

## **Criticizing and Dissenting via Humorous and Satirical Folktale; A Review of Andare's Folktale Cycle**

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Folktales are oral narratives that grow out of the lives and imaginations of the people, or folk. They are a form of traditional literature which initiated as an attempt to explain and understand the natural and spiritual world. Though folktales are often anonymous, they have been expanded and shaped by storytellers over time, and are passed down orally from one generation to the next. In the context of Sri Lanka, most Sinhalese folktales can be cited as tale cycles that are woven around a popular legendary character such as Andare, Mahadenamuththa, and King Kekille. However, there is no clear evidence to verify them as real characters that lived in a certain time period. One of the most popular legendary characters is Andare and tales that revolve round him are humorous and satirical tales that present many examples of outrageous human folly. Andare is known as the Court Jester in the times of Sinhala kings, similar to characters in folklore in other Asian countries. He not only acted as a court jester but was also a mentor and a poet. Andare assisted the king to be relieved and relaxed from day to day work, permitting the king to reduce his troubles by listening to the lighter side of life through comic stories. Therefore, this character is important as a comedian not only for his comic stories but he also helped others to rethink their role in society. The objective of this paper is to identify the importance of humorous and satirical folktales as a traditional medium in sociopolitical criticism and dissention by analysing the folktale cycle of Andare.

Key words: folktale, humour, satire, court jester, mentor, criticism, dissention