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.
CONTENTS

LIST OF ILLUSTRATION

PREFACE

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

ABSTRACT

INTRODUCTION

CHAPTER 1

1 BUDDHISM & ARCHITECTURE.

1.1 Buddhist Philosophy

1.2 The Relationship Between Buddhist Philosophy & the Built Environment

1.3 The Influence of Philosophy on Architectural Concepts

1.4 Definitions and Characteristics of the Buddhist Monastery

1.5 Origin and the Evolution of the Buddhist Monasteries

1.6 Rules of Making Monastery According to the Vinaya Sutra

1.7 Changes of Simplicity of the Monastery

1.8 Locational Aspects of the Monastery

1.9 Monastery and the User

1.9.1 The Monastery & the Monkshood

1.9.2 Behaviour Pattern of the Monk According to 'Vinaya Pitakaya'

1.9.3 The Monk and the Layman
1.9.4 The User Determinant of the Expressive Quality of the
Monastery .......................................................... 21

CHAPTER 2 ........................................................................................................

2 BUDDHIST MONASTICISM IN SRI LANKA ..............................................

2.1 Buddhism and Establishment of Monasteries in Sri Lanka .............. 23

2.2 Main Types of Monasteries in Sri Lanka ............................................. 29

2.2.1 Open Monasteries ................................................................. 30

2.2.2 Closed Monasteries .............................................................. 38

2.3 Types of Buildings in a Monastery to Facilitate the Functions ........ 42

2.4 Modern Monastery ................................................................. 47

CHAPTER 3 ........................................................................................................

3 EXAMINATION OF LAY OUT PLANNING OF ABAYAGIRI
MONASTERY & THE SIRI VAJIRANANA PIRIVENA ..............................

3.1 Principles of Lay Out Planning ......................................................... 49

3.2 Relationship of Monasteries to the City Planning of
Anuradhapura ...................................................................................... 60

3.3 The Layout Planning of Abayagiri Monastery ................................ 63

3.3.1 Public, Semi - Public & Private areas ....................................... 65

3.3.2 Clustering of Monastic Units ..................................................... 72

3.3.3 Location of Stupa .................................................................. 74

3.3.4 Drainage System of the Layout ................................................ 75

3.4 Comparative Analysis of Layout Planning of Siri Vajiranana
Pirivena at Maharagama with the Abayagiri Monastery at
Anuradhapura ...................................................................................... 77
LIST OF ILLUSTRATION

Figure 1: Sanchi Stupa & Monastery - India ......................................................... 8
Figure 2: Sam-ye Monastery, Tibet ................................................................. 8
Figure 3: Monastery on Lake Beihai ................................................................. 8
Figure 4: Plan of Anquor Wot 13th century .................................................. 9
Figure 5: Front view of Anquor ................................................................. 9
Figure 6: Plan & Section-Stupa of Boro - Budur ........................................... 9
Figure 7: Arial view of Boro Buduru ............................................................... 10
Figure 8: The earliest residences ..................................................................... 11
Figure 9: Caves in Mihintale .......................................................................... 23
Figure 10: The First Monastery in Sri Lanka-Maha Vihara ............................... 24
Figure 11: Maha Vihara sketch plan ............................................................... 25
Figure 12: The first holly places were probably mountain ................................. 26
Figure 13: Natural caves .............................................................................. 27
Figure 14: Sithulpawa cave monastery ............................................................ 28
Figure 15: Madirigiriya Cave-Residence ......................................................... 29
Figure 16: Site Plan - Vessagiri ...................................................................... 32
Figure 17: Site Plan - Mirisavati ..................................................................... 34
Figure 18: Site Plan - Jethavana ................................................................. 35
Figure 19: Site Plan of -Vijayarama ............................................................... 37
Figure 20: A Single Residential Unit Monastery - Anuradhapura ................. 39
Figure 21: A Multiple Residential Unit Monastery - Ritigala ......................... 41
Figure 22: Cetiya Pabbata, Mountain ............................................................. 45
Figure 23: Typical monastic Residence, Mihintale ........................................... 43
Figure 24: Typical component ......................................................................... 43
Figure 25: Dwelling near Kaludiya Pokuna ..................................................... 44
Figure 26: Relic House, Mihintale ................................................................. 44
Figure 27: Sannipatha Sala ............................................................................. 44
Figure 28: Refectory, Mihintale ................................................................. 45
Figure 29: Hospital, Mihintale ................................................................. 45
Figure 30: Janthagara, Arankele ................................................................. 46
Figure 59: The Pond at the Entrance ................................................................. 80
Figure 60: The Image House ........................................................................... 80
Figure 61: The Stupa ....................................................................................... 81
Figure 62: The Bo-Tree Shrine ....................................................................... 81
Figure 63: Bell Tower ...................................................................................... 81
Figure 64: Three type of .................................................................................. 82
Figure 65: Poya Ge ......................................................................................... 82
Figure 66: Meditation Kuties .......................................................................... 82
Figure 67: Kitchen for ..................................................................................... 85
Figure 68: Kitchen for Laymen ....................................................................... 85
Figure 69: Dana Sala of the ............................................................................ 83
Figure 70: Entrance to the .............................................................................. 84
Figure 71: Awasa Building ............................................................................. 84
Figure 72: The Court Yard at .......................................................................... 85
Figure 73: Room, which is ............................................................................. 86
Figure 74: Shaded areas with path ways .......................................................... 85
Figure 75: Diagrammatic analysis of the Pirivena showing Major Monuments ................................................................................................................. 87
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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Architecture is considered as a form of art which makes a direct appeal to the best in the human being. Art communicates massages 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 mod 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.
INTRODUCTION
INTRODUCTION

