

A RESEARCH STUDY ON SOCIAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL ASPECTS OF 17TH CENTURY SRI LANKA THROUGH THE ARTY - CRAFTY OF THE TAMPITA VIHARAS OF THE NORTH CENTRAL PROVINCE

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Tampita Vihara, Temple on Pillars, is a distinctly unique type of image Shrine house found in some ancient Buddhist temples all over Sri Lanka during the colonial period of 17th Century. There are more than two hundred identified Temple shrines on pillars at present. Most of these Temples on Pillars are found in South, North West, Western Province, Sabaragamuwa, Central, and North Central Provinces of Sri Lanka. This Research confines its exploration around the North Central Province (NCP). There are fifteen Tampita Viharas out of which ten Viharas have been newly founded in the above area. Exploring about these Tampita Viharas will pave a good way to understand the ancient Sri Lankan art and architecture, Social Cultural Anthropology and technological and creativity status of ancient designers and craftsmen of the colonial period of 17th Century AD. The study exposes qualitative and quantitative, analysis of Social Anthropological data is used in this study. The study can be considered as survey research which uses the selected Tampita Viharas in NCP for socio-anthropological and ancient technological findings. Therefore, the mixed research method was used as the research methodology for this research. There, interviews such as Chief Reverends, traditional Architectures, and contemporary Leaders of the Villagers were conducted for this research. Also, data was collected to confirm the originality of the research by following the observation method through the videos included on the Research Papers, internet websites related to the Tampita Vihara. This study exposes qualitative and quantitative, analysis of Social Anthropological data is used in this research study. In the Ancient Buddhist society existed at the time, the ancestral craftsmen made various types of visionary creations about art. They created high-end advanced architectures. In these Tampita Vihara ancient creations, a special image of Buddhist temples in Sri Lanka is presented: a building with wooden platforms and walls supporting a timber framed roof perched on raised stone pillars or stumps. As per the recorded data, the origin of these temples on pillars started with the Madawala Tampita Viharaya which is the oldest in the central province.

Keywords: Ancient Monastery complex, Tampita Vihara, Art, Architecture, Social Cultural, Anthropology

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