

An Investigative Study of the Spread of Hinduism in the Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa Eras

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Archaeological evidence reveals that Hinduism has more or less Spread during the Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa eras. Since Anuradhapura era, Hinduism has spread in the country due to the influence of Tamils and the various political changes that took place in the country. king Pandukabhaya Who succeeded king Panduvasudewa designed the city of Anuradhapura with an urban culture which is recognised as a unique city plan of the Rajarata civilization. In the meantime, Sena Gupttika seized state power after the reign of Suratissa, ruling the Country for about 22 years. However, it was not uncommon to observe the spread of Hinduism under their rule. After king Elara came into power, it was not possible to observe the construction of a large number of Hindu shrines during that period. Hinduism is prevalent in the Abhayagiri Vihara tradition of Sri Lanka which was formed after the Maha vihara tradition. Although the Theravada tradition was initially followed in the Abhayagiri temple complex, they adopted the Mahayana tradition later on due to various reasons. Hindu religious features such as Avalokiteshvara Bodhisatva statues, bronze diamond, can be seen in this monastery complex. This diamond is mentioned in Vedic literature as the weapon of the god Indre, the chief of the gods, and is said to be a symbol of his power and strength. There is also evidence of Hindu influence in the Jethawana and other monastery complexes, built after the Abhayagiri tradition. Almost all the ruins in Polonnaruwa were belong to king Solin king Vijayabahu the great and king Nissankamalla. Art and architecture of Buddhist and Hindu traditions can be distinguished from the ruins of Polonnaruwa. These information indicate that the influence of Hinduism which dates back to Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa eras has spread to the present era.

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