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**Studies on Sri Lankan folk drama and ritualistic ceremonies in the Colonial era: a content analysis**

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Rituals and magic were more significant fact in the *pre-colonial mode of production*. Arrival of *colonialism* displaced their practical value and usage by *superimposing* capitalism over that mode of production. Therefore, authentic nature *folk plays* could finally be seen only before the deep rooting of capitalism. Then those rituals functioned as organically connected practices of day to day human lives. Some of *European and native scholars* had studied this *Folk drama and Ceremonies* in this context before the grant of political freedom to the country. This study attempts to re-read contributions that appeared from 1829 to 1948 in this field.

Those cultural practices have changed with the march of time as a result of the influence of economic and political factors. Therefore it is difficult to understand their original nature and real context presently. This study aims to understand the original nature of those dramas and ceremonies by means of studies done in colonial period.

This research only uses literary survey for collecting data. The method of *content analysis* is used for analyzing data and the study only focused on *Thovil, Bali, Sokari, Modi, Kolam, Nadagam and Kooththu*. The paper presents descriptive accounts on all these categories respectively.

Scholars in colonial period have experienced those cultural elements in genuine context, and then the ritualistic expectations were main purpose for them. Now, their purposes have transformed into entertainment or symbolism of national identity.

**Key words:** *Folk drama, Folk ceremony, Colonialism, Rituals*