

05**A Study on Names of Individuals of Sri Lanka, (From 1st Century BC to 3rd Century BC)**

W.A.Vijitha Kumara
Temporary Demonstrator
Research Centre for Social Sciences
Faculty of Social Sciences
University of Kelaniya

Abstract

Naming a person is an important factor in a person's life and the process has a long history in Sri Lanka. People believe that their name affects their future success. It is impended to examine here the religious, customary and social issues which effected the naming of a person during the selected period. In ancient India, there were ceremonies to name a child. In a such a ceremony organized to name Prince Siddhartha, he was named thus according to Buddhist sources, meaning person who would do good to the world "jātassa kumārāssa nāma gāhana divas dakkiniya sakka" In Sri Lanka also similar ceremonies were organized during the selected period and the custom continues even today. It can be seen that there was Indian influence in naming children in Sri Lanka during the ancient times. However, when examination the early Brahmi Inscription it is clear that there was Buddhist influence too. Even after the coming of Mahinda Thero to Sri Lanka, there is evidence to show that, pre- historic rituals and believers still

existed. For example, there were instances where the effect of the fire or Agni god Concept and Brahma concept on naming individuals. The names did not reveal the gender in the person. The indicator of gender is the usage of terms such as “Upasaka, Upasika, Diyani”, and the like before a name. This is evident from Brahmi inscription. The methodology applied was the use of early Brahmi Inscriptions and chronical. It can be concluded that the names of individuals during the selected time depicts many social information and the names were selected with a purpose.

Key words. Name of individuals, Naming, Society, Gender