

Portrayal of War through Literature: A Critical Literature Review of the Sri Lankan Anglophone Writers

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Between 1983 and 2009, Sri Lanka experienced a bleak and violent war that had a significant political, cultural, and economic impact on the country's social setting. Domains of English, Sinhala, and Tamil literature in Sri Lanka also changed during this period, and a number of poems, fiction, drama, and films were written in response to the war, both during and after it ended. The Sri Lankan Anglophone writers who produce literature in response to the war, represents residential Sri Lankans as well as the authors of the diaspora. This critical literature review examines the contribution of Sri Lankan Anglophone literature to literary scholarship and explores the role it fulfills in portraying the war in Sri Lanka through literature. An ample number of studies pertaining to Sri Lankan Anglophone literature were reviewed and the study also selected four novels which are set against the backdrop of the war to identify the role that they play in portraying war through literature. Findings of the review indicate that some critics consider Sri Lankan Anglophone literature as a platform which plays a substantial role as a mode for dialogue and reconciliation while some consider it as literary compositions created by the English-speaking class for its own class. The selected novels show that they fulfill the role of a messenger and present the war and the country's collective tragedy to the outer world through literary compositions, surpassing censored war records. This review concludes that the Sri Lankan Anglophone literature plays a significant role as a medium for communication and reconciliation, although it is not written or read by the non-Anglophone majority of the country.

Keywords: "War in Sri Lanka; Sri Lankan Anglophone Literature; Medium for Communication and Reconciliation"

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