

Histories on stage : Analysis of the Tamil dramatic texts based on Poothathamby

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There are more than 10 dramatic texts based on the stories of Poothathamby (character from folklore) in Tamil and English. The first drama was written in 1830, by the poet, