

A Study on Social Factors behind Folklore Related Village Names:

A case study of a selection of folklore

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This study is conducted to identify the social factors that have contributed to folklore which in turn have resulted in the formation of some village names. Based on secondary resources, an extensive study was conducted on village names using literary sources, archaeological evidence, other historical legends and ethnographic evidence. Later, the interrelationships between folklore and village names with the occupational characteristic of each village dwellers were comparatively studied. Kewulgama, Padavigampola, Rattaranbendigala, Gal Atara, Kumbalgama, Seruwila, Ridigama, Pahiyangala can be recognized as village names connected to historical legends. In light of the folklore connected to each village which contributed to the formation of the village name, it is evident that social activities in some villages have a direct connection to the folklore associated with each village name. When compared with linguistic and historical evidence, some folklore which have resulted in the formation of the village name has no historical or social connection. Current folklore which are connected with some village names have come into existence later because they have been passed down through oral tradition and people have forgotten the original. The newly fabricated folklore related to village names depend on contemporary social objectives and necessities.

Key words: Village Names in Sri Lanka, Folklore Associated with Village Name, historical Legends, Fabricated Folklore