



10 years ESJ  
*Special edition*

**Premakumara de Silva**  
University of Colombo, Sri Lanka

Submitted: 31 August 2020  
Accepted: 07 September 2020  
Published: 31 December 2020

Corresponding author:  
Premakumara de Silva

DOI: [10.19044/esj.2020.v16n39p21](https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2020.v16n39p21)



Copyright 2020 Silva P.  
Distributed under Creative Commons  
BY-NC-ND 4.0 *OPEN ACCESS*

## Youth and Youth's Religiosity in Sri Lanka<sup>1</sup>

### Abstract

Sri Lankan youth and youth religiosity has indicated that youth as being hopeless and revolutionary, but this study shows that it is not always through when one closely looks at the everyday life of youth in a more ethnographical sense. The ethnographical accounts that researcher has presented; indicates the way young people behave, contest, and negotiate in the context of a sacred site as well as how youth assimilate and transform their religious heritage quite different even though they proclaim their affinity with religion. Youth pilgrims come to Sri Pada to worship and to ask for help. No doubt many youths do go to Sri Pāda for more than worshipping the sacred footprint and the deity, or than seeking favour from its divine powers for their worries and frustration. This paper explained their 'sacred' intentions are combined with the achievement of maximum pleasure. Both the pleasurable and the religious dimensions of these specific pilgrim groups were explored through the accounts of personal experiences (e.g., through case studies and memories of pilgrims). These youth pilgrims visit Sri Pada with different motivations and intentions, both 'religious' and 'secular'. The interconnecting of both sacred and secular aspects of Sri Lankan youth have not been considered when they were identified as a sociological category and this paper is suggested to overcome that conceptual inadequacy of youth research in Sri Lanka.

**Keywords:** youth, religiosity, sacred site, secula

<sup>1</sup> Some of the material that I use here has already been published in my other work (2019, 2016).

Cite as:  
Silva P., (2020). Youth and Youth's Religiosity in Sri Lanka. *European Scientific Journal, ESJ*, 16(39), 21.  
<https://doi.org/10.19044/esj.2020.v16n39p21>

Approximately 26% of the Sri Lankan population is comprised of youth. National Human Development Report (2014) published by the UNDP revealed that 54.1% of Sri Lankan youth do not have a close friend who belongs to a different religious or ethnic group other than their own (Youth and Development Report- UNDP 2014).

## Introduction

Youth insurgency in 1971 marked the beginning of an attempt to academically understand ‘youth problem’ in Sri Lanka. Sociologically speaking, the first attempt of such an analysis, however, was made by Gananath Obeyesekere to investigate the social background of the youth-driven insurgency in 1971.<sup>2</sup> However, inaugurating and establishing ‘youth as a sociological category’ in particular and youth research in general, was instrumental by Siri Hettige, a leading Sociologist of Colombo school of Sociology. The works of Hettige have subsequently helped to deepen our understanding of how Sri Lankan youth have positioned themselves within broader social, economic, political, and cultural developments.<sup>3</sup> However, there exists no systematic analysis of their religiosity<sup>4</sup>. Based on data from a nationwide youth survey in 1999/2000, Hettige yet states that “80% of Sri Lankan youth consider themselves to be ‘religious’ irrespective of their educational attainment”.<sup>5</sup> In researcher’s view, however, the validity of such a statistical claim needs to be grounded through a thorough analysis of young people’s behaviour from within the microcosm of their day-to-day encounters in postcolonial Sri Lanka. In what follows, I will realize such an analysis to the religiosity of young pilgrims to one of the popular sacred sites known as Sri Pada (sacred footprint).

## The Background

Between August 2001, and September 2002, and 2006 and 2017 in brief, the researcher carried out ethnohistorical research on one of the most popular pilgrimage sites in Sri Lanka, popularly known as Sri Pada<sup>6</sup> or the temple of the sacred footprint. The place is also known to the English-speaking

---

<sup>2</sup> Obeyesekere, Gananath, “Some Comments on the Social Backgrounds of the April 1971 Insurgency in Sri Lanka,” *Journal of Asian Studies* 33, no. 3 (1974): 367-384

<sup>3</sup> Hettige, S.T., ed., *Unrest or Revolt: Some Aspects of Youth Unrest in Sri Lanka* (Colombo: German Cultural Institute, 1988); Hettige, S.T., ed. *Globalization, Social Change and Youth* (Colombo: German Cultural Institute, 1998); Hettige, S.T., “Sri Lankan Youth: Profiles and Perspectives,” in *Sri Lankan Youth: Challenges and Responses*, eds. S.T. Hettige and Markus Mayer (Colombo: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung, 2002): pages 24–67.

