

## **The Role of Art in Sinhalese Village Society (Based on Udakki's Literary and Religious Background)**

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The Sinhalese village culture, which is rooted in a set of beliefs, has been built on the basis of Buddhism for a long time. The Sinhala cultural history builds a universal concept and a metaphysical philosophy of the spiritual foundation of primitive village society. The villager who artistically recreated the beliefs of society in the human mind has tried to give meaning to contemporary society through those arts. *Udakki* art, which originated in the Sinhalese village society and continues to this day, can be identified as one such early art genre. Accordingly, the primary purpose of our research is to investigate this spiritual foundation through the Buddhist religious background that influenced the evolution of *Udakki* birth literature and *Udakki* art. Here, what are the reasons for the mention of invisible forces throughout the *Udakki* birth literature? What is the nature of the behaviour of the Buddhist religion as a mediating agent for its spread? In relation to the problem that arose, data was collected through qualitative research methods, analysed and interpreted, and conclusions were reached. As revealed by this descriptive research, it can be concluded that in contemporary society, rural people have worked with unlimited devotion to God and natural objects, and that it has developed in the Buddhist environment and that art is a spiritual expression that is not just a pleasure of the senses. Accordingly, this research will contribute to popularising the importance of studying the early works of art in cultural studies.

**Keywords:** Artistry, Expression, Folk consciousness, Folk culture, Spiritual foundation