

## **A study of the Buddhist monastery complex in the periphery of Sigiriya**

Rev. Pahiyangala Sumangala  
Assistant lecturer, Department of Archaeology, University of Kelaniya.  
sumangala909@yahoo.com

J.A Indunil Jayathilaka  
Assistant lecturer, Department of Archaeology, University of Kelaniya.  
induniljayathilaka@yahoo.com

Historically it is revealed that the Sigiriya Rock and its vicinity was a Buddhist monastery complex formonks, before it became known as a kingdom. The aim of this research is to identify whether there was a Buddhist monastery complex at the Sigiriya site before it was selected by King Kashyapa as his rock fortress in 5<sup>th</sup> century BC. The research attempts to prove that Sigiriya and its vicinity were occupied by monks since 3<sup>rd</sup> century BC. The methodology of the research includes the analysis of historical evidence from historical literary and archaeological sources including historical chronicles, inscriptions, archaeological sites and monuments. The Brahmin inscription on the rock shelter in one of the caves at Sigiriya complex offers proof that that this place was occupied by Buddhist monks. The phrase in the inscription “*parumakalaguliyalene...*” indicates that “Parumaka” has donated the cave complex to the Buddhist monks. More scientific evidence is provided by Prof. SenakaBandaranayaka who discovered through a pollen analysis that the Bodhigara of the Sigiriya complex dates back to 1<sup>st</sup> century BC. Archaeologists have identified that sites such as Pidurangala and Ramakele had been donated to Buddhist monks by King Kashyapa for the purpose of continuing his kingdom at Sigiriya. Prof. Senarath Paranavithana has stated that Sigiri maidens depicted in the Sigiriya frescoes show that they are on the way to worship at Pidurangala temple. According to archeological evidence, the Naipena Cave in the boulder garden has been identified as a Sangarama. Analyzing all these literary and archeological sources, it can be conclusively proven that the Sigiriya periphery was a Buddhist monastery complex before it functioned as a palace.

Keywords:- Monastery complex, Sigiriya periphery, *Bohdigara*, *Parumaka*, Brahmin inscription