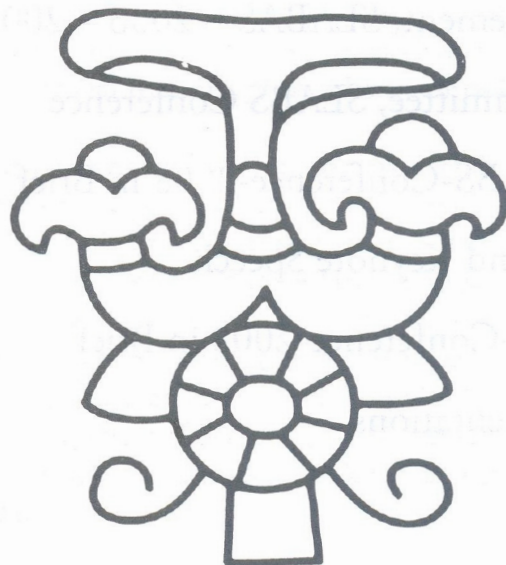


PROCEEDINGS  
OF  
**THE THIRD INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE**  
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**SRI LANKA ASSOCIATION FOR BUDDHIST STUDIES**



**SLABS**

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**Buddhasravaka Bhiksu University**  
**Anuradhapura**  
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**Buddhist Stupas at Anuradhapura:  
An Investigation into the Early Archaeological Activities**  
Anura Manatunga (University of Kelaniya)

Anuradhapura is credited with a large number of Buddhist Stupas including the three highest Stupas in the world. All these Stupas were built during the period of the Anuradhapura Kingdom i.e. circa 3<sup>rd</sup> Century BC- 10<sup>th</sup> Century AD. Along with other monuments, these Stupas became ruins after the abandonment of the region where Anuradhapura was located in the 13<sup>th</sup> Century AD. The Stupas were merely jungle –clad hillocks or mounds when antiquarians noticed them for the first time in the early 19<sup>th</sup> century.

The present study deals with the early antiquarian observations on these stupas and attempts to identify their ‘untouched’ condition as ruins. The way of identification of the ancient names of the ruined Stupas and controversies in that regard will be discussed in this paper. The re-occupation of the Buddhist monks at the Viharas at Anuradhapura and their interest in reconstruction of ancient Stupas will be discussed. The early archaeological excavations, re-constructions and architectural interpretations on the Stupas at Anuradhapura will be dealt with in this paper.