

# **The Institution of Family as Portrayed in the Prose Narratives Produced during Colonization**

Ranaweera, H. K. C. K.

Department of Sinhala, University of Colombo

[kumudukr@yahoo.com](mailto:kumudukr@yahoo.com)

This study hopes to investigate the impact of the socio- economic and political changes witnessed in the 19<sup>th</sup> Century in the transformation of social institutions as reflected in contemporary Sinhala literary sources. It is the opinion of many contemporary literary critics that works of literature is not a mere phenomenon reflective of a creator's emotions or feelings. Neither is it a result of any divine intervention or other mystic elements, in fact, it is a clear reflection of the socio cultural influences of the contemporary society. Therefore, this research hopes to explore the portrayal of the institution of family as depicted in contemporary works of literature, narratives and other published material covering a period of fifty years, inclusive of the last three decades of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and the first three decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century which is identified as the first phase of the Modern Sinhala Classical tradition. According to the studies of sociology of Literature, a literary work is not a mere result of creativity; it is considered to be reflective of the perspectives of the contemporary social consciousness. Therefore, this research hopes to examine if the narratives produced in this era clearly reflect the reality and social milieu of the times. In order to identify the established social institutions, it is important to comprehend the established conventions of society. By investigating the literature published during this era, this study hopes to analyse the social roles, stratification, relations and social structure. In sociological studies, family, marriage, kinship, caste, religion class and education are considered as social institutions. ^Eisenstaedt ^1968& 1972(408-420'& A few theoretical approaches will be referred to in order to investigate the impact of colonialism in transforming the society and its traditional aspects. Colonial and postcolonial literary theory, sociological theories and concepts and preambles to socio literary studies on social institutions as well as Marxist literary theory will be the theoretical focus of the study.

**Key words:** *Colonization, Family, Narratives, Portrayed.*