

A Study of the Ancient Relationship between Sri Lanka and China based on the Artefacts at Jethavanārāmaya Buddhist Monastery Site in Anurādhapura

*Ven. Uduwila Uparathana*¹

The Jethavanārāma Buddhist monastery is situated in Anurādhapura, Sri Lanka. This site is very important for the study of the evolution of Buddhism in the relevant period. During 4th century A.D the Mahāyāna Buddhist tradition was introduced to Sri Lanka and many foreigners came to the country to visit the Buddhist monasteries and to learn Buddhism. According to the records of the Chinese traveller Fa-hien, the Jethavanārāmaya Buddhist monastery was a very beautiful place containing many luxurious items. Further, the monastery's importance is heightened thanks to its geographical location; the site was in close proximity to the main point of the ancient silk route in Sri Lanka. Jethavanārāmaya bears a number of artefacts such as pottery, beads, ivory, gold, iron and other objects evoking Sri Lanka's ancient relations with other neighbouring countries. The site is a treasure of ancient materials. There are several types of artefacts which show the relationship between Sri Lanka and China; especially ceramic ware and other luxurious items such as ivory objects and beads. The present study intends to focus on the ancient relationship between Sri Lanka and China based on the artefacts found at the Jethavanārāmaya Buddhist monastery site.

Key words: monastery, ancient relationship, treasure, artefacts

¹*Postgraduate and Research Institute in Archaeology, Deccan College, Pune, India.
uparathanaud@gmail.com*