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CONTENTS

Aesthetics ......................................................... 1 - 20
Archaeology ..................................................... 22 - 45
History ............................................................. 47 - 65
History of Science & Technology ........... 66 - 81
Language ........................................................... 83 - 132
Media ............................................................... 133 - 146
Philosophy ......................................................... 147 - 187
Sosial Science .................................................. 188 - 250
Aesthetics

Representation of Male Body on Ivan Peries' Works: An Analytical Study Based on Selected Paintings
M. S. K. Fernando

Usage of Areal in Sinhalese and Eastern Indian Folk Theatre

Specialties in Folk Culture of Gujarat, India
Withanage Madara Seuwandi, Kavindu Lakshan Rodrigo, Withanage Udari Nisansala

An Analysis of the Minor Plot of Rathnavali and Shadow Characters in Sri Lankan Art Works

A Study on Choreography in Performing Arts

Performance Culture Embedded in Greek Life and its Impact on Greek Drama
Sopali Bamunusinghe, Kaumadee Bamunusinghe

The Role of Culture Centers for Sustainability of Sri Lankan Culture
K. S. Mohamed Jabeer

The Dress is a Cultural Symbol: Reading through Folksongs, Classic Texts and Historical Records
O. M. Ranathunga

The Study of Artistic Characteristics of Palm Leaf Writing
M. Buddhika, Mahinda Gemunu S. A. D. Mallicka Saddika

Dancing Costumes on the Timber Paintings in the Karagampitiya Temple Sermon Hall (Dharma Mandapaya)
U. Hettige, A. U. Sudasinghe

Fashion Transformation: Portuguese Fashions Dictate the Sri Lankan Fashion Arena
Priyanka Virajini Medagedara Karunarathne
Archaeology

An Archaeological Study: Three Types of Portuguese Silver Coins in Sri Lanka
R. M. Dilini Lakmali Meslinka

Archaeological Activities in Balochistan from 1885 to 1947: An overview
Shakir Naseer

A Study of the Activities of the Velaikkaras in Medieval Sri Lanka
S. Anuradha

A Study of a Housing Complex of the Nobles at Ragalkanda
Archaeological Reserve

A Study on the Role of Contemporary Social Identity of the Women Depicted in Temple Wall Paintings of the Kandyan Era

An Empirical Study on Bali and Terra Cotta

Schematic Arrangement of Terracotta Plaques in the Kestari Temple: A New Understanding of a Late Medieval Temple of Bengal
Minmooyee Ray

The Green Building Concept of the Ancient Monastic Architectural Landscape in Sri Lanka
D. S. Sampath
Vatadages of Sri Lanka: An Analytical Study
K. S. M. R. Priyadarshana, M. P. Ranaweera

New Maritime Archaeological Research on SS Indus
Mahinda Karunarathna, W. M. Chandrarathne, Palitha Weerasinghe,
Amalka Wijesuriya, Camal de Soysa, Chamal K Gamage, Nadeeka Kumari

A Rare Instance in the Creation of Statues with Teeth

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An Analytical Study of New Archaeological Evidence with Special Reference to
"Ranagala" in Ancient Rohana

A Comparative Study about Footprint Stones Found in Excavations in Ampara
Neelagiriya Stūpa

An old Inscription describing Loluwagoda Silwaththana who set fire to
his body as Pradeepapooja

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his body as Pradeepapooja

A Study on the Architectural Construction of Neelagiriya Stūpa in Ampara

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Water Management in the Irrigation Technology at the Mihintale Archaeological
Complex

Ibrahim Writing Dated 600-500 BCE in the Citadel in Anuradhapura
Malini Dias

Pottery Utilized by Distinguished Society and the Technology during the
Anuradhapura Era (Between 500 BCE – 1000 CE)
Priyantha Jayasingha

Preservation of Cultural Heritage Resources in the University of
Peradeniya Library
Kanchana Dehigama
History

The Ideals to Governance of King Amandagamini

‘Asna Literature’ as a Historical Source
A. M. M. Chandrika

Cultural Legacy of the Shakyamuni Buddha’s land of Ladakh, India
Deepakshi Sharma

The Profile of Contemporary Society identified from Waharala Inscription

Provincial Extortion and Homicide in Romelts Evolution in Criminal Procedure from the Late Republic to Early Empire
Hashani Boange

Scientific Inquiry as Colonialist Discourse? John Davy’s An Account of the Interior of Ceylon and of its Inhabitants with Travels in That Island (1821)
Shravika Damunupola Amarasekara

Modern Technology, Changing Dynamics of Historical Sources and Challenges faced by Historians

An Investigational Study on the Factors that influenced the Construction and the Offering of Viharas

“Barandi Kovila” in Indigenous Medical Rituals; A Historical Observation Based on Vaidyacinthamani Bhasajyasangrava
Danister L. Perera

Log Records of a Buddhist School: A New Contribution to Studying Historical Sources

viii
Upgrading the Social Status of the Physician: A Historical Point of View
Ven. Maduruoye Dhammissara

Some Little Known Facts about the Dutugamunu Saga
P. G. Punchihewa

A Bibliographic Study of the Collection of Thumbaruk Raja Maha Viharaya in the Anuradhapura District

Bead Making in Ancient Sri Lanka: With Special Reference to Carnelian Bead Industry
Kanchana Dehigama

A Closer Look at the Fall of Sinhala in 1815
Gamini Gunawardena

History of Science & Technology

A Critical Study of Alexander Moon’s Botanical Catalogue

An Analysis of the Mechanism of Tattoo Burning used in Indigenous Medicinal Treatment of Diseases & Cattle Population

A Comparative Study on the Nomenclature and Description of Prameha in Ayurvedic and Indigenous Medical Textbooks
Nilceeka S. Samanweera, Dunister L. Perera

Womb Protection connected with Riddiyagaya

A Comparative Study on Cosmology in Hindu Vedanta and Modern Science
Darshana Ashoka Kumara

The Buddhist Exposition of Psychological Problems of Drug Usage

Past and Present Role of Water Management to reduce the Impact of Droughts and Floods in the North Central Province of Sri Lanka
L. M. A. P. Gunawardhana

The Walking Stick of a Physician as a Multifunctional Instrument
S. P. Molligoda, K. I. W. K. Somaratna, H. M. Senadeera
A Literature Review of “Trivida Karma” as Whole Surgical Procedure with Special Reference to Shalya Tantra in Ayurvedic Medicine
A. P. Kumara, B. S. Samarawickrama

An Analysis on Technology of Sri Lankan Fortresses and their Evolution
H. H. A. Karunaratne

The Study of Anatomical Knowledge about Heart, Eye, Urinary and Ano-Rectal System among Ancient Ayurvedic Practitioners
M. A. Hiran, S. S. S. Karunasekara

Sleep (Nidra): An Ayurvedic Perspective
S. R. Ariyaratne, R. D. H. Kulathunga

The Political and Economic Background of the Anicut Construction at Deduru Oya Basin by King Parakamabahu I (A Comparison with Engineering Technology)
S. B. J. Wijesuriya, Don. B. H. Weerakkody

Language

An Analysis of Motivations for Code-mixing English into Sinhala among ESL (English as a Second Language) Learners
U. D. Senaratne

Vaidyabhuddanaya: A Study of Western Medicine and Linguistics
C. A. P. K. Kelum, W. D. S. K. A. P. P. Gunaratne

"Clash between "Jeppo" and "Alayos" Creates Havoc in the University"
Sandalami Uthpala Gamage

(A Study on Mutual Enrichment of Oriental Studies)
D. S. Wijesuriya

Passive Conformist or Subtle Critic? : A Re-Examination of the Patriarchal Discourse of Selected Texts of Punyakanthi Wijenaikake
D. Siriwardena
A Critical Survey of the Quality of Nasalized Plosive Sounds in Sinhala Language
Lasantha Bandaranayake

A Comparative Study on *The Waiting Earth* (Punyakante Wijenaike) and *The Good Earth* (Pearl S. Buck)
Kande Kapuge Ganushka Randula

A Morphological Study on Word Formation Processes in Sinhalese Language
Ranmali Jayasinghe

"Is He a Misogynist?" A Critique on the Treatment of Women in Selected Novels of Salman Rushdie
J.M.B.K.Jayasekara

A Comparison between the Acquisition of Phrasal Verbs and Spatial Prepositions by Sinhala Speaking ESL Learners
Ramani Ratnamali Jayasinghe

Using Mono-Gender Terms in Contemporary Sinhala Language and its Limitations: from Selected Newspapers 2013-2014

An Interrogation on the Functionalism of *Alamkara* and its Application in Poetry
Ven. Mahawela Rathanapala

A Study of Features of Panegyric Poetry in Sinhala Inscriptions

Controversial Descriptions of *Pão de Cobra* in European Sources: A Literary Study on the Observation of *Garcia de Orta*
Danister L. Perera

"Jvara Gayatri Mantra" as Evidence for Tantric Influence on Indigenous Medicine: A Textual Case Study
Danister L. Perera

The Summarizing Quality of the Author of the *Sikhavālanda* in translating *Pāli Vinaya Rules*

A Visible Approach to the Pictorial Usage of the Composite Poem

19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33 34 35 36 37 38 39 40 41 42 43 44 45 46 47 48 49 50 51 52 53 54 55 56 57 58 59 60 61 62 63 64 65 66 67 68 69 70 71 72 73 74 75 76 77 78 79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90 91 92 93 94 95 96 97 98 99 100 101 102
A Study on Sanskrit Kavisamaya Concept of Colours used in Siri Gunasingha’s Poetry
S. A. R. R. P. Dissanayake

Acquisition of Second Language Elements in a Non-Instructional Setting: A Case Study
S. A. R. R. P. Dissanayake

The Impact of English Language on Present Day Colloquial Sinhala Language
S. A. R. R. P. Dissanayake, K. G. Swarnananda Gamage

The Story of Wathhimi
S. B. Sirisena

The Application of the Theory of Language Acquisition in Learning Spoken Sanskrit: A Case Study
S. M. S. Weerasinghe

Chronological Localization of the Sandakinduru Da Kawa in Sinhala Poetic Tradition
S. N. Perera

An Investigation of Lexicon Loaned from Tamil into Sinhala with Reference to Traditional Medicine System
S. W. Wijayantha

Is Yasodarawatha a Folk Poetry?
S. C. Gunawardena

A Comparison of Errors in Languages Spoken by Sinhala: English Bilinguals with Post-Stroke Aphasia
N. I. Dharmarathna, Dinushee Atapattu Bakmeewewa

Affecting Postcolonial Identity: Reading Shyam Selvadurai’s Funny Boy
Somak Mukherjee, Lav Kanal

Linguistic Theories and the Inter-Disciplinary Nature of Buddhist Philosophy
Reduction of the Woman as a Symbol of Pure Culture in Decolonization in Sri Lanka: Based on Playadasa Sirisena's Novels
S. Liyanagunawardena, P. V. N. Perera

Developing and Validating the Sinhala Syntactic Structures Test (S3 Short Form)
Shyamani Hettiarachchi, Thilini Lokubalasuriya, Shakeela Saleem, Dinusha Nonis, Isuru Dharmaratne & Lakshika Udugama

Limitations and Problems of Contemporary Sinhala Language Studies
A. S. D. C. G.,

The Importance of Poems on Mining as a Reflection of Social Transition
A. R. D. W. K. S.,

Adult Lifespan Language Behaviors of Sinhala Speakers: Effects of Age, Gender, Education and Occupation

Manifestations of Power in Presidential Speeches: A Linguistic Analysis
A. Sajith Ruksan Peiris

A Normative Study on Documenting Phonological Processes Exhibited by 3 Year Old Sri Lankan Tamil Speaking Children in the Ampara District, Kalmunai Zone
M. T. F. Sajana

Determinations of Meaning: A Semantic Approach of Traditional Pali Grammar (based on the Payogasiddhi)
Ven. Karagawwe Wajira

Palm Leaf Manuscripts Related to Traditional Medicine Available in the Library of University of Jaffna: A Preliminary Study
Visakanuban Mythili, S. Navaneethkrishnan

The Study of an Ancient Ola Leaf Manuscript Written on Thailand
Media

Rathupaswala TV Narrations: A Media Content Analysis
Maheshika Rathnayake, PhD, MA, MPhil

Language Usage and Sexual Stimulation on Facebook Chats among University Students
Mahesha Ihalagedara

Sri Lanka’s Image and International Media Reporting over the Recent Sinhala-Islamic Conflict in Aluthgama and Beruwala
Darshana Ashoka Kumara

Use of Media in Promotion of Soft Power: The Case of Korean Wave
Sisini Thisara Thrikawala

Effectiveness of the Law on Right to Information in Sri Lanka
D. Supun Rashinda Jayawardena

The Use of Internet by Secondary School Teachers in the Badulla District
J. D. Careemdeen

Sri Lankan Cinema and the Public Performance Board (With Special Reference to Sinhala Feature Films forwarded to Public Performance Board from 2000 to 2010)
S. H. Samanthika Priyadarshani

Main Factors for Cinema Censorship outside the Public Performance Board in Sri Lanka

A Study about the Role of the Media in the Promotion of Cultural Tourism in Sri Lanka
S. D. Ranjith Wijesena

The Degree of Media Coverage for Women’s in Sport News Reporting in Sri Lanka
W. M. D. Sahajeeva

A Study on Utilizing New Media Technology for the Social Development and Management (With Special Reference to Using Mobile Phones in the Western Province)
Philosophy

A Pre-awareness of Mind in Buddhist Perspective: An Obligatory Prerequisite for Buddhist Meditation
R. M. Rathnasiri

Behavioural Prerequisites for an Initiation of Buddhist Meditation
R. M. Rathnasiri

Modern Utility of Environmental Management in Buddhism

A Comparative Study on the Buddhist Judicial Reconciliation Practices and procedures of present Reconciliation Boards

In Conventional and Absolute Sense, Is there a Puggala
Ven. Ilukewela Dhammarathana Thero

A Study of the Theravada Buddhist Chronology as Depicted in the Samantapāsādikā

The Way of the Concept of Classification Used in the Organization of the Tripitaka

Curing the Disease of Lineage Consciousness by the Medication of Buddhist Mind Culture
Ruwaw Deshapriya

Psychological Significance of the Visuddhimagga
Ven. Yodhakandiye Ariyawansa

Mahakassapa Thera being the Successor is against Early Buddhism
Ven. Ilukewela Dhammarathana Thera, Ven. Middeniye Dhammika

A Comparative Study of the Concept of Causation in Buddhism and the African Traditional Society
Hakaki Andrew

Buddhist Positive Psychology towards Environment
Kavindranath Harshana
Buddhism and Family Counseling
Kavindranath Harshana

The Significance of the Right View: An Inquiry into the Sammādiṭṭhi-sutta
Ven. Galle Dhamminda

Movements of Faith: A Cult of Dhārani in South Asian Buddhism
Sumudu Dharmarathna

Buddhist Interpretation on Professional Ethics
H.R. Nishadini Peiris

Understanding and Practice of the Buddhist Construct of Mindfulness in
Modern Psychotherapy
Soma Subhashini De Silva

Botanical Verification of “Lonapanna” in Buddhist Literature:
Etymological Evidence from Indigenous Medicine
Danister L. Perera

Devaluation of the Mahathupa: A Re-Consideration about the
Legend of the Mahavamsa

A Critical Inquiry into Practical Application of the Buddhist Standpoint of
Environmental Conservation in Comparison to the Modern Western
Approaches on Environmental Conservation
H. M. I. Prasanthi

A Study on the Contexts of ‘Vimamsitabbam’ (should be examined)
with Special Reference to the Vinaya Tikā

Philosophical Thoughts of Ancient Dhamma Sermons: A Study Based on the
Sothabhathamaliniya
A Review of the Logical Interpretation of Means of Knowledge in Nyaya Philosophy
Kumari M. W. S. J. 178

Theravada and Non-Theravada: A Study of the Sources of the Visuddhimārga-mahā-sannaya
Ashoka Welitota 180

The Buddhist Cure for Current Health Problems
M. N. Shyamali Piyasiri 181

The Way of Bhaishajyaguru: The Way of Healing
Prashanthish Narangoda 183

Constructing a Thesaurus to the Mahāvamsa: A Facet Analytical Approach
S. Arulanantham S. Navanethakrishnan 184

Emei Mountain and Chinese Buddhism
Prasittha Kollipitiya 185

Revisiting the Ancient Stupa of Sri Lanka as a Commemorative Monument
K. K. D. K. Bowatta 186

Pali Grammatical Scholarship as a Dialogic Mechanism
Ven. M. Wijithadhama 187

Sosial Science

The Impact of Upper Kotmale Hydro Power Project on Livelihood of Plantation Workers: A Case Study in Rathneelakelle Resettlement in Talawakelle
Ms. S. Chithra 188

