

AN OVERVIEW ABOUT DIFFERENT SOURCES OF POPULAR SINHALA SONGS

Nishadi Meddegoda

Abstract

Music is considered to be one of the most complex among the fine arts. Although various scholars have given different opinions about the origin of music, the historical perspectives reveal that this art, made by mankind on account of various social needs and occasions, has gradually developed along with every community. It is a well-known fact that any fine art, whether it is painting, sculpture, dance or music, is interrelated with communal life and its history starts with society. Art is forever changing and that change comes along with the change in those societies. This paper looks into the different sources of contemporary popular Sinhala songs without implying a strict border between Sinhala and non-Sinhala beyond the language used. Sources, created throughout history, deliver not only a steady stream of ideas. They are also often converted into labels and icons for specific features within a given society.

The consideration of popularity as an economic reasoning and popularity as an aesthetic pattern makes it possible to look at the different important sources using multiple perspectives and initiating a wider discussion that overcomes narrow national definitions. It delivers an overview which should not be taken as an absolute repertoire of sources but as an open pathway for further explorations.

Keywords Popular song, Sinhala culture, Nurthi, Nadagam, Sarala Gee

INTRODUCTION

Previous studies of music have revealed that first serious discussions and analyses of music emerged in Sri Lanka with the focus on so-called tribal tunes. The tunes of tribes who lived in stone caves of Sri Lanka have got special attention of scholars worldwide since they were believed of being some of the few “unchanged original” tunes. Sachs wrote that Sri Lankan tribal songs belong to the post stone age (Sachs, 1949: 6). According to him, the oldest tribal tunes in the world are found in Sri Lanka and Patagonia. Amongst all the tunes in the world, Sri Lankan tunes have clear melodic structures that accommodate Western familiarity. Scholars, who researched melodies in the world, have even nominated Sri Lankan tunes to be more musical than others as stated by Kulathilake (1974: 6). This irrational judgement found in the quoted literature shows the progress in research methods and views on music that was accessed mainly through oral means. The striving for superlatives in music research seems not a primary goal anymore, especially if those superlatives represent wrongly interpreted preconditions such as the degree of musicality attributed to melodies and their appearance. Also, the originality is questionable in any case found in recent times since mobility and communication do not avoid communities that lived slightly longer than others in geographical or social isolation.

In consultation with historical researches, other previous studies have demonstrated that the inauguration of Sri Lankan music formation is influenced by teachings of Buddhism, some Indian music and the cultural life of European colonizers. This paper is concerned with music influenced by colonial life styles that was instigated in Sri Lanka in 1505, when the Portuguese established their control over the maritime areas of the island and after that the Dutch and the British (Ariyaratne, 2002: 9-12). However, the colonial power lasted about four centuries in Sri Lanka and unavoidably, many elements of Western culture were spread throughout the Sri Lankan communities during this period.

Sri Lanka seems not having had a kind of entertaining court music similar to that of India or some European regions. However, there may have exist a specific music during the occasions of people's ceremonial gatherings and during magic rituals. It is possible that court culture with dancing and music did exist in Sri Lanka as well, but since the Buddhist monks were the scribes and exclusive guardians of the literary tradition, they chose to ignore and not record texts of such rather profane performances. Sarachchandra mentioned the nonexistence of an advanced or professional theatre tradition due to the

influence of Theravada Buddhism which “tended more towards solitary contemplation and the attainment of insight (vidassana) than towards congregational practices or participation in community life” (Sarachchandra, 1953: 7-8).

The most probably influential fact could be some Indian practices from the root, which were integrated into Sri Lankan music (Kulathilake, 1974: 24) due to the geographical factors, commerce, religious tasks, trade (Swami, 2002) and any kind of cultural contacts. Sri Lankan musical life thus did never exist isolated from others and took up many inspirations from abroad.

The following section scrutinizes comprehensively the production of popular Sinhala songs in Sri Lanka focusing on the different sources of Sinhala music practice up to the present time. Accordingly, the first three forms in this chapter, which is titled as ‘the ritual theatre’, nadagam song and nurthi song include a brief introduction to understand the evaluation of ‘Sinhala song’.

THE RITUAL THEATRE

One of the most important contexts for music is its use in rituals. The term ritual also encompasses religious services. This specific context is more broadly applicable to all situations in which formal patterns of behavior are repeated without question because they are seen to have meaning (Miller & Shahriari, 2013: 42).

The Sinhala theatre rigorously incorporated religious beliefs and practices of the people, bringing them a feeling of prosperity and entertainment. Music enriched their rituals, and marked their social and cultural belongings. Only very few elements of the ritual performance and folk drama survived, and there were where only limited parts that could be considered being songs in which prose was chanted or verses (kavi) were rather spoken in impromptu dialogues, however, dance was an accepted element.

Sokari, Kolam (masked drama), and Kavi Nadagam can be seen as important sources. The Sokari “song” was a type of chanted prose or sung verse of four stanzas in consistent metrical outlines called ‘gee meter’ which usually shaped the melodic capacity. The melodic range is narrow, about two or three narrow intervals. Initially the blowing instrument ‘Horanawa’ was used (CP Meddegoda, 2019) and subsequently some percussion instruments such as local drums; yak beraya, geta beraya, udekkiya, daula with ‘reverberating gongs’ (thaalampota) and horanawa were played. There are quite a few research studies on ritual theatre music in Sri Lanka. However, studies on songs rarely found.

There are three other varieties of recitative forms used in the Sri Lankan music vocabulary; such as Kavi, Sindu, and Viridu. Sarachchandra defined the term Sindu as ‘songs that are sung in measured time and are given the general name ‘Sindu’ (Sarachchandra, 1967: 106). At the same time Kavi and Viridu are also sung in a specific meter and typically the word “rhyme” is very similar to Sindu (Gunathilake, 1984: 20). Kavi also was a very popular style of Sinhala compositions in Sri Lanka which was meant essentially for singing. In the Sanskrit language ‘kavi’ denotes a poet and poems (kavya means also poems).

As cited by Kulathilake (1974), the song no. 601 in ‘Kavsilumina’ (the crest gem of poetry) by Parakramabahu, a king of Ceylon, mentions the word ‘ollie’ a singing style of Carnatic music in which the singing range always is in a high pitch register. This is similar to one aspect of Sinhala gami gee (folk songs) with a singing style known as “andahara”. Kulathilake (1974: 111) assumes that andahara is similar to falsetto in what he has known as Western music.

NADAGAM SONG

One of these traditional forms of art ‘nadagam’ has no past history of indigenous Sinhala music since the origin is seen in the South-Indian Carnatic tradition. Even so, the most interesting approach to this issue has been proposed by Gunathilake who states that the Sinhala Nadagama is not a mere ‘dance drama’ of the type found in the South Indian folk theatre and this rural theatrical performance is termed as the nadagam in Sinhala and natakam in Tamil (1984: 1). The nadagam song repertoire extends a

greater melodic range. Singing is usually reflecting upon dramatic conversation. The style of singing in the nadagam had a definite meter and rhythmic structures and they were not theatrically stylized. The narrator sings one line of the verse and the chorus repeats this, creating further dramatic intensity. The singers in the nadagam recapitulate different situations represented by the kavi, innise or the sindu as experienced in the songs of Ehelepola, Sulambawathi, Kusa and Wesathuru nadagam (Gunathilake, 1984: 21, 22).

Important nadagam composers were Pilippu Sinnho, John Murthi, Hendrik Re Abreu, and Rajapaksa Waidyanatha (Gnanissara, 2009: ix-x). The used instruments are harmonium, maddalaya, horanawa with distinctive beats such as tirlana, chapu, pasan, wadimudi tal. Traditionally, nadagam used two drums for vedi tal (increase meter) and adu tal (reduced meter). The music of nadagam brought once a fresh dimension into Sinhala musical life and this might be the aspect of providing a source of inspiration until present times.

