

Decoding and signifying the concept of generating the soft power embedded in crystalline stones as a prevailing feature of Sri Lankan heritage

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Throughout the history man is intuitively attracted to crystalline stones and it has been practising for years and still continues. Proving that, it started evolving from prehistoric period with the discovery of using crystalline stones for a non-tool purpose(9000YBP). Although during the proto historic period, clay technology was widely spread over the stone technology in craftsmanship, many evidences are found indicating the consistent use of crystalline stones and it implies the consumption of crystalline stones regarding non-tool activities had also been considerably increased with time.

During Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa period, it can be identified as a well-established industry of crafting crystalline stones and utilizing them in various functions. Subsequently, it broke out a caste system at the beginning of this era. Further, the glimpses of the initial stages of trading of crystalline stones also have been recorded during this period. Within the time period from 4th to 14th century BC, there was a notable attraction from the Europe and Middle east towards these minerals due to their abundance and diversity.

Geologically, the occurrence of precious and semi-precious stones in the rock-matrix is rare over the state, which draws an intrinsic attention for them. An individual (either living or non-living) bearing such a crystalline stone in any form can acquire a special attraction towards itself and in contrast, it is believed to be the primary cause of generating the soft power.

The study will be focused on the following aspects; the purposes of crystalline stones used, qualities and characteristics of the parties involved in the process, the key attributes of generating the soft power and the transformation of the “role of crystalline stones” from prehistoric period to the present day along with its contribution to the society, culture and heritage.

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