<sup>4</sup> See de Silva P. (2019) and for a different aspect of youth life K.T.Silva (1997).

<sup>5</sup> Hettige and Mayer, *Sri Lankan Youth*, 30.

<sup>6</sup> I use Sri Pada in this paper quite loosely and without intending to emphasize any religious connotation.

world by the name “Adam’s Peak”. Due to the long presence of colonial powers on the island, the Anglicized name has taken deep roots in regional discourses and is still widely used.<sup>7</sup> This temple is situated on a lofty mountain called *Samanala* (Sinh., butterfly), roughly 7,360 ft (or 2,200 m) above sea level. It rises dramatically on the south-western edge of the central hills as a part of the boundary between Sabaragamuwa Province and Central Province. This tropical forest ‘mountain territory’, or *Samanala adaviya* (Sinhala.), comes under the jurisdiction of the guardian deity Saman (see de Silva 2008). This deity, along with the sacred footprint, is venerated at this remote temple in the mountain jungles.

Historically speaking, Sri Pada temple is a remarkable place of worship for people belonging to all four major religions; Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity and Islam in Sri Lanka. Irrespective of their religious affiliation, worshippers share the same object of worship – the sacred footprint – but associate different interpretations with it (see: de Silva 2007). The largest ethnoreligious community on the island, the Sinhala Buddhists, maintains that the footprint-shaped indentation at the top of the mountain site is that of Buddha, implanted during his third mythical visit to the island. Tamil Hindus consider it to be the footprint of Lord Siva (Sinh., *Sivan-oli-padam*). Muslims hold the belief that it belongs to Adam (*Baba-Adamalei*), as do Christians who hence coined the name ‘Adam’s Peak’. Sri Pada, therefore, represents a very important place of worship for many centuries and across ethnic-religious boundaries.

Like to some other major pilgrimage sites in Sri Lanka, thousands of pilgrims annually make the journey to Sri Pada to worship the sacred footprint. In the past, many people climbed up the mountain intending to acquire religious merit. Today, however, people visit for many different reasons. The majority of pilgrims coming to Sri Pada are Sinhala Buddhists. Whilst Hindu Tamils also visit the site, they are small in number and mostly come from the tea estates in the area surrounding the temple (see de Silva 2018). Unlike in the past, Hindu, Muslim, Catholic, and Protestant pilgrims are thus notably absent due to religious and ethnic tensions prevailing in postcolonial Sri Lanka<sup>8</sup>. In the recent past, however, non-Buddhist youth participation in Sri

---

<sup>7</sup> See de Silva 2014. ‘Religion, History and Colonial Powers: Colonial Knowledge’ Productions on Sri Pada as ‘Adam’s Peak’. *South Asian Journal of Social Sciences (SAJSS)* vol. 5.

And also de Silva 2016. ‘Anthropological Studies on South Asian Pilgrimage: Case of Buddhist Pilgrimage in Sri Lanka’ In *Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage* vol. 4 No 1.

<sup>8</sup> As I have discussed elsewhere in detail, this pilgrimage has now been transformed, constructed or rather (re)ordered into an ethnic majoritarian Buddhist space, concurrent with the rise of Sinhala Buddhist nationalism in postcolonial Sri Lanka (see: De Silva, 2013).

Pada pilgrimage has notably visible in the context of post-war Sri Lanka.

### **Youth's Religiosity in Sri Lanka**

The only existing study on youth's religiosity in Sri Lanka is by Seneviratne and Wickermaratne. It focuses on the collective representations that have emerged in connection to a new form of religiosity, popularly known as *Bodhipuja*, which became a centrally visible phenomenon particularly among "educated urban middle-class youth in the mid 1970s. These authors argue that the popularity of the young Buddhist monk, Ariyadhamma as well as his new religious ritual innovation of *Bodhipuja* and the secular musical performances of a popular singer, Victor Ratnayaka as the pathways to temporarily ameliorate the *asahanaya* (Sinhala; hopeless, strain or oppression) of the youth. According to Seneviratne and Wickermaratne, the new *Bodhipuja* provides a rite of collective amelioration of hopeless and oppressed conditions of young Sri Lankan<sup>9</sup>.

