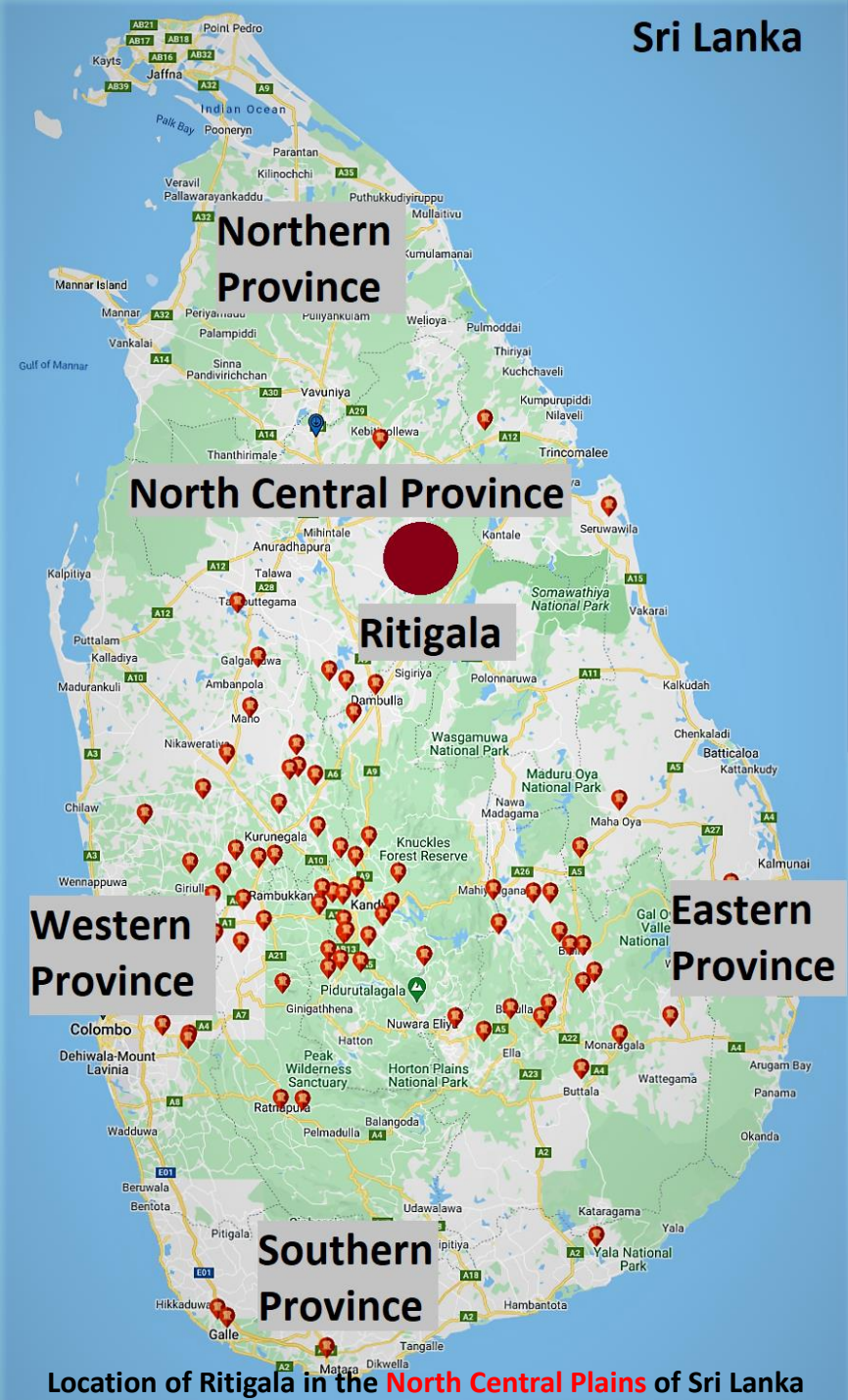


Sri Lanka



The Production of Vishuddhi Spaces and their Subjects: Identity, Meaning, and Space of the 'Ritigala Vishuddhi Haramba' Process and the Establishment in Ritigala, Sri Lanka



Figures: The custodian, Ritigala Sumedha and the Vishuddhi legion (Sumedha 2018;2019)

