

A Study of Veddas' Culture and Life Style in the 20th Century Through the Perspective of 'White Blood Brother' alias R. L. Spittel. (Based on R. L. Spittel's Selected Novels)

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Little is known about the origin of Vedda community but they possess a continuous history of more than 2500 years. Focusing on Veddas' distinguished external features and restricted cultural aspects which are unique to their identity, it could be assumed that they are the descendants of the primitive generation. A historical chronicle, the Mahavamsha, mentions that the Vedda community originates from Jeewahattha and Dissala. Jeewahattha's and Dissala's father was Prince Vijaya and mother was Kuveni or Kuvanna (dark hued one) who represented Yakkha community in ancient Ceylon. Various ethnographers have given various definitions of the word 'Veddo'. According to the definition of R.L. Spittel, the word 'Veddo - වෙද්දෝ' was derived from the word 'Beddo - 'බෙද්දෝ' which means the people who live in bedda or thick jungles ('බෙද්දෝ' - බෙද්දෙහි වාසය කරන්නෝ). The definition of Spittel takes prominence far and above the other definitions. Richard Lionel Spittel (1881-1969) was born in Sri Lanka. He was a physician, novelist, poet and an ethnographer. As an avid nature-lover, he gained much knowledge of the jungle and the Vedda community in Sri Lanka. The novels related to this study are namely *Savage Sanctuary* (1941), *Vanished Trails* (1950), *Where the White Sambhur Roams* (1951), *Wild White Boy* (1958) written by R.L. Spittel. The research problem in this study is whether Spittel has highlighted many aspects about the Vedda, their simple life style and cultural aspects in his four above mentioned novels. The research is based on socio-linguistic approach. In this study the main attention was drawn to Veddas' way of life which was hunting. In addition, food culture, customs of marriage, social and cultural phenomena, beliefs and superstition, ritual performances were studied. It can be concluded that these four selected novels depict the transformation period of the Vedda community in Sri Lanka.

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