Dating the jungle tide: scientifically dating the abandonment of Anuradhapura

Keir Strickland¹, Ian Simpson ², Gamini Adikari ¹, Melathi Saldin ³, Harendraal Namalgamuwa ⁴

Although a great deal is known about the abandonment of Anuradhapura from the Great Pali chronicles of Sri Lanka (specifically the Culaavamsa), very little archaeological research has been carried out on this period to date. Recent optically stimulated luminescence (OSL) and radiocarbon age determinations from the Anuradhapura hinterland have the potential to confirm or challenge the long established attribution of urban collapse to the 11th century CE. These age determinations will be presented in the context of the wider Anuradhapura (Sri Lanka) Project.

Key words: Anuradhapura, Collapse, Urbanism

¹ Department of Archaeology, Durham University, UK
² School of Biological and Environmental Sciences, University of Stirling, UK
³ Postgraduate Institute of Archaeology, Sri Lanka
⁴ Department of Archaeology, University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka