

Effective understanding; attempt of using motion pictures to direct Sri Lankans towards Post-war Reconciliation with Reference of “Him. Her. The other” and “Demons in Paradise”

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Visual media is a universal language. It addresses almost every living species on the world. The two films “Him. Her. The other” by Prasanna Vitanage, Vimukthi Jayasundera and Asoka Handagama, and “Demons in the Paradise” by Jude Ratnum can be identified as an effort they made to picturize the unseen, unidentified and unrevealed corners of the aftermaths and consequences of the 30 years of war in Sri Lanka. These films were given different messages, backgrounds and they had shown different insights of war that victims had to face. From the two motion pictures and their contents, the way they address the concept of reconciliation, it is fair to assume that the visual media is one of the best medium to address the social consciousness of lay people especially with reference to key elements of reconciliation like replacing fear, coexistence, empathy and non-violence. The aim of this study was to understand whether these two selected films address the conscious of the spectators, originated due to an unsolved question which resulted in 30 years of war and if so how they address them. This was a case study conducted through forums among spectators of the two selected motion pictures and the sample selection had been limited to the age group of below 45 years from both Tamils and Sinhalese who were not directly affected by the 30 years of civil war. The forums conducted with the spectators did not show any aggressive or negative perspective therefore, it was likely possible to anticipate a better attitudinal change from them in near future. The findings might not be representative of the study population due to the fact that the number of screenings completed so far, do not represent the majority viewership of both Sinhalese and Tamils. With the limited number of screenings and with the received mindful and positive responses it endured the hint that even in public screenings there were no any negative or aggressive responses and certainly these two films can attract the minds of the majority of the Sri Lankans to the path of reconciliation.

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