

The Paradigm Shift of Sri Lankan Cinema: A Study of Reflections and Repercussions in the Cinema after Introducing the Open Economy in 1977

S. S. A. Senevirathne

Department of Languages, Faculty of Social Sciences and Languages, Sabaragamuwa University, Belihuloya, Sri Lanka

Abstract

While Sri Lankan cinema had originated in 1925, Sri Lankan token cinema which had commenced in 1947 completed its first paradigm in 1977. The era from 1978 to the present (2016) can be considered as its second paradigm. After introducing the policy of open economy in 1977, Sri Lankan social body was transformed along with its social, economic, and cultural dimensions. Sri Lanka, in its exposure to the post-industrial, global capital since 1977 when its gates were opened to the external world, underwent great structural and ideological changes which can be termed as a “paradigm shift” (The Structure of the Scientific Revolutions, 1964) as the structure itself was not what it was a decade ago. The paper hopes to articulate analytical approach to interpret post-globalized Sri Lankan film industry and its repercussions. As the basic argumentation of re-narrate the contemporary scenario is to be utilized the concept of paradigm shifting. During this period, the parameters of producing, directing, distributing films, and the industrial form in which the films are made have undergone dramatic and sweeping changes. The aesthetic and the realistic cinema of the pre-open market economy in Sri Lanka were mainly based on the restricted capital provided by local producers whose ideological basement was purely to produce entertaining works, but a small number of filmmakers were interested in radical works but with a poor financial background and thereby could hardly reach a global esteem. In accordance with the knowledge of paradigm shift, in an attempt to understand the current situation in Sri Lankan film industry and art, the present paradigm has been re-contextualized painstakingly comparing it with the early paradigm which has clear economic and cultural marks of an era before the advent of economic globalization.

Keywords: Sri Lankan Cinema; Open Economy; Paradigm Shift; Post Globalized Cinema

1. Background and Introduction

The Sri Lankan economy seems to be a complicated flux consisted with Buddhism, agriculture, irrigation civilization, caste hierarchy, and feudal characteristics. Amalgamating those complexities, the ideology of the Sinhalese society was constituted. One situation can be identified at the peasant context. The rural social classes normally do not utilize the same ideology for their relations of production. The researchers, who have done in depth studies on this entity, have pointed out few stratification layers in the pre-capitalistic accumulation (Gunasinghe, 2007; De Silva Colvin, 1995; Jayawardhena, 2000). Even though this study being focused on the cinema industry in Sri Lanka at a moment of post-globalized, it is essential to examine thoroughly the parameters and background recommendations behind the picture. Discussing the “paradigm shift” in the Sri Lankan film industry is consisted as the main objective of this study should attend to evaluate extendedly the pre-capitalist society.

This study hopes to evaluate the liberal economic reformations implemented by the UNP regime in 1977, and this study hopes to interpret the transition occurred as an “interpellation.” After introducing

the radical economic reformations, the whole Sri Lankan socio-political body has jumped into the next step with massive changes. Before 1977, Sri Lanka experienced the reformations constituted by Colebrook commission. It was also a highly influential change in the economic history. One can ask that where it does the proper interpellation or shift? Because of those reformations restructured whole the socio-political backgrounds of Sri Lanka in a pre-capitalist era. Actually, these interferences of the commission, in fact, demarcated the first real attempt to examine the feasibility of the application of liberal ideal to the situation in Ceylon (Kannangara, 1966). Colebrook and Cameron arrived Sri Lanka in 1929 and they took off the country in 1931. According to the commission for mostly resulted recommendation was the abolition of *Rajakariya* (Customary Service) on 12th April 1832 (Roberts, 1995. p. 143).

The pre-capitalist Sri Lankan society did not portray a clearly marked class classification as the European context. When it was 1978, that society was not in a condition to accommodate “post-globalized” aspects. In this regards, post-globalized aspects mean the society which is highly engaged with computerized networks. As well as, there are consumer oriented people, transnational capital and its trading agents and mainly, the exchange value of goods is highlighted than the use value in this type of society. The most of perverted economic reasons that we are suffered are the results of those irrational production relations. In the 21st century, the liberal capitalism appears in Sri Lanka as the economic mechanism. Its major ambition is that the improving of a sophisticated consuming society which permits to be mercantilism maximally. This economic paradigm began 1978 in its existing meaning and it was clearly resulted to the total transformation of Sri Lankan cinema industry. After introducing so-called liberal economic reformations, the role of film director and producer, film spectatorship or audience, actors and actresses, film critics, the situation of film distribution or circulations and most of the production relations related to the local film industry have been significantly changed with higher index. The paper intends to explore this argument with the special reference to the country’s cinematic reality.

1.1. Objectives

1. To understand the actual effectiveness of implementing liberal economic reformations in the entity of Sri Lankan Film Industry
2. To propose conceptually “the concept of paradigm shift” to contextualize post-globalized Sri Lankan Cinema
3. To furnish a wider discourse between early and second paradigms of Sri Lankan cinema for its uplifted and competitive tomorrow.

1.2. Hypothesis

1. The contemporary Sri Lankan cinema is significantly changed from its early epoch before 1977
2. The existing transformed situation of Sri Lankan cinema is resulted of liberal economic reformations launched in 1977
3. The concept of paradigm shift can be successfully used to re-contextualize that transformation.

2. The Literature Survey and the Conceptual Interpretation

2.1. What is paradigm shift?

Before moving to the next phase of this paper, the concept of the “paradigm shift” is needed to be interpreted theoretically. Such theoretical discussion is essential since the changes in Sri Lankan cinema after 1977 will be described as a paradigm shift, again as the main argument.

At first, let’s look at the dictionary meanings of two main words. The New Lexicon Webster’s Dictionary defines it as “an example serving as a pattern” (Cayne, 1987). (The New Lexicon Webster’s Dictionary, 1987). The oxford English Reference Dictionary refers the word paradigm as “a representative example or pattern” (Judy and Bill, 1996). (The oxford English Reference Dictionary,

1996). If we refer famous Longman Dictionary, it describes a paradigm is “a very clear or typical example of something” (Summers, 1993, Longman Dictionary, 1993). The Oxford Advanced Dictionary also defines that paradigm as a pattern, a model. And in linguistics, paradigm means a set of all the different forms of the words (Crowther, 1996, Oxford Advanced Dictionary, 1996).

What is it meaning of the second word of the phrase, “shift?” It is “a change of place, position, direction or tendency - to change the emphasis, direction or focus - to move from one place or position to another” (ibid). 1086. In general, different dictionaries provide similar definitions to the concept. In other words, there is a stable meaning of the term in dictionaries in linguistically. But by combining these separate two words, somewhat complex contextual meaning is denoted. When the concept used in natural science or social sciences and humanities, the analysis depends on its limitations. The concept of paradigm shift in natural science has been introduced to the world by Thomas Samuel Kuhn (1922-1996). The book titled “The Structure of Scientific Revolution” initiated this new discourse of knowledge in 1962. Most of academics have considered Thomas Kuhn’s the Structure of Scientific Revolution was one of the most influential intellectual contributions of the second half of the twentieth century (Fuller, 2000).

The dominant knowledge wave of a certain age of the world is recognized as a paradigm by Kuhn in this book. While the contemporary scientists and intellectual’s analysis the world articulating that knowledge, the world also is changing slowly. When the time passes, there are many new inventions, practices, ideologies, and knowledge layers which gathered into that changing. Now, it seems to be a new paradigm. “Thomas Kuhn famously updated this elitist myth of humanity’s collective quest by associating the great paradigmatic thresholds in the history of science with the names of revolutionary geniuses who set the pace for lesser worthies. “Newton,” “Lavoisier,” and “Einstein” appear in Kuhn’s own text as the originators of paradigms” (ibid). Accordance with this perspective, the old Newtonian world has been transformed into “Einsteinian” world. If somebody applies the ancient knowledge to read the vastly changed new world, that structure faces a crisis. Kuhn explains this condition according to the general science.

We must examine that can it be used this theory which has been composed in respective to the science, for measuring the eco-political and cultural life of the man or social sciences and humanities? Kuhn begins his discourse introducing the “paradigm.” “I shall henceforth refer to as “paradigms,” a term that relates closely to “normal science” (Kuhn, 1970). Kuhn’s paradigmatic debate is a tool for clarifying the results and forms of science in the long term. This theoretical knowledge furnished by Kuhn, as a condition of sciences, can be applied for understanding the social sciences in a theoretical framework. If we measure very recent artworks using the old paradigmatic perspective, the new artwork would be seen as an absurd creation. If the critics do not accept the transition of paradigms and do not understand the crisis, in rationalizing the new artwork, they also might be gone to the crisis.

According to the most of the film critics in Sri Lanka, its contemporary film artworks cannot be interpreted using the existing critical tools especially the hegemonic parameter called the estheticism (Dissanayake and Rathnavibhushana, 2000; Jayasena, 2010; Jayasena, 2012; Rathnavibhushana and Cruze, 2002). Ashoka Handagama’s many films which are represented the second paradigm faced a crisis in the angles of critics and even the audience. If we consider the debate created on *Aksharaya* (Letter of Fire-2005), it appears so-called misunderstanding. When the case went to the court, they also articulated the previous knowledge, cultural belief, limitations and interpretations for discussing his modern cinema. It was made a philosophical error first, and then it generated practical, legal and human right wise error. Ultimately, it did a great injustice to the movie itself.

An extended dialogue has been launched by the two groups on *Aksharaya*; those two sectors made their arguments on two ways. One group argued that this film destroys our cultural values and identities. Other group insisted on that this film is very avant-garde creation and it could not measure with old tools.

Again, Kuhn mentions that the apparatus should be organized for a new paradigm. This is equal to emerge a new planet. Although they are the familiar objects, now they are being focused under a changed light. Once again, it is very important to concern how to use this concept to understand the social life. Terry Eagleton emphasizes that this interpellation or transformation is related to a wider range such as power, desire, and identity that are interconnected between man and society (Eagleton, 1996).

If we direct the attention one selected angle of that social transformation, for instance. That is sexuality. The discourse of sexuality in the modern society is not the thing what we had previously. The interpretations, practices, forms about the parameters of sexuality and human love have been totally changed. If we focus with old concepts to see below-mentioned sexuality, we can observe that the paradigms would be critically transformed. One of the leading philosophers of our time Zizek has extensively stated that the concept of sexuality has gone to virtual reality and it is hardly interpreted with early perspectives (Zizek, 2005). Computerized virtual sex explained by Zizek is very difficult phenomenon to understand even in the respective discourse.

