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Poster

A critical reading of the novel, *Mama Raththriya Wemi (I am the night)*: A blend of Tolstoyan and Dostoevskian identities of the novel

The novel as a literacy genre mainly splits its identity into two, namely Tolstoyan and Dostoevskian identities. Tolstoyan identity refers to story-telling, explicating of incidents, events, setting, etc. with rich textual admirations. Dostoevskian way of weaving of the story generally includes conversations and vast pieces on sentimental expressions and reveals internal voices of characters and does not pay much attention to settings and atmosphere. Both these identities comply with the generic identity of the novel with settings, point of views, styles, diction, and characterization, the integral parts of the texts and postulate them more or less in them.

Tolstoy dominates several elements and Dostoevsky does in some others, because they present distinctive insights and particular philosophies. This paper theoretically focuses on the two identities in critically reading the Sinhala novel, *Mama Raththriya Wemi* by Hemerathna Liyanaracchi. The story of *Mama Raththriya Wemi* is a well-organized narrative with many poignant events and complex character development. Sapumal Bandara, the protagonist, a mathematics teacher of a Maha Vidyalaya near Colombo considers himself as a monkey because of his disfigured face and suffers his entire life with this mental agony. Having lost his chance to be an engineer, he joins a Maha Vidyalaya as a teacher and falls in love with a very young girl student in his school who also stays in his boarding place. The novel ends with a tragic act of suicide by the protagonist while the last chapter depicts his madness in highly imaginative and also symbolic and figurative language. The novel is also significant for its narration, which finds confluences of Western and Eastern philosophical discourses referring mainly to the Buddha and Fredrick Neitsche.

Keywords: Tolstoyan and Dostoevskian identities, Genre, Sinhala novel, Philosophical discourses