

## **The influence of techniques depicted in Sanskrit vāstu texts for the planning of ancient palaces in Sri Lanka**

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In spite of certain ruins, there is not much evidence related to the palace that is one of the most significant constructions in the history of Sri Lanka. Although more than ten gigantic palaces have been built by the great kings, only ground plans of those palaces exist almost in every ancient city. Fortunately, sufficient evidence is available in relation to the premises of the palace in Kandy as it has been reconstructed on several occasions. It is important to examine the techniques that had been used in the construction of these massive palaces. Adequate details of construction of the Ruwanveli Pagoda are available in the chronicle, *Thupawansa* but it is impossible to identify trustworthy evidence related to the construction of the palace in historical sources.

All the methodical constructions have been initiated in Sri Lanka after the "Mahindagamanaya" (the arrival of Arahant Mahinda thero). Craftsmen who represent the 18 different traditions in India arrived in Sri Lanka as a major result of "Dumindagamanaya" (the arrival of Arahant Sanghamitta). These Indian craftsmen were specialists in their conventions that had been developed on the basis of the techniques depicted in Sanskrit vāstu texts.

On the other hand, it cannot be argued that kings took no advice in order to build palaces from Brahmins who were the chaplains for the kings who were the experts in Sanskrit language traditions. It is possible to assume that techniques that were practiced in order to build ancient palaces were merely extracted from Sanskrit vāstu texts. On the basis of existing ruins of the ground plans of several palaces, an attempt will be taken to establish this in this paper.

Key words: Palace, Vāstu, Sanskrit, King, Technique