Whilst socio-psychological factors provide one possible explanation for the increasing appeal of pilgrimage sites like Sri Pada to young people. My study, however, pursues a different approach by answering the following three questions: What do young people do when they come to Sri Pada? What do they say about their journey to Sri Pada? How do they interrelate notions of place and route? By inquiring into these questions, researcher shows how a study of youth can provide crucial insights into our understanding of the various linkages between religious and non-religious behaviours in the age of globalization. Researcher therefore, concentrates on 'youth's religiosity' by exploring how religious representations, practices and emotions become interlinked with quotidian activities during the ritual journeys of young people to Sri Pada, one of the most popular pilgrimage sites in the country. My ethnographic account explores how young Sri Lankans (trans-) form their religious heritage and assimilates it into their everyday activities whilst visiting to a sacred site.

### **Youth's Religiosity at Sri Pada**

The emergence of young pilgrim groups going to popular pilgrimage sites like Sri Pada describes a relatively recent phenomenon, not least because traditionally these ritual journeys were conducted collectively by entire villages or kin groups, and such groups were steered by veteran pilgrim leaders known as *nadegura* (Sinhala). As the researcher has explained elsewhere, the emergence of new group leaders, especially amongst youth pilgrims,

---

'(Re)ordering of Postcolonial Sri Pada in Sri Lanka: Buddhism, State, and Nationalism' *History and Sociology of South Asia*, 7(2) 155–176).

<sup>9</sup> H.L. Seneviratne and S. Wickermaratne, "Bodhipuja: Collective Representations of Sri Lanka Youth," *American Ethnologist* 7, no. 4 (1980): 734–743; 736.

distinguishes this emergent from traditional forms of pilgrimage.<sup>10</sup> Surprisingly, anthropologists have so far neither analysed such changes<sup>11</sup> nor identified the “youth pilgrim” as a distinctive and noteworthy category. One possible reason for this lack of scholarly attention is the often rather small number of ‘youth pilgrims’ at those sites (see Table 1). However, a focus on the whole spectrum of pilgrims, including youth, helps to scrutinize the diversity and complexity of ritual journeys – as they are conducted by individuals and groups – to some popular sites in postcolonial Sri Lanka. My point here is that whilst the anthropology of pilgrimage must be able to speak to more than one theoretical paradigm at a time, it so far seems to be divided between Turner’s *communitas* and Eade and Sallnow’s post-modern notion of “competing discourse.” As Coleman puts it correctly: “Neither [Turnerian] *communitas* nor contestation [i.e. competing discourse] should themselves become fetishized to produce neatly symmetrical anthropological theory, made up of views that appear to constitute a simple binary opposition.”<sup>12</sup> As Colman suggests that to overcome such theoretical inadequacy “we should not allow such ethnographically rich spaces [pilgrimage sites] to become prisons of limited comparison.”<sup>13</sup> I argue that the anthropology of youth and youth’s studies in general, is one promising entry point into these ‘rich spaces’ because it is especially young people who negotiate and (trans-)form inherited forms of religious and non-religious behaviour.

Following this approach, researcher recognizes ‘youth pilgrims’ as a distinctive category in the context of the Sri Pada ritual journey, not least because Sri Pada, unlike some other sites, attracts a relatively high number of young pilgrims (see Table 1).<sup>14</sup> Though many youth pilgrims seem to come

---

<sup>10</sup> See De Silva, 2019.

<sup>11</sup> E.g., Obeyesekere, Gananath, *Medusa’s Hair* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981); Seneviratne, H.L., *Rituals of the Kandyan State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1978); Nissan, Elizabeth, *The Sacred City of Anuradhapura: Aspects of Sinhalese Buddhism and Nationhood*, unpublished Ph. D thesis, University of London: 1985; Bastin, Rohan, *The Domain of Constant Excess: Plural Worship at the Munnesvaram Temples in Sri Lanka* (New York/Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2002).

<sup>12</sup> Coleman, Simon, “Do you Believe in Pilgrimage?: *Communitas*, contestation and beyond,” *Anthropological Theory* 2, no. 3 (2002): 355–370; 363, italics in original.

<sup>13</sup> Coleman, “Do you Believe in Pilgrimage, 366.