NURTHI SONG

In the last decades of the 19th century, the Parsi theatrical company traveling from Bombay caught the local audiences rapidly with their fascinating performances (Silva, 1981: 485). This Parsi theatre came to be known as nurthi in Sinhala. Its melodramatic art form attracted the society for its plots based on myth and imaginary, new dramatic techniques and mainly Hindustani music.

During the period of the declining nadagam, C. Don Bastian was the first person who staged *Rorina*, the first nurthi play in 1877 (Ruvini, 29th April 2009). He made plays borrowing several Indian melodies for their songs (Ariyaratne, 1998: 218). Later trailing him beside John de Silva and Charles Dias, entering this stream and a number of Sinhala nurthis arose soon to the local spectator's taste, among them 22 songs of Daskon, 44 songs of Siri Sanga Bo, 58 songs of Shri Wikrama, 39 songs of Ratnawalee, 34 songs of Dutugemunu, 42 songs of Wessanthara nadagama (Gnanissara, 2009: x).

John De Silva (1854-1932) directed a number of much-admired nurthi plays accompanied with melodies composed by musicians and dramatists such as Vishvanath Louji, Ameer Khan, Baliwala, Magan Lal, Mohan Lal, Nawab Khan and Abdul Khan (Sujeewa, 2003). Those melodies were based on Hindustani ragas such as khamaj, asawari, jaunpuri, peelu, and kafi with the Hindustani cyclic rhythm patterns such as dadara tal 3/3, tree tal 4/4, kjhap tal 2/3, and kaherwa tal 2/2. This could be the first impressive start that led to the taste for Ragadhari Music launched for Sri Lankan listeners as a result of a visit to Sri Lanka by several Parsi theatre companies from India since 1887.

The nurthi theatre carried out the first public introduction of entertaining songs into the Sinhala speaking music scene, that appeared basically in the structure of sthayi and antara, verse shapes and musical treatments taken over from Hindustani music. The taste of nurthi melodies was soon adapted to the hitherto national music tradition using Hindustani music principles for the compositions (Silva, 1981: 485). The young national music tradition acquired a distinct Indian music system. But the roots of this melodious nurthi tradition prospered for two decades in the first quarter of the 20th century. With the decline of nurthi, another style of drama tradition arose, which was called teeter (theater) (Sujeewa, 2003: p. 30). However, it is clear that no considerable attention has been paid to songs or even dialogues. These teeter plays and their titles were used for Sinhala films produced in Sri Lanka, for example the title of teeter Pitisara Kella was appropriated as the title for a film produced in 1941 in Sri Lanka.

The following section is to help understand the origination of the term 'popular' in the production of Sinhala songs. "Popular" Sinhala songs came into being with the arrival of gramophone music and the growth of popular culture of Sri Lanka.

GRAMOPHONE SONG

Gramophone appliances arrived in Sri Lanka in 1901 and by 1903 records were available to be listened to in Sinhala (Broughton; Ellingham, 2000: 231). The Gramophone record disc is an analogue sound storage medium, a flat record, that could be stored in different ways. The first examples of these talking

machines were manually operated models. Electrically operated gramophones arrived in Sri Lanka in about 1937 along with repertoire in other languages such as Hindi, Gujarati, Tamil, Chinese, Japanese, Arabic, Malay, Portuguese, and English. It should be noted that the music played back from these machines was already heavily transformed and fragmented regarding their musical sources. Anything that was recorded on records could be seen as a gramophone song and many conflicting views on music resulted later from this fact. However, the gramophone use was the most significant event for the development of entertaining Sinhala songs during the past history in Sri Lanka since it initiated the use of key components in structuring songs by using technology. Concentrating on some essentials of music compositions in an imagined Western way, such as pitch, beat, rhythm, melody, texture as well, arranged in a recognizable pattern by way of introduction, chorus, interludes, two or three verses and, time duration settled up to 3 or 4 minutes as well, there was a substantial progress in producing Sinhala gramophone songs. In the early age of the gramophone industry, the first criteria for any preference given was the fitting melody of the song, the second regarded the lyrics and the third the style of singing.

At the beginning of gramophone music, the popular nurthi songs were recorded and the first ever Sinhala record was released in 1906 under the Odeon label (Ariyaratne, 1998: 55, 216). C Don Bastian and John De Silva contributed as well. They produced the dramas ‘Siri Sangabo’, ‘Ramayanaya’, ‘Shri Wickrama’, ‘Sakunthala’, ‘Uttara Rama Charithaya’ and others, which took into account many well-loved songs such as ‘Shreya Mana Math Wee’, ‘Harimi Raja Sepa, or Pipila De Saman’. These songs have been recorded in the early years (Sujeewa, 2003: 37-38). Apart from these songs, some Hindi melodies, Carnatic, and English songs were considerably popular and became more popular among the Sinhalese population.

The recording companies have been releasing parallel Sinhala songs using different titles for the melody of a Hindi song at the same time. These different companies were competing for popular Hindi melodies as they couldn’t find enough Hindi melodies to produce enough records of Sinhala songs. For instance, when releasing the song ‘kale pura pen’ (Wasantha Sandanayake) by Odeon, the Colombia Label released a song ‘pipunu male ron’ (Mohiddin Beg & Vinodini) to the same melody at the same time.

There were two main Gramophone music companies. HMV or His Master's Voice (operating in 1917) and Columbia (operating in 1930) (Ariyaratne, 1998: 32, 39). It can be seen that this was a crucial situation for those who were engaged in producing entertainment music and doing their business with this at that period. The gramophone songs released by these companies became more wide spread. H.W. Roopasinghe (HMV label) and Mohamad Gaus (Columbia label) have been the music directors of these musical companies. It is obvious that these gramophone music companies contributed to the competition within the early Sinhalese music businesses. During this era, a number of Sinhala singers became well-known stars, recording songs largely for the Tower Hall productions (Gnanissara, 2009: x).

The first repertoire of gramophone songs has been created based on Hindustani ragas and also the musicians such as Naushad composed music based on some Indian Folk music.

Ariyaratne (1998: 114) noted that the period of the gramophone songs was the first to be introducing Western music melodies which had not been known much earlier. The following songs fall into this category: songs by Sarachchandra, ‘Siri paade samanala kanda pene’ (the melody of the parallel English song is ‘Galway Boy’) by Vincent De Paul and Erica (H.M.V. Disc No. WN114) and ‘Selalihini kowul handa rewu denna’ (HMV Disc No. WN124) (using the melody of the song ‘There’s a Tavern in the Town’) by C.T. Fernando and Lata (Makuloluwa, 1970: preface). According to public opinions, there exists a similarity between the above noted English melodies and the named Sinhala songs.

Another relevant point is that of the lyrics, which played an important role. Proper words have been set to a melody, unlike in many Hindustani songs which use singing syllables. As Ariyaratne indicates, the lyrics of the gramophone songs indicate significant events in the life of Buddha, including incidents of the Jataka stories and evocative descriptions of sacred religious sites and religious festivals (1998: 216). Hence the lyrics are full of a deep Sinhala poeticism and a simple sense of meaning. For example, love, aesthetical pleasure, devotion, patriotic and sacred or religious feelings are found therein. It is noticeable

that the lyricists or writers have used their skills and paid much attention on the lyrics systematically used to construct these songs.

Mohamed Gaus, B.S. Perera, Vincent Perera, R.A. Chandrasena and P.L.A. Somapala have introduced some aspects of Western orchestration to the Gramophone music.

However, by the 1940s the gramophone has taken a novel way of being independent from the pervasive influence of Indian musical tradition and it became a great commercial enterprise. Ananda Samarakoon, a pioneer of this new trend in the field of gramophone music composed several catchy songs inspired by Rabindranath Tagore. The National Anthem of Sri Lanka is also one of his compositions falling into the gramophone song period which was recorded under the Label of HMV. The singers Ananda Samarakoon, Sunil Santha, Sooriya Shankar Molligoda, W.D. Amaradeva, Susil Pamaratne, and C.T. Fernando found creative and unique music styles in this field. Simple narrative songs of everyday life were brought in. This stage of development in Sri Lanka was known as “the era of the independent Sinhala song”.

In this era some Western music instruments were also utilized to produce euphonious songs which were not used earlier in the Sinhala song system, such as the piano, the mandolin, and the guitar.

Around 1953 Radio Ceylon permitted the producers of gramophone records to use its recording facilities and with this chance for the first time, Sri Lankan sound engineers have put on tape the discs of HMV and Columbia. Therefore, two microphones could be used for the first time now to record gramophone music in Sri Lanka.

FILM SONG

‘Film songs’ played a vital role in the Sri Lankan music scene. The first film produced in Sri Lanka was shown on 21st January 1947 at Kingsly Cinema in Colombo called “Kadawunu Poronduwa” translated as “The Broken Promise” produced by S.M. Nayagam of Chitrakala Movie Tone Ltd. The early phase of Sri Lankan film music seemed to have been depended on Indian guidance. In the first nine years various Sri Lankan films were made in south Indian studios with stories, sets, technicians and even directors, and musicians who were Indian. The songs were sung by Indian artists with Sinhala words to the tune of the original Hindi or Tamil song. To illustrate Indian musician ‘Ramaya Muttusamy’ (1926-1988) who composed music scores for over 200 films can be considered as the pioneer of the Sri Lankan film music in the early decade (Thilakerathne, 16 August 2009).

The first serious occurrence of Sinhala music has emerged during the late decade of the 1950s, when the Sri Lankan film industry started producing its own movies and film music about different topics. In this era, the composer Mohammed Gaus started generating music compositions for Sri Lankan films and a number of composers began creating a unique of music native to contemporary Sri Lanka (Broughton & Ellingham, 2000: 231). However, for the first time, Amaradeva created remarkably non-Indian music for Sri Lankan films with the most important being ‘Ran Muthu Doowa’ in 1962. The efficiency of film songs has been improved and captured the Sri Lankan audience easily. So far it has been avoided of copying Indian films and enabled an opportunity for Sinhala musicians and singers to showcase their artistic skills. Likewise, these melodious film songs have assisted the Sinhala sarala gee, a specific kind of songs (see below) to arise. Most notably, Shelton Premaratne, Premasiri Kemadasa, Austin Munasinghe, Sarath Dasanayake, Stanley Pieris, Rohana Weerasinghe and numerous other musicians made a lasting effort to create intrinsic styles of music compositions. Also, Sri Lankan musicians such as Victor Ratnayake, Gunadasa Kapuge, Nanda Malini, Malini Bulatsinhala, Amara Ranathunga, and T.M. Jayaratne began to appear on the scene.

Structurally, it is noticeable that these film songs were considerably more complicated than Sinhala light songs, a category that applied on earlier types of entertainment songs, since many different musical features and skills have been used. Assuming that as a replacement for the ‘adlib-style’ (dohorawa) of Sinhala light song, film songs have appealed to Sinhala traditional four stanza’s verses (kavi). For example, a song by Indrani Wijayabandara, ‘kulunu gune sudana sene’, from the Sinhala film ‘Deiyanage

rate' (1958) was shaped with this verse (kavi) which then was applied at the beginning and the end of the song as 'pera pera kandulu binda dena dena sudana sene'.

During this era of songs, there could be seen another special feature that some consists slow vocal passage which was not sung correspondingly to any cyclic rhythmic pattern but in a free-metric way (dohorawa). This type of free-metric renderings can be found in the beginning and sometimes in the middle section of a song, for instance Mohiddin Beg's song, 'Suwade mata seethala suwanda pawa (adlib), Himi budu una Buddha gayaawe' (chorus).

GROUP SONG

There had been a considerable development in the Sinhala song in the mid-1960s after group music was instigated into Sri Lankan music practice. It is said that the first Sinhala group song was sung by Nevil Fernando's 'Los Caballeros' music group. They sung C.T. Fernando's song. They were using Western techniques of harmonic progressions and instruments such as Spanish guitar, güiro, maracas, and conga drums (Ariyaratne, 2002: 62, 63). They tried to follow Spanish and Latin American music styles for their music compositions. For example, they used a limited number of tones in a narrow scale, the dancing type of rhythms, syncopized styles and Latin American instruments such as timbales or tress were often utilized (Alison, 2000: 428).

They created some of the existing songs of the other musicians, with their new music mixture and those songs became more popularized rapidly, for example 'Mage sudu mame', (C.T. Fernando's), 'Udarata Manike manahara kandurata thilake', (C.D. Fonseka and Razeena Yakeem), and 'Wella simbina rella apata mehema kiyanawa' (from the film 'Dheewarayo' in 1964, music by M.K. Roksam).

Inspired by them, a number of musical groups soon followed and formed themselves into larger groups in Sri Lanka. These music groups blossomed around the island for two decades, in the 1960s and 1970s. Singers such as Clarence Wijewardane, Annesly Malawana, Indrani Perera, Anil Bharati, Shiromi Fernando, and Maxwell Mendis became more well-known in the course of group music. The Sinhala music groups have introduced themselves either as 'Harmony Groups' or as 'Pop Groups' (Ariyaratne, 2002: 65,80,84,100). It has to be noted that "popular" in this context is rather a quantitative term and does not reflect on any kind of musical quality. It is meant as a denomination for wide-spread or well-known. Insofar, this term is taken as an economic term rather than an art term (Jähnichen, 2012).

The singer, music composer and lyricist, Clarence Wijewardane (the king of pop music in Sri Lanka) shaped the first generation of pop music. His songs such as Kanda suriduni, Maniyane, Hiruge lowedi, Gamen liyumak ewilla became very popular (Broughton & Ellingham, 2000: 231-232).

Group songs were released effectively with the assistance of extended play (EP) discs¹ on the record labels of Philips and Sooriya. Sri Lanka Radio Ceylon has banned broadcasting group songs as well as baila² or songs based on non-Sri Lankan tempo that affect the Sinhala music scene. The genre baila was a condemned type of music (Ariyaratne, 2001: 154). Likewise, the commercial service, too, took action so as to preserve Sinhala music programs for the public (Ariyaratne, 2002: 88).

SARALA GEE

After the establishment of Radio Ceylon in 1925, the term sarala gee (light songs) was introduced to the Sinhala music industry in the first half of the 1950s as a new trend with simple story lines of everyday life. The same song structure has been preserved over the times and exists even until today.

The roots of Sarala gee can be traced back to musicians such as Ananda Samarakone and Sunil Shantha, who went to India to learn Indian music and after India's independence, brought back North Indian and

¹ EP is an extension of the single record. It contains more tracks but is not as long as a full album of songs. It was a cheap alternative for both the producer and the artist.

² Baila, an entertaining song, mainly urban and instrumentally accompanied, is not further explained here, but can be considered as another important source reaching back to Portuguese colonial times (Dias, 2019).

Bengali classical music to Sri Lanka. They introduced something original and creative musical and lyrical forms in their field which consisted of great complexity. They took up the sarala gee tradition along with the experiments of Hindustani classical and semi classical music genres such as khyal, ghazal, bhajan, and quawali. The major change in the lyrics was formed with the method of fixing a four-line stanza. The themes were seemingly religious songs, love songs, patriotic songs, and didactic songs. The accompanying instruments were the violin, guitar, flute, traditional Sri Lankan drums, sitar and tabla. Hence the roots of these melodious tunes are deeply rooted in entertainment music in Sri Lanka, where a preference for Hindustani music existed due to various reasons (CP Meddegoda, 2018).

Ariyaratne stated that after 1950 the actual gramophone song and later radio song was found to be distinguished only with difficulty (1998: 93).

Sunil Santha (1915-1981) used many musical techniques learned through observing Western music of singing and playing in his compositions such as harmonic progressions and instrumentation (double bass, Spanish guitar). For example, the songs 'kurulu adare', 'nelawee senasenne', 'rella negenne', and 'suwanda Rosa mal nela' (Ariyaratne, 2002: 17).

Another special circumstance of Sunil Santha's musical life is that he printed and published 'Song Folio (1948)' transcribing his Sinhala songs into the Western staff notation system, for those Sri Lankans who admired Western music. Inspired by Sunil Santha, his student P.L.A. Somapala used many Western techniques and music instruments to produce Sinhala songs. Western dancing beats 'Rumba Samba' and Western instruments such as the piano, clarinet, saxophone, and guitar as well as Eastern music instruments were also used for both singing and playing. Following his teacher, he also published three of his song books with their music notations, such as Yamuna (1950), Sigiri (1951), and Dunhida (1952). In the formation of sarala gee during the early decades, singers and composers such as B.S Perera, G.R Edward, Leelawathi, Suriya Shankar Molligoda, R.A. Chandrasena, P.L.A Somapala and W.D. Amaradeva also played decisive roles.

During the period of 1925-1950, Radio Ceylon (SLBC) refused to use Western music for Sinhala songs, not even a Western music instrument could be played, the Director General's special permission had to be sought for such cases. When a permanent orchestra was established at the SLBC, not even a Spanish guitar was allowed to be included therein.

With the establishment of the commercial service at Radio Ceylon in 1950, there had been an easy way to record and broadcast imitative songs with lyrics in Hindi, Tamil and English. For instance: Sinhala songs by Susil Premaratne "ranwan karalin pesila" (English song was 'whish me luck as your way), "ma aa mawatha sandalu thale hinda" (from the English song 'you are my sunshine') and others were composed.

As noted, it was circumscribed to broadcast those Sinhala songs via Radio Ceylon, which have been composed with the grace of Western music. Although, there were no such restrictions caused in the field of film music. B.S. Perera's film 'Perakadoru Bena' (1955), Edwin Samaradiwakara's 'Daskama' (1958), Sheltan Premaratne's 'Gehenu Geta' (1959), Premasiri Kemadasa's 'Senasuma Kothanada' (1966) were outstanding examples of such works (Ariyaratne, 2002: 21-37).

However, the situation generated a significant atmosphere in the Sri Lankan music field by the 1960s. The trade of Gramophone discs ended in 1970. At that juncture these emanated the era of EP (Extended Play) disc. EP discs could give extensive reproduction due to closer grooves and the big area of its surface. An alternative name for an EP disc is 'Microgroove'. There were two types of Microgroove discs available (Ariyaratne, 2002: 47-52).

33 1/3 RPM (REVOLUTIONS PER MINUTE) VERSUS 45 RPM

The 33 1/3 rpm LP disc (long playing) and 45 rpm EP disc were displayed. The LP and EP discs were easily sold out after launching the disc playing machines such as the 'Record Player', and the 'Turn Table'. However, at the beginning it was difficult to find either EP discs or LP discs of Sinhala songs to run with those technologies. Thus, only English, Hindi, and Tamil LP and EP discs were played. Rock and Roll music and pop groups like The Beatles, The Shadows, The Bee Gees and Rolling Stones

became enormously popular among Sri Lankans. Particularly among the younger generation. However, the first Sinhala EP disc was released in 1959 by Louis Brown Company by 'Philips'. The very first LP disc released in 1971 with the label of 'Sooriya' was by Jerold Wickramasooriya. The recording studio Nelu in Nugegoda had accepted to record the stereo (multitrack) version and there were approximately 11 recording studios in Sri Lanka in 1986 (Ariyaratne, 1998: 50). The songs which were popularized by way of Radio Ceylon started to convert those into EP discs around 1974 for example 'Maliniye', 'Upuli', 'Daskon' and others. Later gramophone and radio songs of professional singers such as H.R. Jothipala, J.A. Milton Perera, M.S. Fernando, and Victor Rathnayake were transformed into EP discs (Ariyaratne, 2002: 56,57).

FINAL REMARKS

This rough overview is only the beginning of a wider research into the field of Sinhala oriented entertainment music in Sri Lanka. Many episodes such as earlier practices in folk songs during ceremonies or on entertainment spots during celebrations, as well as urban entertainment initiated by colonial structures, could not be mentioned here. They will be examined in detail since further studies are highly recommended.

REFERENCES

- Abhayasundara, Vimal. 2011. *Sangeetha Sanhitha*. Colombo: S. Godage and Brothers.
- Ariyaratne, Sunil. 1998. *The Gramophone Era in Sinhala Music*. Colombo: S. Godage and Brothers.
- Ariyaratne, Sunil. 2001. *Baila Kaffirinha; an Investigation*. Colombo: S Godage and Brothers.
- Ariyaratne, Sunil. 2002. *Pop Music Groups of Sri Lanka*. Colombo: S Godage and Brothers.
- Broughton Simon, Ellingham Mark and Richard Trillo. 1999. *World music / 1 Africa, Europe and the Middle East* London: Rough Guides.
- Broughton, Simon and Ellingham Mark. 2000. *World Music: Latin and North America, Caribbean, India, Asia and Pacific, 2*. London: Rough Guides.
- De Silva, K.M.. 1981. *A History of Sri Lanka*. London: University of California Press.
- Gnanissara, Pathegama. 2009. *Gi Rasa Vinisa*. Colombo: S. Godage and Brothers.
- Gunathilake, M.H.. 1984. *Nadagama: The First Sri Lankan Theatre*. Delhi: Sri Satguru Publications.
- Hennayake, Nalani. 2006. *Culture, politics, and development in postcolonial Sri Lanka*. Lanham: Lexington Books.
- Jähnichen, Gisa. 2012. How Much "World is World Music? *Essays on World Music and its Preservation*. Edited by Loo Fung Chiat, Loo Fung Ying, and Mohd Nasir Hashim. Saarbrücken: LAP LAMBERT Academic Publishing: 71- 83.
- Kulathillake, Cecil de Silva. 1974. *Lankawe Sangeetha Sambhawaya*. Colombo: Lake House.
- Makuloluwa, W. B. 1970. *Abhinava Mulika Geetha, 3rd Edition*. Colombo: Gunasena Publishing.
- Meddegoda, Chinthaka Prageeth. 2018. Oral Teaching Systems Versus Ongoing Canonization in Hindustani Vocal Practice. *AEMR-EJ*, 2: 53–64.
- Meddegoda, Chinthaka Prageeth. 2019. The Role of Double Reed Instruments in the Process of Cultural Exchange along Past and Present Trading Routes. Lecturer given at the Second Music Education Alliance Across the Belt and Road Conference, CCOM Beijing, 2019. Ms. unpublished.

- Ruvini, J.. 2009, April 29. Nurthi the Living Art. *Daily News*.
- Sachs, Curt. 1943. *The Rise of Music in the Ancient World*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company.
- Sachs, Curt. 1949. *A Short History of World Music*. London: Denis Dobson Ltd.
- Sarachchandra, Ediriweera. 1967. *The Folk Drama of Ceylon*. Colombo: Department of Cultural Affairs.
- Sarachchandra, Ediriweera.. 1953. *The Sinhalese Folk Play and the Modern Stage*. Colombo: Ceylon University Press Board.
- Silva, K.. 1981. *A History of Sri Lanka*. London: University of California Press.
- Sirimewan, Sujeewa. 2003. *Sindu Sevanaya*. Mudungoda: Tharanga.
- Swami, P.. 2002. *Music of the Nations*. New Delhi: Munishiram Manoharlal Publishers Pvt. Ltd.
- Thilakerathne, I. 2009, August 16. "Importance of Music to Cinema". *Sunday Observer*.
- Weerasinghe, Chamikara. 2008, 12 January. "Iraj to release album in Dhevehi". Archives, *Daily News*.