

THE MAKING OF MODERN SINHALESE THEATRE

AND

EDIRIWEERA SARACHCHANDRA

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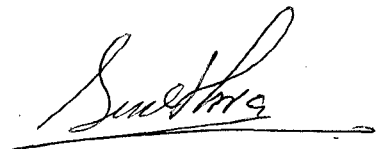
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2010

Declaration

I declare that this dissertation titled '*The Making of Modern Sinhalese Theatre and Ediraweera Sarachchandra*' submitted by me, at the School of Arts and Aesthetics, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, for the award of the degree of *Master of Philosophy* in Theatre and Performance Studies, is my own original work. The dissertation has not been submitted so far, in part or in full, for any other degree or diploma of this or any other University or institution.



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Date: 28 April, 2010


Certificate

This is to certify that the dissertation titled '*The Making of Modern Sinhalese Theatre and Ediriweera Sarachchandra*', submitted by Ms. K. K. Sunethra at the School of Arts and Aesthetics, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi-110067, for the degree of Master of Philosophy in Theatre and Performance Studies, is her own work and has not been submitted so far, in part or in full, for any other degree or diploma of this or any other University or institution. We recommend that this dissertation be placed before the examiners for evaluation.

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Chapter 1-I

Introduction

There is no evidence to claim that the theatre was a popular art form in ancient Ceylon. It possesses an unbroken tradition in literature, painting and sculpture. Sinhalese Buddhist culture is unique in the sense that there is no dramatic art, dance or music that is believed to have been developed from it. Then the question arises why has Buddhism allowed some of the arts to develop and not others?

In Sinhalese Buddhist society, the art forms can be divided into two categories - individual arts and community arts. Painting, sculpture, plastic arts belong to the first category for they do not require the help of many people. The art forms like drama, music, and dance are directly in contact with many people and therefore known as community arts. It is always enjoyed in a group. They also help towards the organization of human beings in communities, making way for a strong social living and ties. Sinhalese *Theravādi* Buddhism has however discouraged these community arts.

Owing to the inspiration from Buddhism, temple art such as painting and sculpture based on *Jātaka* stories were created on the walls of temples. Artist made stories from *Bodhisatva Charitha* which deal with the lay life phase in Buddha's life period. Thus, the art of the wood-carver and the carver in stone

developed as they belonged to individual arts and not community arts. Independence was the most important reason for their development and growth. Temple painters and sculptors were the makers of demon figures. They were created according to the Buddhist *Jātaka Tales* and the expressions of these figures were always fiery.

The fact is Buddhism requires one to give-up drama and other associated art forms such as music and dance. It is mentioned in *Dambadeni Kathikāvatha* that drama is a taboo art form. A royal announcement issued by King Parākrama Bāhu in the thirteen century speaks of drama and dance as ‘shameful arts’.¹ These could have in turn prejudiced the monks to avoid community arts themselves. Not surprisingly, this attitude can be observed even today in Ceylon society among few in rural communities. However, history reveals that the king Parakrama Bāhu was a great lover of arts. He wrote the great Sinhalese Kāvya – *Kavsilumina* – (*Kāvya Shikhamani*).

Besides drama, sometimes music and dance is also challenged as tabooed art forms. There is no doubt that drama is prohibited for monks as a rule. They are expected to give-up all kinds of entertainment (*Pekkha, Visūkadassana, Samajja*) in addition to music (*Gīta, Vādita*), dancing (*Naccha*) and dramatic presentations (*Akkhana*). Nevertheless, all public events and ceremonies of Buddhists were accompanied with dance and music in the past and is the case in present times too. Yet, there are no efforts to develop the culture of music, dance and drama.

¹ Jayathilaka D.B., *Dambadeni Kathikāvatha*, Colombo: Kathikāvath Sangarā, First print, 1922, p. 15

The absence of a tradition in the field of performing arts is of special significance to Ceylon. Since the earliest times, the great sub-continent of India provided inspiration for literature. Sanskrit poetry provided Sinhalese poetic norms and medieval Indian works influenced Sinhalese prose styles. Literary activities were created for many centuries chiefly in monastic and religious environment. Authors of all these literary works were either *Theravādi* Buddhist monks or laymen who were deeply steeped in the Buddhist traditions and teachings. Buddhist discipline did not encourage theatre as a form of religious activity. They considered drama as a taboo art form as mentioned earlier. They wrote poetry and narratives regarding *Buddha Charita* and the practices and duties of *Bhikshus*. They were proficient in Sanskrit language and literature. Consequently, Sinhalese has a rich repertoire of poems and verses.

There are ten virtues followed by the *Theravādi* Buddhist monks and one of the stanzas in their religious text reads as: '*Naccha gīta vadita, visuka dassana māla...*'² According to this stanza, *Naccha* meaning *Nṛtya*, or dance; *Gīta* meaning songs; *Vādita* meaning playing musical instruments or any other kind of graceful performances are prohibited for them. However, dance, songs, playing musical instruments and other kinds of art forms are essential for theatre. Therefore, Buddhist monks and lay people, who were following *Theravādi* Buddhism, could not and did not create any kind of theatre.

In such a social environment, it is easy to infer that theatrical performances could not have taken a healthy root. Sinhalese theatre can therefore be seen to have

² *Piruvāna poth vahanse, Bodhagama Chandima, Sri Lanka Dharmachakra Lama Padanama, 2006, p. 208*

originated in the context of various rituals and ceremonies of folk religions in Ceylon. Sinhalese playwrights do not have an indigenous classical model, except for the knowledge of neighboring Sanskrit theatre tradition.

Even though theatre is forbidden, few ceremonial performances do take place in the Buddhist temples of Sri Lanka. For instance, *Dorakada Asna*, *Milinda prashnaya* and *Ālavaka Damanaya* is performed at nights on very special *Poya* days. One actor plays every character in that particular ceremony along with the main priest of the temple. While the main priest represents Buddha, the actor represents characters like *Ālavaka*, *Milinda*, etc. Graceful acting and costumes accompany the scene and character. The performances are held in *Dharmashāla*, which represent the stage or *Prekshāgrha*. People who come to listen to the preaching are the audience or *prékshaka*. Facial expressions and *Āngikābhinaya* together with the text are very important for these performances.

Ceremonies of the Buddhist temples are not popular like theatre or drama. But we can find four gestures, imitation or *Anukarana* and some other elements of theatre in them. According to Bharatamuni's stanza,

Yoyan Svabhāvo lokasya sukhadukkha samanvitan

*Songyādyābninayopetan Nātyamityābidiayte.*³

³*Nātyaśāstra* of Bharatamuni, with the commentary *Abhinavabhāratī* by Abhinavaguptāchārya, Vol. I, (Eds.) Dr. R.S. Nagar, Delhi: Parimal Publications, First Ed., 1981, 1. p. 121

(Hereafter, I shall refer to *Nātyaśāstra*, as *NS*.)

When human nature reflecting life is depicted by means of four gestures, *Āngikābhinaya*, *Vāchikābhinaya*, *Āharyābhinaya* and *Sāthvikābhinaya*, it is called *Nāṭya*. '*Lokavṛttānukaranam nāṭyamēthanmayā kṛutham*'⁴ *Nāṭya* is *Anukarana* or representation. Considering this viewpoint it seems some basic elements of theatre form is present in Buddhist ceremonies.

Sinhalese culture developed together with Buddhist traditions and both had a parallel growth and relationship. A powerful as well as popular development of folk religion mixed with the Buddhist way of living also took place. These activities built a vast range of ritualistic performances and it had primitive dramatic forms. Folk plays and similar entertainments are part of the regular village lifestyle in remote places of Ceylon even today. However, these plays are performed only as a part of religious gatherings and rituals seeking prosperity and wealth; not for entertainment purposes. There are professional players to perform these folk plays as mere rituals. Since, the performances in rural areas are religious and commercial; these professional folk theatre artists seek better chances for earning their livelihood, mainly through performances in the suburban areas of Ceylon.

There are elaborate ceremonies connected with the peoples' belief of worshipping numerous folk deities of the Island for gaining prosperity. There are strong dramatic characters manifested in these temple ceremonies and folk rituals. The dramatic elements are visible throughout the folk tradition. In few ritual events,

⁴ *NS.*, Vol..1, Manomohan Ghosh, Calcutta: The Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal, 1950, 01. 111, p. 10

(Hereafter, I shall refer to *Nāṭyaśāstra*, Manomohan Ghosh as *NS.*, Ghosh)

dramatic movements with mime and comic dialogues are added for ritual purposes or to entertain the audience. There are dramatic possibilities inbuilt in the *Pirit* ceremony. The lay audiences' perception of such dramatic qualities is rather missing. For the *Pirit* performance is considered a very serious and sacred ritual with hardly any element of entertainment. However, a keen observer can realize that besides the ceremonies being useful they cater to theatrical entertainment.

In contrast, the exorcist ceremonies such as *Sanni yakuma*, *Kohombā Kankāriya*, *Devol Maduwa* etc. are highly effective and entertaining. In *Sanni Yakuma*, there are two categories of performers and participants. It is performed for a patient who seeks wellness. Though they do not actively perform in the ritual, their emotional involvement is great. There is a third category of 'visitors' and spectators, who are very much in the sense of theatre, the audience. They come to enjoy the performance, sit around, gossip, laugh, and are involved in the dramatic action as theatre audience. Mostly they leave when they have had enough amusement. These performances can be analyzed in terms of worth and entertainment ranging from ritual to theatre.

Sinhalese folk theatres comprise of *Sokari*, *Kolam*, *Kavi Nādagam*, *Nādagam*. These are some of the dominant art forms in Sri Lankan Buddhist society. There are very primitive type performances associated with harvesting ceremonies and propitiation of the benevolent goddess *Pattini*. These are performed in the rural villages of interior and coastal areas. *Sokari* is a dramatic form and it is confined to *Uda Rata*, (up-country) and *Vanniya*, though it is very rarely seen in *Pāta Rata*

(low country). It is the enactment of the story of *Sokari* in the form of mime. In this performance, few characters wear masks while the main characters do not.

Kolam is confined to the low-country such as *Bentara*, *Alutgama*, *Ambalangoda*, *Mirissa Udupila*, *Mātara* and *Thangalla*. The meaning of the word *Kolam* is mockery. The word though borrowed from Tamil, has changed in its meaning overtime. *Kolam* characters wear suitable masks with facial expressions clearly embedded in them.

The development of Sinhalese folk drama was continuous and simultaneous, interconnected and woven together like a chain. Nonetheless, there existed special elements and attributes to each individual form. The masks of *Kolam* were found to be causing unnecessary disturbances to the performances. It was a disturbance to the development of dialogues and was dropped entirely in time. The original interludes or presentations of the isolated characters in demons ceremony were gradually given up and finally they became a type of play, which was similar to *Nādagama* and called *Kavi Nādagama*, which was a kind of stylized play. This became the starting point of stylized plays in Sinhalese theatre.

Kavi Nādagama had come into existence only during recent times, that is to say about one hundred and fifty years ago. The *Nādagama* had grown due to the influence of these performances but not entirely. In *Kavi Nādagama* the masks had already disappeared. The idea of unmasked plays had been conceived by the *Kavi Nādagamas*. The *Nādagama* could have also hinted at the possibility of depicting an entire story through the medium of reciting dialogues.

The word *Nādagam* had been borrowed from the Tamil word *Nātakam*, and it had been popular in villages and townships along the western coastal belt, from *Chillaw* to *Tangalla* and had not penetrated into the interiors or hilly areas. There was a special performance called *Terukkuttu* in Jaffna. It was a kind of street theatre. According to scholars, Sri Lankan *Nādagama* had been influenced by the South Indian *Terukkuttu*⁵. Sri Lanka and India are neighboring countries with cross-cultural communication, which had greatly influenced Sri Lankan society. However, *Nādagam* was highly codified and it was considered as a form of dramatic entertainment. The *Nādagam* actors did not wear masks. Carnātaaka music and *Nātyadharmi style* were used for these performances. One special feature about Sinhalese folk theatre was that there were no female actors. Female characters were usually portrayed by males.

While *Nādagam* performances were well received, a new theatre form came from North India in the 18th century. Around 1870s, a prominent drama group called *Elphinston*, led by K. M. Balivāla came to Sri Lanka and performed *Nurti* in the capital, Colombo. They became popular and theatre music became predominantly Hindustani in style. It had new themes and beautiful sceneries. They used lights for the play and the stage was innovative and well made. Actors' make-up and the orchestra of *Nurti* became well developed. As a result, *Nurti* became more popular all over Ceylon and *Nādagamas* disappeared.

⁵ *Purāna Sinhala Nādagam Pitapat*, (Vol. I), Sunil Ariyaratna, Colombo: S. Godage & Brothers, Maradana, First print., 1996, p. 05

(Hereafter, I shall refer to *Purāna Sinhala Nādagam Pitapat*, as *PSNP*.)

Nurthi brought female actors to the Sinhalese stage for the first time. Sinhalese spectators were fascinated by them as they were impressive in their appearance. *Nādagam* was held on all seven nights and spectators used to get exhausted participating in every performance, but without this continuous participation understanding the story became difficult. *Nurthi* performances never exceeded for more than three hours. The taste of Sinhalese audience had changed tremendously in favour of *Nurthi* songs. Due to many other reasons, *Nādagam* slowly depreciated in the Sinhalese society.

After the Second World War, Western style Sinhala drama emerged in the dramatic society of University of Ceylon (now University of Perādeniya). The students belonged to the Dramatic Society and studied in the Department of English. Nonetheless, students of other universities in Ceylon like *Vidyodaya*, *Vidyālankāra*, Colombo, also became members of the Ceylon dramatic Society. E.F.C. Ludowyke, a graduate of Cambridge who was a lecturer in the Department of English from 1933 to 1966 in Colombo and Perādeniya University, produced a play annually. He introduced a number of classical and major modern dramatists to Ceylon. It was Ludowyke who introduced playwrights such as Sheridan, Moliere, Goldoni, Shaw, Shakespeare, O'Neill, O'Casey, Pirandello, Ibsen, Pinero, Plautus, Brecht and Anouilh.

He also introduced a number of students who were very much interested in direction to the Ceylon Dramatic Society. They continued with the spoken drama tradition. Some of them who were very famous then were Ranjini Obesekara, Ashley Halpe and Cuthbert Amarasingha. In 1945, Ludowyke produced and

adapted 'Gogol's *The Marriage*' as the first production in Sinhala. In 1960s, the Dramatic Society produced '*Death of a Salesman*' and '*The Crucible*' of Arthur Miller, Brecht's '*Caucasian Chalk Circle*' and '*Mother Courage*.'

The founding of the Arts Council of Ceylon in 1952 is perhaps the most significant step in the overall development in public support for theatre activity in the Island. They followed the model of the Arts Council of Great Britain focusing attention on the Sinhala language even though many English language drama groups continued to operate along with other drama groups working in Tamil. Eventually, three different Arts Council drama panels were established for the three different language groups, which were Sinhalese, Tamil and English for traditional music, western music, dance, visual arts and puppetry.

Lack of quality scripts was the major problem that the Arts council drama panel faced initially. Therefore, for promoting new plays as well as adaptations from English to Sinhala and Tamil it launched a series of annual competitions. The council involved itself in supporting the production of the winning scripts. Annual festival featuring new plays soon became part of the theatrical landscape. Most of these scripts dealt with contemporary social problems and national history as their subject matter. While most playwrights were conservative in style, some writers began to experiment with the forms and content taken from Sinhalese folk theatre, rituals and theatre forms of other Asian countries.

One such experimental playwright was Ediriweera Sarachchandra, a professor of the Department of Sinhala, University of Ceylon and a qualified Sanskrit, Pali and

Sinhalese scholar. He was one of the playwrights and producers in the Ceylon University Dramatic Society. His play *Maname* is considered the most impressive Sinhala script. It was staged at the Lionel Wend Theatre in Colombo for the first time on 3rd November 1956. This is a landmark in the history of Sinhala drama. The play *Maname* is based on the *Jātaka Tales*, which is called *Chulla Dhanuddara* and *Maname Nādagama*. He used the dramatic style found in the Asian theatre forms like south Indian Dance Drama, opera, Sanskrit dramaturgy and modern theatre form for producing the plays. Consequently, Sinhalese modern theatre produced a well made play in form. This new theatre tradition became the stylized form or *Nātyadharmi* style. Here, the word ‘modern’ does not mean today’s popular sense of modernity.

It was highly meaningful and cut across all social and cultural barriers. There was a saying among the people at that time as ‘*Join Maname and see the Ceylon*’. There were two men, Charles Silva Gunasinghe Gurunnanse, and his son Morman who were supportive towards the success of *Maname*. Charles Silva Gunasinghe was the principle resource person of Sarachchandra’s creation of ‘*Maname*’. The traditional melodies were built-in the play by him. He taught the songs besides the ‘*Gamanas*’ or gaits to each character.

Sarachchandra had taken the style of theatre from *Nādagama* for *Maname* with the help of Charles Silva Gunasingha. He had also played female roles in his youth. Gurunnanse’s son Morman was an expert ‘*Maddala*’ or *Myrdangam* player. It was usually used in *Nādagam* music. Sarachchandra used chants, masks, stylized movements and broad gestures. In addition to *Āngika* and

Āharayābhinaya, he used poetry for describing situations or moments or incidents of play as followed in Sanskrit theatre. The prose and verse of the play are mixed with Sanskrit language.

Shaymon Jayasinge played 'Pothē Gura', Sutradhara or presenter in *Maname* and he gave a special quality to the role. Poet, novelist and critic, Prof. Siri Gunasinghe designed the costumes and make up for the *Maname* group. Vasanta Kumar created the dances. Eileen Sarachchandra, Sarachchandra's first wife also supported the performances. There is no visual record of the original *Maname* except photographs and gramophone records. Sarachchandra was strictly opposed to filming or photography. In 1961, he created a second important work in this style titled *Sinhabāhu*, a theatrical piece dealing with the origins of the Sinhalese and the conflicts between the young and the old. He produced dramas chiefly based on Sinhalese tradition, and for the modern spectators.

Sarachchandra's theatre did not consciously follow any particular form or genre, but, of course, he had absorbed much from the theatre traditions prevalent in other parts of Asia, as well as from the folk drama of Ceylon. Accordingly, my research '*The making of modern Sinhalese theatre and Ediriweera Sarachchandra*' is a study, which takes into account the influence of traditional Asian theatre approach on Sinhalese stylized plays. This research is a research experiment designed to show how Sinhalese stylized plays express a new theatre form. It evaluates Ediriweera Sarachchandra's plays such as *Maname*, *Sinhabāhu*, and *Pematho Jāyathi Soko*.

Considering Sinhalese theatre, it is always refreshing and stimulating to dwell on *Maname*. It is the epitome of poetry, music, dance, song, dialogue and theatre. And, it is a landmark in the history of theatrical events which provided the impetus, environment, land and inspiration for the revival of theatre. Sarachchandra explored the mode's potential over a variety of challenging issues. He led the gold rush after the *Sinhabāhu*. He tuned his immensely creative works harmonious with the nationalist cultural revival in Sinhala then so that the Sinhala theatre was ready for a stylish and smooth romanticizing. Its music foregrounds many formalistic elements of narrator – chorus – stylized movements– masks and a fluid movement from prose to verse, verse to prose etc.

1.1 Core Objectives

Sarachchandra had taken plots for his theatre from the Buddhist *Jātaka Tales*, historical legends, folk tales and myths. Carnātaka music, Sinhalese folk music and dance existed in it for creating background and facial expressions for the play. Every movement of the limb and utterance was controlled by the rhythm of the musical instruments, especially *Mṛdangam*. In Sarachchandra's stylized plays, character entered the stage, through a special entry. It connected with *Maddala pada* like *Pasan*, *Thirlāna*, *Thirkanam* and the actor moved around with graceful movements and faced the audience performing their components. The synchronization of the actor's movements and the sound of the drums were of infinite importance. Here, freedom was the gift of discipline. The beauty of the

stylized movements of the body in consonance with the rhythm of the drumbeats arose from the precision in expression of the dramatic role in his stylized plays.

Songs and chants were sung with Carnāṭaka music, because there were no original Rāgas in Sinhalese stylized plays. It was harmonized by the tune of Caranāṭaka Rāgas as a new creation. The melodies of Rāgas had set moods and when it was employed with the character, it created the appropriate situational effect. However, Rāgas were most effective when the audience were aware of their conventions. On the other hand, rhythms based on drums were universally understood. Rhythm was essential to theatre; drums were a marvelous way of creating it. After assessing the theatre elements from Sinhalese folk theatre, South Indian opera and Sanskrit dramaturgy, I have analyzed the elements of Sinhalese theatre in Sarachchandra's stylized plays with the help of text, performances and the stage.

1.2 Methodology

The research methodology is of two fold in general categorization;

1. Methodology was largely based on theoretical sources and fieldwork. This included the readings of Sinhalese theatre research books, articles and commentaries, Sinhalese plays of Sarachchandra written in Sinhala language. Here, I depended on theory as well as performances in tracing the visual picture of theatre forms, the stage, backdrops and actors.

Sarachchandra's stylized plays had given theoretical descriptions of the drama form, and I believe that it warranted the analysis of the performances too. My primary sources of Sinhalese theatre were Sarachchandra's *Maname*, *Sinhabāhu*, and *Pemathi Jāyathi soka* and his critical work, *Sinhala Gāmi Nātkaya* on folk theatre.

2. Methodology was also based on practical investigation with the fieldwork. This part of the methodology involved collecting materials as well as trying to analyze the use of dramatic elements of performances in Sinhalese Buddhist ceremonies, folk rituals, folk plays and Sarachchandra's stylized plays.

It was relevant to evaluate the effect of the performances on theatre artists in various areas. Comparing and contrasting the performance events led to numerous interesting and valuable conclusions. The research study was centered on the question as to how to find a theatre form for Sinhalese theatre, when they were presented via new technology and new social situations. The most valuable contribution of this fieldwork was an idea of the performances. It included various styles of *Gates*, *Angahāra*, music, stage and the script.

The working conditions within the playhouse were obviously very different from the other fieldwork. Collections of several movements within the play were related to four gestures of Sanskrit dramaturgy. After some experiments with Sanskrit dramaturgy, it revealed all of the gestures, *Dharmi*, scripts and finely evoked *Rasa*. Each of these had made critical contribution to the development of

further performances of Sarachchandra's stylized plays. Fieldwork involved the observation of participants and analysis of interviews with musicians, dancers, producers and learners of stagecraft. Technological experiments in performances provided an opportunity to demonstrate and discuss theatre techniques. Nowadays Sarachchandra's wife, Lalitha Sarachchandra produced his plays. I interviewed her and took photos and videos of those plays so as to enrich my research.