<sup>14</sup> This was a random survey that was carried out over some weekends and holidays between January and May 2002. To collect numerical data at a major pilgrimage site is by no means an easy task. Large numbers of pilgrims come and go and the interviews took place in an extremely busy situation, particularly after the long and tiring climb of the mountain. There is also limited space at the temple, preventing the pilgrims from staying long at the premises. In view of such difficulties, it is hard to judge how far the information obtained was reliable. Altogether we interviewed 924 pilgrims. Given that pilgrims tend to arrive in groups, we tried our best to ensure that members of the same group were not interviewed more than once at different times or over and over again.

from a lower social background, there is a considerable number of “lower middle class” youth also present (e.g. children of teachers, traders, and clerical workers).<sup>15</sup>

**Table 1: Age of pilgrims at Sri Pada**

Age	Frequency	Percent
15-19	142	15
20-29	310	33
30-39	127	14
40-49	133	14
50-59	135	15
60-69	53	6
70+	24	3
<b>Total</b>	924	100

Source: own survey (2002)

According to Table 1, nearly half (48%) of the interviewed pilgrims belonged to the age group between 15-19 and 20-29 years and most of them (60%) were young men.<sup>16</sup> This age group constitutes around 30% of the total population of the country (see Census of 2011). Why is such a large contingent of the youth population attracted to Sri Pada? In my view, it is not easy to discard their presence at Sri Pada as ‘pleasure seekers’ or ‘unfaithful pilgrims’ as some of my elderly informants have described by referring to their behaviour at the site. Attitudes of local people in the Sri Pada area towards youth pilgrims might be well demonstrated through the following phrase I picked up from a child selling cigars to passing young people and calling them “mode young (westernized/disco dance type) brothers have Rambo brand cigars and you need only one such cigar for the way up to the temple.” (my translation from Sinhala). Many local people believe young people come to Sri Pada not for worship but for various pleasures such as smoking cigars and cannabis, teasing girls, drinking alcohol, and singing pop songs and playing pop music. Let me briefly discuss this agnostic view of youth pilgrims at Sri Pada.

One of the main stated objectives of liberal economic reforms in Sri Lanka in the late 1970s was to create more employment opportunities for unemployed youth. Yet the kind of employment opportunities created was not in keeping with the aspirations of a majority of unemployed youth. According to many writers on Sri Lanka, young people have mainly been thought of in that country as a problem (e.g., Lakshman 2002, Hettige 2002). They have

<sup>15</sup> I have also noticed a small number of environmentally concerned English speaking urban middle class youth operating at Sri Pada under respective NGOs. They are basically there for conducting a range of environment awareness programs for pilgrims rather than having any devotion to the sacred centre.

<sup>16</sup> Out of the 924 people we interviewed at Sri Pada 40% were female and 60% male.



been seen as an anti-establishment and violent group of people. Scholars (Hettige 1988, 1998, 2002, Fernando 2002, Thangarajah 2002) argue that Sri Lankan youth have been neglected and alienated from the socio-political and economic mainstream of Sri Lankan society. This led to youth unrest in the south in 1971 and 1987 and the north and east from the 1970s onwards. It is in the above context the agnostic view on Sri Lankan youth must be understood.

Youth behaviour and activities at Sri Pada have become constantly attacked by certain individuals and institutions. One elderly person told me: “today we don’t see people come for worship, instead they come for pleasure.” Similar criticisms can easily be found in newspaper articles and editorials. No doubt many youths do go to Sri Pada for more than worshipping the sacred footprint and the deity Saman, to seek favour from these divine powers for their worries and frustration. Their behaviour, elaborate cosmetic efforts, and display of fashion and clothing, clearly indicate some of their intentions in visiting Sri Pada. Many youth pilgrims researcher spoke to clearly said that their visit to Sri Pada was both based on worship and on seeking “fun” (Sinh. *vinoda*). Only a small minority emphasized that their presence at Sri Pada either was entirely for fun or just for worshipping (Sinh. *vandinna*) the sacred footprint. The youth groups who entirely seek “fun” at Sri Pada, as we found, visit Sri Pada more than once in a pilgrimage season. As researcher observed, a large number of such groups who were not religiously motivated had come from both Buddhist and non-Buddhist religious backgrounds. These small groups of young men and women do not treat the pilgrimage to Sri Pada as a serious ritual journey today. Admittedly, they may worship the footprint and the deity Saman, and even offer a few coins (*panduru*) at those two places, but on their admission, they are visiting to Sri Pada for pleasure (*vinoda*) rather than because of any great devotion to Buddha or the deity Saman and other divine figures.

This situation is somewhat like Jock Stirrat’s description of the Sinhala Catholic youth who visit the main Catholic pilgrimage sites in Sri Lanka, particularly Madhu and Talawila. Stirrat reports that “most of these pleasure-seekers are young men, and the place where they have all this fun is in the jungle around the shrine. They try to entice their girlfriends, smoke *ganja*, drink alcohol, and visit prostitutes.”<sup>17</sup> Researcher) can easily add a few other activities to Stirrat’s list such as chasing girls, sometimes women, to exchanging addresses and telephone/mobile numbers. Such pleasurable activities are also not uncommon among young men in today’s Sri Pada. Though youth visiting to Sri Pada engage in such ‘fun activities’ as they do practice during other major rituals journeys to the sacred sites in Sri Lanka

---

<sup>17</sup> Stirrat (1982, 409).

when we closely analysis of their behaviour at those sites it always seems to be a mixture of religious and non-religious.

### **Religious and Non-religious behaviour of youth**

Gombrich and Obeyesekere have interpreted the word '*vinoda*' (pleasure) about Sinhala-Buddhist pilgrims going to Kataragama and concluded: "In Sinhala consciousness *vinoda* does not contradict the "sacred" aspects of Kataragama but is intrinsic to the latter" (1988: 192). In Kataragama, *vinoda* refers to the joyous, playful dimension of the god's cult, which therefore does not contradict with pilgrim's behaviour. But can such an interpretation help us to understand the distinct forms of youth behaviour at Sri Pada?

Traditionally, pilgrims express the religious quality of Sri Pada through the use of devotional language and restricted forms of behaviour. In earlier times the pilgrimage to Sri Pada was conducted to acquire a substantial amount of merit.<sup>18</sup> This is why elderly people also refer to it as a '*pin gamana*' [Sinh., merit making journey] through which people would gain strength in their day-to-day dealings. But today the journey to the Sri Pada temple cannot be understood as an activity that relates to the 'spiritual world', since the religious dimension of the journey is increasingly entangled with 'this worldly' [material] affairs such as the matters relating to personal and family crises. Today as we observed among youth groups some extremely mundane desires such as pleasure-seeking behaviour is also evident as a part of the journey. This is particularly visible in modify devotional language that is used by the youth pilgrims. Instead of relying on a traditional devotional language, these young people adopt a more mundane day-to-day language.

However, in my view, youth groups do not only conduct these journeys to seeking fun. It always seems to be a mixture of religious and non-religious activities. At the temple, they do engage in personal religious practices, particularly making vows and wishes (Sinh., *prartanāva*) on issues that are most common to young people in contemporary Sri Lanka such as unemployment, education, marriage and high aspiration of the life.

Whilst this particular voice of a so-called youth pilgrim conceptualizes the Sri Pada journey increasingly as an undertaking done for fun, most of the narration of youth pilgrims also indicates that the phenomenon of youth pilgrimage cannot be understood fully when looking at the pleasure dimension alone. Because many youths are not just visiting to seek fun and they also seek blessing and help from the sacred footprint and its guardian deity Saman for their most pressing mundane issues such as unemployment, marriage and

---

<sup>18</sup> Ananda K. Coomaraswamy identifies the pilgrimage to Sri Pada as journey of acquiring merit and the transferring merit [to the deity] (1908, 110).



education. Most of the youth that was interviewed enthusiastically confirmed that they enjoyed the journey in general and the stay at Sri Pada in particular. Many of them come to Sri Pada with friends, mostly from their neighbourhoods or workplaces, and sometimes also with schoolmates or classmates. Many groups predominantly consist of young males, but sometimes there are mixed-sex groups. However, at Sri Pada it is hard to find youth groups that consist of young women alone.