Location of Ritigala in the North Central Plains of Sri Lanka



Vishuddhi: purification of mind achieved through meditation practices

Haramba: combat fighting

Vishuddhi Haramba: balanced combination of MEDITATION and COMBAT

Figures: The Vishuddhi community (Sumedha 2018;2019)

In the past, the Vishuddhi community was the sole protector of their country



Yet, since there are armed forces to ensure the country's security today, attending the national security is not Vishuddhi community's present-day mission



The Vishuddhi custodian disseminates spiritual knowledge in public and help people develop their mental and physical health through continuous meditation practices

Figures: The Vishuddhi custodian in a public meeting (Sumedha 2018)



Figures: The Vishuddhi community (Sumedha 2018; 2019)

The Vishuddhi custodian maintains a cadre of people who are wise, resilient, and proficient with combat skills, to preserve the combat art for a future day when the time is right



Figure: The Vishuddhi community (Danushka & Kushantha 2011)



Figure: The Vishuddhi community (Danushka & Kushantha 2011)



Figures: The Vishuddhi community (Sumedha 2018; 2019)



Figures: The Vishuddhi community (Danushka & Kushantha 2011)



Figures: The Vishuddhi community (Sumedha 2018; 2019)

- The Vishuddhi Haramba education is strongly tied to their history
- The Vishuddhi Haramba training takes place in informal outdoor spaces under natural weather conditions
- These natural environments and harsh weather conditions make them warriors who could win a battle

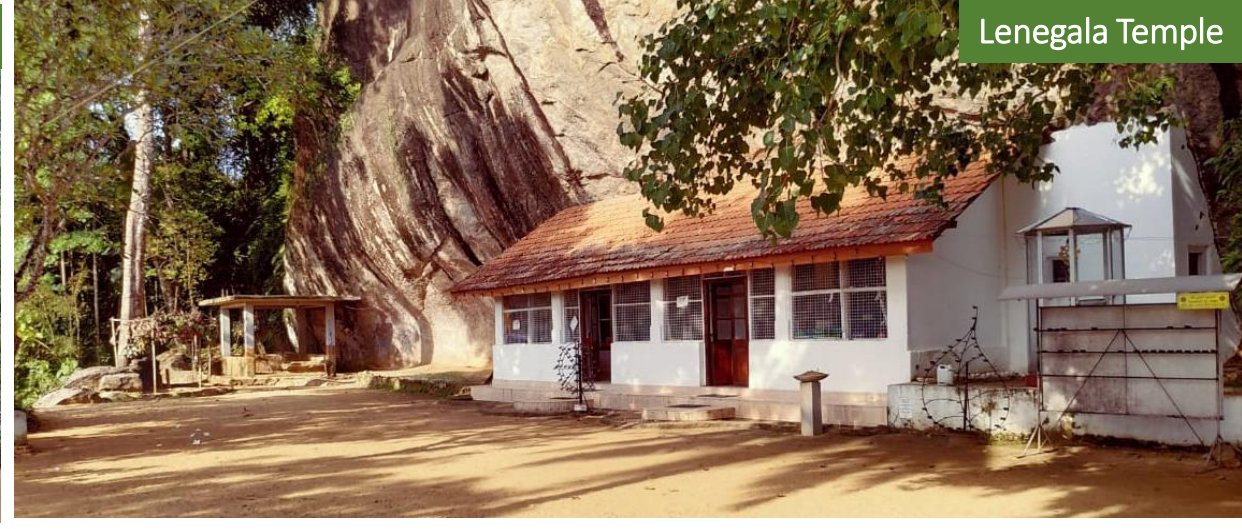
Figures: The Vishuddhi community (Sumedha 2018; 2019)