Some of the practical questions were asked in view of *Āngikābhinaya*, the stage, actors, songs and dialogues in Sarachchandra's plays. For example, How do Sinhalese stylized plays make use of *Chatur Abhinaya*?; What are the ideal methods that are used for theatre? What is the relationship between ethnicity, nationality, modernity and history? etc. The end of the research project of fieldwork in Sri Lanka was a study of the developed form of story – acting, dancing – singing and combinations of entire performances. The fieldwork yielded a great deal of significant information about numerous types of storytelling, and this helped me in my effort to develop the new theory and practice for the Sinhalese theatre. This I believe will be a true value addition to the interdisciplinary field of performances studies.

1.3 Limitations

Original Sanskrit texts like *Nāṭyaśāstra*, *Abhinayadarpana* and *Dasarūpa* was utilized for Sanskrit dramaturgy in Sarachchandra's stylized plays. Those were the main texts when theory was dealt with. As much as I was delighted with the question at hand, I was concerned about translating these texts written in Sanskrit language to the close readings. My project was not dedicated entirely to extract the essence of the primary text by means of theoretical instruments; rather it was to elucidate and elaborate techniques of staging and acting in presenting these texts in theatre.

Chapter 1-II

Ediriweera Sarachchandra's life and critical works

Ediriweera Sarachchandra was born on third of June, 1914 in Southern part of Sri Lanka, which is called Ratgama and he passed away on sixteenth of August, 1996. He studied at Richmond College, St. Aloysius in Galle, St. John's College in Panadura, and St. Thomas' College in Mt. Lavinia in Colombo during his early years.

His father Charles Francis de Silva was a postal worker. His mother Lydia Pinto Moragoda was a teacher. Continuously, Sarachchandra had to change schools in his childhood because of his father's frequent transfers to towns all over the island. He is a bi-lingual scholar due to a Sinhala speaking home environment and a school education in English language. During his schools years, Sarachchandra read only English language literature, and heard only of foreign writers. But later on his mother sent him to a Buddhist temple to learn Sinhala from a priest.

In the mean time Sri Lankan musician, Saranagupta Amarasinghe returned from Shantiniketana after his studies. One day he held a musical show in Colombo and he sang in it. Sarachchandra who was a young college student then was strongly influenced by his musical talent and so requested his father to buy a Sitar for him. His father happily obliged and bought him a Sitar from his small pension. From then onwards, Sarachchandra began to learn Sitar and Hindustani music under Saranagupta Amarasinge.

He began his career as a teacher at St. Peter's College in Colombo. His initial ambition was to become a musician but because of the new literary interests in school, his aspiration changed to Divinity teaching. He read many novels for divinity class. Sarachchandra enjoyed the poems of Keats, Wordsworth and Burns. He learned the life of Rabindranath Tagore, his collection of short stories and poems, which were prescribed as texts in college. Tagore's Gitanjali had a deep influence on him.

He wished to learn in English medium and also study science subjects, but he was more interested to graduate in the oriental languages namely Sinhala, Pāli and Sanskrit. While awaiting admission to the university, he studied Sinhala classics and Pāli language from a priest. In his leisure time, he traveled to villages in Sri Lanka such as *Hewāhāta valley* and watched performances of Sinhalese folk plays. He learned folk music from dancers who belonged to the Kāndyan tradition.

In 1933, Sarachchandra got admission at the University College in Colombo. He completed his degree in 1936 with a first class. After that, he sat for the Ceylon

Civil Service examination, because of his parents' insistence. Sarachchandra came first in the Island in the examination in 1939. He joined the publishing company Lake House for an administrative post. He got married to Aileen Beleth at the age of 24 years, without examining horoscopes and getting dowry. His wife had a sweet singing voice and shared Sarachchandra's musical tastes.

Rabindranāth Tagore is the first Asian to win the Nobel Prize for Literature. When this news spread worldwide, Sarachchandra felt very proud of Tagore's achievement. He read more about Tagore and his Shāntiniketan too. He found details about the University, which is situated in Shāntiniketana in Bengal. He wondered about Tagore's life as a teacher in the university.

Days passed and Tagore came to Sri Lanka on a visit. Sarachchandra got an opportunity to see Tagore's dance drama, *Shāpa Mochana*. It was performed at the *Reagal* theatre in Colombo. During the performance, he saw the great poet Rabindranāth Tagore seated on the stage and keeping time with his foot to the rhythm of the music of the play. Tagore's happiness on the play left an impression on Sarachchandra's mind. Tagore in his long robe, black headgear, with white hair, his face and a beard that covered his chest was an impressive individual. Sarachchandra thought Tagore as majesty personified. Later, Sarachchandra saw Uday Shankar's dance and his group at the same theatre. He was absolutely fascinated by Bengali music and dance and recognized art as part of Bengali and Sinhalese cultural heritage. He decided to go to Shāntinikethan for highest studies.

Sarachchandra travelled to Shantiniketana to study Indian Philosophy and Music for his Masters degree. The ideals of Shantiniketana highly influenced on Sarachchandra. Tagore was the director of the institute. The classical oriental atmosphere of the institute and Tagore's slogan, '*High thinking and plain living*' attracted students of music and literature from all over the world including Sarachchandra and his wife Aileen. Sarachchandra graduated as an expert performer of Sitar. He got his masters degree in Buddhist Philosophy and returned to Sri Lanka in 1940.

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He resumed his teaching career at St. Thomas College in Mt. Lavinia, Colombo from 1942. Between 1942 and 1944, he also worked as an assistant editor in Sinhala Etymological Dictionary at the University of Ceylon. In 1944, he got a transfer to Royal College in Colombo, but he refused the teaching post. Interestingly, because of his Indian experience and influence he changed his dress to Indian dhoti and Kurtā. St Thomas's College employed him as a Sinhalese teacher in the year. The senior students of St. Thomas's college were encouraged to study in the medium of their mother – tongues, either Sinhala or Tamil instead of English medium. Sarachchandra saw this as an opportunity. The young westernized minds who discovered the oriental tastes from their new Sinhalese master, Ediriweera Sarachchandra nicknamed him 'Tagore'.

In 1947, he received an appointment as lecturer in Pāli from the University of Colombo and served there until 1949. In 1949, he got an offer in the University of London to study for a postgraduate degree in Western Philosophy. Professor A.J.Ayer was his guide during his Doctoral degree in Buddhist Philosophy at the



University of London. His PhD dissertation presented in 1948 and published under the title '**Buddhist Psychology of Perception**' in 1958 is regarded as an authoritative work in the field.

After returning from London, he worked as a lecturer in the Department of Sinhala at University of Peradeniya. During this period, he experimented a lot with Sinhalese theatre and joined the Ceylon Dramatic Society. Sarachchandra came to be known as a playwright, novelist, poet, literary critic, essayist and social commentator. Acknowledging his work, he was promoted as a senior lecturer by the University of Peradeniya.

Appointed as a Professor of Pali at the University College and professor of Modern Sinhalese Literature in 1952 in Peradeniya University, Sarachchandra worked closely with E.F.C. Ludowyk who was a Professor at the department of English at the University of Peradeniya, Ceylon. Both persons were devoted to the theatre and found the '*Ranga Sabhā*'. Ludowyk established a theatre group and produced dramas mainly adaptations of European works for the local stage.

This was the first step in process, which culminated in Sarachchandra becoming the foremost playwright. In view of the limitations of adapting foreign plays, Sarachchandra began researching the Folk Drama of Ceylon. He got an award from the Rockefeller Foundation Fellowship for the above research. In this theatrical climate, Sarachchandra composed a play titled *Maname*. It combined elements of the folk tradition of *Nādagam* in the island. Though considered a modern playwright and producer, he consistently drew new theatre forms from the

great classical heritage of South Asia. His works for the stage, his fiction and criticism are the finest artistic achievement of modern Sri Lanka.

In 1965 and 1966, Sarachchandra was invited to teach Drama and Philosophy as a Visiting professor at Denison University, Ohio, and Earlham College, Indiana. His career at the University of Peradeniya in Sri Lanka had the effect of attracting students from many parts of the world to study literature and drama under his guidance. Sarachchandra's teaching skills were well known to every student. When teaching he drew insights not only from his personal life experiences but also from his long experience of international theatre, Eastern and Western philosophy, wide range of Oriental and Occidental literary thoughts, ranging from Aristotle to Ānandavardhana and quoted Shelley as well as the *Siyabaslakara* (a 10th century text on Sinhala poetics) interspersed with many examples and explanations.

The Sinhalese folk traditions in his plays were original and relevant to all classes, communities, and occupations existing in the society. He conveyed poetry and lyrics in his plays through various suggestions without the loss of dramatic force and the skill, which he had shaped and brought from folk elements to the modern theatre. It attracted the attention of the best critical minds among the generation of all three national (Sinhala, Tamil and Muslim) traditions.

Sarachchandra's theatre has been continuing from 1956 to the present day. He maintained an interest in writing novels, short stories and poems, critical works in

both English and Sinhala, philosophical essays, and a ‘non – autobiography’. He was also a literary editor, translator and a critic.

Sarachchandra’s great representation as an artiste, writer and theatre producer guaranteed his public service assignments. He represented Sri Lanka as its Ambassador to France, accredited in addition to Switzerland and the Vatican from 1974 to 1977. He was a permanent delegate to UNESCO and was appointed research professor at the East-West Center, Hawaii. Universities of Peradeniya and Jaffna honoured him with the award of Doctor of Literature in 1982. In the same year, he was appointed as Emeritus Professor of the University of Peradeniya.

He is truly a nationally representative figure. Because of this reason and his play ‘*Pematho Jāyathi Soko*’ he got the literary prize the ***Mahākavi Kumaran Asan***. Sarachchandra was awarded the Asan World Prize in 1983 with the following citation: ‘*distinguished poet, scholar, and national playwright of Sri Lanka, the Asan Memorial Association places on record its deep appreciation of the great contribution made by him to the resurgence of Sri Lankan culture after the long dark night of Western imperialist domination*’.

This was the first proof of his international standing and recognition. He later won the Ramon Magsasay Award for Journalism in 1988 for his creative works. At the presentation of the Ramon Magsaysay Award, Sarachchandra’s work was cited as ‘*creating modern theatre out of traditional Sinhalese folk drama, and awakening Sri Lankans to their rich cultural spiritual heritage*’.

His starting point is Buddhist philosophy. It is embodied in his works for theatre. Greek, Japanese and Sanskrit classical theatres helped him greatly to evolve a great theatre for Sinhalese tradition. From the early nineteen fifties beginning with *Maname* he has been pursuing a vision for society. Sarachchandra's noble ambition was to obtain a theatrical tradition for Sinhalese. His creations were in tune with the Sinhalese tradition, taking in moral and spiritual values of the contemporary society as well as giving back new ones to the society. His literary, dramatic and critical works were writings as per these circumstances. He is widely acknowledged as the doyen and patriarch of Sinhala literature and so naturally qualified to write and create on his own. Appreciably, he imbibed the best in western classical culture without forsaking his roots in the native tradition.

Ediviwira Sarachchandra achieved the remarkable merit of being recognized during his lifetime as the national dramatist of Sri Lanka. He enjoyed his career as a poet, dramatist, social thinker and university teacher. He exhorted Sinhala literary and art establishment following the ascetic ideas of the Sinhala – Buddhist tradition. The languages of his plays both spoken and written are good examples of his creativity. It was rhythmic enough to be sung in the magnificent plays that lay in his fruitful imagination. The texts of *Maname* and *Sinhabāhu* are central to our poetic diction as Shakespearean texts are. The texts of Sarachchandra's plays are incredible sounds of spoken words.

His plays have crossed sub-cultural boundaries. He took the Buddhist concepts subtly and re-worked them among the animating themes of his dramas. Consequently, love and compassion were the central points of *Sinhabahu*, which

besides retelling the legend of the origin of the Sinhala race, depicts at one level the conflict between two generations, and at another explores the contrast between savage and civilized life.

As a playwright, Sarachchandra made a peerless contribution to literature and the performing arts of Sri Lanka. His objective of engagement with drama and stage was highly ambitious and because of his contribution, Sinhalese tradition has evolved a unique style of modern theatre distinctive to Sri Lanka. Sarachchandra's theatre was achieved by an imaginative synthesis of the native forms of theatre. He used stagecraft of the West and gave attention to two main themes - realistic and conventional. His 'poetic -musical' dramas were the vehicle capable of handling contemporary social themes and experiences.

When Sarachchandra was 75 years old, he suffered an illness that affected his eyesight. In spite of that, he was very active in literary and cultural circles and wrote plays, poems, and experimental novels while also engaging in the work of a new generation of dramatists, actors and producers who came to him for advice. Sarachchandra not only created Sinhalese theatre, but made new playwrights. More than other University teachers, he imparted a sense of value to his students.

1.II.1 Sarachchandra's critical works

He has written and produced more than thirty plays, which include stylized, lyrical and poetic dramas. Few of them are adaptation and translation of English plays.

i. Novels

His fictions have been accorded high recognition in Sri Lanka and overseas. Sarachchandra's novels *Malagiya Aththo (The Dead, 1959)* and *With The Begging Bowl (1987)* were awarded Sri Lanka's Sahitya Mandala Award and the Arts Council Award respectively. *Malagiya Aththo* is worthy enough to be appreciated like *Maname* and *Sinhabāhu*.

The novel '*With The Begging Bowl*' is based on Sarachchandra's experiences when he was Sri Lanka's Ambassador to France from 1974 to 1977. It has been described in a satirical comedy style and functions as a means of criticism and of inspiration or examination of the brave and the honest in contemporary Sri Lankan society. Two novels of Sarachchandra have been translated into Japanese language and few of them into English. His works have been written in Sinhala except his novel '*Heta Echchara Karuvala Nā*' (Tomorrow will not be so dark) which he published in English in 1978.

Prof. Ediriweera Sarachchandra wrote the novel '*Malawunge Avurududā*' (The Festival of the Dead) in 1965. This novel has followed *Malagiya Aththo* (The Dead) and it contains the famous lines:

*"If you do not go, you cannot come back. That is the truth, I did not understand. Going is good. Going and coming back is good too. In the world, there is only going and coming. If you do not come, you cannot go. If you do not go, you cannot come back."*⁶

These are the famous words of Noriko San was said to Devendora San in the novel.

ii. Short stories

His famous short stories include *Kālayage Awemen*, *Māyā Rūpaya*, *Rūpa Sundari*, *Midiya*, *Gṛhaniya hū Upāsikāwa*, Of a Queen and a Courtesan, The Death of a Friend and others.

⁶ *Malagiya Aththo*, Ediriweera Sarachchandra, Colombo: S. Godage & Brothers, Maradana, 1996, p. 55

iii. Dramas

Translations and adaptations

Mudalālige Peraliya (1943)

Moliere's *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme* - Adapted by E.R. Sarachchandra and A.P.

Gunaratne. This was the first stage play translated and produced by E.R.

Sarachchandra. It was staged on 16th December 1943.

Kapuvā Kapoti (1945)

Nikolai Gogol's *The Marriage* - Adapted by E.R. Sarachchandra, A.P. Gunaratne

and D.J. Wijeratne. It was first staged on 25th April 1945.

Hāngi Horā (1949)

This play was an adaptation of Oscar Wilde's *The Importance of Being Earnest* –

It was first staged on 1949.

Mānager (1950)

Anton Chekhov's *The Manager* - Adapted and produced by Ediriweera

Sarachchandra and U.A. Gunasekara.

Magul Parasthāva (1951)

Anton Chekhov's *The Proposal* - Adapted by Ediriweera Sarachchandra and U.A.

Gunasekara. First staged on 2nd February 1951.

Walahā (1951)

Anton Chekhov's *The Bear* - Adapted by Ediriweera Sarachchandra and U.A.

Gunasekara. First staged on 2nd February 1951.

Uttara Rāma Charithaya (1951)

John de Silva's *Nurtiya* - Adapted for Radio Ceylon. Broadcast on 2nd August 1952.

Veda Hatana (1953)

Moliere's *Le Malade Imaginaire* - Adapted by Ediriweera Sarachchandra, A.P. Gunaratne and D.J. Wijeratne. First staged on 14th October 1955.

Yermā (1993)

Garcia Lorca's *Yerma* - Translated by Ediriweera Sarachchandra and Sunil Ariyaratne. First staged on 27th December 1999.

iii.i. Original plays

Bahinakalāva hevat Sanskṛtika Komasaris (1951), Tharuna Lekhakayā (1951), Satva Karunāwa (1951), Pabāvati (1952) first staged on 16th September 1952, ***Vala Ihagena Kāma (1954), Rattaran (1954)*** Originally written for Radio and subsequently presented as a stage drama on 6th September 1958, ***Ekata Mata Hinā Hinā (1954), Vandinna Giya Devāle (1955)*** First staged on 14th October 1955, ***Maname (1956), Pemato Jāyati Soko (1957)*** First written for Radio Ceylon and later revised for a stage play, ***Kadā Valalu (1958)***, First staged on 6th September 1958, ***Elova Gihin Melova Awa (1959), Hasthi Kānta Mantare (1959), Vella Vāhum (1960)*** First staged on 24th March 1960. (Actors were minor employees of the University of Ceylon), ***Sinhabāhu (1961)***, First staged on 31st August 1961, ***Mahāsara (1967)***, Actors were minor employees of the

University of Ceylon) , *Watapuluwe Geval Bindalā* (1972), *Vessantara* (1980), first staged on 16th November 1980, *Lomahansa* (1985) first staged on 22nd August 1985 at Lionel Wendt theatre, *Kiri Muttiya Gange Giyā* (1985), *Bawa Kadaturāwa* (1988) first staged on 24th August 1988.

iii. ii. Ballets

Gonman Kekaniya which was a translation of Kinoshita Jungi's *Usuru* .

iii. iii. Radio Plays

Tharuna Lekhakayā (1951), *Uttara Rāma Charithaya* (1951) John de Silva's *Nurtiya* which was adapted for the Radio Ceylon and broadcast on 2nd August 1952, *Yā Deka Noratha Ratha* (Unpublished) but, broadcast on 2nd August 1952, *Satva Karunāwa* (1953), *Nedeyo*, *Gatkaru Pissuva*, *Vela Paluvai Kaputu Rālai*, *Pemato Jāyati Soko*. In 1957 this was broadcast over the radio as a musical drama, *Ā Nuwan Lebuva* (1969), *Landanaya Ākramanaya Kota Ethā* (BBC), *Piyā Peralā Eyi*

iii. iv Research, literary and criticism

In '*The Sinhala Novel: History and Criticism (1942)* (reprinted as *Modern Sinhala Fiction in 1943*), Sarachchandra applied western literary criteria to original writing in fiction. This is a critical study of the emerging Sinhala novel and short story written in English. Later, this was developed into a major work in Sinhala literary history and criticism as *Sinhala Navakathā (1951)*.

Sāhithya Vidyāwa, Sinhala Nawakathā Ithihāsaya hā Wichāraya, Kalpanā Lokaya, Nātya Gawèshana, Sinhala Gāmi Nātakaya, Wes Muhunuda Sābā Muhunuda, Modern Sinhalese Fiction, The Sinhalese Novel, Buddhist Psychology of Perception (1958) are other notable works of Sarachchandra.

iii. v. Other works

Apé Withthi, Asampūrna Charitha Satahan, Dharmishta Samājaya, Pin Áthi Sarasawi Waramak Denne is other few works of importance.

Chapter - 02

Theatre form of *Nādagam* and *Maname*

Nādagam tradition represents the ancient drama culture of Ceylon. It is a form of dramatic entertainment, which regaled Sinhalese audience since the beginning of 19th century. The theme of several *Nādagam* stories is the birth of Christ. During the Christmas season, performances are held in the coastal areas from Chillaw in the North, right down to *Tangalla* in the South of Ceylon, but it is not known in the interior or hilly areas. *Nādagam* performances had begun as early as 1615 A.D. and they enacted the incarnation of Christ in *Kammala* or blacksmith's shop.

Many scholars such as late Dr. Edmund Pieris, the former Bishop of Chilaw; Prof. Sunil Āriyaratna have done a great deal of research on the origins and development of Sinhala *Nādagama*. According to them, the first Sinhala *Nādagama* is '*Raja Tunkattuwa*'.¹ It was presented by M. S. Gabriel Fernando of Chilaw and was performed in 1761. The story was based on the three Kings of Magi and their worship of the birth of Christ, the divine baby. In fact, it is

¹ *PSNP.*, p. 10

believed to have influenced the Tamil work of art "*Muvrasikai Nātakam*" on the Birth of Christ in 1882. Until date, this play with the text written by Marthelis Gurunnanse is performed in Duwa during the Christmas season.

There is another popular belief, which is that Pilippu Siñno, born in 1770 is the first *Nādagam* writer. He presented "*Ehelapola Nādagama*" in 1824. It was a successful production and was followed by another *Nādagama* called "*Marigida*", based on the life of St. Margarita. Many other Sinhala *Nādagamas* followed this tradition and centered on the lives of Saints and other Catholic themes. Later, *Nādagamas* took on secular themes as seen in '*Sinhavalli*', '*Portia*', and "*Māthalan*" which were famously performed in various parts of the country and became a recognized form of drama in Ceylon.

Philippu Singho wrote and produced thirteen *Nādagam* scripts such as, *Ähälepola*, *Mātalan*, *Senagappu*, *Simhavalli*, *Jusēput*, *Susevu*, *Helēnā*, *Visvakarma*, *Varthagam*, *Sannikulā*, *Raja Tunkattuva*, *Sulambāvati*, and *Hunukotuvē katāva*. Oral tradition maintains that the authorship of a large number of existing *Nādagamas* belong to Pilippu Siñno. He is celebrated as the first writer and producer of *Nādagamas* in the Sinhalese language with these plays having existed earlier in Tamil language.

The more popular *Nādagamas* are *Eugene (Iyujine)*, *Balasanta or Orison saha Palenten*, and *Brampord (Brumford)*, all three attributed to V. Christian Perera, *Dinatara Nādagama*, attributed to Lindamulage Stephen Silva Wickramasinghe Jayawardena of Moratuwa, *The Merchant of Venice or Pōrsiyā (Portia)*, and

Harishchandra, of unknown authorship, and *Selestinā Nādagama* by Charles de Abrew.

In Martin Wickramasingha's opinion, *Nādagama* was an entertainment of Sri Lankan villagers. He mentions in his novel '*Ape Gama*' that it came to Srilanka from South India. In the beginning, it was part of community festivals. The villagers, big and small assembled and selected the actors necessary to portray each character among them. The heroine was represented by a man in female costumes. Few youth belonging to rich families put up with the operating cost of constructing a shed, providing costumes and training to the actors involved. There was no admission fee for those part-time performances. Even the women of the rich families were allowed to attend in the beginning. It was later that women stopped coming to see the performances. Gradually, *Nādagama* became a professional theatre with the women's participation having stopped being a distraction or social gossip. Professional artistes began producing *Nādagam*. Earlier, the leaders of the village community always produced it with one of the persons from the leading families in the village being always chosen as a king or the hero of the play.

