches, pains in the limbs, dysentery, and his belly is swollen," answered Manipāla-dēvinānsē. Isvara then sent for a vessel of pure water and sprinkled the child, whereupon he recovered. But then he called the Grahaniya-yakkini to him and reproached her. He could not, however, deprive her of the power which Vesamunu-rajjuvo had bestowed upon her. She was and remained a yakkini. But Isvara imposed one condition. "Whenever you have afflicted a child with illness," he told Grahaniya-yakkini, "you must restore him to health again, when his parents offer you a gift. Then you must go away as quickly as possible"; and the yakkini had to give her consent, whether she liked it or not.

### THE MADANA-YAKKA AND THE KŪTANA-SAMAYĀMA

The Madana-yakka (madana = love, passion) also occupies a special position. It is he who raises desire in men, tormenting them with erotic dreams, and he is to blame when young people go astray and commit immoral deeds or sexual crimes. In the same way the venereal diseases are also traced back to him, although not directly.

The following legend is told about this yakka's origin:

Once upon a time, there lived a hermit, a very pious man who spent his life in meditation and the reading of the scriptures. He dwelt under a huge banyan-tree, somewhere in the Himalaya mountains. At the same time, there was a king who had a daughter that led a very licentious life. The girl's parents tried everything in their power to guide her in the right way, but in vain. One day she ran off into the woods never to return. In the wood, she came upon the hermit and resolved to seduce him, but the religious man took no notice of her presence. However, she did not desist and stripped herself naked in order to raise his passion. At length, she attained what she had been striving for. The hermit, having lived all those years in the same spot, had almost become petrified in the course of the long years and the aerial roots of the tree had grown around his body and held him tight. But now, with the passion that overcame him, they burst all of a sudden and released his body. The girl remained with the hermit from that day on and they lived together as man and wife.



Soon after she became pregnant and gave birth to a boy. When the boy grew up, they returned together to the city. Nobody knew them and they were hired to serve in the royal palace. The boy, however, became a yakka who strove to trouble young men with desire and erotic dreams so that they perpetrated unchaste actions and seduced women and girls. He was from then on called *Madana-yakka*. Later on, seven yakkiniyo joined him and helped him henceforth to torment mankind and execute his orders. They were the Madana-yakkiniyo, and their names are: Kāli, Mahāni, Rati-madāni, Mal-madāni, Matikāmi, Ratakāmi, and Mahakāli.

There exists a ceremony the aim of which is to appease this Madana-yakka by an offering, but it is, for obvious reasons, very seldom performed. People are ashamed to discuss sexual topics and feel even more embarrassed to make them public, which, indeed, can hardly be avoided when a ceremony is performed. This ritual is called the:

#### KŪTAKA-SAMAYĀMA-CEREMONY

(kūtaka = hot) and, in short, amounts to the following:

The ceremony is known over a great part of Ceylon, with the exception of the Tamils who are said not to be acquainted with it. It is conducted by an *ḍura* and requires the presence of three or four drummers. It is always performed at night and begins after dusk. A small booth is built of banana-stems and young palm-leaves, similar to that of the sanniya-yakuma. Offerings must also be arranged for the following yakku: the Maha-sohona, the Kalu-yakka, the Sanniya-yakka, the Hiri-yakka, and of course, for the Madana-yakka.

The ceremony is opened by the so-called "henda-samayāma" during which three persons execute a dance to the accompaniment of music of the drums (p. 51). Then, the offerings for the Maha-sohona and the Kōla-sanniya (Sanniya-yakka) are brought along. Maha-sohona appears, represented by three dancers. Next, the offering for the seven Madana-yakkiniyo, the female accomplices of the Madana-yakka, is prepared. It is brought at midnight, and the *ḍura* summons the seven yakkiniyo to receive their gift. They appear as dancers dressed as women and perform acrobatic tricks and pantomimes (*peḷa paliya*). After them, enter several sanniya-yakku, one by one, just as in the sanniya-yakuma-ceremony. The Kukurū-sanniya comes to cut up the cock, then the Kapala-sanniya, the Vedda-sanniya with his bow, the Demalā-sanniya, and then the other ones. Only the Kōla-sanniya does not present himself as he has already received his offering.

After dawn, the seven Madana-yakkiniyo return once more and dance till about noon. Meanwhile, a hole is dug near the river or the shore of a lake, deep enough to draw water from. All the yakkiniyo-actors then go to the pit with new unused pots, and fill them. When they return, each of them pours the contents of his pot over the head of the patient. Thereupon, they go back to the water hole, along with the patient, and they all pour water over themselves and take a bath. Returned

home, they perform a pirit-ceremony, led by the *ḍura* who recites from the "piru-hana-vahansē". This done, the *ḍura* ties a yantra of copper (or gold) foil about the patient's body, and the ceremony is ended.

### THE MOHANIYA-YAKKINI AND THE ANANGAYA-YAKKA

Among the associates of the Madana-yakka are also the *Mohaniya-yakkini* and the *Anangaya-yakka*. The following legend refers to them:

Vesamunu-rajjuruvu's daughter lived with her child (a boy) on a mountain, the Ajaakuta-parvataya. One day, while the child was playing in front of the door, the Mohaniya-yakkini passed by in the air and took the boy with her, intending to marry him later when a youth. The mother sought everywhere for her child, but in vain. After a while, she heard him crying, followed the sound, and arrived at a fissure in the rock where the boy had been hid. She burst the rock open and found her child with the Mohaniya-yakkini. The mother grasped her boy and flung a curse at the yakkini that she should never get a husband and remain unmarried during her whole life time. Since that day, the Mohaniya-yakkini has ceaselessly hunted for a man and endeavours to raise desire in young people. Therefore, they apply to this yakkini when preparing a love-charm, and ask for her help. A special offering must be presented to her, placed in a square *tātuva*. It is composed of nine kinds of white flowers, various fruits, oatmeal, palm-sugar, arrack, palm-wine, rice-cake, etc.

Mohaniya-yakkini had directed her charms especially on an *asuraya*, called Anangaya, and left no means untried to gain his love; she could not marry him, however, on account of the curse which the mother of the kidnapped boy had put on her. Nevertheless, these two are always seen together and jointly torment people — the Mohaniya-yakkini, men and youths, Anangaya, who subsequently also became a yakka, women and girls.

### THE BALI-CEREMONIES

*Baliya* (plural: bali) means something like figure, picture, and hence are derived the names of the ceremonies which are to be described shortly.

Images are modelled in moist clay, sand, or boiled rice, or are made from flowers, young coconut leaves, parts of banana-stems, etc., and are intended to represent the yakku, certain deities, and other spiritual beings, or they have merely some decorative or symbolical character. In the ceremonies, they play a similar role as that of the masked yakku-actors in the sanniya-yakuma-ceremony. A spell is cast on them and they are presented with offerings so that they acquire the significance of mediums in which the deities or the yakku are believed to manifest themselves. Frequently, also the deities are pictured in the shape of dreadful raksho in order to





Fig. 10. Shiva raksha avatāra (Shiva in the form of a raksha).

inspire terror in the yakku. Similar images are also hung up in homes to keep the yakku and prēto away. Among the most frequently seen representations of that kind are the so-called "Shiva avatāra", i.e. Shiva in the form of a raksha, and the "Vesamunu-rajjuvo avatāra", figures of Vesamunū-rajjuvo with his abdomen

and his bowels protruding visibly<sup>1</sup>. Symbolized in such a terrifying and formidable way, the deities protect people from the yakku and prēteo<sup>2</sup>.

The bali-ceremonies are quite different from any of the other ones. They have nothing in common with either the sanniya-yakuma or the sūniyama, but it may happen that they are celebrated in combination with one or the other or even with both of them.

It is, indeed, difficult to arrange the numerous rites of which they are composed in a uniform scheme as the bali-ceremonies are not only directed against the interference of the yakku, but also against the raksho, prēteo, and other mischievous beings. Moreover, the unfavourable influence of the planets and of the zodiacal signs is always within their scope. The main point, however, is not a number of rites which follow one another, as in the other ceremonies, but the recitation of appropriate mantra which is continued for hours on end. No "ēpa-nūla" is tied to the patient when a bali-ceremony is performed; however, a yantra is wound round the patient's neck or arm in certain rituals of this kind, to shield him in the future from the harmful influences of the planets.

#### ORIGIN OF THE BALI-CEREMONIES

Like the other ceremonies, the bali are also connected with a number of legends which can be traced back to Northern India.

One of the traditions tells of a king, named Maha-sammata-rajjuvo, who dreamed one night that a viper (polanga) fell on to his body from above. He awoke and pondered over the curious vision. As a result, he began to suffer from severe headaches, his limbs swelled, and finally, he became insane. That was the first case of illness which had ever befallen a man. Formerly, diseases and maladies had been utterly unknown. The king consulted all his learned men and brahmins; they assembled and each gave his opinion. They tried all kinds of remedies, but the king's health did not improve. At last, one brahman appeared at court and recommended that a bali-ceremony be carried out, because the disease, he maintained, had been caused by Mārea. The king followed the advice of the wise man and was cured.

#### THE IMAGES

Images are mostly made of clay, modelled in semi-relief on a backing of palm-leaf-ribs or parts of banana-stems, so that they must always be prepared immediately before the performance of the ceremony. Their size varies between a few decimetres and several metres; occasionally enormous images are made, up to six metres in length, which must of course be handled with special care. Naturally, such colossal images have to be made on the spot, because subsequent transportation would

<sup>1</sup> The most popular effigies of yakku are those of Kalu-kumāra in his various manifestations.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. Grünwedel, *Mythologie des Buddhismus*, p. 100.



be rendered impossible by their excessive weight. Particular attention is paid to bringing out the detail of the head and face, and perhaps the body, while the lower part of the figure and the arms and legs are only indicated by painting (Pl. XXX, fig. 49). A great variety of colours is used, the paint being applied directly on the moist clay, and multi-coloured figures are on the whole preferred. In the main, the representation depends upon the imagination of the artist.

When the painting is finished, the image is put upright against a wall or a tree, usually next to the house, opposite the veranda where the ritual is going to be carried out. If sufficient room is available, a special roof of leaves is erected to protect the models, because they must, of course, be shielded from rain. According to the kind of ceremony to be performed and the circumstances, one or more images must be made: figures of the respective yakku and, in addition, of the deities mentioned along with them in the legends. For here, as always, the legendary traditions form the basis for everything else.

Other images of a smaller size are, in contrast, fully modelled. They are made a few days in advance, and are dried in the sun so that they become absolutely hard. The dancers hold them in their hands, throw them into the air and catch them again, and this game is often continued for hours. Little figures made of boiled rice, are usually employed only at ceremonies on behalf of young children (p. 97). Finally, we ought still to mention the purely ornamental figures, made out of various flowers and cut-out palm-leaves; they are required for the santi-ceremony which will be described at length in the following chapter.

According to the statement of one of my informants, eleven different bali-ceremonies are distinguished:

- I. The *vel-bali*, i.e. the images made of sand (*veli*), and decorated with flowers.
- II. The *mal-bali*, images made of flowers (*mal*), cut-out palm-leaves, and pieces of banana-stem.
- III. The *kada-bali*, images of clay, modelled in semi-relief, which may reach a height of up to six metres.
- IV. The *at-bali*, fully modelled images of a smaller size, made of clay. They are kept in the hands during the dance (hence *at-bali* = hand images), thrown into the air, and caught again.
- V. The *meti-bali*, similar images of clay (*meti*), fully modelled, but of larger proportions so that they are not carried about.
- VI. The *kulu-bali*, effigies made of boiled rice, intended for ceremonies on behalf of young children. The figure is formed on a round rice-fan (*kulu*) and left on it.
- VII. The *bat-bali*, similar figures, made of boiled rice (*bat*), but smaller in size.
- VIII. The *graha-bali*, figures of clay, decorated with coloured paper intended for the nine planets (*graha nava*).

- IX. The *yuga-bali*, pictures made in clay, up to eighteen forearms' lengths in size. Many persons are portrayed on it.
- X. The *vas- or viskam-bali*, a clay figure of a female deity, "Viskam Karuma dēviputra". It is made for the performance of a ceremony against the evil eye (*ṣ-vaha*) and evil talk (*kathā-vaha*).
- XI. The *var sēta himi-bali*, likewise images of clay. They are used at ceremonies of a purely preventive character, intended to counteract all pernicious influences of the coming year.

The enumeration refers, as I have said, only to the general character of the various images, but not to their exact number; for my informant asserted that there are alone 7,700 different images for the diseases caused by the planets, and further 9,900 different images for the ceremonies which concern the ailments caused by the yakku, prēteo, and dēviyo. These figures are, of course, grossly exaggerated. They are derived from a certain script which deals with and explains the ritual of the bali-ceremonies fully.

Actually, innumerable factors have to be considered at the performance of a bali-ceremony. For each of the yakku and deities concerned, the images have to be made and modelled individually, according to the circumstances. The offerings have to be made up in a special manner, the mantra have to be uttered differently, and the ritual has to be conducted in another form. The number of the yakku and dēviyo, however, is exceedingly great. It can thus be understood that long years of intense study are necessary to become more or less adequately acquainted with this subject.

Another classification is based on the length of time required for the celebration. Six different bali-ceremonies are thus distinguished:

- I. The *tispe-bali-ceremony*. This is the most frequently celebrated one; its performance is completed within one night.
- II. The *tispe katamāra-bali-ceremony* takes one night and the half day following.
- III. The *tispe tunai-bali-ceremony* lasts one night and the whole of the following day.
- IV. The *batvida-bali-ceremony* lasts a night, a day, a second night, and a further half a day.
- V. The *tispe pahai-bali-ceremony* lasts five times twelve hours.
- VI. The *bat davasa-ceremony* extends over seven times twelve hours.

The performance and conduct of the bali-ceremony is usually the responsibility of the bandhanaya, the medicine-man of the *oli-* (potters') caste. In celebrating a ritual, he wears a white cloth and a white sash. Corresponding to the caste he belongs to, the task of modelling the effigies, as far as these are made of clay, also falls to him.

There are also many *ḍurḍ* who know how to perform the bali-ceremony, and



who use this knowledge whenever such a ritual is combined with a *sanniya-yakuma*. But an *edura* will never take a hand in the manufacture of the clay-images, as that is the absolute privilege of the members of the *oli*-caste.

Another personality is the *ganitaya* or *santi-kariya*, a man who likewise belongs to the *oli*- or to the *beravaya*- (drummers') caste. He is entrusted particularly with the performance of the *santi*-ceremony, which is connected with the planets, and must, therefore, have a rich fund of astrological knowledge at his disposal. We shall come back to this ceremony in a later chapter.

The method which the *edura* uses in the ceremonies conducted by him, has, however, little in common with that of the *bandhanaya* or the *santi-kariya*. None of them is experienced in the other's procedure or mode of action, and they will never trespass on the other's territory or meddle with his affairs.

For the rest, we come across here the same conditions which have been explained in the other ceremonies, namely: the ceremony is so much the more effective, the more completely and conscientiously the ritual is carried out. This, in turn, depends on the number of people taking part and the length of the performance. It all depends, however, on the money to be expended on it. The wealthy can afford greater and dearer ceremonies, while the poor must usually be content with a ceremony which only lasts one night.

#### COURSE OF THE BALI-CEREMONIES

I want now to give an account of a bali-ceremony for which four big clay-images were prepared.

The first of them represented *Umayangana*, a female demon, a combination of the figure of a woman with that of a snake. *Umayangana* is recognized as the mother of the *Gana-dēviyo*, the *Ganesha* of the Indians (fig. 50).

The second figure was intended to be *Shiva-avatuka*, i.e. *Shiva* in a distinct manifestation as a *yakka*. His body was green in colour, and in his hands he held his various attributes: his sword, trident, discus, bush-knife, club, hook, etc. His neck was decorated with a wreath of flowers, round his loins he wore a red cloth, and a small stag, the result of his hunting, protruded from between his teeth. A dog between his legs represented the animal he rides (Pl. XXXI, fig. 51).

The third effigy showed *Vishnu*, recognizable by his blue body and a *gurulā* (*garuda*) which he rides.

Finally, the fourth image portrayed *Brahma*, as could be seen by his four faces, his four arms, and the goose he rides on. In one of his hands he held a rosary (*lakveliya*), in another one a fan.

As a fifth symbol, finally, an "*asugāba-mal-baliya*", a flower-bali, had been prepared; it consisted of eighty-one squares, each containing a red hibiscus flower, and the whole was surrounded by cut-out palm-leaves (Pl. XXXV, fig. 60). Such an "*asugāba-mal-baliya*" is made whenever the evil-influences of the planets or

the zodiacal signs must be warded off. We shall come back to it in more detail later on.

The patient, a young woman who had already had several miscarriages and had remained childless, had been advised to undergo a bali-ceremony, because, as the *sāstra-kariya* had asserted, she was under the injurious influence of the *Umayangana-dēvi* and certain planets.

She was seated on the veranda of the house, directly opposite the five models. In the centre, stood the *mal-baliya* against the wall of a booth of leaves, and on each side two of the above-mentioned clay images. At the patient's feet were placed, as is the custom at every great ceremony, a rice-pounder, a *telambu-leaf*, a ripe coconut, an *areca-flower*, and the sacrificial cock with its feet tied. The last must not be omitted at a bali-ceremony either. The ceremony was opened by the uttering of *mantra* and the summoning of the *dēvatāvo* who were represented in the images. Their assistance was needed in order to exorcize *Umayangana* who is their inferior, and who, by the presentation of offerings, was to be entreated to cease tormenting the patient. Thereupon followed a dance by the conductor of the ceremony along with his two assistants. For the performance of the ritual and the dances, they wore white loin-cloths and red sashes; each of them held a little bell in his left hand, and round their ankles they had hollow bronze-rings which tinkled with every step as they walked and danced. At first, the conductor of the ceremony danced alone in the middle of the space, between the veranda where the patient was sitting and the images; during the first stages of the performance, however, two boys held a cloth stretched before the patient so that she could not see either the pictures or the dancers. After this dance came again recitations, and when these had been finished, the *bandhanaya* flung some *dummala*, i.e. fire, against the cloth which was then removed. Now, two other dancers appeared, but this time in another dress. They again wore white garments with red sashes, but, in addition, had head-gear decorated with beads. The dance consisted of the same twistings and turnings of the body, whirling motions, somersaults, and other acrobatic tricks, as are always performed by the *ḍūro* at the *sanniya-yakuma*. The longer these "dances" were continued, the more vivacious and grotesque they became. They danced now alone, now all together. Before the dancers showed their skill, they first ran round in circles a few times, then began to spin around quicker and quicker, and finally began to spin like a top. Then again they turned head over heads, somersaults were performed, and other exploits, in which each dancer tried to surpass all the others. The dancers never let those occasions pass without begging money for their performances from the spectators.

After the termination of the dance, a white thread was tied to the *asugāba-saliya*, and led over the beam of the protecting roof to the patient. She was told to hold the end of the thread, to which a small lemon, a panicle of *areca-flowers*, and a red *hibiscus-blossom* had been attached.

Then followed another dance by the three *bandhanayo*, with the same acrobatic



tricks, leaps, and turns of the body, as before. In the meantime, one of them entered into a long discourse with one of the drummers about the patient and her ailment.

A long pause then ensued. The dancers took off their costumes, and there followed the recitation of a legend and subsequently conjurations until day-break. Now, a woven plate filled with rice and flowers was placed before the representation of the Umayangana, with little torches inserted round the edge, about eight in number. The uttering of mantra to exorcize the Umayangana-dēvi was then begun again, while the patient remained motionless the whole time with the lemon in her hand in front of the image. After a while, a red cloth was handed to her with which she first covered her head and which she then returned to the Bandhanaya who hung it over the picture of Umayangana. Immediately afterwards, the whole image was sprinkled with a little yellow-root water and "fire" was thrown at it. It was then immediately carried off to the near-by pond and submerged. In the same way, the small offering-stand with the gift was given up to the water. Last of all, the "asugāba-baliya" was exorcized and presented with an offering. At the end of the ceremony, it was taken away to the bush, along with the other images.

On another occasion, I was also offered the opportunity of being present at a bali-ceremony. This one was likewise performed on behalf of a childless woman. A huge clay likeness of the Kalu-kumāra had been made for the event. Between his teeth, he held a little child whom he was about to devour, and with each of his arms he embraced a woman or a girl<sup>1</sup>. An ape, on which he rides, was squatting at his feet (Pl. XXXII, fig. 53). A combination of a sanniya-yakuma, a sūniyama, and a bali-ceremony was going to be celebrated. The first one took its usual course, but towards midnight, at the hour when Kalu-kumāra was expected to appear, one of the *ḍuro* began to perform the ritual involving the baliya. The image stood on the veranda leaning against the wall, and in front of it sat the patient, with the rice-pounder, the telambu-leaf, and the coconut at her feet. Two boys held the white cloth spread so that she was unable to see anything, while the *ḍura* began to summon the yakka, pointing out to him the offerings which had been arranged for him directly in front of the image (*disti karnova*). It was the usual Kalu-kumāra-pidenna, placed in the *tātuva* which had the shape of a crown and was ornamented with *gokkola*; in addition, there was a little pot of yellow-root water with a young coconut-flower as a sprinkler. Small torches were inserted in the frame of the picture and lit, mantra were uttered, and the offering was perfumed with *dummala*. After a while, the white cloth was removed, and a white thread, stretched as described above. A long recitation ensued giving an account of the picture and commenting on it. This is the general way of carrying out all the ceremonies.

<sup>1</sup> The representation of this and the other yakku varies according to circumstances and to the manifestation (*avatāra*) which is thought to correspond to the case in hand. If *Vāta-kumāra* who kills children in their mothers' wombs, is concerned, he is pictured with a child on his stomach. As can readily be imagined, the artist has ample opportunity of indulging his own phantasy.



Fig. 51.

Fig. 51. A clay image of the Umayangana-dévi being painted.



Fig. 52.

Fig. 52. Ritual of a bali-ceremony. The clay figure set up against the coconut-tree represents the Kalu-kumāra. In the foreground the patient is seated, holding the thread which is attached to the figure. By the side of the idol stands the çdura who is conducting the ceremony.





Fig. 53.

Fig. 53. Clay figure for a *bali*-ceremony. It shows the *Kalu-kumāra*, the "Black Prince", who pursues girls and young women, and devours unborn children. He holds a child in his mouth and a woman clasped in both his arms. The animal which he rides, an ape, is squatting at his feet. At the side is standing the *ēdura* with a torch in his hand.



Fig. 54.

Fig. 54. The *ēdura* dancing round the *kūduva* during an *iramudun-pidenna*-ceremony.



Fig. 55. Powdered resin is thrown over the image and ignited with the burning torch (flashlight picture).





Fig. 56. A stone, the shape and size of a coconut, used in the pol-gahanavā. Length 13 cm. (Museum, Kandy).



Fig. 57. Hook used in the an-keliya, symmetrically cut from a deer's horn. Length 22 cm. (Museum, Kandy).



Fig. 58. Wooden sticks and hook used in the an-keliya. Lengths 33, 55, and 53 cm. (Museum, Kandy).

Every action of the *ḍura* was fully explained (*upata*) in the form of recitations, and further elucidated by the narration of the appropriate legends. The *ḍura* gave a vivid description of the *yakka* concerned, his appearance, character, origin, etc. During all this, he had a torch in his hand with which he again and again pointed to the picture; now and then, he also bowed to the patient and invited the spectators to wish her good luck and a long life (Pl. XXXI, fig. 52). This recitation was accompanied by the uninterrupted beating of drums.

Then followed another scene. *Kalu-kumāra* now made his appearance, as a "devil dancer", with a double-torch in his mouth. This "*dēpata-vilakku-dance*" is always the dramatic climax of the ceremony. It is always felt to be the high spot, so to speak of the whole programme, and is invariably performed about midnight. After this dance, the patient went with the *kalu-kumāra-tātuva* on her head to the *kumāra-mēsa* which she had to go round three times, just as in the *sanniya-yakuma*. Then, she was sprinkled with yellow-root water, and the *tātuva* was placed on the *mēsa*. The other *yakku* now appeared, the *sanniya-yakku*, and last of all, the *Kōla-sanniya*; after a longish pause, the ritual with the *baliya* was then continued.

It was now eight or nine o'clock in the morning; the patient resumed her seat in front of the image, took the lemon and the areca-blossom in her hand again, along with the end of the thread attached to them. Again, the *ḍura* recited and uttered mantra, threw *dummala* at the picture as if wanting to burn it (Pl. XXXIII, fig. 55), plucked a few small feathers from the sacrificial cock, stuck them on the *yakka*'s mouth and singed them off with his torch. He repeated this operation with the women on both sides of the *yakka* and with the ape between his legs. At length, the patient was told to throw the lemon at the picture so that it remained sticking to it. After the recitation of another mantra, she had to pay a money-offering (*pandura*) of five cents which was wrapped in a small piece of cloth and also thrown at the image.

Then for the last time, the *ḍura* threw a great quantity of *dummala* at the picture, and the ritual with the *baliya* was thus finished. Finally, the picture was carried off into the bush behind the house.

After that ritual, the *sūniyama*-ceremony was performed, but considerably abbreviated on account of the late hour. The ceremony came to its end at noon or in the early afternoon.

## THE INFLUENCES OF THE PLANETS AND THE RELATED CEREMONIES

According to the ancient Indian doctrines, the various parts of the body and its organs are subject to the influence of the nine planets, which are thought of as the personifications of divinities. Each of them rides his own particular animal. Of the very many portrayals of the planets and deities, one of each is shown in fig. 11.





Sun



Moon



Jupiter



Venus



Mars



Saturn



Mercury



Dragon's Tail



Dragon's Head

Fig. 11. Representation of the nine planets, pictured as deities with the animals on which they ride.

The consequences of the unfavorable planetary influences are physical and psychical disturbances of all kinds, and fighting and removing them forms a special branch of occult therapy. Besides the five planets of our solar system visible to the naked eye, there are also the Sun, the Moon, the Dragon's Head, and the Dragon's Tail:

- Sun (ira (iru) or rāvi, also suriya)
- Moon (handa, or sōma, also chandra)
- Jupiter (brahaspati (brihaspati), or guru)
- Venus (sikura or shukra)
- Mars (angaharu or mangala, also kuja)
- Mercury (budohu or buda)
- Saturn (senaseru or shani (ṣeṇi), also mandah)
- Dragon's Head (rāhau or rāhu, also pāni)
- Dragon's Tail (kehēta or kētu, also bambahu)

The influences which the planets exert on the human organism, are either good or bad, either beneficial or injurious. Each planet controls one distinct region of the body or one distinct organ which is affected by these influences, so that it may easily develop into dangerous forms of ill-health. The Sun, for example, is believed to have control over the head, and to be able to produce ailments of the head, as well as fever. The moon dominates the chest and its organs, and is regarded as the source of pulmonary diseases, bronchitis, etc. Venus rules over the throat, and throat diseases are ascribed to him. Jupiter has power over the bile, and causes biliary disorders. Mars is said to hold sway over the blood, so that all blood disorders are traced to him. However, the planetary influences affect not only the physical and mental well-being of mankind, but also all the capabilities and activities in public and private life. Their effect is felt in success and in failure, in good fortune and in bad fortune, in wealth and in misery; all these are traced back, at least in most cases, to the influences emanating from planets. This is the reason why it is essential that the horoscope of a child be cast as soon as it is born, and be examined again and again in order to find out what dangerous planetary influences are prevailing during any period of the child's life. It is only by this means, and by taking the appropriate precautions or performing a ceremony, that diseases, accidents, or failures can be avoided, or at least the dangers to which they are exposed can be reduced to a minimum.

The following survey may give some idea of the favourable or adverse effect of the nine planets:

*Sun.* The favourable influence of this planet enables a person to win general esteem, to attain a high position in life, to become popular and respected and to gain wealth and opulence. The unfavourable effects, on the other hand, are: disappointing experiences and lack of success, ingratitude, suffering from fever and headaches with perhaps an early death as a result.



*Moon.* This planet's propitious sway brings harmony, happy family life, literary abilities which may be crowned by great success; but its hostile influence means moral baseness, lack of initiative and energy, instability in character, and failures.

*Jupiter.* Those under his friendly influence enjoy a good memory, great intelligence, prudence, are universally respected, and have many friends, pay careful attention to their appearance, and tend to homely comforts. He who is subject to the bad sway of this planet, has no success in his activities, tends to changeable and inconsistent; an inner unrest will drive him from place to place; he will be exposed to weakness and will suffer losses.

*Mars.* Its favourable influence accords authority and success, great physical strength, courage, ability to carry out military operations and service, talent for heavy handwork, (chiefly the manipulation of metals), and a creative mind; the contrary effects, however, are diseases due to bad blood (venereal diseases) and accidents.

*Venus.* He who is favoured by this planet's sway, is distinguished by great physical strength, a cheerful disposition, and domestic feelings. He will perform many good deeds and gain a high position. If, on the other hand, the planet does not favour him, he will remain feeble, be poorly esteemed, his family will live in discordance, he will tend to licentious and lascivious conduct, and bad health and loss of his property will overcome him.

*Mercury.* The friendliness of this planet brings intelligence and prudence, wealth, great influence on one's fellowmen and followers and, on their part, blind faith in one; its adverse effects, however, are a changeable temperament, inclination towards everything evil and base, towards offensive talk, and towards slandering one's fellowmen, resulting in being disliked.

*Saturn.* His being antagonistic has the following consequences: you will encounter all kinds of difficulties and troubles, disagreements with your relatives, matrimonial quarrels; you will suffer losses and lack of success. Early death may be your share. On the other hand, the patronage of this star means respect and wealth, promotion, titles, and lucrative activities.

*Dragon's head.* Its amity grants you good profits in purchasing land, and makes you a great personage and a high official. Subjected to its unfavourable influences you run the danger of insanity or emotional disturbances, of matrimonial disputes; you may be expelled from your own country and be separated from your relations. You are susceptible to snakes-bites, and rheumatism.

*Dragon's Tail.* The benevolence of this planet is seen in the successfulness of your enterprises, especially when abroad. You will be able to acquire vast riches and great respect. Its ill will causes a tendency to suffer from certain diseases, especially of the skin. You will display a changeable character, and will consequently suffer failure, matrimonial discord, and losses.

But also the signs of the zodiac (Sanskrit: *rāsi*; Sinhalese: *gēval*) and the lunar houses (Sanskrit: *nakshatra*; Sinhalese: *ṇekata*) influence the various parts of the body and their organs, affecting them in a good or a bad way.

Thus, is believed that:

the *rāsiya mēsha* (Aries, Ram) influences the head  
 the *rāsiya vorsamba* (Taurus, Bull) influences the face  
 the *rāsiya mithuna* (Gemini, Twins) influences the chest  
 the *rāsiya singha* (Leo, Lion) influences the heart  
 the *rāsiya kataka* (Cancer, Crab) influences the stomach  
 the *rāsiya kanyā* (Virgo, Virgin) influences the navel  
 the *rāsiya tūla* (Libra, Balance) influences the abdomen  
 the *rāsiya vortjika* (Scorpio, Scorpion) influences the genitals  
 the *rāsiya dhānū* (Sagittarius, Archer) influences the thigh  
 the *rāsiya makāra* (Capricornus, Goat) influences the shanks  
 the *rāsiya kumbha* (Aquarius, Water-bearer) influences the ankles  
 the *rāsiya mina* (Pisces, Fish) influences the feet.

Their connections with the planets may also quite generally have good or bad effects.

The following are regarded as good, propitious constellations:

Jupiter in connection with *kataka*, *mina*, and *dhānū*  
 Venus in connection with *mina*, *vorsamba*, and *tūla*  
 Mercury in connection with *mithuna* and *kanyā*  
 Saturn in connection with *tūla*, *makāra*, and *kumbha*  
 Mars in connection with *mēsha* and *vortjika*  
 Sun in connection with *singha* and *mēsha*.

On the other hand bad and adverse constellations are:

Sun in connection with *tūla*  
 Moon in connection with *vortjika*  
 Mars in connection with *kataka*  
 Mercury in connection with *mina*  
 Jupiter in connection with *makāra*  
 Venus in connection with *kanyā*  
 Saturn in connection with *mēsha*  
 Dragon's Head in connection with *dhānū*  
 Dragon's Tail in connection with *mithuna*.

According to another conception, it is not the planets themselves which exert the evil influence over the various parts and organs of the body, but rather the *yakku* who are associated with them.

As mentioned by Glasenapp, in India the astrologist is mainly concerned with the position of moon in the twenty-seven or twenty-eight moon-houses (*nakshatras*), to which mankind and the various sorts of animals and plants are supposed



to be subject. It is similar with the astrologers in Ceylon and indeed they have taken over their knowledge and ability from India. From this, as well as from certain chronological calculations connected with the course of the moon, certain periods of time are explained as being unsuitable or suitable for some undertakings.

Along with this lunar astrology, there is another method based on calculations with the signs of the zodiac and planets. This knowledge appears to have been taken over from the Babylonians and to have been brought to India by the Greeks. From a number of technical terms of Greek origin it can be concluded with certainty that the Indian planetary and zodiacal astrology is based on Greek examples, but later went their own way.

The Indian and hence the Ceylonese astrology is divided into several branches. The natural astrology concerns itself with the various lunar, sidereal, and meteorological signs, from which conclusions about the most diverse subjects are drawn. Horoscopy seeks to predict future events from the position of the constellation at a given moment, e.g. at the birth of a baby, while the fixing in advance of favourable times for the holding of festivities and other events represents a special branch of knowledge.

Of the greatest possible significance is the casting of a horoscope at birth, which no Sinhalese will ever neglect to have done. This forms one of the main sources of income for the astrologer who, along with the kapuā and vedārāla, is one of the most respected persons of a Sinhalese village. The casting of a horoscope is carried out as follows: First a definite point in the ecliptic is calculated and from here the zodiac is divided into twelve "heaven houses". The stars found in these houses give the answer to certain questions: the first house to the general course of life, the second to wealth and property, the third to seventh to relatives, friends, children, enemies, and husbands, the eighth to death, the ninth to the attitude to religion, the tenth to the deeds accomplished in life, the eleventh to charities, and finally the twelfth to loss and misfortune.

Each of the planets is assumed to be connected with a certain yakka and it is to his malevolence that people are exposed. Thus, Sun and Jupiter are connected with the Hiri-yakka; the Sanniya-yakka is subordinate to Moon and Mars, the Kalu-yakka to Venus, the Maha-sohona to Mercury, the prēteo to Saturn, the Sūniya-yakka to the Dragon's Head, and the Aimāna to the Dragon's Tail. Thus, the much discussed pernicious influence of the planets is, after all, nothing else than the activity of the yakku in their connection with the planets. Frequently, a mutual relation is also assumed between the planets and the yakku and between the planets and the dēviyo, for which the most fantastic explanations are given. There is no limit to the flights of imagination shown in the speculations on this point.

The ordinary people, of course, are convinced that the nine planets themselves are to be blamed for diseases and physical disturbances, so that they are without further ado regarded as being responsible for the ease and health of men. Hence

the consultation of the horoscope at every opportunity, hence the performance of all kinds of ceremonies to counteract the evil injurious swayings. People always think first of an unfriendly planetary influence, and only in the second place of some malicious interference of the yakku, pr̥teō, etc. It is only seldom that a horoscope does not indicate the possibility of danger from one or other of the planets. However meticulously cast the horoscope may be, however clear and precise the wording of its explanations may be, if it is necessary to explain a fresh sickness or ailment, some hint can always be found in it, which may be interpreted as referring to the unfavourable influence of some planet.

The disorders caused by the planets usually appear not so much as distinct and definitely characterized diseases which take their prescribed course, but rather as disturbances of the general balance of the organism — an uncertainty which we have already met with in the case of the sanniya. They are quite generally called "*graha-lēda*", or if epidemical, "*graha-rōga*".

For the warding off or fighting of these diseases, a large number of different ceremonies are known; their performance and management are in the hands partly of the bandhanaya, partly, however, in those of a member of the oli-(potters') caste or of the beravāyā-(drummers') caste, who is called a *ganitaya* or *santi-kariya*. Frequently, these ceremonies have a purely preventive character. The horoscope enables the astrologer to determine in advance which planet may be dangerous for his client and at what age the unfavourable influence is likely to assert itself. Thus, everyone can take precautions in time; he can protect himself by a suitable "yantra", or he may have an extensive ceremony performed in order to remove or neutralize the evil influences or to be able to withstand the perils which threaten. As a rule, the making and tying on of a yantra is the first thing which is done, and is also the most frequently employed means. It is not expensive, and its effectiveness lasts a very long time. If, however, one has already fallen victim to the unfavourable influence of a planet, a yantra will not prove to be very helpful. At any rate, under these circumstances, an extensive ritual must be performed to destroy the evil influences and forces.

### THE SANTIYA-CEREMONY

This ceremony is always observed during the night, from seven or eight o'clock in the evening until seven o'clock in the morning, so that it lasts thirty Sinhalese hours (tispeya). Its performance is, as has been explained in the preceding chapter, entrusted to the *ganitaya* or *santi-kariya*, a person familiar with the entire range of astrology.

This ceremony may best be characterized as an offering-ritual for the nine planets, the twelve signs of the zodiac, the twenty-four lunar-houses, the four quarters of the compass, etc., or for the deities who control them. At all events, the con-



scientious arrangement of these offerings is an important element in this ceremony. The gifts are placed in a square, made of palm-leaves and banana-stems; this big square is subdivided into a large number of equal and symmetrically arranged squares, each of which contains a small part of the offering and a flower. The small squares are separated from one another by cut palm-leaves and the whole forms an artistically harmonious structure of red flowers, light green palm-leaves, and white banana-stems. It is called *mal-baliya* (*flower-figure*), and this name is also used for the whole ceremony. Another, more usual designation is *santiya*; it means the same as termination, repeal, removal, namely: of the unfavourable influences exerted by the planets, the signs of the zodiac, the lunar-houses, etc. Thus, the expression "*graba-santiya*" is quite generally used when the planets, the signs of the zodiac, the lunar-houses, etc., are involved. When, on the other hand, the ceremony refers to the Moon, it is called "*sōma-santiya*", in the case of Saturn,

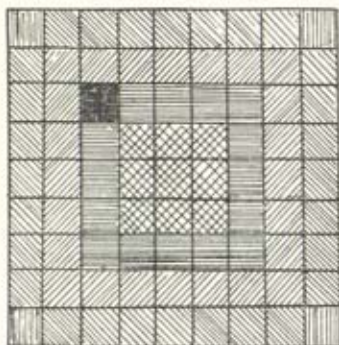


Fig. 12.



Fig. 13.

"*senaseru-santiya*", etc. The *sōma-santiya* is of particular importance, as the influences of the moon have the longest range and, hence, have the greatest significance, especially for the female sex.

According to the number of squares which make up the whole square, two different kinds of *mal-baliya* are distinguished, namely: the *asugāba*<sup>1</sup>, and the *visipabaigāba-baliya*. The former consists of nine times nine, that is eighty-one squares, which are symmetrically arranged and fill the whole surface evenly (fig. 12). Of these eighty-one squares, the nine in the centre are intended for the nine planets (they are the ones cross-hatched in fig. 12). Around these nine squares are fifteen others, corresponding to the "*vak-panji*", i.e. the fifteen lunar days, counted from the full moon to the new moon or vice versa. (Those squares shaded horizontally). The sixteenth square (the one completely shaded) is reserved for the *yakku* (*samāgama yakshaya*).

<sup>1</sup> Properly speaking, the name *asugāba*, i.e. eighty squares, is incorrect, as the figure comprises eighty-one. The right expression ought, therefore, to be "*asu-ekai-gāba*". For brevity, it is, however, always called "*asu-gāba*".

Then follow twenty-four squares which are connected with the twenty-eight buddhas (atavisi buddhung), of whom four have, however, not attained enlightenment (i.e. the twenty-four squares of the inner row which is shaded obliquely). Finally, the outermost squares, with the exception of the four corners, correspond to the twenty-eight lunar houses (ṇekata; Sanskrit; nakshatra), while the four corners are for the four quarters of the compass (hina) <sup>1</sup>.

The visipahaigāba (fig. 13), on the other hand, is, as its name suggests, composed of twenty-five squares. Here, likewise, the nine central squares correspond to the nine planets, the four corner squares to the four "hina", and the remaining twelve to the twelve signs of the zodiac (rāsi). Each category of square is filled with a distinct offering whose composition must be exactly followed.

#### THE ORIGIN OF THIS CEREMONY

As to the connection of the santi with the other bali-ceremonies, opinions are divided. On the one hand it is maintained that the santiya is the same as a straight forward baliya-ceremony, and on the other, this conception is rejected and it is denied that there is any such equivalence. The latter group declares that, in contrast to the santiya, all the bali-ceremonies are mere clumsy schemes of two bhikshu who only wanted to gain fame by their contrivance. The legend tells the following about it:

Once upon a time, there lived a learned Brahman, called Chandra Bagaskar, in Vadingadēse near Benares; he possessed a precious book which contained everything worth knowing about the santiya-ceremony. This man once happened to come to Lanka and to meet there two educated bhikshu whom he hoped to convert to his doctrine. Their names were Dutugemunu and Vidagāma and they lived in a monastery belonging to the temple of Rahula near Hikkaduva. The brahman asked Dutugemunu whether he knew his book, and Dutugemunu answered, "Let me hear what it contains." So the brahman began to read from the book. In the adjoining room, however, sat Vidagāma, Dutugemunu's friend, who wrote down all that the brahman said. When the brahman had finished reading aloud, Dutugemunu said, "All these things are quite familiar to me, because I possess the same book." The brahman was highly astonished at this answer, but did not believe it. So, Dutugemunu went to the next room to fetch the book which Vidagāma had just taken down. Upon seeing it and ascertaining that it really was the same book as he had,

<sup>1</sup> The twenty-eight ṇekata have the following names: kṛti (Sanskrit: krittika), uttrapala (uttara-bhadrāpada), uttrasala (uttara-āshāda), rehena (rohini), hasta (hasta), suvēna (śhravāna), sita (chitra), dhenata (dhanistha), kuja (kuja), ardra (ādra), jivāsa (jyēṣṭha), visat (visaka), puaputupa (pūrvaphalguni), ansura (anurādhā), uttraputupa (uttaraphalguni), pusa (pushya), sah (svāti), dēta (dēta), rēvata (rēvāti), asvīda (asvinī), puopalu (pūrvā-bhāsrāpada), puosala (pūrvā-āshāda), berēna (bhārāni), magha (magha), aslisa (āshleṣha), mula (mūla), puvarvasa (pūrvāvasu), and muasirisa (mṛi-gāshirisha).

The four hina are called: kala-hina, yama-hina, dēva-hina, and murtu-hina.



the brahman grew angry, seized it, and disappeared. He had, however, grasped only half of Vidagāma's copy which had been written down on palm-leaves, while the rest of the leaves remained in Dutugemunu's hand.

In this way, the Sinhalese had gained "partial" knowledge of the santiya-ceremony; however, they took no notice of its deficiency, and used it to ward off the pernicious influences of the planets, signs of the zodiac, and lunar houses, and to protect people who are exposed to them.

Later, the two bhikshu completed the details of the santiya-ceremony with which they had but fragmentarily become acquainted, and added their own clumsy inventions which, of course, had no foundations whatsoever; in this way, they drew up a system of thirty-five different rituals, i.e. just as many as the great variety of baliya-ceremonies which are carried out with the help of images of clay, sand, cooked rice, etc.

In contrast, their opponents, the santi-kariya, who only know how to perform the santiya-ritual, argue that all these ceremonies are pure nonsense, established to deceive the public, and that solely the santi-ceremony is in accord with the ancient Indian lore as written in the book of the Indian philosopher. And so it can be understood how it came to be that the bali-ceremonies are rejected by many exorcists as mere rubbish without any foundation.

But the two monks Dutugemunu and Vidagāma made another mistake. Since they found no adherents among their equals, they promulgated their new dogma among the common people, the members of the lowest castes, who took it up all the more eagerly and made use of it for themselves forthwith. It was, particularly the members of the oli- (potters') caste who accepted the new teachings; as it was part of the handicraft of their caste, they began at once to manufacture models of clay which up to that day had not been heard of. From then on, the "*baliya-karmante*", clay images for the bali-ceremonies about which, as has been said, nothing is to be found in the ancient Indian scriptures, were produced on an ever-increasing scale and in all possible forms <sup>1</sup>.

As regards the course of the santi-ceremony itself, it is, on the whole, performed similarly to the other bali-ceremonies; it differs only in that for the santi-ceremony a so-called *yantra* must always be made, a talisman which, depending on the horoscope, fulfills the function of protecting from the evil influences of the planets, signs of the zodiac, and lunar houses.

The production of such a yantra is very time-consuming and expensive. It always precedes the ceremony proper and takes considerably more time than the ceremony itself. We shall, therefore, deal with it in detail in a separate chapter.

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<sup>1</sup> It is, of course, erroneous to assert that the manufacture of clay figures of gods and demons came into use first through the Sinhalese potters or these two monks Dutugemunu and Vidagāma. Along with the ceremonies with which it is connected, it is of Indian, and in particular, of Tamil origin.

## THE MAKING OF THE YANTRA FOR THE SANTIYA-CEREMONY

This work is a very lengthy affair which requires at least eight days. First of all, the yantra must be engraved on a strip of copper foil (*tamba-kola* = copper sheets)<sup>1</sup>, in accordance with the horoscope of the person on whose behalf the ritual is being performed. The engraved yantra must be charmed during seven consecutive days, from morning till night. This is usually done in the client's house, but can also be carried out in that of the *santiya-kariya*.

The majority of the cases do not concern a person who is really ill or ailing, but one whose horoscope predicts injurious influences in the near future from one or other planet. In such an instance, the ceremony is simply performed in order to avoid or prevent the period of ill favour which menaces the individual in question. Frequently the horoscope prophesies that the person will, at a certain age, come under the influence of this or that planet, and that the encounter may prove unfortunate. In that case, one generally waits until the time is near, and then has a yantra made.

The ceremony is also often executed at the beginning of a new year, so that, provided with the amulet, any may enter the new year carefree and confident.

The yantra is a talisman which, for a definite period of time or for life, is worn around the neck or upper arm in a small metal case, usually of silver. Its purpose is to protect its bearer from the bad influence of the planets or the signs of the zodiac.

Its making is always a rather expensive affair, which will not cost less than fifteen rupees. After the yantra has been made, a small shrine is built, a so-called "*yabanāva*". It has generally two stories. The top one, covered with a white cloth, is the so-called "*Buddha-yabanāva*", on which are placed nine different flowers of various colours and a small earthen oil-lamp (*meti-pana*). The lower floor is the "*yantra-yabanāva*" or "*grabaya-yabanāva*" (yantra- of planet-shrine). Here are deposited the yantra, a small vessel with nine precious stones, a box with some yellow-root powder (*kahā*), some camphor (*kapuru*), and three little oil-lamps. Every morning, before the mantra is uttered, a little piece of the camphor must be burnt in the brazier. Further, on top of the shrine there is a plate with nine flowers of different colours (each colour corresponding to one of the planets), and a number of different fruits and sweets as an offering for Mahavishnu, namely: a *kolikutu-banana*, a crab apple, a rice-cake, an areca-nut, a small bottle of melted

<sup>1</sup> Whenever it can be afforded, gold foil is used, but neither silver nor any other metal is permitted. The strip measures about three or four by ten or fifteen cm. Strips of copper foil for this purpose can be bought from a dealer, with the metal case (sure). The yantra itself is a magic rectangle, consisting of four rows of four smaller rectangles, each of which bears a number. Any row of four numbers arranged vertically, horizontally, or diagonally always adds up to the same total. In the centre, a six-pointed star is engraved, a so-called "*asurenda mandālaya*", in the middle of which is the name of the person, and in its corners those of the planets.

42	49	5	4
7	2	34	47
45	46	8	1
6	3	43	48

Fig. 14.



butter (ghi), another one of honey, an āyapara (sweet), and a candle of incense. The back of the grahaya-yahanāva is usually decorated with a picture, painted or printed, representing Vishnu or another deity, and at the back of the buddha-yahānāva there is one of Gautama Buddha.

On the white cloth which extends over the yahanāva, there is a tuft of leaves from nine different trees: nā (ironwood tree), karanda (Galidupa arborea), imbul (Eriodendron anfractuosum), bō (Ficus religiosa), kohomba (Azadirachta indica), vetakāya (a kind of Pandanaceae), kehel (banana), jūl (elephant-apple). This tuft of leaves is tied with a white thread which passes through the buddha-yahanāva and the grahaya-yahanāva and is wound round the yantra and its metal case. The thread ends in a small loop. While the mantra is being recited, this loop is put round the little finger of the right hand, with the idea of forming and sustaining the contact between the speaker and the yantra and the deity.

During the recitation of the mantra, some dummala is taken from time to time from a container and put into the brazier with the thumb and forefinger of the right hand, so that a thick smoke is created (Pl. XXXV, fig. 60). The brazier is then swung to and fro evenly under the yahanāva to perfume it. The uttering of mantra and the perfuming must be continued for seven consecutive days, from morning till night; only at noon is a short pause permitted. On the other hand, it is not necessary for it to be executed by the same person; usually, two or three santi-kariya share the task, one of them taking care of the recitation of mantra in the morning, and another one, during the afternoon. This is called "hat davasa jivan karnova", i.e. "to make seven days alive"<sup>1</sup>. No drums are beaten during the act, but there is always a shell horn (hakgediya) on the grahaya-yahanāva, which is blown at the beginning of each new mantra. Each day, a different mantra is recited, each one, of course, having a special significance. On the first day, the mantra is the so-called "namaskara mantra" which refers chiefly to the patient and his name; on the second day, the "disti mantra" is uttered, invoking the yakku, the dēviyo, and the nine planets; the mantra of the third day, the "siddi mantra", serves to confirm and supplement the preceding one; the fourth day is filled with the "prāma mantra" which has the purpose of endowing the yantra with power; on the fifth day, the "prāma protista mantra" is recited, which is again to confirm and complement the previous one and which is to cause the power to remain in the yantra; the mantra of the sixth day, the "puta mantra", has the same significance and serves to establish and strengthen the former one once again. On the first part of the seventh day, finally, the "palipu mantra" is uttered, to which a purifying effect is attributed; the second part of the day is taken up in preparing the mal-baliya which has already been described in the preceding chapter. According to the circumstances of the case, an asugāba or a visipahaigaba is made. There

<sup>1</sup> The charming and perfuming of a yantra is generally called "jivan karnova", i.e. to make alive. In this way, the yantra is endowed with forces which enable it afterwards to be active as an amulet.

exist nine different baliya-forms for each planet, thus a total of eighty-one. The differences are, however, rather slight so that the layman cannot appreciate them at a first glance. They concern chiefly the composition of the offerings, while the baliya itself remains unchanged. It depends entirely on the horoscope what kind of baliya must be made for the ceremony in question; the decision is always made by the santi-kariya who, as is obvious, must possess a very considerable knowledge.

The following list gives the names of the eighty-one mal-baliya:

- |  |        |  |        |
|--|--------|--|--------|
| 1. <i>The ira-(rāvi-) baliya:</i>      |        | sarikot-mangala                        | „      |
| rāvi-sāka                              | baliya | buda-rupa-mangala                      | „      |
| suriya-rāstakā                         | „      | gaudi-raksha                           | „      |
| vidi-pantiya                           | „      | sara-haranang-mangala                  | „      |
| triloka-mangala                        | „      | sara-vishnu-mangala                    | „      |
| davagiri-kalayana                      | „      | 5. <i>The sikura-(kiri-) baliya:</i>   |        |
| santi-mangala                          | „      | rati-bimbha-raksha                     | baliya |
| kala-kuta                              | „      | kivi-distiya                           | „      |
| rāvi-raksha                            | „      | dēva-rupa                              | „      |
| rāvi-bimbha                            | „      | jiva-mangala                           | „      |
| 2. <i>The chandra-(sōma-) baliya:</i>  |        | jiva-raksha                            | „      |
| sandhu-sāka                            | baliya | sirikata-mangala                       | „      |
| sōma-mangala                           | „      | praana-sandayava                       | „      |
| chandra-bimbha                         | „      | yahapat-mangala                        | „      |
| pauva-nabha-kalayana                   | „      | jiva-rupa-mangala                      | „      |
| varsa-kalayana                         | „      | 6. <i>The angabaru-(kuja-) baliya:</i> |        |
| agra-sōma-mangala                      | „      | mangala-distiya                        | baliya |
| chandra-raksha                         | „      | mangala-sāka                           | „      |
| agra-rajā-mangala                      | „      | anganadiya                             | „      |
| chandra-distiya                        | „      | mangsa-kalayana                        | „      |
| 3. <i>The braṣpati-(guru-) baliya:</i> |        | anga-mangala                           | „      |
| guru-sāka                              | baliya | jayakōt-mangala                        | „      |
| abeya-kalayana                         | „      | ratanga-raksha                         | „      |
| guru-mangala                           | „      | kala-muruva                            | „      |
| singhasana-mangala                     | „      | kuja-raksha                            | „      |
| sodasa-mangala                         | „      | 7. <i>The senaseru-(seni-) baliya:</i> |        |
| jayaratna-mangala                      | „      | seṇi-sāka                              | baliya |
| mahakot-mangala                        | „      | nilanga-distiya                        | „      |
| suru-guru                              | „      | dasāk-kroda                            | „      |
| guru-distiya                           | „      | kuda-nilanga                           | „      |
| 4. <i>The budobu-(buda-) baliya:</i>   |        | maha-nilanga-raksha                    | „      |
| buda-sāka                              | baliya | madima-nilanga-raksha                  | „      |
| sarva-mangala                          | „      | sara-vishnu                            | „      |
| vishnu-kalayana                        | „      | maha-sanisaka                          | „      |
| sarva-rupa-mangala                     | „      | seṇi-distiya                           | „      |



8. *The rahu-(pāni-) baliya:*

pāni-sāka	baliya
pāni-giri	"
pāni-sandiyava	"
pāni-kalayana	"
vaikunda-raksha	"
asura-mangala	"
pāni-rupa-mangala	"
asti-raksha	"
asura-rupa-mangala	"

9. *The kētu-(bambahu-) baliya:*

bambha-rupa	baliya
krushna-raksha	"
naga-kalayana	"
bambha-giri-raksha	"
rupa-giri-raksha	"
anuhās-mangala	"
naga-distiya-raksha	"
uranga-kalayana	"
bambha-distiya	"

## COURSE OF THE CEREMONY

The ritual begins after nightfall and lasts about twelve (i.e. thirty Sinhalese) hours. At the side of the yahanāva, the mal-baliya stands against the wall (Pl. XXXVI, fig. 61) and also the *atamāgala*, a little box made of pieces of banana-stem in the shape of two squares one above the other, which contains a small vessel with coconut-blossoms. Instead of this box, there is often a yantra of ashes strewn on a table covered with a white cloth, which consists of two squares one on top of the other with a circle in the centre. The ashes used which are called "*trianōru*", come from the Kataragama-kovil and have been brought in large quantities by the kapuo and the pilgrims from the great festivity which is celebrated there in July and August. Some other yantra of smaller size, as in fig. 15, are outlined on the floor with the same ashes. Their purpose is to ward off the evil spirits. On top

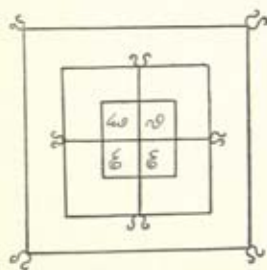


Fig. 15.

of the yahanāva are placed, among other things, an earthen jug of yellow-root water, nine different fruits, and nine flowers of various colours, as an offering for the nine planets. On the upper part of the yahanāva there are also fruits and flowers for the rulers of the four cardinal points, the *batara-dēviyo*. The yantra with its metal box and the yellow cord used to tie it to the patient, are placed on a chair near by. At its side is a square basket of leaves which contains a royal coconut and a cloth of six different colours with nine betel-leaves on it, arranged in the

shape of a flower, and also white temple flowers arranged similarly. Opposite the yahanāva, the patient sits or lies on a mat, with a rice-pounder (*mōlgaha*), a young royal coconut, a little basket with several unripe lemons (*dēhi gēta*), a *dēvi-kaduru*-leaf, a *telambu*-leaf, and a stalk of a *hirāsa*-plant at his feet, just as in other ceremonies. If the patient is a woman or a girl, this is completed by a comb, a mirror, a braid of hair, a little flask of perfumed water, some powder, etc. (cf. p. 79).

The ceremony is opened by the patient who with his own hands lights four little oil-lamps (*meti-pana*) which are placed on the *yahanāva*. Next, he lights four small torches (*vilakku*), and inserts them in the four corners of the *mal-baliya*. He then resumes his seat on the mat. Now, the *santi-kariya* begins to utter the *yāga* (verses), solemnly and in a singing tone, initiating the recitation of each *yāga* by blowing the shell horn which is lying ready on the *yahanāva*. The first *yāga* is addressed to Gautama Buddha, the second one to the *dēva-samāgama*, the group of *dēvatāvo*, a third kind of *yāga* to the nine planets (*nava-graha*), or properly speaking one *yāga* to each of the planets and an additional one, finally, to the *yahanāva*. During the whole time, the speaker points at the gifts and the *mal-baliya*. At the conclusion of each *yāga*, he folds his hands and bows to the *mal-baliya*. The assistant joins in the recitations, i.e. the two of them take turns throughout in speaking the *yāga*.

Now, a white cloth is spread out between the patient and the *yahanāva* or the *mal-baliya*. Two boys hold it up so as to prevent the patient from looking over it (Pl. XXXVI, fig. 61). More *yāga* are uttered in front of the *mal-baliya*, and *dummala* is thrown on the coal-pan to perfume it. This act is followed by a dance of the *santiya-kariya* who for the purpose adorns his head with a kind of diadem. Sometimes, several persons dance together; they hold "*chamara valga*", white yak-tails, in their hands and have their arms smeared with "*trianōru*".

When the dance has come to an end, *dummala* is thrown over the *mal-baliya* and kindled by the burning torch of the dancer, and the patient is sprinkled with yellow-root water. A torch is lighted and stuck into the middle of the *mal-baliya*; more *yāga* are uttered; the white cloth is then removed and the ceremony proper begins.

It consists mainly of uninterrupted recitals of more *yāga*, which have, however, a quite other significance. There are *kāvi-yāga*, *solōka-yāga*, and *matrima-yaga*<sup>1</sup>, all three being different from each other. During his recitations, the *santiya-kariya* now and then sounds a little bell (*gantāra*), while in his other hand he holds a *chamara valga* or an *areca-flower*<sup>2</sup>. After each *yāga*, he bows to the patient, and the spectators show their approval by loud acclamations.

While the *matrima-yāga* are uttered, the patient is sprinkled with yellow-root water and stroked with a tuft of *manga* leaves. The stroking movements have to be made in a downward direction, i.e. from the head towards the feet, and the tuft of leaves has from time to time to be shaken out, as if freeing it from the impurities which adhere to it.

As soon as the white cloth has been removed, the patient takes the end of a white thread, or a small lemon tied to a thread, in his hand. The other end of the thread

<sup>1</sup> *Matrima* is an abbreviation of "*mantra kima*" = to perform mantra.

<sup>2</sup> Occasionally, the dances and recitations are accompanied by drums, but some *santiya-kariya* maintain that such usage is contrary to the rules laid down and, therefore, absurd.



is joined to the yantra and the metal box. In this way, the contact between the patient and the yantra is maintained during the whole ceremony.

Towards dawn, the patient's forehead and head are moistened with yellow-root water; then the little lemon is cut through with a pair of areca-scissors above his head, and finally, the dēvi-kaduru leaf, the telambu leaf, and the stalk of hirāsa, put at his feet. This done, the yantra in its case is put on the patient, that is to say it is tied round his neck, or sometimes round his upper arm, by a yellow string (nūla), made of nine threads which must be knotted nine times (gēta navayai). The yantra must be put into its case at a time indicated in advance by the santi-kariya, i.e. at the rise of a planet propitious for the patient. The tying on of the yantra, however, is always done in the early morning, before the sun rises (ira payana isravela), or more exactly, as soon as the lines on the palm of one's hand can be distinguished. While this is being done, two more mantra, the "*kāvicha-mantra*" and the "*istōtra-mantra*" must be uttered in honour of the nine planets. At the same time, the nine knots are made in the nūla.

### THE GARA-YAKUMA (OR GARA-UMA)-CEREMONY

One of the most expensive, and therefore very much less often performed ceremonies is the ritual called "*gara-yakuma*", or "*gara-tovilē*".

*Gara* means sickness, ailment, poison, but also antidote, while *garā* signifies to devour. It is not very clear from which of these two expressions the name "*gara-yakuma*" should be derived.

In contrast to the other ceremonies, the *gara-yakuma* is not held only in cases of illness, but also on many other occasions, as for example, if the rice does not thrive and hence the prospect of a good harvest appears bad, when the cows do not give milk, when a house has been built and proves larger than expected (an event that might bring disaster with it), when termites invade a house and their destructive work cannot be stopped, when the copulation of two snakes, varans, lizards, or scorpions has been observed in the house, which is always regarded as a bad omen and indicates misfortune (dōsa)<sup>1</sup>. The most frequent reason for the performance of a *gara-yakuma*, however, is when somebody has spoken evil of another person (kathā-vaha), has wished him bad luck, or has even asked the deities to punish him or to inflict illness or misfortune upon him. Such an ailment or disaster is imagined to arise in this way: the evil-minded person has applied to the four deities (Saman-dēviyo, Nata-dēviyo, Dēvol-deviyo, Vahala-bāva-dēviyo), who, on their part, have given Dala-kumāra, a most dangerous yakka, the order to pursue the other person with disease, or accidents, etc., and thus to punish him.

<sup>1</sup> This holds especially for the class of snakes "*garandiya*" and the scorpion (*garakatusa*). It may even be that there is a connection between the expression *gara-yakuma* and the names of these two creatures.

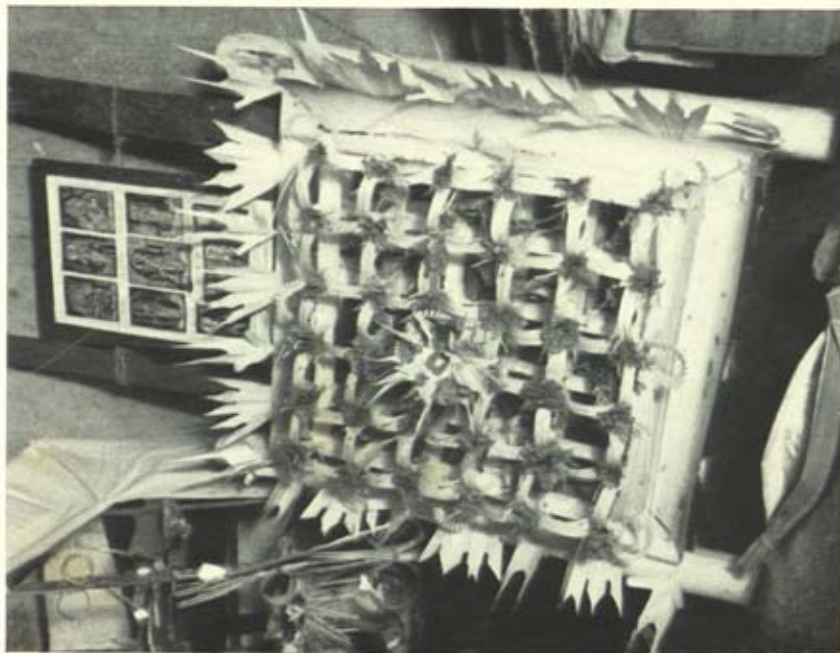


Fig. 60. The "activation" (jivan karnova) of a yantra before a santiya-ceremony. On the left is the yahanāva, on top of which the yantra has been put. In the foreground is sitting the santi-kariya who performs the ritual.

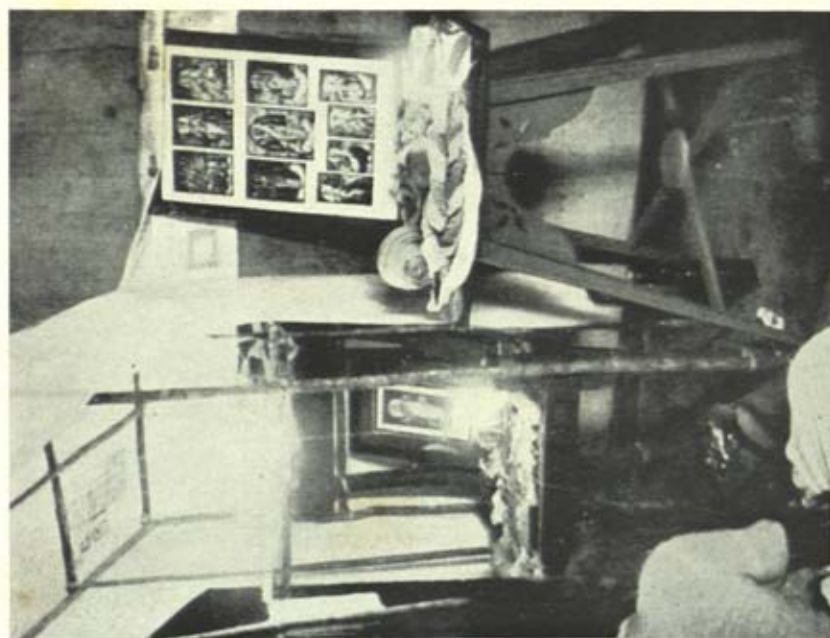


Fig. 59. An "asugāba-mal-baliya" made for a santiya-ceremony. To left is the yahanāva; on top of the baliya the representation of the nine planets (flashlight picture).





Fig. 61. Ritual of a santiya-ceremony. In the middle is the "asugāba-mal-baliya"; above it the representation of the nine planets. The boy on the right holds the cloth which conceals the baliya from the patient who sits in front of it (flashlight picture).



Fig. 62. Scene from a gara-yakuma-ceremony. The "yāgapala" is being perfumed before the beginning of the dance.

## LEGEND

The legend on which the gara-yakuma is based, runs shortly as follows:

Once upon a time, there lived in Northern India, in the state of Solima-nuvara, a king, named Solimana-rajjuruvo, with his consort. In the tenth month of her pregnancy, the queen gave birth to a son who developed amazingly quickly and seemed from the early years of his life to be possessed of secret supernatural powers. The king sent for the *astrologer* and asked him to cast the boy's horoscope as he was eager to know about the prince's future. The astrologer did as he had been told, and reported to the king the following result of his computations: "After a time, the queen will have a second child. It will be a girl of exceptional beauty, and she will be loved by whoever sets eyes upon her. Even the prince will not be able to look at his sister without desire. It would, therefore, be better if he were taken away in time, lest he brings disgrace upon the royal house."

The king, deeply grieved by the information, resolved to follow the advice of the astrologer. As had been prophesied, the queen soon afterwards gave birth to a girl and the parents decided to send their son to another country where he was to live in the house of a brother of the king. There, the boy grew up and was henceforth called Dala-kumāra because his eye-teeth (*dala*) were abnormally long and gave him a bestial aspect.

The girl also thrived and was from an early age noted for her beauty and grace. She received the name of Giri-dēvi. When the time approached for her to be married, the king decided to celebrate with a great festival. The king's brother, with whom Dala-kumāra was living, had also been invited, but he had already been told by the king that he must never speak to Dala-kumāra about his sister, nor even let him know that he had a sister. The departure of the king's brother was to be kept secret and Dala-kumāra should not be told either where his uncle had gone.

The boy, however, heard it all from a common man who had happened to come to town; he found out that he had a sister, that her wedding was to be celebrated within the next few days, and also that his uncle had been invited.

The prince was beyond himself with fury and decided to return at once to his native town without telling anybody about his intention. So, he arrived at home quite unexpected, and all his relatives were absolutely appalled. The banquet was just at its height. Since Dala-kumāra was hungry from his journey, he fell at once on the table and ate everything up. Then, he demanded to see his sister who, however, had already been brought to safety. But as he threatened to smash everything up and set fire to the palace unless his wish was fulfilled, the king saw no other way out than to send for Giri-dēvi. Hardly had Dala-kumāra set eyes on her, when he became inflamed with passion. He seized the girl and left the palace and town with her. He carried her far away into a vast forest, where he kept himself hidden from then on. They continued to live as man and wife, existing on fruit and roots. One day, when Dala-kumāra had fallen asleep, the girl resolved to leave her brother





Fig. 16. Dala-rakshaya.

and flee from him. She ran and ran through the woods until she was exhausted with fatigue and hunger. In her despair, she decided to take her life, and hung herself from a tree by means of a liana.

When Dala-kumāra woke up and did not see Giri-dēvi, he set out to look for her. He roamed about the woods in every direction, and devoured seven thousand stags and seven thousand wild buffalos; as a result he grew thirsty to such a degree that he emptied three thousand coconuts. But his thirst was not yet quenched. So, he hastened to the coast and drank half of the ocean up. He then returned to the forest again and, running ceaselessly to and fro, ultimately arrived at the Uttarakurudivaina. There, he met Vesamunu-rajjuvo and asked him about his sister. Upon the answer that Vesamunu-rajjuvo knew nothing of her whereabouts, he grew very angry, for he had already asked several deities without anybody being able to help. So, he went to look for Sakra, for Sakra had a thousand eyes and should know where Giri-dēvi had gone. When Sakra failed to satisfy him on the spot, he once more boiled over with rage, seized the parasātu-gaha (the world-ash tree), the tree under which the deities used to assemble, and began to shake it violently. During all this, his eye-teeth began to protrude further out of his mouth and grew into real fangs, and his entire figure took on a terrifying form. Sakra was frightened; he realised that he had to deal with a formidable adversary. He fetched some holy water and sprinkled Dala-kumāra with it in order to calm him, but his efforts had just the opposite effect. Dala-kumara raged with fury, began to rave, and shook the tree still more violently with all his might. His fangs grew even longer, and he became a real raksha, the Dala-rakshaya. Sakra, therefore, decided to get rid of him as quickly as possible. "Return to the Himala-vana," he said to him, "and there you will find Giri-dēvi." So, Dala-kumāra went back to the large forest, and at length found his sister hanging from a tree, dead and beginning to decay. Horror and despair seized him; once again, he began to rage, running madly hither and thither, uprooting trees, and slaying whoever crossed his path. His body burned like fire and he was tormented by a terrible thirst. He met Patini-dēvi, but she avoided him because she was afraid of him. He addressed her as his sister and asked her for food and drink. She gave him what little she had, but it was not enough for him.

At length, they agreed upon his being henceforth allowed to accept offering from people, but he had to promise that he would stop seeking men's lives; he might only afflict them with illness and misfortune, and was obliged to restore them to health and to redeem them from their misery as soon as they offered him their gifts. Dala-yakka finally agreed to this proposal; he asked, however, to be granted a number of attendants who would assist him at his activities. Patini-dēvi advised him to go and see Vesamunu-rajjuvo and to ask from him the followers whom he needed. This he did. Vesamunu-rajjuvo gave him twelve male and twelve female companions who were assigned to help him from that day on; their names are:



Andun-gara and Andun-giri,  
 Sohōn-gara and Sohōn-giri,  
 Dēsa-gara and Dēsa-giri,  
 Sandun-gara and Sandun-giri,  
 Puspa-gara and Puspa-giri,  
 Kāna-gara and Kāna-giri,  
 Uma-gara and Uma-giri,  
 Launa-gara and Launa-giri,  
 Vāta-gara and Vāta-giri  
 Toteya-gara and Toteya-giri,  
 Kila-gara and Kila-giri,  
 Kili-gara and Kili-giri.

With these twenty-four accomplices, Dala-yakka or Gara-yakka, as he was from then on also called, now set forth to pursue mankind, inflicting disease, suffering, and harm on them in order to collect the offerings from the afflicted <sup>1</sup>.

#### COURSE OF THE CEREMONY

As already remarked, the gara-yakuma is a very expensive ceremony; since the assistance of a great number of persons is required, the performance costs at least a hundred rupees. The execution and management of the different rites and dances is entrusted to a bandhanaya, never to an *ḍura* who has no connection whatsoever with the gara-yakuma. A few of them may have some knowledge of its mythological tradition and perhaps of a few mantra which they have happened to hear and learn. But an *ḍura* would never dare to perform such a ritual or more than assist at it, just as a bandhanaya is never found attending at a sanniya-yakuma or a sūniyama-ceremony.

At a gara-yakuma-ceremony, there are at least three skilled bandhanaya, the same number of drummers, and several helpers. Each of them has his special part to play; like other ceremonies, this one consists simply in some theatricals, or rather in a dancing and pantomimic representation of the mythological traditions of Dala-kumāra. Since, besides Dala-kumāra (or the Dala-yakka), his sister, Giri-dēvi, and a number of other personalities always appear, the representation of so many characters accounts for the high cost of the celebration of a gara-yakuma.

The ceremony is generally begun in the afternoon and continues without any essential interruption till the morning hours of the following day; frequently, it is delayed so that another night is necessary.

In most cases, a roof of leaves is erected under which dances are performed to

<sup>1</sup> According to another version, Patini-dēvi is said to have granted him permission to persecute people only in those houses in which the copulation of two garandiya-snakes, lizards, or scorpions has been noticed. Such an observation should, at the same time, serve the inhabitants of that house as an omen, so that they can have a gara-yakuma performed to ward off bad health and bad luck.

the music of drums; the members of the family on whose behalf the ceremony is being executed (this ceremony is not concerned with the welfare of an individual, but with that of a whole family) are also seated there, along with the spectators. At the side of this covering, there is the so-called "yāgapala"; this is a square enclosure, made of the ribs of palm-leaves and of the semicircular parts of banana-stems which have been split in two down the middle. Here numerous little oil-lamps (*meti-pana*) and flowers are hung and it is decorated with strips of young palm-leaves. At some distance from the roof of leaves, if possible at the street side, the so-called "vēsata" is constructed, consisting of three little trunks or big branches of the vēsata-tree which are fixed in the ground; this is the same tree as is mentioned in the legend<sup>1</sup> and which is of great importance for the performance of a gara-yakuma-ceremony and of the mimic dances of the *Dala-kumāra*-actors.

The prelude takes place in the yāgapala. Six dancers enter, dressed in white loin-cloths, white jackets, and sashes. They each wear a diadem of brass plate, an ornament on their breast of the same material, and bracelets and hollow rings which tinkle about their ankles. They have pieces of coconut shell hidden under their blouses to simulate the female figure, as each one of them represents *Giri-dēvi*.

We have already seen in former chapters that it does not matter when one of the personages of the myth is acted by several players, or vice versa, several of the characters by one actor.

These six dancers are joined by six drummers who begin beating their cylindrical drums in the same rhythm. Meanwhile, one of the assistants occupies himself with a fire-pan. Continually throwing dummala on the glowing embers and thus producing resinous smoke, he runs to and fro along the enclosure and perfumes the little oil-lamps and the neatly woven offering-baskets (Pl. XXXVI, fig. 62).

The dance of the six *Giri-dēvi*-actors consists of the usual turning and wheeling of the body, stamping on the ground which makes the rings on the ankles tinkle, wild leaps and whirls. One after another, they advance to have themselves perfumed by the helper who is continually bustling round. Each one of them goes through this procedure. Then, the dance is taken up afresh with ever-increasing abandon, finally becoming a general display of delirious frenzy. In the beginning, the dancers hold tufts of leaves in their hands which they later exchange for torches. From time to time, dummala is thrown into the air. Then all of a sudden the dance stops, and a pause of about an hour is made during which supper is eaten. In the meantime, it has become completely dark. All the members of the family have by now assembled in the "festive hut" to attend the continuation of the ceremony. They squat on mats; a rice-pounder, a *telambu*-leaf, a *dēvi-kaduru*-leaf, and a red coconut are placed at their feet; a small vessel with yellow-root water and coconut-blossoms complete the outfit. Two boys hold a white cloth stretched out so that those squatting on the floor cannot, at least for the moment, see the dancers

<sup>1</sup> This vēsata or vēšta represents the *parasātu*-tree of the legend (p. 131).



or their performances. It is the same rite as we have come across in other ceremonies.

Again, the six dancers and six drummers appear, the former once more in the same costume representing the Giri-dēvi. They again hold tufts of leaves in their hands, and perform the same dances. They stamp their feet, dance round in circles, spin themselves round like tops at such a speed that their movements cannot be followed. After a while, the drummers step aside, and the dancers now stand directly in front of the white cloth. While the drums roll quicker, new whirling dances are performed. The actors, then, run towards the cloth in twos, glance over it at the people sitting there, and go back again. Now, one of the assistants splits a coconut with one blow, and it is observed how the two halves fall to the ground. At the same moment, the cloth is removed.

New dancing scenes ensue. The drums are beaten faster and with fresh vigour. A number of different scenes (*peḷa paliya*) is now represented by dances and mimicry. Their subject is still Giri-dēvi, her growing up in the palace, the eminence of her grace and beauty, the desire which she inspired in every man. It is shown how she bathed, powdered her face, combed her hair, etc. Another dance with a rolled-up mat suggests the wedding of the princess, another one the arrival of the Dala-kumāra, his flight with Giri-dēvi from the palace, and their living together in the woods. Only the initiated know the meaning of all these pantomimes, but most often it has rather to be guessed at.

In the meantime, it is two o'clock in the morning, and now, at last, enters Dala-kumāra as a yakka. Two oil-lamps of a curious semi-spherical shape are brought and placed on the chairs in the middle of the place. An assistant carries a coal-pan, throws dummala on the fire, and perfumes the two oil-lamps by fanning the smoke towards them with his hands. Two dancers (the rest of them have in the meantime retired) stand nearby and are likewise perfumed, as is the rule at the beginning of each dance. They wear white loincloths and jackets with red scarves, and their heads are covered with white cloths. They then begin to dance, first with slow, measured steps, then faster and faster, finally spinning round the dancing scene like tops, and somersaulting like circus clowns, and doing all kinds of acrobatics. After a while, they grasp the lamps and continue their dance until they are exhausted. Thereupon they bring the lamps back to the *vēsata*, keep on dancing for some little time more, take the lamps up again, and perform another series of dances and tricks with the lamps in their hands.

The dancers pass their arms and chests over the flames, put burning lamps under their blouses, and run about like this as fast as they are able, so that the flames sweep over their throats and necks; this is intended to show how Dala-kumāra was tormented by an inner heat. They then throw the lamps into the air like balls, and catch them again. Higher and higher they throw them without extinguishing the flames, always catching them again with astounding skill. From time to time, the assistant pours a few drops of oil on the wicks, and the throwing-game is resumed with renewed fervour.

This scene with the oil-lamps is followed by a dance with *gurulla*-leaves in their hands, to the accompaniment of the drums; the performance is also accompanied by a song about the part of the tradition which describes how *Dala-kumāra* turned into *Dala-raksha*. The ensuing dancing scenes picture this episode with extraordinary expressiveness. Another couple of dancers enters. They are clothed as the previous pair; their heads are covered with white cloths and ornaments of pleated palm-leaves are fixed to their shawls; both of them have a long tail of split palm-leaves hanging down from the neck. In addition, each dancer is given a three-pronged torch (*kila-pandama*). The two actors make their appearance from behind the *vēsata*. They raise wild howls, shake the *sēsata*, tear at it in all directions, and climb up on it from behind, swinging to and fro on the supple little trees. After a while, they jump down again and run with wild leaps round the dancing place. They behave like madmen, and fling handfuls of *dummala* into the air which lights up the scene like a fire works display. An assistant now brings a rice-pounder. One of the dancers takes it, balances it in his hand for a while, and then runs with a threatening gesture towards the people on the mat as if to beat them. Thereupon, he and the assistant enter upon a long conversation during which a further episode of the myth is recited.

After a while, the dancers retire again and are now attired with masks. These masks have long fangs, big round eyes, and round protruding ears; they are painted red, white, and black (Pl. LI, fig. 91). The two dancers wear completely identical disguises and costumes. They again make their appearance from behind the *vēsata*, shake it, climb on to it, and sway to and fro, their long white garments billowing in the wind (Pl. XXXVII, fig. 63). This scene is not without a certain humour and is decidedly apt to cause mirth rather than to arouse fright. After some time, they spring down from their "swing", run about the dancing place as if in a frenzy, throw *dummala* about themselves, and behave like real *yakku*. One of them also runs through the whole house, flinging *dummala* into all the corners. The two dancers return once more to the *vēsata*, climb up again, swing to and fro for a short while, and are then presented with their offering, the "*gara-pidenna*" (Pl. XXXVIII, fig. 64). This gift consists of a big plaited rice fan, on which five kinds of flowers, bananas, some rice cake, and coconut kernels cut in the shape of rings are placed, and a live cock which forms an indispensable part of the offerings.

The offering is perfumed with incense and carried to the *vēsata*, and another long dialogue ensues between one of the *gara-yakku* and the assistant who brought them their offering and whom the *yakku*-actors address as "*gurunānsē*". Funny scenes are acted, as is always the case when the *yakka* receives his offering (Pl. XXXIX, fig. 65).

In the meantime, however, two more offerings have been prepared. They are destined for the *Maha-sohona* and the *Aimāna* who must always be remembered at the observation of a *gara-yakuma*; for those two *yakku* are likewise connected with the legends of the *Dala-kumāra* and of the *Gara-yakka*, and form, so to speak, one



group with them. Each of the yakku who are mentioned in a legend, must be honoured by an offering when a ritual is performed.

With this, the ceremony proper is finished. There appear, however, further pairs of masked actors, each wearing the same mask as has just been described. All these dancers to begin with clamber on to the *vēsata*, swing backwards and forwards on it, first standing, then seated, and subsequently perform further on the dancing place. These masked pairs represent the male and female companions of the Gara-yakka whose names were enumerated above. One male and one female yakka together come forward each time; actually all the rôles are played only by men who are in no way distinguished, neither in their dresses nor in the parts they perform. Sometimes, a second and even a third *vēsata* are now erected, on which the mask dances are carried out in turns. The dancers climb now on this *vēsata*, now on that one, sway to and fro for a little while, dance about the place in great excitement, throw dummala into the air, and spin themselves round. Two pairs never appear at the same time, but always one after the other. So, the ceremony is continued until late in the morning, and only towards noon when it grows too hot, does the ceremony finally reach its end. But it is often taken up once more towards evening and continued during the next night. This depends, as already said, only on the amount of money which one is willing to spend; the greater the expenses incurred, the longer the ceremony lasts and the more conscientiously it is performed.

## DISEASES AND EPIDEMICS, SENT BY THE DEITIES, AND THE CEREMONIES CONNECTED WITH THEM

### THE TWELVE DEITIES

There are twelve deities (*dolos dēvivoru*) who, according to the belief of the Sinhalese, spread diseases, especially in the form of epidemics and plagues, among mankind in order to afflict and punish them. They are: the *Dēvol-dēviyo*, the *Patini-dēvi*, the *Kataragama-dēviyo*, whose real name is *Kandasvami hāmuduruvō*, further the *Nata-dēviyo*, the *Saman-dēviyo*, i.e. the Indian Ganesha, *Bibisana* (or *Vibisana*), *Gini-Kurumbāra*, *Vahala*, *Dadimunda*, *Mahavishnu*, and *Isvara*. Frequently only eight, or even three of them, namely: the *Dēvol-dēviyo*, the *Patini-dēvi*, and the *Kataragama-dēviyo*, are spoken of as the three most important deities of Ceylon, whereas the other ones play a more subordinate rôle or are even considered as mere assistants of the three already named.

*Dēvol-dēviyo* is the most feared of the twelve above-mentioned divinities, and is attributed the leading rôle. The next one is the goddess *Patini* about whom many legends are related. In contrast to the other ones, she seems to be a native deity, although there are many assertions to the effect that she is of Indian origin as are also the other gods, and that she is as well known on the mainland as on Ceylon. Be that as it may, she may be regarded as the favourite goddess of the Sin-

halese people, as the great heroine of their folklore and myths; among many other things, she is said to have been the first to teach men the cultivation of rice<sup>1</sup>. Her earthly home is the Navaguna-dēvālaya, between Polgahavela and Kaduganāva on the road to Kandy, where she is regularly presented with offerings. The goddess herself lives in the "*tautisa bhavanaya*", the heaven of the thirty-three saints.

Bibisana is a well-known personality of the Ramayana-legend; he is the brother of Sita who was carried off to Lanka. His temple is in Kelaniya, and he rules over a number of inferior deities, while he himself is considered as being equal to Saman-dēviyo. It is told that, on his second visit to Ceylon, Gautama Buddha bequeathed his little finger and the holy bō-tree to Bibisana, and that he designated him as his successor. He, furthermore, appointed two birds to be Bibisana's permanent attendants; in subsequent representations, Bibisana always appeared together with them.

The most widespread reputation is doubtlessly enjoyed by the Kataragama-dēviyo, his name being derived from the place Kataragama, sixteen miles north of Tissamaharama, in the south of the island. There, this god has a temple, known all over the country, in which a great festival in his honour is celebrated each year in July and which is attended by many thousands of devotees from all parts of Ceylon and southern India. This deity is looked upon as an incarnation of Vishnu; the legend about his origin will be told below. He is, moreover, said to have two wives: Valli-amma, to whom a strange supernatural parentage is attributed and who was brought up by the wild Veddas, and Bhadrakali, who originally belonged to the Kārave- (fishermens') caste. This god rides on a peacock which is always pictured together with him.

The next two deities, Gini-Kurumbāra and Vahala, occupy a special position, as they are not real deities like the others, but half divine, half demoniacal beings (*yakku-dēviyo*), who often play the rôle of servants of the superior godheads. Dadimunda is also such a *yakka-dēviyo*. He is the grandson of Vesamunu-rajjuvo, the chief of the whole of the *yakku*; he does not himself inflict diseases on mankind, but rather joins the others' retinue more or less passively.

Concerning the Nata-dēviyo, there does not seem to be much to say. It is related that he intended to become a Buddha. He is believed to rule over the West (*basnāhira*). When Gautama Buddha died, he assigned to Vishnu the Dharma and with it the sovereignty over the East. Kataragama-dēviyo was from now on to reign over the South, Saman-dēviyo over the North, and Nata-dēviyo over the West. There is a temple (*kovil*) of Nata-dēviyo near Kelaniya, where he is venerated. Saman-dēviyo is the representative of Buddha; all the holy places which are revered by the Buddhists and to which they make their pilgrimages are under his

<sup>1</sup> F. Sarasin mentions a crude wooden statue which he found in 1884 at the foot of the Adamspeak; natives told him that it was a figure of Patini-dēvi, and he is of the opinion that she is an agricultural deity (F. Sarasin, *Reisen und Forschungen in Ceylon*, Basel 1939, Taf. IX) (fig. 82).



care. These are chiefly the four localities where the footprints of the great master are to be found, namely: first, the Adamspeak (Sri-pada or Saman-ta-kūta, i.e. Saman-dēviyo's mountain) <sup>1</sup> on Lanka, second, Makkama, i.e. Mekka, third, San-kīsa, about 160 miles north-west of Benares at the foot of the Himalayas, called Sajjabadiya-parvataya by the Sinhalese, and fourth Achiravata on the Narmadaganga <sup>2</sup>.

It is said of Saman-dēviyo (more correct Sumana-dēviyo) that he is very calm and peaceable, in contrast to Kataragama-dēviyo, so that there are no legends about him. His main dēvālaya is to be found in the environs of Sapragama near Ratnapura <sup>3</sup>.

About Vishnu and Isvara there is not much to say; but a curious tradition which also refers to the origin of the Kataragama deity as an incarnation of Vishnu may be related:

Isvara was in possession of a very active mantra. He only needed to cast a spell on his hand and then put it on a person's head, for that person to be burnt to ashes in a moment.

There was a certain asuraya, Brahma-asuraya by name, a very passionate man. One day, he happened to see Isvara's wife Umayangana (also called Uma-dēvi) and was seized by passion and desired her. He thought of a ruse to gain his purpose. He went to Isvara and offered to serve him for twelve years. Isvara was amazed at the stranger who offered him his services and that at once for twelve years, but he acceded finally to the proposal.

After having been in Isvara's employment for a time, Brahma-asuraya asked him one day to teach him the mantra which enabled the initiated to burn any person at once to ashes. Isvara was perplexed and declined to fulfil the wish. But then he agreed and promised, if he really wanted to stay in his service for twelve years, to put the spell on his hand so that he might henceforth kill any man on the spot by merely laying his hand on that person's head. Brahma-asuraya was greatly pleased at this assurance, but Isvara had seen through his intentions and knew that the other only wanted to take his life. However, it was too late, for he had already put the charm on Brahma-asuraya's hand, who now had the power of killing any-

<sup>1</sup> On the summit of the mountain, there is a little dēvālaya consecrated to Saman-dēviyo, in which a crude wooden sculpture of the deity is kept. As is generally known, these footprints are also venerated by the Hindus and Mohammedans. The former ascribe them to Vishnu, the latter to the prophet Adam (hence the name Adamspeak). The Tamils, on the other hand, call the mountain Shiva-nadi-padam.

<sup>2</sup> This last-mentioned footprint is said to be found in a deep ravine of a river (perhaps the Salween). The real number of these footprints may be much greater (there are records of several of them on Java, which go back to the Hindu period), but the four in India and on Ceylon are the best and longest known. According to the Chinese monk Fā-Hien, two other footprints are to be found in the north of the Punjab and in Pataliputra (Patna) (Legge, pp. 28, 80).

<sup>3</sup> According to the statements of several kapuo, Saman-dēviyo and Nata-dēviyo are believed not to pursue people with illness at all, while others are convinced of just the opposite. At all events, these two deities have nothing like the rôle to play that the other ones have; they are, therefore, not much spoken about.

one he wanted. So there was nothing left but for Isvara hurriedly to take flight, but Brahma-asuraya pursued him.

Vishnu had observed what had happened and resolved to hurry to his friend's assistance. He quickly transformed himself into a beautiful young woman and seated himself on a swing when he saw Brahma-asuraya coming near, for he was well aware that the other was extremely fond of fair women. When Brahma-asuraya perceived the young woman on the swing, he at once left off from his pursuit, eager to approach her and to declare his love for her. And indeed, she seemed disposed to respond to his advances. So, Brahma-asuraya asked her right out if she would become his wife. "Go first and talk the matter over with your wife", she told him, "and ask her whether she has any objection to sharing her home with another woman." Brahma-asuraya hastened home to make sure of his wife's consent. When he returned again to the young woman, bringing an answer in the affirmative, she was still sitting on the swing and had now an infant in her arms. Again, Brahma-asuraya asked whether she now wanted to be his wife, but again she sent him away. "Go and ask your wife if she is willing to receive a second woman with an infant in her house." And once more he set off to see his wife and returned with her consent. When he came back to the young woman on the swing, he saw to his amazement that she now had two little children on her lap. On his repeating the question, she once more sent him home to ask his wife whether she would agree to taking another woman with two babies. He went through the same procedure four times more, and each time when he returned to the beautiful woman, she had one more child in her arms. So, she was finally sitting there with six children, and Brahma-asuraya had become quite bewildered. But nevertheless, he was not willing to abandon his purpose of marrying the beautiful woman with her six children. But now, the woman on the swing demanded that he lay his hand on his head and swear an oath that he was speaking the truth. Brahma-asuraya was willing to fulfil even this demand, for he had long since forgotten that Isvara had uttered a mantra which put a spell on his palm. Impetuous and excited as he was, he at once placed his hand upon his head, when he was at once turned to ashes. The woman on the swing had meanwhile assumed six faces and twelve arms and hands, as she now had six children, and so she became Kataragama-dēviyo.

The twelve divinities together form the so-called "*dolos dēvol samayāṅgama*", i.e. society of the twelve deities, and they dwell in the lowest heaven, the "*chatur maharajika*"; from there, they occasionally come to the earth and punish people who are guilty of an offence, with illness <sup>1</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Further, there is a number of inferior deities of less importance who also afflict people with maladies. They are, in particular, the following four: Mahēsvara, Natēsvara, Kartēsvara, and Mundēsvara. Each of them has his special dēvālaya where he is venerated. Mahēsvara's dēvālaya is at Nivitigala (sixteen miles from Ratnapura), that of Natēsvara is at Kelaniya, that of Kartēsvara at Kēvul near Chilau, and that of Mundēsvara at Kurunēgala. These four deities are the chief ones responsible for causing fever (vara-ūna = childbed fever, mura-ūna = quartan, salisa-ūna = ague, geḥṇa-ūna = attacks of fever every two or three months).



It is generally believed that these deities, like the yakku and prṭeo, are able to spread diseases, mainly in the form of epidemics, among mankind, which are included under the name of "*dēviyo-dōsa*" (god-epidemics) <sup>1</sup>. There is, however, an essential difference between the two. The ailments which are produced by yakku and prṭeo or by planetary influence, are usually no definite maladies with whose course the medicine man is well acquainted and which end in either recovery or death, but rather some vague undefinable indisposition of a general character, caused by undernourishment, tuberculosis, malaria, influenza, etc. With the *dēviyo* on the other hand, the diseases show a definite and known course, i.e. thus have a definite diagnosis. To this group belong most of the infectious diseases (cholera, small pox, typhus, measles, mumps, scarlet fever, diphtheria, etc.), and also venereal and skin diseases, for which, however, the yakku are sometimes likewise blamed. My informant asserted further that each of these *dēviyo* is the source of one distinct illness. The most dangerous of them is the *Dēvol-dēviyo*, because it is he who disseminates most of the epidemic outbreaks; the venereal diseases are likewise traced back to him. *Patini-dēvi* also afflicts people with epidemics, but hers are of a less serious character. She is also regarded as the bearer of small pox. In the same way, *Kataragama-dēviyo* causes only slight disorders, such as fever, headaches, abscesses, and ulcers on the body. *Isvara* is considered as the origin of ailing limbs and diseases of the skin.

It is said that people know well when they have been smitten with an illness by this or that deity, and that they can do without consulting the astrologer or the horoscope; at most, they apply to a *vedarāla* for advice. This kind of illness has absolutely nothing to do with the horoscope or planets. Neither can anybody predict when and where he will be struck with a *dēviyo-dōsa*. Another informant, however, a *kapuā*, told me that the *dēviyo* themselves do not afflict mankind with diseases, but certain yakku who owe the deities obedience are commissioned by them and fulfil their orders. So we see here again that the notions connected with this kind of illness and their causes are vague and confused, frequently even self-contradictory.

Turning now to the mythological traditions about the deities, we find first the following one referring to *Dēvol-dēviyo*:

Once upon a time, a native sailing vessel went from *Maleāle* (the Malabar coast)

<sup>1</sup> Among the Vedic Indians prevails, however, the conception that diseases and epidemics are principally caused by female deities. Manohar Lall writes: "Some diseases are traced to certain goddesses. They are called *Matar*-mothers... Every epidemic is considered to have some presiding *Mata*. For instance, the goddess of small pox is called "*Sitla*". When people suffer from this disease, the *Mata* is supposed to have appeared in that particular individual's house. The women then go in a procession to a temple, or to some idol by the way-side, to sacrifice a goat with the usual accompaniments of vermillion, rice, incense. In epidemics like cholera and plague, the people get together in a central place, and then proceed to march with an effigy to the disease... Finally the effigy is carried outside the village, the idea being, that the goddess of that particular disease has been driven outside the village limits..." (R. Manohar Lall, *Among the Hindus*, Minerva Press, Cawnpore, 1933, p. XV ff.).

to Lanka (Ceylon). On the way it was hit by a heavy storm. At Gintōta, on the southern coast of Lanka, the men tried to land but were unsuccessful. Deundāra (Dondra-head) was the first place where it was possible to get ashore, but Patini-dēvi who dwelt nearby did not allow them to stay. So they continued their journey as far as Sinimidira and disembarked there. When they looked around, they saw that the region was not fit for permanent settlement. They therefore returned to their boat and went on in a westerly direction. Soon after, another tempest developed and they were shipwrecked. Only a few of them succeeded in escaping and reaching the shore by swimming, near Sinigama which is nowadays called Hikkaduva. Once more, Patini-dēvi endeavoured to keep the intruders off, and had a high fence of seven layers of fire (gini-vēta) erected to make it impossible for the shipwrecked men to go inland. But these men, who had come from India, knew the specific mantra, trampled the fence down and quenched the fire. Three of them resolved to settle there permanently; their names were: Gini-Kurumbāra, Dēvol-Kurumbāra, and Vahala-kurumbāra. Patini-dēvi, however, did not like the idea of seeing these three men establish themselves at that spot, and was, moreover, angry at her failure to keep them off by the fence of fire. As has been told, the three men were experienced in the use of mantra, so they knew how to transform potsherds into money with which to buy food. In this way they lived there for some space of time. Then, two of them went to Panguru and Deundāra, while the third, Dēvol-Kumbāra, remained at Sinigama and married one of the native girls, named Sinigamana. He continued making money out of potsherds and also began to transmute sand into sugar which he sold to people. Now and then he also stole coconuts which he sold, but one day he was caught unawares, and fled to Veragoda where he took another wife. She bore him two children. Here, likewise, he occupied himself in secret with the transformation of sand into sugar; but one day one of his children happened to surprise him and told his mother who up to that time had not known about it. The father flew into a rage at the disclosure and killed the child in his fury. But meanwhile it had become known that the foreigner was familiar with mantra and sorcery, and people came to pay him reverence as to a deity and called him from then on, Dēvol-dēviyo. Afterwards, a dēvālaya was built on the spot where he had lived and offerings were regularly brought.

To-day, a huge *soluliba*-tree of reputedly vast age, planted by Dēvol-dēviyo himself, still stands near this dēvālaya. Later, the kapuo instituted a ceremony in honour of Dēvol-dēviyo, the *dēvol-madua*, which was performed in cases of epidemics. During this ritual, the legend of Dēvol-dēviyo was enacted by dances and music, offerings were arranged, and the deity entreated to stop the spreading of the plague.

The lot of the other two men was similar. Gini-Kurumbāra became a sanniyayakka, and Vahala-Kumbāra became Bandahar-dēviyo, who is still venerated to this day and who has his own dēvālaya near Deundāra (Dondra-head).

According to a somewhat different version of this story, Dēvol-dēviyo had



originally been a merchant on the Malabar coast. One day he left in a sailing boat for Lanka in order to sell his goods there. During the voyage, he suffered shipwreck but was saved in a curious way: Sakra sent him a raft made of seven stones (*gaṣṭ pabura*), by means of which he was enabled to reach the western coast of Lanka. Here, he first went to the Saman-ta-kūta parvataya (i.e. the Adamspeak) with the intention of settling there, but he was refused by Saman-dēviyo. He therefore returned to his raft of stones, sailed round the southern point of Ceylon, and landed finally near Deundāra. But here Mahavishnu objected to his staying. He then went to Kataragama, but was not allowed to remain there either, and was told by Kataragama-dēviyo to go on further. He proceeded to Ahangama (near Veligama) where Isvara-dēviyo had his dēvālaya. Here also difficulties were raised. He met the same fate at Koggala where Maha-dēviyo refused to allow him to stay. At Unavatūna, near Galle, the Gana-dēviyo sent him away; at Gintōta the Vāta-meta-dēviyo regarded him with disfavour, nor did he fare any better at Udugalpitiya where Makala-Nagaraja, the king of the snakes, lived, and at Dodanduva he was denied refuge by Mahavishnu who had his dēvālaya there. So he finally arrived at Sinigama, near Hikkaduva, the residence of Patini-dēvi. She had already seen the strange vessel from afar and bade the foreigner welcome. Many other deities had assembled there, altogether thirty-three thousand. They were all gathered to greet the newcomer. Patini-dēvi stood in front of the rest and stretched out her arms. In her left hand she held one of her golden bracelets, in her right, a ring set with precious stones. She wore a red gown which also covered her head. When the stranger set foot on land, Patini-dēvi asked him from where he had come and what his intentions were. He replied, after having given an account of his adventures, that he had come to do business in Lanka, but that he was also experienced in mantra and in all kinds of sorcery. He affirmed that he knew how to transform sand into rice and several other tricks of that kind. This interested Patini-dēvi so much that she wanted to see an exhibition of his skill at once, basing her decision as to whether he might stay or not on their outcome.

So, he at once began to perform the transmutation of sand, which satisfied her highly. However, she then said, "I shall give you another task on which to try your skill. If you accomplish it, you may stay here!" She thereupon ordered seven fences of fire to be erected, each one one yodum (= sixteen English miles) high and the same in length. "You are," he was told, "to tear these fences down, to eat the fire, and to trample it underfoot so that nothing is left of it and the place becomes completely cool again." "That will be a mere trifle for me," replied the stranger. He devoured the fire, trampled it under his feet so that the flames were extinguished, and danced about on the remains until there was nothing more to be seen of it and until the spot was absolutely cool. When he had finished, he stood before Patini-dēvi, and all the other deities stood round him and complimented him on his great skill. Then, Dohala-dēviyo stepped forward and said, "So skilful a man must be honoured! Let us admit him to our midst and offer him a place in our

ceremonies, the gam-madua, the pam-madua, the dēvol-madua, etc. Whenever one of them is going to be performed, he shall be present and have his share."

The whole assembly agreed with this proposal. They gave him the name *Dēvol-dēviyo* and appointed seven yakku to serve him and to carry out his orders, punishing people who were guilty of an offence. The names of these seven yakku are: Andun-Kurumbāra, Sandun-Kurumbāra, Puspa-Kurumbāra, Vāta-Kurumbāra, Kalu-Kurumbāra, Tota-Kurumbāra, and Gini-Kurumbāra.

One of the best known and most popular personages of Sinhalese mythology is undoubtedly Patini-dēvi (or Patni-dēvi). A great number of legends are told about her and figures of her in bronze, wood, and stone are also made (Pl. XLIX, fig. 85 and 86). As it would lead us too far astray if we tried to reproduce these traditions here in full, we shall content ourselves with a short summary:

It is said that Patini-dēvi came originally from the Coromandel coast and was chiefly invoked in cases of small pox<sup>1</sup>. On the whole, Patini is pictured as a chaste and virtuous woman who was faithfully devoted to her husband and gave herself up completely to him, although he was mean and cruel. He deceived her, he even robbed her of her golden bracelets to distribute among other women as presents, but Patini nevertheless remained faithful to him. She was free from passion and was therefore also called "Patni rashava rakīma", i.e. "the Dispassionate"; she had a great number of other names as well. She is said to have died and been re-born seven times, each time in some unusual fantastic manner, as she had actually desired.

Once upon a time, when Krakuchchanda Buddha was living, there reigned a king on Lanka, whose daughter was distinguished by her beauty and grace. When she was seven years of age, she wanted to show Buddha her reverence by presenting him with a gift for his order. She made the convent a donation of thirty thousand gowns and the same number of bronze oil-lamps (ping karna) for the different temples. Her purpose in doing so was not wholly unselfish but was also directed by the idea of "earning merit". She even thought of her eventual re-birth, and was curious as to the way in which it would come to pass. Indeed, she secretly cherished the wish that she might be re-born either in a manga-fruit, or in a dew-drop, in a cobra's tear, in a water-lily, in fire, or out of Isvara's thigh. And in fact, her longings were fulfilled, one after the other.

Her first re-birth took place in a manga-fruit which hung from a great shadowy

<sup>1</sup> This may point to the identification of the Patini-dēvi with the Indian deity Harity, a fairy, who was regarded as the personification of small pox and was from far off feared.

Harity was, the traditions tell, mother of five hundred sons, but killed yearly thousands of children to save the lives of her own sons. To master the plague, Lord Buddha took away the youngest child, Pinigala, and hid him in his alms-bowl. Full of grief, Harity promised to give up her murderous actions if he would return her child. She became a devoted wife and mother whom people subsequently venerated and who was called upon by people desiring children. Harity was connected with the Bodhisatva Avalokitesvara or Padmapani (i.e. the Lotus-born) of the Mahayana Buddhism.



tree in the king's orchard. She grew up and was called *Tēda-Patini* (*tēda* from *tēdjassa* = strength). One day, she went to Anotatavila, where the rice fields extended far and wide in every direction, and was drowned while bathing there in a big pond. She was re-born for the second time in a water-lily (*manil-mala*) which grew by the bank and from which she received her new name, *Mal-Patini*, and for the third time in a cobra's tear (*Naga-kanduen-Patini*). During this life, she had a retinue of a thousand nagas. Her fourth reincarnation was perfected in fire (*gini*), on account of which she was called *Gini-jala-Patini* (fire-water-Patini). For the fifth time, she was re-born in a boat (*oruva*), and was therefore named *Orumala-Patini*. Her sixth re-birth was achieved in a dewdrop (*pini-bindu*), and the seventh and last one out of Isvara's thigh (*kalava-Isvara*).

Having grown up after this last reincarnation, she went to the mountain *Andungira-parvataya* in order to meditate, and won many followers. King *Senāvi-rajjuvu* presented her with two golden bracelets of great value. Later, accompanied by many adherents, she went to the "*Navaguna-dēvālaya*" which people had erected for her, and passed out of view before the eyes of all those present and was never seen again. She left only her golden bracelets behind. Afterwards, another *dēvālaya* was built on that same spot in honour of the vanished deity, where the bracelets have been kept up to this very day<sup>1</sup>. Subsequently, other objects were added, among them a precious book, written in Tamil, which the Sinhalese king *Gajabavi* donated to the *dēvālaya*. The book contains all kinds of mantra and instructions about the healing of diseases by exorcism, etc. Afterwards it was also translated into Sinhalese. Another relic of great value, *Gautama Buddha's* alms-bowl, found its way to the *dēvālaya* as well. After the *dēvālaya* had been built, *Sakra* let the trunk of a sandalwood-tree fall from heaven, and the people carved a statue of *Patini* out of it. This idol has also been kept in the sanctuary up to this day. The goddess herself lives, as has been told, in the "*tautisa bhavana*", one of the heavens, standing with one of her feet on a needle. Seven *yakkiniyo*, the "*Vaduru-yakkiniyo*", are at her disposal, ready, on their mistress' word, to spread sixty different diseases and epidemics, the "*vaduru-lēda*", over mankind. When people commit an offence against her, she dispatches the *yakkiniyo* to punish them by illness, upon which the harassed men have offering ceremonies performed by the *kapuā*. The same goes for the *Kataragama-dēviyo* who, however, has a considerably greater number of *yakku* at his command.

The origin of the *Vaduru-yakkiniyo* is told in the following legend:

One day, when *Patini-dēvi* was sitting and meditating on the *Andungira-parvataya*, a beggar approached her and asked her for some food. *Patini* wondered what she could give him, as she herself had nothing and there were no plants or blades of grass growing on the barren rock. But after a while, she rose, pounded the stones with her feet, and so transformed them into sand and soil; when it

<sup>1</sup> These bracelets, or their imitations, play a special part in all ceremonies which are performed for *Patini-dēvi*. We shall come back to them again when describing these ceremonies.



Fig. 63. The two Gara-yakku, standing on the vėsata, rock backwards and forwards like ghosts (flashlight picture).





Fig. 64. Scene from a gara-yakuma-ceremony. The two Gara-yakku on the vēsata.

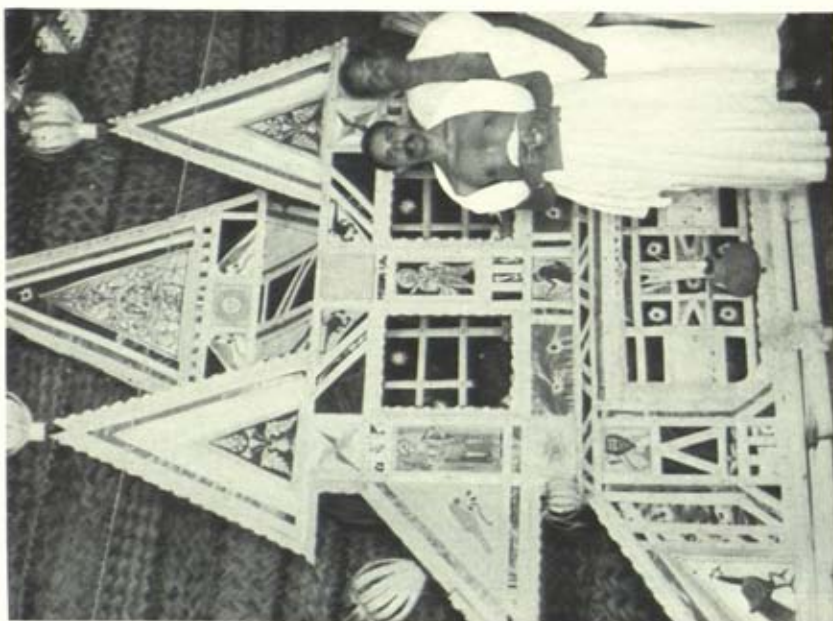


Fig. 65. Scene from a gara-yakuma-ceremony. The kapuā offers a banana to one of the two Gara-yakka-actors.



Fig. 66. Yellow-root water ("kaya-diyāra") being prepared for a dēvol-madua.





Figs. 67 and 68. The "torona-maligāva" and "dēvastana-yahanāva" for a dēvol-madua-ceremony.

became wet with the rain, the ground turned to mud, and the deity set herself to work, planting a rice field. Soon, tender sprouts of rice began to appear and when they bore fruit, the rice could be harvested. Thus, mankind was taught the cultivation of rice. Patini-dēvi then built a fire place, put the rice into her golden pan and cooked it. She first offered Sakra the dish of rice she had prepared, but he refused to accept it. So, Patini asked him what he really wanted. "Come with me to Naraloka," he replied, "to punish mankind for the evil that they have done." Once more Patini stamped the rock with her foot; it burst open and seven women appeared, the seven Vaduru-yakkiniyo<sup>1</sup>. They then went together to the Naraloka.

One of the most outstanding among the deities venerated by the Sinhalese people is, without doubt, the *Kataragama-dēviyo*, who received his name from his dwelling place. In India, he is known under the name of *Marukara* or *Skanda* as the god of war, but on Ceylon he is generally called *Kanda* and respectfully addressed as "*Kandasvami hāmuduruvō*" or "*Kanda-kumāra*", which means "Prince of the Mountains"<sup>2</sup>. Many traditions are related about him, which originated partly in India and which have partly developed on Ceylon but in a later period. He is regarded, as we have seen, as an incarnation of Vishnu; another legend, however, has it that he was emitted in the form of six sparks from Shiva's eye when it opened for the first time; he is, therefore, considered as a son of Shiva's. The six sparks fell into the Ganges and there took on the shape of six children who were brought up by the Pleiades (*kārtikēya*). The deity *Uma-dēvi*, likewise, took care of them, but when she clasped them in her arms the six children were mystically turned into one deity who was henceforth called "Skanda", i.e. "Master of the Lance".

At that time, Ceylon was still connected with Madagascar and in that part of the country which was later devoured by the sea, there reigned a giant whom even the gods feared. Upon the gods' request, Shiva sent his son Skanda to earth to fight the giant. This monster, however, fled to the bottom of the ocean, eager to avoid the stings of Skanda's lance. At Kataragama, Skanda sued for the hand of the beautiful Valli-amma<sup>3</sup>, a princess of the Veddas, the aborigines of Ceylon; that is the reason

<sup>1</sup> Vaduru = small pox. The vaduru-yakkiniyo are the demons mainly responsible for spreading small pox among mankind.

<sup>2</sup> Another name for this deity is "Bara-at", i.e. "twelve hands".

<sup>3</sup> The origin of Valli-amma is the subject of the following legend: 'Once upon a time, there lived a hermit who dwelt in the woods far from the places of other men. One day, he committed self-abuse. A hind which lived near the hermit's hut ate the grass on which the semen had fallen, became pregnant from it, and gave birth to a girl. The child grew up and was found one day by some Veddas who were hunting in the bush. They took the girl with them and one of them adopted her and brought her up. Every day, the girl went to the watering-place to fetch water. One day, she met there two men who were attracted by her grace. These two men were no less than Kataragama-dēviyo and Gana-dēviyo who were just taking a walk in the woods. The girl, disquieted and shy, hurried back to her foster-father's den. Kataragama-dēviyo followed her to see where she was living and returned then to his friend Gana-dēviyo. They deliberated together what to do to get the girl, and Gana-dēviyo put forward the following proposal, "I shall assume the shape of an elephant and lie in wait for the girl at the watering-place. When she comes, I shall frighten her and pursue her, and then you will come and offer her your assistance on con-





Fig. 17. Kataragama-dēviyo with the creature on which he rides, a peacock.

why, to this day, the kapuo who are in charge of the temple in Kataragama, boast of the connection with Valli-amma.

Skanda's first wife, however, was an Indian princess, named Theyvannai-amma (or Dēvasēna), whom he had married in India. Skanda and his retinue lived for many years in Kataragama. Then, a pilgrim from northern India, from the same birthplace as Skanda, came to Kataragama and entreated the deity to return to India. But Skanda paid no attention to him and remained in Kataragama. So, the pious man stayed with him and became his devoted adherent.

After some time, two little children joined him, a boy and a girl, who served him and supplied him with all he needed. One day, however, after the pious man had observed his prayers and had fallen asleep, overtired from his continuous penitential exercises, he was woken up by the boy and grew very angry. The boy, afraid of the old man's wrath, fled to a small island in the middle of the river; there, he revealed himself to his pursuer as Skanda himself, to whom the other had paid reverence during so many years. The holy man again entreated him to return but both deities, Skanda and his consort, did not yield this time either. The holy man thus continued living at Kataragama until his death, and has from then on likewise been venerated by the pilgrims who come to Kataragama.

According to another tradition, Kanda-kumāra once came from the Malabar coast to Lanka and landed at Sinigama (near Hikkaduva) where a dēvālaya was built for him<sup>1</sup>. But afterwards, when people began more and more to take up fishing and the air was filled with the smell of fish drying in the sun, he left and went to Udugalpitiya, near Dodanduva, where another dēvālaya was raised for him. But he could not stand it here either as people began to prepare dried fish here too. He, therefore went farther to Deundāra (Dondra Head) where they likewise built him a dēvālaya, but at length he moved to Kataragama where he settled on the 2,500 feet high Vedahitiya-kanda, one of the seven mountains of that neighbourhood. So it came to pass that he was subsequently also called Kanda-kumāra, Prince of the Mountain.

Although an Indian divinity, Kanda-kumāra or Skanda is paid reverence by both the Hindu and the Sinhalese. Also for the Veddas, has Kataragama since ancient

dition that she becomes your wife". The plan was approved by Kataragama-dēviyo and carried into effect and everything came to pass just as Gana-dēviyo had predicted. Kataragama-dēviyo led the girl to the Vadisitigala; there he built a hut and the two of them continued to live there. Meanwhile, the Veddas looked for the girl everywhere and found her at last on the Vadisitigala, living with a stranger. They were very angry and threatened to kill Kataragama-dēviyo, but the demon made a power (ramaseri) emanate from him which made them all unconscious. The girl was greatly grieved and accused Kataragama-dēviyo of having killed her people; but he soothed her and made the men come to after a while. Thereupon, the chieftain addressed himself to the demon and told him that he might keep the girl and marry her. So they married and from that day on she was called Valli-amma. In a later period, people raised a temple on the spot, the Valli-amma-kovil, which is still standing at Kataragama and is a place of worship along with the other ones.

<sup>1</sup> This dēvālaya is still standing to-day, but now on a small island which, in the course of time, has broken loose from the mainland.



times played an important rôle as a place of reverence; in particular, they used to take care of the small temple of Valli-amma during the festivities which were arranged there annually.

During the first century B.C., Dutugemunu, the king of the Sinhalese, resolved one day to subjugate the Tamil chieftain Elāla who already had seized on part of the realm. He had, however, a vision in which his father warned him not to undertake anything without the previous approval of Skanda. So, he set out on a pilgrimage and underwent penitence. The deity heard his prayers, presented him with weapons, and promised to help him to victory. Elāla was defeated and Dutugemunu had the temple of Kataragama built in compliance with a vow which he had made. His descendants endowed the temple still further and Skanda was, from that day on, generally venerated at the royal court.

According to the statements of Robert Knox who during the 17th century was kept in captivity at Kandy for twenty years by the Sinhalese king, the Kataragama-dēviyo was one of the three divinities who were worshipped at the Kandy-perahēra which was observed each year. This religious festivity had principally been intended as homage for these three deities. It is only later that it was converted into Buddhist ritual in honour of the relic of the sacred tooth.

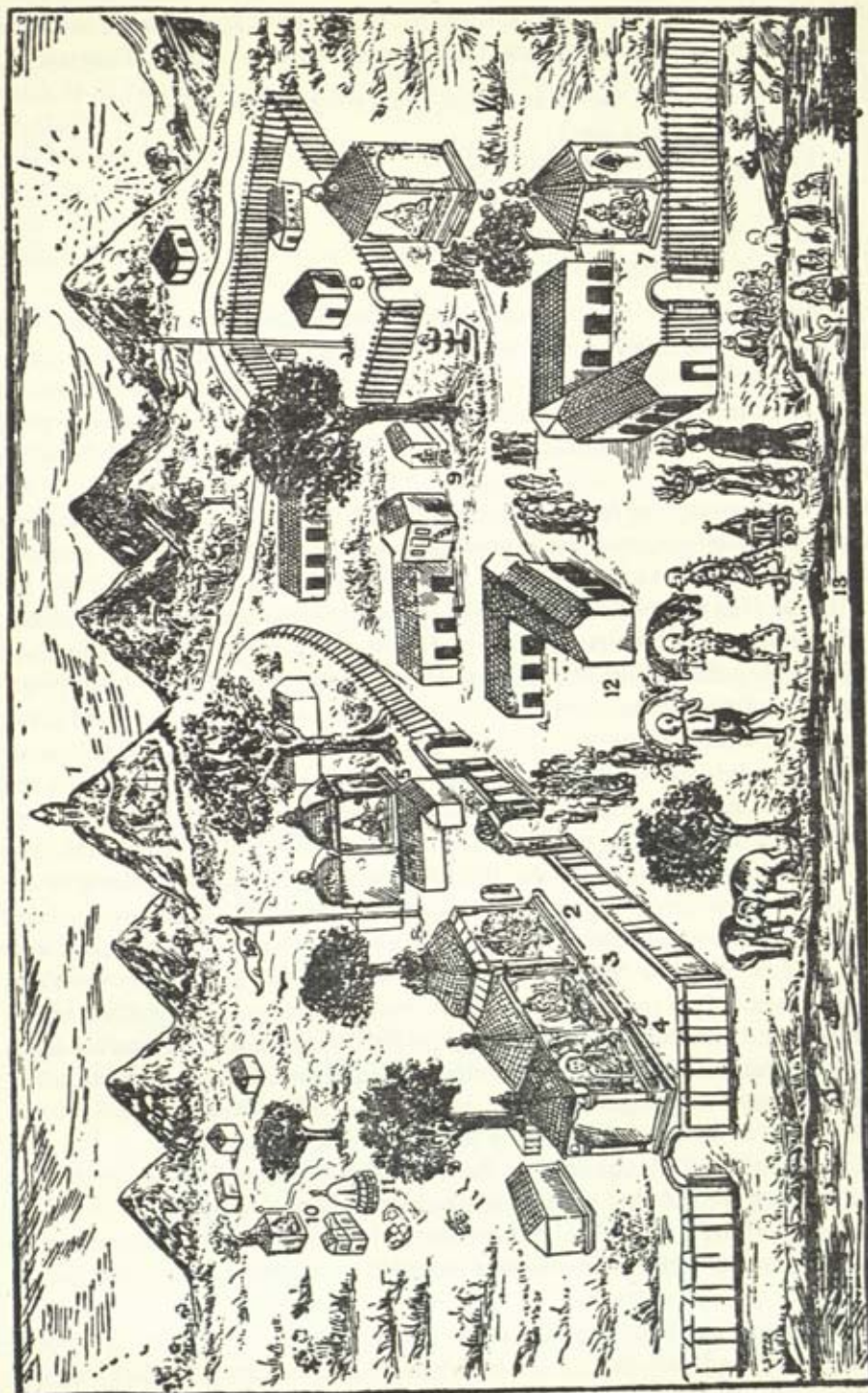
Skanda is a deity who is generally looked upon with fear rather than with love and who is believed to demand penitence from men. That is the reason why penance and self-mortification are the main acts expected from the devotees who attend the great festival at Kataragama in July. The pilgrims chastise themselves in many ways; they walk on shoes spiked with nails, drive iron nails and hooks into their bodies, walk on fire, and perform other feats of that kind.

The most popular form in which Skanda is revered, is that of a tender, three year old boy, adorned with precious jewelry, holding a flaming sword in one hand, and the animal he rides on, a peacock, in the other one. It can be supposed that Marukara was originally a local deity who was identified with Skanda. It is a strange fact, too, that there is no likeness of this great and famous deity to be seen at Kataragama. In the temple itself there is said to be only a little box which contains a yantra engraved on gold foil; this yantra is displayed, instead of an image, on the back of an elephant in the processions during the great festival.

According to another statement, however, a golden effigy of this deity, about 20 cm high, is indeed concealed in the kovil in a small receptacle, but it is never taken out. It is in the furthest room of the Maha-dēvālaya, which is separated by seven curtains from the anteroom to which access is allowed also to laymen; but neither a layman nor a priest, with the exception of the Maha-dēvālaya kapuā, is permitted to set eyes on the idol. It is said never to leave the holy of holies of the temple. Just this point, however, is greatly disputed. There are many who maintain that on occasion of the great perahēra a smaller substitute is exhibited on the back of the elephant, while others affirm that the original effigy itself is paraded.



Plan of Kataragama (according to an old Indian print)



- 1) The Kataragama peak, or Vedahitiya-kanda, one of the seven mountains of Kataragama. 2) The Maha-dēvalaya. 3) The Ganapati-kovil.
- 4) The Perumal-kovil. 5) The Theyvannai-amma-kovil. 6) The Valli-amma-kovil. 7) The Murtulinga-sami-kovil. 9) The Kannakai-amma-kovil. 10) Smaller kovil. 11) Dāgoba. 12) Residence of the basnayaka. 13) The Manik-ganga.



Beside the Maha-dēvālaya, the real temple of the Kataragama-deity, there are several other temples of smaller size devoted to the inferior deities. They are:

- 1) the kovil of the Gana-dēviyo, also called Ganapati-kovil,
- 2) the Perumal-kovil,
- 3) the Theyvannai-amma-kovil,
- 4) the Kannakai-amma-kovil,
- 5) the Valli-amma-kovil,
- 6) the Muttulinga-sami-kovil.

Each one of these temples is under the care of two or three Sinhalese kapuo; only the Theyvannai-amma-kovil is entrusted to a Brahman priest from Benares, because Theyvannai, Skanda's first consort, was an Indian princess. The Valli-amma-kovil is said to have been guarded by Veddās during the great festival. Moreover, there is a mosque at Kataragama, so that indeed each of the religious creeds of the country can be satisfied.

The main sanctuary, as has been said, is the Maha-dēvālaya, consisting of two chambers: the anteroom, open for priests and laity, and, separated from it by seven curtains, the holy of holies (adytanam) where the receptacle with the idol or the yantra is kept. The Maha-dēvālaya kapuā is the only person permitted to enter this, the holiest room of all. He must, however, first wash his hands and feet and cover his mouth with a cloth. Three "pūjā", i.e. ritual services, are celebrated here every day, the first of them between 5 and 6 o'clock in the morning, the second about noon, and the third one between 6 and 7 o'clock in the evening. In this same room, there is also kept the kalana-madima, an object which is regarded with the utmost veneration. It is a broad stool of clay, placed upon a platform and covered with a leopard skin, and it serves to keep the various ritual utensils. The seat originally belonged to Kalana Nātha, the first priest of the Maha-dēvālaya, whose name is remembered even to-day with reverence and who is believed to have been raised to heaven without dying. The Valli-amma-kovil, at a distance of a few hundred metres from the Maha-dēvālaya, likewise contains a sanctuary separated from the anteroom by a painted curtain. Here, representations of the girl and of her mother, the hind, are displayed. Adjoining the Valli-amma-kovil is a small mosque and the monument of a Mohammedan saint, called Kamra Nābhi; he is supposed to have discovered a spring at this spot which, it is said, bestowed eternal life on whoever drank of its water. Nothing is left or to be seen of it to-day.

The Ganapati-kovil is supposed to be on the spot where Kanda-kumāra and Valli-amma met for the first time; a near-by cavern is, according to tradition, the place where Valli-amma used to churn butter. Slimy secretions on the adjoining rocks are connected with the legend and regarded as originating from the butter-milk.

The area which the buildings take up, is two rectangles. The larger is enclosed by a brick wall and includes the Maha-dēvālaya, the Ganapati-dēvālaya, an old

Buddhist vihāra with a pretty bō-tree, and six smaller kovils which are consecrated to the deity Patini. The smaller rectangle contains a karandua (shrine), a kovil which is dedicated to the demon Bahīra, and lastly a rest-house for the pilgrims (chatram).

The whole neighbourhood of Kataragama, far and near, is full of mythological traditions, and they exercise a strange charm upon the visitor. A quaint mystic mood seems to be spread over the landscape and fills one with all the stories and pictures of long forgotten times. Seven holy mountains (kanda hatak) surround the sacred place; seven little streams (ganga hatak) have their source here, and the legend tells that they were created by Skanda himself with the purpose of preventing Valli-amma from escaping; seven water pits (pokuna hatak) are still to be seen which were dug by the deity for his beloved to draw water from with her golden vessels.

Three different festivals are held every year at Kataragama. The most important and widely known of them is the *ēsala-perahēra* which is observed in June from new moon until full moon. It starts with the *māgul-perahēra*, in memory of the wedding of Kanda-kumāra with the Valli-amma, and ends with the ceremony of the cutting of the water which is always performed at full moon. The second festival is the *ilmaba-kachi* which is performed in November and lasts three days. The third one is called *aluth-aurutha* and coincides with the New Year's Day of the Hindu and Sinhalese (April). The *ēsala-perahēra*, the most important of them, was perhaps originally meant to celebrate Midsummer day and had a cosmic background. The kapuo from all parts of Lanka used to come together to Kataragama, and still do so to-day. Even from southern India, the pilgrims and sadhus gather together. Whoever is able to come, comes. Those suffering from an illness or afflicted with infirmity, make a vow to go on a pilgrimage to Kataragama at the next *ēsala-perahēra* to present the deity with an offering. Still others pledge themselves to undergo self-chastisement, to drive needles through their cheeks, their tongues, or other parts of their bodies, to cover the road to Kataragama rolling on the ground, or to measure the route with their bodies, or to walk it in shoes spiked with nails.

About two thousand devotees assemble every year at Kataragama on the occasion of this festival, men from all parts of Lanka and India, Tamils as well as Sinhalese, Hindus and Buddhists. The air is filled with the voices of the crowds who have gathered to pay homage to the deity of Kataragama and to present him with their offering-gifts of flowers, rice, and coconuts <sup>1</sup>.

The ailing and the infirm and all those who are suffering from any kind of disease, bring figurines of silver or gold to the temple as votive offerings for the divinities to whom they pray for their recovery. Much money as such is also offered. It is said that a big box, which is kept ready for that purpose, is completely filled

<sup>1</sup> A detailed account of Kataragama and its festivals may be found in Spittels "Far-off Things", pp. 281 ff., and in Sarasin "Die Tröpen", pp. 41 ff.



with copper coins several times during the principal days of the feasts. The fourth part of the revenue, it is true, is taken by the government as tax. Those who are prevented from going themselves, do not fail to entrust their money gift or votive offering to the kapuā of their village who takes it with him to Kataragama.

The festival proper lasts seven days and seven nights. Each night, a perahēra is performed in which three elephants take part; the idol or its substitute (or the little shrine with the yantra) is, however, only displayed during two evenings. This is the only season when there is any life at Kataragama; at other times, the place is lonely and quiet; only now and then, a holy man finds his way to Kataragama and its famous temples, urged on by the desire to ask the deity a favour, or to do penance, or driven simply by the pious longing to behold the sacred place with his own eyes.

#### CEREMONIES TO FIGHT THE EPIDEMICS SENT BY THE DEITIES

There are four different ceremonies which are performed to ward off the epidemics which the deities have spread. They are called: the *dāne*, the *pam-madua* (literally: little oil-lamp-hut), the *dēvol-madua* (lit.: dēvol-hut), and the *gam-madua* (lit.: village-hut)<sup>1</sup>. All of them bear the same character, and essentially, they are one and the same thing. Each ceremony represents an extension of the preceding one, supplementing it and therefore requiring more time.

The *dāne* may be regarded as a ceremony in itself, but has at the same time also to serve as a kind of prologue to the three others. The *dēvol-madua* is nothing more than a *pam-madua*-ceremony expanded, and the *gam-madua* is a enlarged *dēvol-madua*. The *pam-madua* and the *dēvol-madua* are only observed within one family, while the *gam-madua*, as suggested by its name, is celebrated on behalf of the entire village and its performance may last from a few days to a whole week, according to the circumstances.

All these ceremonies are performed by the kapuā as the head and priest of a *dēvālaya*, the small temple of a deity. Just as with ceremonies carried out by an *ēdura* here likewise two or more kapuo collaborate in the performance of a more extensive ritual, along with a number of assistants and drummers who are just as indispensable here as they are in a *sanniya-yakuma* or one of the other ceremonies which we have described in the preceding chapters. But the kapuo themselves have to fulfil two different tasks. The one, the so-called "patini", is the rôle of the dancer, who has to represent the mythological traditions of Patini-dēvi by dances

<sup>1</sup> These four ceremonies, however, are only the most important ones. In addition, there are the "dēvol-pidenna" and the "kudā-yakuma", which are only very seldom observed, and the three religious fighting games: the *pol-gahanavā*, the *an-keliya*, and the *li-keliya* which will be treated in a separate chapter.

and pantomimes, while the other, the so-called "gi-kiya-nava", is the performing of the discourses and recitations.

These ceremonies are observed with the aim of checking a person's illness or the stopping of an epidemic which has been sent by a deity; but frequently, they are performed only later, i.e. when the afflicted person is already getting better or even when he has already recovered his health. In the latter case the motive for the celebration is the expression of gratitude and homage to the god. It is also often done that a person who has fallen a victim to a *dēviyo-dōsa* makes a vow to perform a ceremony upon his recovery, with the usual offering-ritual in honour of the deity. So, the performance of such a solemnity is, as we see, based on quite other motives than those involved in the ceremonies on behalf of the *yakku* and *prēteo*. They are celebrated not because one wants to get something from the *dēviyo*, but principally to pay honour to them. For one cannot bargain and haggle with the deities as can be done with the *yakku* and the *prēteo*. In the neighbouring country of India, the same usage prevails, that of taking an oath in instances of diseases and other afflictions. People promise the deity that they will walk on fire, chastise themselves, that they will undertake a pilgrimage to a holy place at the next opportunity, or that they will present a temple with a great gift, assist the poor, feed the hungry, or something else of that kind. The same may be said of the four ceremonies mentioned above, whose performance is meant to show one's gratitude to the deity. The origin of these ceremonies is told in a tradition which runs as follows:

Once upon a time, there lived in Northern India a king, named *Sali-rajjuvo*. One night, he heard a noise from the garden near his bedroom, which sounded like the roaring of a bull. And indeed, a wild bull had broken into the park. The king was angry, seized his gun, and shot at the animal. It collapsed dead, but was re-born as a frog who was in the habit of sitting in a lotus-blossom in the pond of the royal garden. One day, the king was taking the air in his garden; when he approached the lotus-pond he saw a gorgeous flower which had just unfolded its petals. He stooped down, picked the lotus-blossom, and enjoyed its fragrance. However, the frog was sitting in the flower, and as the king put the blossom to his nose, the frog crept into it and reached the brain where it brought forth its offspring. The king began to suffer from terrible headaches which nearly drove him mad. *Sakra* sympathized with him. While the king was sleeping, he opened his skull, removed the frogs, and healed the wound. From that time, the headaches diminished; but the king was not yet completely relieved of his ailment, and nobody knew how to cure him. The king consulted a *sāstra-kariya* and was advised to proceed as follows: he was to have a hut built, sixty arms long and thirty arms wide. On one side of the hut, a so-called "*torana*" was to be erected, an offering-shrine in the shape of a triumphal arch made in three parts. Furthermore, the king was to have a pot made of gold, as big and as heavy as his body. Into this vessel, a big coconut was to be put, picked from a palm bearing red, gold-coloured fruits (*ran temili malva*), and the pot itself then placed on the *torana*.



The king followed the advice he had received and was finally cured of his sickness. Thus, the four ceremonies, the *dēva-dāne*, the *pam-madua*, the *dēvol-madua*, and the *gam-madua* were created which are conducted by the *kapuā* in honour of the deities <sup>1</sup>.

### *The dēva-dāne*

"*Dāne*" means "gift", or rather "a meal given to a person" (in contrast to "*pinnapataya*" which denotes the food which kind people put into the alms-dish of the *bhikshu* on his begging-round every morning). When somebody wants to perform a good deed with the purpose of "gaining merit" in his present life or in the world to come, he arranges a *dāne*, or more exactly a "*sangha dāne*", for the *bhikshu* of one or several monasteries in the vicinity <sup>2</sup>. These monks are invited to take the offered meal in the morning hours between eleven and twelve o'clock, since they are forbidden to take solid food after midday.

When we speak of a "*dēva-dāne*", however, we think of a meal in honour of the twelve deities whose places are actually taken by their earthly servants, the *kapuo*. Such a *dāne* is arranged after an epidemic as an act of gratitude towards the divine beings and it may be managed by one or more families or even by a part or a whole village. If the people who want to offer the *dāne* are poor, the necessary means are raised by a collection, and the common meal is taken under the direction and in the presence of several *kapuo*.

In the evening as it is beginning to get dark, the *kapuo* assemble in the host's house; there, they take their meal apart, before the others have tasted the food which will be dispensed to them. Extreme cleanliness must be observed during

<sup>1</sup> Another tradition adds the following: Since the days of king Parakrama-Bahu who lived about the year 1150 A.D., it has been the general custom that the Sinhalese kings marry Tamil women. The king was an adherent of Buddhism, while his Tamil wife kept to her Hindu faith. So the habit grew up that a little Hindu temple, a so-called *dēvālaya*, was always added to the Buddhist temples. A later Sinhalese king, Puotala-rajjuruvo, once brought a book with him from India which was called "*Dēvahotra potra*" and which contained information about the *dēvol-madua*, *pam-madua*, and *gam-madua*; these rituals were soon taken up and were performed under the directions of Hindu priests who were later replaced by the *kapuo*. Originally, the *kapuo* had been Tamils, and it was only later on that the Sinhalese took over this clerical office. Each Buddhist temple of any importance had a *dēvālaya* attached, a small Hindu sanctuary in which were a few Indian and also Ceylonese deities, such as *Patini-dēvi*. In most cases, these gods may be found in the Buddhist temples, either in the main hall of the building itself or in a small side room. The little *dēvālaya*, however, which are quite separate and which are usually erected at obvious places, have nothing to do with the Buddhist temples. They are small buildings, dedicated to the afore-mentioned divinities or to some local deity, whose images, of mortar or stone, are exhibited there.

<sup>2</sup> Anyone who has done profitable business, has earned or gained much money without expecting it, arranges a *sangha-dāne* to which he invites a number of *bhikshu*. Wealthy people even go so far as to serve out a *sangha-dāne* regularly, once a month or once or twice a year. The *dāne* in the usual sense is another thing in which the *bhikshu* of a nearby monastery are presented with a full meal every day, or once a week or once a month. There is also the custom of pledging oneself to offer a regular *dāne* to the *bhikshu* of a certain monastery during one's lifetime.

the preparation of the dishes; for this reason, the food, i.e. the rice and the other ingredients, are not served on plates, but always on banana-leaves, and are eaten from them as well. Banana-leaves are the best expedient, since on account of the great expense which the buying of new unused plates and dishes would involve, such a purchase is generally not made. Not before the meal is finished, are those who provided it and assisted at its preparation, allowed to take their food. The kapuo now begin to invoke the eight deities and to utter the so-called *kanalav*. The same *kanalav* are also used at the *pam-madua*, the *gam-madua*, and the *dēvol-madua*, and correspond to the mantra of the *ḑura* and the *bandhanaya*. The offering consists of flowers, powdered sandalwood, and camphor; in addition, numerous little oil-lamps are lighted, and *dummala* is burned as incense. Frequently, an enclosure made of young coconut-leaves, is erected in front of the house, and within this square the devotees build three so-called *yabanāva*, little offering-shrines, on which the offering-gifts and the oil-lamps are placed. The ceremony lasts one night at most, but generally terminates at midnight or shortly afterwards.

### *The pam-madua-ceremony*

The literal meaning of *pam-madua* is "house of the little oil-lamps". A square booth of coconut-leaves, the so-called "*pam-madua*", is built in front of the residence of the patient who has recovered. Opposite the entrance, there is a little offering-shrine for the *Vaduru-yakka*. On top of it, is placed a small pot with rice and twelve cents in copper coins, and another vessel containing the *hālang*, i.e. the bronze bracelets and foot-rings for the dance. Round about, a few little oil-lamps are distributed. At either side of the square enclosure, there are similar offering-shrines, one of them consecrated to the *Patini-dēvi*, the other one to the *Dēvol-dēviyo*. On top of each of them is a vessel with yellow-root water and a number of oil-lamps. In front of the offering-shrine of *Vaduru-yakka*, they also place a "*mal-bulat-putuva*", a stool with a little pot of yellow-root water, flowers, and a small trumpet.

This ceremony likewise begins at nightfall with a joint meal (*dāne*), at which the *kapuā* and his assistants receive their rice on banana-leaves. The use of plates is prohibited at any ceremony having a *kapuā* in charge. After the meal, mats are spread out on the floor of the *pam-madua*. One of the assistants begins reciting and invoking the *dēviyo*. While he speaks, he holds a vessel with yellow-root water in his hands. He makes the round of the members of the family who are squatting in a half-circle before the *pam-madua*, pours a few drops of water into each palm with which they moisten their foreheads, and then moistens his own forehead and hair, likewise. After this procedure, they all go to the *pam-madua*, each carrying a small oil-lamp. Candles of incense and small torches (*vilakku*) are lighted and fixed in the four corners of the *pam-madua*. The smoke of *dummala* pervades the air and people say a prayer with flowers in their hands, to the accompaniment of the shell-



trumpet. Then, they all return to the veranda of the house and resume their seats. The kapuā and his assistant take up their recitations again, alternating in their performance, and the drums beat an accompaniment.

Towards midnight, the kapuā as Patini-dēvi, performs a dance. For this, he dons a clean white garment, has a red sash round his waist and the tinkling hālang on his arms (hālang-alēnova = dance with the arm-rings). During the dance, the legend of Patini-dēvi is recited and drums are beaten. This dance is the climax of the ceremony and the ritual reaches its end soon afterwards, at about two o'clock in the morning.

We see that this ceremony is very similar to the one which has just been described; the only difference is that, after the kanalav, the kapuā performs a kind of pantomime in which one or the other deity, as a rule the Patini-dēvi, is represented.

### *The dēvol-madua-ceremony*

The performance of this ritual takes a rather long time; it is based upon a number of traditions of various deities and yakku. However, its main rôle is that of the Patini-dēvi which is enacted by the dances and mimics of the collaborating kapuo. I was present only once at such a ceremony which is rather seldom celebrated and I shall now give a detailed description of it.

The ceremony was performed because a sick woman had bound herself by a pledge to arrange a solemnity when she recovered her health. Soon after, she died of pneumonia. Nevertheless, her husband decided to have the ceremony observed, perhaps not so much on account of the vow, but rather on behalf of those left behind, so that they might be spared such a fate as had befallen the mother and wife.

The ceremony, along with its preparations, lasted the whole of two days and two nights and its performance had been entrusted to twelve kapuo from different villages. Close to the house, an extensive roof of leaves had been erected. At the back, along one of its sides, the *torana-maligāva*, a kind of shrine having the shape of a three-part triumphal arch, had been built and took up the entire length of the side (Pl. XL, fig. 67). It was constructed of ribs of palm-leaves and banana-stems, and was richly decorated with paintings, gokkola, and neatly cut-out leaves of a kind of Pandanaceae. Opposite it, there was a similar shrine, somewhat smaller in size (the *dēvastana-yahanāva*), likewise embellished with cut-out leaves and paintings among which representations of the Patini-dēvi, the Dēvol-dēviyo, the Katara-gama-dēviyo, and Vishnu. On this dēvastana-yahanāva were placed three vessels, one with a little rice and a coconut-blossom, the other two containing the bracelets and foot-rings (hālang) and other jewelry of the Patini-dēvi (Pl. XL, fig. 68). These rings and jewels are just as important as in the other ceremonies which concern the Patini-dēvi, and are, therefore, always treated with great reverence. They are sacred objects which may be touched by nobody but the kapuā, and which

must be kept on a torana and a *dēvastana-yahanāva* erected for the purpose. Further, four little oil-lamps (one for each of the deities represented) were placed on this *yahanāva*, and three shell-trumpets which are indispensable as ritual instruments in any ceremony conducted by a *kapuā*. At both sides of the *dēvastana-yahanāva* were similar but smaller shrines upon which flowers of various colours had been placed; these shrines are therefore also called *mal-yahanāva*. On one of these *mal-yahanāva*, there was also a stick of the *nil-tree* which was to be chopped into small pieces and burnt later on. Apart from this "festive hut", there were in addition two small offering-shrines for the *Senāma-rajjuruvo*, a mythological personality who is connected with the legend of the goddess *Patini*. Finally, mention must be made of two "*vēsata*", little *parasātu*-stems which are stuck into the floor for the *Dala-kumāra*. We shall see further below, that this *yakka* also has his place in the legend of *Patini-dēvi*, and must, therefore, be remembered when the ritual is performed.

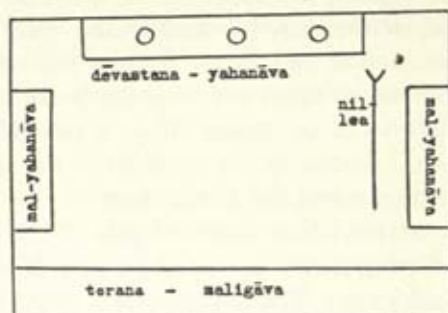


Fig. 18.

The ceremony begins at six o'clock in the evening. Two *kapuā*-dancers appear, wearing long red garments, and with the round vessels which contain jewels of *Patini* fixed on their heads. They represent the deity herself. Before they begin to dance, the silver bracelets are carefully taken out of the receptacles and dipped into clear water in new unused little pots. Mantra are uttered, the rings are well dried, wrapped in the cloths and returned to the vessels. Then, one of the vessels is wrapped in a clean white cloth and fixed on to the head of the *kapuā* again. After this, a white cloth is spread as a baldachin over the heads of the two priests, since they are representing the deities who are accustomed to walk only under canopies. Now the dance begins. It consists of slow, solemn steps forwards and backwards and movements of arms and hands, but the motions are deliberate and not unnatural. Three drummers beat the *beraya*. Opposite the deities, two other persons dance, wearing less clothing. Their bodies are bare, and for the rest, they wear nothing but close-fitting red trousers. Their dance is much more vivid and impetuous, interspersed now and then with wild leaps and whirlings of the body. These two dancers are the "*atavāsiyo*", the servants of *Patini-dēvi*, who entertain her with their dance. The fact that *Patini-dēvi* is represented twice over, is of no consequence and is the customary mode of acting.

All the members of the family are seated on mats immediately to the left of the *torana* which is, for the time being, still concealed by two white cloths. The dance of the two *atavāsiyo* grows wilder and wilder; the leaps and the bendings of their bodies become more and more fantastic. After a while, however, they retire, while



the Patini pair continue their dancing for a little longer, coming nearer and nearer the hidden torana. Suddenly, the cloths are removed, and they now stand directly before the gaily-coloured torana while the assistant lights a number of oil-lamps on it. The two Patini dancers now also stop dancing; the receptacles with the jewels are taken off their heads with the same care, and are placed in the two hollows of the torana. Then, a coconut is split with one blow, and conclusions as to the destiny of the members of the family are drawn from the manner in which its two halves fall to the floor.

Meanwhile, a curious figure of clay (*punāva*) has been put on one of the two offering stands erected at the side. It represents a leopard (*divi*) on whose back a yakka rides. The yakka holds a sword in his right hand and a fire-pan in his left. On his head, he carries a big round vessel (*kala gēdiya*) supported by three cobras; this vessel is removable and serves as a receptacle for the offerings intended for Patini-dēvi: rice, sandalwood, and a betel-leaf with a coin. Round this vessel is a ridge with twelve extensions, having little notches to hold small torches (*vilakku*) which are likewise part of the offering-gift to be presented to Patini. This figure is about 40 cm. in height and is painted quite fantastically in red, white, and blue colours; the eyes of the leopard and those of the yakka are now dabbed with oil and soot (Pl. XLII, fig. 71).

Another dance is performed by one of the kapuo before the torana, and the clay figure is then brought in front of the dēvastana. Twelve little torches are put into the notches in the vessel and are lit. The kapuā dances round the figure, sprinkling it with yellow-root water; he takes it in his hands and dances with it in front of the dēvastana-yahanāva, in front of the two yahanāva on either side of it, and finally in front of the torana. When the dance is ended, it is placed on a chair before the members of the family who are sitting on their mat, and each one of them puts a few grains of rice and a betel-leaf with a coin into the urn. During this act, the kapuā continues dancing with two torches in his hands, reciting incessantly to the accompaniment of the drums, and telling the traditions which are connected with this figure and which may be told shortly as follows <sup>1</sup>.

Kuvēni was a dreaded yakkini who since olden times lived on Lanka. When king Vijaya, coming from India, landed on Taprobane, Mahavishnu gave him a thread (*nūla*) which he was to tie about his arm as an amulet to protect him from the dangerous yakku and raksho of the island. Vijaya had come to Lanka with seven hundred men, and had sent some of them to look for water. They came to a great lake, which was Kuvēni's well. Kuvēni overpowered the men sent out by the king and hid them. In the meantime, Vijaya waited for his men to return; at length, he took his sword and set out to look for them. He came to a large fig tree under which a beautiful woman sat knitting. Vijaya at once surmised that she must be Kuvēni. He approached cautiously and asked her where his men were; he seized

<sup>1</sup> This is the legend of king Vijaya and the yakkini Kuṇēni which has already partly been told in one of the preceding chapters (p. 39).



her by her hair, threatening to kill her unless she returned his soldiers. Kuvēni fell on her knees before the king and promised to fulfil his wish on condition that he married her. "But you are a yakkini", answered the king. Kuvēni, however, did not cease urging him, so that ultimately Vijaya yielded to her entreaties. It was now for the first time that the king became aware that the woman had three breasts, but Kuvēni said, "If you want me to do so, I shall cut off one of my breasts."

They married, and lived in a palace which they built near the tree. Kuvēni bore two children, a boy and a girl, who were to be the ancestors of the Veddas. Soon after, the king received news from his aged father that he was lying on his death bed and longed to see his son once more so that he might pass over his crown to him and instal him as his heir. Besides, continued the message, he had selected a girl whom his son should marry, the daughter of Pandi Suli-rajjuruvo, and had sent a ship to Lanka which had likewise landed at Taprobane. Vijaya took counsel with his men as to what he should do, and they finally came to the conclusion to return secretly to India. Without Kuvēni's knowing anything about it, Vijaya went to Taprobane and did not inform her of his intentions until directly before his departure. When Kuvēni received the message, she hastened to see her husband hoping she might dissuade him from his purpose. She wept and cried, and reminded him of their two children, but Vijaya paid no attention to her entreaties; he sailed to India and soon after married the daughter of Suli-rajjuruvo. When Kuvēni heard about it, she resolved to take revenge. She sent her son who also was a yakka, to India in the form of a wild boar. As soon as he arrived there, he destroyed the garden of the king, his father, and devastated the whole country. The king heard about it and sent guards to find out who the evildoer was. One of them thought that the garden had been destroyed by an elephant during the night and that they must hunt for it. So, a number of men watched the garden and saw one night that a boar broke into it to carry on its work of destruction. The sight of the monster filled the guards with terror; they fled, along with the king who had heard their story. The hog, however, ran to and fro, destroying everything and spreading diseases (*rōga*) all over the country. Whoever met the beast, was smitten with illness and died. A real epidemic broke out and people died like flies.

After the boar had laid everything in ruins, it returned again to Lanka, roaming through the whole island in all directions. Then it finally jumped once more into the sea and this time landed at the most southern point of the island, at Kadavāta (three miles east of Galle). Here, it met the Gara-yakka (*Dala-kumāra*) who had also come from India. On seeing the hog, the yakka jumped on its back and rode off on it. The hog changed itself into a leopard (*divi*) and from that time the two of them roved about the whole country and spread illness over mankind".

Now the three drummers step forward and dance before the torana, beating their "beraya". The music rises and falls continually, and the bodies of the dancers assume strange attitudes which are not seen in any of the other dances. Now, all of them dance together, now only one, exhibiting his skill while the others enjoy



a short rest. Then, once more, four kapuo dance in front of the torana, dressed in coloured gowns and white head-cloths. After a while, one of them takes a piece of graphite, a gift for Patini-dēvi, out of a niche in the torana, and recites another episode of the legend.

Meanwhile, it is four o'clock. The kapuo moisten their hands and faces with yellow-root water and utter mantra before the yahanāva; then a number of new dances are presented. At times they dance individually, at times altogether; they spin like tops about the small extent of the place, perform somersaults, and other acrobatics. They each relieve each other; then again, they dance all together and display their skill jointly. During their performance, they hold areca-blossoms in their hands, and later they kindle little torches and stick them into the dēvastana-yahanāva. And again they dance, wheeling and spinning like tops, with grotesque swinging of the arms. Then follows a dance with torches. Each dancer wears a cloth tightly wound round his body and a short coloured skirt such as the yakka-actors also wear.

The clay figure is now returned to the small offering-stand (Pl. XLII, fig. 71). It is treated with even more reverence than has been the case up to now, and no one but the kapuā is allowed to touch it. The members of the family now stand before the torana. With his hands clasped and separated from the members of the household by a white cloth suggesting a screen, the kapuā utters a mantra towards the torana. The white cloth is then removed.

The kapuā now enters upon a long discussion with one of the drummers. Their conversation once more deals with the mythological traditions; the kapuā pretends to have no knowledge of them and wants to be instructed by the drummer.

This dialogue is followed by the "*Mangara pēla-paliya*", a number of entertaining and amusing scenes (*pēla-paliya*). Mangara was a priest (*vedakariya*) of the Kataragama deity and came from Runusata in the southern part of Lanka. His task consisted in diverting the twelve deities during their meetings (*samāgama*), and he accomplished this by exhibiting before them all kinds of animals he had caught, since that region swarmed with wild buffaloes, elephants, and other wild beasts.

There are twelve of these entertainments (*dolos Mangara pēla-paliya*):

- 1) The *udaha uduviyana*. A white cloth is stretched out as a baldachin (*udaha*).
- 2) The *bimata pavada*. A white cloth is spread on the floor to dance on.
- 3) The *kuda-kodi*. A fan is flourished like a flag.
- 4) and 5) The *nalāh-kombu* (flute-shell-horn). A shell-horn is blown and a little flute is played.
- 6) The *sesāt-chamara*. A big round fan with a picture of the sun painted on it is carried round. It represents the deity's fan of state.
- 7) The *daul-damatang*. A big drum is beaten.
- 8) The *vena-nāda*. The playing of a lute (*vena*) is imitated.
- 9) The *ēṭ-bandhana* (fettered elephant). An elephant is brought forward. It is represented by an assistant covered with a cloth and who is driven around the



Fig. 70. The dévol-samayama.



Fig. 69. Dancers with torches in a dévol-madua (flashlight picture).



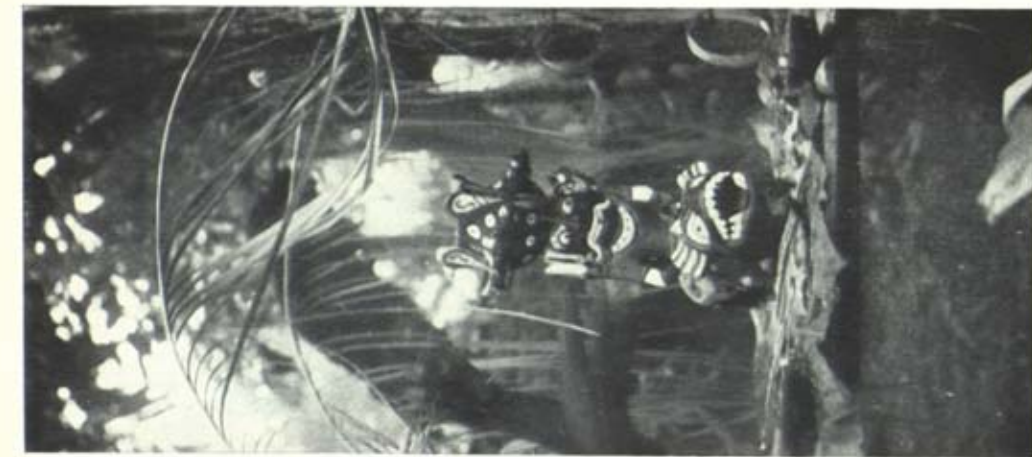


Fig. 71



Fig. 72.



Fig. 73.

Fig. 71. The punāva is placed on a bamboo stand and is treated with the utmost reverence by the kapua. The receptacle is filled with the offering gifts, rice, sandalwood, and betel-leaves. The twelve holes round the ridge will each be supplied with a little torch.

Figs. 72 and 73. The two punāva from Dodanduva, now in the Ethnographical Museum, Basle.



Fig. 74. The pol-gahanavā requires great skill and much practice. The aim is to stop a nut flung with great force from a distance of 10-12 metres, by another one held out as shown.



Fig. 75. The nuts, collected for the pol-gahanavā, are counted and sorted.





Fig. 76. After the game, the remaining nut is placed on the malasun fixed to the trunk of a bō-tree.



Fig. 77. The technique of throwing the coconut. Certain rules must be observed and the way in which the nut is held is also important. The germ holes must always point forward, facing the adversary.

- dancing-place in a stooping posture. A corner of the cloth is rolled into the shape of a trunk. The eyes, ears, etc. are outlined with charcoal.
- 10) The *mī-bandhana* (fettered buffalo). A wild buffalo (*mī*) is represented in a similar way.
  - 11) The *hondeng-sesanti* (swinging the trunk). The elephant-actor moves the trunk to and fro.
  - 12) The *salu-salīma* (flourishing the cloth). A dance is performed during which a white cloth is flourished.

This show is followed by another dance, carried out by two *kapuo* with *Patini*'s bracelets (*hālang*), to ward off the *vas-dōs*.

After this dance, the "*kili-gahanavā*" (fighting the impure), is performed. All the *kapuo* enter the house, going into all the rooms and flinging *dummala* into the corners to expel the *yakku* and *prēteo*. The ceremony is accompanied by drums and recitations.

Now comes the "*gini pēgima*", (trampling the fire out). For this purpose, the *nil-liya* (stick of the *nil-tree*, *Blyxa roxburghii*) is taken from the *mal-yahanāva* and cut into little pieces; these are piled up and set on fire in front of the *dēvastana-yahanāva*. While the fire is burning, two of the *kapuo* prepare themselves for the dance. Clad in short red skirts and white loincloths and wearing high pointed head-gear with semi-circular extensions on either side like wings, these two dancers represent the two *dēva-yakku*, *Gini-Kurumbāra* and *Vahala* (Pl. XLI, fig. 69 and 70). About their ankles they have little bells such as are used by the *yakku*-actors; their mode of dancing is the same, also. Before the dance begins, a white cloth is stretched between the dancers and the inhabitants of the house, and a long conversation takes place between one of the *dēva-yakka* and a drummer. "What is all this noise about?", asks the *dēva-yakka*. The other one shows him the drum and delivers a long explanation of the ceremony which is being performed, its purpose and its significance. Again, part of the legend is recounted, the *dēva-yakka* pretending to be ignorant and wanting to be informed by the drummer.

Then the dance starts. Each of the *dēva-yakku* takes two burning torches in his hands and begins to run around. The waving of their arms, the top-like spinning of their bodies, and all their movements become more and more excited. The dance is just the same as that of the *yakku*-actors at the *sanniya-yakuma* and the *iramudun-pidenna*. Hither and thither the two dancers race, approaching the *torana* and running back again, at the same time shoving the cloth aside and back again.

Now, *dummala* is thrown into the air, a handful before the *dēvastana-yahanāva*, another one before the *mal-yahanāva*.

Flames shoot into the air and the rolling of the drums raises the excitement. Meanwhile, the little fire which had been made out of the pieces of the *nil-liya* has died down. The glowing embers and the ashes left over are spread out on the floor and the two dancers trample about on them for a while. Finally, one of the lads pours some yellow-root water over them.



The "gini-pegima" is nothing else than an enactment of the myth of the Sini-gama-dēviyo who erected seven fences of fire so that Gini-Kurumbāra and Vahala who had come from India, should not settle on Lanka. The trampling about on the fire symbolizes their feat of extinguishing those fire-fences.

Then, another handful of dummala is thrown against the torana, as well; simultaneously, the white cloth is removed which up to that moment has separated the dancers from the spectators. The dance is continued for a little longer in front of the torana, while one of the helpers fetches the offering for the Dēvol-dēviyo: a square woven dish with flowers, rice and spices, and two little torches, as is required by the deity. The gift is accepted by one of the two dancers and moved to and fro over the heads of the family. At the same time, a small piece of coconut is grated, the juice (pol-kiri) pressed out of it, and boiled in three new unused pots over a small fire. One of the dancers then moistens the forehead of each member of the household with the liquid. This procedure shields the person in question from all the evil influences which might be caused by *ṣ-vaha* and *kathā-vaha*, imbues him with fresh vigour, and protects him from now on from all kinds of illness. This ceremony must always be performed before sun-rise, in order that it shall have the greatest possible effect. Then, all who are present form a line in front of the torana. One of the kapuo brings a new white cloth (*tira*) in one corner of which one of the persons involved must tie a copper coin (*pandura*). This cloth is folded lengthwise and put over the heads of the row of people. Mantra are uttered and the cloth is slowly pulled off downwards so that ultimately it lies at their feet (*tira isa-pada* = cloth-head-feet). This indicates that all diseases and infirmities which might still be adhering to these people have been stripped off them from head to foot. Finally, their feet are sprinkled with yellow-root water in order to wash off and annihilate the last traces of illness-causing substance clinging to them. Then, twelve torches, tied in a bundle, are fixed on a rack made of banana-stems; they are lit in honour of the "dolos dēvivoru".

With this, the ceremony proper is ended, but, just as in the *gara-yakuma*, the *Gara-yakka* (*Dala-kumāra*) now appears. Actually, we are confronted with the same mode of acting and dancing here as we were there, and the scenes which are played are alike in every detail; the actors also make their appearance by pairs here. They wear white garments, have a long tail of strips of palm-leaves fixed to their necks, and display the usual masks of the *gara-yakuma*.

Two *vēsata* have been built in different places. The dancers first go to them, climb the little trees which have been fixed in the ground, and begin swinging backwards and forwards. Then, they scurry back to the *yahanāva* and dance with torches in their hands, performing circling motions with their arms and bodies. After they have danced for a while, they return to one of the *vēsata*, climb it, and again swing to and fro, first standing and then sitting. This repeated running hither and thither, dancing, rocking on the *vēsata*, is called "*gara-yakuma pēla-paliya*" (performance of the *gara-yakuma*).

Now, one of the assistants appears, addressed by the gara-yakku as gurunānsē, with a basket made of leaves which contains the offering-presents, such as bananas, rice-cakes, and a coconut kernel cut in rings. The Gara-yakka is known for his voracity; he is never satisfied. The gurunānsē offers one of them a banana. The yakka accepts it, peels it carefully, and then, suddenly, with an unexpected movement thrusts it into the gurunānsē's mouth. Next, he seizes the ring-shaped coconut kernel and tells the gurunānsē that it might be made into a nice drum; some more humorous acts of this kind are played to the general mirth and amusement of the spectators.

After a while, the Gara-yakku return again to the yahanāva and dance for some considerable time in front of the torana. One of them now calls the gurunānsē once more, embraces him, and teases him with all kinds of tricks. The gurunānsē follows this by reciting the whole legend of the Dala-kumāra and recounts how the Dala-kumāra became Dala-yakka, along with the diseases he is able to cure. He also tells about the wedding of Patini-dēvi <sup>1</sup>.

Then, another funny scene is enacted. The Gara-yakka asks the gurunānsē to come up to him, seizes the rice-pounder, and acts as if he were going to hit him over the head. He first aims several times, then covers the head of the gurunānsē with a cloth to prevent him from seeing anything, and aims once more. At length, he is presented with his offering: the basket of rice, rice-cake, coconut kernels, and flowers, which he now flourishes over the heads of the people, promising that from now on he will exempt them from disease.

The last remaining act is the removal and destruction of the clay figure. A bull which must not be used for anything else afterwards (for this reason, an old animal is selected which is not fit for further service and whose days are numbered), has to carry this dangerous object on its back from the village to the nearest pond or the river. One of the kapuo walks at its side and supports the basket with the figure on the animal's back. Before they start, the bull must be perfumed with incense and blessed by a mantra. Arriving at the shore, the kapuā goes into the water with the figure, dives, breaks the dangerous object, and does not reappear above the surface before all the fragments have sunk to the bottom.

<sup>1</sup> The following is related about the wedding of Patini-dēvi: "After the solemnities had been performed she was escorted by the whole of the dēvatāvo. Patini herself was at the end of the procession. Their way had been decorated on both sides and even the wild Veddas had contributed to this. Since they had nothing else to offer, they had hung up bones and pieces of the flesh of the animals they hunted. It gave off a disgusting odour and Patini did not conceal her indignation. She sent for Dala-kumāra, the Gara-yakka, and asked him to remove the bones and the evil-smelling refuse. Dala-kumāra was hungry as always and devoured it all to the very last bit; then he asked for seven hundred coconuts to quench his thirst. As a reward for the service he had rendered her, Patini gave him a vilakku, a little torch, with the respective offering which had been presented to her. For this reason, the Dala-kumāra is always remembered in the gam-madua and the dēvol-madua with a little gift".



*Supplementary notes concerning the punāva*

Clough's Singhalese-English Dictionary defines the punāva as "a vase with many spouts pouring out water and used by the kapua in the dēvala in the service of the demons. This vessel is considered so sacred, that in case of great difficulties or importance people are compelled to swear upon it."

Others affirm that the punāva does not represent the Gara-yakka, but another demon, namely the Diula- (or Diyula-) Divi-yakka, for short called Divi-yakka (divi = leopard). He is always shown riding a leopard. Like the other yakku, he lives in the Parasakvala. When a deity, especially the Kataragama-dēviyo, is asked to punish a person, this yakka is generally given the order, and he carries it out by afflicting the victim with an illness, a vaduru-lēda<sup>1</sup>. The ceremony, performed on this occasion, is called "deskina" or "avalāda kerima" (avalāda = religious performance; kerima = to make, to do, to perform).

The following may give an idea of the use of the punāva: Someone has been robbed: he goes to see a member of the potters' caste and orders a punāva to be made; he then gets into touch with a kapuā and asks him to invoke the deities to punish the culprit. A little ceremony is then performed in the house of the person who has been robbed, consisting of three observances, one in the morning, one in the evening, and the last the next morning (tungvela). The kapuā erects a "mēsa", places the punāva upon it, and puts twelve betel-leaves, twelve copper coins (pandura), some sandalwood, and a few grains of pepper into the receptacle. Little torches (vilakku) are inserted in the holes round the brim; these are lit, a red flower is put into the leopard's mouth, and the kapuā invokes the deities and utters three prayers. This done, he seizes the punāva and flings it against a stone, so that it breaks into pieces.

The individual against whom the spell is directed will meet with an accident within a week. One who has stolen fruit or coconuts from a tree, will fall from a tree the next time he climbs one; one who has stolen a cow, will be hurt by a cow; one who has stolen a boat, will perish in the waters.

At all events, the punāva must be shattered after the end of the ritual, in order to render the spell effective. People believe that the yakka is enraged by this procedure and that he therefore immediately does what is desired of him. But first of all, a spell must be cast on the punāva (maturanavā) and the yakka must be summoned. Occasionally, a punāva is also made in cases of vas-dōs.

*The gam-madua-ceremony*

Examining the gam-madua, the fourth and most elaborate of this group of ceremonies performed by the kapuā, we find that it is nothing but an extension of the

<sup>1</sup> To this group belong the maladies which manifest themselves as epidemics, such as cholera, bubonic plague, dysentery, and typhus. The leopard and the tiger are also the animals on which the Indian deity Kālī, the wife of Shiva, rides. Big, painted figures of clay showing this goddess riding on the back of a tiger are made on certain occasions, particularly in the province of Bengal, and mostly in defence and as a protection from evil demons.

dēvol-madua; it is, as the name suggests, carried out on behalf of the whole village (gama) after an epidemic or a plague has broken out and fortunately, endured. This performance, just as a number of other ceremonies, is a manifestation of gratitude towards the deity and expresses the people's happiness that the danger has, at last, happily passed away. The performance of this ceremony may, upon occasion, be extended up to seven days and seven nights, and so actually becomes a village feast. A considerable number of kapuo collaborate and take turns with the recitations and the dances and pantomimes of which the ritual is composed. They are aided by numerous drummers and assistants.

Since I never had an opportunity of attending this ceremony myself, I must restrict myself to an enumeration of its different parts.

Like the other ceremonies, the gam-madua is opened by a *dāne*, during which the legends are recited. On the second day, the traditions of Patini-dēvi, who again is the central figure, are acted and represented by dances and mimicry. On the third day, the so-called "*tēlme*-dances" are performed by the kapuo who are dressed as brahmans. The fifth day brings various rites and presentations, such as fire dances, walking on fire, etc. On the sixth day, dances are held in honour of Sakra. Also a little *mī-amba-tree*<sup>1</sup> is erected in the festival hut and shot at with bows and arrows<sup>2</sup>.

On the seventh day finally, various little ceremonies are performed, and with offerings presented to the deities, the whole ceremony comes to an end.

### THE DEHI KĒPIMA (CUTTING LEMONS)

When a person suffers from abscesses, ulcers, or a rash, it is generally ascribed to the Kataragama-dēviyo. The kapuā is then sent for in order to perform a *dēhi kēpima*.

For this, about fifty small unripe lemons (*dēhi gēta*) are needed, as well as five twigs of five different kinds of lemons and oranges (*dēhi*, *dodama*, *ambul-dodama*, *bambalosi*, *yahincharan*), five different kinds of seeds (rice, peas, lentils, beans, and sesame), a little salt, some mustard seeds (*abe-ēta*), a coconut with red shell (*pol-geja*), and a rice-pounder (*molgaha*).

The kapuā cuts the lemon-twigs in pieces and puts them into an earthen pot together with the seeds and the salt, while the coconut and the rice-pounder are placed at the feet of the patient. Then the kapuā cuts the lemons with a pair of areca-scissors, one after the other, over the head of the patient (*dēhi kēpima*) (Pl. XIX, fig. 29). The pieces of the lemons are likewise put in the pot and the whole is slowly stewed over a fire. When all the lemons have been cut through, the kapuā strokes the patient's head with a *manga*-twig, uttering mantra at the

<sup>1</sup> A kind of *manga* with small sweet fruits.

<sup>2</sup> Perhaps this "game" has some connection with that episode of the legend which tells about Patini-dēvi's being born out of a *manga*-fruit (see p. 103).



same time. The ceremony lasts about three hours; after its termination, the pot with its contents is carried off to the bush.

### THE KUDĀ-YAKKA AND THE KUDĀ-YAKUMA

Once upon a time, there lived two men in Vidagama near Kosgōda. Both of them owned plantations which were situated close together, separated only by a narrow river. They were good friends, and took turns at watching one another's possessions at night. There were, however, many thieves in that village who had, among other things, fixed their attention on the vegetable gardens of the two friends. Since one of the men was not very popular with his fellow villagers, one of the thieves resolved to set fire to his hut. But on the night when he carried out his purpose, the owner of the hut had just gone on an errand and his friend was alone sleeping in the hut. The hovel burnt down, and the man who was sleeping in it lost his life. The following day, the owner of the hut saw what had happened during his absence, and considering that he might be made responsible for the fire or even be accused of arson, he decided to flee. He took to the woods and lived there on wild fruits. In the long run, however, this kind of life did not suit him, and he thought of a ruse. One night, he sneaked into the village, stole a calf, and took it with him to his hiding-place in the woods. The next night, he returned to the village, approached the hut where he had stolen the animal, and shouted in a loud voice so that the owner in his house should hear him, "If you want to get your calf back, you must bring rice and fruit into the bush and lay them near a certain tree!" The man who had lost his calf heard these words and went the following morning to the bush with rice and fruit to the tree which had been indicated. There, he found his calf, untied it, and took it home with him. Thereupon, the man who had stolen it came forth and satisfied his hunger with the food which had been brought. One of the following nights, he repeated the theft of a calf, this time from another villager and again had rice and fruit brought to him in return. He carried on for some time in this way until the place became too "hot" for him. Then he turned to plundering the fields and orchards of the village and continued this for a time.

Soon afterwards he died and was reborn a yakka. Since that time he has brought all kinds of diseases on mankind, especially those of the skin such as ringworm, scabies, rashes, and ulcerations, and he demands offerings for restoring people to health. He also robs grazing cows of their milk and steals rice from the fields. As appeasement, he demands bananas or some rice boiled in coconut milk (*kiri bat*). He is simply called the *Kudā-yakka*; his usual name, however, which is more frequently employed is Kosgama- (or Kosgōda-) *dēviyo*, for he is in fact no real yakka but a *dēviyo*, or more correctly a *dēviyo-yakka*, i.e. a yakka who occupies an elevated position and enjoys the rank of a divine being. But in other cases, he is merely called by the first name given above, which means "little, unimportant

yakka", since he is satisfied with a little, trifling offering. For, in his former life, he had been a man of low caste, a little man of no account, and that is the reason for his present name; he was then called Gamarāla.

There is, however, a curious state of affairs; for in any *dēvālaya* in which offerings are presented to the Kataragama-dēviyo, reverence is always paid to the Kosgama-dēviyo as well. This strange habit is based on another tradition which in short runs as follows:

One day, a man was on his way to the Kataragama-dēvālaya with the purpose of presenting the Kataragama-dēviyo with an offering. Kūdo-yakka was lurking by the way and seized both the gift and the torch with violence. He repeated similar deeds for a time, until it came to the ears of Kataragama-dēviyo. But the dēviyo at the same time found out what the real situation was, namely that Kudā-yakka had nothing to eat and was suffering from hunger. He sympathized with him and gave orders that, henceforth, part of the gifts which were intended for him were to be left for the Kudā-yakka.

That is the reason why people, when they present the Kataragama-dēviyo with an offering, at the same time always remember the Kudā-yakka and deposit a little gift along with a burning torch for him at the dēvālaya.

Just as for the other illness-spreading yakku, so is a ceremony performed for the Kudā-yakka; it is called *kudā-yakuma* and is conducted by the kapuā since it in fact concerns a deity.

When a person suffers from skin diseases, abscesses, or ulcerations, and it seems established that it is due to the Kudā-yakka, the kapuā is sent for and the patient makes a vow in the priests's presence. He pledges himself to give a monetary offering (*pandura*) when he becomes free from his ailment. Generally, half of this gift is retained by the kapuā for his services and the other half goes to the dēvālaya. The kapuā then indicates a propitious day on which to perform the ceremony.

The ritual always begins after night-fall and lasts from one to two hours. It is opened by a *dāne* (dēviyo-dāne), as is usual in all ceremonies conducted by a kapuā, i.e. a meal is offered at which rice and desserts are served on banana-leaves instead of on plates. The kapuā and his assistants are helped first, and afterwards the members of the household and the patient himself. At the same time, a banana-leaf with the same food, destined for the Kosgama-dēviyo, is placed on the threshold of the house and after the meal carried off into the bush. In addition, numerous offerings are prepared for the deity, each of them in triplicate, i.e. three bunches of bananas, three little pots with rice and desserts, three rice-cakes, three dishes of boiled fish, and three kinds of flowers. The bunches of bananas are hung up and the other things spread out on a bedstead which is covered with a white cloth. Then the door is shut and the kapuā begins to utter mantra and to perfume the offering with incense. Finally, the patient is sprinkled with yellow-root water.



## GAMES HELD TO STOP THE SPREADING OF EPIDEMICS

The ceremonies which have been described up to now are performed to conciliate the illness-spreading yakku, prēteo, and dēvatāvo, or to counteract the pernicious influences of the planets and constellations, to make malicious spells ineffective, and to destroy the damaging influence of the evil eye and evil talk. The most important part, which all these ceremonies have in common, is the preparation of a definite offering and the uttering of certain mantra. However, in addition to these ceremonies, mention must still be made of certain popular games, or rather contests, the carrying out of which has the power of checking the spread of diseases which threaten to become epidemical (smallpox, cholera, typhus), or at least of stopping quickly an epidemic which has already gained ground.

Three such games enjoy special popularity, viz. the "*pol-gahanavā*"<sup>1</sup>, i.e. fighting with coconuts (*pol*), the "*an-keliya*"<sup>2</sup> which is played with the help of deer's antlers (*an*; singular: *anga*), and the "*li-keliya*", fighting with wooden sticks (*li*; singular: *liya*). The *pol-gahanavā* is played especially in the regions of the south and west coasts, that is to say where the coconut palm flourishes and where, therefore, coconuts are in great abundance; the *an-keliya*, on the other hand, is mainly at home where there is plenty of deer, i.e. in the woodlands of the central and eastern parts of the island; the *li-keliya* is limited to the northern portion of the island and is quite unknown in the south and centre. Each of these games is conducted by a *kapuā*, for, as we shall see, they bear a religious character on account of their connection with the *Patini-dēvi*.

The holding of such a contest always depends on the decision of the whole population of a village or of one of its districts, but sometimes two or three neighbouring village collaborate in order to arrange a match in common, as its performance inevitably involves some expenses. The elders of the village assemble and discuss the matter and let the *kapuā* know their decision. As mentioned above, the threat of an epidemic from an adjoining village or district usually forms the motive for the performance one of these three games, but there is no definite time prescribed for the arrangement of such a contest, nor is there any indication as to the most propitious day. The contest must always be held in a square either near the village or in its centre, where there is an old *bō*-tree or banyan-tree. Such a place is to be found in every locality. According to the game, the place is called "*pol-pītiya*", "*an-pītiya*", or "*li-pītiya*"<sup>3</sup>.

## THE "POL-GAHANAVA"

When everything is arranged and the *kapuā* has been informed about the impending celebration, the necessary preparations are made. For the *pol-gahanavā*

<sup>1</sup> *Gahanavā* = to beat, to punish, to thrash.

<sup>2</sup> *Keliya* = game.

<sup>3</sup> *Pītiya* is probably derived from *pīti* = joy, gaiety.

which will be described in detail shortly, a considerable number of ripe coconuts must be obtained. The young men go from house to house collecting nuts. Everybody gives as many as he can, the one more, the other less. Money is likewise contributed so that more nuts can be bought. Particularly hard and thick-shelled nuts are preferred, so-called "kora-pol", and neither trouble nor expense is spared to procure as many of them as possible <sup>1</sup>. When sufficient nuts are gathered, they are divided into two equal lots.

Now, the youths and men who take part in the game form two sides, which recalls an ancient division of the whole population into two fraternities, the *yatipila* and the *udupila* <sup>2</sup>.

The number of active combatants is, however, very restricted. Only a few from each fraternity take an active part in the game, i.e. those young men who have the necessary practice and experience. The others are simply spectators. The throwing of a coconut and the parrying of the blow at a distance of eight or ten metres by stopping it with another nut before it strikes, requires great ability and exercise, and is not without a certain risk either.

We will now consider the other preparations. In the above-mentioned bo- or banyan-tree, two little shrines of palm-leaves, so-called *malasun*, are constructed. They must always face north and south; the northern one is intended for the *yatipila* and the southern one for the *udupila*. The field, about fifteen metres long and five metres wide, is fenced in with a rope. In one corner, the nuts are piled up in two heaps, between one hundred and one hundred and fifty of them altogether (Pl. XLIII, fig. 75). In addition, two nuts are placed at the foot of the tree. Now the *kapuā* appears, dressed in a white loincloth. He takes a nut in either hand, turns towards the tree, and speaks the following mantra:

<sup>1</sup> With regard to this "kora-pol", it seems to be a question of a language mistake, for one often hears "pora-pol" used, which means something like "fighting nut" (pora = fight, wrestle, box) (cf. Clough's dictionary).

A peculiar object, associated with the *pol-gahanavā*, is to be seen in the museum at Kandy. It is a round stone which has been made into the shape of a coconut and it is deceptively similar. The three germ holes have also not been forgotten. Presumably, some kind of ritual procedures were undertaken with this imitation coconut which, as we shall see, also plays a part in the *dēvālaya*.

<sup>2</sup> The names of these two fraternities mean "the higher" and "the lower" (*yata* = down, low; *uda* = high, above, superior). "Pila" is perhaps derived from *pēli(ya)* = line, file, row, to govern. "Pili" means order, classification, command. It may be that the dualism can be explained by supposing that the *udupila* originated in the interior of the island, the mountains, and the *yatipila* on the coast, the lowland. Pertold, however, without offering any evidence is of the opinion that one party (probably the *yatipila*?) represents the gods. Against this is the fact that a division into two in the above sense, i.e. between those from the mountains and those from the coast, is also observed in certain tribes in New Guinea. In the south of India there are also tribes organized in two classes and it may be assumed that this division was wide-spread in former times. Edgar Thurston (*Ethnogr. Notes*, p. 513) writes in "Of the hill tribe Codulu": "There are said to be two distinct classes, the *Cotia-Codulu* and the *Yathapu-Codulu*".

Of course, the *udupila* and the *yatipila* are to-day quite equally distributed over the whole of Lanka, and the dualism has no importance as far as marriage is concerned.



"Pasvadahāsa		sadhu-sadhu	sita	vēnden	dahāsa	vēnden,
Five thousand		blessings	thoughts	reverence	a thousand	reverence
siyak	vara	vēnden	dōta	mudūna		tabah
a hundred	come	reverence	our hands	clasp each		keep
			other above	our heads		reverence
						this
Sri-Lanka,		dipa	dadahasa	dēviyo	balah	Mahabrahma
prosperous Ceylon		country	two thousand	deities	look down	great Brahma
raja	utamamanemang		vahansa	anaguna	mudunkāra	pasvasita;
king	majestic		venerable	his power	we entreat	humbly
Patini-dēvinānsē		geyāna	mulkāra	megangoda	palasāta,	mulkara
Patini goddess			especially	this village	this hamlet	especially
upadrāva	gana	oba	vahanselāta	kiya	sitina,	yagniya
epidemics	on their account		majestic	here	we wait	our supplication
						hear
pilli	aragana	me	upadrāva	gunakara	me	pol-pujāna
take	notice	this	plague	we share with you	this	coconut offering
pin	aregāna	me	lēda	sanēn,	sitovana	gama
merit	accept	this	malady	remove	peaceful	village
						save

which, freely translated, runs as follows:

"With five thousand expressions of salutation, we offer you our reverence, our thousandfold reverence, our hundredfold reverence. With our hands clasped high over our heads, we come to offer you our reverence, and with us the whole prosperous country of Ceylon upon which two thousand deities are looking down. We come to you, the Great Brahma, our majestic, venerable king, whose power we humbly entreat, and to you, Goddess Patini. We, this village and this hamlet in particular, come on account of the plague which has smitten us. Here we await you, O Sublime, that you hear our prayer and listen to it. We share with you this offering of coconuts, hoping that you will accept them, praying that you will remove the disease and save this peaceful village!"

The whole crowd presses round the kapuā, waiting attentively until he has finished the mantra. He hands the two coconuts to two men, one yatipila and one udupila, for them to begin the game. First, all those present are sprinkled with a little yellow-root water, particularly the players who are standing next to him. They then go to opposite ends of the field, the yatipila to the north, the udupila to the south; the oblong field runs exactly north and south.

Two drummers announce the beginning of the game. The coconuts are once more counted by a referee and each one is carefully examined. Now the game proper is begun. There are only four or five players on either side, but they are men who have the necessary experience. Seizing the nut with both hands, the first throws it with all his strength towards his partner who has to stop the blow with a nut held out in front of him. To do this, he grasps the nut with both hands so

that the germ holes point forward to meet the blow (Pl. XLIII, fig. 74, and Pl. XLIV, fig. 77). Particular care has to be taken that the fingers are kept drawn back as far as possible, otherwise the fingers will be broken when the two nuts hit each other; nevertheless, injuries occur rather often. If the blow is checked, almost always one of the two nuts, and sometimes both of them, flies to pieces, but he whose nut has remained intact has the right to fling one back. Any nut which shows the slightest crack must be withdrawn. Of course, they always try to hide any such small crack and it is, therefore, a common occurrence that one party decries the other's cheating. The result is that they finally come to fighting. For this reason, a number of umpires is always present who have to see that fair play is observed. During the whole time two drums are beaten and much noise is made. Whenever a nut is broken, the members of the victorious party exclaim "hara" (i.e. Shiva, Vishnu) as a token of their malicious joy. So the game continues until all the nuts of one party have gone to pieces; then, the remaining nuts of the other party are divided and the play is carried on again. When all the nuts but one have been broken, the game is continued with the kora-pol. The last nut, or properly speaking that party whose nut is the last, is the victor. With loud acclamations, the nut is handed to the kapuā. Holding it high above his head, he runs with it three times round the holy tree and recites another mantra:

"Sidapasvan Five holy people (deities are meant)	dahasakata ten thousand	sadhu-sadhu blessings	kiya uttering	sitavenden erect		
dahavenden looking up	prēvating stretching out the hand	vēnden venerate	huruvat improperly	murukara properly	vēnden venerate	
ē-Lankava, here on Ceylon	mē-Lankava	sakvāla heaven	keli-ganda performing a game	keli-pavātva obliged to hold a game	ganda	
yasavarām divine power	tedavaram more power	kirtivaram highest power	netlā look here	divaslā divine	veda-vadaranāva residing	
dedavalokāta two worlds (of gods and of man)	adipati leader	vanau there	Sakra Sakra	dēviyarajotama king of the gods	vahansēge venerable	tejanubhava almighty
mudunpat remember him	karavagana	tovāda still	chakrataya on the earth	abiyantarāva waiting	vedavadaranāva residing	
Sodasavida-Brahmaloka name for Brahmaloka	adipati leader	vanau there	Sahampati-nam called Sahampati	Mahabrahma Great Brahma		
rajaage royal	tejanubhava almighty	mudumpat remember him	karavāgana	tavāda still	istri-avatārayak, in the form of a woman	
naga-avatārayak, in the form of a snake		garuda-avatārayak, in the form of Garuda			bilindu-avatārayak in the form of Bilindu	
raksha-avatārayak, in the form of a raksha		guruma-avatārayak, *in the form of a guruma			varaha-avatārayak, in the form of the varaha	



raja-avatātayak, in the form of the king	narasingha-avatārayak, in the form of narasingha	meseme same	dasa-avatārayak tenfold forms
ṇtau, Ramodara, having Rama	Navalanda, Sri - Vishnu royal	rajotama	yanan vahansēge venerable
tēja, anubhava mighty glorious	mudumpat karavagana remember him	tavāda. still	Kataragama,
Kaduhantoto	Mutukadavata, at the Pearl-shade (name of a place)	Aetmita, at the Elephant-bull (name of a locality)	valava-gangavata at the Valava water (name of a lagoon)
Kirindi-gangavata, at the Kirindi stream (between Hambantota and Kataragama	Manik-gangavata, at the Manik stream (near Kataragama)	Muda-mette-trikovileta, in the three temples in the middle of the ocean	
Okanda-dēvālaya, in the Okanda-dēvālaya (near Batikaloa)	Vannihatputata,	Kudakataragama-kovileta, in the temple of Kudakataragama	
Dēvālaya-hatata, in the seven temples (at Kataragama)	Vanni-amma-kovileta, in the temple of Vanni-amma	Valli-amma-kovileta, in the temple of Valli-amma	
Theyvannai-amma-kovileta, in the temple of Theyvannai-amma	nēṭla regarding	divasla contemplating	vedavadarānava residing there
ran-monāra gold-coloured peacock	vatama for riding	rudāva Kataragama-Kandasvami Kataragama deity	vahansēge venerable
tejanubhavana almighty	mudunpat highest honour	karnava enjoying	basnā-ira sunset (west)
vedavasana residing	Nata - dēviyarajautamayanam, Nata highest king of the gods	mudunpat highest honour	digbagahi region
tavāda still	Makkama, Mekka	Sri-patunata Adamspeak	karavagana enjoying
Sajjabadiya-parvataya mountain in the Himalayas where a footprint of Buddha is to be seen	netlā regarding	Achiravata-gangavata, river in Burma where a footprint of Buddha is to be seen	
dēviyorajautamayanager highest king of the	tejanubhavana almighty	vedavadaranava living in those places	Saman - Saman
Pandirata-Pandirajjuruvana kingdom in India	ambu-uvana manga orchard	mudunpat highest honour	karavagana enjoying
dēviyanganavung goddess	vahansēge venerable	ambeng-upang born out of a manga fruit	Patini - Patini
pin merit	namayata for her	mekaranava performed	pol-gahime coconut contest
adama ended	anumodanva satisfaction	peṃmini sent to us	pol-gahime plagues
valapatang from to-day	me those	ekasiyata a hundred and eight	vaduru plagues
durindure by and by	gasanda pass away	Patini - dēviyanda". * Patini divine.	

A free translation of this runs as follows:

We address the five deities with ten thousand blessings. We pay them our reverence, standing erect, with eyes raised and hands stretched out. We pay them our reverence in the heaven and on earth, be it properly done or improperly. To perform this game we need celestial power, higher power, highest power. Look down, divine, you who live in the two worlds, in that of the gods and that of men, who are their chief, you Sakra, king of the gods, venerable; on the whole globe of the earth men still remember your power. Great king Brahma, you who reside in the Sodasavida-Brahmaloka, whose name as leader is Sahampati, we still remember your power and your name. And you, royal Vishnu, who reveal yourself in tenfold forms, in the form of a woman, in the form of Guruma, in the form of Varaha, in the form of Bilindu, in the form of the king, in the form of Narasingha, in the form of Rama and Navalanda, you receive our deepest reverence, venerable, mighty, glorious one! And you, deity of Kataragama, to whom are dedicated the places of Mutukadavata and Ētamita, the water Valava, the stream Kirindi, and the stream Manik, the three temples in the ocean, the temple Okanda, the temple Vannihatputata, the temple Kudakataragama, the seven temples at Kataragama, the temples of Vanni-amma, Valli-amma, and Theyvannai-amma where you reside, riding a golden peacock, you also receive our deepest reverence! And you, Nata-dēviyo, highest king of the gods, who reside in the west where the sun sets, you receive our deepest reverence! Almighty highest king of the gods, Saman, who is in charge of the four holy footprints of Buddha, the footprint at Mekka, the footprint on the Adamspeak, the footprint on the bank of the river Achiravata, and the footprint on the mountain Sajjabadiya in the Himalayas, you also receive our deepest reverence! Venerable Goddess Patini, who was born out of a manga-fruit of the king's orchard at Pandirata, to your honour and satisfaction and on account of the merit we desire to gain, we hold this coconut contest, hoping that the one hundred and eight plagues are now going to disappear!"

Now, the kapuā puts the nut in the malasun of the party to which it belongs and there it remains until the last day of the festival (Pl. XLIV, fig. 76). For the game is continued during six days; on the last day, the contest is carried out with all the nuts which remain from the preceding days. Two nuts, one yatipīla and one udupīla, are set apart and carried to the nearest dēvālaya in solemn procession.

The matches are always played between two and five o'clock in the afternoon. At night, a procession is formed, attended by the young men, at the head of which the "dinum polgeja" (the remaining nut) of the preceding pol-gahanavā is carried in state<sup>1</sup>. A man of the winning side leads the procession, walking under a white canopy and carrying the nut on his shoulder or his head. He is followed by the others, dressed up as clowns, with masks representing the yakku and raksho, by

<sup>1</sup> A ceremony at night with torches is said to be called "pēli", one that is arranged by day, "perahēra". "Pēli" = line, row, order, rank, in a general sense, and thus probably = to march in file (cf. footnote 2, p. 169).



youths disguised as women, and of course by the drummers without whom no festivity is complete. The whole crowd runs round the village, along every way and path, cheering and shouting: "Hōya! hōya! puri-hōya! apidi nua!" (Hurrah, we have won!), while the drummers call out: "Haro, hara, haro, hara!" to drive the evil spirits off. These processions usually start towards midnight and go on into the early hours of the morning. Each subsequent night the celebrations are carried on with ever-growing enthusiasm and attendance.

On the eighth and last day, however, the procession starts already in the afternoon, but this time goes from the playing-field directly to the *dēvālaya*. That day, no more *pol-gahanavā* are held. The last match is fought the day before and only two nuts are left, the last of all (*dinum polgeja*) and the one from the previous day, one *yatipila* and one *udupila*.

Before the afternoon procession starts, the two nuts are lying under the big tree; near them are two vessels made of palm-leaves which contain the oil pressed out of the broken coconuts. The rolling of drums summons the participants. They assemble, many in grotesque costumes, some of them also in masks like those of the preceding processions. One wears the mask of a lion, another one represents a *vedda*, there are also *yakku* and *raksho*, holy men and penitents with so-called *kaveri* on their shoulders, and figures such as are to be seen at the *Kataragama* festival. A few of them are also disguised as women and perform dances. At length, they are all assembled, and the procession arranges itself, even more people taking part than during the former nights. This time, the procession is led by two men, one *yatipila* and one *udupila*, each holding his coconut on his head with his two hands. They wear white garments and walk under a white baldachin which is supported by four people. Arriving at the *dēvālaya*, the two leaders go at once to the temple where the *kapuā* stands waiting to receive the two nuts (Pl. XLIV, fig. 76). At the same time they give him the oil, which he pours into the two little oil-lamps kept ready and which are now lit and placed between the two nuts. After this, he utters a long mantra and sprinkles the nuts with yellow-root water. Each of those present also has a few drops of the water poured on to his palm to moisten his forehead, and the rest is sprinkled over the people and the masqueraders who in the meantime have demonstrated their dances and pantomimes on the grass place before the *dēvālaya*. Then the *kapuā* takes up the two nuts again, utters another long formula, and returns them to the men who brought them. The *udupila* now flings his nut against that of his partner, directly in front of the *dēvālaya*, so that one of them is broken in pieces. The nut which has remained whole is then brought to the *dēvālaya* and put on the table by the side of the lamps; the one which was cracked, however, is put away under the table. There they remain for three months. After that time, the oil is pressed out of them and used for the lamps of the *dēvālaya*.

After another mantra which invokes the deity for the third time, the ceremony is finished. The crowd continues the dances and the beating of the drums on the

lawn before the *dēvālaya* for a little while, then it breaks up and the people return home.

The result of the last contest which always takes place before the *dēvālaya*, is not without consequences: If the *yatipīla* win the match, i.e. when their nut remains whole, it is a good omen; if, however, it is broken and that of the *udupīla* is left undamaged, it is a bad sign. In the latter case, it is understood that *Patini-dēvi* is angry or at least grieved; for, both the *pol-gahavanā* and the other contents are connected with the *Patini-dēvi* and have their origin in the following legend:

When *Patini-dēvi* came from the *dēviyaloka*, she married a man called *Polanga Therunānsē* who had neither profession nor income. They soon got into difficulties. But *Patini* still had some gold jewelry, such as her golden foot-rings, and so she said one day to her husband that he should take the rings to the goldsmith and pawn them in order to buy food. *Polanga* did as he had been told, but none of the jewellers wanted to buy the rings. Finally, he went to *Pandirata* to try and sell his wife's rings there, and at last he met a goldsmith named *Tarakaluva* who bought them from him.

In the same place, there lived a king, *Pandi-rajjuvo*, whose consort possessed rings which resembled those of *Patini* very nearly. One day, she washed them and put them in the sun to dry, and in her absence a peacock came and swallowed them. When the queen missed her rings, she at once thought of theft and reported it to the king. He ordered enquiries to be made and promised a large reward to whoever discovered the thief. When the goldsmith who had bought *Patini's* rings heard about it, he of course grew suspicious, took the rings, and showed them to the king. The monarch sent for his consort and asked her whether they were hers. "They look very much like mine," said the queen, "but they are not." The king, however, thought that he knew better and was, moreover, persuaded by the clever jeweller and strengthened in his conviction that *Polanga Therunānsē* who had sold the rings to the goldsmith must have been the thief. He, therefore, ordered that he be led to the place of execution and be impaled under the "puberiga-tree".<sup>1</sup>

In the meantime, *Patini-dēvi* waited for her husband to return. Finally, she resolved to go and look for him in spite of the attempted dissuasion of her maid *Kaliya*. So she set out, accompanied by *Kaliya*, but wherever they came and whoever *Patini* asked about her husband, nobody was able or willing to offer any information. This was because the king had, as a precaution, issued the order that nobody, under pain of having his tongue cut out, must talk about the fact that

<sup>1</sup> It is said that the *udupīla* are descended from this *Polanga Therunānsē*, while the *yatipīla* belong to the kin of *Patini-dēvi*. It is not very clear how her indignation or grief fit into the picture. Perhaps, when the *udupīla* are victorious she is reminded too strongly of her husband's tragic death and sad or angry emotions are stirred in her bosom. There is also the tradition that *Polanga* had been a very cruel man in his former life and had killed many people. A great many other stories are told about *Patini-dēvi* which may refer to one or the other of these contests. Among others, it is said that she has a partner in each of the four quarters of the compass, viz.: *Saman-dēviyo* in the north (*uttara*), *Vishnu* in the east (*nēnāhira*), *Kataragama-dēviyo* in the south (*dakuna*), and *Nata-dēviyo* in the west (*basnāhira*).



Polanga had been executed. At last, Patini and the girl came to Pandirata. Before they entered the place, they rested at an inn where Patini, again in vain, inquired after her husband. She also asked the peasants and the goldsmiths, but always received negative or elusive answers. One day, she saw the two children of the king and tried to sound them as well. She gave them sweets to make them talk and actually had success. "Has there been an execution recently?", she asked. The boy was startled and did not answer, but the girl said, "How can we be impolite, when the lady has given us sweets?", and she told all that had happened.

The palace was surrounded by a moat and could not be reached except by boat. But the king had commanded that nobody was to be admitted to the palace. So, Patini threw one of her golden ornaments into the water so that it receded and she could walk across on dry ground. In this way she reached the island on which the palace and the place of execution were situated, and went straight to the latter. There she discovered her husband lying dismembered on the ground, and broke out into wails and lamentations. She went to the palace and asked the king why he had committed the atrocity. "He stole the queen's foot-rings and therefore I had him executed", answered the monarch. Then he ordered Patini to be put in irons and to have her breasts cut off. But she held the king's two children by the hand and tried quickly to hide them under her garment. She seized her left breast, tore it out, and flung it at the king. Flames shot up and the palace and the whole town went up in the conflagration. When Sakra became aware of it, he went to Patini and asked her not to kill all the people, but to spare those who were innocent. Patini promised and showed mercy to a few men, but the rest of them fared all the worse. The fire was followed by diseases and plagues in which again a considerable number of the inhabitants died. It seemed as if the whole country was going to be depopulated. Again Sakra entreated Patini to be lenient with those who were not guilty. But she answered back, "How am I to be compensated if I check the pestilence?" Then Sakra made the following proposal: She should stop the plague and be satisfied with the offerings which would be presented to her when a contest was held for her. Patini agreed and so the three games were created, the *pol-gahanavā*, the *an-keliya*, and the *li-keliya*. To this very day, the people arrange one of these matches when an epidemic has broken out and Patini is presented with an offering, namely the undamaged coconut, already spoken of above, or a hook of horn after an *an-keliya*, or an unbroken "liya" when a *li-keliya* has been held.

#### THE "AN-KELIYA"

The course of the *an-keliya* resembles that of the *pol-gahanavā*, but it is by no means as exciting nor does it require any special skill. For this contest, a pair of hooks is needed, made out of the antlers of a deer and absolutely identical in size and thickness. These hooks give the game its name.

In his monograph on Ceylon, Trautz gives a detailed description of this match and states that antlers are seldom used, only for games on a small scale, and that



generally the fight is carried out with hooked sticks. <sup>1</sup> "In the middle of a flat piece of ground", writes Trautz <sup>2</sup>, "a close ring of jungle lianas is wound about a sufficiently big tree (which, if necessary, must be erected for the purpose) at ground level. At a distance of about four or five metres from the tree, an oblong hole is dug, about two metres long, one metre wide, and one and a half metres deep. The sides of the pit are covered by coconut stumps; in the middle of the hole a coconut-palm trunk about seven or eight metres in height, whose roots have been cut off so that only the thick lower part of the trunk is left, is erected upside down. Strong liana ropes are slung loosely round the lower part above the ground and two more are fastened to the top so that they can be grasped by the people taking part at a distance of about fifteen metres. The hooks for a conventional an-keliya contest are made of various kinds of lianas; they must be selected and prepared with the utmost care, for the least crack or defect in them would mar the success of the game right from the very beginning. Sometimes antlers are used instead of bent sticks. The hooks are fixed in the centre of a long thick piece of wood; a hook six inches in circumference requires a piece of wood seven to eight feet long and about one and a half feet in circumference. These logs are called "an-mola". In addition, two ropes with a prescribed number of windings are needed; they are supplied with a piece of wood, fixed so that, if necessary, the windings can be made tighter. These ropes are called "varam" and their length and strength depends on that of the hooks. In solemn procession the hooks are carried to the field, there fixed to the varam, and linked with each other. Now, both teams pull until one of the hooks breaks. If they do not break, the rope attached to one hook is fixed to the lianas which were wound round the tree, and that of the other hook to the coconut stump.

Again both parties pull on the ropes until one of the hooks breaks. As soon as this happens, the whole crowd rushes to the spot to see which of the two hooks it is.

The "party of the upper hook" and that of the "lower hook" are hereditary among the families. The losing team is kept prisoner within a rope and the victors dance round them, jeering at them to their heart's delight, while the others are not allowed to defend themselves.

Day after day, the match is repeated, until the upper hook has been broken twice or the lower hook three times, or until both hooks have proved unbreakable... "

Trautz relates the following legend as being the mythological origin of this game:

"One day, Patini and her husband had gone to pick sapu-flowers. They had taken long hooked sticks with them with which to reach the flowers. When they poked the sticks in among the branches of the tree, they became entangled with each other and with the branches of the tree so that they could not be freed. While they were still deliberating what to do, the three sons of Mahavishnu happened to

<sup>1</sup> The museums at Kandy and Colombo are in possession of a large number of such hooks, most of which are made of wood, but a few also from a forked branch of the antlers of a deer. Many of these "wooden hooks" are very carefully worked and are also partly painted. Some, however, have little in common with real hooks and look more like wooden clubs.

<sup>2</sup> Trautz, Ceylon, p. 105 ff. "



pass by. At the deity's request, they pulled at the two sticks until the hook of that of Patini's husband broke off and the two were disentangled. The goddess was so happy at the outcome that she proposed to found a game based on their adventure and so the an-keliya was created."

#### THE "LI-KELIYA"

The third game, the li-keliya, is performed in a corresponding way. Sticks about the length of a forearm, are cut from the jack-tree or other kind of resistant wood; they are sawn lengthwise so as to form a kind of rattle which produces a clapping noise with each blow. One *udupila* and one *yatipila* are each supplied with such a liya and begin striking one another. To the rhythm of the accompanying drums, they beat their own thigh and that of their partner alternately, in the latter case, letting the blows fall a little harder. This is continued until one of the two liya goes to pieces, whereupon a fresh one is taken up. This last one is then carried to the *dēvālaya* in a *perahēra*. As remarked previously, this game is only known in the northern part of Lanka, where there are neither coconuts nor antlers.

#### THE VAS-DOS

*Ēs-vaba*, the evil eye (literally: venomous eyes), *kathā-vaba*, evil talk (literally: venomous mouth), and *hō-vaba*, evil (venomous) thoughts, are able to cause diseases, apparently without any outward, visible means and without action on the part of any particular person. The maladies which are inflicted in this way are included under the name "vas-dōs". *Vasa* or *vaba* means venom, badness, ill will, and *dōs* or *dōsa*, as we saw in the introduction, indicates a distinct category of illnesses.

Jealousy, envy, or a grudge form the motives from which a person whom they involve, may be wished, knowingly or unknowingly, something bad by another person. The individual affected may be struck with failure, bad luck, illness, or the like.

All these cases are called *vas-dōs*. So, evidently not only diseases are caused by the evil eye, evil talk, and evil thoughts, but also lack of success and disaster; in short, any kind of injury may be traced back to them. Take as an example someone having an orchard which yields a lot of fruit. It is believed that envious looks from other people cause the fruit to fall prematurely from the tree, or prevent them from ripening, also that they remain tasteless or are ripped off too early, or even that the whole tree is damaged by a storm. In these cases, the evil eye is blamed and for that reason, ripening bananas and other fruit which are exposed to the looks of other people are often wrapped in leaves or protected by other means.

The most serious consequences of the evil eye, evil talk, or evil thoughts with which people harm each other, are illness or accidents which can only be fought against by adequate amulets, yantra and mantra, and especially by the performance of certain ceremonies. Of course, care must be taken that one is informed in good time about any threatening danger or at any rate that its possible approach is not

overlooked, so that the rites can be observed at an early stage. In many cases, a *sūniyama*-ceremony is performed for this purpose, thus simply as a preventative measure. Even more frequently, a *gara-yakuma*-ceremony is chosen, which is particularly used in cases of *vas-dōs*.

According to tradition, the *vas-dōs* are traced back to the *Dēvol-dēviyo*, or rather, to his seven subordinate *yakku* who have to give effect to his orders (p. 143).

When someone looks at another person jealously, slanders him or simply harbours bad feelings against him, wishing him illness or accidents, such a desire may, according to the general belief, be fulfilled without further action. But at the back of all these maladies or incidents, there are in reality always the seven *yakku*, carrying out the orders of their master, *Dēvol-dēviyo*. The desired effects take place more certainly if an astrological period unfavourable for the person concerned is selected; a *ganitaya* is therefore visited and consulted if possible in advance.

The most certain way, however, is that of applying directly to *Dēvol-dēviyo*, asking him to afflict the particular individual with disease, mishap, etc., always supposing that the other person was the first to harm one, to rob one, to slander one, etc. If one is sure of one's cause, one naturally need not conceal the fact that one is addressing oneself to the deity for satisfaction. A little offering-stand is then erected in front of one's house or elsewhere on one's property; flowers are put on it, it is perfumed with *dummala* or camphor, seven little oil-lamps are lit, and verses (*kāvi*) are recited which one has either composed oneself or had written by someone else and by which *Dēvol-dēviyo* is entreated to punish the evil-doer. The recitation of these *kāvi* and the invoking of *Dēvol-dēviyo* have to be performed twice a day for three or four days, morning and evening. But here also the best chance is to choose a period astrologically unfavourable for the person concerned, after consultation with an experienced *ganitaya*.

## A FEW ADDITIONAL LEGENDS

### HOW THE FIRST PLAGUES CAME TO CEYLON

"Once upon a time, king *Sirisanghalaya* lived at *Anuradhapura*. He was a good and wise monarch who taught his subjects to refrain from doing evil, not to be cruel to animals or to kill them, to lead a righteous life, and to abstain from intoxicating beverages. The people, however, did not heed his exhortations and vice increased among them every day. Then there came a long period of drought; for three years not a drop of rain fell. Everything withered and a great famine broke out. People went to the king and complained of their misery. But he only answered, 'Why did you not follow my advice? Now you are simply being paid back for your sins.'

Nevertheless, he gave all he had to alleviate the need, but it was just a drop in the ocean and destitution spread more and more over the country. The king therefore went to the *Muvang-Velaitaila-dāgoba* and made a vow that he would not rise



until rain fell and the waters carried him off. Then, he knelt down, entreated the gods for rain, and ordered offerings to be arranged. Soon after, it began to rain. The fields obtained plenty of water and could be tilled again. But during the long drought, a certain yakka, the Ratāsa-yakka, had come into the country, with eyes as big as cart-wheels and with his mouth bristling with huge fangs. The people were seized by a terrible fear and began to tremble with fright. They fell ill and died, and their corpses were devoured by the yakka. So, they applied once more to the king and asked him what they should do. He promised them: 'I shall do what I can so that the yakka leaves the country.' Thereupon, he went to the yakka, and explained the situation to him. But the yakka answered: 'I have only come to execute the orders of Vesamunu-rajjuvo.' He went to Vesamunu-rajjuvo and told him that the king of Anuradhapura had tried to drive him out, and asked for permission to return to his country, India. So, he went back to India and pursued the people there with diseases from that time on; so it came about that cholera, smallpox, and pestilence are so commonplace there, since they are spread by this yakka.

After a while, Sirisanghalaya went to another temple, this time in Atamāgala near Veyangoda, and resolved to stay there for some time. At Anuradhapura, however, his brother remained behind. He wanted to make use of the king's absence to seize the throne and make himself monarch; when the king had not been heard of for some time, he declared that he was dead and ascended the throne.

Atamāgala was surrounded by a big wood in which the king now and then used to go for a walk. One day, he met a vedda who was hunting. The king called him, offered him food, and then asked him to go to his brother at Anuradhapura and tell him that he was here at Atamāgala and meant to stay some time longer. The vedda went and delivered his message. Thereupon the usurper resolved to kill the king. He sent drummers out to make it known that he would present the man who brought him the king's head, with gold and silver to the amount of an elephant's weight. But only the vedda knew where Sirisanghalaya was living. He stopped one of the drummers and told him that he would go and procure the head of the king. He went back to the wood in which the former king was living, but when he stood face to face with him he did not know what to do, for the king also promised him a reward for the head of his brother and at the same time handed him a big sword. Now, the vedda spoke out freely and told him that his brother was seeking his life and had put a high price on his head. 'Let him come himself for my head', said the king, but he realized at once that he was now completely helpless. He took a cloth, dipped it in water which had been put under a spell, and wound it round his neck. At this moment his head separated itself from his body, and he offered it with his own hands to the vedda who became frightened and wanted to run away. However, he accepted the head and returned with it to Anuradhapura to present it to the new king. The king, however, did not believe that it was his brother's head, and refused to trust the vedda. So the vedda built an offering-stand



(mal-mēsa), placed the head on it, surrounded it with flowers and offering gifts, and uttered a mantra. Suddenly, the head began to move, jumped into the air, and exclaimed: 'I am Sirisanghalaya-rajjuvo of Anuradhapura', repeating this three times. Then it became silent again. The king was alarmed and bade the vedāda to remove the head at once. When the former queen, Sirisanghalaya's consort, heard about it, she resolved to take revenge for her husband's death. She had a cremation arranged and on the spot where the miracle had taken place she had a vihāra built, the Atamāgala-vihāra, which is still standing to this very day."

#### LEGEND OF BAHIRAVA, THE BUMI-DEVI

Bahirava or Bumi-dēvi, i.e. the goddess of the earth (bumi = earth), was the mother of eight yakkiniyo about whom the following is told <sup>1</sup>:

"When prince Sidharta had become Buddha and sat under the bō-tree on the diamond-throne which the goddess of the earth had given him <sup>2</sup>, Mārea came to dispute the ownership of the diamond. He had brought his whole retinue with him and used all his powers of persuasion to gain possession of the jewel. All those who accompanied Mārea, professed in his favour, while Buddha could neither offer proof nor bring a single witness forward to testify that the diamond was rightfully his. So, he stretched his hand out and called the earth as his witness. The earth opened and the earth-goddess made her appearance. She held a vessel with a coconut-blossom in her hand, turned to Mārea, and said: 'This diamond is his, the Enlightened One's, property!' Thereupon, Mārea flung a curse at the earth-goddess. Soon after, the deity gave birth to eight children who became eight yakkiniyo; it was their duty to take care of the earth and of everything in it, i.e. its treasures, ores, metals, and jewels. The yakkiniyo were called: Anda-Bahirava, Nanda-Bahirava, Atala-Bahirava, Patala-Bahirava, Narasingha-Bahirava, Hanumanta-Bahirava, Udayaksha-Bahirava, and Vadirāna-Bahirava. They distributed themselves over the eight points of the compass and took care that men did not commit offences against the earth-goddess, and saw to it that those who wanted to dig in the earth for treasures or other things, presented her with an offering. From that time on, they demanded offerings from mankind on every occasion, whether a man wanted to dig a well or to work a new rice-field, or to search for mineral wealth.

And so it came about that from then on eight offerings, so-called Bahirava-pidenna, distributed over the eight cardinal points, have had to be presented to the eight yakkiniyo and to the earth goddess, on the spot where a person intended to dig. For each of those offerings, a little mēsa must be put up, on which a little rice

<sup>1</sup> According to the Indian mythology, *Bhayrava* (on Ceylon called *Bahirava(ya)*) is a servant or doorkeeper of Shiva. Sometimes, however, this name is also used for Shiva himself. Shiva as *Bhayrava* is the Dreadful One, and is, like his consort Kālī, represented with a string of skulls around his neck. He spreads fright and terror and, by performing the tāndava-dance, causes the end of the world (Glaserapp, *Hinduismus*, III, p. 132). This is the only known incarnation of Shiva, in which form, however, he is seldom venerated.

<sup>2</sup> The beginning of this legend has already been told in a former chapter (p. 77).



with seven kinds of spices, five kinds of roasted seeds, and eight kinds of flowers, are placed. In addition, a few drops of cock's blood must not be omitted, and the eastern *mēsa* must contain a little silver bowl (made out of a ten-cent piece) with clear water for the earth goddess herself. A short offering ritual must be performed, and it is recommended that an *ḍura* be called in so that everything is carried out according to the rules and that nothing is neglected. During the performance of the ceremony, the *ḍura* wears a red gown and wraps his head in a red cloth so that only his right hand remains uncovered. He then begins to utter mantra, starting at the eastern *mēsa*, then turning to the south-eastern one, to the one in the south, to the one in the south-west, etc., until he has uttered one mantra at each of the eight *mēsa* <sup>1</sup>. These eight *mēsa* with their *pidenna* must be left in position for three days; then they are removed, and the farmer or the tenant may set to work.

#### LEGEND OF GALABANDHARA OR THE AYANA-YAKKA

"King *Buvōneka*, who reigned at *Kurunēgala*, had twelve wives but no children, and therefore no successor to his throne. At that time, there were many Mohammedans, so-called *Marakāla*, living at *Kurunēgala*, and the house of one of them, who had an extraordinarily beautiful wife, stood at the place where the king used to bathe. One day, the king sent for this woman and married her. She gave birth to a boy who was called *Vātini-kumāra*. Since there was no Mohammedan school at *Kurunēgala*, the boy was sent to school to *Beruvala* and lived there in his uncle's house. Soon afterwards, this same queen had another son whom she named *Kalinga-kumāra*.

About that time, the king went to war and said to his wives: 'If I lose this war, I shall hoist a black flag, otherwise a white one. Should you see the black flag, you will all fling yourselves off the cliff!' The king took the field and fortune favoured him. He sent one of his men home in advance with the order to hoist the white flag. The messenger departed, but on his way he drank too much palm-wine and lost the white flag. So he brought the black one home and had it hung out. The women saw the black cloth and threw themselves off the cliff. When the king returned to his palace and was told what had occurred, he also jumped from the cliff to his death.

After this, the son of the thirteenth queen was proclaimed king. Since he was a Mohammedan, he suppressed Buddhism and therefore enjoyed little popularity. The whole population was against him and quarrels arose between Buddhists and Mohammedans with ever-increasing frequency.

The second child of the king's thirteenth wife was still young, and the wife of a launderer had taken care of him and brought him up. But later, she gave him away to a man called *Kaludemagamaya*, who adopted him. This man had two daughters

<sup>1</sup> Frequently, the erection of one single *mēsa* to the east of the place or spot where it is intended to dig is considered sufficient.

of his own. One day, he asked the elder girl whether she would like to marry Kalinga, who had in the meantime attained his sixteenth year. She declined and said she wished to have nothing to do with him and that she did not want the company of a lad of a lower caste. The man then put the same question to his younger daughter and she was not unwilling. So the two of them were married. The consequence, however, was that the two sisters lived in a state of growing discord and at length the young couple resolved to move into another house.

The father-in-law had also given Kalinga rice fields to work, but the young man had no bulls with which to plough them and nobody wanted to lend him any. He went from house to house asking for bulls, but always in vain. One evening when he again came home exhausted from his wanderings, he cut himself a stick, pushed it into the ground, and said: 'When I become king of Lanka, all bulls may gather here!'

One day, two golden foot-rings were seen in a river near Kurunegala. The king heard about them and had his men look for them, but the rings could not be found. So one of the king's counsellors thought of a ruse. He told the king that he should build a hall (mandapam) on the top of a mountain near Kurunegala and arrange a pirit-ceremony in order to gain possession of the rings which certainly belonged to a deity. The king followed the advice. However, when the hall was finished and everyone was assembled in it, the hut, along with the king and the people, plunged down into the depths; for the king's minister had had a rope fixed to the beam and had secretly ordered his adherents to pull it so that the building was precipitated down the slope. The deceased king became a yakka-dēviyo; he is venerated by both the Buddhists and the Mohammedans, and a little temple (dēvālaya) has been built in his honour which is in the charge of two kapuo, one Sinhalese and one Tamil.

After the king's death, Kalinga one day happened to pass the place where he had pushed the stick into the ground, and he saw that a large number of cows and bulls had gathered there, forming a big herd. At that moment, he remembered his former declaration and knew that he would now become king. He returned home, ate his supper, and went to bed. He dreamt that he had hurt his foot and that the wound swarmed with worms. He also saw in his dream his rice-field with a full crop of rice. He awoke and told his wife about the dream. 'I shall be king of Lanka', he said to her. But she laughed at him and his foolishness.

In the meantime, the inhabitants of Kurunegala had sent out the state elephant with the aim that it should select a successor to the king. Kalinga heard the sound of the drums and saw a procession of people with an elephant leading them, coming in his direction. When they reached him, the elephant raised its trunk and bestowed honour on him. It was thus clear to everybody that this man should be their future king.<sup>1</sup> Kalinga was set on the back of the elephant and the whole procession returned to the palace where he was proclaimed the new king.

<sup>1</sup> This was formerly the way of electing a king. A "perahēra" was arranged with the state-elephant leading and he before whom the animal stopped was proclaimed king.



Soon after his coronation, he ordered that the launderer, his father-in-law, be impaled for all the wrong he had inflicted upon him <sup>1</sup>, and that the elder daughter, who had once refused him, also be punished.

He then built a *dēvālaya*, the *Ayāna-yakka-dēvālaya*, for his elder brother who had become a *yakka-dēviyo*. This *yakka-dēviyo* has been and is worshipped by the Sinhalese right up to this day under the name *Ayāna-yakka*, while the Mohammedans simply call him *Galabandhara*, i.e. he who was tied to the rock (*gala* = stone, rock, cliff; *bandhana* = to tie, fasten). He is said to be seen on Saturdays and Wednesdays riding on his horse round the top of the mountain. In the *dēvālaya* which has been built in his honour, he is presented with offerings, mainly bananas and palm sugar. Whoever passes through the neighbouring bush, usually breaks a twig off a tree near the *dēvālaya* and lays it on the road, apologising to the *Ayāna-yakka* for the disturbance. There is otherwise the risk that the person will be struck with illness. For the same reason, even the passengers in a motor-car on their pilgrimage to the *dēvālaya* must break a coconut as an offering for the *yakka-dēviyo* before they reach their destination. For those entering the *yakka's* territory without the prescribed precautions will be punished by being made ill or by having an accident before long.

### THE PRETEO AND THE PRETA-PIDENNA

The *prêteo* [singular masculine: *prēta* (*prētaya*), feminine: *prēti*] <sup>2</sup> are the ghosts of the deceased. The conceptions cherished about them are just as obscure as confused. The old, prebuddhist doctrine that all men become *prêteo*, i.e. ghosts or spirits, after their death, has apparently afterwards changed, in order to become consistent with the buddhist teaching, in that only certain people are destined to take this way. The others, however, insofar as they are not redeemed at their death, are caught up in a circle of rebirths; we may just as well include the *prêteo* within the circle as men who are obliged to go through an inferior form of existence after their life, and, since they can afterwards be free from it like any other being, it is clear that the *prêteo* form is in no way everlasting.

According to a tradition to which we shall return later, the first people were turned into *prêteo* after their death as a punishment for an offence against the *sangha*; before that time, such a thing had never been known (see p. 191).

Thus, not every individual is turned into a *prēta* or *prēti* after life, but only those who, up to and immediately before their death, fostered all kinds of desires, cravings, or passions, whether it was those who directed all their thoughts to money and earthly goods, those who amassed treasures through avarice, those who were always planning the building of houses and palaces without having the means, or those who always had their heads full of phantastic ideas. Such people, taken una-

<sup>1</sup> In former times, criminals were punished by impaling them on sharp poles inserted in the ground.

<sup>2</sup> *Prēta* comes from *pra* = before and *ita* = gone.

wares by death, carry their thoughts, their wishes, their schemes, as it were with them to their graves and can, therefore, find no rest even after their life has ended.

There are various kinds of prĒteo, differentiated by their places of abode and their conduct. The most outstanding of them are the ñata-prĒteo, the māla-prĒteo, and the gēvala-prĒteo.

The ñata-prĒteo (ñati = kinsman, relative) are said continually to follow those they have left behind and to cling to them; they torment them and may even be dangerous for them. The māla-prĒteo (māla = dead) prefer to stay in cemeteries and at crossroads. The gēvala-prĒteo, on the other hand, are household spirits (gēval = houses); they cannot make up their minds to leave the houses where they



Fig. 19. A male prēta.



Fig. 20. A female prēti and infant prēteo.

have lived before and they annoy their inhabitants in most unpleasant ways. The presence and activity of a gēvala-prēta in a house is indicated by strange noises whose source cannot be detected, by the falling down of objects, or even by the discovery of things in places where they had not been put. These prĒteo can best be designated as ghosts. Innumerable stories are told about them and there is hardly a family or house who cannot entertain you with this or that ghost story.

When a prēta has not been presented with offerings by his relatives for three years, he lets the living feel his indignation all the more. Such prĒteo are particularly dangerous and must be quickly appeased by a prēta-pidenna, otherwise one runs the risk of being pursued by them. But this situation does not last longer



than ten years. When a *prēta* grows old, he is believed ultimately to retire into the bush and to become a kind of wood ghost, called *kumbhanda*.<sup>1</sup>

The strangest notions are in circulation as to the outward appearance of the *prēteō*. As has been stated, there are male and female ones. The males are believed to have four arms and an excessively long tongue. They suffer from perpetual hunger and when they do not find any food they bite a piece of their tongue off. Another conception is that they have a very thin neck and that their gullet is as thin as the eye of a needle; for this reason they can only take very small quantities of food and never eat their fill. They always suffer from hunger and thirst. They ride on the backs of pigs and fly on them through the air. The female spirits have six arms and only one breast. They are pictured with rice-cakes and coconuts in their hands (fig. 19, 20). This is but one of the many ideas about the appearance of the *prēteō*.

Their chieftain is *Aimāna*, which is why he too is always summoned when ceremonies for the *prēteō* are carried out. He is, according to the belief, a *prēta-yakka* by rank, for he combines in his person the characteristics of both the *prēteō* and the *yakku*, thus occupying, as it were, a position intermediate between the two; tradition also relates that he was born out of a corpse. But the *prēteō* also submit themselves to the authority of the *Maha-sohona*, the *Hiri-yakka*, and the *Sūniya-yakka*, and obey them out of fear. The *ḍura* therefore always makes sure of the assistance of these *yakku* by presenting them with offerings, when he summons the *prēteō*.

The *prēteō* who have not yet received offerings, particularly the older ones, are dreaded because they bother people, vex and torment them, and are frequently to blame for cases of illness. When a house is haunted, when its occupants hear strange noises, when things are meddled with in an inexplicable way and are found again in places other than where they were put, when a smell of a corpse or of putrefaction is noticed, these signs are thought to prove beyond doubt that a *prēta* is up to his tricks in the house. Giddiness, headaches, delirium, bad dreams, shocks, as well as consumption, dropsy, and other diseases are ascribed to the *prēteō*. It is the task of the *sāstra-kariya* to decide in each particular case whether the interference is due to a *yakka* or to a *prēta*. But when, for instance, someone has attacks of nausea after eating, when his throat feels choked, or when a smell of decomposition or of corpses is noticed, it is infallible evidence that he has to do with a *prēta*.

When a little child whose father or mother has died keeps crying and cannot be quietened, when he suffers from sleeplessness or refuses to take his food, or is tormented by fever, all these things are attributed to the influence of the paternal *prēta* or maternal *prēti* who clings to the child with such longing as not to let him find rest. When a person loses his appetite, is troubled by bad smells, when his sleep is disturbed by nightmares, or when he has the sensation of being touched

<sup>1</sup> *Kumbhanda* is also the name for a kind of demon distinguished by gigantic size.

by something cold while asleep, they are indications that a *prēta* exists in the house and is persecuting the occupants.

In all these cases, the *ḍura* must be called and a *prēta-pidenna*, an offering for the spirit of the deceased, arranged. This offering consists of a very great number of different foods, especially fruit and vegetables, and rice with spices prepared in various ways. A new, as yet unused plate and cup, as well as a piece of white cotton cloth, about two metres long must also be available. The *prēteo* are said to be very particular about their food and they demand the white cloth in order to dress themselves. For, besides their incessant hunger and thirst, they are believed to have nothing with which to clothe themselves. All these offering-gifts are placed in a roomy *tātuva* which is ornamented with *gokkola* and made in a special way, and which is much bigger than the *tātuva* for a *yakka*. It rests upon four legs, is of considerable height, and is supplied with a contrivance of four staves, tied together at the top, by which the whole can be carried.

The offering itself is composed of five kinds of flowers, twenty five kinds of curry, fruit, milk with honey, seven kinds of fish, rice-cake, five kinds of seeds, crabs and shrimps, red sugar and other sweets, various meat dishes, betel, opium, hashish, palm wine, brandy, some silver and gold ornaments, and many other things. In the middle, a new unused plate is placed, filled with boiled rice, on it a new unused bowl with water and three copper coins (*pandura*). On top, a young "*ṭemili*" is fixed, and the white cloth, which must not be forgotten, is attached somewhere (Pl. XLVI, fig. 79 to Pl. XLVII, fig. 81).

Some times, the choice and arrangement of the repast offered is governed by the special considerations which the different *prēteo* require. In this case, the *tātuva* contains five square compartments in its interior. In the middle, above all the others, is placed the offering for the *ñata-prēteo*, and on the lower part that of the *māla-prēteo*, each of these offerings being placed on its own particular *tātuva*. The *māla-prēteo* demand small round fritters of rice-meal, three raw hen's eggs, and a little oil extracted from rotten coconuts (*kunu-pol*). The gifts for the *ñata-prēteo*, however, consist of seven kinds of flowers (*para-mal*), seven kinds of fish, five kinds of seeds, twenty-five kinds of curry, nine copper coins, some palm wine and brandy, a few grains of rice, a little piece of sandalwood, some pastry, some blood from a cock, and finally a live cock which is placed at the side of the *tātuva*. Besides the *prēta-pidenna*, little offerings must always be prepared for the *Maha-sohona*, the *Hiri-yakka*, and the *Sūniya-dēvatāvā*, for one must, as we have seen, always be certain of the assistance of these *yakku* when one wants to summon the *prēteo*.

The ceremony opens, as usual, after nightfall, and is generally celebrated in one of the larger rooms of the house. The two *tātuva*, both supplied with two or three little torches which are burning (*vilakku*), are placed on chairs in front of the patient. The *ḍura*, standing before the *tātuva* of the *Sūniya-yakka*, now begins reciting. The first to be summoned is always *Isvara* who, however, does not receive an offering (*Isvara pūjāva*).<sup>\*</sup> Then follows the appeal to and the invoking of the



Sūniya-yakka (disti karnova) with the help of a little reed pipe. The yakku are entreated to lend their assistance to the summoning of the prēteo, for these spirits are believed implicitly to respect and obey the yakku, (Pl. XI, fig. 17), because of their superior strength and power and because they always leave something edible behind. The tātuva is perfumed with dammala and the recitations are continued. Then the ḍura steps in front of the prēta-tātuva, summoning the prēteo by calling and whistling (prēteo disti karnova) (Pl. XLVII, fig. 80). When this is finished, the prēta-tātuva with the burning torches is carried into an adjoining room, the doors are locked, and it is left there until midnight. After a pause of from one to two hours, the ḍura lies down on his back on a mat, and the tātuva for the yakku are placed on his stomach. During the whole time, he continues his recitations of mantra. After a while, the tātuva are carried out of doors and are left there as food for the beasts and birds.

About midnight, the prēta-tātuva is taken out of the closed room and inspected to see whether it has been tampered with. In most cases, the ḍura has already taken care of this when the tātuva was carried out. If some disorder in the arrangement can be discerned, it is certain proof that the prēta has come and eaten from the gifts. Usually, the tātuva is then returned to the other room with the addition of two or three fresh lighted vilakku and is left there for two or three hours more. Again it is examined to see if anything has been altered or disarranged and again it is supplied with fresh vilakku and returned for the third time to the adjoining room. Before day-break, i.e. before the birds begin twittering, the tātuva is taken out of the other room for the last time and carried to the grave-yard to be left there. While this is being done, the ḍura or one of his assistants runs three times round the house, scattering roasted mustard seed which prevents the prēta from coming back.

#### THE "PRETA-PIDENNA-MANTRA"

Seven mantra must be distinguished which the ḍura, while performing the ritual, has to recite in the sequence in which they are quoted below. They are connected with the tradition related on page 191. Their texts run:

I. "Ōm namō!		Pēra		Krakuchchanda		Buddhung-Buddhava	
Om, glory to Buddha!		former epoch (kalpa)		former Buddha			
lōva	vēda	vasana	kalhi	Kōsala-rajjuruvo		visin	
locality (loka)	when he lived	residing	at that time	Kosala king		with him	
ke-lak	pamana	dāna	viyadangkota	dān	sel	bandova	
100 lak	only	property	spent	plural of dāne (meals)		house	built
dān	dēna kalhi	e	dān	kapu	akusala	balaing	prētava
meals	at that time	those	meals	priests	sinned	became	preteo
Bintota-dēvālaya		mal - poru	patṣ	pokonu	vala	akāsa	polāva
dēvālaya near Bintota		flowers proffered	cavern	water-hole	near	heaven	earth

katha-diyā	sitin	vinamut	vēsipoda	pamonovat	nolēba	sitin
open one's mouth to catch water	wait	in vain	drop of water	not once	never	wait
prēta	kama	yakshaniya	geya	atakona	doloskona	nosita
	together		house	of eight sides	of twelve sides	without waiting
mal-tātuva	bala	enda	Krakuchchanda	nam	Buddhunē	
offering-stand for flowers	saw	coming			who was made Buddha	
Kōsala - raja	daruvanē	varami"				
Kosala king	children	given order,				

which may be rendered as follows:

"In the Pēra-epoch, when Krakuchchanda was Buddha, there lived a king named Kōsala. Ten millions of his fortune were spent on meals and buildings erected for the orders. On one occasion, a meal was distributed, but the peoples' priests (kapuo) committed an offence while preparing the dishes and were therefore turned into prēteo. They lived in a cavern near the Bintota-dēvālaya where people used to lay flowers in honour of Buddha, and which was near a water-hole. But they had to suffer terrible thirst, since they were not able to obtain any water either from the earth or from the sky, although they opened their mouths wide to try to catch a drop of it. So they waited, but in vain. Then the prēteo and the yakku gathered and went to the eight- and twelve-sided house which belonged to Krakuchchanda, who had become Buddha".

II. "Ōm ring, prēsladi gini-gini aruda prēta-distī  
(prēteo) fire (avatara) summoning the prēteo  
vara-vara; namah."  
come, come Buddha, honour!

III. "Ōm ring, bris manslam enēn guru-guru prēla  
salute comes teacher varying his shape  
ginidārana prēta-distī, vara-vara; namah".  
fiery summoning the prēteo come, come Buddha, honour!

IV. "Ōm ring, Kihirelli, Upulvan, Saman, Boksella, Kartēsvara.  
names of the different deities

Mahēsvara aningva, Buma-dēvi aningva, prēta-yaksha-  
through your power earth-goddess through your power  
yakshani distī namah."  
come Buddha, honour!

V. "Ōm ring, bebe sasa kinkin enēn baba Sri-Narayana  
come come come come (Vishnu)  
aning-distī vara-vara; namah."  
come, come Buddha, honour!



V. "Ōm ring, Oradi, Prēsani-vava, Sunti-vava, preta-yaksha-yakshani, enēn,  
come

disti-distī	vara-vara.	Esvahā.
we summon you by presenting you with an offering	come, come	It is good!

VII. "Ōm ring, Airanda kondun-iranda, kondun-vetila, endan bahau,  
betel take it accept it

huni-ambu,	valapalan,	panjarun,	trinam,	disti - disti
chalked betel	bananas	rice-cakes	all together	we summon you by presenting you with an offering

vara - vara;	namah".
come come	Buddha, honour!

If the performance of the prēta-pidenna is without the desired effect, i.e. should the prēteo not be appeased by the offering and continue to make themselves felt by their annoyances, the ḍura is asked to perform a so-called *prēta-bandhima* (bandhima = to bind, to tie).

A mal-bulat-putuva and a prēta-tātuva are erected. In addition to flowers, sandalwood, and other things, the mal-bulat-putuva has on it a so-called *kanyā-nūla*, a white cord of cotton (nūla) made out of seven threads twisted together by an innocent girl (kanyā). The Sūniya-yakka, the Aimāna, chief of the prēteo, and then the prēteo themselves, are summoned by pointing out to them the offerings. Next, the five dēvatāvo are invoked, Vishnu, Isvara, Kataragama-dēviyo, Saman-dēviyo, and Nata-dēviyo, for whom the putuva is intended. The prēta-pidenna must always be erected at some distance from the mal-bulat-putuva, because the deities do not like the smell of the dishes with which the yakku are presented.

After these opening invocations, the ḍura utters a long mantra in order to catch and to fetter (bandhima) the prēta. Seven loose knots are first tied in the nūla which is about one and a half arm-spans in length; then, one end of the cord is tied to the prēta-tātuva, while the ḍura winds the other one round his finger and keeps it so while he utters the mantra and summons the prēta. If the mantra has effect and the prēta approaches, the ḍura feels a slight pull on his finger; at the same moment, he pulls the thread, thus tightening the seven knots which were only loosely knotted. People believe that by this procedure, the prēta is caught. The cord is then untied and put into a small metal case such as are used for amulets. The ḍura takes the case, and goes with it over a stretch of water (river or lake) and over three crossroads. There, he looks for an old solitary tree which is worthless and therefore not in danger of being felled for fire-wood or for some other purpose, e.g. a kaduru- or a mendorang-tree whose wood is regarded as absolutely useless. At an appropriate height, he loosens a little square piece of a bark with his knife, bores a hole in the trunk at the bare spot, puts in the case with the nūla, and covers the whole again with the piece of the bark, so that no traces are left. While he is at this work, the ḍura must take care that he is not observed at his doings,

otherwise there would be the risk of the locket being removed by someone or of the entire tree being cut down. The *prēta* would then be freed and might return home, and the whole performance would be rendered pointless.

The little case with the *nūla* may also be hidden in a cavity in some big stone or in a crevice between the rocks, but a *kaduru* or a *mendorang*-tree is always preferred.

There is still another way of capturing a *prēta*. Into a small metal case seven needles are placed, made of seven different metals and wound round a string consisting of nine cotton threads and in which nine knots have been tied. This case is laid open on the *tātuva*. In the evening, at midnight, and towards morning, a great number of mantra are uttered. Then, the metal case with the needles and the *nūla* is minutely examined to see whether a spider, a beetle, an insect, or any other little animal is in it. If there is, the case is at once closed and carried off to a crevice or a hole in the rocks or put in a hole bored in a tree-trunk. The hole is then conscientiously filled up and smoothed over so that no alteration can be seen from the outside. It is believed that the *prēta* has manifested himself in the little animal and has been rendered harmless by this ceremony. The *prēteo* are sometimes also remembered when a *sūniyama*-ceremony is held; in such a case, a *prēta-pidenna* is arranged, besides the usual offering-gifts, in the above-described form of a *prēta-tātuva*.

In the same way, a meal (*dāne*) offered to the *bhikshu* of a monastery is always a cause to remember the *prēteo*; this custom has its origin in the following legend:

"In the time of Krakuchchanda Buddha, there lived a king, named *Kōsalarajjuruvu*. He built several houses for the *sangha* and performed a great many other good deeds. He also regularly arranged a "*dāne*" for the Buddha and his followers. Once, during the preparation of such a meal, the helpers had brought their children with them and they began to cry and ask for food. In order to hush them, their parents gave them some of the meal they were preparing. This was done several times. To atone for their offence against the *sangha*, these people, after their death, were confined to the deepest hell, the '*avīchia narakadiya*', where they were tormented and then turned into *prēteo*<sup>1</sup>. They spent many ages (*kalpa*) there. Their heads became like stone, their bodies grew black and lean, their hair red, their mouths became twisted, their teeth projected, their eyes receded into their sockets, their navels protruded and secreted a stinking liquid, their bellies became inflated, and their arms and legs became long and thin. A dirty rag served to cover their nakedness. That is what the *prēteo* looked like. They suffered great need and begged Krakuchchanda Buddha to help them and give them food. But Krakuchchanda Buddha refused to give them anything, and consoled them with the coming Buddha to whom they should apply. So, they waited a whole *kalpa* in hell

<sup>1</sup> It is considered a great sin against the *sangha* if, during the preparations for a *dāne*, he who finances it or those who assist at its preparation or other laymen, take even the smallest helping from the dishes before the *bhikshu* have eaten.



until the new Buddha came; this was Kongama Buddha. To him the prēteo now turned and complained about their distress. But Kongama Buddha was not willing to help them either and directed their hopes again to the coming Buddha. So, another kalpa passed by; the new kalpa brought Kashyāpa Buddha with it. Again, the prēteo went to him to beg for mercy. But Kashyāpa also rejected them, and once more referred them to the coming Buddha. This was Gautama Buddha who made his appearance with the new kalpa.

At that time, there lived a king, called Bimbisara-rajjuvo. He had a strange dream. Each and all of the prēteo came to him and gave him no rest, lamenting and wailing and begging for food from him. This dream repeated itself night after night, and the king was harassed in his sleep by the prēteo who would not let him alone. As the king was a friend of Gautama, he told him about his vision. Gautama explained to him: "They are the men who sinned in a former kalpa and were therefore changed into prēteo." "What must I do," asked the king, "for them to let me alone?" "You must have a dāne prepared for them", said Buddha, "then they will withdraw and let you be." The king did as Gautama had advised him, and ordered a great repast, a "prēta-pidenna", to be prepared for the prēteo.

### THE PIRIT-CEREMONY <sup>1</sup>

When a person has died, a bhikshu from a nearby monastery is sent for in order to read from the *sūtra-pitaka*. In the meantime, the family prepare for the interment which, as a rule, takes place on the same day. The nearest relatives carry the coffin, with the "hāmuduruvō" at their head <sup>2</sup>. When the coffin has been lowered into the grave, each of those attending the funeral throws three handfuls of soil upon it, and then the pit is filled in.

On the third day after dusk, the so-called *banoa* takes place, for the performance of which a bhikshu from a nearby monastery is engaged. Tea and gifts are offered to him, and before he leaves the house, he is presented with a towel or other small token. He once more reads from the *sūtra-pitaka* for about an hour. Should now, during that evening or night, a tapping be heard about the house, it is a sign that the deceased has been condemned to hell and is being tormented there. In that case, an *ḍura* is called to present the spirit of the dead with an offering, a *prēta-pidenna*. All kinds of food and luxuries, especially those which the deceased was particularly fond of during his life, must then be provided, but only men are allowed to help in their preparation. When the *prēta-pidenna* is ready, the *tātuva* is placed in a completely empty room on a table or a chair, and the door is shut. Then, the *ḍura* utters certain mantra. After a while, somebody looks to see whether the

<sup>1</sup> Pirit or pirita (Pali: paritta) means protection, defence. In addition, it is the name for a Buddhist script containing nine "sūtra" and treating of exorcism and medicine.

<sup>2</sup> The Sinhalese never employ the word "bhiksu" in everyday language. Instead, they say "hāmuduruvō" or, for a form of address, they use some word such as "sangha(ya) vahansē" or "mahana unvansē".



Fig. 78. The last coconut is carried to the *dēvālaya*.





Fig. 79. The ědura uttering the formulae at a prĕta-pidenna. The prĕta-tĕtuva is standing on the floor; the offerings for the yakku are placed on the two chairs. The cloud of fire comes from burning resin powder. The ědura takes some of the powder from the vessel which the boy holds in his hand, throws it into the air, and lights it with the burning torch.



Fig. 80. Ritual at the performance of a prêta-pidenna. On the chair is an offering arranged for a yakka. Behind it, the çdura is standing with some powdered resin in his hand. He charms it before throwing it into the brazier. The patient is sitting on the chair to the left (flashlight picture).



Fig. 81. The "prêta-tātuva" with the "prêta-pidenna".



Fig. 82. The bhiksha assembled in the mandapam for a pirit-ceremony (flashlight picture).





dishes on the *tātuva* have been displaced or whether they show any signs of having been touched; if so this is interpreted as a sign that the *prēta* has come to taste the offering. Otherwise, the assembly waits a little longer, and then once more inspects the *tātuva*, and if now again no alternation can be seen, they wait a third and even a fourth time. Finally, the *tātuva* is carried behind the house and left there for the crows and dogs. If the *prēta* not yet appeared, it is clear that he has definitely gone to hell and that the *ḍura*'s mantra could not help him anyway.

Another ceremony is the "*bat dāvasa dāne*", i.e. the meal on the seventh day. It is, as the name suggests, held about a week after the burial. Three months afterwards, another more extensive *dāne*, the "*tunmāsdāne*", i.e. the three-months-*dāne*, is arranged to which ten, twenty, or even more *bhikshu* are invited. They assemble at night in the house of mourning where a little eight- or ten-sided pavilion, a so-called "*pirit-mandapam*", has been built of palm-leaves, coloured paper, and cloth (Pl. XLVII, fig. 82). First, the oldest *bhikshu* addresses the master of the house or the senior member of the family in a speech lasting about an hour. Then, all the *bhikshu* speak together and begin reading from a book. During this they hold a white thread, one end of which is tied to a relic which they have brought with them, while the other end is held by the relatives of the deceased who are squatting before the *pirit-mandapam*. After a while, the *bhikshu* retire except two of them who go on with their reading. After about an hour, they are relieved by two others who read for another hour; they are then released in their turn. This is carried on until the sun rises. Usually, the "*atmidima sūtra*"<sup>1</sup> are read. Sometimes, four *bhikshu* read simultaneously, seated opposite each other in pairs. In this case, the four readers distribute the following roles among themselves:

- 1) *Buddhu-hāmuduruvō* (Gautama Buddha);
- 2) *Mahasut-hāmuduruvō*, Buddha's cousin and deputy;
- 3) *Ananda mahaterun vahansē*, Buddha's disciple;
- 4) *Vesamunu-rajjuruvō*, the antagonist, Buddha's adversary.

The four persons enter into a dispute in which the three first-named ones try to conquer and defeat *Vesamunu-rajjuruvō*. But the demon offers strenuous resistance. The argument grows more and more passionate; each one tries to convince the other and to prove his tenet against that of the opponent. Towards daybreak, the discussion reaches its climax, but it of course terminates in a complete victory for Buddha and his dogma, while his adversary is beaten and makes his retreat.

A *pirit-ceremony* may be performed for all kinds of reasons: on account of an illness, at a wedding, when one has built a new house, when a *dāgoba* or a temple is being erected, when a baby takes his first solid food<sup>2</sup>, and on many other occasions. By *pirit* is understood a Buddhist religious ceremony, attended by one or more *bhikshu*, and performed with the aim of counteracting the *yakku*, *prēte*, and

<sup>1</sup> *Atmidima* = redemption, liberation.

<sup>2</sup> With boys this happens when they are between eleven and thirteen months old, with girls about three months earlier.



other evil powers, or of warding them off with the help of Buddha's dogma, which, as is generally believed, makes the demons withdraw. Frequently the pirit also has the character of a purifying ceremony, e.g. at the consecration of a temple or a new house. Its main part consists in the reading aloud or recitation of certain sūtra, preferably of those which are written in the form of dialogues or of discussions between Buddha and his adherents or his adversaries.

When a dāgoba is about to be built, a so-called "pinkama-pirit"<sup>1</sup> is celebrated in the nearest temple, attended by all the bhikshu of the monastery connected with it. A brief ritual, a so-called *mul gala tabimala pirit*, is, on the other hand, carried out at the laying of the foundation stone for a Buddhist school or for a vihāra (*mul gala* = first stone). Only four bhikshu are usually present at it. A special reason for performing a pirit, is, furthermore, the outbreak or excessive spreading of an epidemic. If the ceremonies arranged by the kapuā prove ineffective, then the final recourse is to the Buddhist priests; they are asked to perform a so-called *gam-pirit* (village-pirit).

A large pirit-mandapam is erected where the bhikshu of the vihāra concerned assemble to preach and read from the scriptures.

A little pirit-ceremony is also performed after the observation of an "iramudun-pidenna", but people often neglect calling a bhikshu and the reading of the "piri-vanavā vahansē" is done by one of the elders of the family<sup>2</sup>. In cases of marriage, a little pirit-ceremony is also frequently performed about a week before the wedding; in this case, as in others, the idea is to destroy all evil powers and influences. Three or four bhikshu are appointed, and here too, a small pirit-mandapam is constructed.

### KODIVINA

When anybody wants to inflict damage on another person, he makes a so-called "*kodivina*". It may be regarded as a kind of charm. There are a great many, entirely different kinds of *kodivina* and only the *ḍura* has a comprehensive knowledge of how exactly they must be carried out. Some of them cause illness or death, others bring bad luck into the house, producing discord among the members of a family, others again induce insanity or even lead to suicide. A *kodivina* always means harm for somebody.

Usually, however, under *kodivina* is understood mainly the illness-producing rituals performed by certain *ḍuro*; it is said that of these schemes alone there are sixty different methods known and that the total number of *kodivina* is extremely large. They are a specialized study; a considerable literature about them exists, mostly, to be sure, consisting of manuscripts written on palm-leaves which are to a great extent in the hands of the *ḍuro* and not easily accessible to the laity. It must at any rate be admitted that anybody can gain information about the execution of

<sup>1</sup> Pinkama = to perform a good deed with the aim of earning merit.

<sup>2</sup> Pirivanavā = to read, to declaim, to speak, to repeat.

one or other kodivina, and can at least try to perform it, but it is seldom done, mainly for the obvious reason that, even if only a slight mistake occurs in the performance of the prescribed ritual or in the utterance of the accompanying mantra, the spell will not be effective and may easily even turn upon its producer.

The counterpart to the "kodivina kerima", i.e. making of a kodivina, is the "kodivina keṇima", the cutting, i.e. the destroying of a kodivina by rendering it invalid through a counter-charm, at the same time turning it so that its power acts against its very producer. Therefore, a kodivina is generally followed by a "kodivina keṇima", if the affected person against whom the kodivina had originally been aimed, contacts an experienced *ḍura* in time. The latter tries to find the source of the kodivina in order to make it ineffective as far as the particular person is concerned. He then endeavours to give it instead the power to act against the evil-doer, i.e. the producer of the kodivina, himself.

Through a kodivina which is meant to put somebody out of the way, or through the subsequent kodivina keṇima, always one of the four persons involved will lose his life. This will be he against whom the spell was aimed, or he who had it performed, or otherwise one of the two *ḍuro*. If the *ḍura* of the second party is harmed, the fault lies always in the fact that the kodivina keṇima was not executed with the necessary care and conscientiousness. A slight negligence in the recital of the mantra or during the execution of the ritual may bring it about that the kodivina or the kodivina keṇima has the contrary effect, damaging the very person who tried to work the charm.

With a kodivina which results in illness or death, it is always a question of the *Sūniya-yakka* (respectfully addressed by the *ḍura* as *Sūniya-dēvatāvā*), who, as we have seen, was taught the art of black magic by *Mārea* (p. 73). With a kodivina kerima or a kodivina keṇima, this yakka is therefore always invoked by the presentation of an offering<sup>1</sup> which consists of rice, flowers, seven kinds of fish, and five kinds of seeds. Certain mantra are uttered and dummala is burned. The kodivina-keṇima-ceremony is in reality nothing but the *sūniyama*-ceremony which has already been considered in detail in one of the foregoing chapters. It is, according to the legend, a disenchanting ceremony, contrived by one of the ten learned men, and its special aim is the destruction and rendering harmless of the kodivina. The legend tells further that the first *sūniyama*-ceremony was performed by *Nagapata-rusiya*, one of the ten learned men, to fight the kodivina which *Mārea* had used against *Mānipāla-dēvinānsē*, when all other measures had proved ineffective and no way of helping the ailing queen could be found.

Regarding first the most important and most frequently employed kodivina, and which is presumed to cause illness or death, we find, as has been mentioned above,

<sup>1</sup> In addition, however, the help of the *Maha-sohona* and of the *Hiri-yakka* is also prayed for, and when a woman or a girl is concerned, also that of the *Kalu-kumāra*. The yakka who is regarded as the most important in a given kodivina—usually it is the *Sūniya-yakka*—is also named "*Vina-yakka*" (cf. p. 73).



sixty different rituals, which, however, are all very similar to each other and have a common train of thought.

A particular role at these magic rites is allotted to a so-called "*guru kama-yantra*", a palm-leaf or strip of copper foil (*tamba-kolē* = copper foil), or sometimes also a betel-leaf or one of another plant. It is covered with magic figures and signs and must always have on it the name and place of residence of the person against whom it is directed.

First of all, this *guru-kama-yantra* must be put under a spell by a suitable mantra (*matu-ranavā*), as is the rule for most yantra. It is then buried in the ground in front of the house of the person concerned so that he unknowingly passes over it when he leaves or enters his house (*kodivina peñima*), and so falls victim to the *kodivina*. Along with the *guru-kama-yantra*, a number of other objects must usually be buried with it, from which likewise pernicious powers emanate, thus increasing the *kodivina*'s strength and efficacy.

When a person wants to harm somebody in secret and without direct contact, and to make him slowly waste away by a disease, the easiest way to do it is more or less as follows:

He goes to see an *ḍura* of his acquaintance, if possible from another village, and asks him, after offering a satisfactory fee, to execute the *kodivina* against the person in question whose name, place of residence, etc. he makes known. Utmost secrecy and mutual confidence are, of course, presupposed. In order to preclude any suspicion, it is recommended that the *ḍura* of a sufficiently distant place be employed. Without further ado, the *ḍura* then takes a small lemon (*dēhi*) and a betel-leaf. On the leaf, he draws a yantra, and on the lemon, a face representing the person concerned and also the name and residence which he writes with a pointed instrument. A red flower is attached, some rice, and a human bone procured from the cemetery; the whole is tied together with a yellow thread and mantra are uttered, usually one hundred and eight times. All this must be done at night, at a time which must be ascertained beforehand as being propitious for the performance of the *kodivina*. All undesired spectators are forbidden entrance, only he who ordered the *kodivina*. All undesired spectators are forbidden entrance, only he who ordered the *kodivina* being allowed to be present. Early in the morning before people are awake, the objects tied by the yellow thread (if the bone is big enough, the other things are pushed into it) are buried before the entrance of the victim's home. Unsuspecting, the latter leaves his house, crossing the spot where the *kodivina* lies hidden in the ground, perhaps passing a second and a third time. But already towards the evening, he begins to feel unwell: fever, shivering, pains in the limbs appear, frequently accompanied by vomiting and diarrhoea. Soon, the state of the patient changes for the worse and within a few days or weeks death ensues, unless the patient applies to an *ḍura*. The medicine man makes his diagnosis, judging particularly by the statements of the sick person and by other symptoms, and thus suspects the presence of a *kodivina*. To make quite sure, he first of all orders a

search to be made in front of the house for the kodivina, which he then destroys and robs of its power by counter-magic.

On the Malabar coast, a spell is known which resembles the one described above in all respects. In order to put somebody out of the way, the magician makes a wooden image, drives nails into it, and throws it into the fire.

It may also happen that the patient or his family themselves grow suspicious and have somebody look for the kodivina; in this case, they go first to consult the *sāstra-kariya*. For the same reason, the horoscope of the sick person is, in most cases, also examined. As stated in a former chapter, the *sāstra-kariya* can draw important deductions from a betel-leaf which one hands to him; as a rule, he is able to say in what manner the kodivina has been made, where it is located, in what direction the culprit lives, and to give other details according to circumstances. Perhaps, he may even find certain indications which enable him to tell the initials of the name. Then, he will discuss the situation with the person who suffers from the influence of the kodivina, and advise him to contact an *ḍura*, whom he recommends, and have the latter destroy the spell. He may also indicate what kind of ceremony must be performed. The *ḍura* is sent for and asks for the corpus delicti; he decides what has to be done now and when and how the ceremony will be carried out. Again, strict secrecy is imperative; none of the villagers must get to know of the event and not even the nearest neighbour is let into the secret. For this reason, ceremonies of this kind are, in contrast to most of the others, never accompanied by drum music. Everything is done within the house behind closed doors. At the same time, the *ḍura* makes a number of cords (*nūla*), made from seven yellow threads twisted together, and puts them under a spell with certain mantra. They are then tied round the right arms of those living in the house who have not fallen ill, so that they are prevented from being harmed subsequently. The patient himself, however, is not supplied with such a string.

We shall now describe a few more forms of kodivina. A small lemon (*dēhi*) is cut into two parts. A little soil or sand is procured from a spot where the person to be made ill has urinated and is smeared over the two cuts; if that is not possible, then some soil, sand, or dirt is taken from a place where he has sat down. The two halves of the lemon are then joined again with thorns or pins, and the following mantra is repeated one hundred and eight times:

"Bahi	biyali	asabada	ubhaya	kapiloha - katu	naduranu
outside	halve	edge (side)	both	brass pins	owing to righteousness
kalada	krida	Māru,"			
half	play	Maru			

which freely translated runs as follows:



"(I) cut (the lemon) in two; join (the two halves) together again at the edges with brass pins; owing to righteousness I give one half to Maru to play with."

The lemon so prepared is now buried in front of the house of the person concerned so that he passes over it when leaving or entering the house. During one of the following nights, the lemon is dug up again and hid in the soil of the graveyard or in the fireplace of the victim's house. The consequence is supposed to be that the person concerned at once begins to feel unwell and falls ill.

One of the most dangerous kodivina is the "*lê-tâla kodivina*". It requires three kinds of blood, namely that of a goat, that of a cock, and also a little human blood. (Usually, the performing *çdura* takes some of his own blood, pricking his finger with a needle or other pointed instrument). The blood is divided between four little bowls; then, a small figure is made from the five kinds of wax (*mî-iti*, *bambara-iti*, *kanamiya-iti*, *danupolbeya-iti*, *dēbara-iti*), put under a spell by the utterance of certain mantra, and dipped into the four bowls of blood. *Maha-sohona*, *Hiri-yakka*, and the *Sūniya-dēvatāvā* are summoned and presented with an offering (*disti*), because these three *yakku* are always involved in a *kodivina* (particularly the *Sūniya-yakka*) and their help and intervention are implored in the accompanying prayers. The collaboration of *Mārea* must also be secured, for according to tradition, the *kodivina* is originally a contrivance of *Mārea's*, whose first victim was queen *Mānipāla-dēvinānsē*.

Now, the wax-figure is pierced with five needles or thorns which have been made out of an alloy of iron, tin, gold, silver, and copper; one needle is thrust into the throat, one through the feet, the third and the fourth ones through the arms, and the last one through the genitals<sup>1</sup>. After this, the figure is once more charmed, and then hid in the ground before the home of the respective person or in the cemetery, or else thrust into an anthill. As a consequence, the victim will begin to feel unwell and fall ill.

Another mode of preceeding is as follows: a small lemon (*dēhi*) is taken and the outlines of a human figure with the name of the person concerned are scratched on the peel with a thorn of the same plant. Then, five needles of five different metals are made at a goldsmith's. A *tātuva* is erected, the lemon and the needles are put on top of it, and it is then perfumed and put under a spell. The mantra must be recited fifty-four times. Next, the needles are thrust into the lemon; the golden one through the head of the drawing, those of brass and copper through its shoulders, the remaining two through its legs. The lemon is then returned to the *tātuva* and the mantra is uttered another fifty-four times, i.e. altogether one hundred and eight times. After this, the lemon is buried in a swamp, and the result is that the victim of the *kodivina* will be struck with illness. His belly will become inflated, his limbs will swell, he will be unable to urinate, and he will soon grow thin. Should

<sup>1</sup> This charm is described, although incompletely, by L. Selenka in his well-known book "*Sonnige Welten*", Berlin 1925, p. 185.

he not find and destroy the kodivina within three weeks, there is no more hope for him.

The mantra which must be spoken has the following text.

"Om ring!	visa	nila	katu,	patala	katu	Oddi-Hiri	katu,
	pains	many	thorns	ill-famed	thorns		thorns
atasiyak	sandi,	navasiyak	nahāra,	Vasangini-yaksha-nita	barai		
eight hundred	joints	nine hundred	veins		ordered		
adat	mohuge	huren,	nuhuren	ēta	satarak	Madana - giri -	
to-day	this	right side	left side	bones (ribs)	four		
dēvatāvā	memadung,	billa	disti	gan	tun mas	tun payakata	
	I give you	robber	call		three months	three full moons	
lēda	kāra	sitīn	visa	nila	katu	san	tatu - tatutni,"
disease	make	to wait	pains	many	thorns	skin	sting sting

which amount to this:

"Om, welcome! Pains will come from the many thorns, from the ill-famed thorns! Pains in the eight hundred joints and in the nine hundred veins. Vasangini-yakka will be commissioned to-day to give to Madana-giri-dēvatāvā, the robber, two ribs each of the right and of the left side. For three months, for three full moons, he shall pursue (the concerned person) with illness. Pains shall come from the thorns, frightful pains! And the thorns shall pierce through the skin!"

There are also many kodivina which do not cause illness but other kinds of harm. Among them is a kodivina which brings discord into the home and makes the members of a family quarrel with each other. Conflicts ensue between married couples, between parents and children, and will last until the kodivina has been detected and destroyed. It is called "paula vinasa karama", the kodivina which breaks the family up.

It consists of a taro-leaf (haburu-kolē), wrapped round the following objects: some rice, minced yellow-root, a puskola with the victim's name, a small lemon (dēhi), and a betel-leaf. All these are wound round with a yellow thread and inserted into a human arm or leg bone which is hidden in the ground in front of the house so that the inhabitants must pass over it. We shall meet with other kodivina of this kind in one of the following chapters.

Just as there are various protective measures (arasa kerima = to protect) against all the dangers and evil-minded machinations on the part of ill-willed people, so there are against the kodivina; for obvious reasons, however, they are seldom applied, because the victim must then suspect that danger is threatening from the particular direction. Such a preventative consists, for example, of four pebbles and a small quantity of sand procured from a clean unfrequented spot, preferably from clean flowing water; these things are distributed in four unused little pots. Then, a "mal-bulat-putuva" is arranged by covering a chair with a piece of banana-leaf, putting the four little pots with their contents on top, and surrounding them with



five kinds of flowers and a betel-leaf. The following mantra, called the "tjapat kerima-mantra", must be uttered one hundred and eight times:

"Ōm rang, bhim natai ugra rupaya prejanda kuppaya sāra-sāra, suru-suru neru nasta kai lasa kuta putraya namah."

Another mantra runs:

"Ōm Shiva mastu namō Rama-Kanda sena Shiva agamak vadinga tantra mana kanta Oddi mangala namō namah."

The four pots are then hidden at night in the soil near the four corners of the house, and are left there until the danger is believed to have passed.

#### THE KODIVINA KEPĪMA

When the destruction or "cutting through" of a kodivina is desired (kodivina *kepīma*), the assistance of an experienced *ḍura* is even more necessary than for its creation. This requires the utmost care, since the least inattention or any trifling negligence may render the spell ineffective and may even turn it on the person trying to get rid of it. The destruction of the corpus delicti is only part of the work; certain mantra must be uttered and definite directions followed. This is to make sure that the influence of the kodivina does not affect the individual against whom it was aimed, but, on the contrary, he who originally performed it or had it performed. As has been stated, always one person at least of those who are connected with the kodivina, must die, and everything depends upon the ability of the *ḍura* employed by the patient.

It can be maintained that, in a certain sense, the "kodivina *kepīma*" is nothing more than an inversion of the "kodivina *kerima*". On the whole, we have in both cases to do with one and the same ritual, but the aims are opposed to each other. Here, as in the other one, it is the same *yakku* whose help is implored, and the same gifts are offered to them. In this ceremony, the same objects which were used for the kodivina *kerima*, are symbolically cut through (*kepīma*), the whole, of course, being accompanied by certain mantra which are the most indispensable part of any ritual. With the exception of a few details, it is also the same ceremony which has, in a former chapter, been described as the *sūniyama* or *hūniyama*, and it may best be classified as a disenchanting ceremony. There is in fact no difference in principle, whether the *yakku* pursue somebody out of malice or whether they do it at the request of another person. In either case, this somebody has fallen a prey to the activity of the *yakku* (*Maha-sohona*, *Hiri-yakka*, *Sūniya-dēvatāvā*), so that they must then be exorcized by the *ḍura* and by the offer of suitable gifts induced to leave their victim alone. Thus, the *sūniyama*-ceremony is always composed of two ritual parts: first, the invocation of the *yakku* by presenting them with their offerings and entreating them to stop tormenting their victim, and second, the destruction or "the cutting" of the objects used for the kodivina. Certain ceremonies which must be considered to have a purely magic significance, e.g. the cutting through of a pumpkin, represent a third component, and the fourth one,

finally, is the counter-magic executed by the *edura* and aimed at the evil-doer, when a *kodivina* has been maliciously carried out by a third person. Thus, the two terms, *kodivina* and *sūniyama*, are in many respects identical, but the expression *sūniyama* has a somewhat more comprehensive meaning than the other one. A *kodivina* always consists simply of magic practices which refer to a maliciously performed spell or to its counteraction and destruction, while under *sūniyama* is included those ceremonies which are carried out to ward off those persecutions on the part of the *yakku* which occur without the participation of a hostile third person. *Sūniya* or *Hūniya* is, as has been described, the name of a distinct *yakka* who is so much dreaded as always to be respectfully addressed by the *edura* as *Sūniya-dēvatāvā*. He plays, as we have seen, the main rôle both in the *kodivina* procedure for making a person ill, as well as in the procedure for making a person well again. He is, therefore, distinguished by a particularly bountiful offering of rice, flowers, seven kinds of fish, and five kinds of seeds. He is always followed by the *Maha-sohona* and the *Hiri-yakka* who are eager for their share at every opportunity, and finally by *Mārea* who impatiently awaits the death of one or another of the persons involved. The *Aimāna* is also believed to be present, as well as a number of inferior *yakku* who, however, are paid off with only a modest offering.

The cutting through of a pumpkin plays a special rôle in the *kodivina* *keṇīma*. For this, a so-called "puhul alu" is necessary, i.e. an ash-pumpkin, which is covered with a gray powdery layer of wax. Its cutting can be performed in different ways. If the *kodivina* consisted of a figure made from five different kinds of wax, it is now fixed on the pumpkin with the same five metal needles or thorns (*katu*), and both are cut through simultaneously with a big knife or a sword. On the other hand, however, if the *kodivina* was in the form of a small lemon with a figure scratched on it, a small image, about three cm. long, is made out of a mixture of five different kinds of wax and fixed on the lemon with the help of the thorns. The lemon is then fixed to the pumpkin, and the whole cut through together. To do this, the *edura* stretches himself out on a mat, as already described in the account of the *sūniyama*, covers his whole length with a cloth, places a number of panicles of coconut-palm-blossoms on his body, and on top of them the pumpkin with the attached wax-figure or lemon which has previously been dipped in the blood of a goat or hen. Incessantly uttering mantra, he now cuts gradually and very slowly. Then he rises, and cuts the two halves of the pumpkin further into small pieces which are thereupon thrown into four little vessels with the blood mixture. Finally, everything is put into a big pot, and five different oils (*pas tēl*) and finely-cut twigs of five different kinds of lemons (*pas pangiri*) are added. The pot is next put on the fire and its contents are cooked so that the wax figure melts and completely disappears. After a while, the whole is poured into a sack and thrown into the river or into the sea. The following mantra is uttered while the pumpkin is being cut:



“Ōm namō!		edāme	Naraloka	vina	kapanda
Om, glory to Buddha!		in former times	human world	kodivina	cut
keṭi-nekating	makara-rasieng	kuja -	dēvasing	upan	Nagapata-rusiya
keṭi-moon-house	sign of Capricornus	Tuesday	divine	born	
mamāya,	kane	viduruya,	palandina	vidurup	maduti yakun-yakshini
am I	eat	fire	clothes	fire	see me
gesēti - vitēti,	aluduli	veti,	makā	rakinavā	vinakaraya - adurage,
are frightened	break	powder	destroyed	keeper	magician exorcist
isa	satvatak	karakava	elagan”.		
head	seven times	turn about	throw away.		

A free translation of this mantra runs as follows:

“Ōm, Buddha be praised! A long time ago, the kodivina was destroyed in the world of mankind. This occurrence is told as follows: “I, Nagapata-rusiya, was born on a divine Tuesday, in the moon-house ‘keṭi’, in the sign of Capricornus. I devour fire, my clothes are fire; the yakku and yakshaniyo are frightened when they behold me and are shattered to powder. Destroyed is the keeper of the kodivina, the magician and exorcist. I break his neck seven times and throw him away.”

The following ritual, the so-called “jala kodivina keṭima” (water kodivina cutting), is a little different. In this case, the pumpkin is cut in the above mentioned way, but only half way through; then, the *ḍura* rises, takes the pumpkin to a nearby stretch of water (lake or river), dives in with it, and finishes the cutting under the water. He must, however, take care to lift his head out of the water, before the two halves of the pumpkin have risen to the surface, otherwise he will be harmed. This ritual is the most efficient counterspell. It must be performed at midnight, and provided it has been executed correctly down to the last detail, it cannot fail because the evildoer himself falls victim to his own kodivina. Of course, the pumpkin symbolizes the person of the culprit himself, so the whole performance may be considered as casting a spell by analogy. What is done to the wax figure and the pumpkin, will in reality happen to the malefactor himself. His body will be cut to pieces, boiled in blood, or thrown into the water.

In order to endow this counter-spell with additional potency, a five-pointed star is scratched on the pumpkin, having in its centre the name of the culprit of the kodivina, and in its five corners the five, or ten, signs for the vowels<sup>1</sup>, the so-called “pāṇcha kariya” (fig. 21). The following peculiarity is worth mentioning in connection with these pāṇcha kariya: they correspond to five distinct birds (pāṇcha paksi) which rule the twenty-seven moon-houses (nekata) and which are respected for their ability to produce the sounds of the ten vowels perfectly clearly. The eagle (rājāliya) is the a-kariya; it produces the sounds a and ā, the owl (bakamūnā) is the i-kariya; it produces the sounds i and ī,

<sup>1</sup> As is known, the Sinhalese alphabet has ten vowels: a ā, i ī, u ū, e ē, o ō.

the crow (kāka) is the u-kariya; it produces the sounds u and ū,  
the cock (kukulā) is the e-kariya; it produces the sounds e and ē,  
the peacock (monāra) is the o-kariya; it produces the sounds o and ō.

These birds are thus correlated with the ten Sinhalese vowels: a-yana and ā-yana, i-yana and ī-yana, u-yana and ū-yana, e-yana and ē-yana, o-yana and ō-yana, and it is said that they are able to reproduce them almost faultlessly.

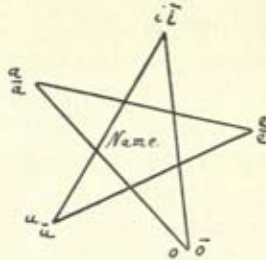


Fig. 21.

## PILLUVA

### THE TUN KULUNDUN-DARUVA-PILLUVA

Another category of magic practices with the aim of inflicting mischief on other people, is the so-called *pilluvā*<sup>1</sup>. Some experts regard it as a special kind of kodivina, others refute this conception on the ground that it is far more effective and therefore more dangerous than any kodivina. Further, the performance of a *pilluvā* requires means entirely different from those needed for a kodivina, namely the fresh corpse of a boy of about three months of age, whose father, grandfather, and great-grandfather have each been the eldest son in their families. For such a child, the Sinhalese have a special term; they call him "tun kulundun darūva" which means something like "three generations child", and everybody knows what is meant by the expression.

The fresh corpse of such a child is indispensable for the execution of the *pillūva*, and so we can understand how it comes about that this spell is so seldom exercised, even in former times. It is hardly ever observed nowadays, as it is, of course, prohibited and punishable; even when it does take place to-day, it is, for obvious reasons, enveloped in the deepest secrecy.

The mode of performance of this spell has, from the remotest times, been known only to the *ḍūra*. Among the laity, there were and are to this day all kinds of rumours, mostly untrustworthy, and which has brought it about that everything concerning this spell is enveloped in a certain mystical aura.

When an *ḍūra* found out that a *tun kulundun darūva* had died somewhere, he

<sup>1</sup> *Pilluvā* is probably connected with "pilli" = to destroy, to annihilate an enemy by a magic act.



waited for a propitious moment to take possession of the corpse. It had to be dug up secretly at night. The grave was at once closed again so that no trace of its violation was left, and the dead body was carried to the *ḡdura's* house. There, it was cut open, the entrails removed, and the cavity stuffed with raw cotton or other material. Then, it was dried in a hidden place, first in the sun, then over a fire, until it was completely dried out and shrivelled, and had by this procedure been preserved from decay and putrefaction. It was dressed with a white loincloth and a red scarf about the head. Then followed the "jivan karnova". A mal-bulat-putuva was erected, and the mummy placed on top of it, along with an alms-bowl made from a certain nut (*danupolbeya*), a raw egg, five kinds of seeds, red flowers, and a live cock. The mummy was supplied with little bells (*geja*) round its ankles, such as the dancers usually wear. Then, the *ḡdura* began to summon the Naga-Oddiya, a yakka who, according to tradition, had been created out of a tooth of Mahagell-*raja*. The moment the yakka entered the body, the little bells began to tinkle. This was the sign for the *ḡdura* to utter the "naya vayroddiya", i.e. the "Naga-Oddi-mantra". When he had uttered it the one hundred and eight times which are necessary for success, the mummy infant rose, took the alms-bowl in one hand, and the bush-knife or the sword in the other, ready to receive his master's orders. He went wherever the *ḡdura* sent him, to whatever locality or house the *ḡdura* named, eager to fulfil orders: to kill somebody with his sword or to do him mischief in other ways. Finally, he returned to his master. The *ḡdura* awaited him tensed, holding the egg in his hand and continuously uttering mantra. If the child came back without having accomplished its mission, the *ḡdura* handed him the egg, scolded him for his idleness, and even struck his neck with the sword or the bush-knife in order to call him to task. The child then started out once more and this time the *ḡdura* felt sure that his command would be fulfilled. If the *ḡdura* wanted to send the child to a place where a *tovilē* was being performed, with the intention of preventing the successful execution of the ceremony, he fixed a beard to the chin of the mummy infant and wound a red cloth about his head; with a stick in his hand, the child then went and carried out the order. If the executing *ḡdura* on the other side was not skilled enough and not thoroughly familiar with the pilluvā, thus neglecting to lay a boiled egg in the alms-dish of the child as soon as he arrived, he was in danger of being killed by the mummy.

On the other hand, the child's master ran the risk of losing his life at the hands of his creation, if he was not on his guard, but was asleep, when the child returned. Having dispatched him, the *ḡdura* had to remain on the alert until the child came back. He had to hold a little pot of yellow-root water in his hand to sprinkle him while he uttered certain mantra. In this way, the creature again became stiff and lifeless and was put back in the chimney or over the fire-place.

## THE NAGA-PILLUVA

For this ceremony, the sprouts of three young leaves of a *temili*-palm are necessary. A *mal-bulat-putuva* is constructed and covered with a red cloth. Red flowers, three eggs, a banana, a little vessel with yellow-root water, a stick of the wood of the *idda-tree* (*idda kotua*), and five kinds of seeds are placed on top. Then, the *ɛdura* who performs the spell, summons the *Sūniya-yakka*, the *Hiri-yakka*, the *Maha-sohona*, and the eight *yakkiniyo* of the *Sūniya-yakka* (*disti*), and carefully removes the red cloth with the stick. He must at all events avoid touching the cloth directly. Now, the three sprouts of the palm-leaves are pushed together with the aid of the stick and are transformed into a cobra by a mantra spoken by the *ɛdura*. While the serpent raises itself slowly, it must at once be presented with the egg. The *ɛdura* is now in a position to issue orders to it, which the cobra is obliged to fulfil. He may direct it to far-off places, to any house, and to definite people whom it is told to bite. Slowly, it will creep away, straight towards its aim, until it finds the person indicated and bites him. After about seven hours, the victim will die, unless an *ɛdura* happens to be at hand who knows how to handle the situation. Only immediate intervention by counteracting the spell, can save the person who has been bitten, from death. The second *ɛdura* must immediately offer the snake an egg which it will devour. The reptile is then obliged to creep back to its master and to bite him and hurt him. If, in this case the first *ɛdura* does not look out, he may be lost. Therefore he must remain watchful from the moment the snake has left until it returns again. If it comes back with its head raised, it is a good sign; the *ɛdura* then gives it another egg. If, however, it approaches slowly, creeping and curling, with its head down to the ground, it is a token that it has been sent back by another *ɛdura*. Then its master must throw an egg at the snake's head. It at once becomes lifeless and is reconverted into the sprouts of the palm-leaves.

## THE KIKILI-PILLUVA

A third kind of *pilluvā*-charm is the so-called "*kikili-pilluvā*". For its performance, the first-laid egg of a hen must be procured, and hatched (*kulundun kikili bittara* = first-laid egg of a hen). The chicken must then be starved to death and dried in the sun. A *mal-bulat-putuva* must now be erected and the dead chicken placed on it, along with five kinds of flowers. *Maha-sohona* is summoned, and after some mantra have been uttered, the chicken returns to life. Next, the *ɛdura* gives it a definite order, e.g. to go to a certain place or house and peck the foot of a certain person.

It arrives there accompanied by four other chickens who enter the house together or wait for their victim at the door, peck his foot, and go back again. The individual whom they have pecked, will die within a few hours. After the chickens have returned, the *ɛdura* gives them some rice and the four who had turned up afterwards, disappear again. Finally, the *ɛdura* cuts the throat of the chicken which had previously been revived, and throws it over the roof of his house. It falls down



on the other side in a dried state and the *ḍura* picks it up and keeps it for further use.

This spell, properly speaking, also belongs to the category of the *pilluvā*, and on the whole corresponds to the preceding ones. *Yak-kadi* is a big black ant<sup>1</sup>. Three of them are caught and wrapped alive in a white cloth. Then, a *mal-bulat-putuva* is erected, supplied with red, yellow, and white flowers, five kinds of seeds, roasted crabs and shrimps, an egg, and three little bowls with some blood from a cock; finally, the cloth with the three ants is put on top. Mantra are uttered, the person is named whose death is desired. The three ants are then told where to go. *Hiri-yakka* is summoned, and a special mantra is repeated one hundred and eight times on behalf of the ants. The little bag is then carefully opened slightly so that the ants can crawl out, one after the other. They will go directly to the house or to the person which the *ḍura* has indicated, and bite him. The individual will be afflicted with intense pains (*visa*) and will die about twenty-four hours later.

### YANTRA AND MANTRA

In the foregoing chapters we have repeatedly spoken about yantra and mantra, but it seems fitting to treat them now in more detail.

Yantra are mystic diagrams and geometrical designs on which certain letters or syllabic characters are written<sup>2</sup>. They are made for the most diverse occasions and purposes. They are drawn or engraved on strips of palm-leaf<sup>3</sup> or copper or gold foil and have the significance of amulets. They are worn in a little metal case round the neck or upper arm or even the loins, as a protection against any possible danger or harm. Some are made to injure another person or to augment the power of a spell against somebody.

Mantra, on the other hand, are formulae which must be uttered one or more times and, according to special prescriptions, at certain hours of the day or night and which then also have magic effects. There is no act of magic which is not accompanied by mantra. In addition, they play an indispensable rôle in the summoning of the *yakku*, *prêteo*, or *dēvatāvo*, and in all ceremonies on behalf of them.

As far as yantra are concerned, they can, on purely external grounds, be divided into two groups. The one comprises the linear yantra which are composed of simple geometrical figures (lines, triangles, rectangles, circles, etc.), and the other the figurative, pictorial yantra which represent deities, *yakku*, etc. Both kinds, but particularly those of the first category, are filled up with syllables which are grouped in a definite way and out of which, when they are adjusted, partial aspects

<sup>1</sup> Yak = cruel; *kadiya* (singular), *kadi* (plural) = big black ant.

<sup>2</sup> An extended description of the meaning and the character of the yantra may be found in the well-known book of Heinrich Zimmer "Kunstformen und Yoga im indischen Kultbild", Berlin 1926.

<sup>3</sup> Strips of the leaves of the palmyra-palm (*Borassus flabelliformis*, Sinhalese: *tal*) are used exclusively. They are also generally used as writing materials. Such palm-leaves, prepared for writing purposes, are called *puskola* (*pus* = clear, white; *kola* = leaves); another name is *ola*, which has been taken over from the Sanskrit.



of the deity will arise (germinate). Hence, they are called germinal syllables (*bijamantra*) or simply germs (*bija*). As the linear system and network of the yantra with its corners and angles fixes the number and order of these germs, it contains, hidden in it as a secret, the guide to the unfolding of visionary images. Its basic function belongs to magic. The faithful wear it as an amulet, draw its lines on the walls of their homes, bury it in the ground, beat it, just as the symbolism of the actual magic event for which it is employed requires<sup>1</sup>. Havell writes: "An equilateral triangle is the geometric symbol of the three coordinate cosmic forces: will (*ichcha*), perception (*inana*), and action (*kriya*), or of the three aspects of the One, embodied in the divine form. When standing on its base, this triangle symbolizes the male element, when however set on its point, it represents the female principle, or with other words, the two elements fire and water. The two triangles, placed upon one another, form the hexapetalous lotus-blossom, the symbol of the divine, mystic union of the male and female principles, the first Act of Creation. The mythologic background is furthermore impersonated in the figure of the Divine Mother who is represented in manifold forms and by manifold names. Each picture impersonated has its own yantra and mantra, the former symbolizing its purest form, the latter, however, interpreting the purest sound which emanates from the divine word that keeps the Universe moving."<sup>2</sup>

There is an extensive literature about both the yantra and the mantra, and every *bandhanaya* has a more or less comprehensive collection of these magic diagrams and formulae which he uses for the most varied occasions and purposes. But the task of the magician is, as a rule, not yet finished with the making or drawing of a yantra.

Three kinds of yantra can be distinguished, according to their internal value. The first group, after being made by the *ḍura* or *bandhanaya*, must then be charmed by special mantra and perfumed with incense; during this act, some *dum-mala* must be thrown into the coal-pan as each mantra is spoken. In this way they are endowed with the requisite power or "breath" (*jiva*) and are then called "*jivan karnova yantra*" (*jivan karnova* = to breathe, to inspire with life)<sup>3</sup>.

Another class of yantra which also must first receive their power by a special act, are those whose "*jivan karnova*" must be performed by a *bhikshu*, a Buddhist priest or monk. As no *bhikshu* will ever perform the "*jivan karnova*" for a yantra which is intended to cause mischief or to harm somebody, these yantra are, of course, exclusively of a protective character. At this observance, the *bhikshu* utters certain "*ratana sūtra*"<sup>4</sup>, each of them up to a thousand times. In this case, the per-

<sup>1</sup> Zimmer, *Kunstform und Yoga im indischen Kultbild*, p. 56 ff.

<sup>2</sup> E. B. Havell, *Indian Sculpture and Painting*, London 1928, p. 29.

<sup>3</sup> According to the tantra doctrine, this invigoration is called "bestowal with breath", and is nothing else but the flowing of the divine energy from he who is praying to the object before him (Zimmer, loc. cit., pp. 57-58).

<sup>4</sup> The "*ratana sūtra*" were uttered by Gautama Buddha on the occasion of the outbreak of a pestilence at *Visālā-maha-nuvara*, in order to drive the *yakku* out (cf. p. 45).



fuming is not effected with powdered resin, but with incense (*kattakumachal*) to which a considerably greater efficiency is attributed. Therefore, the yantra consecrated by a *bhikshu* are preferred to those of the *ḍura* or the *bandhanaya* on account of their superior power.

Finally, a third class of yantra remains to be mentioned, i.e. those which do not depend upon "*jivan karnova*", but which are effective in themselves and without further preparation, although, of course, in a much smaller degree.

When a yantra is being perfumed or put under a spell either by an *ḍura* or by a *bhikshu*, a little offering ceremony must always be performed for the *yakku*, *raksho*, *dēvatāvo*, or other demons who are invoked by the mantra. For this purpose, a *mal-bulat-putuva* is arranged, i.e. a chair on which flowers and betel-leaves with some rice and a few copper coins (*pandura*) are placed, or a real offering-stand, a *mēsa*, is erected for the divinity, or a *tātuva* is made up for the *yakku* and *prēto* with flowers and betel-leaves, as well as various dishes: rice with its accompaniments, frequently also meats, fish, rice-cake, fruit, various seeds, etc. Here, as in other offering-ceremonies, the appropriate gifts must be prepared for all the *yakku* concerned. A *tātuva* is always for a *yakka*, whereas a *putuva* is always prepared for one of the deities, for the latter never accept food, but only flowers, sandalwood, and other fragrant things, along with a few betel-leaves and some grains of rice.

In special cases and when one wants to proceed exactly according to the rules, an astrologically favourable moment must be chosen, that is to say, the position of the planets must be taken into account. In the same way, the horoscope must be consulted and an astrologically propitious date and hour for the person in question selected, when a yantra is transferred or fixed, either for protection or in case of a disease. Many prescriptions have to be observed which are known only to an experienced *ḍura*.

The number of yantra and mantra is legion. Every *ḍura* knows and uses formulae other than those of his colleagues or competitors and each of them is, of course, fully convinced of the exclusive efficiency of his own ritual. At least, he must pretend to be, although many an *ḍura* may concede to himself in secret that the formulae of a rival surpass his own in value and reliability.

The range of uses for yantra and mantra is unlimited, and it almost seems as if a Sinhalese is unable to undertake anything without securing success or protecting himself from failure by preventive magic. His whole doing and thinking are ruled by the conception that everywhere forces are at work, and that all kinds of superior beings are uninterruptedly influencing his ways and doing, his thoughts and aspirations, so that he must always be armed, or at least, on his guard lest he falls victim to these powers and forces.

Two classes of mantra can be distinguished. The first of them comprises incomprehensible formulae, composed of words which may be taken from Sanskrit, Elu, or other languages (mainly Tamil); their sense and meaning is, in most cases, unintelligible even to the person delivering them, whether he be a layman or a

professional. If one enquires as to what they mean, the answer is always that it is "*bhāsa mantra*", i.e. mantra language, about whose origin and evolution one must not worry, and that the significance of the spoken words cannot be made out.

The second category of mantra, on the other hand, embraces the generally understandable formulae, in Sinhalese, which are only now and then interspersed with foreign words. They are chiefly addresses and summons directed to the yakku, prēteo, and dēvatāvo. As can be deduced from the examples which have been quoted in the course of this book, these mantra usually have a definite word-sequence. Every mantra begins with the conventional address, expressed by the mystic syllable "ōm" which refers to the three supreme deities Vishnu, Shiva, and Brahma. It is usually followed by the greeting "*namō*", applying to Buddha, by "*svī*" when directed to a deity, or by the syllable "*ring*" (or "*bring*") in the case of the yakku or prēteo. Then follows the formula proper which generally refers to a mythological tradition. Names of divinities and of yakku, in the latter case especially when it is a mantra which is intended to inflict harm on someone, of places and localities where an occurrence or an event has happened, are enumerated and legendary traditions hinted at. In order to increase the power of a mantra which is to harm a person, in analogy to the Tantrism of the Mahayana school, often the female powers of the yakku (shakti) are summoned; thence the recurrence in many formulae of the summons "yakku-yakkiniyo". The formula is often ended with the word "*ēsvabā*" which is meant to indicate approval of what has been spoken (*ē* = this; *svā* = good, well, bringing luck; *hā* = will be). Consequently *ēsvabā* means "this will be good" or "this may be good". Likewise, *nēsvabā* means that the thing concerned (mantra) will be good (the affix "*nē*" expressing relation, kindred), *dōsvabā* "it is to hope it will be good" (*dō* expressing doubt, uncertainty), and *pralēsvabā* "this will be very good" (the prefix "*pra*" implying excess, much, very, exceeding). The concluding word "*namah*" refers again to Gautama Buddha and is an expression of reverence.

For every mantra there exists a rule as to how many times it must be uttered and this prescription must be conscientiously followed, because on its observance depends the effectiveness of the formula. Preference is given to the figures 7 and 9, but even more to 108 which is a holy number; it is the sum of 81 and 27; 81 is 9 times 9, and 9 is the number of the planets, while 27 corresponds to the number of the moon-houses (*ṇakata*).

After having already met examples of mantra which are employed to summon the yakku in the descriptions of the various ceremonies, some yantra with their appropriate mantra will now be described along with their applications.

They are found to fall into two groups. The first of them contains the protective yantra which are used as amulets, and the second category comprises the "damaging" ones which serve to inflict harm on other persons and which are therefore indispensable for the performance of a so-called kodivina.



## THE PROTECTIVE YANTRA AND THOSE WHICH PRODUCE BENEFICIAL EFFECTS

*Yantra against bad dreams.*

A yantra, such as is shown in fig. 22, is drawn on a piece of puskola and is either put under the mat or the pillow or pinned to the bedroom wall; it secures good sleep. A "jivan karnova" is not required.

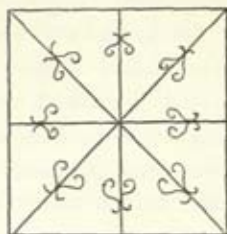


Fig. 22.

*Yantra which protects rice stored in a house from rats*

If mice and rats become too troublesome in a house, a yantra such as is shown in fig. 23 is used. It is drawn on a puskola and hidden in the rice where the animals are. In so doing, the following mantra must be uttered: "Narayana, bandha-bandha, odu-odu. Esvahā."



Fig. 23.

*Yantra to protect the vegetable garden*

Anyone wanting to protect his kitchen garden from devastation by animals employs a yantra such as is shown in fig. 24. It must be written on a puskola and hidden in the soil or hung up in the garden. This yantra does not need a "jivan karnova" either.



Fig. 24.

*Yantra which brings good fortune in lawsuits and in court (nādu-yantra)*

For this purpose, a yantra has to be made as in fig. 25. It must be drawn on a puskola which has already been gnawed at by worms, and must be done in the early morning hours of a Sunday. Then, a mal-bulat-putuva is arranged in the evening with five kinds of seeds, seven kinds of white flowers, a little bottle of perfumed water, and, of course, a little oil-lamp (meti-pana). The yantra is likewise put on the mal-bulat-putuva and the following mantra is repeated one hundred and eight times over it, accompanied by the throwing of incense and camphor into the coal-pan (jivan karnova):



Fig. 25.

The yantra is then rolled up and tied in the loincloth or else pocketed. The owner will then be certain of his success in court.

"Om Sri	Muniya,	jāya	Muniya,	jāya	pilla,	Muniya.
Om, majestic	Buddha	victory	Buddha	victory	on the spot	Buddha.

Esvahā."  
It is good!

*Yantra which secures success*

Fig. 26 shows a yantra which is believed to bring professional success. It is drawn on a bijapatri-leaf and worn about the neck in a little case.

*Yantra ensuring protection against wild elephants.*

The two yantra of fig. 27 must be drawn side by side on a puskola. A person who is going to cross the bush and fears attacks from wild elephants puts it into his belt or wraps it in his loincloth. While it is being made, the following mantra must be uttered one hundred and eight times:

"Om namō!	Patāpa. Pralēsvahā."
Om, glory to Buddha!	O, Majestic One (meaning the elephant).
	It is very good!

The perfuming of the yantra and the erection of a mal-bulat-putuva are not required.

*Yantra for protection against all kinds of enemies.*

The two yantra of fig. 28 are drawn on a puskola, placed on a mal-bulat-putuva, perfumed, and charmed by one hundred and eight repetitions of the following mantra:

"Om namō!	Sri-Akantavi,	Kalakandi,	Katariri,	katu - katu,
Om, glory to Buddha!	(Lakshmi)			come come
visaduli	Bhadrakālī,	Karamundi,	mēma	yakshaniyo
	a manifestation of		I myself	dedēna
	the goddess Durga			both
virahaunu	anubhava,	ada	mēma	dutu
together	mighty	to-day	I myself	see
mēma	kara	dutuvang	māmētvā."	
I myself	near	seen	must obey me.	



Fig. 26.

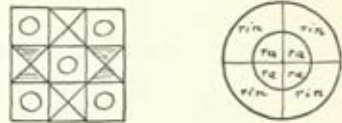


Fig. 27.

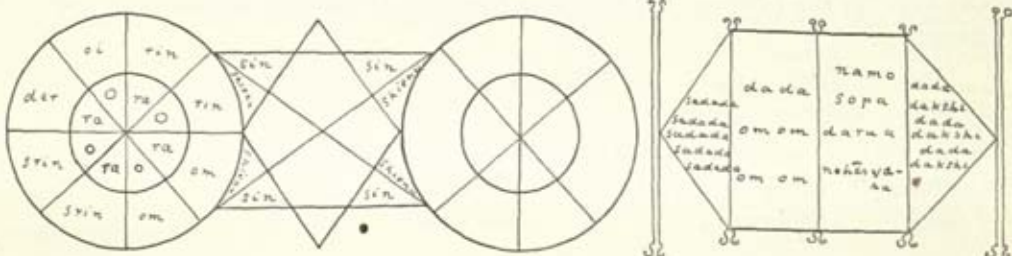


Fig. 28.



The puskola is then put into a metal case and tied to the arm. No enemy will be able to inflict harm upon the owner of this yantra.

*Yantra against stomach-aches (bāda ridenavata)*

The two yantra shown in fig. 29 are drawn on a betel-leaf, one on its upper side, the other on its under side. A little piece of ginger, three pepper-corns and one grain of salt are then wrapped up in it, while the following mantra is being uttered seven times:

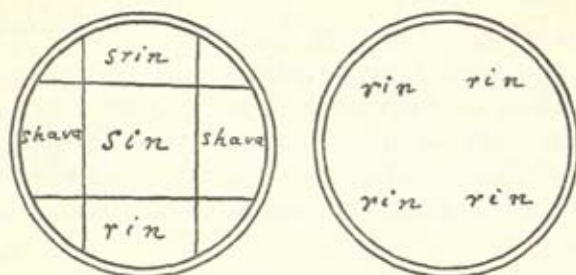


Fig. 29.

"Om namō!	van Muni!	vajra	kila	hun	bāda.
Om, glory to Buddha!		thunderbolts	itch	this	body.

Pralēsvahā!"  
It is very good!

*Yantra to get help.*

The two yantra of fig. 30 are believed to secure that, in an emergency, their owner gets help from anyone he asks. Fig. 30, I, is for men, fig. 30, II, for women.

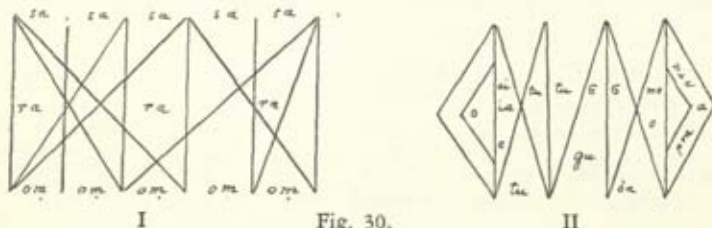


Fig. 30.

They are drawn on a puskola, perfumed, put under a spell, and then attached to the arm. For the first one, the following mantra is spoken one hundred and eight times:

"Ina	bāda	igila	ēsvaha."
This	body	protect	

while the mantra for the second runs:

"Bāda	vikasa	varavali.	Nēsvahā."
Body	invigorate		This is good! e

*Yantra which affords protection against the yakku.*

The yantra and mantra against the attacks of the yakku are, of course, especially important. A specimen is shown in fig. 31. A mal-bulat-putuva is arranged, a little camphor is burnt, and the puskola with its drawing of the yantra is placed on an opened temili-nut and perfumed. Simultaneously, the edura utters the following mantra:

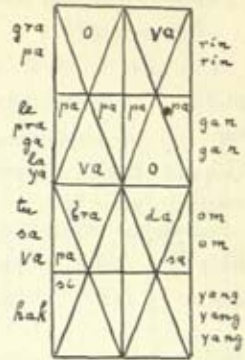
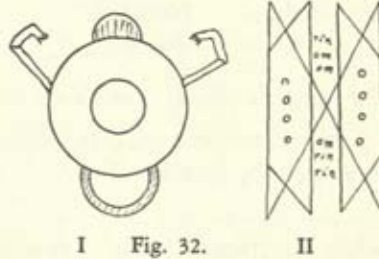


Fig. 31.

“Om namō! raksha, Vishnu-raksha, Rintu, Kumāri-rakshi dēvatāvun  
 vahansa ge - knyava olmada vah. Esvahā.”  
 venerable your power impotent come. It is good!

Such yantra, which thus have quite generally the character of an amulet, are comprised under the name *araksava-yantra*. They are mostly more or less curious, highly stylized representations of a human figure or simply of a part, or purely geometrical drawings, systems of lines, etc. In addition, there are yantra which give the wearer protection against a definite yakka. An example of this kind is the *Hiri-mandalaya*<sup>1</sup>.



I Fig. 32. II

The two yantra of fig. 32 are believed to offer protection against the Hiri-yakka. They are inseparable and must always be used together. They are drawn on a puskola. Then a tātuva with four square compartments is constructed, as is usual for the Hiri-yakka. The offerings consists of red (blood-coloured) rice (lē-bat), a raw egg, five kinds of flowers, and several copper coins (pandura) wrapped in a betel-leaf. Each yantra is separately perfumed with dummala and put under a spell by one hundred and eight repetitions of the appropriate mantra. This must be done on a Saturday, since if done on any other day it would prove ineffective. The yantra are then put into a metal case or wrapped in a piece of cloth soaked in wax, and tied round the waist; this has to take place on a Sunday.

<sup>1</sup> Mandala(ya) is the name for a special kind of circular yantra; it means simply circle or round disc (magic circle).



Mantra for fig. 32, I:

"Om namō!	uttara	yama	vahansa	nagabhāvana	
Om, glory to Buddha!	In the north	residing	venerable	residence in the Nagaloka	
māta •	kumārige - kumārang,	lēda	avachcha	tēnedi	
me	princess prince	illness	overwhelming	at that time	
Gōpala - maharajjuruvo	ēvidung,	lēda	dēka	Hiri-yakshaya-yakshanige,	
cowherd great king	having come	illness	seen	Hiri-yakka, male and female	
(meaning the Hiri-yakka)					
lēda	dēka	Hiri-yantraya-mantraya	liya	arasakala	agnyava
illness	seen	yantra and mantra for Hiri-yakka	written	protected	by their power
Hiri-yakshaya,	kala	lēda	sanēn,	taduttui."	
	given	illness	remove	impede.	

Mantra for fig. 32, II:

"Om!	asurayak.	Esvahā."	
Om!	a certain asura.	It is good!	
"Namō!	Dāna-Bahīrava	chi.	Esvahā."
Glory to Buddha!	Shiva-avatāra	come.	It is good!
"Namō!	ahi	sidi	chi. Esvahā."
Glory to Buddha!	please	appear	here. It is good!
"Namō!	bandha,	bandha.	Nēsvahā."
Glory to Buddha!	bind	bind	This is good!
"Namō!	Badani-yakshani.	Nēsvahā."	
Glory to Buddha!		This is good!	

*Yantra against the yak-lēda (illness caused by the Hiri-yakka).*

The two yantra of fig. 33 are written on a puskola, placed on a mal-bulat-putuva, perfumed, and put under a spell by one hundred and eight repetitions of the following mantra:

"Om namō!	Maladola - giri yana	vēda	vasatāna	karana	dalakada
Glory to Buddha!	former residence of the Hiri-yakka	lived	residence	residing	cruelty

ṛā	ṛā	ṛā	ṛā	ṛā	ṛā	ṛā	ṛā
ṛā	ṛā	ṛā	ṛā	ṛā	ṛā	ṛā	ṛā
ṛā	ṛā	ṛā	ṛā	ṛā	ṛā	ṛā	ṛā
ṛā	ṛā	ṛā	ṛā	ṛā	ṛā	ṛā	ṛā



Fig. 33.

Hiri-yakshaya,	kala	lēda	sanen,	guna	vena,	sihil	venda.
	given	illness	remove	recovery	come	coolness	come
Saman-dēviyange	varami."						
	given order.						

The two yantra are then put into a metal case and tied round the waist.

When a person believes he has encountered a yakka, and, upon his returning home, speaks incoherent nonsense and behaves abnormally, an *ṣūra*, neglecting for the moment the performance of a ceremony, fastens a yantra on him such a is shown in fig. 34. Occasionally, this is done after the execution of a "tēl-matrima".

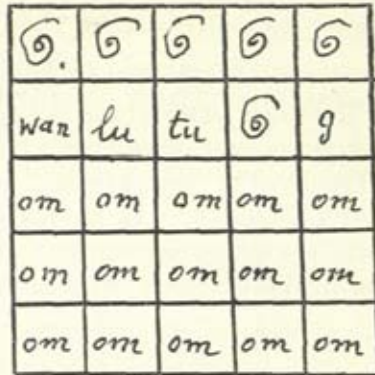


Fig. 34.

#### *Yantra against the diyāra-sanniya*<sup>1</sup>

This kind of malady is traced back to various causes. The general belief is that when you eat something too cold or bathe at a wrong time, your body cools too much and you fall ill. You will suffer from fever and ague and tremble all over your body. It is thought to be true that all these symptoms are most commonly caused by eating a "cold" fruit or dish, or by an untimely bath (see p. 241). In order to protect oneself and, above all, ignorant children, one of the two yantra represented in fig. 35 and 36 is employed. It is drawn

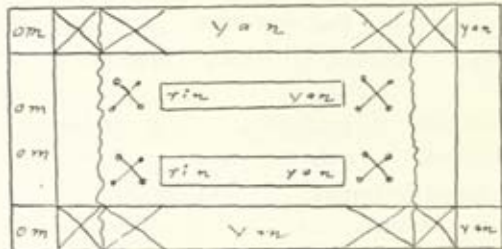


Fig. 35.

on a puskola, placed on a mal-bulat-putuva along with five kinds of flowers, some sandalwood, and rice, and perfumed with kattakumachal. After the following mantra has been recited one hundred and eight times, the yantra is tied on:

"Om namō! Tarusanni, Mahasakra, Vallukama, Urukēsvara, Garu, Butha, Nāta! sribadidima ruhna kenāhi yantra, mantra supavitra iyana  
by your power give life fast clean, tidy these  
yaisodana!"

<sup>1</sup> Literally: water-illness (not dropsy); so called because the body has lost too much heat and is therefore now believed to contain more than the usual quantity of water.





Fig. 36.

*Yantra for children suffering from diarrhoea.*

The three yantra of fig. 37 must each be written separately on puskola. The first yantra must be made on a Sunday, the second on a Monday, and the third on a Tuesday. The "jivan karnova" must be performed on the same days. A mal-bulat-putuva is arranged with red rice (lē-bat) as an offering; while dummala is being burnt, the appropriate mantra (different for each yantra) are repeated one hundred and eight times. Each yantra is then tied separately about the child's neck.

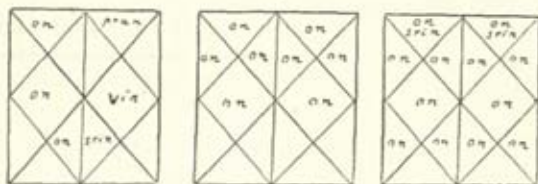


Fig. 37.

"Namō!	Buddha aningyāya!	Dhamma aningyāya!	Sangha aningyāya!		
Glory to	In the name of Buddha,	In the name of Dhamma,	In the name of Sangha,		
Buddha!	they must leave!	they must leave!	they must leave!		
Sakra, Brama, Vishnu, Mahesvāra	aningyāya,	anikut	yaksha		
	make them leave	the others too	yakku		
senapati	aningyaya,	grahaniya	mohuta	upadra	kala
chieftains	make them leave	children's diseases	for them		given
yakun-yakshaniya.	Pralēsvahā."				
male and female yakku.	It is very good!				

*Yantra against the Bāla-giri and the Grabaniya-yakkini.*

The yantra as shown in fig. 38 is intended to protect young children from the pernicious influences of the Bāla-giri and the Grahaniya-yakkini.

A special offering must be prepared for the Bāla-giri and when making the yantra a mal-bulat-putuva is arranged with five kinds of flowers and a string made up of seven strands. The Bāla-giri-pidenna is placed before the child and the Bāla-giri is summoned. The yantra must be charmed by one hundred and eight repetitions of ratana-sūtra, being perfumed with kattaku-machal at the same time. A little piece of cloth to wrap the yantra in is then soaked in wax, and seven knots are tied in the string with which it is to be tied to the pa-

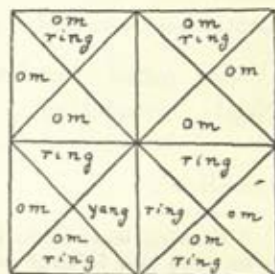


Fig. 38.

tient. While the knots are being made, the following mantra must be uttered:

"Om! ipaya madana; ēsvahā."

"Om! Andun-giri; ēsvahā."

"Om! Bāla-giri; ēsvahā."

While the yantra is being put round the child's neck, the ratana-sūtra is repeated.

Fig. 39 represents another yantra active against the Bāla-giri. It is drawn on a piece of puskola, placed on a mal-bulat-putuva, and put under a charm (jivan karnova). For children two or three months old, it is put under the pillow, a child in his fourth month wears it about his right wrist, a child twelve months or more old, about the neck.

