

A study of the spatial form of river of based settlements at “Guruguda Oya” valley

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The spatial layout of human settlements is configured into unique structures. Despite of this uniqueness, some similarities are apparent in the form of socio-cultural elements and their specific geographical locations. Many countries have carried out studies pertaining to spatial form of their indigenous settlements. In the case of Sri Lanka, this has been examined with reference to tank based settlements with an emphasis on the Hydraulic civilization. On the other hand the settlements which were developed in the river valleys at wet zone of Sri Lanka have not adequately examined. In this context, this study examines the spatial form of the river based village settlements, in the ‘Gurugoda Oya’ Valley, Kegalle district.

This study focuses on the spatial form which can be explained by applying planning concepts and theories. However this study limits its scope pertaining to physical arrangement of spatial layouts in selected settlements. These findings may be replicable in the current settlement planning in Sri Lanka. The method adapted in the study consists of secondary data based identification of spatial distribution of settlements. The field observations and participatory mapping techniques were used in analyzing the factors which influenced in the formation of the settlement layouts. The study concludes the spatial configuration of river based village settlements in the ‘Gurugoda oya’ valley and in the manner in which it was applied within the socio-cultural and geographical perspective.

Key words: Human settlement; Spatial layout; River valley; Indigenous practice; Socio-culture

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