Nādagamas are still performed in some places of the country during the Christmas season. It is continued for seven days with part by part being played each day. It can be called a folk opera for the reason that they generally enacted the entire story in the medium of song. The entire *Nādagama* is in song except for a few occasional prose sentences. The dialogues are also musical. The action of the play proceeds with the aid of these musical dialogues. There are large elements

of dance and presence of stock characters too. They dance in a particular style, and every stock character has a set of particular movements to perform during the entry. The presenter explains a large part of the action to the audience. Thus, the *Nādagama* bears the character of a musical narration, with actors coming in and representing the various characters of the story by means of song and dance.

2.1 *Nādagam* stage or *Karaliya*

Nādagam is usually performed around nine o'clock in the night until late hours in the morning. It is performed in a shift hall and it is never performed in a permanent place like a theatre hall. An octagonal shaped roof shelters the hall. It has a semi-circular shaped platform and is known as *Karaliya*. Near to the *Karaliya* is the green room. In front of this, is a white cloth serving as a curtain.

Actors entered the stage from behind, and came in through a side entrance. The drop curtain is never used as it is considered unnecessary for the technique of presentation. The audience sits on the open space opposite to the *Karaliya*. Some of them are on the ground and some of them are on chairs.

The Presenter, called *Potegurā* (the master of the text, the lector or narrator), stands near the side entrance or in a position wherein he can see both the audience and actors as they participate. The play starts with the entrance of him who is similar to '*Sutradhāra*' in the Sanskrit theatre. He introduces each character with a verse from his book and whistles for each character as a signal before they enter

the stage. One or two other persons stand beside him to join him at the end of each line for *Atvāl gāyanaya* (repetition of the same line after his singing).

The members of the orchestra are seated on the side of the stage, which is opposite to the presenter. There are two drummers, *Horanā* player, and cymbals player. *Maddhala* is the only traditional drum used for *Nādagama*. It is also known as *Demala Beraya* or Tamil drum. It carries a unique pleasing sound. In recent times the violin as well as Harmonium is being used.

The performance begins with the presenter chanting stanzas of invocation. It is known by various names such as *Mūlārambhaya* (introductory song), *Pote Kaviya* (the presenter's verses) and *Purāna Viriduva*. He comes attired in a long *Sanyāsi* robe, and wears a turban on his head and prays to God for their protection by *Pote Sinduva*. He tells the audience what play he is going to present. Next, the presenter introduces the stock characters of *Nādagama*.

First character is the jester, known as *Kōmāli*, *Bahubutayā*, *Bahubūta Kolamā*, or *Konaṅgi*. There is an unmeasured chant (*Innise*) to describe the jester before he enters the stage. Here is an example, from the *Bramford Nādagama*, of a verse introducing the jester:

Ketē bandi pambayāse varali handa korala gata vasāgena

Kâtē yanaturu bī surāmat vemin bada nerāgena²

Like a scarecrow in the rice – field dressed in rags

With his body covered with scales,

His belly extended by excessive drinking,

Drunk to the point of shamelessness,

Staring around him with bloodshot eyes and talking foolish
nonsense,

Staring around him with bloodshot eyes and talking foolish
nonsense,

Here comes before the audience the *Bahubuta Kolamā*

Crying out at the top of his voice.

The jester appears on the stage wearing rags and a hat, perhaps, a crooked cap on his head. The jester always appeared in a costume similar to the European clown looking more comic than frightful. He wears a tight trouser and a long jacket. A strap goes round his waist. The trousers and jacket is covered all over with rows of colored pompons. He sports a grey beard and moustache.

² *Sinhala Gāmi Nātakaya*, Ediriweera Sarachchandra, Maharagama; Jathiaka

Adhyāpanāyathanaya, Second print, 1992, p. 150

(Hereafter, I shall refer to *Sinhala Gāmi Nātakaya*, as *SGN*.)

At the end of the chant, the jester comes and dances to a beat, which means the presenter has finished the chant. Stock characters have a particular dance, make a circular movement on the stage, and when the presenter finishes his song, they sing a song themselves. The jester sings a line and does a dance, and then sings the next line after his step. Between the dances, the presenter asks him questions about his place of birth, name and his parents. Thus, he alternates song and dance, and finally leaves the stage making audience laugh with his comic gestures to his joyful song.

The second stock character is *Sellan Lamā*, or *Sellapille*. He wears a bifurcated dhoti with a long coat with buttons in front made in velvet. The coat reaches up to his knee. He has a belt tightened round his waist. There is a cap on his head as an ornamental *Panāva*. He has heavy necklaces, earrings and armlets, and has a moustache painted on his face, and a *Tilaka* painted on his forehead between the brows. There are bells round his ankles, and he comes in carrying peacock feather on one hand and an *Ola* on the other. When he enters the stage, he dances and writes on the *Ola*.

He is also introduced in the same manner as the jester. The *Potegurā* describes him in his chant, and when the song is sung, he enters the stage with dancing steps and sings his song. After he finishes his song, *Potegurā* interviews him. He is introduced as a scholar, well versed in the sixty-four arts and sciences.

Two characters known as *Dēsanavadi* come to the *Karaliya* next to explain the story to the audience. Sometimes they are also known as *Anāgata Vaktru*, or the tellers of future. They wear a long *Sanyāsi* robe and topknot, wearing chains of beads (*Navagunavala*) round their necks as in the fashion of religious men. They carry a fan in one hand and walk in slow steps into the *Karaliya*. They sing short verses to the audience. Then the story which is about to be enacted is revealed in the form of a chanted dialogue between the two *Dēsanavadis*. The following dialogues are from *Iyujin Nādagama*:

First *Dēsanāvādi* : Will u let me know what happened to the prince Milan, son of King *Beladin* ?

Second *Dēsanāvādi* : In the great city of *Berlin*, of the mighty king *Beladin*, the son Milan by name falls in love with *Iyujin*, princess of Denmark, and after being betrothed to her, he comes back home. He speaks of this matter to his friend, the son of the minister. The minister's son gets on good terms with the prince's servant, and gives him a letter to be delivered to the princess as if it came from the prince, asking her to leave her kingdom and meet him in secret. The princess believes the message to be a true one and goes to meet the prince in the forest.

The next characters are the drummers (*Berakārayo*). They are employed in the royal court. They wear red waistband (*Paawadam*) and the turban with the two side pieces hanging from it over the ears. They enter with the usual dance and make an announcement in a dramatic tone. In rhymed and ornate prose, they

announce the arrival of the king and ask the people to be ready to make obeisance to him.

Finally, the king's heralds come known as *Handa Dūtay* in Sinhala language. They do not have a set costume. They wear a dress, which is mostly similar to the earlier European plays. After the presentation of the above stock characters, the King appears at the *Karaliya*. Poteguru also introduces him in the same manner as the other characters. He is accompanied with one or two of his ministers and royal retinue. He moves around with graceful steps and sits on the throne. His attendants fan him. The presenter or *Poteguru* chants *Āsana Viriduva*.

Nādagama is a kind of lyrical play. It is largely created using verses and songs. The verses are in Tamil metres. A large number of metres are used. These are *Viriduva* (Tamil - *viruttam*), *Innise*, *Kalippa*, *Kavi* (also known as *Kavirāge*), *Kocchakam*, *Venba* (*venpa*) and *Parani* for Sinhala *Nādagama*. Sometimes a verse is sung in measured time and is known as a *Tāla Viriduva*. Writers did not use pure Sinhala words for these verses. They used a kind of mixed Sanskrit language comparable to the *Mishra Sinhala* of literary prose. The general name given for that kind of creation is *Sindu*. Typically, all the melodies of the plays are based on Carnataka *Ragadhāri* music though some of the melodies are from Roman Catholic Church music or *Cantaru*. Perhaps the Sinhalese audience was not familiar with the original Tamil tunes. Considering this fact, that is, the non-exposure of Carnātaka music among the Sinhalese audience, the producers seem to have done slight changes to suit the Sinhalese audience and their tastes.

As per *Nādagama* tradition, there are two varieties of rhythmic patterns within the same time measure known as *Adu Tāla* and *Vādi Tāla*, both of which are played by the two *Maddala* players simultaneously. Most *Nādagam* songs have a section rendered in double time, and this is the rhythm for *Uruttu*. Carnātaka music *Thālas* -namely *Kīrtanam*³, *Tirlāna*⁴, *Tangapāta*⁵ so on are used for *Nādagam*.

Sinhalese folk music also helped in the growth of *Nādagam* music. The chants of *Nādagama* songs are similar in style, singing as well as structure to Carnataka music. Besides, *Nādagam Sindu* has a more complicated melodic structure. Its rhythms are familiar to the Sinhalese folk songs and the notes of time duration they usually possess make them sound very much like chants. Because of these reasons, *Nādagam* music has embedded itself into the Sinhalese cultural environment.

The language of *Nādagama* has Tamil influence. It is shown by *Pilippu Siñno*'s language in his plays. His language is a mixture of Sinhalese, Tamil, and Sanskrit words. A few of it is hardly understandable. Although, he used a large number of colloquial words used in contemporary times, he tried to base his writing in a good literary background. *Pilippu Siñno* appears to have been hardly educated.

³ Fourteen – pulse time (*Mātrā*), This is similar in rhythm to *Tall – Dipchandi* in Hindustani music.

⁴ Six-pulse time, this is similar to *Tall – Lavani* in Hindustani music.

⁵ Twelve – pulse time, this is equivalent to a semi – quaver), similar in rhythm to the Hich of North Indian music.

However, the *Nādagamas* represent an oral and a folk tradition, and most writers are not literary men.

Pillippu Siñno has changed many words for adding sonority and alliterative effects to his songs; sometimes also with the purpose of making the language looking 'dignified'. The following song from *Sthākki Nādagama*, would illustrate his style.

Nili siki pila sē digu varalā

Helā pulā vīadarī (nili siki)

Madana sisārā

Suguna vicārā

Rnga śrigāra tunga jōgiye helā pulā (nili)

Taruna subāvi

*Komala karāvi*⁶

Later *Nādagam* writers largely used colloquial words. They used the speech of the uneducated villagers. It was not highly literary. They reduced a large number of aspirates into non-aspirated consonants. They also used the corrupt forms of Sanskrit words, which were difficult to understand.

Nādagama established itself in the country for centuries in the form of successful theatre of storytelling. Village people were doing it for their entertainment every day at the period when Sarachchandra was doing research about folk theatre of

⁶ *SGN.*, p. 90

Ceylon. After few years, he took out the essence of *Nādagam* and made comparisons among the styles and different modes of presentations. He introduced the stylized drama form in his first play, *Maname*.

Maname is the greatest landmark in the history of modern Sinhalese theatre. It was first staged on 3rd of November 1956 at the Lionel Wendt Theatre, Colombo. It gave modern Sri Lankan theatre a rebirth and discovered the roots of Asian theatre in the process. However, *Maname* is not a pure Sinhala drama in true sense. It is a combination of theatrical craft, poetic and lyrical styles and the essential elements in the Asian theatre tradition. However, folk drama style of the traditional '*Nādagama*' immeasurably helped him in its creation.

Until 1956, Sri Lankan theatre, largely consisted translations and adaptations of western playwrights such as Moliere, Shakespeare and Chekhov. The rich people were the audience for those plays. *Maname* built a consciousness among the middle class' people who had slaved for western society until then. Although Sarachchandra never intended, *Maname* altered the whole notion of social thinking, and paved the way for the people to look at life differently and change their attitudes and values. Thus, Ediriweera Sarachchandra ushered in a new era in the theatre scene of Ceylon with the production of his play *Maname*. The theatre form of *Nādagama* and Sarachchandra's play *Maname* is based on the style of *Nātyadharmi*.

2.2 Performances of *Nātyadharmi* and

Maname

Bharatamuni describes two *Dharmīs* in his *Nātyasūtra* known as *Lokadharmī* and *Nātyadharmi*. *Dharmi* is a style or form. He explained this subject for the drama and theatre. *Lokadharmī* is the natural circumstance/existence of things in the real world. Anything peculiar to drama and not found exactly in the same manner in the world is *Nātyadharmī*. The two styles can be explained as ‘world way’ and ‘stage way’ as drama is chiefly based on the world of representation. Bharatamuni says;

Nānābhāvopasampannan nānāvastharātmakan

Lokavṛttanukaranam nātyamēthanmayā kṛutham⁷

Realistic imitation of natural events is *Lokadharmī* and is able to explain elements of both realism and idealism.

Lokadharmībhavettvannya Nātyadharmī tha'hāparā

Swabhāvo Lokadharmīthu Nātyadharmī vikārata:⁸

⁷ *NS., Ghosh, Vol. I, 01. 111, p. 10*

⁸ *ibid., 23. 199, p. 166*

If a play contains traditional stories, if the act is with a playful flourish of limbs and possess characteristics of dance, if it has supernatural powers and disregards the practice regarding use of the languages it is to be known as conventional or *Nātyadharmi*.

Athivākyakṛiyōpetamtisatvāti bhavakam

Līlāṅgahārābhinayaṅ nātyalakshaṅalkshitam

Svarālaṅkārasaṅuktamasvasthapurushāśrayam

*Yadīdṛṣaṅ bhaven nātyayaṅ Nātyadharmī tu sā smṛutham*⁹

As I discussed above even *Nādagama* tradition has created their stories following the historical legends and myths. *Pillippu Siṅno* has taken the story of prince *Ahalepola* who was asked to be beheaded by King Rājasingha in Kandian period for his play, *Ahelepola Nādagama*. Sarachchandra derived the story from *Buddhist Jataka Tales (Chulla Dhanuddara)* for his play *Maname*, a historical legend for his best play *Sinhabahu*, a *Jathaka* tale known as *Mahā Paduma* for *Pématho Jāyathi Soko*, a *Jāthaka Tale – Kusa Pabavathi* for his play *Pabavathi*. He recreated the above stories as plays closely representing the supernatural power characters, and traditional stories.

Most of the *Jāthaka* tales are about female infidelity. One of them is *Chulla Dhanuddara Jāthakaya*, which was the original source for the plot of *Maname*. It is about female unfaithfulness. Sarachchandra brought out the unfaithful and

⁹ *op. cit.*, 14. 64 – 65, p. 38

feeble nature of the woman consistent with traditional Sinhalese thinking. His modern representation however focused chiefly on human complexities. *Maname* told an old tale in a very special way. It tried to unveil the mystery of the human experience.

Maname Kavi Nādagama followed the *Jāthaka* story, which was about the unmitigated abuse of the princess. Being uninterested in the infidelity issues for his play, Sarchchandra concentrated on a far more complicated and sympathetic version of the character which in reality was of woman's consciousness. This fresh and interesting insight infused into the *Jāthaka Tale* and delivered through a total theatrical experience helped lift the play to achieve a stable place in the history of Sinhalese theatre.

2.3 The play - *Maname*

Prince *Maname* who is the son of King Brahmadatta in Baranespura goes to *Thakshila* for his studies. The teacher's name is Disāpāmok. There is a custom wherein the teacher's daughter is given in marriage to the best pupil in the school or *Thakshilā*. In accordance with this custom, Prince Maname gets married to Disāpāmok's daughter. After the marriage, they set out on a journey towards the kingdom of prince Maname. On their way back, the prince and his young wife pass through a forest where they encounter a hunter-king and his train. Being

hungry, the princess asks her husband to get her some meat, which she sees the hunters eating.

When prince Maname and princess Maname meet the hunter-king, he falls in love with the princess, and requests her to leave the prince and join him. The prince brings his wife some meat, but she is unable to eat, as it is raw. Therefore, prince Maname asks her to throw it back to the hunters. The hunters feel insulted by the princess' behavior, and the hunter-king challenges the prince to fight. Maname succeeds in vanquishing the entire group of hunters, and finally prepares to fight a duel with the hunter-king. Prince Maname's sword drops during the course of the duel. Panicking, the princess takes the sword.

Consciously or unconsciously, she hands over the sword to the hunter-king and he immediately kills prince Maname with it. The hunter-king then takes the princess along with him to the *Himagiri Arana*, which is situated in the deep forest. On the way, they make love to each other. Because of some misunderstood meaning of princess Maname words the situation changes suddenly. She confesses that she helped the forest king to kill Maname because she loved the forest king. But, he misunderstands the meaning of her words and questions her if she could kill her loved husband because of the other person. He leaves her citing that he doesn't need such a woman in his life. Princess Maname is now left alone in the forest lamenting and finally dies heart broken.

The plot is built around the three-cornered relationship of the prince. *Veddā* or the forest King, and the princess are the main characters in the climax of the play.

Prince Maname and princess are traveling through the forest with love and enjoyment until the forest King appears before them. He interrupts the stable and predefined lives of the newly wed couple and creates the crisis.

Vâdi Raja

Me nam lo liya noma vanne

Sura anganaka vilasata – vèda vana sindangana

Mäva ganta ambuvata – vèya mata vāsanāva

Kānda gena yanta ada – manda venu me pamāva

Kavuda mé kanahilu - mūva mama vanasami

Sinda uge gela seda – penvamiya bala theda¹⁰

Vâdi Raja (vachanaya) : Māge mé vijithayata avasara natuva athul vū thā kavuda ? vahā pilithuru deva ! nathahoth mé hi paharin thāge hisa siduru karami.¹¹

Hunter king (song)

This cannot be an earthly maid

She seems a goddess rare – or a forest nymph so fair

It is decreed by fate that she must be my mate

¹⁰ *Maname Nātakaya, Ediriweera Sarachchandra, S. Godage & Brothers, Maradan Eighth Edition, 2006, p. 26*

(Hereafter, I Shall refer to *Maname* as *MM.*)

¹¹ *ibid.*, p. 28

Why should I then delay to carry her away?

Who dares to bar my way? This jackal will I slay

Swift will I lay him low and my power and glory show!

Hunter king (recitative): Who are you who enter my kingdom without my leave? Answer or this arrow shall pierce your head.

The weakness of human character, of human relationships, and indeed of human life itself is represented in *Maname*. This human predicament as shown in the play can happen in real life and in real people's lives. This has a universal appeal for the play. The princess Maname is shown facing a complex and completely unexpected situation. Therefore, her particular response to the sword gives way to different perceptions. Had she really been unfaithful? Did she give the sword to the forest King or was the sword taken? Was she lured by the sexuality of the forest King or did she merely deduce her need for protection by the latter in the midst of a lonely and unpredictable forest? or were many of these elements mixed?

Prince Maname wants to kill the forest king and they fight with bow and arrows for a while, proving equal, they fling their bows and arrows down and wrestle. The prince throws down the forest king and overpowers him. Finally, prince Maname asks princess to give the sword.

*Maname : Me vanacharayāge hisa sinda damīmata māge kaduwa mā athata denu
manavi saumyayani.*¹²

¹² *op.cit.*, p. 28

(My sweety, give me the sword to strike off this savage's head.)

Bisava Kaviya

<i>Diriyen yuda kala oba samagi</i>	<i>nné</i>
<i>Senagin pihitada noma soyami</i>	<i>nné</i>
<i>Thaniyen satanata sârasî emi</i>	<i>nné</i>
<i>Mekagin ai ohu gela sinda la</i>	<i>nné</i> ¹³

(Courageously with you he fought
Nor succor from his warriors sought
Alone he faced you unafraid
Must his neck bow beneath the blade?)

*Prince Maname : Oba kiyānā dé mata nothère, saumyayani. Mama me sâhasikayā parājaya kalemi. Ohu avasan kirīma sandahā nopamāva kaduwa denu manavi.*¹⁴

(Lady, I do not understand this speech. In fair fight, I vanquished this villain.
Swiftly give me my sword to end his life.)

¹³ *op. cit.*, p. 28

¹⁴ *ibid.*

Princess : Mé Vâdi rajuta thama senaga samaga eka varata apa vinâśa kara lanta ida thibuné novéda, himiyani? Èheth ohu oba samaga thaniyama satan kaléya. Ohu vanacharayeku uvada dhairyayen hā uthum gunayen uth keneku bava pene. Ohu marā damīma novatanéya, himiyani, ohuta samāva denu manavi.¹⁵

(Could he not have destroyed us at once with his army at hand? Yet he chose to face you alone. A savage he may be; yet he is brave and noble. It is not fitting Lord, that, he should be slain. Pardon and spare him, I pray)

When he heard her words, he stands staring at her; his grasp slackens; the Hunter King takes advantage of it, frees himself, leaps, takes the sword from the princess, and stabs the prince. The prince falls down dead. Humans are inconsistent and weak and they do things, that are foolish. Therefore, *Pothégure* or narrator sings the following song:

<i>Maname raja siya bisava pavasū vadana a</i>	<i>sā</i>
<i>Vunu me venasa kima sitha chanchala viya viga</i>	<i>sā</i>
<i>Dana è pramādaya vadi raja miduneya nola</i>	<i>sā</i>
<i>Ane è vipatha siduvuni Nodanimi kāge do</i>	<i>sā</i> ¹⁶

¹⁵ *op. cit.*

¹⁶ *ibid.*, p. 29

(Maname heard those words the princess had spoken. Wondering what change had happened, his mind was shaken. He hesitates; feeling the firm grasp weaken. Swiftly the chief has his slackening grip broken. Within that instant swift disaster came. Oh! I do not know who was to blame.)

We first see the struggle in the mind of princess Maname on meeting the Forest King who was the bold authority of the forest.

Kumari Vachanaya : Mohuge nam bhayankara vilāsayak nomatthèya himi thumani, ohuge thèjas penumen ohu rajeku viya yuthu yai sithami.¹⁷

(He is not fearsome to look upon, Lord. By the majesty of his beauty, he seems a King.)

She has confidence in the *Vira* looks of his figure. Prince Maname who has a very smooth body and a kind heart is however not a person who is sure of oneself. The conflict in princess Maname's mind is seen passing through the whole episodes of challenge, during Prince Maname seems victory and the sharp reversal of the forest King. Because of this reason, it seems prince Maname faces his death by the forest King with the support of princess Maname. She gives the sword, which belongs to prince Maname to the forest king when it falls down on the earth. She does not know what happened to her to make her act in that manner. Obviously, she gives the sword to the forest king since she is confused. She has fallen in love subconsciously with the forest king. Consequently, she gives the sword or automatically the sword loosens from her hand. This is the

24. *op. cit.*, p. 26

complexity of the play with Sarachchandra wanting to analyze ‘*Stri chitta*’ or women’s mind.

While princess Maname and forest-King are going to his kingdom, she says so many lovely words to him.

Bisava

<i>Diriyen uda kala</i>	-	<i>oba dutu wèlè</i>
<i>Mohothin sith mās</i>	-	<i>pirunai āle</i>
<i>Vanaye neka biya</i>	-	<i>pahava yaminne</i>
<i>Chanchala vū sitha</i>	-	<i>sānasuma vinde</i>
<i>Nathimuth raja kama</i>	-	<i>obamai pathanné</i>
<i>Athe mata himagira</i>	-	<i>oba samaginné</i> ¹⁸

Princess: (song)

Darling I saw you, valorous in fight
Love instantly filled my heart there at the sight
When all the terrors I had of the forest fled
My trembling heart grew tranquil, comforted
I love you only, though I lose the right
To thrones; enough with you, this mountain height.

Bisava (vachanaya): *Obé divi mama galavā gathimi, vadi rajāneni, obata āle
nuvūyem nam kumakata esé kelemdai sithā balanu yehekai.*¹⁹

¹⁸ *op. cit.*, p. 30

(Princess (recitative): I saved your life. O chieftain, had I not loved you, think, would I have done so?)

After these words of Princess Maname, the situation changes. The forest king goes away from her while saying thus;

Vādi raja

Anda manda vuye masitha – mé puvathin

Kimda vūye nodané aruma

Sarana kara siti narana himihata

Karana ana vina mevani bihisunu

Sindavū gela samiyā – kava sene

Yant yava vané nosita

Amana gathi athi mevani anganak

Mā vaniyanhata kumana sarana da²⁰

Forest – king (song)

Horror my heart grips at a deed so dread

I hardly feel or know what thing has changed

Dazed and amazed I stand; monstrous the crime

To work such evil on the lord you wed

¹⁹ *op.cit.*

²⁰ *ibid., p. 31*

Love! You who sought your wedded lord to slay
Inhuman, mindless, void in head and heart
With women such as you, I have no part
Out of my forest kingdom – wretch away!

It is a sad moment for her. She laments for her husband death and explains about the love of her mind to the forest king. The queen is left alone in the forest, this breaks her frail heart, and there she dies forlorn. The play has a strong dramatic rhythm, which gives expression to the pathos of the lamentations of the princess Maname. Her anxious effort to make the best of her situation only brings ill fate on her followed by sorrow. The audience undergoes an experience of wonder in the classic Greek sense in the final sequence.

The performances in *Nātyadharmi*, also find certain situations, which cannot be reproduced in any manner on the stage. For instance, we are unable to devise better means of laying bare the thoughts before the audience: all the thoughts passing in the mind of a character, when he is alone, or when he speaks to himself in the midst of others or to one of his companions.

Dantacchedhañ nakakshatañ nīvīsañkhanameva cha
Stanādhavimarda cha rañgamadhyahe na kārayet²¹

²¹ NS., Ghosh, Vol. I, 24. 293, p. 197

This dilemma can be overcome by enacting with devices like *Ātmagata* or *Svagata*, *Apavarya* and *Ākasa- Bhāsita*. Bharatamuni says:

Āsannoktantu yadvākyayñ na śūnyanti parasparam

Anuktañ śṛūyate vākyayañ nātyayañ nātyadharmī tu sa smṛitā²²

In *Ahelepola Nādagama* there is the situation of beheading of prince *Ahelepola* and it is enacted by graceful *Angahāra* with music. Many *Nādagamas* have followed this theory. The final sequence of *Maname*, which is the lament, and death of princess *Maname* is not represented real on the stage. She acts these moments with the verbal and graceful *Angahāra* or *Āngikābhinaya*. Sarachchandra has created a poem, which could evoke *Karuna Rasa* and create the impression that she is finally going to die.

Kumari – Sinduva

Nādda sithé anukampā memā hata – nā mata an saranā

Venu karunā mā – pem wadana – rajindu mana

Ma hārā – mā hārā – aida yanne dādi sithinā

Vinda mevan duka moda manu lowa – nādda vena anganan

Thilo pālana – devinduni mā – rakinu mână

Ma desa – ma desa – balanuya daya asina²³

²² *op. cit.*, 14. 67, p. 38

Princess: (song)

Have you no pity left for me? Loved lord, in mercy oh! be kind!

Why will you leave me here alone, hard-hearted with relentless mind?

Has any woman in this world of mortal fully ever known

Anguish and torment such as mine? O you on high whose power is shown

Over the three worlds where you rule, above all your mercy lies!

Protection, give to me o Gods; look down on me with pitying eyes.

Maname presentation totally captivates the audience through a powerful aesthetic view. The rich experiential rhythm at the end of the play is an effective tragic climax. Achievements of the play are due to the anticlimax and the lyrical love-experience. The play has taken up the subject matter of a deep conflict of values and a tragic dilemma.

The best of world creations of art has explored universal human conditions, which are true for all times and all worlds. It is known as *Sārvatrika and Sārva bhaumika* in Sanskrit. Whatever be the social conditions in different parts of the world, people still have to fight the same problems in their personal lives. All Sarachchandra's plays are based on legends and deal with human problems such as those between father and son, husband and wife.

²³ *MM.*, p. 31

The imaginative handling of the plot and play by the rhythmical and musical poets, verses and dialogues is *Nātyadharmī*. It is Idealism and has its basis on art and imagination. Sarachchandra's stylized plays are full of music, dance and stylized movements. There are no theatre ornaments for the presentation. Every situation in the play has been created with poetic words and music.

Maname is the most poetic play with the interplay of words. Poetry of the text is immeasurably superior. When Disāpāmok ask him to marry her daughter, Prince Maname sings the beloved song. In that song, he agrees for the marriage and explains her beauty. He says that her long lustrous eyes shine like lotus petals; she looks like a glowing golden vine as lotuses bloom at the sun's bright glance and that his heart is rapt by that radiance.

Kumarā Sinduwa

Dulā nethu pulā – disi swarna lathā sé me landā

dulā nethu pulā //

lath hiru rās lesa padma vikasitha //

sith māge pat wéya padma vilasata....

dulā nethu pulā²⁴

If the language of the text is poetry as *Kavi – samaya* (poetic tradition), it is known as *Nātyadharmī* or *Kavi – natadi – samaya*. This is not merely a crude

²⁴ *op. cit., p. 23*

convention but it is an imaginative handling and beautification of the things of the world. Ornamented and ornate language in poetry is also *Nātyadharmī*.

After marriage prince Maname and Disapamok's daughter are traveling through the forest to the kingdom of prince Maname. While they are walking through the forest prince Maname explains the beauty of the forest thus:

*Prince Maname: Wasantha sriyen alankāra vu, mangul manduvakata bandu vū
vanāntarayé shobhāva narambamin yana vita, gaman vidāva ibéma maga haré
sondura. Vana rajinada, utsava vilasayen nek visituru pānni apa dedenāge
vivāhaya nisā satutu vannā seya.*²⁵

(This forest, bright with the glories of spring is like a bridal pavilion. Its beauty is such that we do not feel the weariness of journeying, beloved. The forest looks like a queen dressed in festive array, displaying all her beauty, rejoicing at our marriage.)

The most famous song of *Maname* belongs to this event and reads as follows:

Kumarā, Kumari – Thargaya

Kumaru:

Prémayen mana ranjitha vé - nanditha vé

Pushpayen vana sundara vé – lankrutha vé

Ālayen veli sadi me lathā

²⁵ *op. cit.*, p. 24

Mandapayen chandāthapa khanditha vé hiru rajinduge

Kumari :

Kokila handa kanpinavai – ran swarayai

Râna girav dena gî sindu – ama bindū

Sâma desé saṅgitha âsé

Pipi thambarana nanda bambarana piya rav dena liya kindurana²⁶

Prince and Princess: (duet)

He: Love brims the heart with light and delight In blossoming sprays the flowers array the woods and display their beauty bright as in love, the creepers embrace and interlace. Weaving a canopy wide to face the sun-king's fierce heart that retreats in defeat.

She : The Koel's note thrills the hearing it fills my heart with its golden notes. Nectar distills from the parrots' bills as music spills from their sweet throats. Music cascades from every creation. Among lotus flowers the ear discovers the wood nymphs presence by their murmuring notes.

The melody of the song is based on the Christian hymn, '*Āramben pera manulova*'. Its origin belongs to a Tamil hymn.

If the ordinary human nature, which has acts of joys and sorrows as its essence is represented by special gestures, it becomes the conventional practice.

²⁶ *op. cit.*

Yoyan swabhāwa lokasya Sukhadukkha samanvithan

*Sondyādabhinayopetan nātyamityābidiyate*²⁷

When prince and princess are journeying and falling love with each other, they should act with emotions of love or *Rathi Bhāva*, which is the basis to evoke *Sṛngāra Rasa*. But according to *Nātyadharmi*, they cannot embrace, hug and so on. Those emotions should be represented by graceful gestures.

Yadā svapedarthavashādekākī sahito 'pivā

*Chumbhanāliṅganañ chaiva tathā yadbhaver*²⁸

Sarachchandra has created *Āngikābhinaya* with special *Mudrās* for that event. Prince Maname, enacts as if holding the princess from her shoulder. He puts his hand with a curve behind her neck but he doesn't touch. His eyes are always looking down her face and eyes. The princess Maname should also enact closely as his beloved but without actually touching the prince. She bends her right hand to his chest and gives the *Pathāka Mudrā* to him. Her eyes look upon his face and eyes while the feet are in special dance movements at all times.

Sarachchandra delineates one of the loving moments of prince and princess Maname, using musical and rhythmical words. Encompassed by its enclosed rhyming words with graceful meaning and competent singing by the performer it

²⁷ NS., Ghosh, Vol. I, 24. 72, p. 197

²⁸ *ibid.*, 292

evokes *Bhayānaka* Rasa. The moment that is constant is the fear in the princess mind in the forest.

Kumari

Van mé arane – Man biya vannè

Nandana mā himi – vū naranindé

Thunga me giri thula – sinha valas rela

Lanveya thana thana – ringā ruppavala²⁹

Princess (song)

within this forest dark and dread

The mind is filled with constant fear

O! My dear lord and King!

Among these towering mountains dark – what bears and lions may lurk

Hid in the thickets and draw near!

In *Nātyadharmi*, the creator should avoid overly ornamented and ornate language. Sarachchandra opines that words should be sublime and sweet, above all appropriate to the situation portrayed and fully expressive of the ideas; they should be soft and graceful for drama is an artistic production, a thing of beauty;

²⁹ *MM.*, p. 24

expressions should be such that they are capable of being rendered easily into action.

Recitations of the text are required in *Nātyadharmī* especially to convey certain ideas among the characters on the stage. The whole text of the play *Maname* is recited by way of music. Poetry of the text of *Maname* is immeasurably superior. Variety of dramatic poetry and lyrics having a wide range of vocal expression or *Vāchikābhinaya* is present. *Maname's* costumes are a feast to the eyes together with the attractive movements on the stage and a rich repertoire of controlled, formal gestures and expressions.

In a play, instead of merely walking characters are expected to go with graceful movement of limbs as well as practiced and controlled dance steps. This is known as conventional practice. Bharatamuni says;

Lalitaurāṅgavinyāsaistathokshiptapadakramai:

Nṛutyatē gamyate yajna nātyadharmī tu sa smṛutā³⁰

Dance form of *Maname* is traceable to *Kooththu* and the Sinhalese Kandian dance form. Sarachandra has completely polished and created a new dancing method resembling stylized movements. Every movements and steps of the characters are graceful and there are separate dance steps, called *Gaman Thala* or special gates for each character. When narrator introduces them, they enter as per

³⁰ NS., Ghosh, Vol. I, 24. 71, p. 197

that particular step representing the character. This is combined with *Maddala Pada* or the beat of *Mrudangam*. This *Abhinaya* is always the same, unchanged when the character acts. For example, princess *Maname* enters the stage with special footstep, which is akin to *Gaman Thāla* of *Nādagama*. She comes with the dance movement and her hands always in her waist. To portray the beauty of this character, a woman with curvaceous body is expected. When she moves around the stage, the seductiveness of her character in the play should be expressed.

The climax of the play progresses with her beauty and her movements and the forest king falls in love with her grace and beauty. On the other hand, movements of the forest king reflect himself as a huge personality rather than prince *Maname*. His movements or dance steps are created with this intention or purpose. *Nisshanka Diddeniya* who acted as the forest King has an attractive personality and voice. Princess *Maname* falls in love with his strong personality.

When each character enters the stage, they dance to the song of the narrator first and then go three rounds on the stage and make a move to the scene. This method is taken from the style of *Nādagama* known as *Gaman Thāla*. When the scene is about to change, they carry out the same footstep, circle and tell one or two sentences, explaining the scene or place as in *Sanskrit* theatre practice. For example;

*Kumara – vachanaya : Rājagurungan hā mā mithuru sisungen da samu gannata yami sip salata. Oovn siyalu denā èhi rasva sitithi hangimi.*³¹

(I will go to the hall of learning to take leave of my Master and my friends. I think they must be gathered there.)

Most people among the audience are not very educated and many do not understand or have no knowledge about dance and classical songs. But there is no problem becoming a ‘*Sahridayā*’ and ‘*Prékshakayā*’ for the stylized play - *Maname*. The movements and every other performance during the play are understandable because Sarachchandra has refined the *Nādagam* style for his play. It is mostly mixed with many poetic and Sanskrit words. But the theme of the play is very familiar to the Sinhalese audience and so they enjoy the performances of *Maname* in deferent acceptations about woman character.

Songs and dance steps of the play bring out the emotions clearly. This necessity meant a slowing down of the pace a little, but it was essential for the ‘drama.’ Another significant initiative of *Maname* is the portrayal of the characters with their respective dance steps performed. Making dance steps an essential part of the dramatic exposition was the most critical part.

The next *Nātyadharmī* is the music. In addition to singing by the actors themselves, there is an external suggestive music. This is *Dhruvāgāna*. When each character enters, an entrance song is sung, in which the character, his/her

³¹ *MM.*, p. 20

mood, the scene of action and other conditions are revealed to the spectators in symbolical language in the tune of the song.

When prince Maname enters the stage the narrator or *Potheguru* sings thus,

Maname kumaruta pothe innisiya

Lamā Kala sita purā sip sathara uganimi *né*
Pemā banda guruge sitha paradavā an sisu *né*
Nimā kara sav kalā rajakama da labami *né*
Yomā kara neth balav maname kumaru pami *né*³²

Narrator : (The song for prince Maname)

Learned in all arts and sciences and wisdom's lore since boyhood's day
Loved by his teacher, excelling his pupils all in every way
Perfect, full-skilled in every art and newly-graced with royal sway
Fix now your eyes and there behold before you stands prince Maname

Sarachchandra has introduced to the Sinhalese theatre the ways and means to use the aesthetic world with theatre and has used brilliantly *Rāgadhāri* Carnātaka music for the orchestra of his plays leading to the venerable rhythm of *Pothègura's* Prologue. 'Maname' follows a different style of singing. It is always

³² *op. cit.*, p. 19

in the mode of a poem. The tune of *Poteguru's* songs combines with four or five notes or *swara* similar to folk songs. For example;

<i>Dath kalā sūsata saha siv véda apama</i>	<i>nā</i>
<i>Dakvalā sisun sāma gnānaya paturuva</i>	<i>nā</i>
<i>Sipsala adhipathiva chira kāla vājambe</i>	<i>nā</i>
<i>Thaksalā Disāpāmok āduru pāmine</i>	<i>nā</i> ³³

(The sixty-four arts and four Vedas depths he sounds and displays
Boundless learning to his pupils, wide his wisdom spreads its rays
For long years his fame has flourished; the Academy owns his sway
All the scholars of *Thaxila* to his wisdom homage pay.)

When prince Maname sings the song '*Sè surindu Baranas pura pasindu*', his voice transcends the audience, as it possessed an identical rhythm and tune. Sarachchandra understood that and so he used the *Nādagam* melody for that. It is a clever aid in presenting the inner thoughts of the two different personalities that is; prince Maname and Forest- King.

³³ *op. cit.*, p. 21

Maname Kumarā

Sé surindu Baranas pura pasindu -- Rāja karanā

Rupunoda binda théjasā

Pawara é nirinduge put kumarā vemi

Sathara igena thaksalāwa gos emi

Dulā me kumariya vivāha kara gena

Balā pitath vemi Baranas purawara³⁴

(Like Indra high in majesty

A stately king does reign

Crushing with power his foemen's pride

In famed Benares he abides

That powerful monarch's son am I

To Taxila the arts to learn

I went, and homeward I return

With this fair princess as my bride

To Benares again.)

The words sung by Prince Maname indicate the discipline and refinement he had acquired through his academic achievements. This instigates the forest-king or *Vāddā* to bring out his coarse nature thus;

³⁴ *op. cit.*, p. 27

Vadi Raja

Mé arané himagira sita derané – mage sarané vé

Nâthahot véya marané

Mulu dambadivatama thopa maha raju uva

Māge Vijithaya meya mama vemi aga raja

Kavuda thata mehi pivisennata kivè

Avasara nomathiva bala thata vena dé³⁵

(These forests deep, these mountains steep

All lie beneath my sway

Though you were Emperor of India

Here in my kingdom, you shall find

You must my power obey.

In my sole power you draw your breath

I give protection – or give death

To tread this land no leave you seek

See the chastisement I will wreak!

The music of *Maname* is based on a highly limited set of traditional melodies. However, they were seen in far too narrower sense in the intellectual world. The

³⁵ *op. cit.*

song '*Lapa nomavan sanda se*'³⁶ (sung by the princess) is based on the tune from the song '*Pavara pasindu Brumpord raja*' in '*Brumpord Nādagama*'. The tune of the song of *Maname* '*Nan sirin vorandi Baranes puraye*'³⁷, has been borrowed from a Hindustani Bhajan. '*Diriyen yudakala oba samaginné*'³⁸ the tune of the song sung by princess *Maname*, has been taken from *Sandakinduru Nādagama*. But it has been polished by Sri Lankan musician Jayantha Aravinda and he has created a new tune for the song, '*Asan mā piya himi*'³⁹ in *Maname*.

Maname combines the Carnāṭaka Rāgadhāri music, Sinhalese folk music and the chants of the Catholic drama. These are supplemented with dance and rhythmic movements. Variety of dramatic poetry and lyrics are used besides a wide range of vocal expressions or *Vachikābhinaya*. *Maname*'s costumes and music create such a feast for the eyes and ears on the stage.

Nādagama has its own style of melodies called '*Sindu Raga*' as the basis of melodies used for it as songs. Due to this uniqueness, Sarachchandra used same melodies for his plays' songs. Typical *Nādagama* songs have a part played in the normal tempo together with another part played in double tempo, which is called '*Uruttuwa*'. Sarachchandra has invented many '*Sindu rāgas*' like the *Nādagama* and is introduced through his play *Maname* to the modern Sinhalese theatre. He

³⁶ *op. cit.*, p. 20

³⁷ *ibid.*, p. 19

³⁸ *ibid.*, p. 28

³⁹ *ibid.*, p. 25

used two *Maddalas* or *Mṛdangam* as in *Nādagama*. While one player plays one *Mṛdangam* in low beat, the other one plays a fast beat. Conventional practice for acting was enriched with fulsome music, using the violin and sitar along with *Maddala*. Late Mr. Charls Silva Gunasinghe has supplied the *Nādagama* melody for *Maname*. Serious dramas of Asian theatre have explored the poetic possibilities of language such as Kalidasa's plays. Classical music is helpful to enrich that language. It should be presented with stylized movements. Sarachchandra has adopted this condition in his plays.

Maname is the greatest landmark in the history of modern Sinhalese theatre as is evident. A significant feature of *Maname* is that it is not a blind reproduction or a mere revival of Asian theatre tradition. He exploited tradition to create new works of art for Sinhalese theatre. He used the basic form of *Nādagama* but fine-tuned it to suit the needs of the modern theatre. Operatic characters, songs, dance, narrator, and the stylized tradition infuse it. He has combined *Maname* with elements of both traditional as well as modern theatre form.

Chapter - 03

Sinhabāhu and modern theatre form

The story - *Sinhabāhu* has a sociological significance as it deals with the myth of the origin of Sinhalese. Its relevance to Sinhalese lies in the fact that it deals with the mythological origin of their ethnicity. There are many arguments prevailing about the identity of the Sinhalese. In fact, people face serious ordeal pertaining to their origin and identity. Origin of the Sinhalese myth is mentioned in *Mahāvamsa* (sixth century).

The first chapter of *Mahāvamsa* deals with the immigration of Buddha to Sri Lanka. Buddha is believed to have vanquished demons and snakes and chased the demons away to a distant island called *Giridīpa* and the snakes to *Nāgadīpa* until they were converted to Buddhism. This island is situated in the north of Sri Lanka. During his three visits to Ceylon, Buddha visited other sacred places such as *Kālaniya* and *Mahiyangana* and is said to have placed his foot on the great peak of *Samantakūta*. Evil spirits had vanished or converted to Buddhism. The ground itself was consecrated by his presence symbolized by his sacred footprint.

According to *Mahāvamsa*, the king of Bengal has a daughter. On her first birthday, the king seeks an astrologist to know her future. To the king's dismay,

the astrologer foretells that in future she will marry a lion, the king of forest. When she grows up, the princess, desiring the joys of independent life runs away from home by joining a caravan travelling to Magadha Desha (Bihar). A lion attacks the caravan as it is passing a forest but while everyone else flees the place hurriedly, the princess follows the lion. The lion beholds her and falls in love with her. Remembering the foretelling, she embraces him stroking his limbs.

The lion is incited with passion by her touch, takes her to his cave and unites with her. After ten months, she gives birth to twins - a boy and a girl. The feet and hands of the son are similar to a lion. Therefore, his mother Suppādēvi names him Sinhabāhu (lion limb). The daughter is named Sinhasīvali. The boy grows up with body parts similar to a lion but his nature is mostly like a human being.

Sinhabāhu recognizes the physical difference between his mother and father and questions his mother about his weird and wonderful father. When he learns the story from her, he tries to leave the rock cave. The mother tells him that the cave is covered by a huge rock and their escape is impossible. For whenever the lion-father goes out for gathering food, he imprisons them in the cave and shuts the cave door symbolizing the lion's insecurity about his union with humans. Neither did she have a natural husband for her nor her children have a natural father for their life.

Age sixteen is the marriageable age according to Buddhist tradition. Sinhabāhu is in that age then and he is ready to challenge the father as the provider for his mother and sister. One day when lion - father goes to the forest in search food; he

opens the rock cave with his powerful lion arms and escapes from the home with his mother on the right shoulder and sister on the left.

The cave is the symbol of womb and their emergence from it is a symbolism of their rebirth. Though the myth identifies the mother as well as the sister, the superiority (and seniority) of the mother is recognized for Sinhabāhu carries his mother on the right shoulder which is considered the auspicious side as per Sinhalese tradition. When they come out from the cave, they clothe themselves with leafy branches of trees. This implies that they were naked in the cave and were unaware of the clothes used by humans.

The king of the border of the village is princess's mother's brother's son. When she tells him who she is, he takes her to his father who is the king of Vanga. After that, he marries her. It was an ideal cross-cousin marriage. This corrects the earlier 'wrong marriage' of hers. Meanwhile the lion is shown lamenting, not eating food and cursing his destiny with grief. He wanders about the villages and townships in search of them and destroys the townships and countrysides in the process. Sinhabāhu wants to kill the lion-father but his mother stops him twice when he sets out to do so. The third time the son leaves without getting his mother's permission and approaches the lion. When the lion-father hears, his son's voice it is sheer delight for him like nectar has been poured into his ears and runs towards prince Sinhabāhu in excitement.