The pleasure activities in which young people are engaged during their journey to Sri Pada include; the drinking of alcohol, smoking, river bathing, the singing of modified devotional songs (*tunsarana*) and local pop songs, dancing and teasing girls. But as we see in the above narration, youths also make vows at the temple and ensure the safety of their journey to Sri Pada, and similarly they make vows and wishes (*parthana*) on their mundane matters as well. Many youth groups observed the five precepts before the commencement of the climbing and at the temple, and they worshiped the footprint (with or without great devotion to it). These are all common practices that each pilgrim would perform once they come to the Sri Pada temple. Some youth even go beyond such common practice by bringing their private problems to the temple's divine power for assistance. Many youths told me that when they come to the temple they wanted to stick to common religious practices, and for them, anything like fun would take place beyond the sacred boundaries of the temple. One member of a youth pilgrim group from Avissawella expressed this as follows:

We came to Sri Pada as Buddhists, we think that we would get a blessing (Sinh., *asirvadaya*) by coming here. Hence, though we enjoyed ourselves on our way to Sri Pada [the temple] we were never expecting to have a "fun" (Engl.) at the temple.

When interpreting such statements, however, one must not forget the fact that disciplinary measures have been taken up by the temple authorities during the last decade or so to control what they called "disrespectful behaviour" by pilgrims, particularly young ones, at the temple.<sup>19</sup> Though the

---

<sup>19</sup> One such measure is the deployment of a considerable number of policemen both in uniform and civil to maintain the "conformity of the temple." These were more particular about the youth (mis)behaviour at the temple premises; they are not allowed to wear head caps, or footwear, take photographs, make noises, music, eat etc. During my fieldwork, a few drunken youth pilgrims were taken into police custody. In addition to the temple's police post there are five other police posts operating during the pilgrimage season to tackle the "misbehaviour" of the pilgrims and the illicit trading. According to a police report during the 2000/2001 pilgrimage season 205 liquor bottles belonging to the pilgrims were confiscated and 52 illegitimate liquor-selling spots and 16 *ganja* sellers were tracked down. Also, at the temple, an announcement was constantly made through a PA system on certain things that pilgrims should not do in the sacred area (Sinh., *udamaluva*).

“disrespectful behaviour” of pilgrims seems to be controlled on the temple premises, the boundaries between the ‘sacred’ and ‘secular’ are rather fluid at Sri Pada. Though the sacred character of the Sri Pada temple has been reinforced by the authorities, the territorial extent of the sacred area remains rather unclear. This is a major difference to many other state sponsored national pilgrimage sites in Sri Lanka, such as Kandy, Anuradhapura, and Kataragama where sacred geography is marked out. The sacred boundary that we see at the Sri Pada temple today, has been reinforced by the temple authorities to tackle the emerging ‘non-religious’ behaviour of the youth. Though such measures have been taken by the temple authority the youth groups continuously challenging the existing traditional structure of pilgrimage by transforming and adding new innovative religious and non-religious practices and belief into the (post) modern visiting to Sri Pada

### **Conclusion**

Like other pilgrims, the “youth pilgrims” come to Sri Pada to worship and to ask for help. No doubt many youths do go to Sri Pada for more than worshipping the sacred footprint and the deity, or than seeking favour from its divine powers for their worries and frustration. But as I have explained their ‘sacred’ intentions are combined with the achievement of maximum pleasure. Both the pleasurable and the religious dimensions of these specific pilgrim groups have been explored through the accounts of personal experiences (e.g., through case studies and memories of pilgrims). These youth pilgrims visit Sri Pada with different motivations and intentions, both ‘religious’ and ‘secular’. My point here is that both religious attainment and non-religious experiences are equally important when it comes to understanding the pilgrim groups in general and youth groups in particular, at a religious site like Sri Pada. So, in this paper, researcher showed some forms of “secular” and “sacred” behavior of youth pilgrims who can be identified as a separate sociological or anthropological category in the context of pilgrimage to sacred sites as well as the Sri Lankan youth culture in general. The ethnographical accounts that I have presented indicate the way young people behave, contest, and negotiate in the context of a sacred site as well as how youth assimilate and transform their religious heritage quite differently even though they proclaim their affinity with religion. As a limited study on Sri Lankan youth and youth religiosity has indicated that youth as being hopeless and revolutionary but this study shows that it is not always true when one closely looks at the everyday life of youth.

### **References**

1. Bastin, Rohan, (2002) *The Domain of Constant Excess: Plural Worship at the Munnesvaram Temples in Sri Lanka*. Berghahn Books.

