A PALIMPSESTUOUS READING OF SHEHAN KARUNATILAKA'S "CHINAMAN" – POWER DYNAMICS OF THE PALIMPSEST OF SRI LANKAN ENGLISH

Aparna Hettiarachchi

University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka

Aparna.hettiarachchi@gmail.com

●

Abstract- The present study is an attempt to device a combined approach towards reading Sri Lankan English literature that takes into account both socio-linguistic and thematic concerns of the cannon. In this context, the study holds the literary medium of Shehan Karunatilaka's Chinaman: The legend of Pradeep Mathew as a palimpsest, whose linguistic stratification signals a discord between the novel's linguistic content and its political worldview. Here, the study situates Sri Lankan English within the linguistic ecology of Sri Lanka and observes how different socio-political and socio-linguistic voices inhabit and inhibit each other in constructing the palimpsestuous texture of Sri Lankan English. These observations are in turn compared with the novel's commentary on national (dis)harmony. This content analysis is conducted by applying Chantal Zabus's theorization of "relexification" which conceives postcolonial Anglophone writing as a palimpsest, and Sarah Dillon's theoretical insights in to "palimpsestuous reading" that observes the way different layers of a palimpsestuous text interact with each other in constructing that text. The study observes how the power dynamics that inform the literary medium of "Chinaman" may contradict the novel's political worldview that promotes an inclusive national consciousness.

Keywords- Sri Lankan English Literature, Chinaman, relexification, palimpsestuous reading

I. INTRODUCTION

Shehan Karunatilaka's debut novel *Chinaman – The Legend of Pradeep Mathew* (2015) (from now on Chinaman) which is presented as the last attempt of a dying alcoholic sports writer to compile "a halfway decent documentary on Sri Lankan cricket" (Karunatilaka, 2015, p. 5), is primarily motivated by a search for an erased voice. A large part of the story features WG, the narrator and his friend Ari chasing behind the elusive figure of Pradeep Mathew – a genius Chinaman bowler of Tamil origin, the unsung hero of Sri Lankan cricket. However, as the narrator's son Garfield points out, "the story, like the man himself, seems to forget its point" (Karunatilaka, 2015, p.467) and plunges into a discussion of the political turmoil and ethnic conflict of late 20th Century Sri Lanka. As a result, Chinaman is often read as a novel that takes cricket as a surrogate for the nation (Rambukwella, 2010; Kesavan, 2012; Yothers, 2012). In this context, the character of the genius cricketer Pradeep Mathew, whose presence is felt throughout the novel in his enforced absence, can be taken as a symbol of voices effaced in hegemonic narratives of the nation.

The present study observes how a similar process of erasure that Pradeep Mathew was subjected to is observed in the linguistic content of *Chinaman* as well. In order to explain this connection, a content analysis of Chinaman is conducted by employing the concept of "relexification" (Zabus, 2007) that observes how a constant process of erasure and re-inscription of linguistic identities produces a "new literary medium"

(Zabus, 2007, p.16) in postcolonial creative writing, and the concept of "palimpsestuous reading" (Dillon, 2005) that observes how multiple layers of writing inhabit and inhibit each other in constructing a palimpsestuous text.

In this context, the study conceives Sri Lankan English as a relexified palimpsest and conducts a palimpsestuous reading of it in order to discern the process of linguistic negotiation taking place in *Chinaman's* literary medium. Based on this analysis, the present study juxtaposes the novel's thematic engagement with the ethnic conflict of the country against the structure and power dynamics of its literary medium, which is Sri Lankan English.

A. Research Objective

A majority of academic studies conducted on Sri Lankan English literature seem to focus on the socio-political concerns addressed by these texts at the thematic level. In comparison, much less attention has been paid to linguistic characteristics of Sri Lankan Anglophone writing. Despite the fact that the socio-linguistic dimensions of Sri Lankan English have been studied extensively, linguistically oriented studies of Sri Lankan literature are a rarity. Furthermore, as the critics Dushyanthi Mendis and Harshana Rambukwella point out, even the available studies of such nature focus almost exclusively on the linguistic strategies employed in literary texts (2010, p.192).

The broader goal of the present study therefore, is to contribute to the attempts made at merging linguistic and thematic analyses of Sri Lankan literature, particularly in the context of linguistic studies conducted on Sri Lankan English literature. At a more precise level, the present study is an attempt to bring together the linguistic and thematic concerns of the novel *Chinaman*.