According to *Mahāvansa* and most other versions, the son knew that he was going to kill his father. The lion-father recognizes that his son Sinhabāhu's arrows are aimed at his chest. But the point of the first arrow turns and falls to the ground. The same happens with the second arrow. These are deflected because of the power of father's love for the son. But as Sinhabāhu aims to shoot the third arrow he feels confident that it will kill his father. Likewise, when the father realizes his son's implacable hate he is enraged and his love for the son is lost. Therefore, this time the arrow aimed at the lion's chest hit him and he falls to the ground dead.

Sarachchandra's *Sinhabāhu* is a beautiful play based on the above mythical tale. Suppādevi is the heroine of the play as the eldest daughter of the king of Vanga Desa (Modern Bengal?). This play is about love between male and female, parents and children, and brother and sister. The play like the myth is based on the hero who is shown as a lion and not a human being. He lives in a forest and his habits signify everything that is opposite to the systematic society and the civilized life. The princess Suppādevi represents uncontrolled sexuality, and defiance of parental authority and social norms.

Sarachchandra's intent is to convince the spectators to sympathize as well as feel terrorized about the end of the story. Because they see the final sequence of action, which is complicated in the sense it defies the cultural notions about father-son relationship. To kill one's own father is a taboo in Sinhalese-Buddhist tradition and the audience know that this cultural hypothesis cannot be ignored.

However, the story of the play demands the killing of the father by the son. This emotional tension or dilemma is the logic of *Sinhabāhu* play. The great achievement of this play is the creation of a method of dramatic situation stirring a moral dilemma, which is in tune with the public thought too.

The play *Sinhabāhu* is a combination of rich colour, vibrancy, myth, rhythm and drama. Sarachchandra has taken some modern theories for the production and has incorporated certain principles in the Sinhalese modern theatre with *Sinhabāhu*. In taking Brecht's ideals of theatre and opera and other forms of Indian theatre elements, he has made *Sinhabāhu* as the best production in the modern Sinhalese theatre.

3.1 Opera and *Sinhabāhu*

Opera is a kind of theatre form, which is performed along with music. It has a story set with songs in classical type of music, with verses and prose passages in both conversational as well as indirect style.

The music of *Sinhabāhu* is based on Carnāṭaka Rāgadhāri and the Sinhalese folk music. Sinhalese music and dance became a well developed form because of the influence of South India. In early times, South Indian musical and dance performances were received for religious and ritual practices and also as

entertainment for the king. These kings developed both forms considerably. In fact, music tradition began during the era of Kandiyan kings. *Vannam* also existed during this period. The language, rhythm, singing style of *Vannam* and *Prashasti* has a very strong Tamil influence of this period.

The other development of Sinhalese music is *Viraha*. This term applied in Kandian Period to a poetic genre dealing with love and separation. Perhaps it was born due to similar contact with Tamil music. This music seems to have grown out of the melodies that were originally embodied in *Nādagam* songs, some of which expressed the longings of separated lovers. Based on this model other love songs were composed and dealt with legends, which are popular among the people such as *Kusa - Pabāvati*. Music of *Viraha kāvya* is very different from the earlier Sinhalese folk music. Songs have a large melodic range and has a well developed structure. We can see the proper connection with the Tamil culture as well.

Therefore, Sinhalese folk and popular music in Sarachchandra's period is seen to combine well with Carnātaka music. The production of the play *Sinhabāhu* becomes more interesting with both genre of music present and Sarachchandra has opined that *Sinhabāhu* is mostly similar to South Indian opera.¹

Sarachchandra did not want to adopt only Carnātaka music, because this was one of the reasons, which made *Nādagama* unpopular among Sinhalese audience.

¹ *SGN*, p. 30

Therefore, he was concerned about the music in the play as well. When lion-father comes from the forest and discovers that Sinhabāhu, Suppādevi and Sinhasivali has escaped from the cave with the strong door of the stone cave opened and big stone which helped to cover the door properly thrown away, he is shocked and becomes sorrowful. He is wandering and singing thus:

Sinhayā Sinduva

Gal lena bindalā

Len dora harlā

Sinhabā Sinhabā Sinhabā

Mā sondura mā sondura mā sondura

Sinhasivali mā priya diyaniya

Gal lena bindalā

Len dora harlā

Gosin hama dena

Nathe kisivek

Mama dāna gathimi

Mama sāka kalemi

Sinhabā Sinhabā Sinhabā

Lena thula novethi

Peralā noethi

Mama dana gathimi

Mama sākā kalemi²

Lion – song

The rock cave has broken

The rock gate has opened

Sinhabā Sinhabā Sinhabā

Oh! My sweetheart, my beloved, my darling

Sinhasīvali my sweet daughter

The stone cave has broken

The stone door has opened

Everybody has gone

No one is here

² *Sinhabāhu*, Ediriweera Sarachchandra, *Add Adda, Maharagama, Colombo: Fifth Print, 1993*,
p. 32

(Hereafter, I shall refer to *Sinhabāhu* as *SB*.)

I knew that

I suspected that

Sinhabā Sinhabā Sinhabā

They are not inside the cave

They will not come again

I knew that

I suspected that

The song is expressing the lion-king's sorrow. A part of the song which begins 'Gal lena bindalā' till 'Mā sondura' has been made with slow music and the other part is beginning 'Mama dāna gathimi.....,' 'Lena thula novethi' is based on *Uruttuwa* of *Nādagama* taken from Carnātaka music with *Druta Laya* or fast beat.

Sinhabāhu is a musical play with the language of literary form. The prose passages are rendered in a dramatic way by using the conversational style. It consists of more songs than prose passages. When using dialogues, he has changed the sentence pattern according to the rhythm of the words and music. Even those prose passages are musical and sound like chants. It is written in very special meters so possessing enchanting musical sounds and rhythm. Sarachchandra is the best play writer in Ceylon because of this reason.

After lion –father returns from the forest with food, he asks his wife, *Suppādevi* ;

*Sinhayā : Vachanaya: Apé priya daruwo dedenā mata nopenethi savmyayani.
Ovun kohi sitith dai dana ganu kamatthemi.*³

Lion: My sweety, I cannot see our beloved daughter and son. I would like to know where they are.

Speech is used as a connecting link to proceed with the story or to give continuity to the play. This is akin to *Sandhi* in Sanskrit theatre and normally this passage is in prose or verse. But in the operatic plays it should be in prose. Sometimes songs or verses are used in Sarachchandra's plays. This kind of narrative and descriptive passages helps to keep the audience engaged while the scene settings are arranged which are very much necessary for the staging of an opera.

It is most likely that music is prominently used for all conversational dialogues for the audience will be enjoying music more by hearing the story, as they will also be witnessing the play. Importance is thus given more for hearing the play than for seeing it. Music is the 'spine' of the play. The theme of the play is augmented through music and it is the fundamental scheme of opera. The situations that are created on the stage are sharpened in their appeal through music.

³ *op. cit.*, p. 19

Operatic plays should be acts of powerful commentary. Therefore, the rhythm of music, acting and usage of *Mudrās* and slow dance movements of *Sinhabāhu* are coupled with lyrics too. The musical forms are included with a story in an opera. *Sinhabāhu* is a tale of love between father, son and daughter even though the father is a lion. Most fathers love their daughters more than they love their sons, because of the inherent opposite sexual attraction. The Lion says ‘*Ai sudu diyantine numbawath nositiye* (why did you also go away my sweet daughter?)’ *Sarachchandra* wanted to explain this situation with music. Therefore, when lion is lamenting without anyone in his cave, he sings:

Ai sudu duvaniye

Numbavath nositiye

Sohoyurā nam ola mola gathi atha

Numba men mṛdu natha

Ohuge anatada kīkaru vuyé

Peralā enneda

Ohugen gelavi⁴

He asks his unseen daughter ‘Why did you also go away? I very much love you. If you are here, I could have made my heart, my sweet daughter. I am your

⁴ *op. cit.*, p. 33

father.’ But his mind tells him again that ‘You are a king of the forest’ and gets angry again. Once more, he sings with the fast beat of *Mṛdangam* evoking *Vira* Rasa. This melody is based on Rāga – *Hindola* and it is mixed with the tunes of lament found in Sinhalese folk songs with the aid of *Mṛdangam* beats. Drama appeals to the ear when it has music and delights the eyes when it has both music and dance. That is why the term *Rūpaka* is applied generally to denote drama, for *Rūpakas* paved the way for the kind of plays wherein music and dance predominate.

Indian drama is classified into two types: *Rūpaka* and *Uparūpaka*. In *Rūpaka*, importance is given to speech and in *Uparūpaka* music and dance predominate. The form of opera has originated from *Uparūpaka*, which is the Sanskrit theatre style. The term *Rūpaka* defines the ten major forms. *Nāṭyaśāstra* is silent about *Uparūpakas* but it has mentioned ten dramatic varieties called *Rūpakas*.

Nāṭakan saprakāranamko vyāyoga eva cha

Bhānan samavakārashcha vithiprahasanan dhima:

Ehamṛgashcha vignevo dashamo nātyalakshane

*Eatheshon lakshanamahan vyākhyasyamyapurvasha:*⁵

⁵ *NS.*, Vol. II, 18. 02, 03, p. 298

The *Uparūpaka* or *Nṛtyaprabandha* includes music and dance elements prominently whereas speech is minimal. These minor dramas, *Uparūpaka* appear to have emerged from *Rūpakas*. Whatever be their relationship, it is certain that the *Uparūpakas* represent an important landmark in the ancient theatre tradition and it is a form of dance-drama and musical opera. They are connected in some way with the *Rūpakas*. This theatre tradition has been discussed by many Indian dramaturgies in the post-Bharata period.

Bharata said that songs are said to be the ‘beds’ of dramatic representation. If songs and musical accompaniments should be suitably inserted then the production of dramas will never fail. Vocal (*Gāna*), instrumental (*Vādya*) and acting (*Nāṭya*) have different appeals and they should be introduced in the drama procedures like a brilliant entity.⁶ He also says that just as a well built house requires colour to enhance its beauty, songs are necessary for a drama to make the audience enjoy the play. It is more impressive than the dialogues in plays. Music and dance are essential elements in Sarachchandra’s stylized plays. Therefore, one can introduce his plays as audio – visual representations.

Uparūpakas existed since ancient times and were enunciated by authorities like Harsha. However, they developed and were performed in the pre-medieval and medieval periods on a large scale. They were predominantly musical and dance forms, alternatively known as *Sangita Nāṭakas* or opera.

⁶ *op. cit.*, 28. 482, p. 155

While the *Rūpakas* present Rasas, *Uparūpakas* present only *Bhāvas*. *Githa Vad purvake ramabhavabhinaya*: is a representation of *Rasa* and *Bhāva*, accompanied by vocal and instrumental music. When the performances developed to opera and dance-drama they represented both *Rūpaka* and *Uparūpaka*. Otherwise, it cannot be considered a theatre because Bharatamuni has said that, every creation has to evoke the eight *Rasas*. Not only *Bhāvas*, where there is *Bhāva*, obviously *Rasas* are also there.

*Vibhāvānubhāva vyabhichāri bhāva sanyogādrasa nishpatthi.*⁷

Sarachchandra's *Sinhabāhu* is a *Nātaka* and we can find many elements of *Uparūpakas*. *Rūpakas* have *Vākyārthābhinaya*. It is a presentation wherein the meaning of the whole sentence has to be communicated by gestures. There is no stagecraft for the stone cave and rock as this is a stylized play. Everything is acted out with graceful *Āngikābinaya* with the assistance of *Vākyārtha* and music.

Every day when the lion-father closes the cave and goes to the forest, *Sinhabāhu* says the following to his mother:

Sāmadā noma randā me lenè

Hāra yanta sithe mata sedinè

Dāka ganta mā piya raju vijithaya è vané

⁷ *op. cit.*, Vol. I, 6. 32, p. 271

Sama dā

*Binda hāra lendora yannemi*⁸

(We cannot stay here forever.

I feel like escaping from this cave

To see my father's kingdom, which is situated in this forest

Everyday.....

I feel like breaking the cave's door and going away)

When he sings this with graceful *Angahāra*, the audience can understand the scene as per the meaning of the sentence or *Vākyārthābhinaya*.

Sinhabāhu also depicts a short theme, or small self-contained sections taken from a larger theme. In either case, the composition is simple and the presentation on stage does not require elaborate accessories. It has adopted stylized *Āngikābhinaya* especially *Mudrās*. It means this play is in the form of *Nātyadharmi*.

In essence, opera, which has evolved from Nṛtya, has a mimetic element but no dialogue and is capable of arousing only emotion (*Bhāva*). A number of existing traditional forms precisely fit this description. Like the *Uparūpaka* types, most of the contemporary traditional forms are essentially musical but do incorporate

⁸ *SB.*, p. 18

some speech and story. In *Sinhabāhu*, music and dance plays the major role. It is filled with music and dance. The play *Sinhabāhu* can be produced on the stage and it can also be read as a piece of literature or can be sung by a single person or group of persons as a musical composition.

For the productions of opera on stage, requires performers who can sing and act with a good orchestra. This orchestra is also a special one and is called as melodic orchestra or Indian orchestra, known as *Vādyavṛnda* in Sanskrit. Bharatamuni explains about this in the first chapter of his *Nāṭyaśāstra* as *Kutapa*. Abhinavagupta has defined the word *Kutapa* in the *Abhinavabhāratī* as ‘*Ku*’ means ‘*Rangam*’, ‘*Tapah*’ means ‘*Ujjvalayati*’ - that which enlightens or enriches the theatrical stage by the play.

Sarachchandra has used *Kutapa* for his orchestra. *Kutapa* includes Indian traditional drums such as *Mṛdanga*, flutes, and string instruments like *Veena*. They produce Carnāṭaka Rāgadhāri music for the song and it successfully communicates the correct *Bhāva* to the audience. *Sinhabāhu* orchestra comprises *Mṛdangam* (Ampe, Thomas Gunasingha), Flute (H. H. Bandara), Esraj (S. A. Manuratna), *Veena* (Yoga Shivashubramaniyam), *Jala Tharanga* (Premala Arumugam).

Bharata has mentioned sixty-four classical songs known as *Dhruvā*. It forms the musical settings of the play and contains two parts known as *Praveshikā* (entrance) and *Naishkramikā* (exit). These three elements happen during the presentation of the characters on the stage and these *Gitis* or songs were

significant as they give an idea to the audience of the whole context place, person, etc. of a particular scene.

Sarachchandra's plays do not have any exit songs, but every character has entrance song. It is known as introductory song or *Pothe Innisiya*. Sometimes, introductory song is used for the explanation of the situation or moment. In the beginning of the *Sinhabāhu* play, after introduction song of the presenter, *Suppādevi* comes to the audience and sings a song about her.

Suppādevi Sinduva:

Vagurata Naranindu Dambadiva parasindu

Hata dā vū mama vemi detu dū

Sarana giya siha samindunè

Samaga vesemiya giri lenè⁹

Suppādevi (song): (I am the only one daughter of Vagu, who is the king of Vagurata in the famous Dambadiva. I am living with my lion husband in a stone cave in the forest.)

After the song, she leaves the stage with graceful movements and the narrator goes on to explain the next moment of the play thus:

⁹ *op. cit.*, p. 16

<i>Vesena sanda mē lesē daru dedena samagi</i>	<i>nē</i>
<i>Detu puth Sihabā saha sivali diyaniya</i>	<i>nē</i>
<i>Lenehi hira kara visuma kala nohakiva saha</i>	<i>nē</i>
<i>Asathi daruvo mavagen nithara mebandu pā</i>	<i>nē¹⁰</i>

(When they are living with their two children, *Sinhabāhu* and *Sinhasivali* who are the son and daughter of the Lion respectively they ask many questions to their mother as they are living uncomfortably in the closed stone cave.)

These questions help in the continuity of the play and create the climax action sequences. Therefore, the narrator sings the above song, which is called *Druvā* in *Nātyaśāstra* and introductory song or *Pothe innisiya* in *Sinhabāhu*.

This has been taken from the South Indian opera and it is a proof to its influence on Sri Lankan modern theatre. Sarachchandra highly preferred to use this method for his plays in view of the fact that in the stylized plays there are no options to use stagecraft or any other decorations on the stage. Everything is enacted with verbal expressions for the audience to understand. Consequently, playwright should be a good poet. On analysis, Sarachchandra's stylized plays can be cited with many examples for the prolific use of the above mentioned method.

The special thing about opera is that the whole set of actors sing themselves for their respective parts. We can see this in Sinhalese *Nādagama* and

¹⁰ *op. cit.*, p. 16

Sarachchandra's plays. Sounds of the song should be spread and heard throughout the whole audience. Nishshanka Diddeniya enacted the lion in *Sinhabāhu* in 1956. He sang with loud and proud voice with the *Mṛdangam* beats and it was an amazing performance. Singing of the actors themselves is a kind of external music. In *Nāṭyaśāstra* it is introduced as *Dhruvāgāna* and it has been mentioned in ancient Indian drama as *Nāṭyalochana*. These musical patterns in modern Sinhalese theatre or Sarachchandra's plays are essential parts of scenic representations.

A general review of the music of *Sinhabāhu* reveals that Carnātaka Rāgas were used for evoking Rasa for different situations. Employments of notes or *Swara sanghati* help for this. Mostly he has used *Sandyānga* or *Rakti Rāgas* such as *Thodi*, *Kalyāni*, *Bhairavi* etc and they are well suited to be sung in the evening or night. The verses, which occur in-between the songs as narrative links, are usually sung in *Ānandabhairavi*, *Kedāragoula*, *Nadanamakriya*, *Yadukulakambod* etc. Normally the tempo is slow in this part. The *Ranga* or dances of the songs in this part are also restricted. The *swaras* or notes of the songs are in high pitch because of their *Yati* and *Thāla*. This can be traced in the *Nāḍagama* also. Because of the beats of *Maddala* and Carnātaka Rāgas they sing in the high pitch style.

The songs from Sarachchandra's dramas are very popular in the Sinhalese music concerts (both vocal and instrumental) as the music is of classical Carnātaca type; at the same time very appealing to the ears due to their tunes. Some of the songs of *Sinhabāhu* have introduced Sinhalese folk melodies, especially introductory

songs, which are sung by the narrator. However, the original tunes, names of the *Rāgas* and *Thālas* are not available in the text. H. H. Bandara composed music for the first production of *Sinhabāhu*.

Operatic plays are not easily understandable for everyone, because of the classical music, literary prose passages and stylized dance steps and *Mudrās*. Sarachchandra who was conscious of this concern has created modern theatre accordingly. Hence, *Sinhabāhu* is performed even today and it is the best production in Ceylon.

3.2 *Sinhabāhu* in modern theatre

There are three most perceptive and creative theatre theorists in western namely Bertolt Brecht, Artuad and Growtoski. They gave the elements and the form necessary for the modern theatre. Each of them has unique approach to the theatre experience. When we examine *Sinhabāhu*, it is a form in the light of the ideas used by modern theorists, especially Bertolt Brecht (1898 – 1956). He was a German poet, playwright, and a very renowned theatre director of the twentieth century. Some of his principles have influenced Sarachchandra's play *Sinhabāhu*.

Brecht's most celebrated principle is the alienation effect, which he uses in his 'epic theatre'. Here the audience is always aware when they are watching a play. Epic theatre was a reaction against other popular forms of theatre, particularly the

naturalistic approach pioneered by Constantine Stanislavski. Brecht wished to keep the audience away from empathizing deeply or engaging their rational faculties. He believed that this detachment was necessary for catharsis.

Sinhalese modern theatre, also exposed to the alienation effect concept applies it most subtly. Sarachchandra applied this for modern theatre by making stylized plays, which is akin to the proscenium arch theatre. It is a well-known fact that Sarachchandra's theatre uses a lot of symbols as found in *Āngikābhinaya*. Also poverty is shown by patching the cotton costumes with irregular shapes of different colours, likewise silken, to indicate that they have been mended. The stage itself however remains the same.

Sarachchandra always preferred to use stories such as historical legends or myths, which are popular among the Sinhalese. So that when they come as audience, everyone is aware of the story. They come as audience only to see how Sarachchandra presents the popular story on stage and they are more than willing to see the known story enacted in front of their eyes. There are no attachments or additions like a new story or a new event. It thus keeps them glued to the performances or the acting and not merely following the story, as they know it already. They do not cry or laugh with characters but merely observe that the events had happened as shown.

Breaking the fourth wall and including the audience usually has the effect of taking them out of the play rather than bringing them into it. In opera, there are plenty of 'asides' written into the script. This gives the actor the opportunity to express his thoughts to the audience, including them as a character. And, in fact, the audience expects this in opera. In a drama, and in most straight operas, it would destroy the illusion showing the audience that you are aware of their presence.

According to Brecht's theory, actors frequently address the audience directly out of character. It is called breaking the fourth wall, which is speaking directly to the audience, including them in the situation. This is similar to *Ātmagata*, *Svagatha* or *Apavāritha Bhāśana* in Sanskrit theatre. When Sinhabāhu is asking many questions about his parents' marriage and their life in the forest, she doesn't have any answer to give him. She is confused and silent. But in the beginning of the second act, after questioning his mother Sinhabāhu leaves and Suppadevi is left alone in the stage. It is then she explains the situation revealing her mind to the audience. In this moment, Sarachchandra has used an *Ātmagata* and he calls it *Innisi gīthaya*. She sings:

Sangavanta thathu bariya puthugen

Migindā nithina sondinā penena vilasā

Adahanne nâtha kîvada musâ

Nana mûkurâ gos âtha purâ vayasâ¹¹

(I cannot hide any details from my son. He will not believe if I say lies. He is grown up now and intelligent)

During this singing, she is speaking directly to the audience and she is away from the character.

Brecht believed that the action of a play was a justification of the characters rather than a revelation of it. He wanted his plays to be a potential for social movements through their didactic moralizing. The characters in the *Sinhabâhu* play are justifying the situations and the characters rather than engaging in revelation. The play is carried on with ponderous questioning about their lives. He is justifying the life and the society. For instance, like the following situation, he is always telling the audience about his justifications for the moment or their lives thus:

Sin hayek wé mâ piyâ

Jan mayen lath mè aranne

Purudu vû vâsé sadâ

Kumariyak vé mâgé mavu

¹¹ *op. cit.*, p. 25

Uttarīthara janma laddi

Uruma vū yaa isuratā

Matada himi vé Vanga rājyaya

Prbala naravara parapuren

Kumakdo mé pāpe lené mé visimé sethak do¹²

(My father is a lion born in this forest. He used to live here and my mother is a princess born in a high caste. Marvelous properties belong to me in Vanga kingdom which I aspire. We are from the powerful generation of human beings. What is this life living in this cave? There is no wealth and happiness in this cave!)

Brecht's fourth theory is the 'Relaxed Audience'. That is how Brecht referred to the audience he wished the epic theatre to attract. Many events of *Sinhabāhu* is known to the audience and when the actor/s perform the audience is thinking about the love between father-son and mother in the society, without any attachment towards the event on stage. Spectators relax whilst watching the performance. They are entertained and interested in what they see and they are able to think about the situation relaxely.

Brecht's description of the epic theatre closely and unmistakably resembles the Indian traditional theatre and Sarachchandra's stylized plays. In *Sinhabāhu* we

¹² *op. cit.*, pp. 27 – 28

find that all aspects of theatre are present: music, dance, drama, *Āngikābhinaya* and distinctively stylized footwork. Each of this has its own place in a performance structure. Actors are introduced with distinct entries at the start of the play. Musical instruments and the musicians are all visible on stage as part of the performance. Their presence also helps to destroy the illusion of reality.

Actor and the character are two poles of duality. This has been a subject of study, admiration and theoretical investigation. Brecht's concept of 'alienation' seems to relate to this duality. In *Sinhabāhu* actors' makeup is stylized which is similar to *Kathakali* dance and *Kudiyāttam* in Kerala. Makeup and headgears are breaking the illusion for the audience because they do not seem real. Even they enter the stage and exist in a stylized way. The characters are playing the part of the character but stays away from the reality of it. For example, *Sinhabāhu* wants to kill his father and shoots three arrows, one by one but these arrows are not real. When he aims his father's chest and shoots the arrow, the lion-father falls down and acts as if he is dead. The arrow is on his chest, but everybody in the audience knows this is merely a play and the actors are not doing anything in real. And so, no one in the audience cries.

Even if *Sinhabāhu* is doing that as real, he won't be able to act. The lion-father is also in the same situation. Therefore, both characters are in two poles of duality that is, between character and reality. Lion-father is singing, *Sinhabāhu* is moving with graceful movements for making arrows to his father, mimes and delivers dialogues, knowing very well that they are only performing the role of the

character they are portraying. Sometimes *Sinhabāhu* talks to the audience telling them of the plans and the course the narrative would take. During performances of Sarachchandra's plays, it is common to see the artist seat himself on the stool on stage and relax, stretch a little and seem oblivious to the stage settings.

He disengages himself, returns to the acting arena, and engages in action again. This is an essential component of theatre and folk rituals, which are traditionally performed for several hours throughout the night. It gives the actor and the audience a chance to be removed from the intensity of the performance. It is a de-linking relationship of actor and the role, which Brecht, did seek to employ in his theatre. Sarachchandra has done much research about Sinhalese folk theatre and rituals. The method has been taken from them and is gathered from the theory of modern theatre, because he has many experiences about theatre productions and performances in many countries such as Japan, China, India, America and Germany etc. Whole lot of these influences was introduced to the Sinhalese audience with the performance of *Sinhabāhu*.

Also in Sanskrit theatre and Sinhalese *Nādagama* when the actor comes to the stage, they dance and walk three rounds and then start to act. In Sarachchandra's entire stylized plays, he has followed this method. In the second act of *Sinhabāhu* there is a conversation among Suppādevi, Sinhabāhu and Sinhasivali called *Sāhali Thargaya*. It is about their discussion to escape from the stone cave. Before telling the dialogues the three characters enter the stage and go three rounds each and start to say thus:

Sinhabāhu

Māniyani kīva oba bas asā

Sanituhan kara gathimi

Nopamāva yā yuthuya

Mé lenen oba dedena

Mā samaga yā youthuya

Vana vāsa hāra damā¹³

(You two must come with me and give up the forest life in this cave.)

Even this is the one of theory as discussed by Brecht for the modern theatre. He said that the events on stage carries the audience away from their daily problems, relaxes the mind and in turn helps to solve issues to the 'relaxed audience' whom Brecht admired. The presenter or *Pothegura* in Sarachchandra's plays is also an important character. He keeps the audience distracted and at once aware of the distinction between stage and reality. His prologue is bringing the spectator away from the stage characters to the reality.

In the end of the second act, Sinhabāhu moves the huge stone from the door and opens it. They are ready to go away from the stone cave and Sinhabāhu keeps his mother on his right shoulder and his sister on the left shoulder. He is going through the huge forest and it is at this moment the act comes to the end. In the

¹³ *op. cit.*, p. 28

beginning of the third act, narrator comes and explains the situation to the audience. The last moment is an important dramatically poignant event. Mother does not want to escape from lions cave, because of her love, but the reality of the world is realised by Sinhabāhu. Therefore, everyone is inclined to analyze the truth between love and the reality. Sarachchandra wants to break this emotion from the audience. Therefore, narrator says:

Thidenā gos me lesā vana petha pasu karami *na*

Pasal janapadayakata pamununoya suwaye *na*

Daka un gam vasso sitha anukampāve *na*

Dunno neka pili hā aharada budina me *na*¹⁴

(Like this, all three went passing by the forest. Finally, they reached a land called *Pasal Janapada*. Everybody in that land sympathise with them. They give them many garments to wear and food to eat.)

Now the audience is taken away from the present situation and so they are questioning about the next event with the relax mind, because, the narrator has broken the ‘fourth wall’ and the attachments. Narrator is thus representing as an agent for social changes. This is another of Brecht’s theory where he sees theatre as a ‘potential for social comment’.

¹⁴ *op. cit.*, p. 35

3.3 *Sinhabāhu* on the proscenium stage

At present, we must move on to observe that the work of the dramatist – Ediriweera Sarachchandra is conditioned by the fact that he must plan his plays to fit the sort of theatre that stands ready to receive them. A fundamental and necessary relation has always existed between theatre (building as theatre) and theatric art. The best plays of any period have been fashioned in accordance with the physical conditions of the best theatres of that period. Therefore, in order to fully appreciate a play such as *Sinhabāhu*, it is necessary to imagine the theatre of modern Sinhalese and also understand thoroughly the dramaturgy of Sanskrit, and modern theorists. Theater on the proscenium stage is given special prominence, since it is the most commonly found stage and the type of venue that allows for the greatest amount of spectacle and use of scenery. If we are producing a ballet, opera, or Broadway musical, this is the stage meant for that.

Sarachchandra produced his plays for the modern proscenium arch stage. Styles of producing plays have also been a factor. However, there is no stagecraft in Sarachchandra's theatrical productions. Before the performances of University Dramatic Society, Sinhalese had amphitheatre as a type of structure because they liked to perform outdoors. Because of the Baliwālā Theatre Group, who performed *Nurti*, they used Proscenium arch stage instead of outdoor venues.

During this period they created the most useful and efficient space possible in producing theatre. Large indoor structures were simply not possible without modern engineering methods. *Nurthi* introduced the front curtain that is used to mask the stage from the view of the audience. Sinhalese folk theatre was no way equipped to hang a curtain from the front in contrast to the ease with which curtains are hung in a modern proscenium theatre using a counter weight system.

For Sarachchandra's plays, he never used front curtain for the entire performances, because he wanted to portray the Sanskrit and modern theatre elements together in his plays. Every play has been separated with *Ankas*. The play *Sinhabāhu* consists of four *Ankas*. When one of the *Ankas* is finished the narrator comes to the stage and sings a song about the event or situation in present and how it is going to be connected to the next scene. Thus, the present *Anka* comes to the end and he makes the opportunity to open the next *Anka*.

Pothe Innisiya

<i>Mesé hata gath biya sâka sithin paha karami</i>	<i>na</i>
<i>Thosé vemin é migidā vesena sanda pemi</i>	<i>na</i>
<i>Basé muvin pita vuna nisā vaduna kuhuli</i>	<i>na</i>
<i>Visésaya piyāge dakithi daruvo dina di</i>	<i>na</i> ¹⁵

¹⁵ *op. cit.*, p. 24

(He removed every meticulous thought in his mind and living like this, he heard the same words again and according to that, his moods changed every time. His daughter and son could understand his mood every day.)

Or else, at the end of each *Anka*, all characters leave the stage and the presenter comes to the stage and sings *Pothe Innisiya* or narrator's song. In the script it is mentioned as '*Siyalu denā nikama yathi*' (everybody is leaving). In Sanskrit theatre, it is mentioned as '*Sarve nishkranth:*' it is known as *Ranga vidhāna*. Therefore, Sarachchandra did not wish to use any curtain for the production of his plays.

The stage is situated as a space for performers and it is a central point for the audience. The proscenium stage is an architectural feature and it consists of a platform or a series of platforms. In Sri Lanka, mostly we can see the only one platform structure. The modern theatre stage as proscenium theatre is a permanent feature.

In the modern theatre, there are four types of stages such as proscenium, thrust stage, theatre in the round and found space theatre. The audience is located on one side of the stage with the remaining sides hidden and used by the performers and technicians in the proscenium theatre. Thrust stages are similar to proscenium stages, but the performance area extends into the audience space. Therefore, the audience is located on three sides. The audience is located on all four sides of the

stage in theatre in the round. The found space theatre may be constructed specifically for a performance or may involve a space that is adapted as a stage.

The most common stage is the proscenium, which is also referred to as a picture frame stage. There is a primary feature, which is similar to a large arch. Therefore, we call it proscenium arch theatre. The audience views the performance through this arch. They directly face the stage, which is typically raised several feet above front row audience level and views only one side of the scene. This one side is commonly known as the invisible fourth wall of the scene. This was the space in front of the backdrop where the actors actually played.

According to Brecht's theory, he discussed about the breaking of the fourth wall. When characters act in this area, it captivates the audience. This place is really effective in that sense. Therefore, Brecht wanted to break that emotion between actor and the audience. It is called alienation. Sarachchandra has followed this with his stylized plays as discussed before in this chapter.

Stage floor is raised upward slightly from front to back, in order to contribute to the perspective illusion, and also to make groups of actors more visible to audiences who were at first seated on a flat floor. In Sarachchandra's plays, the participating narrator always used this space as well. Because it helps to break the 'fourth wall' and it is keeping with the *Nāṭyadharmi* style too.

The proscenium hides the sides of the stage, called the wings, which may be used by theatres personnel working on the particular performance as well as a space for storage of scenery and theatrical properties. Typically obscured by side curtains, or framed scenery pieces, called *legs*. There is an additional playing area in front of the proscenium arch to the actors. This area is referred to as apron. Underneath and in front of the apron is sometimes an orchestra pit, which is used by musicians during musicals and operas. This is used for *Sinhabāhu* performances, because Sarachchandra wanted to take the space on the stage for acting as well. In some other stylized plays such as *Maname*, orchestra is seated on the side of stage. Because he wanted to make that plays with *Nādagam* style.

In the modern theatre, the greater part of the audience is gathered directly in front of the actors. Some traces of the former platform system, however, still remain. In front of the curtain, the stage projected into a wide 'apron', as it was called, lined on either side by boxes filled with spectators; and the house was so inadequately lighted that almost all the acting had to be done within the focus of the footlights. After the curtain rose, the actors advanced into this projecting 'apron' and performed the main business of the act beyond the range of scenery and furniture. With the 'apron' stage arose a more natural form of play.

The greatest revolution of modern times in stage conventions owes its origin directly to the invention of the electric light. Now that it is possible to make every corner of the stage clearly visible from all parts of the house, it is no longer necessary for an actor to hold the centre of the scene. The introduction of electric

lights abolished the necessity of the 'apron' stage and made possible the picture-frame proscenium; and the removal of the 'apron' stuck the death-blow to the Drama of Conversation and led directly to the Drama of Illusion.

They are many advantages in proscenium stage. Backdrops, curtains and lighting can be used to greater effect for the view of the audience. Even Sarachchandra used the proscenium stage though he did not want to use any backdrops and used normal light effect to light the stage and the characters. There are not many effects from the lights and backdrops, because of the *Nātyadharmi* style. In this stage, characters' entrances and exits are made more graceful and so it was highly useful for his productions.

The absence of scenery forced the dramatists of the time to introduce poetic passages to suggest the atmosphere of their scenes. Suppādevi starts her answer to her son and daughter with a pretty dialogue descriptive of the love of her and the lion's.

Suppādevi

Asirimath vu déki mélova

Premaya naminā

Vanu porana kividun sonda

Rasa musu basinā

Siyalu bhoga vasthu isuru

Harithi nek dano

Sav sãpa déna sithu minak van

*Prémaya sandã*¹⁶

(The love is a beautiful thing in this world. It has been ornated by poet ancestors with beautiful and aesthetic words. People give up every property because of love, which is similar to wish-conferring gem, which gives everything you wish)

3. 4 Elements of proscenium stage

There are defining elements. Basically, a big picture frame stage is divided to acting spaces according to the view of the audience' such as Up-stage, Down-stage, House left- stage right, House right -stage left.¹⁷ Stage directions are decided from the viewpoint of an actor who is in the center stage facing the audience. Stage Left is the actor's left, Stage Right is the actor's right. Down-stage is towards the audience, Up-stage is towards the back wall of the stage.

The conventional proscenium playing area is divided into a checkerboard of fifteen equal blocks.¹⁸ The area, which is close to the audience, is called Down-Stage; important action takes place in here. In the play *Sinhabãhu*, when the

¹⁶ *op. cit.*, p. 27

¹⁷ *Appendix*

¹⁸ *ibid.*

narrator comes and describes the situation or character, he always comes to the down-stage and sings his song. While he is leaving from the stage the character also comes with his particular dance step and sings or acts if it is relevant to the play. For example, in the beginning of the play, the narrator comes and sings about lion's and Sinhabāhu's thoughts, because the door of the stone-cave is closed by lion every day while he is leaving for the forest. This disturbs *Sinhabāhu's* mind and he asks too many questions to his mother – Suppādevi seeking answers.

Sinhabāhu

Māniyani oba pavasana nithi

Novāatahe mata mé vadan

Pitru apa adhirājayā nam manda biyavanu kāranā

Mam novemdo ohuge detuputh.....¹⁹

(Mother, whatever you are telling me it is not understandable to me. If our father is the king of this kingdom, what is the reason to fear? Am I not the elder son of him?)

During this moment, he comes to the Down-Stage and acts, because these questions are connected to the climax of the play. The Down- Right is the most important part, because we read from left to right and Down -Left is considered

¹⁹ *SB.*, p. 17

the strongest playing area. When he sings the above songs Suppādevi is standing in the Down-Right, and acts shocked about the behavior of her son and ask him to stop making unnecessary questions and decisions.

Suppādevi – Thāla viriduva

Pinanā ma man sondina pembara ma puth ruva *na*

Rakinā lesā dedena nithiyen men denuva *na*

Karanā me rākavarana pithu obe puthu pemi *na*

Bathinā ivasā gena hindinuya no asā pā *na*²⁰

(My son! who delights my heart as well. As I care for my eyes, I care for you children every time. I am doing all these things because of my love for you – son. I am quiet because of my love.)

The next strongest playing area is the Down-Center. Strongest area for entrances and exits is the Up-Center. The audience eyes aims to this point directly and becomes the frequent viewpoint. The climax of the play is played in this part of the stage. In the play *Sinhabāhu*, from the moment when Sinhabāhu starts to aim the arrows towards his father and kills him is play in this point of the stage. In the last moment, before dying the lion- father, lion sings;

²⁰ *op. cit.*

Sin hayā : Sinduva

Sinhabā nam mé ma puthā nové do

Dāsata penenā – adahami kelesā

Soyamina mā āvada vana pethatā

Katuvada mava hā hurathal nāgāniya

Mā maranata ā narayeki sithuyem

Biya nova sipa gannata den avasara²¹

(Is that Sinhabāhu my son? What is this? Unbelievable act, that he is doing? I went in search of him throughout the huge forest. He went with his young sister also. I thought he was a human being. However, I will face to my death and I will embrace him without any fear.)

There is one place in the proscenium stage called vanishing point, it is located somewhere near the bottom center of the viewing plane. Objects in the foreground are shown in a larger scale than those objects in the distance. This technique creates an illusion of depth and three-dimensionality. These objects are spaced at intervals moving away from the audience. All this dividing parts help the audience focus on the important action. While one character is says or does something important, the other characters are often blocked, so that they are still,

²¹ *op.cit.*, p. 47

because their movement could divert attention, or displace action. Therefore blocking is the principle focus tool.

Sarachchandra has made the play *Sinhabāhu* with the style of South Indian opera and has used the modern theory of breaking the fourth wall and alienation as well as the *Nātyadharmi* style. The main thing, which he has done, is focusing the modern theatre with the proscenium arch stage.

Chapter 04

Traditional and modern plot structure and ‘*Pematho Jāyathi Soko*’

Plot is the significant part of a play. It necessarily involves five stages of development of the plot in the text. These can be traced out from the ancient and the modern dramaturgy. When we talk of the ancient theatre, it is in connection with Sanskrit theatre and its dramaturgy, especially Bharatamuni’s *Nāṭyaśāstra*.

Aristotle’s Poetics is wherein the structure for the modern theatre plot is elaborated. He has discussed Greek theatre and modern theatre elements. In this chapter, a formal analysis of plot construction in the ancient and modern theatre with special reference to Sarachchandra’s stylized play, ‘*Pematho Jāyathi Soko*’ is aimed at. The focus on these elements within Sarachchandra’s play writing structure is because theatre form is not only based on performances but on the script too.

The theoretical understanding of the formation of plot structure should be transformed into a presentable theatrical plot action and events sequence and these dramatic values should be revealed as such in the dramatic text. It should connect with the forms or shape of the play from within or internally and coordinate all its

parts. The playable dramatical events of the plot should be focused on the actors, director, and designers when playwrights write their creative work. To accomplish this goal, one has to analyze the traditional and modern system of classifications of the various elements of the plot. It helps to break up a play into parts to understand their purpose and relationship.

A play is not a simple and straight-forward narration of a story. It is an artistic creation of carefully adjusted series of more or less imaginative action sequence. While they are arranged so, they carry forward the plot with the theme without any break. This consists of scenes, situations and the climax. Whatever the playwrights wish to express in the play those are to be coherently arranged in a comprehensible way so that it holds the audience's interest. The construction and arrangement of the plot is one of the most necessary and complicated effort in playwriting. The playwright must write precisely and effectively, otherwise the basic idea of the play will be distorted. Even though there exist dramaturgy for plot writing in theatre, the author should ensure he adheres to them with a creative or artistic touch.

4.1 Plot and story

A plot is not a story, but every story has a strong plot. Good writers know the importance of both plot and story. The same story can be written in different styles or plot structure based on the writer's individuality. The plot is not the main story of a work but it is the series of events providing conflict within a story.

For instance, searching a lover is the plot. If we analyze differently, plot is whatever the writer want it to be. It could also be surviving a natural disaster. Sometimes it is called the 'spine' of a story. The plot is the action and story is the emotions associated with the action. In the play, the characters portray the action and the events.

A story is built upon the conflicts created by a plot. Those conflicts are either experimental or philosophical. A writer selects a setting for the plot and then it is connected with few detailed characters. The story can begin with a plot or the setting or the characters. It mainly consists of a chronological sequence of events. Casually and logically, those are connected with the plot. It can have various plot lines, different elaborations of various parts of the story, which are combined to form the entire plot.

It refers to the order of the events that happen in a play. The plot includes the action and movements. In the beginning of the play, we can see it is a picture, which is unclear and entangled. From this situation, it begins to rise up through the actions. Then it reaches the theme and deals with the climax. The next is the falling action leading to the resolution. The plot of the drama is can be depicted through a line diagram. In simpler terms, we can say it has a beginning, middle and the end - although it does not have to be presented in a linear structure. This is the general plot structure of both traditional and modern.

Formalist analysis of modern drama is usually associated with the principles and methods of Aristotle. In his *Poetics*, he has described six elements of drama such as plot, character, dialogue, idea, music, and production values. His ideas have influenced literature and drama until today, and his expressions and descriptions have become a part of our critical heritage. On examining the writing, construction, and arrangement of the best plays of modern theatre, he developed the principles and methods. In the twentieth century, this tradition of Aristotle has been developed as a method for the study of literature and drama. His work outlines the importance of plot.

4.2 Aristotelian theory for the plot

Aristotle (384 – 322 BC), in one of his treatises, he has suggested five elements for the play structure such as; Exposition, Rising Action, Climax, Falling Action and Resolution / Denouement. This is represented in the shape of a hill with extended plains on both sides¹ and it is similar to five *Avasthās* and five *Arthaprakṛtis* in Sanskrit dramaturgy.

The aim of my study in this chapter is to analyze the construction; development and end of the plot with respect to Sarachchandra's play '*Pematho Jāyathi Soko*' in the ancient and modern form.

¹ *Appendix*

4.3 *Pematho Jāyathi Soko*

(love brings sorrow)

The play, '*Pematho Jāyathi Soko*', a distinctive creation of Ediriweera Sarachchandra won the "*Mahākavi Kumaran Asān*" International award offered by Kerala University, India for the poetic and theatre skills. The story is about 'love giving rise to grief.' The Buddha has said that '*Pematho Jāyathi Soko*' - (love brings sorrow).

Pematho jāyathi soko pematho jāyathi bhayam

Pematho vippamutthassa natthi soko suto bhayam².

Whatever form love takes whether maternal, paternal, and fraternal or patriotic, it eventually ends in sorrow. Any sweet feelings of love is impregnated with reciprocity, and certainly ends in sorrow after passing through various stages of hatred, jealousy, enmity and uncertainty.

The story is about Uddāla Brāhmana who is an old teacher and a beautiful *Chandāli* woman, Swarnathilakā. She passes the Guru's home with her father while searching for a job from North Madhura city to *Phancha* Madhura city. When Uddāla Brāhmana sees her and her beauty, he feels both love and passion.

² *Dhammapadaya - Piyavaggaya (Vol.16)*, Colombo: Gunapala Malalasekara, Godage & Brothers, 1966, 212- 216, p. 58

(Hereafter, I shall refer to *Dhammapadaya - Piyavaggaya (Vol.16)* as DP.)

He becomes withdrawn and silent after this episode and shows no interest in doing his duties. In an earlier instance, when he comes across a woman he takes bath with seven milk pots for purifying his mind and body, because there is a customary belief '*Stri jathi nam papihuya*' - (women are the foundation of sin). It is mentioned in many Buddhist Jathaka tales as well as other *Theravadi* Buddhist concepts.

However, this time Uddāla Brāhmana is unable to purify his mind and remove the love and passion he feels for Swarnathilakā. His students come and ask many questions about the change that has come over him and his indifferent attitude. Finally, he tells them the incident. As he is narrating then incident, Swarnathilakā and his father pass his school once again. His students on seeing the beautiful woman tells her rudely 'This area is prohibited for women. What is the reason for crossing our area?' These words hurt Uddāla Brāhmana and so chide his students saying that was not the way to treat guests according to his lessons. He tells them to invite Swarnathilakā and her father to the school and treat them properly.

