

Buddhist monastic architecture in ancient Sri Lanka designed to fit spiritual development

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The objective of this research paper is to highlight the religious utility of Buddhist monastic architecture in ancient Sri Lanka which was typically planned to fit spiritual development. Buddhist Monastic setting and planning in ancient Sri Lanka seem to be a particular subject which supported spiritual development. Though a considerable amount of research work has been done on this subject, there is a need for a supplementary study on typical setting and design of monasteries fit for spiritual development of monks. The aim of this study is to complete this shortcoming.

The research methodology of the study is based on the data collected from literary and archaeological information involving library research and field study. The collected data will be analyzed and compared with the literary evidences.

Hypothetically, it seems that residences of monks in ancient Sri Lanka were built to suit the spiritual development of meditators. In the field of Asian architecture, Buddhist monasteries were planned and setup to facilitate mental development. They are not only symbolic but are also representative of the inner lives of monks who lived in these monasteries. Designing of buildings for monks fosters the attainment of the ultimate goal in Buddhism. These plans reflect inner life of monks. The Papanca[^]dani and the Visuddhimagga consist of the following types of monasteries which were recommended by the Buddha. They are *lenani* or abodes allowed for monks: *Vihara, Addayoga, Pasada, Hammiyam, Guha, Lena, Kuti, Kutagara, Mala, Upatthanasala*. In this study these types of plans will be closely examined.