Rationale/ Need of the Study

At the beginning monks had no built structures to live. They lived under trees, caves...etc. But later they felt the need of a permanent structure especially in Vassana (rainy) season.

The 'Vinaya Pitakaya' (the Buddhist Code of Discipline) lays down the rules for building a cell (an Awasaya). With the rapid increase of the population of monks, they lived together as a community. Generally other ancillary buildings were added to facilitate the needs of monks like Bathing Places, Dinning Places, and Meeting Halls...etc. Stupa and Bo Tree were also later added for worshipping purposes. This is the beginning of the Monastery.

With passing of time Monastic Architecture was influenced by social, political, economic and cultural issues. The different periods saw changes being carried out to the basic idea to suit the various needs. Architectural and the spatial planning evolved in response to the quality of social life. Therefore a study of Monastic development of different periods will enable to understand the social stability, the ideals and how the values placed on the different institutions changed with time.

Also the study is expected to reveal how a disciplining physical environment can influence the behavioural patterns of the users and a disciplined society. A lesson in spatial planning for creating order and discipline in the user can be learnt from this study.

Issue/Architectural problem

Architecture reflects the needs of the society, and its quality reflects the quality of social life. Buildings could be considered, as an image of the Society Buildings should fit into the needs of the society.
The Monastery incorporates the basic Buddhist concepts of discipline. But the cultural, political, economic and social changes affected the Monastic Architecture of different periods. Adherence to Buddhist principles also changed with the above impacts. Original Buddhist Monastic Architecture that evolved in strict adherence to the Code of Discipline also changes thus. With the architectural problem is to identify how the quality of architectural expression changed in accordance with the change of ideals and the social order that prevailed in the modern times in comparison to the early days.

**Aims and Objectives**

The main aim of this study is to establish that the quality of architectural expression is related to the quality life of a particular society. It is intended to show this by considering two examples of Monastic developments; one from early Anuradhapura period and the other of the Modern day.

**Methodology**

Primarily research study will be done by critically examining the spatial concepts in the lay out planning of Abayagiriya Monastery at Anuradhapura after establishing the Buddhist principles involved in the development of such an institution. A comparison will be made to a present day Monastery/Pirivena complex.

**Scope and Limitations**

It is interesting to study the development pattern of spatial concepts from the beginning to the modern times. A proper study on Monastic development involves an in depth analysis of both spatial planning as well as architectural design elements of different periods.
However such in-depths study is beyond the scope of this dissertation. The study here will be limited to the analysis of two case studies, one of the ancient days and one from the present. The basic principles involving the development of Buddhist Monasteries will be spelt out together with a brief description of different types that have evolved. The emphasis will be mainly on the spatial planning of the layouts. In the absence of a Monastic establishments of the present day comparable in scale and functions to that of the ancient day at Anuradhapura Abayagiriya, Siri Vajiranana Pirivena at Maharagama has been chose for comparison. A true comparison will also required an in-depth study of the different social orders that prevailed covering, economic, political, cultural and religious aspects. Once again such a study is beyond the scope of this dissertation. This is intended as an eye-opener for carrying out further research on this subject.