

An investigative study of how environment management was used in creation of megalithic burials

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Abstract

Proto Historic Man had always recreated their cultures to match with the environment. They have created burial grounds by managing the environment well to bury the body, when one of their tribe died. Culture not only completes man's social needs, it also can be considered as a process that educate people how to live in accordance with the environment. This research intends to identify whether environment management was used in creating burial grounds. Both field studies and non-field studies have been used in this study. Megalithic burials were created by placing a relatively large stone on several small stones without using plaster. These megalithic burials could be found in places like Ibbankatuwa, Yan oya and Rambewa etc. Numbers of cuttings on these stones were very less and it seems they have used stones subjected to erosion most of the time. Selection of places like this has enabled proto historic man to create burials without damaging the environment and to create burials that suits well to the surrounding. They were very tactical in creating burials in the most suitable places. They have mostly used less fertile areas in creating burials and focused on land management to a greater extent. Since all burials have been found near to a water source and cultivating fields it appears they have spent an economic life based on agriculture. Proto Historic Man has used these Megalithic burials to protect his land boundaries to show their powerfulness to keep a physical memory of the dead one and to protect the dead body until they are reborn again, (to protect from invincible forces) (eg. Marble jewelery found in ibbankatuwa.). By studying these burial cultures we can get an idea about use of metal in Sri Lanka, religious and mythical beliefs and practices, natural resource management, political capabilities, animal husbandry and agriculture as well as how they have recreated their cultures to match their environment (eg. Dorawaka Cave, Billewa). Painted Human Skulls, cereal molecules, clay containers were found near to these burial grounds (Pahiyangala, Batadomabalena). Thus, Proto Historic Man had well managed his surrounding environment.

Keywords: *Dead body, Environment management, Megalithic burials, Proto historic man, Stone materials*

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