

The Investigation of the Cultural Landscape in the Proximity of

Vessagiriya in Sri Lanka

D.T. Mendis

Department of Archaeology and Heritage Management, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka.

Thus.mendis@gmail.com

Vessagiriya, situated in the South region, very close to the Capital of Old Anuradhapura, is built up closely by three rock ridges, placed North and Southwards. This rock ridge, which highly influenced the colonization of Anuradhapura, is running on the earth surface in several places, closed to the city. The specialty of these rock ridges by Vessagiriya is that it has highly affected colonization from the Pre -historic period to Middle Historic period.

The main purpose of this research is to identify the cultural landscape built in the techno-cultural periods that can be identified from the close by land of Vessagiriya. For this, the physical and cultural news, found from the excavations as Archaeological sources and inscriptions and literature sources are being used.

According to the physical and cultural data that are found from the excavations, the first human settlements of Vessagiriya backdate to the Mesolithic period. The facts about this were proved through finding out the microlithic tools from the reddish- brown earth zone, by excavations. Over that rock zone, through getting black and red ware and black ware, and also crucibles and their parts that were used to melt the metals, pre-historic cultural period and the proto-history is covered through Brahmic inscriptions placed under the cave stone water gutters; and the mid-history is defined through Buddhist monasteries. According to that, four techno-cultural periods implemented can be identified through the landscape of this Vessagiriya, which is full of physical-cultural facts.

Keywords: *Colonization, Cultural landscape, Human settlement, Mesolithic period*