

Tracing lineage of mentorship of Tämpita Vihāras of Sri Lanka

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The structures built on a wooden platform resting on short granite pillars or stumps are a unique type of image houses from the 17th to 19th centuries called *Tämpita Vihāras*. Recorded history has revealed the close association of these buildings with the mid 18th century Revival Movement by Ven. Velivita Saranankara. This type of single room very small image house emerges in the early Kandyan era. It has a wooden superstructure. The murals in the inner room or sanctum have a very rigid spatial arrangement. The side wooden walls and ceiling have almost similar picture programs. Over 174 structures have been visited by the Samkathana Research team and documented them on the web site. The team has already mapped *Tämpita Vihāras* in six clusters located in the close geographical vicinity: Two in Kurunagala, one in Kegalle and two in Kandy Districts and one in the entire Southern province. Based on this primary research the team has observed the following: There seems to be an unequal distribution of these unique 18th century structures on the island. Sponsor ship has been provided by the King of Kandy, Adigars (Chief Ministers) and Disawas. The clusters mentioned above even today reveal affiliations with the Malvatte Chapter or the Asgiriya Chapter which is also reflected in the design of the *Tämpita Vihāras* architecture. Therefore the paper ties to question if there are any close association of these buildings with the mid 18th century revival movement by Ven. Velivita Sri Saranankara? If so, what evidence can be used to classify building activity under three generations of mentorship?

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