

An Investigation of the Aesthetic Principles Underlying the "Maha Kola Sanniya" in Sri Lankan Mask-Making Tradition

Malliya Wadu Arosh Chaminda De Silva
Department of Philosophy, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka.
A17109arts@pdn.ac.lk

A mask is a craft creation by which the natural face of a person is covered by an artificially created face of a different type. According to circumstances like belief systems, society, rituals, and meanings, people wear masks on their natural faces to disguise their true identities. This makes changing personalities simpler for a brief amount of time. But the mask used to be much more than just a face covering device. Anthropologists have accepted the fact that ancient people in various countries used masks to frighten enemies in battle, making an attractive impression on cultural rituals and as entertainment. Its use in ritual dances was undoubtedly an important aspect of the religious and social life of our ancestors. In some parts of the world the mask still retains a deep and often complex aesthetic meaning. In Sri Lanka's cultural background, the "Maha Kola Sanniya" represents a very unique aesthetic essence of the Sri Lankan folklore. But there are very limited research findings on the Maha Kola Sanniya and its aesthetics values. The research problem of the study is how "Maha Kola Sanniya" is able to express aesthetic values through its performances. The research paper describes that there is a particular aesthetic essence of the Sri Lankan 'Maha Kola Sanni Mask', especially in Ambalangoda on the southern coast of Sri Lanka. To clarify the aesthetic account of "Maha Kola Sanniya" in Sri Lankan mask making history, the study of how Maha Kola Sanniya is able to express the aesthetic values through its performances serves as a qualitative research project.

Keywords: Sri Lankan, Mahakola Sanniya, Daha Ata Sanni (18 aliments), Aesthetic, Culture.