

Location: Nalanda Mahavihara (Bihar, India)

To me, the ruins of Nalanda University resemble a layout that would be found in action-adventure games. It reminds me of the map in the Tomb Raider franchise (Tomb Raider 2013).

The Nalanda Mahavihara was an ancient Buddhist monastery and a learning center. It was ransacked and destroyed in 1202 AD. The remnants of the Mahavihara capture the past, not only in terms of what the functionality of the building was but also how it was destroyed. The burn marks from the attack can still be seen in the ruins. The foundation of the ruins is fascinating and has a maze-like structure that is fun to navigate through.

The different structures on the site effectively portray the stories of the past. The Mahavihara was masterfully architected, and several flights of stairs still remain after the destruction. Visitors can reach the library by navigating through the maze and by climbing a few flights of stairs. To me, navigating through the maze and trying to enter the tomb-like structure through the top by a combination of jumping and climbing stairs seems like fun. The different leveled grounds and platforms on the buildings make great spaces for climbing. Overall the location has an air of mystery and reverence. Having the base of the pillar-like structures close together doesn't necessarily make sense to me. If I were to use this as an inspiration for a game, I wouldn't have three flights of stairs near each other like seen near the tomb-like structure and would have more vines on the location to allow a swinging mechanic.