2. Coleman, Simon, (2002) "Do you believe in pilgrimage?: Communitas, contestation and beyond," *Anthropological Theory* 2, no. 3: 355–370.
3. de Silva, Premakumara, (2019) 'To Worship Our 'Boss' (the Buddha):" Youth Religiosity in a Popular Pilgrimage Site in Sri Lanka' in Jürgen Schaflechner and Christopher Bergmann (eds.) *Rituals Journeys in South Asia*. London: Routledge
4. de Silva, Premakumara, (2018) 'Competitive Sharing: Sri Lankan Hindus and Up-country Tamil Religiosity at the Sri Pada Temple' *South Asianist: Journal of South Asian Studies*, University of Edinburgh. Vol 6 No 1 76-97.
5. de Silva, Premakumara, (2013) '(Re)ordering of Postcolonial Sri Pada in Sri Lanka: Buddhism , State, and Nationalism' *History and Sociology of South Asia*, 7(2) 155–176
6. de Silva, Premakumara (2014) 'Religion, History and Colonial Powers: Colonial Knowledge' Productions on Sri Pada as 'Adam's Peak' In *South Asian Journal of Social Sciences (SAJSS)* vol. 5. 21-34.
7. de Silva, Premakumara (2016) 'Anthropological Studies on South Asian Pilgrimage: Case of Buddhist Pilgrimage in Sri Lanka' In *Journal of Religious Tourism and Pilgrimage* vol. 4 No 1.
8. Eade, J. and Sallnow, M.J. (1991) eds, *Contesting The Sacred: The Anthropology of Christian Pilgrimage*. London: Routledge.
9. Fernando, Laksiri, (2002) 'Youth and Politics: Why They Rebel?' in S.T. Hettige and Markus Mayer (eds), *Sri Lankan Youth: Challenges and perspectives*. Colombo: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.
10. Gombrich, R.F. and Obeyesekere, G. (1988) *Buddhism Transformed: Religious Change in Sri Lanka*, Princeton: Princeton University Press.
11. Hettige, S.T., (1988) ed., *Unrest or Revolt: Some Aspects of Youth Unrest in Sri Lanka* . Colombo: German Cultural Institute.
12. Hettige, S.T., (1998) ed. *Globalization, Social Change and Youth*. Colombo: German Cultural Institute.
13. Hettige, S.T. (2002) "Sri Lankan Youth: Profiles and Perspectives," in *Sri Lankan Youth: Challenges and Responses*, eds. S.T. Hettige and Markus Mayer. Colombo: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung: pages 24-67.
14. Hettige, S.T., Graner, E. and Amarasuriya, H. (2014) eds. *Youth and Social Transformation Improving Life Chances of Youth in Sri Lanka*. Friedrich Ebert Stiftung and Social Policy Analysis & Research Centre, University of Colombo,
15. Lakshman, W.D. (2002). 'A Holistic View of Youth Unemployment in Sri Lanka' in S.T. Hettige and Markus Mayer (eds), *Sri Lankan*

- Youth: Challenges and Perspectives. (Colombo: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung).
16. Nissan, Elizabeth,(1985) *The Sacred City of Anuradhapura: Aspects of Sinhalese Buddhism and Nationhood*, unpublished Ph. D thesis, University of London:.
  17. Obeyesekere, Gananath (1974) "Some Comments on the Social Backgrounds of the April 1971 Insurgency in Sri Lanka," *Journal of Asian Studies* 33, no. 3: 367-384.
  18. Obeyesekere, Gananath (1981)*Medusa's Hair*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
  19. Seneviratne, H.L., (1978) *Rituals of the Kandyan State*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press,.
  20. Seneviratne H.L. and Wickremaratne, S. (1980) "Bodhipuja: Collective Representations of Sri Lanka Youth," *American Ethnologist* 7, no. 4: 734–743.
  21. Silva K.T., Sivayoganathan C, Lewis J (1998) Love, sex and peer activity in a sample of youth in Sri Lanka. In: Hettige S, ed., *Globalization, Social Change and Youth*. Colombo, Sri Lanka, (Colombo: German Cultural Institute, 34–52
  22. Stirrat, R.L.'Shrines, (1982) Pilgrimage and Miraculous Power in Roman Catholic Sri Lanka' In W. J. Sheils (ed.) *The Church and Healing*, (Oxford: The Ecclesiastical History Society Basil Blackwell, 385-413.
  23. Turner, V. and Turner, E., (1980) *Image and Pilgrimage in Christian Culture: Anthropological Perspectives*. Oxford: Blackwell,.