

DIALOGUE IN THE DISSONANCE OF NATIONAL HERITAGE: MULLATIVU, KURUNDI EXPLORATION

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Kurundi Temple, an ancient Buddhist monastery in the Mullativu district, was built by King Khallatanaga (119-103 BC). The monastery, has attracted the attention of pioneer scholars such as Henry Parker, J.P. Lewis, H.C.P. Bell and R.L. Brohier, is a regionally widespread archaeological site. This exploratory study was conducted with the aim of understanding the archaeological features and their value in the field of archaeology, which has been the subject of intense discussion in the field of heritage in Sri Lanka, recently. Literature sources, previous studies, field surveys, field reporting methods and Discussion were mainly used for entire study. Kurundi archaeological site contains a close relationship with ancient Kurundivapi and Thannimuruppukulam and the ruins of Buddhist monasteries, ancient human settlements, iron production zones and ancient road network. This can be seen as an archeological site that faced the internal and external economic and political dynamics in the second half of the Anuradhapura Kingdom. The Kurundi Pabbata Vihara belonging to the second half of Anuradhapura kingdom is the most prominent architectural complex that need to be investigated properly. An intervention aimed at reviving the Kurundi monastery complex in the 1980s and 2018 where excavation and conservation work has been done. In the current socio-political discourse, this archeological site and its identity has become a very prominent place to recover the recent Sri Lankan heritage in that area. According to the available facts, this archaeological site, which started in the oldest historical period of the country, has become important as a religious, economic and political center and it is confirmed that it gradually declined due to internal and external factors around the 12th century AD. Kurundi became a much-discussed heritage site in the country due to the fact that the discourse on national heritage was related to different ethnic perspectives. It is essential to study and build a dialogue about this archaeological site from different dimensions, which can secure the archaeological identity and foster the heritage discourse for the national and international explorer.

Keywords: Sri Lanka, Kurundi Temple, Heritage, Pabbata Vihara, Buddhist Architecture.

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