

Human Burial Practices in the Microlithic Phase of Sri Lanka

Pahiyangala Sumangala¹, Nimal Perera², Uduwila Uparathana¹, Kelegama Jinarathana¹,
Nilanka Udara Jayarathna²

¹Department of Social Sciences and Comparative Studies, Bhiksu University of Sri Lanka

²Central Cultural Fund, Colombo 7

¹Corresponding author - sumangalap@busl.ac.lk

¹ORCID - <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-7745-214X>

Abstract— Human burial practices during the Microlithic phase of Sri Lanka provide important insights into the social and symbolic behavior of early hunter-gatherer communities. Archaeological evidence from cave, rock-shelter, and open-air sites such as Fa-Hien Lena, Batadomba-lena, Kitulgala Beli-lena, Bellan-bandi Palassa and Mini-athiliya demonstrates that the disposal of the dead was a deliberate and culturally structured practice. Burials are typically found within habitation contexts, often in shallow pits with flexed or semi-flexed body positions, indicating intentional interment. The presence of associated materials, including microlithic tools and traces of red ochre, suggests ritualized behavior and symbolic expression. Variations in burial posture, orientation, and associated artifacts reflect cultural diversity and temporal change within the Microlithic period. These burial practices reveal complex social organization and cognitive development among early *Homo sapiens* in Sri Lanka and contribute to broader discussions on the evolution of mortuary traditions in South Asia.

Keywords— Burial, *Homo sapiens*, microlithic phase, rockshelters, open-air site.

I. INTRODUCTION

The Microlithic phase of Sri Lanka represents a significant stage in the island's prehistoric cultural sequence, characterized by the widespread use of microlithic stone tools and the adaptation of human populations to a variety of ecological environments (Deraniyagala, 1992; Perera, 2010; Wedage et al., 2019). Spanning from the Late Pleistocene to the early and mid-Holocene, this period is associated with hunter-gatherer communities commonly referred to as the "Balangoda culture." Archaeological investigations conducted over the past several decades have revealed that these populations were among the earliest anatomically modern *Homo sapiens* in South Asia, displaying advanced technological, subsistence, and social behaviors. One of the most informative aspects of Microlithic society in Sri Lanka is its human burial practices, which provide valuable insights into social organization, symbolic behavior, and beliefs related to death and the afterlife.

Burial practices during the Microlithic phase are primarily documented at cave and rockshelter sites across the island's wet and intermediate zones. Key sites such as Fa-Hien Lena, Batadomba-lena, Kitulgala Beli-lena, Bellan-bandi Palassa, and Alu-lena have yielded human skeletal remains in clearly defined burial contexts (Perera, 2010). These burials are typically located within habitation areas, suggesting that the

dead were interred in close proximity to the living (Kennedy, and Deraniyagala, 1989). Such practices imply a strong connection between the living community and their ancestors and reflect the social significance of death within these early hunter-gatherer groups.

The manner in which individuals were buried further indicates deliberate and structured mortuary behavior. Most mesolithic burials in Sri Lanka consist of primary inhumations placed in shallow pits excavated into occupation layers. Bodies are often found in flexed or semi-flexed positions, with limbs drawn toward the torso, indicating intentional placement rather than accidental deposition (Stock et al., 2022). In some cases, skeletal remains show evidence of careful positioning of the head or limbs, suggesting ritualized burial practices. The repeated occurrence of similar burial postures across different sites points to shared cultural norms and traditions among Microlithic populations.

Associated grave goods, although generally limited, provide additional evidence of symbolic behavior. Some burials are accompanied by microlithic tools, bone implements, animal remains, or traces of red ochre. The use of ochre, in particular, is widely interpreted as having symbolic or ritual significance and is commonly associated with early human burials in many parts of the world. Its presence in Sri Lankan Microlithic burials suggests that these communities engaged in symbolic practices that extended beyond purely functional concerns. The inclusion of artifacts in burial contexts may also reflect social identity, status, or beliefs regarding the afterlife. Variations in burial practices across time and space indicate that Microlithic mortuary behavior in Sri Lanka was not uniform. Differences in body orientation, burial depth, presence or absence of grave goods, and age or sex of the individuals suggest flexibility and adaptation in burial customs (Kennedy & Elgart, 1998). These variations may reflect changes in social organization, environmental conditions, or cultural traditions over time. Additionally, the presence of both adult and juvenile burials highlights the inclusive nature of mortuary practices within these communities. The study of human burial practices in the Microlithic phase of Sri Lanka contributes to broader debates on the emergence of symbolic thought and complex social behavior among early *Homo sapiens*. Intentional burials represent a significant cognitive and cultural development, indicating an understanding of death that extends beyond

biological necessity (Perera, 2010; Kulatilake et al., 2014). In the South Asian context, Sri Lanka provides some of the earliest and best-documented evidence for such practices, particularly within tropical rainforest environments previously thought to be marginal for early human settlement.

II. METHODOLOGY

This study investigates human burial practices during the Mesolithic phase of Sri Lanka through a qualitative analysis of archaeological and osteological data derived from previously excavated sites. The methodology is based on a comprehensive review of published excavation reports, scholarly articles, and radiocarbon dating studies related to Microlithic contexts, with particular emphasis on sites such as Fa-Hien Llena, Batadombalena, Kitulgala Beli-lena, Bellan-bandi Palassa open-air site, and other rock-shelter sites across the island (Wijeyapala, 1997; Perera, 2010; Kulatilake et al., 2014; Stock et al., 2022).

Burial contexts were examined using stratigraphic descriptions and spatial records to identify intentional interments. Variables such as burial type, body position, orientation, depth, and placement within habitation areas were systematically recorded and compared. Osteological information was reviewed to assess age-at-death, sex, and preservation where available, allowing basic demographic observations. Associated materials, including microlithic tools, faunal remains, and traces of red ochre, were analyzed to interpret symbolic and ritual aspects of mortuary behavior. Chronological frameworks were established using calibrated radiocarbon dates associated with burial layers. Comparative analysis across sites and time periods was employed to identify patterns, similarities, and variations in burial practices, providing a contextual understanding of Microlithic mortuary traditions in Sri Lanka (Kennedy & Elgart, 1998).

III. RESULTS

The previous research into Sri Lanka's prehistory, comprising the microlithic phase, provides the context to describe the recovery of archaeological artifacts from Sri Lanka. The first finding of prehistoric human skeletal remains in Sri Lanka was by the Sarasin brothers, who came across remains of human bone when excavating Nilgala Cave in 1907 (Sarasin and Sarasin, 1908). The human remains from the Nilgala cave represent a child and adults (2) with heavily worn teeth (Sarasin and Sarasin, 1908; Perera, 2010). The fully erupted and lightly worn status of the deciduous teeth of the child's jaw (Sarasin and Sarasin, 1908) would suggest an age of about five years old (Hillson, 1996). Sarasin and Sarasin opined that the form of the vault fragments suggests intentional smashing but discounted any possibility of cannibalism because none of the human fragments show traces of burning. The Sarasins' explanation of heavy wear on the teeth of the other two individuals suggests that the Nilgala population had indeed experienced the rapid tooth wear rates that would be expected of hunter-gatherers (Hillson, 1996). They also explained the recovery of different adult postcranial pieces, which may or may not represent separate individuals.

P. E. P. Deraniyagala (1958) attributed human remains to *Homo sapiens* *Balangodensis*, an extinct subspecies he ascribed

to the hybridization of 2 ancestral populations, the early humans responsible for the Rathnapura industry and a later wave of microlith - using humans. The term has originated to be associated with the human fragments from the Late Pleistocene rock shelter sites of the wet zone (Kennedy 2000), in addition to other contexts like the later coastline shell middens (Somadeva and Ranasinghe, 2006). Small fragments, such as the semi-fossilized *Homo sapiens* calotte found 2.74 m below the surface in a gem pit at Ellawala in the Rathnapura beds (Rathnapura District) (Kennedy, 2000), may represent individuals who passed away alone. Furthermore, isolated teeth such as the single loose molars found at Ravana-ella, or the human teeth (fragments) which occasionally crop up in rock shelter faunal collections, are hardly evidence of death, let alone burial, since we know from the many sets of jaws lacking one or more teeth that many people had shed permanent teeth during life. Cut marks on human bone fragments from numerous of the rock shelters suggest cannibalism, but details are unavailable. However, most of the remains to be explained here come from intentional burials.

Early examinations in the rock shelters of the island's wet zone regularly found fragmentary human fragments. This found is compatible with the fragments reported from the excavations instigated by Siran Deraniyagala, and so further attention to them in the present context would not add any additional data. However, the Alu-galge burial in the dry zone, which seems to have been primary, is particularly noteworthy. The frontal bone of Ravana-ella, which had been painted with red ochre on its inside and may have been subjected to additional ceremonial treatment like rubbing and the perforation of a circular pit near the zygomatic trigone, is another remarkable discovery. (Kennedy, 2000).

The Fa-Hien Lena rock shelter is credited with the oldest known burials in Sri Lanka, based on their recovery in layers 4 and 5 with calibrated dates between ca. 30,000 and 38,000 BP (1997). Fa-Hien Lena 1, associated with the B-N7-3 charcoal, whose date calibrates to around 35,000 cal. BP is also interpreted as the mixed remains of secondary burials (Perera, 2010). There is not enough information to decide whether the 5 persons had been buried at various times in a similar location or buried together following treatment of the body before the last disposal. As examined by Kennedy (2000), the found of all of the child's cervical vertebrae proposes burial of the neck bones attached to the incompletely decomposed head by desiccated tendons. Lastly, Fa-Hien Lena 2, associated with charcoal calibrates to around 25,000 cal. BP is another child represented by skull fragment remains. General, the available Pleistocene evidence for Fa-Hien Lena suggests a focus on skull burials, mainly of subadults, and seemingly secondary.

During the 2012 excavation from context 248, a human skeleton was discovered from Fa-Hien Lena. The Fa-Hien Lena interment was a relatively primary burial of an adult skeleton, even though the elements that could be found were enormously fragile and fragmentary (Stock et al., 2022). Within context 248, calcium carbonate concretions of the skeleton suggest that the presence of a burial pit cut into the site from a more recent context. Radiocarbon dates of charcoal samples that were in

direct association with the skeleton and likely date to the time of interment place the burial at 10,640 - 10,139 cal. BP.

During the primary burial of the Fa-Hien Lena, the body was located in an extended position with the head and torso angled towards the left side, facing towards the back wall of the rock shelter to the North. The left leg was flexed at the knee and positioned below the right leg, which was extended. The arms were extended to the north, in front of the torso, with the elbows flexed so that the hands were situated towards the front of the face (Stock et al., 2022). As the skeleton was lying on its left side, the right humerus was above the left in the deposits; however, the right forearm crossed the left to be situated underneath, meaning that the skeleton was interred with crossed forearms and the final position represents some post-depositional movement.

Batadomba-lena has reported the second oldest human fragment remains in Sri Lanka, some of which may increase 30,000 years in age. The earliest investigations were disinterred by P.E.P. Deraniyagala, and the remainder during the excavation site by Siran Deraniyagala (1992). Kennedy labelled 8 specimens (Kennedy and Elgart, 1988; Perera, 2010) amongst the occupation material noted from layer 7c (Kennedy and Deraniyagala, 1989; Perera, 2010). Kennedy and Deraniyagala (1989) examined that some of these specimens discovered traces of burning, perhaps post-depositional change due to their nearness to fireplaces. The context of the human remains and their lack of a grave outline suggests they may not have been deliberate burials, although the thoracic vertebra is colored with yellow ochre (Kennedy, 2000; Perera, 2010), which would definitely indicate ritual behavior of human remnants.

Re-excavation of Batadomba-lena (2005) came upon a burial excavation pit, and phalanges in the baulk, which were left in situ because of time constraints. Burials in layers 4 and 5 are, however, represented by the 10 identifiable specimens found by P.E.P. Deraniyagala (Kennedy and Elgart, 1998; Perera, 2010). These interments would date to ca. 13,000 to 15,000 cal. BP. Kennedy's further inference of the reveal of the bodies to fire and secondary interments needs to be put in the context of the repeated construction of earth ovens and hearths in layers 4 and 5. Some human fragments in shallow burials could well have suffered disturbance, mixing and post-depositional burning.

The list of human fragments from Kithulgala Beli-lena (Kennedy and Elgart, 1998) contains a semi complete woman skeleton, which therefore may be a disturbed primary interment rather than a secondary interment, and a child's skull interment. These individuals, from Layer IV-b-II dated to 13 – 15 ka cal. BP, are the only two burials on which the accounts by Wijeyapala (1997) and Kennedy and Elgart (1998) agree. As examples of the level of disharmony, Kennedy and Elgart (1998) assign most of the Kithulgala Beli-lena individuals to context X, but this was a mixed layer with over 9 ka cal. BP pot shards, in striking contrast to Wijeyapala's assignment of most of the human fragments to the unmixed Layers III-c-I to VI-b-I (Wijeyapala, 1997: 346-49).

In layer III-a-2, human bones were linked with this layer, which has been radiocarbon-dated with charcoal to 25 ka cal. BP. The human remains of specimen No. 3 were embedded

with lumps of charcoal scattered all over. Three large stones, a fragment of yellow ochre and faunal remains uncovered associated with the above. It was categorized as a child skeleton. Examination on the dentition and sizes of associated long bones suggest the age of the child to have been ca. 5.5 years at the time of death. This seems to be a secondary interment. Other than those skull fragments, there is a considerable collection of bone specimens and dental were found stratigraphically from the Kithulgala Beli-lena.

During the 2013 excavation from context 8, a human skeleton was discovered from Kuragala (Stock et al., 2022). It was dated by charcoal samples associated with the skeleton to 7,170 - 6,950 cal. BP. The interment was a relatively complete primary burial of an adult. Three additional human teeth were found in the proximity of the skull within Context 8, but they evidently belong to at least one additional individual. The burial position of the Kuragala human skeleton is tightly flexed and placed on the left side of the body. The interment was laid on top of two large stones with the left arm extended beyond the dorsal side of the thorax (Stock et al., 2022; Eregama, 2022). The distal end of the left humerus has moved post-mortem, and there are signs of root penetration through the distal end of the humerus suggesting some post-depositional disturbance of this region of the interment.

The Bellanbandi-Palassa individuals discovered by Kennedy (Kennedy and Elgart, 1998) amount to 35 individuals. Kennedy's (2000) assessment of up to 30 buried individuals may be closer to the mark than 35. Kennedy (2000) examines that the excavation by P.E.P. Deraniyagala found 5 flexed burials and 2 supine burials, and concludes that secondary interment is unlikely given the completeness of many of the human skeletons. As examined by Kennedy (2000), the Bellanbandi-Palassa series is dominated by adults, with females (6) and males (7) similarly represented. While the paucity of subadults might reflect their poorer preservation to some degree, in particular it would seem to reflect a various status for subadults compared to adults. The part of Bellanbandi-Palassa where interments were excavated would seem to have been a Balongodensis burials, though it is uncertain whether the burial was in use during the main occupation phase at the site, or at a later stage (Early Holocene) after abandonment of the base camp. Another burial from the dry zone mentioned should be made of the 2 primary inhumations found in a flexed position from the Sigiriya Pothana cave in a layer dated to around 5 ka cal. BP (Adikari, 1998a). Also, the human remains recovered from Alawala Cave consist of fragmentary human skeletal elements, including parts of the cranium, postcranial bones, and teeth. These remains are associated with cultural artifacts, providing a context for their age and the behaviors of the individuals who lived there (Adhikari and Manamendra-arachchi, 2012).

Sri Lanka's rock shelters do not seem to have been consumed as burials or interments repositories and must have received only a small fraction of the thousands of individuals who had occupied those sites over the millennia. How representative the excavated remains are of microlithic forager burial practices is therefore ambiguous, but most perhaps rock shelters sporadically received individual burials at times when

this was a convenient option for the relatives of the deceased. Variability in burial practices is evident from the use of ochre to paint the human remains of 2 individuals, the occasional practice of flexed primary burials, and the possible distinction between skull burials and burials that included postcranial bones (Perera, 2010). However, there is no data on a directional change in burial practices over time. The variability in burial practices abridged by Deraniyagala (1992) for foragers in the South-Asian and Southeast-Asian regions broadly corresponds to the variability observable in the microlithic phase of Sri Lanka.

The archaeological site of Mini-athiliya, located in southern Sri Lanka, is one of the most significant open-air Microlithic sites on the island, notable for yielding a rare and nearly complete human burial. The burial was discovered during systematic archaeological excavations conducted by the Department of Archaeology of Sri Lanka, aimed at investigating prehistoric hunter-gatherer occupation in coastal and semi-arid environments. The human remains recovered from the rescue archaeology operation at Mini-athiliya posed several challenges for identification and analysis. They were highly fragmented and subjected to postmortem deformation due to recent haphazard mining activity. Since most skeletal elements were fragmented or missing, it was clear that the shell deposits containing mixed human bones from these burials had been completely damaged or sent to be crushed before the excavation team was able to salvage them. Excavation report provide descriptive accounts of the skeletal and dental elements assigned to HMA 1–6 (Kulathilake et al., 2018). HMA skeleton of a complete adult male was discovered intact during the systematic excavation at the Mini-athiliya site. A bone-by-bone recovery was not feasible on site, due to the onset of the rainy season and the urgency associated with this rescue operation. It was decided that the complete human burial would be removed from Mini-athiliya as a block within its matrix (Contexts 7 and 8), to be followed by the implementation of a meticulous extraction strategy, off site, within laboratory conditions.

It was clear that the complete human burial from Miniathiliya, HMA 6, was a primary interment. The burial appeared to have been compressed vertically, crushing and fragmenting many skeletal elements. HMA 6 had been buried in a tightly flexed foetal position, resting on the right side, with the head placed to the north. This mortuary practice of placing the deceased in flexed positions, parallels burial patterns recorded from other Sri Lankan mid-Holocene sites, such as Bellan-bandi Palassa (Deraniyagala, 1958; Deraniyagala and Kennedy, 1972; Kennedy, 2000), Pallemalala (Somadeva and Ranasinghe, 2006), and Godawaya. Dentition from the maxilla and mandible of HMA 6 clearly indicated that he was a mature adult. A high degree of attrition to the molar teeth suggested an extremely abrasive diet. Cranial sutures (though highly distorted) and the knowledge of the abrasive nature of the diet among early and mid-Holocene South Asians (Kennedy, 2000), allowed the estimation of age of this individual to be approximately 45 years. The age range among the other excavated individuals from commingled human remains from Mini-athiliya was 12 – 45 years (Kulathilake, 2009), placing HMA 6 among the oldest from this sample of people.

IV. DISCUSSION

The human burial evidence from the Microlithic Phase of Sri Lanka provides an important, although still limited, source of information for understanding the treatment of the dead among prehistoric hunter-gatherer populations. Compared with the relatively abundant evidence for lithic technology, subsistence, and occupation, human burials are comparatively rare and are often represented by fragmentary or isolated skeletal remains. Consequently, the relatively complete primary interments from Fa-Hien Lena and Kuragala are particularly significant because their archaeological contexts allow aspects of mortuary behaviour to be considered alongside the broader evidence for prehistoric occupation (Stock et al., 2022; Eregama, 2022).

Caves and rock shelters appear to have played an important role in the preservation and discovery of human remains associated with prehistoric occupations in Sri Lanka. These locations were repeatedly used by hunter-gatherer communities for habitation and other activities, and in some cases human remains occur within or close to occupational deposits. The association of human remains with habitation contexts raises important questions concerning the relationship between mortuary activities and everyday life. It is therefore necessary to examine burial evidence together with stratigraphy, associated artefacts, sedimentary conditions, and the broader archaeological context rather than interpreting isolated human remains as evidence of a particular ritual practice.

The available evidence suggests that prehistoric communities did not necessarily follow a single, uniform burial tradition (Deraniyagala, 1989). Variation in the position, preservation, articulation, and archaeological context of human remains may reflect differences in mortuary treatment, site use, environmental conditions, or post-depositional processes. In some contexts, skeletal remains may represent deliberate burial, whereas in others their presence may have resulted from later disturbance or natural processes. Careful osteological and taphonomic investigation is therefore essential for distinguishing intentional burial from other forms of deposition. The location of human burials within caves and rock shelters may also have significance for understanding the relationship between mortuary practices and landscape use. These places were not simply habitation areas but may have represented persistent locations within the wider rainforest landscape.

V. CONCLUSION

The examination of human burial practices during the Microlithic phase of Sri Lanka highlights the cultural complexity and symbolic behavior of early hunter-gatherer communities on the island. Archaeological evidence from cave and rock-shelter sites such as Fa-Hien Lena, Batadomba-lena, Kitulgala Beli-lena, and Bellan-bandi Palassa demonstrates that burial of the dead was a deliberate and structured practice rather than a simple or accidental act. The consistent use of shallow pit burials within habitation areas, often with flexed body positions, reflects shared cultural traditions and a meaningful relationship between the living and the deceased.

The presence of associated materials such as microlithic tools and traces of red ochre further suggests ritualized behavior and symbolic expression linked to beliefs about death and social identity. Variations in burial posture, orientation, and grave associations across sites indicate flexibility in mortuary practices, possibly influenced by environmental conditions, social organization, or temporal change. Importantly, the inclusion of adults and juveniles within burial assemblages points to the social inclusivity of these practices. Microlithic burial practices in Sri Lanka provide important insights into the cognitive, social, and ideological dimensions of early *Homo sapiens* in South Asia. These findings contribute to broader discussions on human behavioral evolution and underscore Sri Lanka's significance in understanding early mortuary traditions within tropical environments.

REFERENCES

- [1] Adikari, G. 1998. Aspect of the Prehistory of the Sigiriya-Dambulla region. Un.pub. Thesis submitted for the degree of Master of Philosophy (M.Phil.) PGIAR, University of Kelaniya.
- [2] Adikari, G., Huffman, M.A., Nahallage, C.A.D., Ananda, T., Kanthilatha, N., Perera, N., Bardi, M. 2012. The Prehistoric Nonhuman Primate Subfossil Remains at Sigiriya Potana Cave, Sri Lanka. DOI:10.1017/9781108766500.024, World Archaeoprimatology. pp.456-473.
- [3] Adhikari, G and Manamendra, K. 2012. Prehistory of Alawala Potgul-lena (Cave). Dr. P.E.P Deraniyagala memorial Paleo biodiversity conference, Ministry of Environmental Department, Central Cultural Fund, PGIAR – University of Kelaniya.
- [4] Bass, W. M. 2005 Human Osteology: a Laboratory and Field manual, 5th edn, Missouri Archaeological Society, Springfield.
- [5] Deraniyagala, P.E.P. 1958b. An open air habitation site of *Homo sapiens* balangondensis. Part 1. Spolia Zeylanica 28: 223-61.
- [6] Deraniyagala, S. U. 1992 The Prehistory of Sri Lanka: an Ecological Perspective. 2nd ed. Parts I & II. Department of Archaeology, Colombo.
- [7] Deraniyagala, S. U. and Kennedy, K. A. R. 1972 "Bellan-bandhi Palassa: a Mesolithic burial site in Ceylon", Ancient Ceylon, 2, pp. 18-47.
- [8] Deraniyagala, S. U. (1989). Fossil Remains of 28,000-Year-Old Hominids from Sri Lanka. Current Anthropology, 30(3), 394-399. <https://doi.org/10.1086/203757>
- [9] Deraniyagala, S. U. (1992). The Prehistory of Sri Lanka: An Ecological Perspective (2nd ed.). Department of Archaeological Survey, Government of Sri Lanka.
- [10] Eregama, S. (2022). Archaeological Evidence from the Kuragala Site, Sri Lanka (Sinhala publication). Ancient Lanka, 1.
- [11] Hillson, S. 1996. Dental Anthropology. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- [12] Kennedy, K. A., Deraniyagala, S. U., Roertgen, W. J., Chiment, J., & Disotell, T. (1987). Upper Pleistocene fossil hominids from Sri Lanka. American Journal of Physical Anthropology, 72(4).
- [13] Kennedy, K.A.R. and Deraniyagala, S.U. 1989. Fossil remains of 28,000-year-old hominids from Sri Lanka. Current Anthropology 30: pp. 394-99.
- [14] Kennedy, K. A. R. (2000). God-Apes and Fossil Men: Paleoanthropology in South Asia. The University of Michigan Press. Stock et al., ANLK Vol 1 (2022)
- [15] Kennedy, K. A. R., & Elgart, A. A. (1998). South Asia: India and Sri Lanka. In R. Orban & P. Semal (Eds.), Hominid Remains: An Update (pp. 1-95). Anthropologie et Préhistoire, Institut Royal des Sciences Naturelles de Belgique.
- [16] Kulatilake, S., Perera, N., Deraniyagala, S. U., & Perera, J. (2014). The Discovery and Excavation of a Human Burial from the Mini-athiliya Shell Midden in Southern Sri Lanka. Ancient Asia, 5. <https://doi.org/10.5334/aa.12319>
- [17] Kulatilake, S., Peiris, R.D., Perera, H.N and Perera H.J (2018) Out of Context, in Association: Human Remains Salvaged from the Mini-athiliya Shell Midden, Sri Lanka, ASIAN PERSPECTIVES, The Journal of Archaeology for Asia and the Pacific, Volume 57. Number 1. 2018.
- [18] Perera, N. (2010). Prehistoric Sri Lanka: Late Pleistocene rockshelters and an open-air site. BAR International Series.
- [19] Roberts, P, Stock, J. T., Boivin, N., Petraglia, M. D., Deraniyagala, S. U., & Perera, N. (2022). From the forests to the coast – multidisciplinary investigation of human adaptations at the Mini-athiliya shell midden. Ancient Lanka
- [20] Sarasin P. and Sarasin F. 1908. Ergebnisse Naturwissenschaftlicher Forschungen auf Ceylon, Vol. 4: Die Steinzeitlauf Ceylon [Results of Natural History Research in Ceylon, Vol. 4: The Stone Age of Ceylon]. C.W. Kreidel's Verlag, Wiesbaden [in German].
- [21] Somadeva, R. and Ranasinghe, S. 2006 "An Excavation of a Shell-midden at Pallemalla in Southern Littoral Area of Sri Lanka: Some Evidence of a Prehistoric Chenier Occupation on c. 4th millennium BC", Ancient Asia, 1, pp. 14-24. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5334/aa>
- [22] Stock, J. T, Emma Pomeroy, Oshan Wedage, Saman Eregama, Siran Deraniyagala, Nimal Perera, Patrick Roberts, Nicole Boivin, Michael Petraglia. 2022. Early Holocene Human Burials from Fahien-lena and Kuragala, Sri Lanka. Ancient Lanka, Volume 1: Siran Deraniyagala Commemoration Volume.
- [23] Ubelaker, D. H. 1999 Human Skeletal Remains: Excavation, Analysis, Interpretation, Manuals on Archaeology 2. 3rd ed. Smithsonian Institution, Washington.
- [24] Wedage, O., Picin, A., Blinkhorn, J., Douka, K., Deraniyagala, S., Kourampas, N., Perera, N., Simpson, I., Boivin, N., Petraglia, M., & Roberts, P. (2019). Microliths in the South Asian rainforest ~45-4 ka: New insights from Fa-Hien Lena Cave, Sri Lanka. PLOS ONE, 14(10), e0222606. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0222606>
- [25] Wijeyapala, W. H. (1997). New Light on the Prehistory of Sri Lanka in the Context of Recent Investigations at Cave Sites. University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka.