

An Industry in Extinction: The case of Diyatharippu Industry at Pilimathalawa in Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

This research is regarding a diminishing craft called “Diyatharippu” (quartz) industry. Quartz mineral is used as its raw material. Chudamanikya alias crest gems and spectacles are made using these quartz minerals. This industry is not as popular as other crafts like brass or lace but it also has a history like those industries since the Gampola kingdom.

According to Sri Lankan history, kingdoms in Sri Lanka were transiting to the South Western side. So the agricultural economy was withering. Various craft classes were merging around Kandy. With the economical and social environment these crafts were easily embedded in the Kandyan kingdom. Then some crafts spread in Kurunegala and Matale. This Udunuwara Kiriwavla Diyatharippu art succession was offered a royal grant by King Buwanekabahu the 4th in the kingdom of Gampola. This succession was called “Silumina” and they did a massive Diyatharippu industry and many people engaged with this industry though now it remains with only one family. According to folklore, the community that is practicing the industry is the 8th generation. This industry is inherited from one generation to the other due to the cast system.

The objective of this research is to identify a specific industry in extinction, the causes for the extinction and discuss solutions to protect this valuable industry.

Key words: Diyatharippu, crest gems, extinction, cast system, crafts

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