According to the condition of the scientific knowledge which has revolutionarily changed in general science, the world can use as a mirror to portray the current moment. This scientific related vision is conceptually underpinned to explain social change in Sri Lanka, after a certain moment in recent eco-political history. In this case, whole body of Sri Lankan society has been transformed thoroughly in the zones of economy, technology and culture. First of all, the research should aim to capture this interpellation of the said entities and consequently, we would move to revisit the paradigm shift in Sri Lankan cinema.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Cinema and capital

The Cinema has been honored and famous as the 20th century art or director's art. Even though it is, this genre of art is empowering all over the world in the 21st century also. The cinema is highly synthesized art. It is incorporated with poetry, music, sculpting, art, visual art, drama and many other different expressions of human totality. The style of communication in the cinema is distinguished as pictorial narration. In this case, the visual is dominant and the sound comes second.

If we consider in Sri Lankan context, the cinema which is transformed its classical meaning, is rushed among to the cheap and fancy objects on the pavement in Colombo. These DVDs are sold in very low prices. Now the attention of film theater or the habit or film going is being collapsed badly and the cinema experience is jumped into a "pavementalized" and individual solitude thing. The film criticism is transformed to an advertisement. Finally, the cinema and the capital are free from their conventional context and reduced to just a trade sign or common-easy commodity.

This transformation of cinema is not a sudden phenomenon. In the middle of last century particular communication experts had theorized that the cinema with the capital has to be destined to commodity at the dream factories. "The movie is not only a supreme expression of mechanism, but paradoxically it offers as product the most magical of consumer commodities namely dreams" (McLuhan, 2003. p. 317).

We mentioned already that the film with its initiation had played the commodity's role. It is an entertainment media. If the cinema was gradually being uplifted to a way of creativity, it was not avoid from technology and marketing in all the time. The socialization of cinema is being manipulated according to the principles of culture industry. The cinema just like any other fetish commodity is accompanied to the consuming society through the advertisements and publicity. Vanishing the moment of the use value of the commodity, there is over-determined only the exchange value in the present society. It is no any special to the concept of cinema.

Considering all these complexities, the cinema and the capital are inevitably combined picture and depend on each other. The existing quarter of the present Sri Lankan cinema is a manifestation of the said reality. The thousands of latest films which are comprised on a verity of themes in the world can be seen in Colombo as "the heaps of DVDs," and they are being declined from their prominent and prolific interpretation and pavementalized without any significance. The seeing a cinema is reduced to the mobile phone screen. It has been lined to just a digitalized wave among the limitless waves in the virtual space. Bearing this background, this thesis hopes to evaluate the cinema and its industrial formation at the next step. Then, we may realize that it is also a result of the process in the Sri Lankan capital accumulation and the linear development of the country.

3.2. The Sri Lankan cinema up to 1977: The early paradigm

Although this research paper has attended to explore the formation of Sri Lankan film industry and its entertainment ship, it should be extendedly evaluated again some background information and hidden realities. What sort of leaner development is appeared in Sinhala cinema up to 1977? Especially, the Sinhala talkies films and its commercial background story, early Colombo cinema experience and its eco-political background are to be aimed to have a deep discourse. Why should it be emphasized so lengthily? This thesis hopes to bear the main hypothesis which tries to prove the “shift” or “interpellation” in Sri Lankan cinema after 1978. Therefore, the descriptive history reflects the key points of its metamorphosis.

“No cinema springs from a social and cultural vacuum. All cinemas bear the imprint of the society, culture and moment of history that gave that rise to them. Sri Lankan cinema is no exception. The urbanization of culture and consciousness, the capitalist infrastructure, the crystallization of the idea of the nation state, the encounters with cultural modernization and tradition are all vital to the birth of cinema” (Dissanayake and Rathnavibhushana; 2000). After a few years of its European origin, the cinema that was a newly recognized entertainment genre experienced Sri Lankan public in Colombo. As the above-quoted argument stresses that the emergence of cinema in Sri Lanka was a rational result of the socio-cultural process at the moment. TAJ Noorbai produced the very first Sinhalese film, *Rajakeeya Wikramaya* or *Shantha* (The Royal Adventure) in 1925 (Senevirathne, 1999; Nayanajith, 2005; Amarasena, 2008).

In general, 21st January 1947 is mostly agreed as the birthday of the Sinhala cinema. The reason for that, “*KadaunuPoronduwa*” the first token film was screened at Kingsley theatre in Kotahena on that day. Although this is the commonly accepted idea, Nayanajith furnishes an argument about this origin. According to him, “*Paligeneema*” (The Revenge) was the first ever screen silent film in this country and it was in 1936 (Nayanajith, 2005). Nuwan’s this argument may be controversial. Anyhow, *KadaunuPoronduwa* was born as a result of strong commercial rivalry made by two businessmen (Sawarimuttu, 1977).

While the Sinhala cinema marks its inception, that effort did not articulate the surplus capital in a realistic industrial atmosphere. All the films were produced in the Indian film studios such as Chithrakala, Citadel, Central, Wahini, Modern, Neptune, Film Centre, Prabhath, Sothern and Shammuga. These cinema activities were conducted under the fully Indian guidance and with their technical knowledge. In the first half of the 20th century Sri Lankan film industry portrayed three major investors. These triple entrepreneurs and the movie mogul they created were the strong pillars of the industry. The first presidential commission for inquiry of the Sri Lankan film industry has mentioned this monopoly using the term “Tripoli” (Wickramasinghe et al., 1965). The Ceylon Theatres established by CA Gardiner in 1928, The Ceylon entertainments made by Jabir A. Carder in 1946 and the Cinemas of K Gunarathnam in 1949 had played the lion’s part of the Sri Lankan film business. The Ceylon Theatres maintained very successful trade relationships with the film production and distribution companies in the Europe and the USA. DV Senevirathne’s explanations explore the Sri Lanka’s film crazy was created over imported movies of this company. DV Senevirathne’s *Chithrapata Kalawa* (1958) was the first book or report on Sri Lankan cinema.

While these situations on Sinhala cinema were going on, the upper middle class also showed an enthusiasm to this aesthetic experience. Although a small group of pioneers, they had an enough sense of estheticism and particular knowledge on concept of art. They had hailed from the fields such as painting, music, photography, and drama. In the 40s, the only artists who achieved any degree of recognition were known in parlances as the ’43 group. They were a group of artists and painters who had got together into a sort of club to discuss and disseminate ideas. They were really the product of post-impressionist in Europe, and drew their inspirations mainly from works of Cezanne, Gauguin and Van Gogh. Others specialized in seascapes which were much admired in Britain as well as by the British residents and English educated elites in Ceylon. Justin Deraniyagala, Geoffrey Belling, George Keyt, Harry Peiris, Richard Gabriel, Aubrey Colette, and Ivan Peiris (brother of Lester James Peiris) were prominent members of the group (Sawarimuttu, 1977).

Obviously, the cinema in Sri Lankan context did not reach the level of its European meaning. Because of it did not have the parallel progress of the both streams that were the limited and classic audience generated by Colombo Film Society or '43 group and socio-political realities of investments. The second fatalistic missing of this trend itself is more tragic one. That is the story of establishing of the Government Film Unit.

The very first Sinhalese token film *KadaunuPoronduwa* was screened with special participation of Prime Minister DS Senanayake and the dame at the Kinsley theatre, Kotahena on 21st January 1947. DS Senanayake starts a strange and really new film culture appealing the signature, giving an autograph to Desi Daniels, later heavenly famous as Rukmanee Devi. There was a long queue to make a glance of this "divine lady." The mansion called "*Jaya-Ruk*" in Negombo was given the police security. Some people spent the night at the queue itself and made the chance to see *KadaunuPoronduwa* at the next day. The deluge of "stars" had been launched. The Sri Lankan people were experiencing the features of a film culture.

It is widely known argument that *Rekhawa* is the realistic, artistic, and cinematic turn of Sinhala film industry. The attention of government directed toward industry from second decade of Sinhala cinema. The government commission to inquiry to Sinhala film industry was appointed in 1962. This commission report points out the real situation of existing cinema. It realizes that the film monopoly which had immersed the industry and market in this country has been understood as the biggest barrier for the qualitative development of Sinhala cinema.

When some commercially successful films for earning profits, such popular box-office directors were funded openly by above-mentioned monopoly. It is very known factor that how Lester James Peries was helpless in the beginning period of filmmaking. Ultimately, Raj Kapoor in India had interfered personally with CA Gardiner for requesting an opportunity to Lester who was honored as the father of Sinhala cinema and a versatile genius in the industry. Then *Sandeshaya* came out and it was a great commercial hit. Dr. Amunugama who was a front lined film enthusiastic in Sri Lanka had interpreted this situation as "money collecting" (Amunugama, 1990). Dr. Amunugama, as the very first chairman of the National Film Corporation, 1972, uses that important two words "money collecting." This situation is rather identical for today merely. In few years ago when film critic Ajith Galappaththi criticized Soma Edirisinghe's cheap films, on behalf of EAP, Soma Edirisinghe states that "I do not care the film critics for a dead cent (*thambasathaya*)." Even today in the globalized society, the capitalist traders do not concern on artistic value or cultural ground rules, but only chasing money. The present Ceylon theatres management is busy with opening Cargill's supermarkets at the places of film theaters which are being run on under profit, belonged to the company. The term "money collector" is highly suitable for naming them today even. It is the historical truth that according to the time and space, there is no trifle change of these merchants in speculating profits. The investment capacity and the income of so-called "early big three" are well established in a large scale. The film importation, distributing, exhibiting and producing were subject to their consent. The studio facility was another strong avenue enriching that stability and monopoly.

This was the condition of Sri Lankan cinema up to 1977. As Lester says, the serious and ideological films were not produced in the time of national cinema. The concept of a national cinema is restricted to merely a name board. Some sort of advancement has taken place and that should be considered as post-national cinema. It will be broadly examined as "a paradigm shift" in Sri Lankan cinema.

3.3. Economic shift powered by politics in Sri Lanka

The economy is said to be the bedrock of the modern societies. WD Lakshman has classified the modern history in Sri Lanka into few economic power regimes, after the independence. We can update Lakshman's opinion and then it is the map of history of Sri Lankan power politics. It is not difficult to realize that they are apparently the economic entities also.

