

Abstract No 11

An investigative study of the "harem"

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This investigation consists of the "harem" or the "*antahpura*" which is came from the Sanskrit word "*antahpura*". Harem was a place where the king of the country goes to realize his stress and spend his leisure time enjoyable with sex. The place where the king's queens were kept inside the palace is called the *antahpura* or the harem. This place is not related to the state's administration. Except the king any other man cannot enter the *antahpura* as this place has a huge security inside it. This security of the *antahpura* was under a female director named "*kanchuki*" and dwarfs, neuters, and corpus men were also engaged in security service. This *antahpura* situated in a calm and beautiful environment which is near the king's palace. It cannot identify that how many queens were there in the *antahpura*. But the information based on *seegiriya* proves that two to five hundred queens were kept in the *antahpura*. The main queen always engaged in the things regarding country's welfare and administration. And also the main queen's son becomes the heir to the crown. But the other queens who were in the harem were not having these opportunities. Among these harem queens there were some queens who had different skills. They lived in the special rooms which were made by the king. There is much folklore regarding the *antahpura*. Among them most are regarding the jealousy between the queens and the willingness of the king. When we pay out attention to the Sinhala, Pali, Sanskrit, Arab and Hindi literature we can find more information about the harem. As the king suffers from the stress because he is the controller of his land he goes to have company with his queens in harem. King goes to the harem when he got his leisure time after engaged in the work regarding administration of the country. After having company with his main queen the king comes to the *antahpura* and spends his leisure time enjoyable. *Antahpura* is a small city inside the main inner city. The beautiful women who were in the harem are legally connected to the king after they enter the harem they cannot deal with the external society. The beauty and the location of the harem, beautiful women inside it, comfort inside it, king's willingness to his queens, the officers in the harem, the internal maintenance, why the main queen differs from the other queens are going to discuss from this experiment.

Keywords: *harem or the antahpura, king; leisure time, privacy, queens*