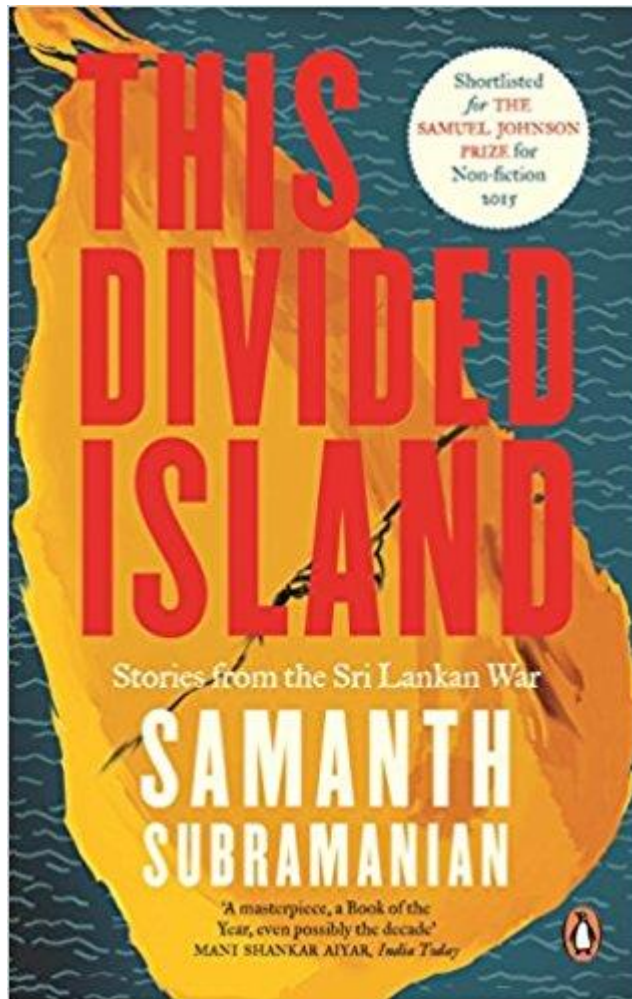


A Critical Overview of Select Eezham War Testimonials

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Abstract

The convention of Eezham war writings mainly comprises of narrative techniques, sequential pattern and testimonials. On the whole war writings bring a catalyst of omission and possession because victims on the one hand and assailant on the other establishes their

experiences in their writings. War is a historical incident, whereas literature is of both facts as well as narrative in style. This article brings out the importance of the testimonials in certainty and the objectivity of it. It is a genre where first person narration will be involved in the text. In other words the writer speaks on behalf of the whole community. This paper establishes a critical appreciation of war testimonials with a specific idea about Eezham war. It impacts the writer to share the testimonials of victims about their unusual confrontation. Finally, this article will explore the characteristics of war testimonials and its revelation.

Keywords: *Eezham, War, Testimonio, Narration, Victims.*

War as an Intended Event

War is an intended event by extending the terrible and harmful trial in the society. Primarily war happenings mainly occur due to objectionable ideologies, identity basis and communal atrocities. War has no ending; every war which happened earlier in this globe has looted many people's lives. Significantly during the war time many unintended souls and their histories were hidden intentionally. In other words, histories were buried by the dominant group members.

War within Independent Sri Lanka – Majoritarian Rule

After the independence of Sri Lanka, the great tragedy begins to enact. In the late 1950's a great nationalism among the Sinhalese instigated the enforcement between Sinhalese and Tamils. The socio- political force by the Sinhalese government started pervading the whole nation. Especially the Tamils in the north and east part of Sri Lanka became the prey for the Sinhalese. Later the government started to evacuate the Tamils from the country by passing the bill on 'Sinhala Only Act'. This makes the country into the devastated state. Sinhala, the majoritarians started depriving the minority Tamils. This act makes the Tamils to be unknown citizens. The war history took place more than two decades where many number of human souls lost their life. This civil war happened for four times from the year 1993 till 2009 the war desperately seeks the land for the blood. During this time period human rights violations predominantly happened that leads to questioning the sovereignty of the state.

Genocide

In Eezham War IV genocide reached at its worst form. Sri Lankan government planned strategically, and they demolished half of the Tamil population. The war between Sri Lankan Army and Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eezham had a frequent clash for their natural rights which was denied by the Sri Lankan government.

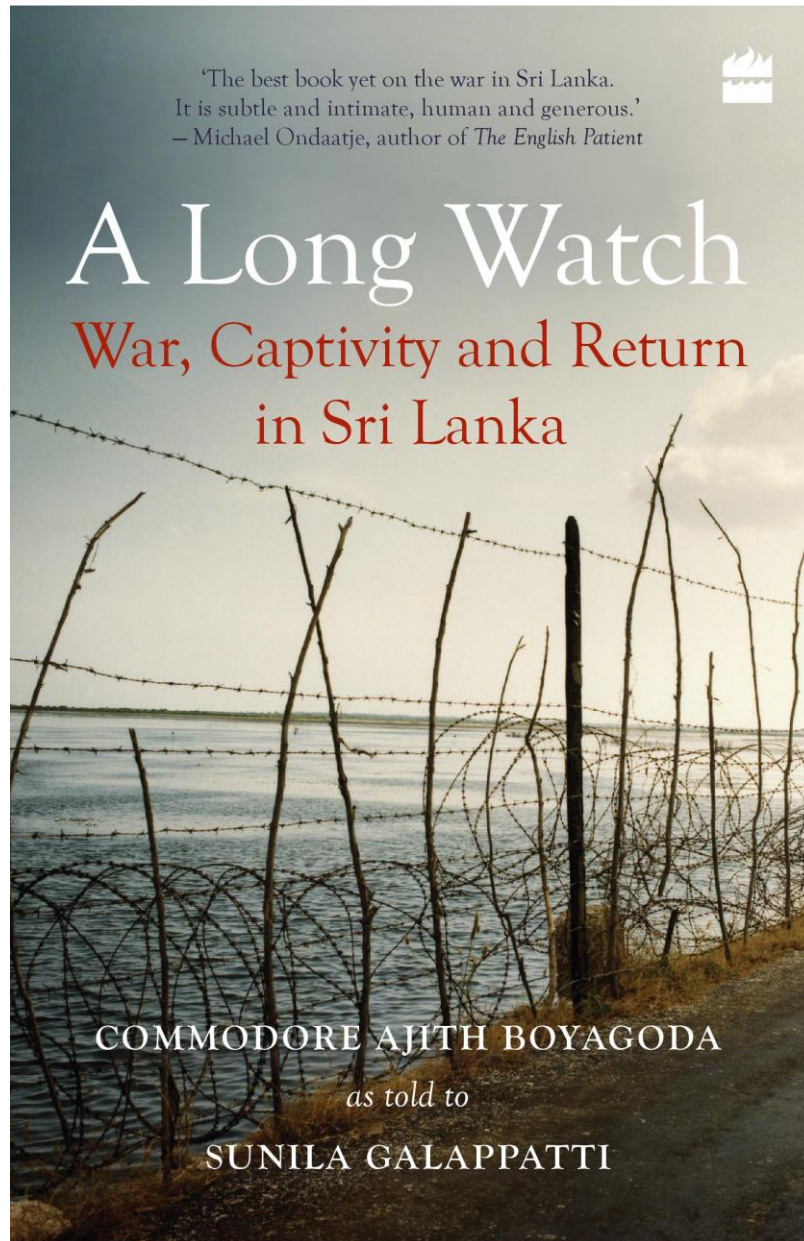
The war causes the division among the people which effects in enmity. The mass killing of Tamil civilians ended as a huge massacre that shows the failure of the entire state. The war causes heavy displacement, refugee camps, murders, rapes and so on. Pragmatically this affects their routine life and they were fully wrapped by fear, stress and anxiety. The main cause is to destroy the Tamil community from their state. For instance, Library of Jaffna in the year 1981 a gang of Sinhalese set on fire, many Tamils histories and documentaries turned to ashes. The deliberate attack makes the whole world to denounce the immorality caused by the mob. The extreme violence leads to cultural destruction,

If the Delegation were asked which act of destruction had the greatest impact on the people of Jaffna, the answer would be the savage attack on this monument to the learning and culture and the desire for learning and culture of the people of Jaffna . . . There is no doubt that the destruction of the Library will leave bitter memories behind for many years. (Sri Lanka 26)

Testimonio, a New Narrative Genre

Testimonio is a new narrative genre in the 1960's. In general it makes the narrator speaks for the others. John Beverley in *Testimonio: On the Politics of Truth*, clearly advocate the themes as "Each individual testimonio evokes an absent polyphony of other voices, other possible lives and experiences" (34).

Select Literature



Samanth Subramanian's *This Divided Island* and Sunila Galappatti's *A Long Watch*, the two post-war testimonials bring out their own personal encounters they faced during the eezham war. These two books are taken for this article. It is mainly subjected a critical account of the two texts. Subramanian an Indian Journalist who visited the Sri Lankan nation and collected the real encounters the people faced and brought out an autobiographical book called *This Divided Island*. Galappatti in her biography *A Long Watch War, Captivity and Return in Sri Lanka*, she shared the experiences of Commodore Ajith Boyagoda a Sri Lankan Navy man. By having these

two texts this article brings forth the importance of knowing the nearness and the objectivity in the Eezham war. Primarily the selected testimonials discuss the objectivity of the casualties happened in the Sri Lanka island. The vending of the human souls for burying by bombing, firing and killing the nameless peoples became the important role of the Sri Lankan Army (SLA). This displeased both the writers which is deliberately seen the description of the happened events. Both the texts are mainly corresponding to each other in the subject matter. Subramanian in his book *This Divided Island* he recorded that, “Cars were stopped on the road and, if they were found to contain Tamils, burned without hesitation. Property was looted” (32). The real situation makes the whole world to look this as a strange condition. “. . . In all that shelling, they were trying to wipe out the next generation of Tamils. There’s a racist tendency, even now, that is characteristic of a majority community” (60). The utmost incident faced by the Tamils is to escape from the tyrannical situation. “SOMEWHERE IN A book, I had seen a photograph that haunted me, and when I arrived in Sri Lanka, I dug around online and discovered it again. It dates from July 1983, and it shows a reed-thin Tamil man, stripped naked by a mob, sitting on a stone plinth at a bus stop in a Colombo suburb, his head held in his hands and his body whipcord-tight with despair. It is late night” (Subramanian 32). The description of the incident evokes the human kind and brings forth the disappointment nature towards the community.

Self-narrating

The importance of self-narrating this war incident makes much invasion about the human condition. The whole world shook by knowing this situation, but nothing comes out of it. Galappatti in her book *A Long Watch* she shared commodes saying, “I remember it as a period of terror. It hung in the air. People couldn’t take the coffins of their dead for burial. People could not switch the lights on in their homes” (39). She clearly expresses the panic situation that prevails over the whole nation. “In August 1977, I had been at home on embarkation leave when race riots broke out. Tamil people were being attacked and killed by Sinhala mobs” (25). The personal reference in the testimonials has more authority over the situation. The drastic fear makes the Tamils as a being inflicted citizens. Here both the war testimonials bring out the importance of recording the historical incidents as the history does. Through these testimonials it

is clear that the oppressors oppressed and refused the rights of every individual is clearly recorded in every single incident happened in the war.

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