In striving towards this objective, the study poses the following research question: How do the linguistic negotiations in the literary medium of Chinaman relate to the novel's thematic preoccupation with socio-political realities of Sri Lanka?

II. METHODOLOGY

The present study conducts a qualitative content analysis of the literary medium of Chinaman based on a theoretical framework that draws from the concepts of "relexification" (Zabus, 2007) and "palimpsestuous reading" (Dillon, 2005).

A. Relexification

The postcolonial theorist Chantal Zabus defines relexification as "the making of a new register of communication out of an alien lexicon" (1991, p.314) in the context of postcolonial literature. According to the critic Ahmed Gamal, "this new form of communication functions as a third space between an indigenous source language and the dominant European language" (2012, p.115). Zabus regards this "third code" (2007) or the relexified text as a palimpsest where, "behind the scriptural authority of the European language, the earlier, imperfectly erased remnants of the African language can still be perceived" (Zabus, 2007, p.3). Therefore the deciphering of the palimpsest allows one to recover the trace of the native languages as well as to "catch a glimpse of linguistic stratification" (Zabus, 2007, p.3) or the power dynamics and struggles between different languages – not only between the European and native language but also between native languages.

Zabus's conceptualisation of relexification offers a steady platform to view the postcolonial writer's language as a palimpsest, and thus discern the traces of competing linguistic identities (and by extension, socio-political identities) that form the contentious category of 'Sri Lankan English'. This understanding in turn is crucial to achieving the objectives of the present study which are oriented primarily towards examining how the Sri Lankan postcolonial nationalistic identity that Chinaman discusses in depth is reflected in its very literary medium – Sri Lankan English.

B. Palimpsestuous Reading

Chantal Zabus draws largely from the model of the palimpsest in her book The African Palimpsest where she conceives the literary medium of the Anglophone and francophone novels in West Africa as a palimpsest. The present study takes the literary medium of Chinaman that is constituted of Sri Lankan English as a "relexified palimpsest" (Zabus, 2007), and conducts a "palimpsestuous reading" (Dillon, 2005) of this multi-layered text.

Palimpsest, which carries the literal meaning of "an ancient document from which some or all of the original text has

been removed and replaced by a new text" (Oxford, 2017), is a concept that has captured the imagination of critics since the 19th century as a model to explain the human psyche, history and societal incorporation (Dillon, 2005), and as in the case of Zabus' The African Palimpsest, the glottopolitics of postcolonial writing. According to Dillon, "the palimpsest is an involuted phenomenon where otherwise unrelated texts are involved and entangled, intricately interwoven, interrupting and inhabiting each other" (2005, p. 245).

In the context of actively reading the palimpsest, Dillon identifies two different approaches adopted by critics through the ages, namely, "palimpsest reading" and "palimpsestuous reading" (2005). The concept of 'palimpsest reading' derives from the historical role of the palimpsest editor whose task is to unearth the partially obliterated text. As Dillon points out, the sole objective of the "traditional palimpsest reading" is the "resurrection of the underlying script; the overlying one is irrelevant" (2005, p.253). According to her, this method of unravelling and deciphering the palimpsest, particularly in the figurative sense, destroys it, because the palimpsest exists "only and precisely as the involution of texts" (Dillon, 2005, p.254). 'Palimpsestuous reading' in comparison does not attempt to "uncover 'hidden' or 'repressed' narratives. Rather, it traces in the fabric of literary and cultural palimpsests the interlocking narratives" (Dillon, 2005, p.254). Thus a palimpsestuous reading seeks to appreciate the complex relationship between the interlocking inscriptions that inhabit and constitute the palimpsest.

The present study takes the linguistic content of Chinaman as a "new literary medium" (Zabus, 2007, p.16) and observes how it is constituted of interlocking linguistic identities that are products and productions of Sri Lankan national consciousness. In other words, the present study seeks to conduct a palimpsestuous reading, rather than a *palimpsest* reading, of Sri Lankan English as a Sri Lankan phenomenon recorded and legitimised in Chinaman. With the outlook of a palimpsestuous reading, the study explores how Chinaman engages with the political concerns of both Sri Lankan English and Sri Lankan national consciousness.

III. DISCUSSION

A. The Pitch: Negotiating Linguistic Identities

Even though Zabus defines relexification as a deliberate technique, her insights into the synchronic and diachronic aspects of relexified language permit an analysis of Sri Lankan English as a "relexified palimpsest" (Zabus, 2007, p.175). Zabus identifies distinct synchronic and diachronic practices of relexification. The "synchronic" practice performs a methodological function by representing the "interplay of linguistic codes or registers in the social arena" (Zabus, 2007, p.16), while the diachronic practice performs a strategic function by fulfilling the "artistic need to forge or create a new literary medium" (Zabus, 2007, p.16). Thus, relexification carries the potential of both representing the existing linguistic reality in the "social arena" and devising a decolonising strategy out of and against it.

The present study focuses on the synchronic aspect of relexification where it functions to represent the existing "interplay of linguistic codes" (Zabus, 2007, p.16), in order to conceive Sri Lankan English thus "represented" and recorded in Chinaman as a relexified palimpsest. The following are two examples from Chinaman that indicate how Sri Lankan English is composed of multiple linguistic strata that inhabit and inhibit each other in forming its palimpsestuous character.

Example 1 : Put a drink/chat/shot (p.98; p.128; p.178)

> The unique use of "put" in these examples indicates how Sinhala syntax resurfaces in the texture of Sri Lankan English. In a study on minority languages in contact language situations, the linguist T. L. Markey observes that "relexification involves translational equivalents for a morphosyntactic process" (2010, p.12). This implies that in the process of relexification, not merely the lexical item is calqued but its syntactic usage is also appropriated into the relexified language

medium. In this context, the use of "put" in different situations to roughly mean "have", "engage in" or "take" as represented in the literary medium of Chinaman, can be considered a relexification of the versatile use of the Sinhala verb "daanava" (to put) in colloquial situations.

Example 2 : We are also missing our boy (p.112)

A closer analysis of the above statement uttered by WG makes visible the layer of Sinhala language that is over-written by English in producing the palimpsest of 'Sri Lankan' English. The main element of Sinhala syntax visible here is the preference of first person plural pronoun api (we) and first person plural possessive determiner ape (our) in colloquial speech.

Laws of the Game: Power and Resistance

As a model that capitalises on its contradictory functions of erasure and retention of the past (McDonagh, 1987, p.8), the palimpsest is often taken as a useful tool in understanding the dynamics of power and resistance. For instance, as Sarah Dillon observes, the palimpsest "represents 'history' not as natural evolution or progress but as the history of colonial expansion, the violent erasure and superimposition of cultures, and defiant and subversive persistence" (2005, p.254). Therefore, a palimpsestuous reading of Sri Lankan English may bring out the power dynamics that govern its layered composition. Power appears in cricket in the form of the "Laws of the game", while it may make its appearance in world Englishes in the form of 'standard English' and in postcolonial national consciousness as hegemonic narratives. This can be taken as the juncture where the linguistic content of Chinaman converges with its thematic preoccupations.

When considering the negotiation of linguistic and national identities taking place through the 'pitch' of colonial experience, the communal aspect of language communities and nations, as much as of the game of cricket becomes important. Not only is cricket a team sport, but also its unique spectator culture calls for a collective engagement with the game. This team spirit is often transfused into the national consciousness of the players and the spectators, for as Perera observes, "cricket

is perceived as a site of conflict, not just between opposing national 'styles', but even between national ideologies and cultures" (Perera, 2000, p.18).

Against this background, Chinaman is a novel that celebrates the "eastward march of cricket's power base" (Karunatilaka, 2015, p.35); how the ICC has come to become "petrified of the subcontinent" (Karunatilake, 2015, p.p.182). Similarly it is a novel that celebrates the "eastward march" of the English language and how the ownership of the language was wrenched from the 'IC' or the 'Inner Circle'. In one of the iconic scenes in Chinaman, Pradeep Mathew gets involved in an angry dispute with a British commentator. This clash between the "Yorkshire accent" and the "Lankan lilt" (Karunatilaka, 2015, p.240) can be taken as a metaphorical example of how the power balance in the arena of world Englishes has shifted over the years. In WG's words, "us brown folk play the game better, and we should no longer apologise for our quirks; in fact we should celebrate them, and if necessary, defend them" (Karunatilaka, 2015, p. 390). Therefore, when Arjuna Ranathunga defies the belief that "the umpire's word is law" (Karunatilaka, 2015, p. 390) and defends Muralidharan's 'chucking' action, it oddly reflects the way the 'Outer Circle' nations are "chang(ing) the rule book" (Karunatilaka, 2015, p.400) of 'Standard English' and emerging with their own national styles.

At the other end of the metaphor, Chinaman appropriates cricket as a surrogate for the nation and yearns for a unified national identity and "an idea of Sri Lankan-ness that welcomes all shades of brown" (Karunatilaka, 2015, p. 346). This is indicated by WG's repeated attempts and failures at defining a Sri Lankan identity and an "all-time Sri Lankan team" (Karunatilaka, 2015, p. 173). These attempts only lead to drunken brawls and self-aware generalisations such as "we are smaller in every way, including being small minded" (Karunatilaka, 2015, p. 346). The inability to conceive a unified and inclusive national side and a national identity may testify to the internal contradictions within these concepts.

Critics such as Bandyopandhyay and Majumdar celebrate the ability of cricket to transcend racial, religious, class and other socio-political categories in "imagining a secular homogenous nationalist identity" (Bandyopandhyay, 2013, p.29) – going as far as to name cricket as "the only secular religion" in Bangladesh (Bandyopandhyay, 2013, p.19) and the "national religion" in India (Majumdar, 2007 p.89). WG shares the same perspective when he states that

"sports can unite worlds, tear down walls, and transcend race, the past, and all probability" (Karunatilaka, 2015, p.449).

However, what critics such as Bandyopandhyay and Majumdar and WG in Chinaman might have failed to recognize is that the idea of a "homogenous national identity" (Bandyopandhyay, 2013, p.29) itself is a fallacy and that the 'nationality' thus constructed will invariably subscribe to and propagate hegemonic narratives of the nation. As Perera points out, "in Sri Lanka, the most prestigious cricket clubs in Colombo still have names like 'Sinhalese Sports Club' and 'Tamil Union'" (2000, p.22) which brings out the segregationist ethos of Sri Lankan sports as well as Sri Lankan national consciousness. The discrimination that was aimed towards Pradeep Mathews could be a manifestation of this discriminatory political situation. In this context, WG's 500 page record would ironically testify that there is divide, "walls" and "race" (Karunatilaka, 2015, p.449) within sports itself.

Therefore, it is evident that while a unique "Lankan style" (Karunatilaka, 2015, p.391) may provide a site of resistance against external effacing forces of Imperialism (and "Inner Circle standards"), it is also composed of tensions and contradictions from within. The reluctance to accept Pradeep Mathew into the 'national side' and his consequent erasure from the official records of Sri Lankan cricket, for instance, are the results of such internal tensions. These issues of ethnic conflict and segregationist national consciousness are some of the main themes addressed by Chinaman in the guise of cricket. At the same time, similar internal tensions are echoed in the linguistic content of the novel as well. Therefore, it is apparent that while Sri Lankan English, similar to cricket, has certainly been able to develop a unique "local action" (Karunatilaka, 2015, p.142) in the arena of world Englishes, it is still composed and born out of warring linguistic identities conditioned by the country's postcolonial national consciousness.

The internal conflicts of the composition of Sri Lankan English are visible in the competition between the 'native languages' Sinhala, Tamil and Malay to resurface in the textuality of Sri Lankan English.

Take for example, WG's utterance, "instead I get two sarong johnnies in cream shirts" (p.397) Michael Meyler's A Dictionary of Sri Lankan English defines sarong Johnny as a dated "derogatory or humorous term for a

person wearing a sarong, implying that they are socially inferior" (Meyler, 2007, p.230). 'Sarong johnny' cannot be considered a borrowing or calquing because it has no 'original' Sinhala or Tamil word from which it is translated. For instance, Dileepa Abeysekara's translation of Chinaman translates the expression as "සරම්කාරකා" (Abeysekara, 2015, p.247), a likely approximation.

Interestingly, the sarong – a garment worn by Sri Lankan men and a word generally taken as a Sinhala word – has its etymological roots in Malay. According to M. Gunesekera, "the 'sarong' is from Malay 'sarong kabaya'" (2010, p. 274). In fact, sarong is only one of the many Malay words strongly naturalised as Sinhala. The word *konda* or *konde* is one such example. Even though the word means hair or a particular hairstyle in contemporary Sinhala, according to karava.org, it is "a usage adopted in recent centuries from the Malay language." (2017). The critic M. A. Sourjah in The Sri Lankan Malay Heritage in Brief, supports this point maintaining that the hairstyle "konde" was first followed by Malay men before it was adopted by the Sinhalese (2005, p.23). This in turn curiously flips the linguistic stratification of the central idiom of *Chinaman*: "konde bandapu cheena" (Karunatilaka, 2015, 261), (which identifies a gullible person) granting Malay a "quasi-invisible" (Zabus, 2007, p.175) status. Thus, the relexified Sri Lankan English idiom 'ponytailed chinaman' can be identified as a product of glottopolitical tensions between Malay, Sinhala and English.

A vast majority of relexification found in Chinaman in the forms of calques and transpositioned idioms, proverbs, linguistic habits derive from the Sinhala language. However, more impoortantly, it can be observed that these idioms are intended for an audience of Sinhala speakers of Sri Lankan English. The versatility of the non-variant question tag "no?" that is extensively represented in Chinaman, for instance, may not be absorbed easily by a non-Sinhala speaker.

Example 1: To reason
I swivel around and light myself a cigarette.
'I thought you gave up?'
'Writing, no?'

Example 2: To invite assent
'Reggie malli. This is not going live, no?'
Example 3: To express disbelief
'He could imitate any action, no?'

While the non-variant question tag "no?" is not exclusive to Sri Lankan English (Kortman, 2010), in the Sri Lankan context it can be taken as an example of relexification since it is a linguistic habit deriving from the Sinhala negative question particle neda/ne that has the function of an English question tag.

Expressions such as "our man", "our boys", "our boy" and "our cricketers" (Karunatilaka, 2015, p.3; p.71; p.112; p.119) can be traced back to the tendency in colloquial Sinhala to use the first person plural possessive determiner instead of the singular. Furthermore expressions such as "put and see" or "go and check" (Karunatilaka, 2015, p.104; p.54) can be seen as drawing from the Sinhala syntactic formation of purva kriya which is used to identify actions done by the subject before the main action. These examples may indicate that Sinhala voices have overwritten other native linguistic voices in the composition of Sri Lankan English as represented in *Chinaman*.

It must be noted that the above mentioned Sinhala syntactic features relexified into Sri Lankan English are observed in Tamil as well. For instance, Tamil syntax also use negative question particles such as illaiya/allava as non-variant question tags, has a tendency of preferring the first person plural possessive determiner in colloquial speech and has a grammar structure (vinai echcham) similar to Sinhala purva kriya. This could suggest that many linguistic habits and calquings mentioned above could have been influenced by Tamil syntax as much as Sinhala syntax.

However, the fact that these expressions in Chinaman are used mostly by Sinhala-English bilingual speakers eliminates this possibility. Despite the plot being woven around a character who has a partly Tamil lineage and who was discriminated mainly because of his Tamil lineage, there are only a few Tamil speakers who have a significant linguistic presence in the narrative. Even Pradeep Mathew the "unsung hero" himself "couldn't… speak proper Tamil" (Karunatilaka, 2015, p.63). Perhaps the most material reason behind the absence of Tamil voices could be the fact that the writer Shehan Karunatilaka is a bilingual speaker of English and Sinhala (Karunatilaka, 2017) and therefore has limited knowledge about language habits of Tamil speakers.

While the absence of Tamil and Malay linguistic identities are felt throughout the narratives except in certain instances of linguistic borrowing such as appa, thambi,

anna and watalappan these suppressed linguistic identities seem to resurface in the palimpsest of Sri Lankan English in indirect ways.

Example 1 : You should've seen Ravi de Mel's face. Like a pittu (p.246)

This expression appears to be a (mis) approximation of the Sinhala idiom pittu gilala wage which is used to refer to someone who looks annoyed and at a loss for words. 'Like a pittu' or "පිට්ටු ගෙඩිය වගේ" (Abeysekara, 2015, p.156) as Abeysekara translates it, is instead an expression typically used to refer to an obese person or a swollen body part (eg: legs), deriving from the cylindrical shape of the food item. While these idioms are Sinhala, the food item pittu or puttu is identified as originating from traditional Tamil cuisine . This may lend itself to an argument of how the Tamil voice has to cross an extra layer to make its appearance in the palimpsest of Sri Lankan English.

Example 2 : Danila sounds like a vatti amma selling veggies on the street (p.45)

The Sinhala expression vatti amma is used to refer to a loud-mouthed woman with a piercing voice. Danila's character portrayal as a vatti amma both derives from and appeals to the semantic codes of the Sinhala-English bilingual speech community. However, similar to pittu, vattiya, which is naturalised as a Sinhala word, has an etymology reaching back to Tamil (Coperahewa and Arunachalam, 2011, p.79), once again bringing out the superimposition of Sinhala voices over Tamil ones in the composition of Sri Lankan English. This situation is true not only for Tamil but Malay as well, whose voice finds its roundabout way into Sri Lankan English through Sinhala idioms such as 'konde bandapu cheena' .

The same situation is reflected in the grim determination of Pradeep Mathew as well. He asserts, "as a Tamil I have to be ten times better than the Sinhalese spinners. Now I'm only eight times better" (Karunatilaka, 2015, p.234). The sheer effort he has to put in order to be accepted and

respected as a visible member of the national team is a reflection of the discriminatory and segregationist ethos of postcolonial national consciousness in Sri Lanka.

At its thematic level, Chinaman can be read as a criticism of the segregationist national consciousness that has permeated and shaped the character of Sri Lankan cricket. For instance WG condemns segregationist ideas that "the nation belongs to the Sinhala" or "that the Tamil deserves a separate state" (Karunatilaka, 2015, pp.345-346). He at one point even attempts to subvert this exclusivist logic through language itself.

"But then I look closely at the shades of brown and I see interlocking patterns. The Tamil Zion is called Elam which derives from the same Sanskrit word as Hela. The Sinhala word for sovereignty". (Karunatilaka, 2015, p. 346).

Thus, a yearning for a "Sri Lankan-ness that welcomes all shades of brown" (Karunatilaka, 2015, p. 346), is felt throughout the narrative of Chinaman. In this context, WG's attempt to unearth the traces of Pradeep Mathew can be interpreted as an attempt at producing a counter narrative to the hegemonic narratives of the nation.

Ironically however, the power dynamics of the literary medium of this documentation, as discussed above, seem to contradict this inclusive political message. While Chinaman as a text criticises the segregationist national consciousness of Sri Lanka, the marked absence of Tamil voices (and other native languages apart from Sinhala) in its literary medium, as was evident in the above discussion, could work against the yearning for an inclusive national identity that was felt throughout the narrative. What is evident here is that while Chinaman attempts to promote an inclusive national identity through its narrative, the oppressive power dynamics of its literary medium as discussed above may undermine this inclusive ethos.

IV. CONCLUSION

The present study set out to examine the way the political and glottopolitical concerns of Chinaman merge with and redefine each other at the level of its literary medium, which is Sri Lankan English, with the broader goal of merging linguistic and thematic analyses of Sri Lankan English literature. As the critic MacLean points out, "as part of [the] cultural politics of nationalism all nations construct golden ages and claim heroes, some ancient, some modern" (2009, p.543). In this context, WG's palimpsest reading of Sri Lankan cricket records to unearth the partially erased remnants of the 'unsung hero' Pradeep Mathew is an attempt at constructing a counter narrative to the Sinhala hegemonic narratives of the nation. However, the erasure of Tamil voices in its literary medium, as exposed by the palimpsestuous reading conducted in the present study, contradicts this political proposition at the level of glottopolitics. This in turn substantiates the present study's endeavour to suggest that critical appraisals of creative works that take into account both their linguistic and thematic aspects may provide fresh perspectives as to their political engagements.

Since creative writing in world Englishes can be considered a major catalyst in the process of validating and legitimizing a language as an independent variety, the observations made through the analysis of Chinaman may relate to the larger context of the discourse on and codification of Sri Lankan English in a socio-linguistic perspective. This indicates that the theoretical framework employed in the present analysis can be used in 'socio-linguistic studies' on Sri Lankan English as well. The concepts of palimpsestuous reading and relexification in particular can be used to deconstruct and conduct diachronic analyses of situated linguistic locations such as 'elite English', Singlish, Jaffna English, Burgher English and other synchronic categories that form the contemporary understanding of Sri Lankan English.

V. ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

VI. REFERENCES

Bandyopadhyay, K. (2013). Cricket as nationalist obsession: ICC World Cup 2011 and Bangladesh as a host nation. *Sport in Society*, 16(1), 19-32.

Coperahewa, S. and Arunachalam, S.D. (2011) *A dictionary of Tamil words in Sinhala*. 2nd ed. Colombo: S Godage and brothers

Dillon, S. (2005) Reinscribing De Quincey's palimpsest: the significance of the palimpsest in contemporary literary and cultural studies, *Textual Practice*, 19(3), 243-263.

Gamal, A. (2012) Postcolonial translation as transformation, *The Translator*, 18(1), 101-118.

Gunesekera, M. (2010) The Postcolonial Identity of Sri Lankan English. Revised edition. Colombo: Vijitha Yapa.

Karava.org, 2017. *Konda karava* [online] Available at: <http://karava.org/family_names/konda_karava 2017> [Accessed 24 Nov 2017]

Karunatilaka, S. (2015) *Chinaman: the legend of Pradeep Mathew*. 5th ed. London: Random House Group.

Karunatilaka, S (2017) *Email interview with Shehan Karunatilaka, the author of Chinaman*: The Legend of Pradeep Mathew. Interviewed by A Hettiarachchi. Unpublished.

Kesavan M. (2012) Cricket and the nation: a novelist reads three recent cricket novels, T*he International Journal of the History of Sport*, 29 (12). 1805-1814.

Kortmann, B. (2010) *Variations across Englishes: syntax. In A Krikpatrick*, ed. 2010. Routledge Handbook of World Englishes. London and New York: Routledge.

MacLean, M. (2009) A national(ist) line in postcolonizing cricket: Viv Richards, biographies and cricketing nationalism, *Sport in Society*, 12(4-5), 537-550.

Majumdar, B. (2007) Nationalist romance to postcolonial sport: cricket in 2006 India, *Sport in Society*, 10(1), 88-100.

McDonagh, J. (1987) Writings on the mind: Thomas De Quincey and the importance of the palimpsest in nineteenth century thought, *Prose Studies*, 207-224.

McLeod, J. (2010) Nation and nationalisms. In: S. Chew and D. Richards, eds. 2010. *A concise companion to postcolonial literature*. West Sussex: Wiley-Blackwell.

Mendis, D. and Rambukwella, H. (2010) Sri Lankan Englishes. In A Krikpatrick, ed. 2010. *Routledge Handbook of World Englishes*. London and New York: Routledge.

Meyler, M. (2007) *The dictionary of Sri Lankan English*. Colombo: Perera Hussein.

Oxford (2017) *Oxford advanced learner's dictionary online*. [online]. Oxford: Oxford University Press. Available through < http://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com > [Accessed 15 Oct 2017]

Perera, S. (2000) 'Cricket, with a plot': nationalism, cricket and diasporic identities, *Journal of Australian Studies*, 24(65), 13-26.

Rambukwella H. (2010) Rambukwella reviews Karunatilaka's "Chinaman: The Legend of Pradeep Mathew", *The Sri Lanka Journal of Humanities*, 36 (1,2).

Sheeran, A. (2004) Baila music: European modernity, and Afro-Iberian popular music in Sri Lanka. In N. Silva ed. 2004. *The hybrid island – culture crossings and the invention of identity in Sri Lanka*. Colombo: Social Scientists' Association.

Sourjah, M. A. (2005) *The Sri Lankan Malay heritage in brief*. Mulleriyawa: Madurapriya Printers

Yothers, B. (2012) Betting on fiction: nation, diaspora, technology, and Anglophone literary networks in Shehan Karunatilaka's "The legend of Pradeep Mathew", *South Asian Review*, 33(3), 139-154.

Zabus, C. (1991) Relexification. In Ashcroft, Griffiths and Tiffin eds. 2003. *The post-colonial studies reader*. London and New York: Routledge.

Zabus, C. (2007) The African palimpsest – *Indigenization of language in the West African Europhone novel*. 2nd enlarged ed. New York: Rodopi.