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WAY OF PRACTICE OF BUDDHISM AND BUDDHIST RELIGIOUS ARCHITECTURE

AN ANALYTICAL STUDY OF THE ARCHITECTURAL EXPRESSIONS, PRESENT IN THE BUDDHIST TEMPLE ENVIRONMENT, WHICH FACILITATE THE MODE OF BEHAVIOR (WAY OF PRACTICE) OF THE BUDDHIST DEVOTEE

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A Dissertation presented to the
Faculty of Architecture
Of the University of Moratuwa
For the M.Sc. (Architecture) examination

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M.Sc. (Architecture)
Session 2004/2005
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DECLARATION

I declare that this dissertation represents my own works , except where due acknowledgement is made and that it has not been previously included in a theses , dissertation or report submitted to this university or any other institution for a degree / diploma or other qualification.

UOM Verified Signature

.....
(E.G.L.M.E.Hewage)

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ABSTRACT

Art is considered as a medium of expression for human thoughts , desires , emotions and ideas. The signs and symbols act as the vehicle for the communication of the different expressions. In Architecture too , various signs and symbols are used to communicate ideas through Architectural expressions of the spaces and elements.

The expressions which evoke negative or wrong types of emotions create difficulties and uncomfortabilities in achieving required life goals of the human being mainly through their inability to indulge in the correct behavioral patterns.

It is essential to accommodate **appropriate Architectural expressions** in the built environment in order to facilitate the **correct behavioral patterns** of the user. This concept is illustrated by considering the **way of practice of Buddhism** of the Buddhist devotee in the setting of the temple environment.

The Buddhist religion is a disciplined way of life that progressively leads to the elevation of the mind. But it is so complex and comprehensive for the common man to understand. By understanding that the Buddha himself in the *'Parinibbana suttra'* had explained **a way of practice** for the uneducated common man in order to develop his/her mind for the understanding of the great philosophy , the Buddhism.

Through this way of practice , it is expected to develop *'Saddha'* , *'Sila'* and trust in Triple gem *(Buddha , Dhamma , and sangha)* among the mentality of the Buddhist devotee. These three achievements guide the devotee in understanding the deeper aspects of the philosophy , and finally to the extinction of all sufferings.

The way of practice of Buddhism leads to achieve above mentioned aspects through evoking the positive emotions like **formality , hierarchical consideration , faithfulness , truthfulness , respectfulness , obedience , awareness , consciousness , mental and physical purity.** But the way of practice alone cannot achieve this successfully , the temple environment which the devotee practice has a leading role.

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It is clear that the way of practice of Buddhism and the Buddhist religious Architecture go hand in hand in evoking the positive emotions among devotee mentality on the correct place at the correct time.

The appropriate expressive qualities which facilitate in evoking the identified emotions are Formality , Sacredness , Mystery , Dominance , Purity and Tranquility. These qualities can be identified as the major components of the primary expressive quality of the temple environment.

The temple environment achieves these appropriate expressive qualities through its Architectural planning arrangements , spaces , places and elements by being the facilitators in evoking the correct emotions among Buddhist devotee through the Way of practice of Buddhism.

The fact that the physical built environment is determined by the behavior of the human being is well illustrated by the various fashions and styles of built forms which appeared in consecutive time periods in the Architectural history.

The two types of processes between the built environment and the human behavior can be identified as a reciprocal process in which each one is interdependent on the other.

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Hence , Architecture is a process of concretizing suitable built environments to accommodate the human living patterns as well as required emotions and is a process of concretizing the human living patterns by the built forms , once built.