

**CRITICAL EXAMINATION OF CHANGING SPATIAL
CONCEPTS IN URBAN MONASTIC DEVELOPMENTS.**

**FROM ANURADHAPURA TO MODERN PERIOD WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO
ABAYAGIRI MONASTERY AND A MODERN DAY MONASTERY - PIRIVENA.**

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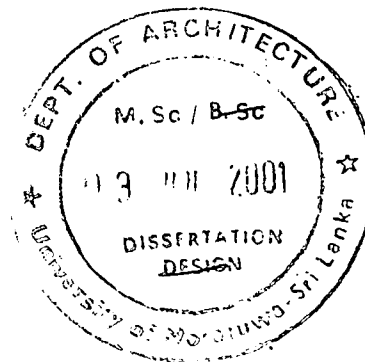
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KANCHANA S. NIMALASENA
FACULTY OF ARCHITECTURE
UNIVERSITY OF MORATUWA
SRI LANKA
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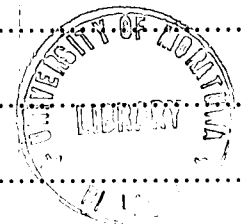


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PREFACE

This study is a result of an idea, which has been within me for some time. Intends, interest and enthusiasm that I felt for architectural and artistic characteristics of the ancient Sri Lankan monasteries.

The study will be benefited to understand the changing spatial concepts in urban Monastic developments from Anuradhapura period to modern period, such an attempt would provide a valuable source of information for the designers who will be involving in creating such places in the present day context.



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ABSTRACT

Architecture is considered as a form of art which makes a direct appeal to the best in the human being. Art communicates messages through the expressions produced by it. The expressions are created by individual elements, by an assembly of elements into built forms and by the spatial quality of the compositional forms involving several built forms as well as nature components.

Thus architecture of the built forms and the architectural planning of spaces, infuse an imperceptible quality into expressing, communicating and evoking ideas, moods and feelings in the user. These in turn affect their behavioural patterns.

Therefore the built environment should accommodate appropriate architectural expressions in order to facilitate the correct behavioural patterns of the user.

Buddhism advocates a discipline way of life that progressively leads to the perfection of the mind. Buddhist religious places are those that help precipitate the correct behavioural patterns in the user for the desired physical and mental development. Thus these places needed particular works of architecture and spatial planning to achieve its goal.

The environment, which facilitates correct physical and mental development maybe, defined as a Buddhist Environment.

The building called 'arama' which were used earlier purely for the monks' living purposes, became places of worship with some later additions such as the 'Dagaba', 'Bo-Tree', Soon after the Parinibbana (passing away) of the Buddha. With the increase in the monk community, some other buildings were also added such as Refectory, Janthagara(Medicinal Bath), Dining Halls etc. Such developed places were called Monasteries.

There are two categories of users of the Monastery, namely; the monks and the lay people. The Monastery facilitates the needs of both categories.

The architectural planning of spaces and the Built Forms of Buddhist Monasteries thus evolved to satisfy the basic needs of both groups namely mental and physical discipline. As taught by Buddha, a person is a combination of 'Nama' and 'Rupa' ('Nama'=mind, 'Rupa'=physical body) To discipline the mind first it is needed to discipline the body. One cannot be achieved without the other. The Buddhists achieve this in two ways; namely 'Amisa puja', 'Prathipatti puja'. 'Amisa puja' means concentrating on the good virtues of the Blessed one and offering flowers, lightning candles.etc to him in a disciplined pasture. 'Prathipatti puja' means the practice of the Dhamma, following the path laid by the Buddha, which involves meditation, learning Dhamma..etc. Both these facilities were provided in a Monastery.

This study is to examine the spatial concepts basically in lay out planning which were used in the early Monasteries of Sri Lanka and how with the change of time they changed reflecting the change in the quality of life enjoyed by the society.

In the first chapter a brief introduction to Buddhist Philosophy and its influence on the Buddhist built environment is given, together with definitions of the Monastery, its origin and the evolution satisfying the basic needs of the users, both the monks as well as the laity.

Second chapter analyses the beginning of Monasteries in Sri Lanka, types of Monasteries and how the city planning and the quality of urban life influenced its development into a Modern day Pirivena.

A critical examination of the spatial concepts in the lay out planning of Abayagiriya Monastery at Anuradhapura and a comparative study on a Modern example Siri Vajiranana Pirivena at Maharagama has been undertaken in the 3rd chapter.

In addition to analysing how an environment conducive to physical and mental development has been achieved through a disciplined physical environment in the early day Monasteries, the

Study also intends to establish a link to the quality of life enjoyed by the different communities as reflected in the architecture and the special concepts of the Monasteries under study.



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