Pilikuththuwa Temple



Pidurangala Temple

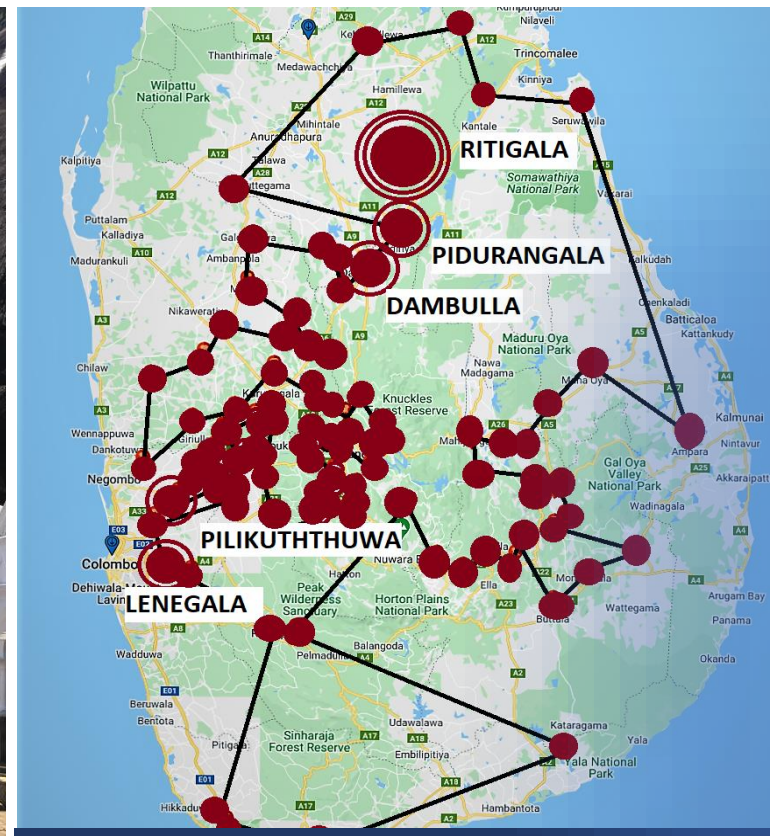


Lenegala Temple



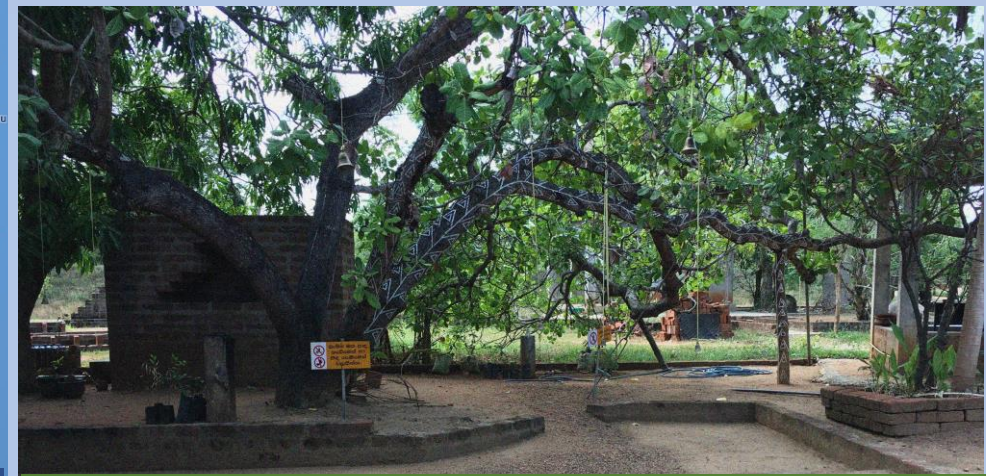
Dambulla Temple

Figures: The Vishuddhi spaces



The Network of 166 Vishuddhi Spaces

The Vishuddhi Haramba education takes place in the network of 166 spaces which was built into a powerful constellation, by the King Walagamba (103-89 BC). These spaces were later transformed into Buddhist temples, making Ritigala their command center



Ritigala Vishuddhi Spiritual Monastery-The command center




Figures: The Lenegala Vishuddhi training ground, Colombo-Sri Lanka



The Vishuddhi community transforms the Buddhist temple grounds into a dynamic lived space as they perform their cultural Pujas and practice Haramba



They employ their creativity, imagination, and traditional knowledge in their daily Vishuddhi combat training

- 
- “SPACE IS SOCIAL RELATIONS” - Henri Lefebvre (1991).
 - David Harvey (1973) identified a social order created through the social meanings given by people to their spaces in different times
 - According to Michael Carrithers (1992), human beings produce their society unlike other social animals.
 - Nihal Perera (2016) confirms, capital and the state are not the sole producers of space, but the ordinary people produce their own space for their daily activities and cultural practices