Social Cohesion through Life Competencies and Civic Education
K. A. N. Pushpakanamara, Namal Indika Thilakarathna 190

Employee Satisfaction Factors in Terms of Organizational Performance: The Case of Apparel (PVT) Ltd, Hakmana Sri Lanka
Tilak Wijesundara, Piumi Kankanamge 191
Motives for Status Consumption: An Empirical Investigation Based on Semi-Urban Women Consumers in Supermarket Settings in Sri Lanka 228

Social and Cultural Importance of Endemic Shorea species in Sri Lanka (With Special Reference to North Western Slope in Sinharaja Forest Reserve) 229
R. K. Chaminda Kumara

The Present Status of Traditional Mahabamba Kolama in the Saparagamu Maha Saman Devala Perahara 230
Tharaka Anandal & Charmalic Nahallage

Demand Analysis of Outdoor Recreation as a Non Market Economic Activity: With Special Reference to Dalupitiya-Mahara Jogging Park 231
G. S. D. D Sudarshani

An Evaluation Study on the Effectiveness of the Post-Graduate Diploma in Education Offered by the National Institute of Education 232
I. Selvaranee

Epic of Ramayana, Femininity and Women Agency 233

Sustainable Development in Coastal Areas in Sri Lanka with Special Reference to Hotel Industry: An Analysis of the Existing Legal Regime 234
J. A. Darshane Jayakody

An Analysis of the Causes for the Changing Consumer Demand for Goods by the Rural and Urban Sector 235

A Comparative Study on Entrepreneurial Skills and Small and Medium Entrepreneurs in Sri Lanka 237
N. M. A. Jayasinghe, Iresha Chathuranganie, K. G. G. Weerasinghe

A Sociological Study of the Professional Changes in Street Sex Work 238
S. S. Pathirana

Winning Elusive Gold Medals for Sri Lanka at Elite Competitions 239
Shemal Fernando

An Analysis of Participation of University Students in Sports 240

An Analysis of Participation of University Students in Sports 241
Social Behavior of Humans and Spontaneous Scientific Systems:  
A Comparative Study  
S. T. Sadeeshwara

A Study on Influence of Technical, Environmental, Social, Economic Factors and Factor Efficiency for the Profitability in Rice Cultivation

An Anthropological and Historical Analysis on Gaur
H. W. R. Kumara, B. P. A. Amarasinghe

Potentials and Prospects of Religious Tourism in Katharagama
R. A. N. Sandamali

Investigative Study of Folklore Related to Treasure

A Study of Basic Police Training in Sri Lanka  
(With Reference to Kaluthara Police Training College)
S. D. S. B. Perera

A Cultural Geographical Study on Temporal and Spatial Distribution of Ethnic Muslim Segregation and Cultural Identity in Maharagama Area
N. N. D. S. Wijekoon

A Demography Assessment of Single Age Distribution in Sri Lanka
N. D. S. Wijekoon
Dancing Costumes on the Timber Paintings in the Karagampitiya Temple Sermon Hall (Dharma Mandapaya)

U. Hettige¹, A. U. Sudasinghe²

To the south of Dehiwala is Subodharama Road on the landside of Galle Road. About 200 metres along this narrow road, located on a small hillock, is the historical Karagampitiya Buddhist temple with its statues and paintings standing for over 300 years. The image hall wall paintings belong to the third quarter of the 19th century. One of the most important paintings is found in the sermon hall on right side to the image hall. The sermon hall is furbished in polished timber most beautifully and carry paintings as well. In this timber paintings, several dancing figures are found. Each dancing figure is different from each other in dancing styles, costumes etc. The classical dance forms are associated with the performance of various rituals and ceremonies which are centuries old and are based on the folk religion and folk beliefs going back to times before the advent and acceptance of Buddhism by the Sinhalese people. The costumes of the dancing figures are of special significance.

The objective of this study was to examine the dancing figures with special emphasis on style, headdress, jewelry, European cultural and social influence, Sri Lankan traditional cultural and social influence and other influences on the costumes. In addition to historical and archeological evidence, data was collected from field observations and personal interview methods. Sri Lankan traditional, Tamil, European and multi cultural influences were identified. All these areas were analyzed for each individual painting. Principal sources of the most significant were discussed in detail.

Keywords: Dancing figures, Costumes, Cultural, Style

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