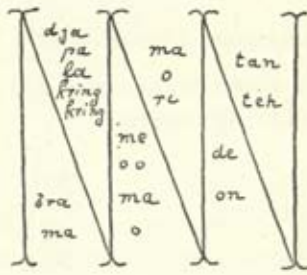


Fig. 39.

Still more dangerous for children than the Bāla-giri are the Grahaniya-yakkini. Their influence is believed to be checked by the three yantra shown in fig. 40 which must be drawn on a puskola, placed on a mal-bulat-putuva, and put under a spell by one hundred and eight repetitions of the following mantra (jivan karnova):



I



II



III

Fig. 40.

Mantra for fig. 40, I:

"Om namō!            yang    kintji    vitan    pralēsvahā."  
Glory to Buddha!            go away            It is very good!

"Om namō!            Sakra-rasta.            Esvahā!"  
Glory to Buddha!            By the power of Sakra.            It is good!

"Om namō!            Buddha    anubhāven!            Dhamma anubhāven!  
Glory to Buddha!            In the name of Buddha!            In the name of Dhamma!

Sangha anubhāven!    Yakkini!    Pralēsvahā!"  
In the name of Sangha!    Yakkini!    It is very good!

Mantra for fig. 40, III:

"Om ring!    Grahaniya-yakshani    palen!    dōsvahā!"  
go!            We hope it may be good!



Then the offering for the Grahaniya-yakkini is prepared. It consists of a square *tātuva* supplied with boiled rice, a little piece of veal or goat's meat, seven kinds of curry, five kinds of seeds, some shrimps and crabs, and five kinds of flowers. A big earthen pot which has not yet been used must be filled with water by a member of the family who is not allowed to exchange even a single word with anybody on his way to and from the water-hole. The pot is then covered with a clean cloth and placed on the *mal-bulat-putuva*. A string having seven strands is twisted out of a yellow thread, two arm's lengths long. Next, the *puskola* on which the yantra have been written is put round the neck of the pot and fastened with the string. Now the gift is offered to the *yakkiniyo* with the utterance of a mantra. Then the yantra and the string are taken off the pot again; the yantra is rolled up, fastened with the string and tied with seven knots, while the following mantra is recited:

"Om namō!	danta,	bandha	dantagra	akāsa	bandha
Glory to Buddha!	teeth of	bind	teeth and mouth	heaven	bind
	the <i>yakkini</i>		of the <i>yakkini</i>		

The child with his face towards the room is now led to the door and the yantra are wound round his body. Then he is washed three times with water from the pot. This must be carried out in the morning.

*Yantra against menstrual complaints (lē-mala-yantra or māsa-maruvima-yantra)*

A yantra such as fig. 41, I is drawn on the upper side of a betel-leaf and charmed by seven repetitions of the following mantra:

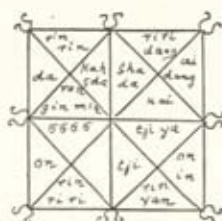


Fig. 41.

"Om namō!	bhajanaya	lingu.	Esvahā!"
Glory to Buddha!	In the service of the lingam.	It is good!	

It is then eaten by the affected woman.

The second yantra, however, is drawn on a *puskola*, perfumed with *dummala*, while the following mantra is said one hundred and eight times:

"Om hiraniya	gun	prelah	muka	bandu-bandu.	Esvahā!"
jungle				relatives.	It is good!, i.e.

all *yakku* with their relations are told to return to the jungle.

For this spell, a *mal-bulat-putuva* must be arranged. A banana-leaf is spread out and covered with five kinds of flowers, some rice, a little piece of sandalwood, a

piece of camphor, and a betel-leaf with a copper coin on it. The second yantra is put into a metal case and tied to the body with a string.

*Yantra against intermittent fever (mura-ūna-yantra)*

On a new unused plate, a yantra such as is shown in fig. 42 is outlined with roasted rice-meal and put under a spell with seven repetitions of the following mantra.

"Om Sri-Brahma, Sipala-Matunava chandra mama prāna pati."  
moon I life inspire.

"Om Buddha! prāna, Buddhi disti vara - vara,  
life summon by presenting come come  
a gift

dhamma prāna, dhamma disti vara - vara, sangha prāna,  
law life law summon come come priesthood life  
sangha disti vara- vara, jiva prāna."  
priesthood come come life

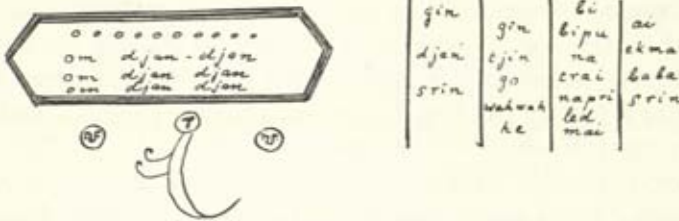


Fig. 42.

The rice-meal is then made into a paste with a little coconut-milk or is poured into the coconut-milk for the patient to drink. This ceremony requires a mal-bulat-putuva.

*Yantra which is supposed to afford protection against diseases caused by Patini-dēvi*

The yantra displayed in fig. 43 is drawn on a puskola, laid on a mal-bulat-putuva, and perfumed with dummala. Meanwhile, the following mantra is repeated twenty-one times:

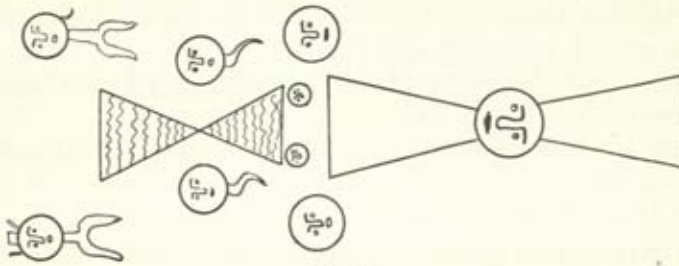


Fig. 43.



"Om namō!	Teruda,	Sanikāra	masekra	murū - uruke,	gada -
Glory to Buddha!	a deity	Saturn	great	cruelties	forgive
gada,	murū - uruke	nagāta napuren	bandhiti	meruksna	
forgive,	cruelties	badness	will be bound	this body	
kenhi-yantra	mantra	sudēn	Yama-rajjuruvo	Virupaksha	namostu
these yantra	mantra	cleanly	King of Hell	Ruler of the West	bow
namami.	Esvahā!"				
clasp ones hands.	It is good!				

*Yantra against the unfavourable influence of the planets*  
[Graba(ya) yantra]

The number of yantra which are intended as protection against the adverse influences of the planets is particularly large. We have already treated this subject in our descriptions of the *bali-* and *santi-*ceremonies, but we shall summarize them here once more.

Each of the planets can, as we have seen, exert an unfavourable influence, i.e. it has a certain period during which it exercises an unfavourable influence on the people subject to its power. This period is six years for the Sun, ten for the Moon, sixteen for Jupiter, seventeen for Mars, twenty for Venus, nineteen for Saturn, eighteen for the Dragon's Head, and seven years for the Dragon's Tail. This time of a planet's bad influence is quite generally called *apalaya*. The disaster or calamity which is caused by a planet manifests itself as famine, epidemics, pestilences, etc., spreading over a country and its population, and is called *rāstrakā*. During this unpropitious period, any person under the planet's sway is more than usually susceptible to disease of all kinds; one therefore tries to protect oneself at that time with the proper yantra, or rather, one takes care in advance more than one would do otherwise.

There are one or more yantra for each planet, each yantra having its own name. Thus, the yantra for Saturn and for the Dragon's Head is called *naga-arjuna*, that for the Moon, Mars, and Venus *mabatan-gesvāra*, and that for the Sun *suriya-mandalaya*.

In addition to these, there are still the following yantra: the *bahutankāliya-* and the *saromaniya-*yantra for the Sun, the *arjiva-* and the *mahasvariya-*yantra for Jupiter, the *natamaya-*yantra for the Moon, and the *srimahabodī-mandalaya*, the *bahu-mesvāra*, and the *agōra-*yantra for Mercury.

Finally, there is still one yantra which is effective for all the planets together; it is called *navanāta-yantra* (fig. 44).

These yantra are, like the other ones, usually drawn on an ola-leaf, but more frequently engraved on a strip of copper foil; well-to-do people even have yantra made from gold foil. The use of other metals is not permitted.

All these yantra must be given their power by "jivan karnova". For this, a *mal-bulat-putuva* is arranged with nine kinds of flowers, nine betel-leaves wrapped

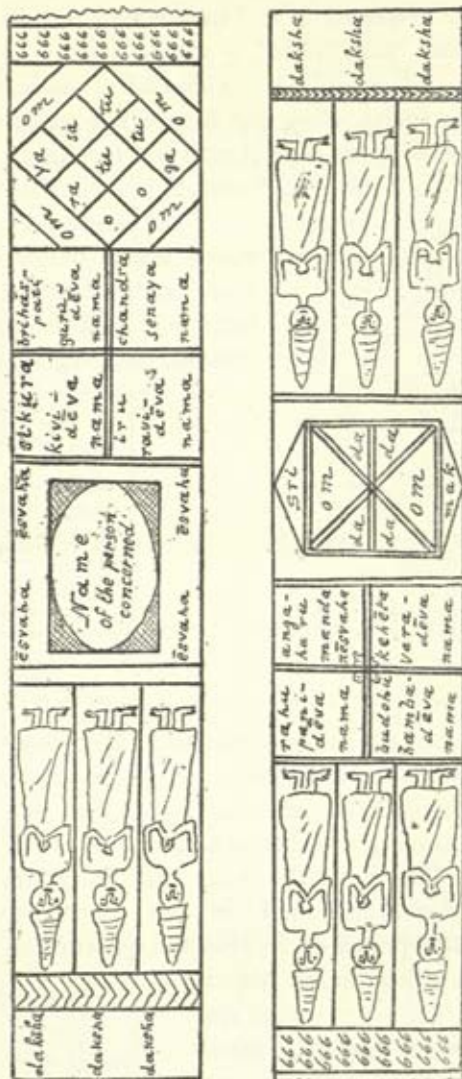


Fig. 44. Navanāṭa-yantra.



round nine copper coins (pandura), and nine kinds of seeds—everything ninefold corresponding to the number of the planets. In the middle is placed a *ṭemili*-nut which has been cut open and which has been decorated with gokkola around the opening. The milk is left in the nut and a few flowers, some seeds, and two or three different fruits are immersed in it. The yantra is put on top; around it, the end of a string, a so-called “*kanyā-nūla*”, is wound which must be twisted out of nine threads by a young girl (*kanyā*); the other end of the string is wound round the *ṣḍura*'s right middle finger. Now and then, while he is reciting mantra, he takes a little dummala between his right thumb and forefinger, raises his hand towards his mouth, and then throws the dummala into the fire-pan. He thereupon holds the yantra for a little while in the sweet heavy fumes coming from the coals, and perfumes it in this way (*jivan karnova*). Each mantra must be said one hundred and eight times.

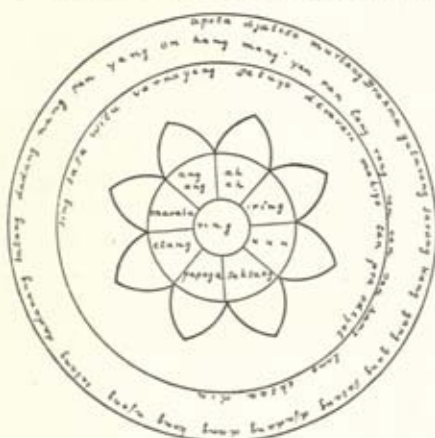


Fig. 45.

Seni rastraha-yantra.



Fig. 46.

chandra apalaya yantra.

Then, the yantra is rolled up and wrapped in a little piece of cloth which has previously been smeared or soaked with wax. So, a very small and solid little roll is formed which is impervious to water. The roll is then tied with the ninefold string in a special way, forming nine knots, each one of which must be separately charmed with a mantra. This done, the string with the yantra is tied round the neck or the upper arm (but never round the waist) of the person concerned and worn until the unfavourable period of the planet in question has passed.

Three of these yantra will be shown here as examples. The first, fig. 45, is a so-called *seni rāstrakā*- or *seni murchchānjaya*-yantra<sup>1</sup>, which is believed to shield a person from the unfavourable influences of Saturn. The mantra is inscribed in the figure and must be uttered two hundred and one times for “*jivan karnova*”. The preparation of such a yantra is therefore rather a lengthy affair and is, as a consequence, comparatively expensive.

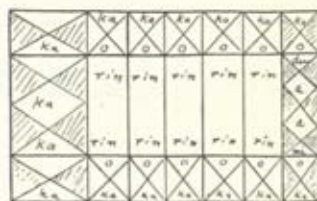


Fig. 47. Brahaspati apalaya-yantra.

<sup>1</sup> Murchchānjaya comes from *murchchā* (sometimes erroneously pronounced *murtā*) = to become unconscious, to faint, to become weak.

The second yantra of this group (fig. 46), on the other hand, refers to the Moon (chandra apalaya-yantra), and the third one, fig. 47, to Jupiter (brahaspati apalaya-yantra).

For the brahaspati apalaya-yantra the following mantra must be spoken:

“Navasadāsa Nine together (referring to the nine planets)		Banu name for the Sun	viritja religious zeal	mukan accept	Sri-lotjana Buddha's word
mānusha-jutan human life	Rāvi-visma sun-rays	yuvangala youthful	bādi body	badha kill	Rasa - Rama manifestation of Vishnu
chakram throwing ring	vidan like a	butha-bisatja spirit of the diseased	vinasa destroy	karan investive	abijtjora leave
vairiharan.”					

vairiharan."  
by the power of Vesamunu-rajjuvo.

"Om Sri-Vishnu	Narayana Vishnu-avatāra	jivita body	rakshantu protect	kuru - kuru. please please.
----------------	----------------------------	----------------	----------------------	--------------------------------

Esvahā!"

It is good!

This yantra, or at least its "jivan karnova", must be made on a Sunday, otherwise it is worthless. It is then tied round the neck.

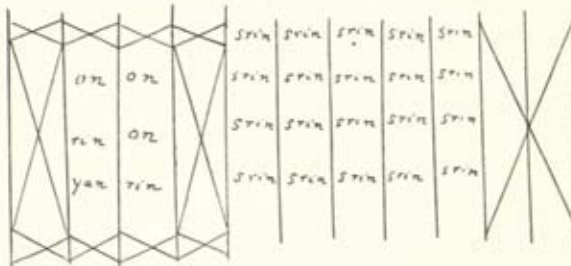


Fig. 48.

### Yantra against the "graba-dōsa"

The yantra shown in fig. 48 offers protection against epidemics caused by the planets. It is drawn on a puskola, perfumed, and is given power by one hundred and eight repetitions of the following mantra:

"Om namō!	Vidikāma-yakshani odu	bāda.	Pralēsvahā!"
Glory to Buddha!		the body.	It is very good!
"Om ring! yakshani	idan kamācha	lang mutjala.	Nēsvahā!"
	come on cure	and leave again	This is good!
"Om namō!	Vidikāma-yakshani	hun - hun	bāda. Pralēsvahā!"
Glory to Buddha!	•	fast fast	the body. It is very good!



A mal-bulat-putuva must be prepared, and after the incantation the yantra is sprinkled with yellow-root water and tied round the neck. It differs from the above-mentioned "graha-yantra" by its much smaller size and its more general scope. Moreover, its preparation is much simpler and requires less effort.

Fig. 49 shows a yantra which serves the same purpose, but which is designed for a little child. It is put on to the child as soon as it is able to take solid food.

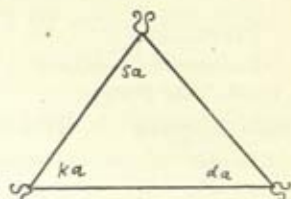


Fig. 49.

*Yantra for a love-spell (vajasa gurukama-yantra) (fig. 50)*

This yantra is drawn on a puskola and placed on a mal-bulat-putuva, perfumed with dummala, and put under a spell by repeating the following mantra one hundred and eight times:

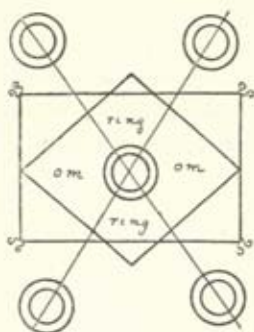


Fig. 50.

"Om Adhiri vara, vira-vara		Kadira-dēvi	Vira-murtu	Kadira-dēvi,
		refers to Valli-amma	weaken	
ānubhāva	vatuka	Bahīrava - kumāra - dēvatāvā	vara - vara	bandha-
powerful	come by	Shiva avatāra prince	come come	bind
bandha.	Esvahā."			
bind.	It is good!			

The yantra is then put under the mattress or the pillow of the girl whose favour one wants to win.

*The "gini sisil kerima-mantra"*

This is the mantra with whose aid fire can be made cool (sisil), i.e. it will make an individual invulnerable and insensitive to fire. The exorcist makes use of this mantra when he performs his "tricks" with burning torches or lamps, or when he lets the flames play on his body, walks on glowing coals, tramples on fire, swallows

fire, or performs other feats of this kind. He who masters this mantra can walk on fire or plunge his hand into boiling oil, either simply to attract attention and to collect money for his performance, or at religious celebrations such as the Katara-gama, festival in which fire-walking was formerly the custom.

As yellow-root water is needed for this purpose, it must be prepared by pouring some water into a new unused vessel and adding some minced yellow-root and powdered sandalwood (handun). It is then put under a spell with the following mantra:

"Om namō!	Isvara - dēviyan,	vahansē,	Isvara-avatāraya	mamangana
Glory to Buddha!	Isvara deity	venerable	manifestation	mental force?
Vismakarma - kovilēta	diyā-tanēdi,		Vismakarmaya	dēviya-putraya
Brahma's son temple	watering place		Sakra's servant	son of god
dēpayan	pagagana	sitala	kala	ānubhāvan
two feet	tread down?	cool off	given	mighty, dignified
ānubhāvan	sita-lāñchha,	pāda-lāñchha	sitala-sitala	agnijvāla
mighty, dignified	cool	footprint	cool cool	flames of fire
dharmā.	Esvahā."			gurutra
doctrine.	It is good!			the great master's

The performer then sprinkles his body and particularly his head with this water, or his torches which are already burning or about to be lit, or he sprinkles a little water over the fire which he is going to cross. Thereupon, he tries whether he is already insensitive to the heat. Should this not yet be the case, the mantra and the sprinklings must be repeated. Every direction must be conscientiously observed, not a syllable of the mantra must be omitted, lest it remain ineffective.

#### THE INJURIOUS YANTRA

Quite another group of yantra is formed by all those which are aimed at other persons in order to harm them directly or indirectly. These yantra play an important part in the performance of a kodivina, i.e. a spell which is executed with the help of the ḍura against one or more individuals with the purpose of injuring them by disease or in some other way. The most dangerous and most dreaded kodivina have been described in detail in a former chapter, as far as their execution and their counteraction and destruction are concerned. In addition, however, there exists a vast number of other, smaller kodivina which are less harmful; they too can cause all kinds of injuries and belong to the less enjoyable things in the everyday life of a Sinhalese village.

An appropriate and dependable yantra is always the main component of such a "lesser" kodivina. It represents, in connection with the pertinent mantra, the actual magic principle. In reality, however, it is the yakku who are invoked in the yantra and who must, if necessary, be forced to yield and to obey by the presentation of offerings or by an appeal to the superior deities. But frequently, it is indeed dif-



ficult to make out the reasoning of the natives, and the real meaning of the magic act remains unintelligible to us.

In the following, a few such "less harmful" kodivina will be described.

*Kodivina to make another man's cattle fall ill*

For this, the two yantra of fig. 51 are used. After they have been drawn on a brick, a mal-bulat-putuva is arranged on which the brick is laid; dum-mala is then burnt and the following mantra uttered one hundred and eight times:

"Ōm namō, Asurapa-Kali enen, Bahīra-dēvivarō, Virapa-Kali ēsvaha."<sup>1</sup>

The brick is then buried in a place where the cows generally graze. Unless the kodivina is found in time and rendered ineffective, they will fall ill before long. A cock must then at once have its throat cut and the blood must be dropped on the spot where the brick lay. In this way, so it is said, the spot is cooled and the destructive forces are annihilated.

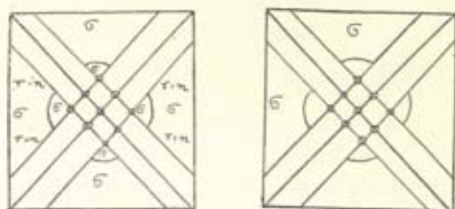


Fig. 51.

*Kodivina which causes discord between husband and wife.*

This is a very popular kodivina which is often used with malicious intent. The five yantra of fig. 52 must be drawn on a piece of kohomba-bark. A mal-bulat-

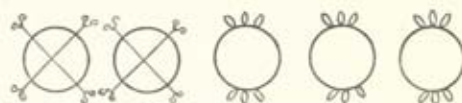


Fig. 52.

putuva with five kinds of flowers is erected. The whiskers of a cat and a mouse must be procured and tied with a thread to the puskola on which the mantra has been written. The whole is then placed under a stone in front of the entrance to the house, while the appropriate mantra are recited. When, after some time, the couple has repeatedly passed over the kodivina, it is hidden under the hearth.

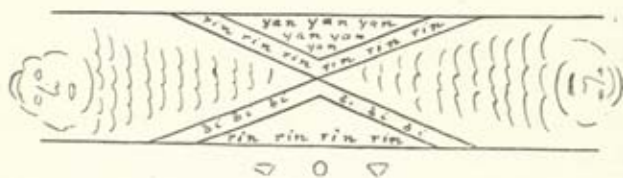


Fig. 53.

<sup>1</sup> There are thirty-two asura. One of them is Asurapa-Kali; another one is Virapa-Kali. Bahīra is the earth-goddess. The mantra calls for the co-operation of all three of them.

*Yantra to bring husband and wife together again.*

The yantra of fig. 53 is drawn twice on a puskola. Then, to the recitation of mantra, it is tied about the man's neck and about the woman's waist.

*Kodivina to spoil a person's fishing (mala pita kerima-kodivina, kodivina which drives fish away).*

A yantra such as fig. 54 serves to drive fish away from a person's fishing-place so that his endeavours are fruitless. It must be drawn on a brick, and in its text is the name of the person leading the catch. A mal-bulat-putuva is arranged with flowers, rice, a piece of sandalwood, and a small oil-lamp, in addition to the brick with the yantra. Then, the following mantra is repeated one hundred and eight times, while dummala is burnt as incense:



Fig. 54.

"Om ran, tau sadiya kanandu dāne tenaje tutistan santudan Buddhānu bahavena Ginapanjera mahavīro eti Sambuddhan prayana mahavidita viditanu yuta mahabāla Mahakashyapa, Gautaman, Sariputra, Buddhopi mahateja."

The brick is then laid on the sands where the people are going to fish, with the yantra face down. If the stone is turned, the kodivina becomes ineffective<sup>1</sup>.

*The "bumi padua-kodivina"*

The so-called "*bumi padua*" (to destroy earth) is an extremely dangerous kodivina. With a little piece of charcoal, procured from a recent cremation, the three yantra shown in fig. 55 are drawn on one side of a tile or brick, while the name of the victim is inscribed on the other. Then, a little mēsa is arranged under a bō-tree

<sup>1</sup> In other cases, where inland waters are concerned, Kadavara-Hiri-yakka is also invoked and entreated to drive the fish away and thus spoil the catch (cf. p. 28).



and the stone with the yantra is put on top, surrounded by the following things: a little piece of sandalwood, a little piece of camphor, a few betel-leaves, and a copper coin. The mantra is now recited:

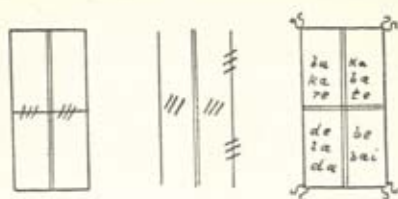


Fig. 55.

"Om!	hantu,	Buddhu	rasvāren	kīlā	tāla,	kīla	vadinga,
Om!	yakku-prēteo		glorious	many	places	many	
balagatin-yakka,	duakatin-yakka,	dēvālaya-Mahamēra	vipula	baladāri			
			happy	mighty			
Oddi-massinā	varēn,	inja - inja,	garā	agān	sitin	ayra-bala,	
cousin	come	nearer nearer	illness	here	wait	mighty	
Purandra-vadiga,	Sri	Oddi-massinā	umbata	barāva	sitīn	Buddha-	
place in India		cousin	your	take it	wait		
raskatu,	umba	barāva	raka - sitīn	nurāka	nositot	kīla	katu
power	you	take it	keep it waiting			many	nails
gahanavā,	languruvala,	massinā	numbāga	saran	katu	putu	
drive in	chieftain	cousin	your	aid	nails	great	
gārana-dārana.	Esvahā."						
illness pains.	It is good!						

Freely translated, it reads something like this:

"Om, yakku-prēteo, assemble, in the name of the glorious Buddha, come to this spot to play, mighty yakka, you who dwell at Mahamēra. Great and mighty cousin Oddi (Sūniya-yakka), approach nearer and nearer. Bring the illness and wait. Powerful cousin Oddi of Purandra-Vadiga, here you are to wait. Take it (the stone) and wait. Buddha's power be with you. Take it, keep it (the stone), and wait. You are to drive many nails into his body, chieftain. Cousin, I need your assistance. Many big nails will afflict him with disease, cause him pain. So shall it be!"

At the same time, the stone is perfumed with dummala in order to endow it with power (jivan karnova). Then, the stone is buried secretly in the garden or the estate of the person against whom the kodivina is directed, in the light of a lamp belonging to the same house, so that nobody sees it. The consequence will be that the yakku will throw stones on to the victim's roof, the next day. In the course of a week, the members of the household will fall ill and die, one after the other, if the kodivina is not removed and destroyed.

*The "hena-gini alanganiya-kodivina" (the invincible lightning  
and thunder kodivina)*

Some lime is put under a spell and used to paint the door-post or the post of the veranda of the victim's house. The occupants of the house will be struck with illness and will not recover before the lime is removed. The corresponding mantra must be repeated one hundred and eight times; its text runs:

"Om, hena-gini, bumi tatu aloka gini-Valhalla. Om, naragan indiya baba, om rin vallimala gini Mamakandi, Pisu-yakshani ensera kulanbu, Māruva tabarai aleka gini valhalla anarāgan indabāba.

Om namō, Naravalēla-dēse, puta sitin, apotje-sitīn, bin-bin, teri-teri, bila surindu, Māra-diridat, bila-bila mīra, kala bila-bila, kagana bila-kāti, kana-gatjarin uma ama teri."

### AÑJANAN

*Añjanan* is the name for a special kind of magic, and those familiar with it are the *añjanan-kariya*. It is essentially a kind of clairvoyance carried out by the *añjanan-kariya* with the aid of a certain goddess, the *Añjanan-dēvi*, and her son Hanuman, the ape-god, along with Mahavishnu and the *Sūniya-yakka* <sup>1</sup>.

The *añjanan-kariya* can at the same time be an *ḍura*, but he must possess certain abilities and knowledge which are not accessible to everybody. Only those who belong to the "*mānusha-gana*" are qualified to busy themselves with the *añjanan* <sup>2</sup>.

As we shall see later on, this charm is of extreme importance. When one wants to get detailed information about some occurrence, or to be foretold the issue of some enterprise, or even merely to know the future, one applies to the *añjanan-kariya*; he will, for his part, contact the *Añjanan-dēvi* and receive knowledge about whatever he has been asked. Also in cases of disease and especially those which are connected with a *kodivina*, the *añjanan-kariya* is often consulted, particularly when the *sāstra-kariya* has not been able to give satisfactory advice. Indeed, the *añjanan-kariya* demands a considerably higher fee than the *sāstra-kariya*; he will charge up to five rupees for a home visit, and from between one and two rupees for a consultation in his house.

The *añjanan-magic* can only be performed at night and requires particular preparations; it is said that *Añjanan-dēvi* will not obey an invocation during the day. A so-called *añjanan-mēsa* must also be arranged: banana-leaves are spread out on

<sup>1</sup> The *Añjanan-dēvi* is an Indian deity, mother of the art of magic, who is also called *Badda-dēvi*; her son Hanuman, king of the apes, must always assist at the performance of a spell.

<sup>2</sup> *Gana(na)* = number, numerical value. The lunar houses (*ṇekata*) are divided into three groups, so-called *gana*, namely: the *mānusha-gana*, the *dēva-gana*, and the *raksha-gana*. The first category includes the *ṇekata*: *berēna*, *rehena*, *ardra*, *puopalu*, *uttrapal*, *puosala*, *uttrasala*, *puaputupa*, and *uttraputupa*; the *dēva-gana* group comprises: *asvida*, *muasirisa*, *puvarvasa*, *pusa*, *hasta*, *sah*, *ansura*, *suvēna*, *rēvata*; the *raksha-gana* is composed of: *kēti*, *asliśa*, *sita*, *visat*, *dēta*, *mula*, *dhenata*, *jivāsa*, *kuja*, and *magha*.



a little table or on a stand which has been erected especially for the purpose; a little higher above them, a clean white cloth is stretched over two curved bamboo sticks so as to form an arched roof. This *mēsa* is then provided with white flowers (temple-flowers), areca-blossoms, a few bananas, some rice-cakes, and a handful of rice grains, a little piece of sandalwood, betel-leaves, a little bottle of coconut-oil, one of sesame oil, one of brandy, and a fourth one with some palm wine, a string of beads such as is worn by the Indian sadhus (*yāpa malavak*), and a new unused little pot with yellow-root water. Finally, a small white plate or saucer is put against the wall or against some object in the middle of the *mēsa*; its under surface which is turned outwards has a round, black, shining spot in its centre. This spot has to be painted on with a special substance, the so-called *anduna*<sup>1</sup>, prepared from the roots of certain herbs and other ingredients and stirred with a small quantity of castor oil into a black paint.

The preparation of this *anduna* must be attended to with the utmost care, since the success of the spell depends primarily on it. We shall see farther on, from what substances it is made.

A little clay oil-lamp (*meti-pana*) is placed in front of the saucer so that the black spot is evenly illuminated and clearly visible, and now the observation can begin. But previously, a little yellow-root water is sprinkled with a coconut- or areca-blossom in the four points of the compass in order to counteract the evil powers and to keep them off the *mēsa*. Mantra are then uttered, some three times, others seven times, and some also one hundred and eight times; these repetitions are necessary to make the charm effective (pl. XLVIII, fig. 83). The mantra fulfil different functions. First, the *anduna* must be put under a spell, because otherwise it would remain ineffective and lack power; this giving of power is performed by the "*anduna jivan karnova-mantra*", i.e. the mantra which gives life (= power) to the *anduna*. A second one is the "*eliya yavana-mantra*" to render the light effective, i.e. the oil-lamp and its flame. A third mantra, the "*bōjana-mantra*", is intended for the food, i.e. the offering. And further mantra, finally, serve the purpose of conjuring the necessary *yakku* and *dēvatāvo*, in some cases also the *prēteo*.

The leading figures, as we remarked before, are the female deity *Añjanan-dēvi* and her son *Hanuman*, who is her steady companion and is believed to illuminate her path with his torch. The rest of them, on the other hand, play the part merely of auxiliary demons whose assistance is needed to summon the goddess.

When all the mantra have been recited, the *añjanan-kariya* sits down at the *mēsa*, adjusts the little lamp suitably, and gazes without moving at the black, brilliant spot on the saucer (pl. XLVIII, fig. 84). To prevent disturbances and distractions,

<sup>1</sup> *Andun(a)* means the same as *añjanan*, but is its *Elu* form. *Añjana* is a preparation on an antimony or soot base, used to paint the eye-lids black. Babies have their eye-lids blackened when they are about three months old in order to prevent eye-diseases. The root of the word *añjanan* is "*añj*" = to smear, to daub.

a curtain is let down behind his head and back. After a while, he asserts that he sees a figure in the black spot, walking towards him with a torch in its hand. A little later, another figure will appear, and then a third and a fourth one. They come in a definite order: first the Sūniya-yakka, then Mahavishnu, then Hanuman, and finally the Añjanan-dēvi who remains visible for a considerable time and who reveals whatever it is desired to know. Her son Hanuman always runs and hops before her, leading the way with his torch in his hand. The number and order of these apparitions are, however, not always the same; it depends chiefly on the composition of the anduna used, of which several kinds are distinguished and whose use varies according to the situation and circumstances.

Each of the spirits appearing has, as has been stated, to carry out his particular part. Here again, the yakku play the rôle of helpers and are summoned in order to intimidate the others so that they feel compelled to present themselves. The chief personality is Añjanan-dēvi who lets her inquirers know anything they wish. Her son Hanuman, however, is her companion and shows his mother the way.

Picture after picture passes before the eyes of the observer. He sees people coming and going whom he knows well, sometimes individuals who are far off and of whom he has not heard for a long time, and sees things which he would otherwise never have known about. After a while, the añjanan-kariya will also ask the person who is consulting him and on whose behalf he is performing the ceremony to sit down at the mēsa and gaze at the black spot. Whether he will see anything or not, depends, I was told, entirely on the disposition of the client; it is believed to be wholly out of the question if he belongs to the "raksha-gana". Those of the "dēvagana" do not show any great capacity for it either. The best natural aptitude in this respect is found among the members of the "mānusha-gana".

As mentioned above, there are three categories of añjanan each of which has its own scope. The first form is the so-called "Vishnu vajira patala-añjanama" which also makes it possible to see and experience things which are or are happening in a foreign country or on another continent. This añjanan is, therefore, particularly valuable when it is a question of detecting a kodivina which has been buried and hidden in the ground. The Sūniya-yakka, the Mahavishnu, Hanuman, and the Añjanan-dēvi are summoned with this añjanan. The composition of the anduna which is required in this case is rather complicated, the following herbs and materials being necessary:

- Leaves from the katupila-tree (*Evolvus alinoides*, a *Convolvulaceae*)
- Stamens of the flowers of the ironwood-tree (*nā-malrēnu*)
- Amukkara, a *Solanaceae* (*Withania somnifera*)
- Mayla-mal, flowers of the sandalwood-tree
- Attika palu, bark of *Ficus glomerata* (an *Urticaceae*)
- Udupiyāli, a leguminous plant (*Desmodium*)
- Una-alu, powder (literally: ashes) of a split-off bamboo-cane and finally an old rag, left behind at the work place of a washman.



The rules for the preparation of the anduna are equally intricate. In the earliest hours of the morning, before the birds are awake, the āñjanan-kariya must procure the above-mentioned ingredients. He naturally has to make sure beforehand where all the herbs and plants are to be found, as it would otherwise scarcely be possible in the darkness. Moreover, he is not allowed to speak a word to anyone whom he happens to meet on his errand in spite of the early hour, but he must pursue his way in silence and without arousing attention. On his return home, the herbs are first thoroughly dried in the sun, and then put into a pot or pan and heated for some time over a fire. Thereupon, the whole mass is powdered in a mortar, mixed with a few drops of "dummala-tēl"<sup>1</sup>, and again mixed and powdered. The powder is then shaken on to a big flat stone and ignited. The clean blade of a hoe or other big piece of iron is held over the flame to catch the soot which is then put on a little plate and charmed by a special mantra (jivan karnova); finally, it is put into a new and absolutely clean receptacle made of wood or horn (neither a glass bottle nor a metal case may be used). Another requisite is the soot of burnt camphor which is kept in an identical vessel.

When an āñjanan-spell is to be performed, the āñjanan-kariya takes some soot out of each of the two containers, just sufficient for the one performance, and mixes the two together with a few drops of castor oil (erandu-tēl) so as to form a fairly thick paste. While uttering mantra, he paints a moderately large round spot in the centre of the under-side of the saucer, with the tip of his forefinger. This mixture, the ready-made anduna, may not be prepared either in anticipation or for a later occasion, because it would lose its effectiveness. The soot itself, however, may be kept for any length of time, provided it is kept in a wooden or horn vessel, and will, in contrast to the ready-for-use anduna, not lose its power. For the rest, the ritual takes the course already described above.

Another form of āñjanan is the "Kataragama-dēviyo-āñjanama". For it, an anduna made up of the following herbs is required:

Maha-hadaya, *Lycopodium phlegmaria*

Ira-raja, *Zeuxine regia* (Burmaniaceae)

Vana-raja, *Anaetochilus setaceus* (Orchidaceae).

These ingredients are dried in the shadow, heated in a pot over the fire, reduced to powder, stirred into an ointment with dummala-tēl, ignited, and burned. The soot is caught on the cool, shining parts of a banana-stem which is held in the flame, put under a charm (jivan karnova), filled into a wooden or horn receptacle, and kept there. When needed, some of it is stirred into a paste with castor oil, and then used to paint a round black spot on the under side of a saucer, as was done

<sup>1</sup> Dummala-tēl is obtained in the following way: Powdered resin (dummala), such as is used for incense and for fire effects during the performances of ceremonies, is put into a suitable pot, covered with the lid, and put on a fire. An oily liquid condenses on the lid and can be caught, drop by drop, in a bottle. This dummala-tēl is a very precious substance; a very small bottle of it costs ten rupees.



Fig. 83. The āñjanan-kariya uttering the mantra (flashlight picture).



Fig. 84. The āñjanan-kariya making his observations. He stares intently at the round black spot on the saucer. Flowers and fruit are spread out on the table as offerings (flashlight picture).



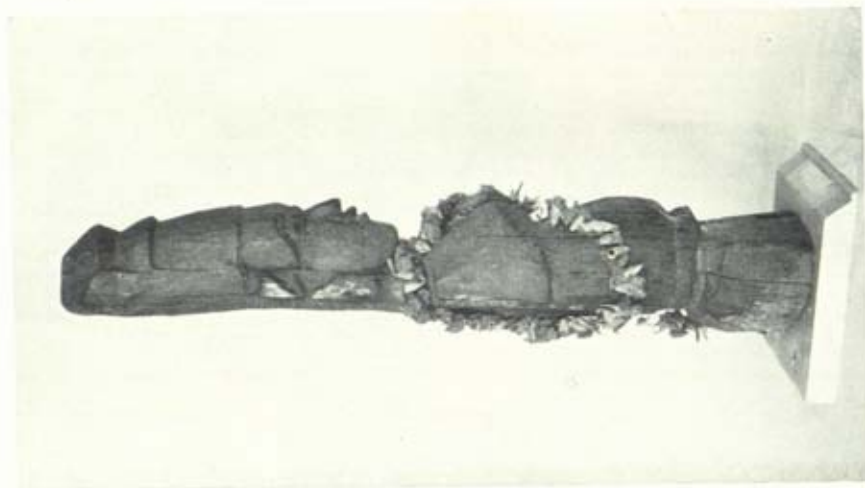


Fig. 86. Crude wooden figure, alleged to represent Patini-dēvi. Ethnographical Museum, Basle.



Fig. 85. Patini-dēvi, a bronze figure from Kandy; 36 cm. in height (Collection P. Wirz).

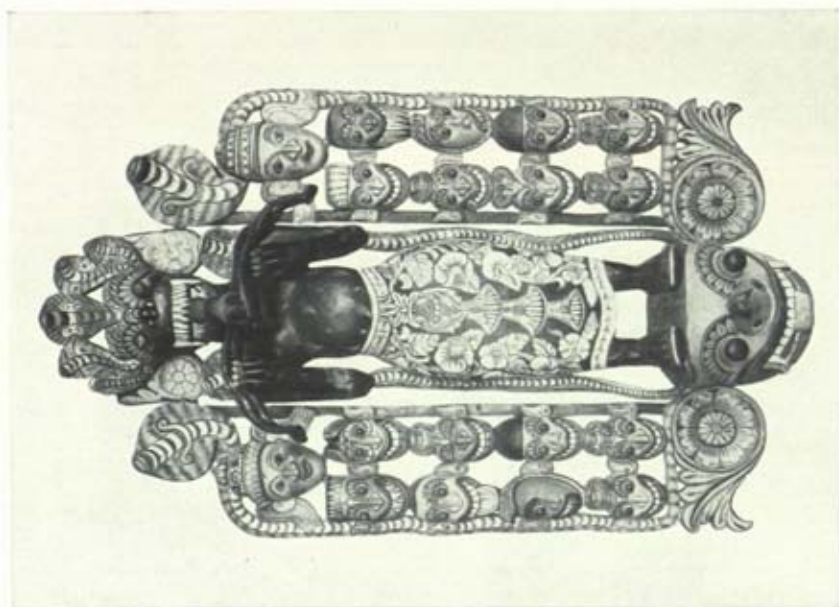


Fig. 87. Polychrome carving, representing Maha-Kola-sanniya and his eighteen attendants (Ethnographical Museum, Basle).

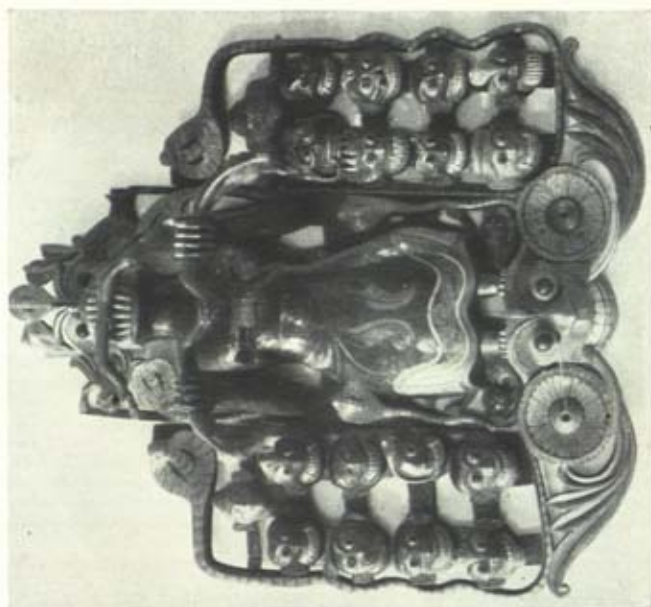


Fig. 88. Big mask, representing the Kola-sanniya with his eighteen attendants (Museum Colombo).





Fig. 89. Wooden figure, representing the Sūniya-yakka (Museum Colombo).

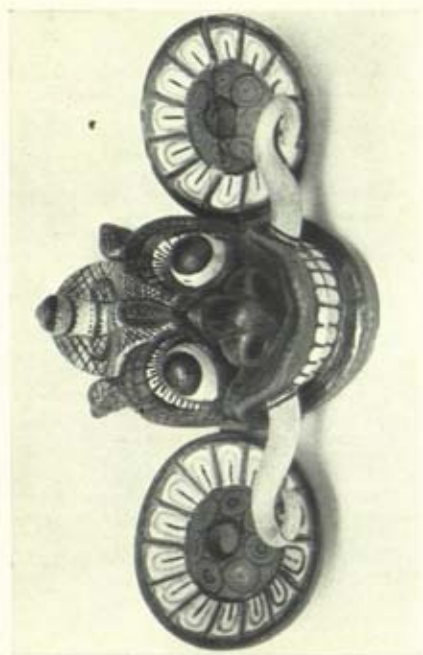


Fig. 90. Gara-mask (Collection P. Wirz).



Fig. 91. Maha-sohona-actor with wolf-mask (Collection P. Wirz).

with the "Vishnu vajira patala-añjanama" described above. In this case, the Kataragama-dēviyo is summoned first, and then Hanuman and the Añjanan-dēvi. Should these two demons hesitate to appear, the Sūniya-yakka is invoked; at this, they will present themselves immediately, for they fear the Sūniya-yakka and obey him without hesitation. This añjanan also makes it possible to see things which are beyond the earth, i.e. in the air or anywhere in the universe.

The third kind of añjanan is the "māla-prēta-añjanama". In this ritual, neither the yakku nor the dēvatāvo are summoned, but the prēteo, in particular the māla-prēteo, who will reveal anything the magician wants to know. Besides them, the Sūniya-yakka is also always cited; he orders or obliges the prēteo to appear, or simply precedes them, since, as we have already seen, they always follow him. They both receive their offerings, the prēteo their prēta-tātuva, and the Sūniya-yakka another tātuva.

This añjanan requires not a saucer, as do the two above ones, but a fragment of an unglazed earthenware pot or dish, on which a round black spot is painted with another kind of anduna.

The prescription for this anduna is as follows: different kinds of yam-roots growing wild are ground into a fine flour on a stone, and charmed with a certain mantra (jivan karnova). A silver rupee is placed under the stone in the belief that it may reveal whether it is fine enough ground and thus fit for the añjanan. This will be the case when the surface of the flour shines like silver; otherwise, the grinding must be continued and it must again be charmed until the silvery shimmer is clearly visible. The flour is then without further treatment mixed with a little castor oil into a paste and applied with the forefinger to the potsherd. The flour must be freshly prepared for each ceremony and must never be kept in store. The piece of pottery, on the other hand, may well be kept, and actually belongs to the indispensable outfit of every añjanan-kariya.

The following mantra accompany the performance of an añjanan:

I. *The Añjanan-dēvi disti-mantra, i.e. the mantra to summon the Anjanan-dēvi.*

“Ōm! dasai Hanuman-ta		jiva-jiva	yanen	Hanuman-ta	raja	vava,
		life life	get to work		king	come
Kavira-Bhadrakali <sup>1</sup>	vava,	Silambara	vava,	Mahavishnu,	Oddi-	
Durga avatāra	come		come			
yavarni	vava	Añjanan-dēvi	Satakuta	mudunen	memaki	
	come		residence of Añjanan-dēvi	on the summit	what I say	
taneta	disti	vara-vara	namah.”	To be repeated one hundred and		
hither	I summon	come come	Glory to Buddha!			
eight times.						

<sup>1</sup> There are thirty-two different avatāra of Durga, two of which are the Kavira-Bhadrakali and the Silambari.



II. *The Hanuman disti-mantra, i.e. the mantra to summon Hanuman.*

"Om! Krida Hanuman-ta, vappen, Ada-Hanuman-ta<sup>1</sup> vappen  
 playing Hanuman come here Half-Hanuman come here  
 Dēva + Hanuman-ta vappen Kairady-Oddi-Hanuman-ta, disti vara-vara  
 divine Hanuman come here I summon come come  
 namah." To be repeated one hundred and eight times.  
 Glory to Buddha!

III. *The Sūniya-yakka disti-mantra, i.e. the mantra to summon the Sūniya-yakka.*

"Om! guruvala pēṭala Bahīrava kondē, Vishnu-Kadiravelu  
 Om! (guru) Shiva avatāra come here  
 kondē angaradu māru madēna Oddi-yaksha, mabala jiva-jiva,  
 come here \* mighty angry passionate look here life life  
 vara-vara. Namah."  
 come come. Glory to Buddha!  
 "Om, rin! Makāraduti, Kokala-raksha, Oddi-kondūva, Oddi-yakshaya  
 Om, rin! various names for the Sūniya-yakka  
 enēn. disti - disti, vara-vara. Namah." To be repeated seven times.  
 come hither hither come come Glory to Buddha!

IV. *The Vishnu disti-mantra, i.e. the mantra to summon Vishnu.*

"Om! Sri Mundesvara, Kataragama, Mundal vava, Nata-drida  
 Om! various names for Vishnu come  
 Ayanayata disti - disti, Sri Vishnu Narayana adatmaga andunsandun  
 hither hither to-day  
 jivan, disti - disti, vara-vara namah."  
 life hither hither come come Glory to Buddha!  
 "Vasu-dēvata Paran-Brahma tatmurti purusah nirguna santa  
 name of a sloka (verse) man kind-hearted  
 Vishnu namō varan Govina - Govinda prelada --bari  
 name of a Bodhisatva istri-avatāra (in the  
 form of a woman)  
 mukunda Krishna, Govina-Govinda namostu tasmai."  
 black cow with bows bestow honour  
 To be repeated three times.

V. *The anduna jivan karnova-mantra, i.e. the mantra which endows the anduna with power.*

"Om! Kudiripu dāre akasa peiyun, urip patu  
 Om! Sūniya-yakka avatāra heaven living life spend

<sup>1</sup> There are ten different avatāra of Hanuman, one of which is the Ada-Hanuman, i.e. the Half-Hanuman; here only half of the demon is visible.

sakram	Kudiripu	dāre	prāna-prāna	triloka	viya
endow with power			entreat	three worlds	victory
vara-vara.	Esvahā!"				
come come.	It is good!				
To be repeated three times.					

VI. *The eliya yavana-mantra, i.e. the mantra which bestows power on the light.*

"Om! añjanan	vetu	idaru	pudijel	yayah."
Om!	for this	near	appear	fast
	(añjanan)	To be repeated three times.		

VII. *The bōjana-mantra, i.e. the mantra for the food (meaning the offering).*

"Om namō!	ira	hatak	sandah	hatak	palagana	upan	
Om, Glory to Buddha!	sun	seven	moon	seven	separate	born	
dēvatāvā	udin	sesāk	ala	sitin	velēndu	anubhāvemū	kepagan
	above	a king's standard		wait	eat	powerful	accept it
bōjanan.	Esvahā!"						
this food.	It is good!						

## THE POSITION WITH REGARD TO BUDDHISM

Although the Buddhism in Ceylon belongs to the Hanayana school, numerous Tantrist practices have found acceptance, while the foundation of the religion must be sought in age-old primitive animistic and spiritist conceptions. Magic practices with the aid of magic circles (mandala), magic drawings (yantra), and magic formulae (mantra) can be traced back to them. By these means, the initiated are able to exorcize the gods and the demons and through becoming merged in them, to gain supernatural powers.

It is an unmistakable fact that the practice of the edura and bandhanaya, just as much as that of the kapuā, are in unmitigated opposition to the true doctrine of Buddha, and for this reason the monks and priests will have nothing to do with these three people. A bhikshu will never submit to the ritual of a "devil-charmer" or even attend a ceremony simply out of curiosity or any other reason. In the traditions which form the origin of the ceremonies, as well as in the mantra with the help of which the yakku and prēteo are invoked and exorcized, one comes up against the name Buddha at every step. He is quite generally set forth as an exceptionally powerful personality, from which a power emanated which on its own sufficed to destroy or render harmless his adversaries. Nevertheless, it is the same here as in other religions. Each sought to appropriate for his own doctrine that which appeared to fit and to be suitable, and did not shrink from any means to justify his point of view.



