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**Stone as a Resource Medium in Proto Historic to Late  
Historic Built Environment of Sri Lanka**



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## **Abstract -**

### **Stone as a recourse medium in proto historic to late historic built environment of Sri Lanka**

Stone become an important medium for the creative needs of humans for over thousand of years in history. The relationship between stone and human date back to the pre historic period in Sri Lanka. Pre historic tools were in the main produced from the stone in addition to wood and bone. The knowledge of using stone continued from the pre historic period through the Iron age and in to the historic period. It was the most reliable resource medium in the historic period when combined with the knowledge of Iron and steel.

In the present study, the classification of stone used in buildings and monuments is based on the pattern and functional use of stone in such activity. The classification also reflect the identification of scientific and engineering approach to stone monuments. It is evident that the ancient technicians were aware of scaffold, slant from and leverage system. It is also significant that they had developed translocation skills which are proved by geological studies. Studies on the raw material of stone types indicate that the ancient craftsmen knew of conventional qualities of rock (especially foliation plans, variation between sedimentary and metamorphic rock) Ecological and archaeological studies indicate that they invariably selected a site for building with a source rock to provide the raw material.

This study also at the development of an interpretative model on the scientific knowledge of the technology of stone use and its products. In addition social adaptation of the technology, its craft people and the transmission of knowledge to the future generation are some of the areas touched in this study. With the use of ethno archaeology, we are also able to understand such transmission of knowledge and social adaptation in Sri Lanka. In addition to the technology, this study also provides an insight to the arts and crafts ornamentation on stone in ancient Sri Lanka and also internal and external influences that shaped the wonderful tradition of stone crafting in the built environment and the sculptured art.