While they follow his orders, Uddāla Brāhmana enquires about their journey and the reason for their crossing that part of the land. Swarnathilakā then tells him that they have been banished from the kingdom because of the king's anger. They request Uddāla Brāhmana to find a job for them in that kingdom. Uddāla Brāhmana who has been appointed as a teacher by the king of Panchavathi city finds her father a job as a *Gāndharva* or musician in the palace.

After that, he proposes to Swarnathilakā his love and marriage. She does not wish to marry him because of her low caste status (*Chandāli*) and his high status and caste, but she respects him a lot. Eventually Uddāla Brāhmana succeeds in persuading and marrying the beautiful woman Swarnathilakā.

In the wedding night, he discovers the beauty of love and marriage with her. He tells her how he has lived alone all those years without any woman but in the company of literature and poets. He tells further, how he earlier found and felt beauty in the ornate words of the poets. He confesses that now that he has found the real life with her, beautiful poetic words are unable to give a life to him.

Four months pass. Uddāla Brāhmana is very happy with Swarnathilakā and does not go to the school to teach. He longs to stay with her all the time. However Swarnathilakā coaxes him to go there and continue with his duties as a teacher. He rejects her request every time. Eventually students get very angry with Swarnathilakā for they believe it is because of her love and beauty that their Guru is not leaving her to teach them. They respect and appreciate his education and teaching a lot and so miss it. They decide to do something about the situation.

One day, after repeated requests from Swarnathilakā, Guru Uddāla Brāhmana decides to go to school and leaves his home. There are three students who keep a watch of their home and their activities so as to get rid of Swarnathilakā. Realizing that Swarnathilakā is then alone at home, they approach her. They tell her that there is an elephant, which is drunk and running along the road. They

describe it as if it is a beautiful and wonderful sight to see. It is only because she believes that those students are close to Uddāla Brāhmana that she welcomes them home, and listens to them with rapt attention. Initially she feels shocked hearing the incident because that elephant could do anything to anyone. Though she resolves not to go there initially, she is overcome with curiosity later on and goes to the road to see the drunken elephant.

The elephant keeper as asked by the students sees the correct time to send the drunken elephant on the road. Swarnathilakā sees the elephant coming. She is shocked and afraid. The elephant comes towards her direction, tramples her and she dies. Meanwhile, Uddāla Brāhmana who returns from the school after his duties crosses the incident spot and finds his beloved Swarnathilakā dead on the road with her body parts spread. He faints on the road realizing what has happened. Two students carry him to the school. Uddāla Brāhmana questions his students with deep sadness, they say many things, and he comprehends the incident. He no longer wants to carry on living without Swarnathilakā. While on one side her dead body is being cremated, Uddāla Brāhmana jumps into the raging fire and dies too.

This is the outline of the story of the play. The plot, by contrast, encompasses the causally linked sequence of scenes presented on stage to tell the story. Thus, we are presented with happy scenes between Uddāla Brāhmana and Swarnathilakā as well as grief scenes between Uddāla Brāhmana and his students. The story is developed in a minutely choreographed plot wherein the individual scenes combine and logically build up towards the crisis. Thus, plot refers to the logical

arrangement of events and actions explaining 'why' and 'how' the events happen in a particular order.

The incidents of the play are represented so as to occur connected like a chain with the central idea. The actions and situations in a drama should be depicted in such a connected manner. In each case, the preceding stage should naturally proceed with succeeding stages one by one and ultimately the whole action should end in one point. This leads us to conclude that the idea of a mono-centric plot has been firmly established in Sanskrit dramaturgy. Mainly the five *Avasthā* and *Artaprakṛtis* are important elements of Sanskrit plays.

4.4 Five *avasthā* in sanskrit dramaturgy

Nāṭaka in Sanskrit drama, when it is developed in full as an action, there are necessarily five stages of development of the plot called five *Avasthā* or *Kāryavasthā* such as *Ārambha* (*Prārambha*), *Prayatna* (*Yatna*), *Prāptisambhava* (*Prāptyāśā*), *Niyata Phalaprāpti* (*Niyatāpti*) and *Phalāyoga* (*Phalāgama*). They take place in the above order and Bharatamuni has described them in his work *Nāṭyaśāstra*.

Saṅsādhye phalayoge tu vyāpār: kāraṇasya ya:

Prārambhaścha prayatnaścha tatha prāpteścha sambhav:

Niyatā cha phalaprāpti: phalayogaścha pañchama:³

³ NS., Ghosh Vol. III, 07 – 08, p. 06

The theory of the elements of plot in Bharatamuni's *Nāṭyaśāstra* is not only for Sanskrit plays, but can be studied to write a good script for the modern play too. This can be shown on through a line diagram too.⁴

4.3.1 *Ārambha* (Beginning)

In Sanskrit theatre, the objective of the hero is revealed in this stage. Furthermore, in the beginning the action of the hero is the focus on the final aim. Therefore, it is called *Ārambha*. In Aristotelian theory, it is known as exposition. According to him, the most important thing is that the main conflict is introduced in this step, sometimes also called as 'narrative hook'.

Ārambha is represented by hero, minister or a divine character. It consists the beginning of the action where a move is set afoot which ultimately leads to the final stage of the action. The final objective is reached through successive stages. It cannot be said in every case, that the character concerned consciously desires this final object at the stage of the first move. Bharatamuni says,

Autsukyamātrabandhastu yad bījasya nibadyate

*Mahat: phalayogasya sa sa khalvārambha iṣyate*⁵

⁴ Appendix

⁵ NS., Ghosh, Vol I, 21. 09, p. 127

Ārambha of the play, which merely creates a curiosity about the attainment of the great objective with reference to the seed (*Bija*), is called the Beginning or *Ārambha*. Danamjaya explains concerning the hero at the starting moment of the play as: *Autsukyamātram ārambhah phalalābhāya bhūyase*⁶

This main element *Bija* can be traced in Sarachchandra's play *Pématho Jāyathi Sko*. In the first act, Uddāla Brāhmana comes to school. He is intoxicated and confesses to his students the reason. He admits that though that was not the first time he had seen a beautiful woman, he has become passionate about Swarnathilakā whom he had seen passing by the school. He wonders how he who could earlier forget the image of the woman he sees and keep his mind undisturbed without any feeling love or passion finds himself caught in love and passion since seeing Swarnathilakā. Every student in school is shocked about their teacher's obsession for Swarnathilakā and his indifferent behavior towards his duties because of that. When they ask him to sit and cool down his mind, he says,

Hindagatha nohakiya mā priya Dappula

Ekalas kara gannā thuru mā sitha

⁶ George C.O. Hass, *Dhanamjaya, The Dasarupa, A Treatise on Hindu Dramaturgy*, New York: AMS Press 1965, 1.29, P. 10

((Hereafter, I shall refer to *The Dasarupa, A Treatise on Hindu Dramaturgy* as *DS*.)

Gos dān sāthapennemi mama yahane

Pamā novi yali ennam oba vetha⁷

(My dear Dappula , I cannot sit without settling down my disturbed mind. Now I am going to lie down on my bed. I will come to you again without getting late.)

In this situation his passion and love for Swarnathilakā is just a beginning, and the audience hopes to see the coming together of *Nāyaka* – *Nāyikā* and they anticipate the final achievement which is love bringing sorrow. This is the first vision of the play. The playwright has to lay a start so as to lead to the intended final objective and call it *Ārambha*.

4.3.2 *Prayatna* or *Yatna* (Effort)

According to Abhinavagupta's explanation, *Prayatna* is a serious endeavor. It is finding out the means for the final achievement. In Aristotelian theory, this is similar to complication or 'rising action' of the play. This part of the story begins to develop the conflict, and so the building of interest or suspense.

The idea is explained in *Nāṭyasāstra* as,

⁷ *Pematho Jāyathi Soko, Ediriweera Sarachchandra, Sanaskṛthi, Pas Avurudu Mangala*

Kalāpaya, 1957, P. 32

(Hereafter, I shall refer to *Pematho Jāyathi Soko* as *PJS*.)

Apasyat: phalaprāptiñ vyāpāro y: phalañ prati

*Paranchautsulyagamanañ prayatna: parikīrtit.*⁸

The hero is striving towards the achievement of the objective when the same is not in view, and his steps excite curiosity as he puts in the efforts (*Prayatna*). Danamjaya opined *Prayatna* is exertion attended with great haste.

*'Prayatnas tu tadaprāptau vyāpāro 'titvarānvitah.'*⁹

In the second act of the play, when Swarnathilakā and her father walks again near the school, Guru Uddāla Brāhmana asks his students to call them inside and treat them well. This is the first step of *Prayatna*. This event continues for some more time. After tea, he finds about their journey and their need and goes to the king requesting a job for them. This *Prayatna* is connected with his achievement, which is to marry Swarnathilakā, because if someone helps another, that person would want to reciprocate his or her gratitude with helping in return. Therefore, this is the opportunity set to ask her love for Uddāla Brāhmana.

Because of the Guru's mind filled with desire and passion, he suffers, ignoring his school duties and students. When reminded of poetic lines, he rejects those ideas. The reason being, he wishes to dwell in the real world and enjoy the real love of Swarnathilakā. He says:

⁸ *NS., Ghosh, Vol. I, 21. 10, p. 128*

⁹ *DS., I. 30, p. 10*

Yavvanayé suwanda malda

Yavvanayé mihiri palada

Sarasaviyage pudasuna matha

Mâlavi âtha thibu ayuru

Lath danuma kimda ea?

Lath sâpatha kimda in?¹⁰

(The fragrant flowers of the youth and the sweet fruits of the youth have withered on the Altar of *Sarasaviya*. What kind of knowledge have I taken from them? What kind of happiness have I taken from them?)

Lovi suvayaka pihitalā nâthi

Lovthurā āsvadayen kima

Pasak viya mata nisarū bava ehi

Miringuvaki eya pavasa nonivana¹¹

(Something, which is not situated within the happiness of the mundane, and something, which, has not delightful in the metaphysical, it is unfruitful. Now I understand. It is an illusion that is not enough to remove the thirst.)

He is trying to make Swarnathilakā desire to marry him. This is the *Yatna* in this play.

¹⁰ *PJS.*, p. 37

¹¹ *ibid.*

4.3.3 *Prāpti sambhava* or *Prāptyāshā*

(Prospect of attainment)

When the attainment of the object is slightly suggested by some psychological state (of the hero), it is known as the Possibility of Attainment. *Prāptisambhava* in the words of the *Nāṭyaśāstra* is as follows:

Īṣatprāptir – yadā kācit phalasya parikalpyate

*Bhāvamātreṇa tam prāhurvidhijñh: prāpti - sambavam*¹²

It is the knowledge of the existence and as such the possibility of the future *phala* – *prāpti*. The main characteristic of this stage is thus a psychological foretelling of a chance of achieving the end, tantamount to the adoption of a plan, based on materials in hand, which is regarded as conducive to success.

Abhinavagupta takes the expression *bhāvamātreṇa* to mean the removal of obstacles and the gain of additional means. Due to these two factors according to Abhinavagupta, possibility of specific achievement but not its certainty comes to be known at this stage.

Prospect of success (*prāptyāśā*) is the possibility of succeeding with means at hand.

¹² *NS., Ghosh, Vol, I, 21. 11, p. 128*

‘Upāyāpāyaśñkābyām prāptyāśā prāptisambhavaḥ’¹³

According to Aristotle, this is called the climax of the play and this is the turning point of the story. Usually the main character comes face to face with a conflict. The crisis moment of the play is similar to the top of the hill. We cannot say the main story of the hero at this juncture, that is if he would win or not just as putting a stone on the top of the hill and the difficulty in judging the direction of the fall. The resolution moment is similar to the climb down the hill called as *Kārya*. The plot always gets help from the chorus. They sing every past and future actions of the hero.

Swarnathilakā agrees to marry Guru – Uddāla Brāhmana. It takes place in the third act of the play. He is very happy with her. Now he does not want to leave her for school or any other work. He wants to be with Swarnathilakā all the time. Uddāla Brāhmana’s state of mind can be understood from the song, which Sutradhāra sings at the beginning of the act, such as:

Swarnathilakā landun labamin

Ádurusanda viya sāntha mana dola

Chanda māruthayakin mulu rá

Mahā samuduru jalaya kalambunu

Nisala vuvā lesata aluyama¹⁴

¹³ *DS.*, 01. 31, P. 10

¹⁴ *PJS.*, p. 39

(Getting Swarnathilakā, Guru has calmed down his mind as the sea, which mixes with the wild wind in the night and calms down again in the morning.)

He is impressed with his love for Swarnathilakā and stays home with her for four months without going to teach to his students, but Swarnathilakā fears some unfortunate turn of event because of his irresponsible behavior towards his students and teaching job after the marriage. She therefore repeatedly requests him to go there.

Gṛuhavāse arambu apa dedenāta

Gatha novīda sāra masak adurindu sanda

Balā sitithi kumārayo oba enathuru shilpa dennata

*Nopamāva yanu yeheki samipeta ovunge*¹⁵

(Now, is it four months past since the start of our married life. Princes are waiting for your presence and teachings. Now please go to them without delaying any more.)

In the meantime, those princes (students) ponder what they could do about the tragedy in their Guru's life. They want to banish Swarnathilakā, because they believe that she is the reason for the Guru's disinterest in his duties as a teacher.

The chorus reveals students' thoughts to the audience thus:

¹⁵ *op. cit.*, p. 40

Sitiyahoth jivathva é landa
Nádda adurindu soyā yanne ?
Saptha sāgara ethera kara ho
Sathara divaina kela pamina ho
Maha mera gala muduna naga ho
Aseki sakvala thek yamin ho
Nadda adurindu soyā yanne
*Sitiyahoth jivathva é landa*¹⁶

(If she lives, will guru go and find her! Crossing over the seven seas or going to every corner of the four islands or, climbing up the *Mahāmeru* rock or, going through the universe or will he go and find her, if she lives !)

They resolve to kill her and put an end to the tragedy in their Guru's life. This is connected to the achievement of the play, which is '*Pematho Jāyathi Soko*', or 'love brings sorrow.' It is known as *prāptisambhava*.

4.3.4 *Niyatāpti* - (Certainty of attainment)

As per *Nātyasāstra* at this penultimate stage of the action, the sure success of the hero is visualized and idealized (*bhāvena*). When the hero visualizes due to a psychological state (of his) a sure attainment of the objective, it is called 'Certainty of Attainment' (*Niyata – phala – prāpti*).

¹⁶ *op. cit.*, p. 43

Niyatam tu phala – prāptim yadā bhāvena paśyati

*Niyatām tām phala – prāptim sagunām paricakṣate*¹⁷

It appears that according to the *Nāṭyaśāstra* the playwright has to handle the plot in such a way that the audience at this stage can gather some idea about the final achievement of the hero, which is yet to come and that, the dramatic suspense is at the same time maintained.

At the stage of *Niyatāpti*, it becomes apparent that the final achievement of the hero is assured by primary means with the assistance of secondary means and the removal of obstacles. Certainty of success (*Niyatāpti*) is the assurance of success because of the absence of risk. ‘*Apāyābhāvatah: prāptir niyatāptih: suniścitā*’¹⁸

Aristotle calls this ‘the falling action’ of the play. All loose ends of the plot are tied up. The conflict and the climax are taken care of.

To illustrate this viewpoint, we can cite a passage from the third act of *Pématho Jāyathi Soko*. There are three princes (students) named Pingala, Dappula and Agnidatta who decide to kill Swarnathilakā by sending a drunk elephant on the road. They ask her to go and see the wonder waiting outside her home.

Bāhara oba kandavanta

Vidiye nuduru thana

¹⁷ *NS.*, Ghosh, 21. 12, p. 128

¹⁸ *DS.* 01. 32, p. 10

Penvanta arumayak

Visithuru vu siddhiyak

Paminiyemu api thidena

Nolada muth anu danuma

Oba swāmi vu apage

*Guru devayānange*¹⁹

(We come to invite you to come out of your home. There is a wonderful and beautiful thing happening in the nearby lane. We three people came without any permission from your husband or our teacher.)

She decides to go and see. The drunken elephant sent by the elephant keeper charges at her. She is shocked with fear. Elephant comes, crushes her with his huge legs, and throws her body away on the road. Swarnathilakā is not alive any more. Students' hopes succeed. Every obstacle of the play towards the final achievement is removed now. At this stage, every problematic situation comes close to the line of resolution. This is called *Niyatāpti*.

¹⁹ *PJS., P. 46*

4.3.5 *Phalāyoga or Phalāgama*

(Accomplishment, consummation)

Phalayoga or *Phalāgama* is the last stage of the action, which includes mainly the accomplishment of the desired object of the hero. When a suitable result of the intended action appears in full at the end of the events of a play, it is called 'Attainment of the object (*phala – yoga*).

Abhipretam samagram cha pratirūpam kriyāphalam

*Itivṛtte bhavedyasmin phalayogah: prakirtitah.*²⁰

Phalayoga is also marked by incident or incidents. In the last stage, the desired fruits of action (*Abhipretam kriyaphalam*) should occur in such a way so as to conform to the vision reflected in the beginning. According to Abhinavagupta it is that state of the hero (*Sāvastā Nāyakasya*) who accepts *phalayoga* in which he achieves in full the suitable object. *Dasarupa* simply states that *phalayoga* consist the full and final attainment of the hero.

*'sāmagraphalasampattih: phalayoga yathoditah.'*²¹

In this last stage of the action of a drama, the playwright unfolds the meaning of the beginning and the successive stages. Aristotle called this is the resolution of

²⁰ NS., Ghosh, 21. 13, p. 128

²¹ DS., 01. 33, p. 10

the play. In *phalayoga* this idea finally unfolds its nature and establishes the ideal firmly. This is the pleasurable moment of the play. According to Sanskrit dramaturgy, the end of the play is always happy. Therefore, spectators have an enormous anticipation on the subject of the hero's happiness or union of lovers and riddance of every anxiety thus reaching the successful end, also revealing every secret of the play.

Sarachchandra's play '*Pematho Jāyathi Soko*' has a tragic end. When Uddāla Brāhmana returns after finishing his duties, he sees Swarnathilakā's unfortunate end and falls down unconscious near her dead body. He is unable to accept the situation and becomes very melancholic. Finally, he goes to Swarnathilakā's funeral pyre and jumps into it killing himself. This is the end of the play and it substantiates the theme 'Love brings sorrow.'

4. 5 Arthaprakṛtti

(Constituent elements of the plot)

The analysis of the plot into five *Arthaprakṛtis* depends upon the formal division of the plot of a drama. These includes the plot and some of the situations are directly connected with the main thread of the story and some of them are connected indirectly. Based on this point of view, the plot consists of two parts: *Adhikārika* and *prāśnagika* or *Anushāngika*.

Adhikārika vṛtta or the principal action of the plays are the leading part in the final attainment and is directly connected with the hero. The *prāsangika* (incidental or secondary action) is not directly related to the final achievement. However, it contributes to it. The *Anusāngika* is a contributory story within the main story.

The secondary action is undoubtedly contributory to the principal action, but it may not always be a full-fledged story (*kathā*). It may be a mere incident. There has been a longstanding controversy regarding the significance of the term *Arthaprakṛti*. According to Abhinavagupta there are five *Arthaprakṛtis* known as *Bija, Bindu, Pathākā, Prakari, Kārya*.

Arthah: phalam tasya prakrtayah: upāyāh: phalahetava ityarthah:

Tadetaih: pañchabhirupāyaih: pūrnaphalam niṣpādyate²²

Avasthās are five stages in the development of the action. *Aarthaprakṛtis* are constituent elements and not divisions of the plot.

4.5.1 *Bija (Germ)*

The action of a Sanskrit play has a *phalayoga* as its final stage. Germ of the final event is shown in the initial stage of the action. The action practically begins with the sowing of the germ, which sprouts and develops with the progress of successive stages culminating into fruition or the final event. It pervades over the

²² NS., Ghosh, VO. III. P. 12

entire play. Bharatamuni says that which scattered in a small measure, expands itself in various ways and ends in fruition, is the seed of the plot.

Alpamātrañ samuddiṣṭaṅ bahudhā yadvisarpati

*Phalāvasānāñ yañchaiva bījañ tat parikīrtitam*²³

How to begin a drama is really a problem faced by the playwright. The genesis of action is called 'Bijanyasa' in Sanskrit dramaturgy. It should be appealing and capable of leading the whole action to the desired end by the playwright. This must appear as its logical consequence. Much of the success of a drama depends upon the beginning. The *Bija* should be introduced such that it appears amidst the circumstances natural and appropriate.

In the beginning of the play *Pematho Jāyathi Soko*, the chorus sings:

Pematho Jāyathi Soko

Pematho Jāyathi Bhayan

Pematho vippamutthassa

Natthi soko kutho bhayan

Piyatho jāyathi soko

Piyatho jāyathi bhayan

Piyatho vippamutthassa

Natthi soko kutho bhayan

²³ *op. cit.*, 21. 22, p. 129

Rathiyā jāyathi soko

Rathiyā jayathi bhayan

Rathiya vippamutthassa

*Natthi soko kutho bhayan*²⁴

‘Love gives rise to grief. Love gives rise to fear.

There is no grief for one who is released from love, so how could there be fear?

Attachment gives rise to grief. Attachment gives rise to fear.

There is no grief for one who is released from attachments, so how could there be fear?

Passion gives rise to grief. Passion gives rise to fear

There is no grief for one who is released from passion, so how could there be fear?’

The chorus sings these stanzas twice in the beginning of the play. This idea will succeed at the end of the play with the aim of love bringing sorrow achieved.

Therefore, it is known as *Bija*.

4.5.2 *Biṇḍu* (Sign of continuity)

Biṇḍu or vital drop is the course of the continuity of the action until the end when some subsidiary issues interrupt its main purpose.

²⁴ *DP.*, p. 31

Prayojanānāñ vicchede yadvchedakāraṇam

*Yāvtsamāptirbandhasya s bindu: parikīrtita:*²⁵

Biṇḍu is the cause of continuity. Before this stage, the certainty of the final achievement cannot be disclosed for the sake of dramatic suspense. *Niyatāpti* is the clear idea of the final achievement of the hero. It can be formed by the audience and as a real connection is established between the past stages and the future *Phalāgama*. *Biṇḍu* as a connecting element may be a requirement to be employed at any stage of the action of a drama. It may occur whenever there is a break in the main current of the story and at the close of an *Aṅka* to provide a fresh impetus to the movement of the play.

The word *Biṇḍu* meaning a drop has been taken up in different works to elaborate the idea with the help of similes. Drops of water dripping from the sides of a thatch indicate the fall of water even when the rain is over. *Biṇḍu* also indicates the main purpose and maintains the continuity of the main action when it is interrupted by secondary issues. It is like a drop of oil spread over the surface of water. Just as drops of water sprinkled to the root of the tree produce fruit, so also the *Biṇḍu* produces the end in progressive stages.

In the beginning of the play *Pematho Jāyathi Soko*, after the song by chorus, Uddāla Brāhmana arrives at the school. He is unlike his usual self and comes very late to school. He is in an intoxicated state of mind, and tells the reason for being one of his experiences in the morning.

²⁵ NS., Ghosh, 21. 23, p. 129

Kālakanniyek dutuvemi mama ada
Kavara pāpayak do pera nodanimi
Sakman karamin hunnemi uyane
Hudekalā pedesakya
Kisi keneku no hasirena
Mahalu miniseku katuwa hunnā
Piyādo age nodannemi ohu,
*Man mulā vi do é dedenama?*²⁶

(Today, I saw an ill-fated woman. I don't know what kind of sin I have done before. I was walking in the garden. It is a lonely area, and no one was there. She was with an old man. I do not know if it is her father or not and I do not know if they have lost their bearing?)

Uddāla Brāhmana's intoxicated mind is working towards the final achievement of the play and this situation is the *Biṇḍu*. It is spread throughout the play as a drop of oil in a water surface.

4.5.3 Patāka - (Episode)

The name of the subsidiary portion of the action of longer duration is *Patāka*. It has given rise to several conjectures regarding its exact significance. Bharatamuni says;

²⁶ *PJS.*, p. 32

Yadvṛttantu parārthañ syāt pradhānsyopakārakam

Pradhānavaccha kalpyeta sā patāketi kīrtitā²⁷

The event, which is introduced in the interest of the principal character of the plot and treated in the similar vein, is called *Patakā* or episode. It is an element, that helps in the delineation of the entire plot through its assistance to the main plot.

Prakari should be of shorter duration and always serve the interests of others. The ally of a *Prati Nāyaka* cannot be described as gaining some end in a drama, as the defeat of the *Prati Nāyaka* in any Sanskrit drama is a settled fact. The *Patakā* as an *Artahprakṛti* is a means and as such, serves other's interests. Nevertheless, the hero of the *Patakā-vṛtta* is described as serving his own interests too.

In the third act of '*Pematho Jāyathi Soko*', Uddāla Brāhmana marries Swarnathilakā and finds happiness in real life than in the poetic world. This idea is spread for a long time in the act as a conversation with her beloved Swarnathilakā. Sometimes, the spectator and *Sahṛda* end up feeling that it is true rather than love brings sorrow. For Uddāla Brāhmana sings happy notes every time they expect sorrow to follow. For example:

Sisil andunin dāsa thavarana

Mihiri vadanin sawan galwana

Athūthaya wathmanata gena ena

Pūrva janmaya sihiye nanvana

²⁷ NS., Ghosh, 21. 24, p. 129

Aruma suwandin nâhâya sanahana

Molok pahasin sirura sathapana

*Mé siyal muth kawara de veda angana nam?*²⁸

(Applying collyrium on eyes for cool effect, delighting my ears with sweet words, bringing past to the present, reminding my last birth, delighting my nose with wonderful fragrance, giving my body a smooth touch, can I call them woman!)

This is an obstacle for the final achievement of the plot. Therefore, it is called *Pathakâ*.

4.5.4 *Prakari* (Incident)

When merely the result of such an event is presented, for the purpose of another and it has no continuation it is called the Episodical Incident.

Phalañ prakalpyate sayasyâ: parâarthâyeiva kevalam

*Anubandhavibhînatvât prakarîti vinirdîset*²⁹

That the *Prakarî* serves others interest only comes from its derivative meaning. The duration of the *Prakarî* is also very short. These are the two characteristics,

²⁸ *PJS.*, p, 36

²⁹ *NS.*, Ghosh, 21. 25, p. 129

which differentiate it from *patākā*. Utility of *prakari* is as a decorative device of the plot and like a floral design (*puspa – prakāra*) it creates beauty.

At the end of Act three, in *Pematho Jāyathi Soko*, Uddāla Brāhmana decides to go to school because of Swarnathilakā's repeated requests. He does not wish to go to fulfill his duties, because his passion and love for her is powerful than everything. He says:

Hudekalāva sitiya hakida

Pālu bavak noma dānéda

Langa nathi vita miulasa mā³⁰

(When my *Mṛgākshi* is not going to be with me, how can I stay alone, and I will feel forsaken.)

4.5.5 *Kārya* – (Action)

As a rule, every Sanskrit drama ends with some sort of achievement of the hero, which is called *phala - yoga*. The dramatist also aspires for the attainment of a fitting end. *Kārya* may be described as the end, both on the part of the principal hero of the drama and the dramatist himself. The effort made for the purpose of the principal plot introduced by the experts in a play is called the Action or *kārya*.

³⁰ *PJS.*, p. 45

*yadādhikārikañ vastu samyakprāgnche: prayujyate
tadarthe yassamārambhastat kāryañ parikīrtitam³¹*

In the achievement of the hero various means in the form of resources, both physical, mental, and their proper employment are represented as adopted by the *pradhāna Nāyaka, patāka Nāyaka and prakari Nāyaka*. The *Bija* is chief of all these means and other means, which contribute to the final fruition of the *Bija*.

Finally, Uddāla Brāhmana faces the sorrow of love, when he comes home from school and finds Swarnathilakā dead. He who felt so much happiness in marriage because of Swarnathilakā finds so much sorrow in her death because of love.

Uddāla Brāhmana is the hero of the play and the author's achievement lies in the expression of the idea 'Love brings sorrow.' This is the fruit of the play. He took a seed, grew with drops of water and it became a tree and finally it produced fruit which is the achievement of the play. This is known as *Kārya*.

All the theorists, however, are of the opinion that from the very beginning of the action the situations in a drama, should be depicted in such a way that in each case the preceding stage should naturally move on to the succeeding one and ultimately the whole action should culminate at one point. This leads us to conclude that the idea of a mono-centric plot is firmly established in the realm of Indian dramaturgy.

³¹ NS., Ghosh, 21. 26, p. 129

Therefore, we can analyze the play '*Pematho Jāyathi Soko*' with Aristotelian theory and other modern dramaturgy elements of play. However, Sarachandra has taken a plot structure as much as suitable for the modern theatre. The structure of the play attracts the spectators with complicated moments in the script.

Conclusion

There is no evidence to argue that the theatre was a popular art form in ancient Ceylon. For Sinhalese Theravadi Buddhist culture does not encourage dramatic art, dance or music. They consider them as community art forms as many people are connected directly and indirectly with these fine arts. It is questionable then why Buddhism has allowed some of the arts like sculpting, painting, drawing, poetry etc. to develop and not dance drama and music? It is understood that Sinhalese Theravadi Buddhism has discouraged community arts and encouraged individual arts.

It is a fact that Buddhism requires one to give-up drama and other associated art forms such as music and dance. This is supposed to have biased the monks to avoid community arts themselves. Not surprisingly, this negative attitude can be found even today in the rural regions of Ceylon. Besides drama, sometimes music and dance are also considered as tabooed art forms. It is well known fact that drama is proscribed for monks as a rule. Strangely, all public events and ceremonies of Buddhists were carried on with dance and music both in the past as well as present. What is absent though is a systematic effort to develop the culture of music, dance and drama.

The absence of a tradition in the field of performing arts in Ceylon is a sad reality. From early days, the Indian sub-continent provided inspiration for literature. Literary activities were carried out for many centuries chiefly in monastic and

religious environment. Writers of all these literary works were either Theravadi Buddhist monks or laymen who were followers of the Buddhist traditions and teachings. As discussed above, Buddhist discipline did not encourage theatre art form in the religious sphere. What they wrote were mainly poetry and narratives based on *Buddha Charita* as well as the practices and duties of *Bhikshus*. They were talented in Sanskrit language and literature writing and as a result, Sinhalese have a rich collection of poems and verses.

Under such social circumstances, it is not difficult to infer that theatrical performances could not have survived. The origin of Sinhalese theatre can therefore be traced to various rituals and ceremonies of folk religions in Ceylon. Sinhalese playwrights do not have an indigenous classical model and had to rely on their knowledge of neighbouring Sanskrit theatre tradition.

Folk plays and theatre are part of the regular village living in remote places of Ceylon even today. However, these plays are performed only in religious gatherings and rituals seeking prosperity and wealth. They are not enacted for entertainment purposes. But a keen observer can grasp that besides the ceremonies being functional, cater to the theatrical entertainment as well.

The exorcist ceremonies such as *Sanni Yakuma*, *Kohomba Kankariya*, *Devol Maduwa* etc. are highly effective and amusing. The visitors and spectators can be compared to the theatre audience. They come to enjoy the performance, sit around, gossip, laugh, and are involved in the dramatic action just like the theatre audience. They leave the venue when they have had enough amusement. These

performances can thus be analyzed in terms of merit and entertainment ranging from ritual to theatre.

Sinhalese folk theatre comprises of *Sokari*, *Kolam*, *Kavi Nādagam*, *Nādagam*. These are some of the few dominant art forms in Sri Lankan Buddhist society. The growth of Sinhalese folk drama was continuous and simultaneous, consistent and interconnected. Nonetheless, there existed distinctive elements and attributes characteristic to each individual art form.

The masks in *Kolam* were found to be causing unnecessary disturbances to the development of dialogues during the performances and were dropped with time. Folk theatre eventually gave way to a type of play, which was similar to *Nādagama* and later called *Kavi Nādagama* (a kind of stylized play). This was the beginning of stylized plays in Sinhalese theatre. It also introduced the method of depicting an entire story through the medium of dialogue exchange.

In the opinion of scholars, Sri Lankan *Nādagama* had influences from the South Indian art form *Terukkuttu*. *Nādagam* was highly codified and was ranked as a form of dramatic entertainment. *Nādagam* performances were well received until a new theatre form; *Nurti* from North India arrived in Ceylon in the 18th century. Their popularity rose and theatre music became primarily Hindustani in style. It incorporated new themes and striking sceneries. With the development of *Nurti* it gained popular all over Ceylon and *Nādagamas* disappeared.

It is after the Second World War, western style Sinhala dramas came into being within the dramatic society circle of University of Ceylon (now University of Peradeniya). The students were the members of the Dramatic Society and mainly studied in the Department of English. E.F.C. Ludowyke, a graduate of Cambridge and a lecturer in the Department of English between 1933 and 1966 in Colombo and Peradeniya University, produced a play every year. He was instrumental in introducing many students, interested in direction to the Ceylon Dramatic Society. They sustained the spoken drama tradition.

The major problem encountered initially by the Arts council drama panel was the lack of quality scripts. To encourage new plays as well as adaptations from English to Sinhala and Tamil it launched a series of annual competitions. Though most playwrights were conservative in style, some writers began experimenting with the forms and content borrowed from Sinhalese folk theatre, rituals and theatre forms of other Asian countries.

One such experimental playwright was Ediriweera Sarachchandra, a professor of the Department of Sinhala, University of Ceylon and a qualified Sanskrit, Pali and Sinhala scholar. He was one of the playwrights and producers in the Ceylon University Dramatic Society. His play *Maname* is considered the most impressive Sinhala script. It was staged at the Lionel Wend Theatre in Colombo for the first time on 3rd November 1956. This is celebrated as a landmark in the history of Sinhala drama.

The dramatic styles adopted by him for the plays are the ones found in the Asian theatre forms like south Indian Dance Drama, Opera, Sanskrit dramaturgy and modern theatre form. Consequently, Sinhalese modern theatre succeeded in producing a well made play in form. This new theatre tradition came to be known as the stylized form or *Nātyadharmi* style. Here, the word ‘modern’ does not stand for today’s popular understanding of the word.

His plays are highly meaningful and flout all social and cultural barriers. In the case of *Maname* Sarachchandra had taken the style of theatre from *Nādagama*. He included chants, masks, stylized movements and broad gestures. Besides *Āṅgika* and *Āhārayābhinaya*, he incorporated poetry for recounting the situations or moments or incidents of the play. This was similar to what was followed in Sanskrit theatre. In fact, the prose and verse of the play are interspersed with Sanskrit. There was a popular saying among the people then: ‘*Join Maname and see the Ceylon*’.

It can be argued that Sarachchandra’s theatre did not deliberately follow a singular form or genre, but had absorbed different elements from the theatre traditions prevalent in other parts of Asia, as well as from the folk drama of Ceylon. My research study titled ‘*The making of modern Sinhalese theatre and Ediriweera Sarachchandra*’ has taken into account the influence of traditional Asian theatre approach on Sinhalese stylized plays. The research was designed in such a way to show how Sinhalese stylized plays express a new theatre form. With the objective of achieving this end, Ediriveera Sarachchandra’s plays such as *Maname*, *Singhabhāhu*, and *Pématho Jāyathi Soko* has been evaluated.

In 1961, he created another most important work in this style titled *Sinhabāhu*. It is a theatrical piece dealing with the origin of the Sinhalese and the conflict between the young and the old. His dramas were predominantly based on Sinhalese tradition with the modern spectators as his target audience. *Sinhabāhu* is a legend dealing with the true love between father and his children despite the fact that the father is a lion and not human like them. It is usually held that fathers love their daughters more than their sons because of the inherent opposite sexual attraction.

Sarachchandra explored the stylized theatrical mode's potential over a variety of challenging issues. He led the gold rush after the *Singhabhāhu*. He tuned his immensely creative works harmonious with the nationalist cultural revival in Sinhala happening then. Under that social scenario, the Sinhala theatre was prepared for a stylish and smooth romanticizing and transformation. Its music foregrounds many formalistic elements of narrator – chorus – stylized movements– masks and a fluid movement from prose to verse, verse to prose etc.

Sarachchandra's plots for his theatre are mostly from the Buddhist *Jataka Tales*, historical legends, folk tales and myths. Carnataka music, Sinhalese folk music and dance were an internal part of his theatre creating background and facial expressions in the play. Every movement and every utterance was controlled by the rhythm of the musical instruments, especially *Mṛdangam*.

In Sarachchandra's stylized plays, characters made a special entry. The synchronization of the actor's movements and the sound of the drums were of infinite importance. The beauty of the stylized movements of the body in consonance with the rhythm of the drumbeats arose from the precision in the expression of the dramatic role as portrayed in his stylized plays.

The play *Sinhabāhu* is a blend of rich colour, vibrancy, myth, rhythm and drama. Sarachchandra had used some modern theories for the theatre production as well as incorporated certain principles from the Sinhalese modern theatre. In following Brecht's ideals of theatre and opera in addition to Indian theatre elements, he has made *Sinhabāu* the best production in the modern Sinhalese theatre.

The music of *Sinhabāhu* is based on Carnataka *Rāgadhāri* and the Sinhalese folk music. Sinhalese music and dance developed well with South Indian influence. Operatic plays are expected to be acts of powerful commentary. So, the music rhythm, actions and use of *Mudras* and slow dance movements of *Sinhabāhu* are coupled with lyrics. In an opera, the musical forms are included within the story telling.

This play is a *Nātaka* with many elements of *Uparūpakas*, *Rūpakas* and *Vākyārthābhinaya*. It is a staging wherein the meaning of the whole sentence is to be communicated by gestures. Being a stylized play there is no stagecraft for the stone cave or the rock in *Sinhabāhu*. Everything is acted out with graceful *Āngikābinaya* with the assistance of *Vākyārtha* and music.

Sinhalese modern theatre is aware of the alienation effect concept and applies it most subtly. Sarachchandra in fact applied this in modern theatre by making stylized plays, which is akin to the proscenium arch theatre. It is a known detail that Sarachchandra's theatre used many symbols as can be seen in *Āngikābhinaya*. Poverty is depicted by patches of cloth in irregular shapes and varied colours, strewn to the dress indicating that they have been mended. The stage itself however remains the same without any additional props to recreate the situation.

It is important to observe that the work of the dramatist – Ediriweera Sarachchandra is conditioned by the fact that he must plan his plays to fit the sort of theatre that is available to him. A basic relationship has always existed between theatre (building as theatre) and theatric art. The best plays of any period have been fashioned in accordance with the physical conditions of the best theatres of that period. Therefore, in order to fully value a play such as *Sinhabāhu*, it is essential to imagine the theatre of modern Sinhalese and also be thoroughly aware of the dramaturgy of Sanskrit, and modern theorists. Theatre on the proscenium stage is given special distinction, since it is the most widespread stage and allows for the greatest amount of spectacle and use of scenery. If one is producing a ballet, opera, or Broadway musical, this is the stage meant for them.

Sarachchandra plays were for the modern proscenium arch stage. Styles of producing plays are also a factor. There is no stagecraft in the case of Sarachchandra's theatrical productions. Before the emergence of University Dramatic Society, Sinhalese used amphitheatre as a type of structure because they

liked to perform outdoors. It was later because of the 'Baliwālā Theatre Group', who performed *Nurti*, Proscenium arch stage replaced outdoor venues.

The fourth chapter of my dissertation deals with the subject of construction of plot. Plot is the backbone of the play. It involves five stages of developments as can be understood from the ancient and modern dramaturgy. When we talk of the ancient theatre, it is in connection with Sanskrit theatre and its dramaturgy, especially Bharatamuni's *Nāṭyaśāstra*. A substantial analysis of the construction; development and ending of the plot structure with reference to Sarachchandra's play '*Pématho Jāyathi Soko*' in the modern form has been carried out in the fourth chapter as intended.

The play being a typical creation of Ediriweera Sarachchandra won the "Kumaran Asan" International award offered by Kerala University (India) for the distinctive poetic and theatre skills. The central theme of the story is 'Love giving rise to grief.' In fact, Lord Buddha had stated '*Pématho Jāyathi Soko*' meaning 'love brings sorrow'.

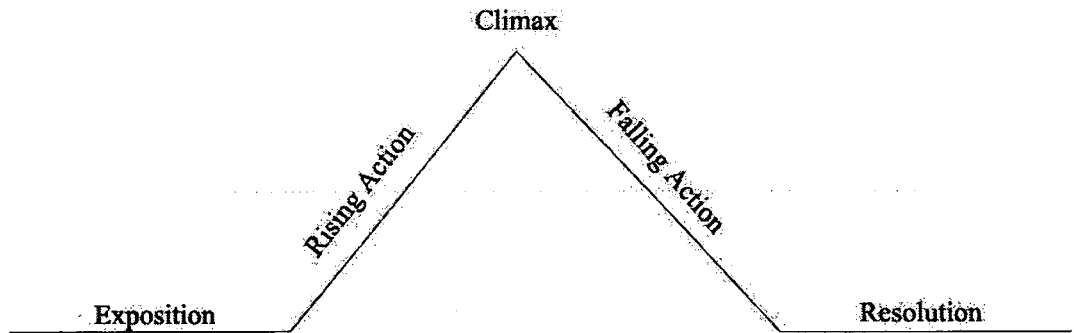
Aristotle's elaboration of plot construction methods as discussed in 'Poetics' is the structure usually followed in modern theatre. His discussions are on the Greek theatre and modernity. The fourth chapter is a formal analysis of the ancient and modern theatre form with Sarachchandra's stylized play, '*Pématho Jāyathi Soko*' being the play under scrutiny. The main focus was on Sarachchandra's play writing structure, because theatre form is not only based on performances but the script plays a major role too.

Whatever form love takes, be it maternal, paternal, fraternal or patriotic, it eventually ends in sorrow. This has been the running theme of '*Pématho Jāyathi Soko*'. Feeling of love towards another is always tied with reciprocity, and so certainly ends in sorrow after experiencing various stages of hatred, jealousy, enmity and uncertainty.

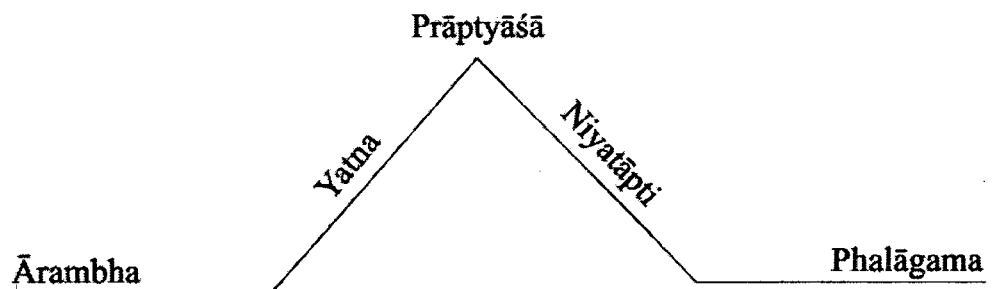
In short, when we thoroughly examine Sarachchandra's plays, we discover that they are based on the dramaturgy of Sanskrit as well as Modern. In fact, he has adapted some elements of the folk theatre into the modern stage. Also few basics of modern dramaturgy have been customised into easy methods for the Sinhalese audience to understand, but always keeping them in line with the Sinhalese Therevādi Buddhist tradition. He can thus be credited with the achievement of opening the floodgates of modern stage and modern theatre to Sinhalese drama tradition in an interesting manner through his play and writings.

Appendix

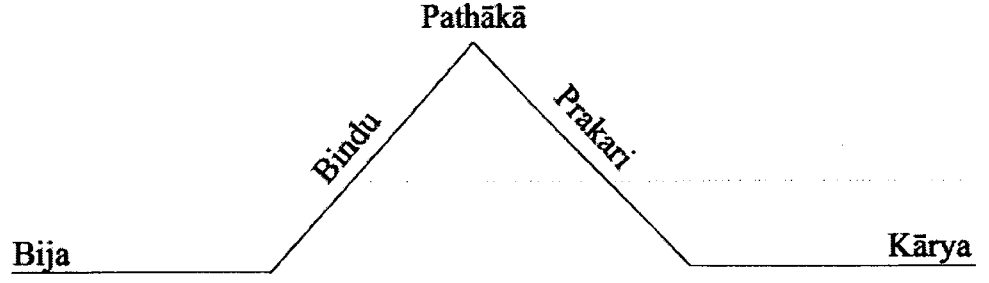
Five elements for the play structure



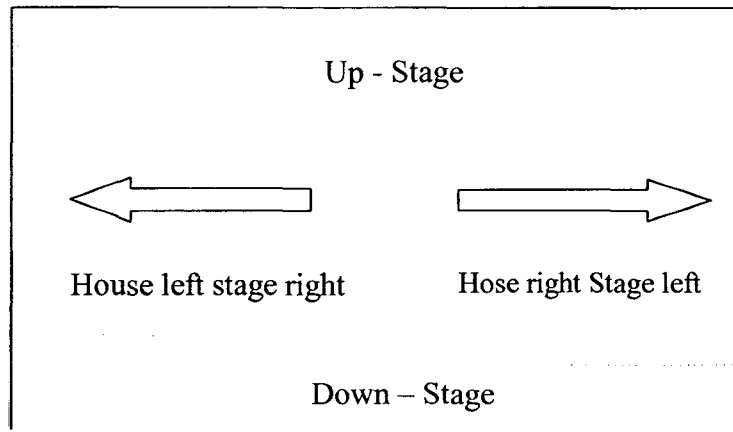
Five *Avasthā*



Five Arthaprakṛtti



proscenium stage



Playing areas in proscenium stage

Up right	Up right center	Up center	Up left center	Up left
Right	Right center	Center	Left center	Left
Down right	Down right center	Down center	Down left center	Down left

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