MURAL TRADITIONS IN TEMPLE ON PILLARS
(TÄMPITA VIHĀRAS) OF SRI LANKA

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The structures built on a wooden platform resting on short granite pillars or stumps is a unique type of image houses from the 17th to 19th centuries called *TāmpitaVihāras*. 
The ongoing research to document evidences of the TämpitaVihāraya has documented 92 sites to establish iconographic patterns common to all Tämpita Vihārayas.
Structural characteristics such as material for the floor being wooden planks acting as sleepers and the superstructures of the edifice being out of wattle and daub qualifies any structure to be a

*TämpitaVihāraya*
This type of single roomed very small image house emerges in the early Kandyan Era. The TPV are located districts wise as follows:
A specially of the *Tämpita Vihāras*, seen in the Kurunegala, Gampaha, Kandy and Matale Districts, is that statues, murals and decorative motives from the pre-Kandyan and Kandyan period of art can been studied here.
The Vihārageya or Pilimageya is the space where the devotee could visualize the living Buddha, venerate him by reciting PaliGāthās. The innermost chamber or sanctum is the central place of worship. A seated Buddha is usually the main object of worship. The walls of the sanctum are adorned with Buddha statues and paintings of Buddhist monks (Arhats) stand in adoration. Protective gods and other deities and future Buddhas(Bodhisattvas) face the main Buddha image.
Some mentors and donors also appear in the crowded space of the sanctum. The ambulatory narrates the Life of the Buddha (Buddhacharita) and former births (Jātakas), how the future Buddha perfected his virtues with great selflessness (*Pāramita*).
## Examples

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<th>Sanctum</th>
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</thead>
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<td>Kanugala Tampita Viharaya</td>
<td><img src="image1.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image2.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image3.png" alt="Image" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>2 Wayamba</td>
<td>Konduruwapola Tampita Viharaya</td>
<td><img src="image5.png" alt="Image" /></td>
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<tr>
<td>3 Wayamba</td>
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<td><img src="image9.png" alt="Image" /></td>
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<td>4 Southern</td>
<td>Mabotuwana Tampita Viharaya</td>
<td><img src="image13.png" alt="Image" /></td>
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<td>5 Southern</td>
<td>Vatagedara Tampita Viharaya</td>
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<td>6 Southern</td>
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<td>Muvapitiya Tampita Viharaya</td>
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<td>Kempitikanda Tampita Viharaya</td>
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<td>10 Sabaragamuwa</td>
<td>Hingula Tampita Viharaya</td>
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<td><img src="image38.png" alt="Image" /></td>
<td><img src="image39.png" alt="Image" /></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Categorization of the Ichnographic Program in the sanctum

Type A

Main Buddha Statues / Buddhist monks (Arhats) / SuvisiVivarana / Seven Weeks after Enlightenment (Satsatiya), / Boarder design / Gods

Type B

Main Buddha Statue / Buddhist monks (Arhats) / SuvisiVivarana / Seven Weeks after Enlightenment (Satsatiya), / Boarder design / Jātaka (special Vessantara Jātakaya) Gods

Type C

Main Buddha Statue / Buddhist monks (Arhats) / SuvisiVivarana / Seven Weeks after Enlightenment (Satsatiya) / Boarder design / Jātaka (special Vessantara Jātakaya) / hells / Gods
Tämpita Vihāras in the South- Do they have a special iconography?

– This my research question

My Sample: All the TPV in the South

• 01 මාබ ගටුවන් නැති නිකුත් විහාර
Mabotuwana Sri Sumanarama Purana Viharaya

• 02 අගලකඩ ලෝකත්වත් විහාර
Agalakada Dhammarakshita Purana Viharaya

• 03 රන්සාබගොඩ විහාර
Ransegoda Purana Viharaya

• 04 වටබගදර විහාර
Vatagedara Purana Viharaya

• 05 වහාතාගල මහා විහාර
Hathagala Rajamaha Viharaya

• 06 මිගල විහාර
Sigala Purana Viharaya
• 07 Dampahala Vilayaya Purana Viharaya

A few examples, front elevation images on this slide

From the south
Budha statue of the image houses
Doorway
Watagedara Sudarmaramaya