- i. 1948-1956: 8 years
- ii. 1956-1965: 9 years
- iii. 1965-1970: 5 years

- iv. 1970-1977: 7 years
- v. 1977-1994: 17 years
- vi. 1994-2000: 6 years
- vii. 2001-2004: 2 years
- viii. 2005-2015: 10 years
- ix. 2015: Update.

“The UNP which came into office in 1947 represented the interests largely of the country’s bourgeois and elite groups, who wish to see the continuation of the ‘export economy’ they inherited from British colonial administration” (Lakshman, 1997). This point is the decisive moment of the economy in Sri Lanka modern state that was changed completely in 1977. If somebody wants to understand that transformation, he should clearly realize the earlier paradigm first. The first regime that came into office after the independence was terminated in 1956. Then, people’s alliance was elected to power. In a cultural perspective, most of critics recognized this transition of state as “1956 Revolution.” However, the economy was not sharked or influenced vastly.

It was observed that two regimes shifted in the next phase of 1956-1977. The Sirimavo Bandaranayake’s government 1970 launched a change based on agriculture and indigenous industries in the long term organized manner. It moved the policy regime back to a hard version of Import Substitution Industrialization (ISI). Again we witnessed another electoral change, this time a landslide victory of the UNP in 1977 for the country to make a sharp turn about in its policy from a basic ISI regime to an Export Oriented Industrialization regime. Actually, this was the turning point that deceives paradigm change demarcated (ibid).

In the next step of the economy very influentially introduced the concept of “Liberal Capitalism” in rapid way. It caused to make a vast restructuring to the process which had been scheduled on the development based on indigenous industrial strategy. This was the era of 1977-1994. This is the longest power entity in the modern state of Sri Lanka. The liberal capitalistic strategy they used was famous as “the open economy.” Moore explained comprehensively that the “Open Economy” policy was first introduced in 1977 that Sri Lanka is inevitably set on the capitalistic avenue (Moore, 1992).

While Mike Moore interprets that change in such way, Lakshman explains widely this liberal economic policy which had been drastically transformed the government’s political and economic ideologies (Lakshman, 1997). This exclusive changing of economic paradigm in Sri Lanka second could be affected as the foundation factor for transforming whole the sociocultural life upside down in the country. Anyhow, we have to return back for having a glance to next power strata.

Then in 1994, a government of the people’s alliance came into office. This new front again used a political metaphor for their proposing economic ideology as “market-oriented policy with a human face.” Although the UNP came to power for 2 years in 2000-2002, there were no successes to implement their early liberal ideas as it is, for restructuring Sri Lanka. The PA government won the mandate 2003 and is still going on. It is highly capitalistic regime. They have ended the ethnic war of 30 years through a nationalistic approach. Now, the capitalism being in Sri Lanka is not the ideal, but a muted one. It leads to an economic dictatorship. Although the justice and freedom are not here, it pretends that they are in everywhere. The general public has been tranquilized with unlimited consumerism of fetish commodities. The people sometimes pretend that they critically against the existent system, but while it is, they have given the silent consent to run the corrupted malpractice. This is not an urgent repercussion, and they are the offsprings of 1977’s radical reformations.

“If I may be permitted, Mr. Speaker, to quote from our party manifesto, we are committed to establish: “A free and just society in our land.” The foundation, the sine qua non, for a free and just society, is a free and just economy. It is with this end in view - the creation of a free and just economy - that this budget has been introduced as the first Budget of this government” (de Ronnie, 1978). De Ronnie, the Minister of Finance presented the first budget of 17 years powered UNP government on 15th November 1977. He stressed in the budget speech that they had promised to the people to be promoted “a free and just society.” At the next chapter, he shifted to the statement of “a free and just economy.” He proposed to open the closed economy and lead to the economic development. It is an operation functioning without killing the patient. “The establishment of a free and just economy after more than 20 years of

controls and restrictive practices which hampered and hamstrung economic growth and development is not an easy task. It is, in fact, a massive operation of the highest magnitude. This operation must be performed successfully and without killing the patient” (ibid: 2).

The finance minister revealed to the parliament in his second budget on 15th November 1978, that in a short period, just a year, Sri Lanka’s development level was booming. “Mr. Speaker, last year’s budget liberalized the economy and laid the foundation for economic development and growth. This budget marks the commencement of the biggest development program in the history of Sri Lanka. It is geared to quick investment and growth both in the public and private sector. This is the only solution to the problems of our country and our people” (de Ronnie, 1979).

At that moment, the government proposed the liberal capitalism as a remedy for all the sufferings and crisis of this country. They know that the only one avenue of gathering profit through the foreign investments. The country does not have fuel, gold, coal or other natural resources. But ultimately, this profit and the accumulation of capital were centralized on the very limited and selected bourgeois traders, not for the sake of the general public.

The change occurred in 1977 was rapid and significant than the eventual slow transforming of paradigms of previous Sri Lankan society. The other important fact was that paradigmatic shift was handled by purposely, artificially, and intensively. The Minister of Finance, Ronnie De Mel talked openly about the severe changes, at his second budget speech. “I realized the truth of this dictum only when I began to liberalize the economy of Sri Lanka. It became a battle, a battle for men’s minds. Changing rules and regulations was difficult, changing the mentality and psychology of people was even more difficult” (ibid).

They have used a mass media process to change the mentality of people. Gradually electronic and print media propagated the government vision through the advertising and publicity campaign. A giant media culture was initiated along with those efforts. The television received this operation instantly, and the hesitation that the finance minister had was vanished. Because of they used a mixture of images of women and desire, money, uncontrolled indulgence and enjoyment in unprecedented manner to entice people into commodity culture.

In 1978, the government knew clearly that when they transform the economic paradigm, inevitably the social and psychological paradigms also would jump a remarkable leap. The “correct view” should be generated to win a mandate to introduce a new economic policy. They had to prove that the earlier vision was the “mistaken view.” In the second budget speech, the minister openly theorized his mission.

Again, they knew that after implementing the open economy, “worker,” “peasant” or “common man” would not be safeguarded. All the welfares are to be ceased. They pushed people to a path of limitless consumption by promoting Selling and buying while pretending to be doing something else. In these two budget papers, the finance minister has mentioned many times that the UNP is not a capitalist party. This was a double standing to achieve strategically their “task and mission.” The mindset of people was to change internally. In present day Sri Lanka, all the people are admiring the liberal economy, but they have simultaneously forgotten that the worker, peasant or so-called common man has not been protected as promised. This situation is a “paradigm shift” of public thinking but it comes to surface initially in the field of economy.

Gradually, the welfare state politics was being eroded. The government withdrew from investing in the most of economic sectors. Then, the private capital and private entrepreneurship began to fill the sectors evacuated by the state. Accordance with that scenario, the commercial capital of those foreign and private entrepreneurs was flowing into Sri Lanka through the opened and deregulated gates. The government strategically opened most sensitive doors without any regulatory practice. This policy was the exact opposite of the previous SLFP regime of 1970-77.

When these new economic policies were taking roots, an export-oriented trade regime was established offering new laws and institutions, simultaneously sidelining the existing laws and organizations. Introducing this economic policy, the Minister of Finance explained that the figure of capitalism in Sri Lanka was shaping into a form which supposedly had an indigenous Sri Lankan identity. That did not come true. The capitalistic consumer market does not tolerate having two faces. Its behavior is universal. What happened, in fact, was that those native identities, values, and customs

adopted themselves to fit global capitalism. This dramatically changed the existing style of Sri Lankan life creating a huge gap between the old and new.

The consumption of this level was never seen in the past. Consumer goods of every type flooded the market “overnight.” It was heard that Sri Lanka was transformed to a “Singapore.” This new economy was worshipped, admired and overestimated by everyone. This was the power of the magical constitution drafted by JR Jayawardhane. A popular political commentator described this huge change as “Sri Lanka after JR” (Gunarathne, 1997). Actually, that Sri Lanka was not the earlier one and it was interpellated into an unknown-new Sri Lanka. That is why this research suggests that it is a shifting of paradigms. Consumerism, enjoyment, suppression, terror, competition, sex objects, and the new fetish commoditized life do not represent the earlier paradigms in identity, form, behavior or structure.

3.4. Sri Lankan cinema after 1977: The second paradigm

Accordance with the brief discussion related the origin of Sri Lankan cinema; one can understand that what sort of correlations seem to be in the economic bedrock and the cinema. It was unsurpassable interconnection as in other countries. When we evaluate the entire journey of Sri Lankan cinema completed, it is clearly understood that it comprises with two major paradigms. The first or early paradigm (1925-1977) is consisted with few sub-paradigms as follow:

- 1925 - *Rajakeeya Wickramaya*: TAJ Noorbaih
- 1936 - *Paliganeema*: Don Edward
- 1947 - *Kadawunu Poronduwa*: BAW Jayamanne
- 1956 - *Rekhawa*: Lester James Peries
- 1963 - *Gamperaliya*: Lester James Peries
- 1972 - *Nidhanaya*: Lester James Peries
- 1974 - *Ahas Gawwa*: Dharmasena Patiraja.

As the main argument of this paper, the second paradigm of Sri Lankan cinema began 1977 and it is valid up to date. Including early film industrial monopolies of producing sector and most of film making aspects and parameters have been vastly changed in this zone. Especially the state entrepreneurship has been transformed into speculative or trans-national capital. Sometimes, private capital like Soma Edirisinghe, MilinaSumathipala, and UpulShanthaSannasgala have rushed to filmmaking business and that capital was accumulated through the investments of Jewelry, pawing, newspaper and electronic media agencies, tuition education and gambling like turf accounting. In some extent, there was international capital also invested from Japan, France, and some few countries. Based on these different types of production relations, there were few sub-paradigms representing the second paradigm of Sri Lankan cinema.

- 1980 - *Hansa Vilak*: Dharmasiri Bandaranayake
- 1983 - *Dadayama*: Wasantha Obeysekere
- 1996 - *Anantha Rathriya*: Prasanna Vitanage
- 2000 - *Me Mge Sandai*: Ashoka Handagama
- 2005 - *Sulanga Enu Pinisa*: Vimukthi Jayasundara.

3.5. Three revolutions

Most of the film scholars researched in Sri Lankan film industry have shown three major revolutions in filmmaking history. Obviously, the first revolutionary director was Dr. Lester James Peries who was conferred as the father of Sri Lankan cinema. Dr. Dharmasena Patiraja shifted the wave of cinema tradition in 1974 making *Ahas Gawwa* and it was the second revolution. He had absolutely changed the Lestorian paradigm with his concentration of plot, structure, philosophy and whole cinematic language. Again one can observe the third revolution commenced by Prasanna Vitanage and Ashoka Handagama who have opened the great doors to the international film market and internationally awarded accreditation. These two significant revolutions occurred in the so-called second paradigm.

3.6. Government contribution, the role of film producer and film director

1972, Sri Lanka State Film Corporation was established under the slogan “Toward an Indigenous Cinema.” They have kept the peoples’ promises and furnished many things to generate very big film culture with wider political philosophy. But after 1977, the executive presidency was constituted as an eco-political designation. Then, the earlier vision and mission got completely changed and corrupted. “The system worked quit well, without a single court case filed against the SFC till 1977. It was after Anton Wickramasinghe, (The Chairman of Film Corporation from 1979 to 1989) dismantled the system in 1979, that there was an influx of court actions against the corporation, with over 100 such actions instituted to date” (Nihalsinghe 2005).

When it was 1971, 80% screen time was allocated for the foreign films including English, Tamil and Hindi (ibid). The film corporation was constructing the industry with a certain agenda, obtaining that screen time for the Sinhala films as well as making a balance from the side of imported films also. Actually, the film attendance and audience were increased by a significant number. DB Nihalsinghe who conducted a research on this matter, mentions that the decline occurred since the immature political shift in the Sri Lankan economy, 1977-1979 marked the highest point of cinema attendance in Sri Lanka with 74.4 Million admissions and when chairman Wickramasinghe retired in 1989, it had declined to 27.8 Million, a loss of 45.6 Million in annual attendance (ibid).

Anyhow, while losing the grip from government interference, the capital accumulated from beyond the nation state and private sector, started to make films in much-acclaimed level. Prasanna Vitanage’s *Anantha Rathriya* opened the gate to the international film festivals. Consequently, younger film directors invaded the entity with huge enthusiasms. Stepping in to the new millennium, film directors such as Ashoka Handagama, Somaratne Dissanayake, Sudath Mahadiwulwewa, Inoka Sathyanganie, Linton Semage, Sathyajith Maitipe, Prasanna Jayakody, Sumith Rohana, Athula Liyanage, Vimukthi Jayasundara, and Sanjeeva Pushpakumara have utilized the multi-faceted capital modes and won many international film festivals with high concentration. Vimukthi Jayasundara won the “camera dor prize” from renowned Cannes in 2005 for his debut feature film *Sulanga Enu Pinisa* (The Forsaken Land). International film producers like NHK and some international collaborated productions have marked a fresh avenue to think of filmmaking. Vimukthi found a producer for his second film from India, and he directed the film foe Bengal government. As well as the younger generation attracted to the filmmaking had the opportunity to get foreign film trainings in famous film schools (Vimukthi Jayasundara in France, Boodi Keerthisena in New York and Sanjeeva Pushpakuamara in Korea). All those behaviors without any hesitation can be recognized as the rational results of liberal economic reformations after 1977.

3.7. Film circulation, preservation and the role of film critic

In the second paradigm of cinema in Sri Lanka, though the international fame came up, the amount of film theaters and film spectatorship has been declined badly as mentioned before. One fatal reason for this unfortunate collapsing is highly politicized film governing body, and private sector ad hocked influence with only the profit-making sense (ibid). All the circulation and other strategies had been planned in broader public entrepreneurship but it ended with mistaken strategies in badly politicized private sector after introducing open economy based on power politics.

This research explored four major inquiry commissions timely imposed. Only the first commission (chaired by Jothiyasena Wickramasinghe in 1962) was truly success and the rest of them AJ Gunawardhane commission in 1985, Ambalawaner commission in 1991 and Senaka Bandaranayake commission in 1995 were influenced by polity and business grids (ibid). Some owners of film circulation companies were representing those commissions and that proved the politicization.

The film preservation or archiving also came to an entity which was invaded by self-appointed business. No government proper policy planning, private sector plundered the vacuum. The other thing is that contemporary cinema does not want to concept of preservation, because of those films are made in digital mode. In the age of ultra-capital, early gradual steps of productions are being vanished. These

repercussions can be seen without difference in the field of film criticism. At the contemporary cinema, there is no specific honored service generated by film critics. The film criticism also is being reduced to couple of narrow sentences or statement or ultimately to an advertisement. Sometime it is simply printed on the DVD cover, like “merely a great movie.”

This “paradigm shift” in Sri Lankan cinema and the existing moment of the society are amalgamating day by day and drowning in thousands of commodity signs or simulacrum. The current Central Bank report does not incorporate Sri Lankan film industry to the industrial segment but under the entertainment factor. The definition given into the film industry in Sri Lanka portrays the crisis and the uncertainty of the subject. The film is one of the gigantic entertaining industries. Although the TV or internet invaded the field, the well-established transnational trading companies were not shocked or cracked. The most of the western countries have changed their point of views and strategies, understanding the formation of the new cinema in a postmodern moment. We observe the same condition appearing in Sri Lanka, but in a mode of “perversion” in some extent or as the repercussions of late capitalism.

4. Conclusion

This paper hopes to test some hypothesis related Sri Lankan cinema, simultaneously with some dimensions in the economy. In the mid of the 20th century, the art mode named cinema introduced into semi-fuddle, post-colonial Sri Lanka and gradually it become a very lucrative business of few entrepreneurs. However, with the strong effort of committed people, the film business was converted to a deep art form when it reached to end of the 70s. Accordance with the power change in 1977, the UNP government introduced the liberal economic reforms to Sri Lanka, then it effected thoroughly to the film industry without any special. Sri Lankan cinema after introducing the open economy has transformed to a dream factory reality or commodity or simulacrum governed by the logic of the consumerism, while they are overcoming international market and makeable fame. This significant turn or interpellation is recognized in this research as a paradigm shift in Sri Lankan cinema and the concept of paradigm shift is borrowed from the contribution made by Thomas Kuhn in the field of general science in 1962.

References

- Amarasena, A.U. (2008), *Sinhale Maha Sinama Wanshaya*. Colombo: Book Post Publishers.
- Amunugama, S. (1990), *Notes on Sinhala Culture*. 2nd Print. Colombo: MD Gunasena.
- Cayne, B.S., editor. (1987), *New Lexicon Webster’s Dictionary*. New York: Lexicon.
- Crowther, J., editor. (1996), *Oxford Advanced Learner’s Dictionary*. 5th ed. London: Oxford University Press.
- de Ronnie, M. (1978), *Budget Speech-1978*. Colombo: Ministry of Finance. 15th November; 1977.
- de Ronnie, M. (1979), *Budget Speech-1979*. Colombo: Ministry of Finance and Planning. 15th November; 1978.
- De Silva Colvin, R.D. (1995), *Ceylon Under the British Occupation*, Reprint. New Delhi: Navrang.
- Dissanayake, W., Rathnavibhushana, A. (2000) *Profiling Sri Lankan Cinema*. Colombo: Asian Film Centre.
- Eagleton, T. (1996), *The Illusions of Postmodernism*. USA: Blackwell Publishers.
- Fuller, S. (2000), *Thomas Kuhn: A Philosophical History for Our Time*. New Delhi: Orient Logman.
- Gunarathne, D.K. (1997), Abeysekara C, editor. *JR Gen Pasu Lankawa: Pashchath Yatath Vijitha Rajya Wyuhaya Newatha Sakas Veema*”, Part II, *Prawada*. Colombo: Prawada Publishers.
- Gunasinghe, N. (2007), *Changing Socio-Economic Relations in Kandyan Countryside*, 2nd Print. Colombo: Social Scientists Association.
- Jayamanne, L. (1992), *Hunger for images: Myths of femininity in Sri Lankan CINEMA 1947-1989*. *South Asia Bulletin*, 12(1), 57-75.
- Jayasena, N. (2010), *Where have all the Tamils gone? Ethnicity and the body in the films of PrasannaVithanage*. *Quarterly Review of Film and View*. UK: Routledge.
- Jayasena, N. (2012), *Like making love to God: The politics of intimacy in Vimukthi Jayasundara’s The Forseen Land*. *South Asian Popular Culture*. New York: Routledge.
- Jayawardhena, K. (2000), *Nobodies to Some Bodies: The Rise of the Colonial Bourgeoisie in Sri Lanka*. Colombo: Social Scientists Association.

- Judy, P., Bill, T. (1996), *The Oxford English Reference Dictionary*. 2nd ed. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Kannangara, P.D. (1966), *The History of the Ceylon Civil Service (1802-1833)*. Dehiwala: Tisara Prakasa-Kayo.
- Kuhn, T.S. (1970), *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. 2nd ed. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- Lakshman, W.D. (1997), *Dilemmas of Development, Fifty Years of Economic Change in Sri Lanka*. Colombo: Sri Lanka Association of Economists.
- McLuhan, M. (2003), *Understanding Media*, Reprint. London: Rutledge.
- Moore, M. (1992), *What Kind of Capitalism Does Sri Lanka Need? Visiting Lecture Series-II*. Colombo: Institute of Policy Studies.
- Nayanajith, K.N. (2005), *Sri Lankeya SinamaWanshaya*. Nugegoda: Sarasavi Publishers.
- Nihalsinghe, D.B. (2015), *Public Enterprise in Film Development: Success and Failure in Sri Lanka*. Canada: Radford Publishing.
- Rathnavibhushana, A., Cruze, R. (2002), In: Aruna, V., Vasudev, A., Padgaonkar, L., Doraiswami, R., editors. *Calm Beneath the Storm, Being and Becoming the Cinemas of Asia*. India: Macmillan.
- Roberts, M. (1995), *Caste Conflict and Elite Formation: The Rise of a Karawa Elite in Sri Lanka 1500-1931*. New Delhi: Navrang.
- Sawarimuttu, R. (1977), *Development of the Sinhala Cinema*. Colombo: OCIC Publication.
- Senevirathne, H.L. (1999), *The work of Kings*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press.
- Summers, D. (1993), *Longman Dictionary of English Language and Culture*. 3rd ed. Harlow: Longman Group.
- Wickramasinghe, J., Weeraman, P.E., Siriwardhane, R. (1965), *The Report of the Commission of Inquiry in to the Film Industry in Ceylon*, Colombo, Government Press Ceylon, Seasonal Paper II, Appointed by His Excellency the Governor - General on September 10; 1962.
- Zizek, S. (2005), *Interrogating the Real*. London, New York: Continuum International Publishing Group.