

READING CULTURAL HERITAGE PATTERNS THROUGH ANCIENT BEADS

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Artifacts are of crucial importance to understanding past human behavior. Among those artifacts, beads provide important material evidence to reconstruct human narratives. It is however not possible to understand the story behind the use and manufacturing of the beads in ancient times correctly. When someone studies past human behavior and their cultural patterns, beads can be identified as a special exchange material. The research area of this study is the ancient Magama city, which is situated in the southern region of Sri Lanka. Archaeological excavation has been carried out in the Lower Kridioya Basin (LKB) where ancient Magama had been located. 151 beads have been reported in this excavation, and that collection of beads is the sample of this research. The objective of this paper is to study the cultural development in the ancient Magama city based on the beads sample. The research problem is how to study cultural patterns of the ancient Magama city through beads in LKB. Several methods were used in the research. Firstly, literary sources were used for the collection of qualitative data. Secondly, ancient beads were studied, which had been found in the Magma city, using the quantitative method. Observation was used as the primary data collection technique. The present study identified new evidence based on an analysis of this beads sample. The findings provided insights into the technical skills, aesthetic skills, political stability and deterioration and urban degeneration of the period in question. Based on the findings, it could be argued that beads constitute an important form of archaeological evidence for a study of the ancient Magama city to identify ancient human behavior and cultural patterns.

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