In very many cases, Buddha plays the rôle of a mediator, just as the supreme deities Sakra and Isvara. Each and all the yakku and prêteo are subject to him and obey him without question. All these dark powers (yakku, prêteo, raksho, etc.) are Buddha's antagonists, avoid his presence, and take flight as soon as they see him approaching.

On the other hand, we see that Buddha and the other deities are always willing to mediate; again and again we hear legends about agreements with the yakku and prêteo; we hear they forbid the demons to pursue and kill men, but concede them the right of afflicting them with diseases on the explicit condition that they restore them to health again. Men, for their part, are obliged to show their gratitude by the presentation of an offering which must be arranged according to a definite prescription, and which the spirits have to accept. So, we gain the impression that on these terms both parties apparently get on well together in harmony; but this is only as far as we have drawn our own conclusions from the ideas which the exorcists (edura and kapuā) and the common people support. The picture is quite another one when we hear what Buddha himself has to say:

"Astrology, fortune-telling, prediction of good or bad events based on signs, foretelling of success or failure, all these things are prohibited" <sup>1</sup>. Further, he says with reference to the ceremonies <sup>2</sup>): "Ceremonies are worthless, prayers are idle gossip, and conjurations are void of saving power. But when you forego covetousness and lust, when you free yourselves from evil desires and cast off all hatred and ill will, that is the real offering and worship of God <sup>3</sup>."

In reality, it is the same here as in other Buddhist countries; only very few comprehend the true Buddhist dogma in its real profoundness; the rest are Buddhists in name only, among them also a great part of those who wear the yellow gown. Actually, the Sinhalese are just as little Buddhists as the Balinese are Hindus or the Papuans of Western New Guinea are Mohammedans. They are too deeply rooted in their old conceptions and customs, in their belief in the yakku, raksho, and prêteo who must constantly be presented with offerings, and they will, considering the tolerant practice of the yellow church, hardly change within the next decades.

## BUDDHISM AND THE ART OF HEALING

Another word about the relation of the Buddhist religion to the art of healing in

<sup>1</sup> Seidenstücker, *Evangelium des Buddha*, p. 257.

<sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 38.

<sup>3</sup> According to tradition, Gautama Buddha is said to have been on Ceylon three times. His first visit was paid to Bintenne, where the Mahi-yangana-dāgoba was erected in memory of the occasion. The second time, in the fifth year of his being a Buddha, he went to Nagadipa in the north-west of the island, where he settled the quarrel of two kings of the Naga about a diamond-studded throne. His third visit took place three years later. On this occasion he went to Kelaniya and preached to the king of the Naga, converting him to Buddhism. During this last visit of his, he is said also to have visited Anuradhapura and to have climbed the Adamspeak, where he left his footprint.

a general sense. The Buddhist scriptures say very little about this topic; it is at best mentioned incidentally. Nevertheless, a good deal of importance has, since ancient times, been ascribed to the recitation of certain Buddhist texts, particularly the *sūtra-pitaka*. The commentaries to the Buddhist writings emphasize the fact that the great master was already in his lifetime asked to ward off evil forces by sermons in order to stop epidemics and plagues. Thus, the legend reports the case of the outbreak of pestilence at Visālā; there, Buddha is said to have uttered the *ratana-sūtraya* and to have succeeded with their help in subduing the evil forces. And the same procedure was observed by Buddha's disciples on occasion of the previously mentioned Spirit-ceremony, the origin of which is traced back to that very tradition.

The ceremony takes the course described above. First, the small *mandapam* is erected. A pot with clear water, having a white thread round it, stands on the table. The attending *bhikshu* are seated in a circle and hold the thread whose other end has been tied to a relic which they have brought with them. The ceremony is opened by the recital of certain *sūtra*. Then follows the recitation proper or the reading from the book (also brought with them). Two *bhikshu* are thus occupied; after an hour or two, they are relieved by two others, and this continues throughout the night. This ceremony generally requires one or two nights and one day, but sometimes it lasts even longer. During the last night, a special ritual is performed with the attendance of all the *bhikshu*. They now recite jointly, enumerating the names of the most important *vihāra* and *dēvālaya*, and prophesying good luck and happiness for all their fellow-men.

The water of the above-mentioned vessel is then sprinkled over all those present and pieces of the white thread are distributed which are tied about the right wrist as amulets against diseases, epidemics, and other dangers.<sup>1</sup>

### MEDICAMENTS AND POISONS

The majority of the medicaments with which the Sinhalese *vedarāla* is familiar and which he applies, originate from the plant kingdom; only a few of them are taken from the animal or mineral kingdoms, as one can easily convince oneself by a glance in an apothecary's shop. The number of various herbs, roots, seeds, woods, and barks which are approved and applied as remedies for this or that ailment is enormous; it is even maintained by many experts that there exists no plant, part of which may not be good for something. The Indian physician Jivaka, son of king Bimbisara of Magadha, established the principle that everything is a medicine and that there is nothing which is not. The same applies on the whole to the Sinhalese art of healing.

It is, therefore, impossible within the limits of this book to enumerate all curative plants, with even the slightest pretension to completeness. Most of them are

<sup>1</sup> In the Vesak issue of the Daily News of 1940, W. A. de Silva gives an extended description of such a spirit-ceremony in his essay "Buddhism and Healing of Disease".



simply dried and applied without further preparation, either in the form of a decoction, or ground into powders for plasters or for internal use. Usually, the vedarāla himself gathers the herbs, roots, barks, etc. which he needs for his patients; but there is in addition a group of people, the so-called "*behēd badu kadā-kariya*", i.e. herbalists, whose business it also is. Among the bhikshu are likewise found some who occupy themselves with this. And then, finally, there are those whose profession it is the production and sale of various oils. These have already been mentioned earlier in this book.

As mentioned above, the number of remedies originating from the animal body is, if not theoretically, at all events practically, very much smaller. In most cases they are fats which have been extracted. Yet, it appears strange that poisonous effects are attributed to many of these animal fats. This superstition is, in particular, connected with the fat of snakes, especially with that of the dangerous viper (*polanga*), that of the perfectly harmless python (*pimbura*), and also with the fat of the big varan lizard (*kabragoya*) which is said to be produced best by the people of Mātara. Those who want to commit suicide or who want to remove their rivals often make use of these poisons. The death due to them is said to be a very terrible one; a person who has swallowed the venom is believed to swell up and hiss like a serpent or a varan lizard, and to die in violent convulsions. Since the varan lizard enjoys official protection on account of its feeding on snakes, its fat is not easy to procure, but it is thought still to be obtained in secret. The animal is cut up lengthwise and the fat taken out. Snakes are hung up, head down over a fire, and the liquid which runs out of the mouth is collected. What is obtained in this case is, of course, not actually the animal's fat or grease, but the decaying blood and the liquids of putrefaction. One can well imagine that they produce a poisonous effect when introduced into the stomach in considerable quantities.

Other animal fats, on the other hand, are valued as old approved medicines, just as in our western pharmacology. Bears' fat (*valas-tēl*) is used against baldness and loss of hair, that of peacocks (*monāra-tēl*) cures sprained joints. The fat of tigers and leopards (*koti-tēl*) is a well-tried means of protection (*arakshava*) from the yakku and *prēteo*. It is worn about the arm in a small metal case, such as is used for yantra. Pigs' fat too, is a similar preventative, and is smeared on the forehead or the arms when danger threatens from a *kodivina*. In the same way, houses and their inhabitants are protected by applying pigs' grease to the walls, the door, or the pillars of the veranda.

The meat of tigers and leopards is in high esteem as a remedy for asthma, while most Sinhalese avoid pork as being impure (*kili*).

An outstanding position is occupied by the so-called *kastūri*, a very valuable medicine, which is obtained from the glandular secretion of the musk-deer (*Moschus moschiferus*). It is very expensive and not easily acquired, so that only the rich have access to it. It is believed that a few drops of *kastūri*, administered to a dying person, may still bring him back to life. It is mixed with other remedies

and made into pills. A similar property is attributed to the horn of the Indian rhinoceros, which is also highly valued by Chinese physicians; it is powdered and then given to pregnant women when the delivery does not proceed easily (p. 247).

In certain cases, minerals and metals are also employed, just as in Chinese and Indian medicine. We have already mentioned mercury, and in addition there is gold, in the form of powder (also used in Tibetan medicine), which is prescribed for ailments of the heart and the lungs, and powdered precious stones, amber, corals, and even pearls, which find occasional application and which were also known to mediaeval pharmacy.

The number of remedies which are made from minerals or metals, is enormous; they are collectively called *sinduram-behēd*. Although each is in itself a medicine, they are mostly mixed or heated with other ingredients; this heating is often continued for hours or even days, until the mineral has, as they call it, been completely "burnt", i.e. until the metal has been converted into its oxide, or if cow-dung is a constituent of the mixture, into the nitrate.

Among the metals, mercury (*rasā-diya* = liquid metal) occupies the first place and is the basis for the production of numerous medicines.

Not every *vedarāla*, however, is familiar with the production and application of these *sinduram-behēd* which are a special branch of the Indian and Sinhalese medical science. They are, just like the above-mentioned *kastūri*, administered only in especially serious cases and when the otherwise customary remedies have proved of no avail.

Among the vegetable poisons, the fruit of the kaduru-tree (an Apocynaceae) must be mentioned as being the most important. This tree is very common in the lower regions. Suicides, particularly girls who face the birth of an illegitimate child, frequently make use of this fruit. Death is said to ensue within a few hours of eating even a single fruit of this plant.

There is a voluminous literature, dealing with medicines and therapeutic methods. Most of the works, however, are of Indian origin and written in Sanskrit, or else translated from the Sanskrit into Sinhalese<sup>1</sup>.

### THE CONCEPTION OF HOT AND COLD

The Sinhalese share with other peoples of the Indian cultural group the idea that all foods, especially vegetable ones, i.e. fruit and greens, are to be distinguished as hot or cold. Correctly speaking, there is a graduating scale, from very hot, moderately warm, neutral, moderately cool, to very cold kinds of food. Instead of hot and cold, we ought to speak of foods with a hot or cold action, or of heating and

<sup>1</sup> The following works may be listed: *Rasarajasundara*, Calcutta; *Vaishiyaratnavali* by Govinda Dasa, Calcutta; *Charaka Sanhitta*, Calcutta; *Kasayasangrahaya*, Calcutta. A comprehensive survey of Sinhalese medical science is also to be found in John Attygalle "Materia Medica", Colombo 1917, and Emanuel Roberts "Vegetable Materia Medica", Colombo 1931.



cooling ones, but the native, in his everyday vocabulary, does not make these differences.

Extremely hot or cold food is believed to be unhealthy for the organism and must, therefore, be avoided by children and sick people. Colds and digestive disorders are most frequently traced back to the consumption of very hot or very cold fruit. Neutral fruit and vegetables of course agree best with the stomach and may be eaten by anybody without harm. The others, on the contrary, are looked upon with such a degree of anxiety as to appear to us completely phantastic.

The following is a list of the most common kinds of fruits, vegetables, and other foods, which are classified, according to the above-described conception, in three categories: hot, cold, and neutral.

Hot	Cold	Neutral
Manga	Soursop ( <i>Anona muricata</i> )	Pineapple
Papaya	Pomegranate	Mangustine
Breadfruit ( <i>Artocarpus nobilis</i> )	Ratu-mala-banana	Tomato
Beef	Kali-gutu-banana	All kinds of beans
All kinds of fish with much blood	Kernel and milk of the coconut	Rice
All insects	Eggfruit ( <i>Solanum esculentum</i> )	Potato
Ana-mula-banana	Ladies' fingers ( <i>Hibiscus esculentus</i> )	Mutton
Rose-apple ( <i>Jambosa vulgaris</i> )	Paprika	Chicken meat
	Jackfruit ( <i>Artocarpus integrifolia</i> )	Cow's milk
	Pumpkins	Sweet potato ( <i>Batata edulis</i> )
	Cucumbers	Taro ( <i>Colocasia</i> )
	Melons	Yams ( <i>Dioscorea</i> )
	Aligator-pear ( <i>Persea</i> )	
	Jambu ( <i>Eugenia aquea</i> )	
	Milk of buffaloes	

The last group comprises all those fruits and eatables which are not considered as disadvantageous and which may be consumed by anybody without harm. Particularly the following are avoided: the banana species ana-mula whose big fruits are said to produce excessive heat, and the banana species ratu-mal, polu, and kali-gutu, whose fruits, however delectable, are believed to have an extreme cooling effect. For these reasons, they are generally not cultivated and it is said that only the very poor eat them on account of their low price, while they are rejected by other people.

The main rule is, not to eat cold fruit after bathing, because they cool the body down too much. Sweet potatoes, soursop, grapes, and imported apples also cause strong cooling. Concerning the last-mentioned two, one might suspect a prejudice against foreign products, because they do not grow in the country, but are only known as imported goods; this would not explain, however, the aversion against

the soursop which is everywhere common. You will never find this fruit on the markets; it is generally refused for its extremely cooling effects and because it is said to produce stomach-aches. The jackfruit also has extremely cooling consequences and is therefore never given to children. These and other fruits are seldom allowed to ripen; they are, however, consumed unripe, cooked as vegetables or as curry.

This classification of fruits and food into hot and cold sounds all the more strange, when it is realised that, ice cream, for example, is grouped among the foods which produce heat and which must therefore only be taken with the utmost care. Thus, it is not the temperature in itself which suggests the classification of hot and cold, heating and cooling, but the internal warmth or coldness produced by the consumption of a certain food, the warmth which the body receives or loses, and the damage which results in the organism. There may well be a grain of truth in the idea, but it is equally certain that the value attributed to the heating or cooling effects of the different foods and stimulants, is greatly exaggerated.

The same conception is to be seen in the over-anxiety concerning bathing (pouring water over the body). So, for instance, one must not bathe during the noon-hour, since the strong cooling down of the body at the hottest time of the day is also believed to produce detrimental results.

Speaking now about the idea of the heating and cooling off in a metaphysical sense: When a house is haunted by yakku and prēto, it is thought to be hot and must be cooled off; in the same way, people who are menaced by evil spirits or *vas-dōs*, must undergo a cooling ceremony. Any conjuring or offering ritual, as well as the sprinkling with yellow-root water, is supposed to be cooling. The conception of cooling (*sisil*) is identical with purifying, whereas a malicious action or spell is considered as a heating process<sup>1</sup>. The place where a kodivina has been buried, is distinguished by the increased warmth (*kūtaka*) of the soil; after the kodivina has been detected, the ground must be cooled down (*sihil*) either by sprinkling it with yellow-root water or by the fresh warm blood of a sacrificed cock. The same holds for the spot where a murder has been committed. Falling ill, also, is equal to becoming hot with fever, and moderate cooling and sprinkling with yellow-root water brings recovery.

### OMENS

The Sinhalese attributes great significance to the calls of certain animals and to other distinct occurrences. He is used to considering them as good or evil omens.

When dogs begin to howl at night, or cats make a noise, it is a sign that the yakku are in the neighbourhood; the belief is generally that dogs and cats can see the spirits.

<sup>1</sup> For this reason, mantra directed towards the deities in cases of illness are prayers for coolness (cf. 214, 224).



When a *kanakoka*, a certain crane, lets its cry be heard, it is a bad omen, and it is thought that a member of the household will die. When one of these birds flies over the house, it means death for one of the occupants. When a person is angry with somebody and wants to curse him, he will say: "*Kanakoka andola umbati*", i.e. "the *kanakoka* has come for you".

Similarly, it is a token of imminent death for a person in the vicinity, if the call of an owl (*bassā*) is heard. If a crow dirties the soles of a person's feet while he is kneeling on the ground by a *bō*-tree to perform his prayers, this individual will die.

If two snakes, *varan* lizards, or *gekkos* are seen copulating in a house or near it, it is a bad foreboding for those who are living there, and a *gara-yakuma*-ceremony must be observed to ward off bad luck (cf. p. 128 ff.). This is the case particularly when a pregnant woman is in the house.

When a *bhikshu* is the first person whom you meet upon leaving your home, it is a warning and you had better turn back. If, however, the first you see is a woman with a pitcher of water, it is a prosperous sign. A pot of water is presented, for instance, on occasion of a wedding and is supposed to bring good luck.

Another bad omen is when one meets in the early morning a woman with an empty basket or vessel, or a woman carrying coal. The former indicates that one will suffer from want, and the latter that one's house will be burned down. It is dangerous if the salt barrel is found completely empty, so that it should never be allowed to get as far as that without directly taking care that it is filled again.

When the *pollichchā* cries (a small bird with black and white plumage, *Copsychus saularis*), people believe that it summons the *Sūniya-yakka*, because its call resembles the whistling of the *ḍura* on his bamboo flute. When this bird is seen near a house, it must be scared away, because its piping might allure the dreaded *yakka*.

When the hearth (*lipa*) collapses while the fire is on to boil rice, it is an evil omen and misfortune will come to the inhabitants of the house.

When, upon leaving your home, the first thing you meet is a funeral procession, it is a very unfavourable token and it is better to turn back at once.

When mushrooms suddenly make their appearance in the house or close by, it is a bad sign. It is connected with evil talk (*kathā-vaha*), or interpreted as an indication that someone fosters ill-will against you. The appropriate procedure in this case is the performance of a *gara-yakuma*, a *dēvol-madua*, or a *sūniyama*-ceremony, in order to counteract the bad influences.

The following things must on no account be done:

Cutting the finger nails or hair inside the house; neither must hair which has been cut off be left lying around so as to be seen. One must not sit on the threshold and never may one step over a person sitting or lying on the ground. Nothing that can act so as to decrease or injure the mental powers of oneself or of another.

The utmost importance is ascribed to the breaking in two of a coconut and the manner in which the two halves fall to the ground foretells imminent happenings

and occurrences. As a rule, a coconut is cut through at an exorcism ritual in order to see whether or not the ceremony will be successful, i.e. whether the patient is going to recover or not (cf. p. 78).

## SEXUAL LIFE OF THE SINHALESE

### PUBERTY-CEREMONY FOR GIRLS

The appearance of menstruation is always cause for a particular ceremony, called *lokuna* (grown up) or *mal-varauna* (opening blossom). In the district of Colombo the expression *kotoluna* is generally used, which means the same as *lokuna*.

As soon as the bleeding sets in, the wife of the wash-man is sent for. She takes the blood-stained cloth away from the girl and gives her a clean one. The old cloth remains the woman's property and she is further presented with a piece of the girl's finery, such as a ring, a bracelet, or an ear-ring, in addition to a pot and three earthen dishes, a measure, and a reward of fifty cents. The woman anoints the girl's hair with oil (*nanu ganavā*), puts a coconut flower into the pot and moves the vessel three times in a circle above the girl's head.

Next the girl is led into a room of the house where she remains secluded for one or two weeks with only the company of an old woman of the family. This relative also serves her food. Meat, fish, eggs, and baked things are prohibited during this time.

The *sāstra-kariya* is summoned. He has to examine the horoscope and indicate the day for the purifying bath according to the horoscope and the *nekata* of the birthday. On the day of her bath, the girl is first taken to a tree having a milky juice (breadfruit-tree, papaya, rubber-tree) and there, her mother or her mother's sister pours a pot of water over her head (*isa-diyāta* = head water). From there, they go to the bathing-place where the bath is taken.

In the meantime, all the girl's relations have assembled in the house. The moment she enters, the mother's brother breaks a coconut on the threshold. The manner in which the two halves fall down is examined with regard to the girl's future. If the inside parts of both halves point up, it is considered as a very good omen; the girl will be spared from diseases and lead a very happy married life. If, however, both parts fall with their openings downwards, or the female half with its inside up and the male one face down, it is a bad sign; it means that in her marriage she will have the upper hand<sup>1</sup>. But if the male half of the nut lies upward, and the female one points down, it is regarded as propitious for, in this case, the man will be the stronger partner in the marriage, which is as it ought to be according to Sinhalese and Indian ideas.

After this ritual, the mother or her sister brings an oil-lamp of brass with a star-shaped opening for the wicks (*pitala*), and lights a certain number of wicks in

<sup>1</sup> Sometimes the breaking of one or even two coconuts is first performed during the wedding, i.e. before and after the thumbs of the couple being married are tied together.



accordance with the *nēkata*. The burning lamp is moved three times around the girl's head; then, she takes it herself and carries it into another room of the house where it is left burning.

Now, the girl is presented with gifts, such as ornaments, sari, or even money, from her nearest relatives.

A new horoscope with reference to the day and hour of the beginning of the menses, has to be calculated by the *sāstra-kariya* and is used in place of the birth-horoscope. It is called "*magul kili nēkata kēndra*". From now on it is authoritative, and it is consulted on every important occasion, especially marriage.

#### MARRIAGE

The Dutch law which still prevails on Ceylon, allows a girl to marry from the sixteenth year of her life, a man from his twenty-first year; the wedding must always be performed before the registrar.

According to the old Indian custom, the parents decide which girl their son has to take as his wife. This question is generally settled early on, and the children usually comply with their parents' decision without opposition. Now and then, there are, of course, exceptions to the rule: secret love affairs which frequently end in the carrying-off of the girl and the flight of the loving couple to another village, do occur. Such conduct naturally raises a lot of commotion among the relations and acquaintances, so that the newly-weds would find it difficult to continue living in their own village amidst all the suspicion and gossip.

About a girl who runs away with her lover, it is said: "*muna deligāva deman-pianga*", "she smears her parents' cheeks with soot", or in other words, she brings disgrace on her family. Such a girl had better never more set her foot in her own village and in such cases there is no question of a dowry.

Actually, a girl's dowry is of the greatest importance at her betrothal and her marriage. Another point is the belonging to different castes. It is generally regarded as improper if a young man marries a girl from a lower caste. When it does happen, one may be certain that it has not been brought about by the choice of the parents, but that the young couple have had their own way against that of their parents.

When parents want a wife for their son, they first of all look around in the neighbourhood. Usually, an elderly friend of the family is entrusted with going into the preliminaries with the girl's parents, and particularly with finding out what dowry she will bring to the marriage; he also has to enquire about jewelry and property, which may be considerable. There are also the so-called "*māgul kapuā*", people who occupy themselves especially with match-making, collecting their corresponding reward from both sides.

If a young man has a secret affection for a girl (*hora yanova*) <sup>1</sup>, he also generally

<sup>1</sup> In the district of Ambalangoda, the expression "*kadenovā*" is also used.

asks the māgul kapuā to arrange matters for him, i.e. to lay the subject before both the girl's and his own father, as in most cases he has not the courage to do it himself. A lad will never speak to his parents about his love for a girl, nor will a girl either. Thus, the māgul kapuā not only plays the rôle of a professional match-maker, but also takes the place of a friend and adviser, the most intimate secrets being entrusted to him.

Every family has for generations past had to do with the same family of match-makers and these mediators form quite a characteristic institution, also in India. A good match-maker is in a position to enumerate all the illnesses of a family, his clients, as far back as the most ancient ancestors. This ability and knowledge is handed down from father to son. These remarkable people hide an exceptional cunning behind a sort of comicality.

The girl's inner qualities, her personal inclinations and abilities are considered as of much less importance than the question of the dowry and her parents' pecuniary circumstances. In the first place, marriage is a business, at least in the eyes of the bridegroom's parents, and neither his own nor the girl's opinion or sentiments are given much consideration.

After the māgul kapuā has made the necessary investigations, a meeting is arranged between the parents of the young people. A sāstra-kariya is appointed to compare the two horoscopes with one another (porodambalua = comparison of the horoscopes). The most favourable is, of course, when the stars under which the prospective bride and bridegroom were born, agree with each other. Particularly the girl's horoscope is subjected to a close examination. It is scrutinized as to her health, her ability to bear children, and to the chance of her being exposed to unfavourable planetary influences, and so on. According to the circumstances, it may be decided to defer the marriage for a time or even to drop the whole project completely. If one or both horoscopes appear unfavourable in the immediate future, it is understood that the respective party, or if necessary the two of them, will undergo a ceremony in order to ward off the evil influences of the yakku, pr̥teo, or planets. When, however, no hindrance is found, the two families pay each other visits and return visits, and the bridegroom now has the opportunity of seeing the girl. At the same time, the dowry is definitely settled. When the state of affairs has reached the point that the marriage appears definite, the engagement is made public, which means that the wedding must take place within the next three months. Also, on the day of betrothal, part of the dowry is paid over. The ancient Indian custom, which still rules in the old conservative Sinhalese society, demands that bridegroom and bride see one another for the first time on this day. At this occasion, the girl hands her future husband a ring, while the fiancé presents her with a silver or gold necklace. Besides, the young man's parents bring sweets (bandēsi) with them.

Now, the sāstra-kariya appoints a day for the nuptials. Again the two horoscopes must be consulted, for care must be taken that the wedding is not celebrated on



an unfavourable day for either of the partners. Following an old usage, a little bower (*porua*) of coloured paper is made on the wedding day, generally in one of the more spacious rooms of the house or else under a protective roof which has been constructed in the open air for the solemnities. In it, the young couple sit down. The brother of the girl's mother ties the right thumb of the bridegroom to the left one of the bride with a white thread and covers the pair with a white cloth. A few drops of yellow-root water are poured on to the joined hands from a little earthenware pot, while children of the family recite poems (*yāya mangalangata*). Then, a banquet is served for which, nowadays, a big wedding cake is baked, following the English custom.

On this day the second instalment of the dowry is paid to the father of the young man who generally at once passes part of it over to his newly married son. The brother of the girl's mother likewise receives a number of gifts from the bridegroom. The usual objects are a box for betel, a pair of areca-scissors, a tortoise-shell comb, a loincloth of fine wool, a silk towel, and some cash (about ten rupees).

On the third day after the wedding, the "showing of the blood-stained cloth" takes place. On that day, the parents of the newly-weds come together once more, and the wife of the wash-man is secretly ordered to inspect the bloody cloth. Without wasting a word about the matter, this woman puts a half-peeled banana in the middle of the table as a token that all is in order, i.e. that the defloration has occurred normally. If such a banana is not seen on the table, it means that no blood has been found on the cloth. Discussions ensue, and in former times the consequence was that the dowry had to be returned and the marriage was revoked. This is nowadays no longer possible; people therefore let the matter rest with their discussions and resign themselves to the fact. If everything has been found in order, the match-maker is now paid his reward by the two parties, the amount of which is determined by the financial circumstances of each family; in the other case, he foregoes the bridegroom's part.

#### PREGNANCY, BIRTH, AND BABY-CARE

It is regarded as a great disgrace if an unmarried girl becomes pregnant; this is called "*horota bad vela*", "clandestine pregnancy". The girl is well aware what she has to expect from her relations and the other villagers, and will try every possible means to stop her pregnancy at an early stage and procure an abortion (*andura*). There are a number of remedies known which may be successful when administered in time, but which will do considerable harm if applied too late or improperly. Among the inoffensive means are young unripe pineapples (*anasi-gēta*) and young pumpkins (*puhul-gēta*) which must be eaten raw; to the dangerous ones belong the manga-like fruit of a tree growing in the lowlands called *kaduru*, which produce an absolutely deadly effect when consumed in large quantities.

Now and then, an *edura* is consulted who knows the pertinent mantra. It occurs not infrequently in Ceylon that a girl who is expecting commits suicide by eating



the poisonous kaduru-fruit; for a girl with an illegitimate child certainly has no easy life. Wherever she goes, she will be exposed to disrepute and her child will for the whole of its life be branded because of its parents' guilt. Especially in this respect, the Sinhalese are very narrow-minded.

If difficulties occur during the delivery, the *ḍura* is called in order to utter mantra or to perform a little ceremony. He first tries to help by reciting appropriate mantra, or with the "*dēhi kēpīma*", or merely by administering holy water to the woman in labour (*vatura maturala bona* = water, charmed, drink). He may also draw a yantra on the leaf of an alu-kehel-banana (ash banana) and put it under her back, or anoint the woman's body with holy oil (*tēl maturala bada ganava* = oil, charmed, anoint the belly), or put a betel-leaf under a spell (*bulat kola maturala*) and place it on the woman's gavel. If the child still does not appear soon, the *ḍura* tears the leaf in pieces and flings it on the floor at the feet of the woman. A piece of the horn of a rhinoceros (*kangavena anga*), powdered, dissolved in water, and put under a charm, yields a potion for women in labour which cannot fail to produce results, even if the child should be still-born. This remedy, however, is hard to procure and hence very expensive, so that only rich people can afford it.

In the case of a miscarriage, a coconut-flower is ground into a fine powder and soaked in water and then given to the woman to drink; it is believed to possess purifying qualities for pregnant women. Another purifying drink is the milk of a red coconut.

One of my informants gave me the following detailed statement:

When a pregnant woman feels that her time is near, she sends for the midwife (*dā-amma* or *minapu-amma*). This person helps to deliver the baby and lays it on a clean cloth; then she continues to lend assistance to the mother until the after-birth (*ved-amma*) has appeared. Should this be delayed, she stuffs a clump of hair into the mouth of the woman to produce nausea which is supposed to drive it out. Then, the umbilical cord (*pekani-vella*; *vella* also means creeping plant) is cut through with a knife or scissors so that the piece remaining attached to the child's body is long enough to come up to its nose. The midwife takes this part of the cord between her thumb and forefinger and strokes gently along it towards the child's navel. Then, she folds the ends of the cord and ties it tightly with a thread. The region around the navel is finally anointed with a mixture of coconut oil and of dried burnt and powdered *goraku*-fruit (*Garcinia combogia*). The afterbirth and the cut-off piece of the cord are buried in the ground at some distance from the house; the hole must be deep enough to prevent their being eaten by pigs, dogs, or varans, otherwise the child will cut his teeth very late.

The child is washed in clean lukewarm water and rubbed dry. Then a female relation or acquaintance expresses a little of her milk into a small bowl and a gold ornament is dipped or laid in it. A few drops of this milk, which is therefore called "*rankiri*", i.e. gold-milk, are now dropped into the baby's mouth and a few grains of boiled rice are pushed between its lips. A few hairs are cut from the new-born's



head, wrapped in a little piece of white cloth, and kept during the first three months of its life. At the end of that time, the child's father or another of its relatives takes these hairs with him across a river or a lake and on his way back throws them into the water.

When the delivery is finished, the midwife passes the child over to one of its relations, generally the father, and is rewarded by him with a gratuity of from two to ten rupees, according to the circumstances. The child is then laid by its mother, but must not be nursed by her during the first three days of its life, because it might fall ill. The mother must squeeze her milk into a bowl and throw it against the wall. If the baby drinks its mother's milk in the course of these days, he is in danger of being afflicted with convulsions (*valipu*), rash (*hori*), milk-thrush (*ullegan*), or ulcers on his legs (*lē-rata*). A woman of the family or of the neighbourhood, therefore, takes it upon herself to nurse it during this time.

The mother is for the first three days not allowed to take any food other than rice-water (*kanji*) and a decoction of leaves of the kohomba-tree (*Azadirachta indica*) called *kayangābadi*. She must continue drinking the latter for at least a fortnight, or better still for a whole month. During the first days, she also has to take powdered ginger, one teaspoonful at a time, which she washes down with some water. Immediately after the delivery, she must swallow a considerable quantity of ginger-juice with kohomba oil in order to speed her recovery.

After three days, the baby's eyes are dabbed with *anduna*, so that they are made clean and eye diseases are prevented.

If the infant cries too much and suffers from indigestion, or if anything else is wrong, the *ḍura* is called to perform a *Bāla-giri tovilē* (see p. 96 ff.), a ceremony for which a figure of boiled rice must be made. In addition, five needles of an alloy of five different metals are ordered at the goldsmith's, put under a charm by the *ḍura*, and laid under the child. Then, an offering of five kinds of flowers is arranged for the *Bāla-giri-yakkiniyo*, and a string (*kahā-nūla*) which has been dyed with yellow-root water to the recitation of mantra, is tied about the little one's neck. After the ceremony, the rice-figure and the offering are carried off to the bush.

As has already been stated in one of the former chapters, a child is, from the third month to its eighteenth year, subject to the influence of one or other of the *giri-yakkiniyo*, each of whom demands her particular offering. However, the case, just described represents a quite general ceremony.

If the child is afflicted with rash (milk-crust), the ailment is traced back to the evil eye (*ḍe-vaha*) or to evil tongues (*kathā-vaha*). Again the *ḍura* is consulted and a "*ṭemili gejah matrima*" (literally: place a charm on a king-coconut) is carried out. This little ceremony must be observed only in the forenoon of a Tuesday or a Sunday and requires the following objects: a young king-coconut (*ṭemili*), seven twigs of different kinds of lemons and oranges with their leaves, five kinds of seeds (rice, peas, beans, lentils, and sesame).

The ritual begins with the uttering of mantra, while the *ḍura* holds the opened coconut in his hand. Then, he throws the five kinds of seed into the nut, stirs the liquid, and administers a few drops of it to the child three times. After the child has drunk, its head is sprinkled with the rest of the water, also three times.

This ceremony is repeated the same evening and once more the following morning, in the presence of the family. Then, the lemon and orange twigs are put into the coconut and from time to time inspected to see whether the leaves are withering and losing their colour. If this occurs within the next twenty-four hours, it is a bad omen for the child; if otherwise, it is a good sign indicating early recovery.

A few days after the child's birth, the father sends for the astrologer (*kendra-kariya*) to have the "velapat kāda", the first, provisional horoscope, cast; this velapat kāda fulfils more or less the function of a birth certificate and testifies as to the day and hour of the birth and the corresponding positions of the planets. Its price is twenty-five or fifty cents. The real and definite horoscope (*kendra*) is only cast after the child has completed his tenth year, and then the astrologer charges one rupee for it.

The *kendra-kariya* will also appoint a favourable day, in accordance with the *neḱata*, on which the child may for the first time be taken out of doors into the sun. He will also fix the date on which the mother is first allowed to leave the house again. These first airings are called "ira pennana", i.e. exposure to the sun, or "tanniyarima". Before this day, the woman in childbed is not allowed to receive visits by strangers, nor must she be left alone. Some one of her relations must always be near to attend to her. But from the day she is allowed to go out again, she needs no further nursing.

When the *kendra-kariya* returns with the velapat kāda, he mentions to the parents four or five letters which are connected with the child's moon-house (*neḱata*). According to these letters, the parents can determine the child's name by selecting one of them as the initial for the name. The child retains this name for his whole life; only boys may change theirs, should they later on enter a monastery and be ordained.

#### SEXUAL ABERRATIONS

Looking over the various aberrations and anomalies of the sexual life of the Sinhalese, we are far from finding the kaleidoscopic multiplicity which we come across in India or in any other country of the Near East.

As to prostitution, it has, even in former times, never assumed as large an extent as has been the case ever since in neighbouring India. For several decades past, it has been generally suppressed by the government. A prostitute, caught at exercising her profession, is imprisoned for between a few weeks and several months. For this reason, prostitution, in the reduced degree to which it still occurs at all, is carried out only in secret. In former times, there were, just as in India, distinct



castes from which the prostitutes were recruited. They were the Hakuru in the district of Karadeniya and the Goigama near Kandy. The casteless Rodiya from the environs of Ratnapura had a particularly bad reputation in this respect, which is still alive to-day.

The custom of offering one's wife for the night to a friend or perhaps even to a stranger who enjoyed the hospitality of the house appears to have been quite common, as Robert Knox describes in detail in his well-known book. It was equally conventional that a woman was more or less the property of her husband's brothers who even took his place in his absence.

It seems that paederasty is rather more widely spread on Ceylon than prostitution; at least, this may be inferred from the fact that a great number of expressions and euphemisms for this vice are in circulation. "Eluyā maranova", i.e. to kill the goat, "beli 'kanova", i.e. to eat crab-apples, "kakul gahanavā" and "kalava gahanavā", i.e. to punish the thighs or the buttocks, are a few of the most frequent in use. It is an undeniable fact that the monasticism on Ceylon, as in Burma and other Buddhist countries, has definitely tended to promote the occurrence of paederasty. Over and over again, it is maintained that only very few bhikshu really live in chastity and it is even asserted that there are not more than two or three in a thousand. This appears to be decidedly exaggerated, for there are a great many bhikshu who observe strict seclusion and solitude. But the situation is much worse in the larger monasteries and it is a quite common occurrence that older, and sometimes also younger, bhikshu keep boys ostensibly as their servants, whom they occasionally also instruct, while their real purpose is quite another one. One speaks of "pansala sudūva", "temple diversions", and everybody knows what is meant. But it is evidently difficult for an outsider to discern the true state of affairs and to obtain an idea of things as they really are. Reliable sources informed me that paederasty is also wide-spread in schools. It is quite common that a teacher has a favourite pupil whom he prefers to the other ones and whom, if circumstances allow, he also takes home with him or who accompanies him on excursions, etc. These things are not hidden from the public eye as much as one would suppose; one can see often enough a teacher sitting with his favourite pupil in the theatre or cinema.

Considerably less common is Lesbianism, which is known by the name "bāt valan gahanavā", i.e. to punish the rice-pot.

Still less frequent are reports of bestiality; I heard of only one case of this kind. A half-grown lad had attempted intercourse with a cow; when his doings became public, he ran away to another village in order to escape derision and infamy and did not return until five years later when the affair had meanwhile fallen into oblivion.

Likewise, masturbation is not at all so prevalent as one would think and is by no means the rule, even among young men. It is called "ata gahanavā" (ata = hand), the person practising it being ridiculed as an "āyā", i.e. nurse-maid.

Other kinds of unnatural self-satisfaction, also those of a harmless type, are, however, hardly known even by name among the Sinhalese. Scarcely a trace is found on Ceylon of that highly elaborated erotic style which developed in the middle ages in India, Persia, and particularly in the Near East. Neither are erotic systems known on Ceylon comparable to the "Kama sūtra", nor pornographic literature or pictures, nor representations of sexual intercourse such as are to be seen everywhere in South Indian temples and which are equally common on Java and Bali. It is rather strange to find that the Sinhalese are, to all appearances, so entirely different in this respect from their neighbours on the mainland and from the peoples on the islands to the south and east. Sexual life is, on the whole, an entirely private and intimate sphere for them. Even the Sinhalese vocabulary knows very few indecent and obscene expressions, and the impression one receives is that, in spite of various vices, they are accustomed to a dignified reticence and to avoid equivocal language. As a matter of fact, sexual inclinations do not seem to be very strongly developed in the Sinhalese race and this circumstance may explain the infrequency of sexual crimes, rape, and incest. If a girl or woman is violated while working in the plantation or on any other occasion, the offended father or husband will only seldom nowadays personally attack the evil-doer with his hatchet or some other weapon, as he would doubtlessly have done in former times; instead, he will in all secrecy proceed against the culprit with the aid of a *kodivina* which, in any case, involves the least amount of risk to him self. Actually, the *ḍura* to-day still finds a wide field for his activity in this line; in cases of illness, however, people are more and more applying to the qualified medical doctor, rather than consulting the *ḍura* and *bandhanaya*, on whose ways and doings modern emancipated and enlightened circles are already looking down with only a derisive smile.

#### LOVE-CHARMS (VASAYA-GURUKAMA)

In a former chapter (p. 224), we made acquaintance with a yantra which helps to obtain the love of a girl. There exists, however, another love-charm, called *vayasa-gurukama*, which is more complicated and whose performance requires an *anduna*. Among the different recipes for its production the so-called *bebēd badu* is the most frequently employed. It consists of the following things:

Kokuru-mal rēnu, dried stamens of flowers of the sandalwood-tree

\* Kastūri, musk

Maina-pita, the bile of the maina-bird (*Acridotheres melanosternus*)

Görōchana, a bezoar from the stomach of the zebu-bull.

These ingredients are rubbed up with some melted butter (*elingi-tēl*); the resulting "ointment" is placed on a *mal-bulat-putuva* and put under a spell to endow it with the desired power (*jivan karnova*). This done, the mass is ignited and the soot is caught on a piece of a banana-stem which is held over the flame. This soot is then carefully scraped off again with a knife and mixed into a thin



salve with a little oil obtained from a coconut with a red shell. An appropriate mantra, the so-called "*vāta-kumāra*", must be uttered one hundred and eight times over the product thus obtained to invoke the *Vāta-kumāra*. The anduna is then ready for use.

The individual who wants to apply it must beforehand add a drop of blood from the little finger of his right hand. Then, as soon as an opportunity offers, he flings a little bit of this anduna unnoticed into the face of the girl whose love he desires. Before a week has passed the girl will be inflamed with passion for him and will be his without any further effort on his part.

If, on the other hand, a girl wants to gain the love of a man, she can make use of the same anduna but must first mix it with a drop of blood from her left thumb.

Another anduna, the so-called "*pāncha māla vayasava anduna*", is obtained by the following procedure: A ripe coconut with a red shell is carefully plucked so as not to fall to the ground. The liquid it contains is poured into a new unused little pot, together with the oil which is pressed out of the grated kernel. The contents of the pot are boiled until all the oil has separated from the water. Then, the pot with the oil is carried to the grave-yard. Furthermore, the umbilical cords of a boy and of a girl must be procured, tied together, and soaked in the oil. They are then burnt and the soot is collected on a plate held over the flame. A *mal-bulat-putuva* is constructed and the anduna, which has been made in the above way, is put under a spell with a mantra which must be recited one hundred and eight times (*jivan karnova*). All this must be carried out in the cemetery. Finally, the anduna is, as usual, kept in a small box of buffalo-horn. The application of this anduna is carried out as follows: some ear-wax, some sweat, some faeces, some spittle, and a little drop of blood from the big toe of the right foot are mixed with a small quantity of the anduna. The mixture is smeared on a strip of a coconut-leaf and stealthily wiped on the girl whose affection is desired. This anduna is called "*pāncha māla vayasava*" on account of the five corporeal substances it contains.

#### *The "kalava-bandhima"*

There is, as we have seen, a counter-charm for each spell, one whose effect is just the opposite of that of the other one. The opposite to the love-spell about which we have just spoken is called "*kalava-bandhima*", i.e. tying of the thighs. It is generally executed by some jealous lover whom his girl has neglected in favour of a rival. The spell is intended to disconcert the mutual affection of the newly-wedded couple and to render the bridegroom incapable of performing the sex act.

The ritual is performed as follows: Two figures, characterized by an indication of their genitals as man and woman, are engraved with a sharp instrument on a piece of the outer rind of a red coconut (*temili*) in such a way as to be drawn in two opposite directions (cf. fig. 53). Then, a leech (*diya kudulla*) must be procured and three needles (*katu*) of three different metals. The leech is then fixed

to the coconut rind with the aid of the three needles, across the two drawings so that the needles stab the figures in the genitals. A *mal-bulat-putuva* is erected and the coconut rind with the leech placed on top, perfumed, and put under a spell (*jivan karnova*). Thereupon, it is hidden in the ground in front of the home of the young couple so that they pass over it without knowing. Within a short time, discord will arise between them and the man will be unable to cohabit; this state will last as long as the *kodivina* has not been found and destroyed. Besides the matrimonial discord and the psychic depression, it may even, if continued for long enough, result in serious disturbance and finally lead to suicide.

#### ATTITUDE TOWARDS NAKEDNESS

Only young children are allowed to show themselves naked. Boys are expected to cover their private parts when they are six or seven years old, girls a year or two earlier. Only when bathing in the river or the sea may they appear unclothed for a longer time without anybody taking offence, but even here not after they have reached the age of puberty. One will never see a half-grown lad or a man bathing wholly nude, much less a girl or a woman. To be sure for the male sex, the scantiest little piece of cloth suffices, whereas girls or women simply pour water over their bodies while dressed in their loincloths which are fixed above the breast. Only children are accustomed to bathing as we do, never a grown-up person. The same slight bit of cloth which hardly covers anything, is also sufficient for the farm labourer or the coolie who is employed on road-making or other work of that kind and nobody will ever object to this most incomplete clothing. On the other hand, it is regarded as highly indecent if a woman leaves the upper half of her body bare. It is only in very remote jungle villages that half-clothed women and girls are still seen occasionally and, up to a short time ago, it was also quite common among the *Rodiyas*. Formerly, under the Sinhalese kings, the *Rodiyas* were not allowed to cover the upper half of their bodies at all.

The Sinhalese woman wears a tight-fitting white jacket, and the Tamil woman, not being accustomed to it, is satisfied as they are in South India, with a cloth which is generally red in colour. It is long enough to serve at the same time as a loincloth and as a covering for the body, and is adjusted so as to leave bare the arms and part of the back. In this picturesque apparel, women and girls can be seen working in the tea- and rubber-plantations in all parts of Ceylon.



A Summary of the different forms of illness, the causes and the means of counteracting them

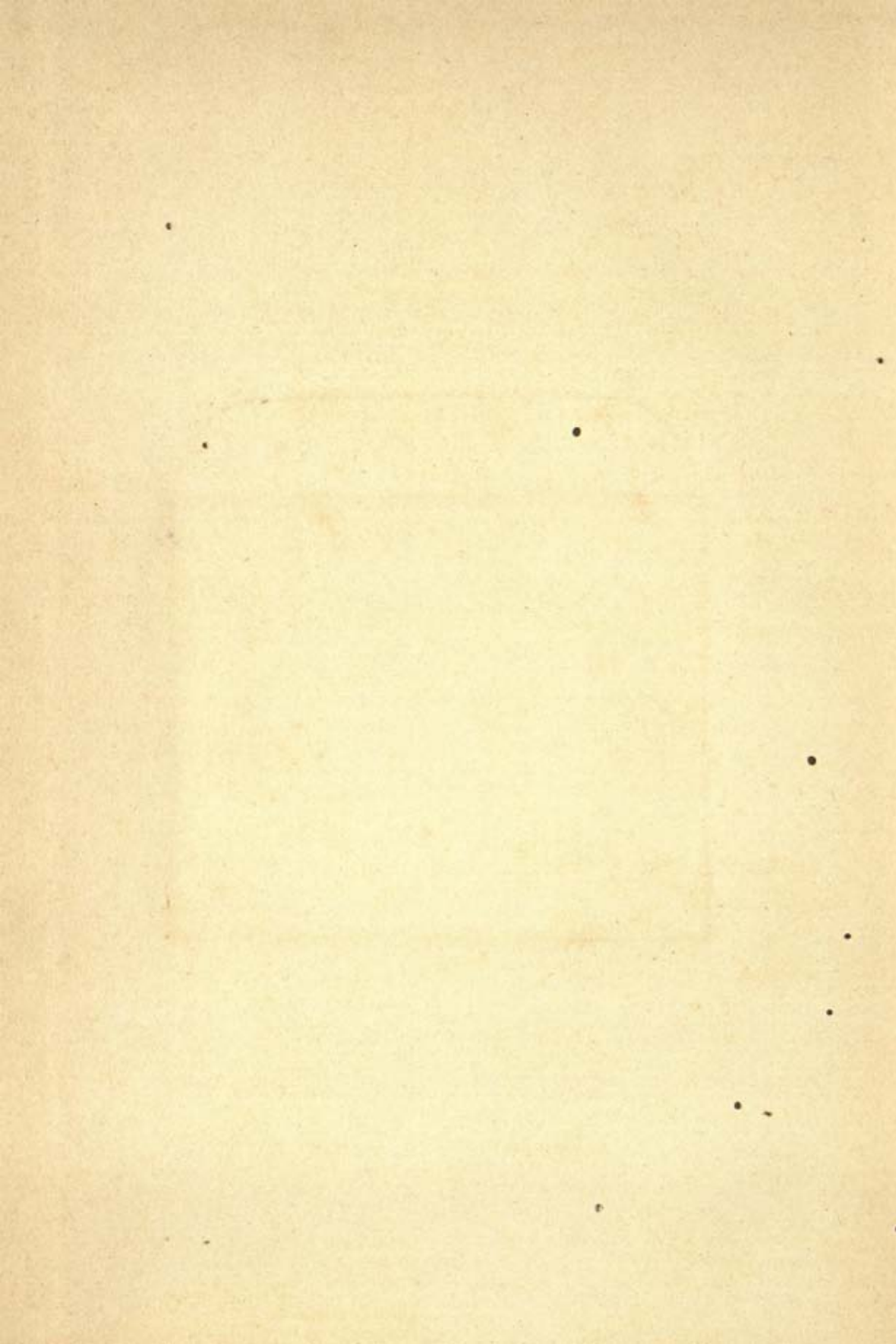
Form of illness	Diagnosis made by the	Cause of the illness	Treatment by the	The ceremony to be held (tovilē)
saririka-rōga manasika-rōga angantuka-rōga sahāya-rōga	vedarāla	natural	vedarāla	
ummāda-rōga	ganitaya (astrologer) sāstra-kariya (soothsayer) añjanan-kariya (clairvoyant) ḍūra (exorcist) bandhanaya (devil-charmer) kapuā (peoples' priest) in cases of plagues and epidemics	yakku and prṛteo yakku and prṛteo yakku yakku Kalu-kumāra yakku and kodivina Vanda-bisavun Madana-yakka Bāla-giri Grahaniya-yakkini prṛteo Gara-yakka (authorized by the gods) grahaya and yakku grahaya yakku (authorized by the gods)	ḍūra ḍūra ḍūra ḍūra ḍūra ḍūra ḍūra ḍūra ḍūra bandhanaya bandhanaya santi-kariya kapuā      kapuā kapuā	nūla-bandhina and ava-mangala-nūla tel-matrima santiya-yakuma iramudun-pidenna Kalu-kumara-pidenna sūniyama rata-yakuma kūtaka-samayāma Bāla-giri-tovilē grahaniya-yakkini-tovilē prṛta-pidenna Gara-yakuma  baliya santiya, sōma-santiya dēva-dane, dēvol-madua, pam-madua, gam-madua, and in cases of epidemics or a prophylactic the games in honour of Patini-dēvi: pol-grahanavā, an- keliya, li-keliya dēhi-kepīma kudā-yākuma



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- Further references to the literature concerning Ceylon and the Sinhalese in particular are to be found in the above-mentioned book by Trautz.





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