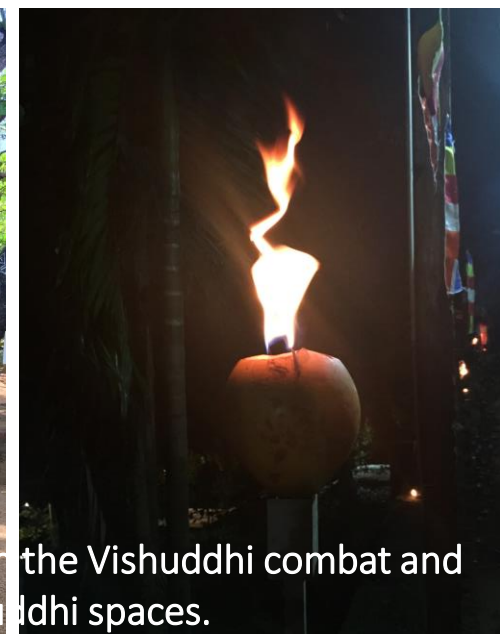
Different communities give different meanings to their space within their own cultural framework and create diversity within the larger society

The Vishuddhi community has a unique practices, culture, and an identity

They are the creators of their own space



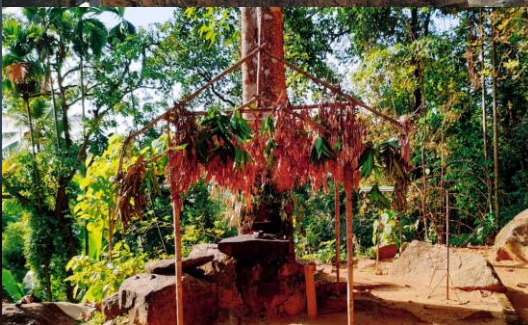
Puja offerings for deities



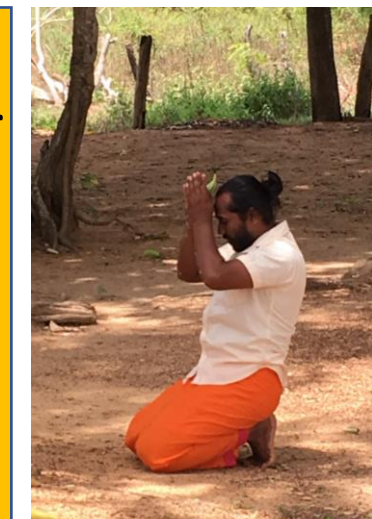
These elements are employed in the Vishuddhi combat and creation of Vishuddhi spaces.



Mahapandam-Wahanse



Their culture has a specific influence on their space and this space is highly important in creating Vishuddhi identities and these individuals



Figures: The elements used in Vishuddhi cultural Pujas



With the Vishuddhi custodian, at his place, Ritigala

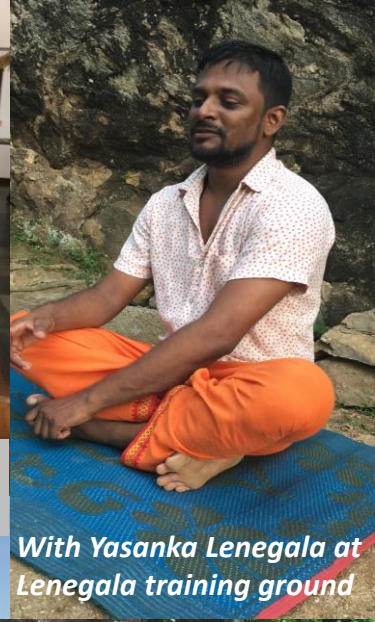


Figures: In the field; Familiarizing Vishuddhi spaces

At Nuga-Wahanse, Ritigala, with Saman Yadipura, a senior Vishuddhi teacher



With the Vishuddhi custodian at Sigiriya



With Yasanka Lenegala at Lenegala training ground



With some senior Vishuddhi teachers at Ritigala



At Ritigala jungle



Pidurangala.

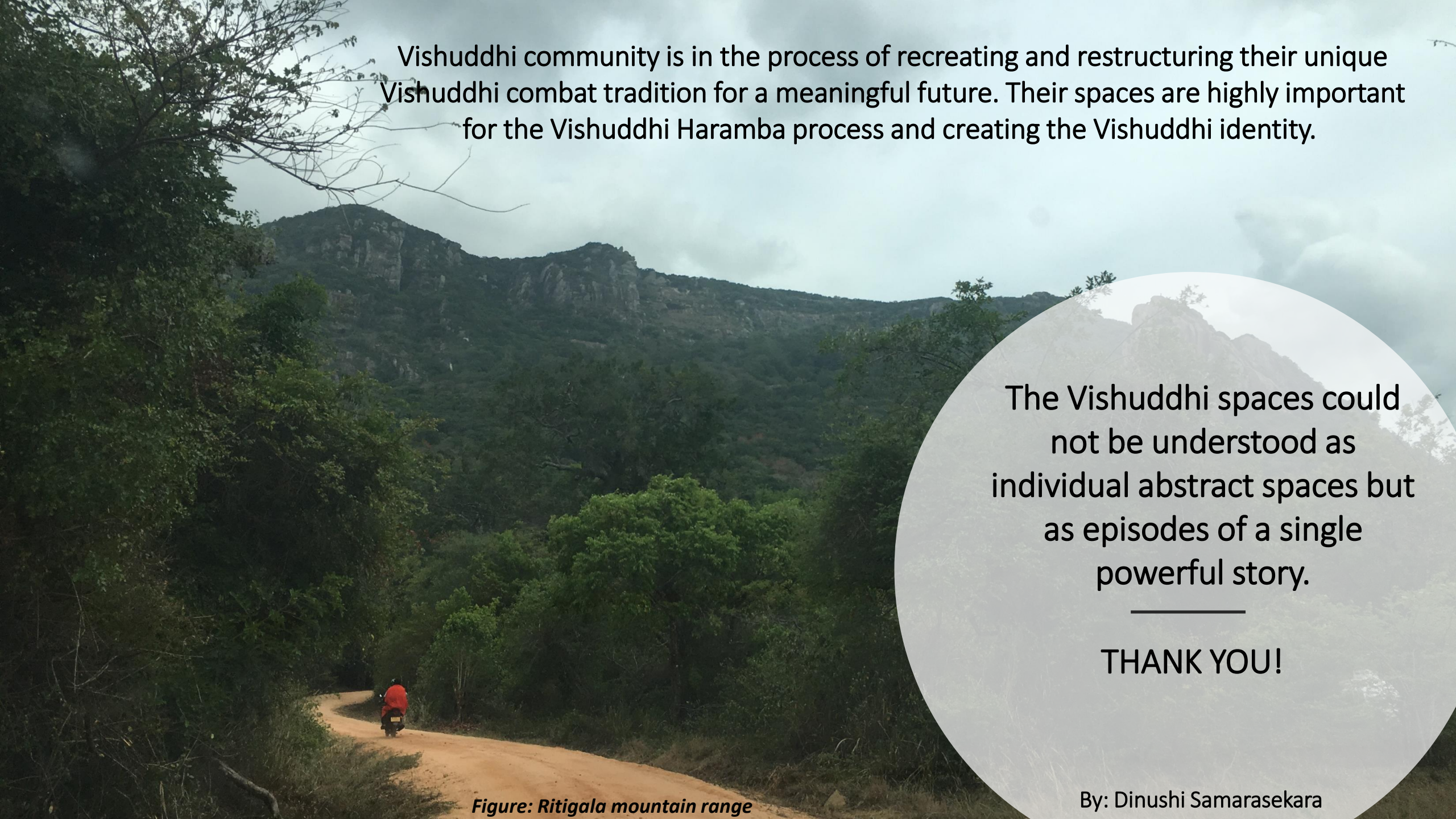


With some Vishuddhi students at Pilikuththuwa .



Dambulla

METHODS & METHODOLOGY:
The inside-out approach, participant observation, and collaborative ethnography provided an intellectual platform to work together with the subjects not only in the field but also in the writing process

A scenic view of the Ritigala mountain range. The foreground shows a dirt road winding through a lush green forest. A person wearing a red jacket is riding a motorcycle on the road. In the background, there are large, rocky mountains under a cloudy sky.

Vishuddhi community is in the process of recreating and restructuring their unique Vishuddhi combat tradition for a meaningful future. Their spaces are highly important for the Vishuddhi Haramba process and creating the Vishuddhi identity.

The Vishuddhi spaces could not be understood as individual abstract spaces but as episodes of a single powerful story.

THANK YOU!

Figure: Ritigala mountain range

By: Dinushi Samarasekara