

A Study of Prehistoric Settlement in Sri Lanka Through Archaeological Evidence

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According to the latest excavation, it is revealed that the settlement of Sri Lanka dates back more than 6th century BC. These periods can be divided as Prehistoric, Proto historic and historic period. Main objective of this study is to identify when and how the human settlement of Sri Lanka established in the ancient times. Research method is included both primary and secondary data collection methods excavation reports of prehistoric and historic. First evidence of prehistoric settlements was found from the excavations at Balangoda area by Dr. S.U Deraniyagala and it was identified that those skeleton remains date back to 28000 years ago. They belonged to Homo Sapiens. There are large number of prehistoric sites in Sri Lanka which are extremely rich with evidences of prehistoric settlement sites. Pahiyana Cave 47000-5000 years BP, Batadomba Cave 36000- 13000 years BP, Belilena 30000-9000 years BP, Pothana 5800 years BP, Bellanbadhipelassa 12000 years BP, Aligala 5500-4100 years BP can be mentioned as the examples of prehistoric settlement sites. In Sri Lanka, proto historic period dates back between 2500-600 BC. This period is regarded as transitional period when permanent settlement, agriculture, iron usage, pottery industry can be identified as prominent aspects. As archaeological evidences of this period, Red ware 5300 BC and Black and Red ware 3100 BC from Dorawakakanda site, burials from the Pomparippuwa site such as Ranchamadama, Ibbankatuwa, Haldummulla and remains of a foundation of a house from Ranchamadama were found from several excavation. During the excavation at Anuradhapura inner city covering 5 km, it was excavated evidences of pottery usage, agriculture, brick usage of the ancient shelters in Sri Lanka. According to the inscription found from the sites such as Rambukkana, Diyagama, Pokunuwitw and Galapatha, it is clear that ancient settlement in the country prevailed continuously from historic period. According to the archaeological evidences, it is also clear that the ancient settlements of Sri Lanka which was limited by the historical chronicles, have been prevailed in various areas in different periods.

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