



## **STUDIES ON PRIMITIVE SOCIETIES IN SRI LANKA: A REVIEW BASED ON THE POSTCOLONIAL CONTEXT**

Mrs. Paheerathy Moses<sup>1</sup>, Dr. S. Srikanthan<sup>2</sup>  
Correspondence: rathyms@yahoo.com

### **Abstract**

The studies on primitive societies are important in the study of the cultural identities of the people. The way of life and culture of the primitive societies with a long cultural history is undergoing various changes and destructions over time. In this context, studies of primitive societies have been conducted worldwide by well-known anthropologists since the late 1800s. Although these kinds of studies were used to learn about people in the early days, such studies were encouraged to rule particular people during the colonial period. This study attempts to analyze the unique features of studies on primitive societies in post-colonial context. The most basic concepts, theories and methods that exist in anthropology today are based on the findings of a study of primitive societies conducted by renowned anthropologists in various period. Studies of primitive societies can be seen to prioritize the unique lifestyles, livelihood technologies, religious beliefs and practices of the people who continue to live in a particular area. In this regard, this study is seen as a review of studies conducted on primitive societies with special reference to Sri Lanka. Vaddas is one of the primitive societies of Sri Lanka. Multifaceted studies on Veddas have been carried out since colonial times. This review is designed to review published studies on Vaddas since the colonial period. This study is based on qualitative research approach and data was collected from secondary data sources mainly focused on research studies of Veddas in Sri Lanka. The method of content analysis was used to analyse the significant features of studies of Veddas in the colonial and post-colonial context. Studies of the Vaddas, one of the primitive societies of Sri Lanka, are generally seen as prioritizing the Vaddas' habitats and their distinctive cultural features and presenting the problems they face today and the solutions to it. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that certain studies have revealed issues related to their cultural identity in the postcolonial context. There are some insufficiency in the micro level studies on Veddas. This review study therefore suggested that ethnographical studies on Veddas should be conducted at regional and village levels.

**Keywords:** Primitive, Post-colonial context, Culture

---

<sup>1</sup> Department of Sociology & Anthropology, Eastern University of Sri Lanka

<sup>2</sup> Department of Sociology, University of Jaffna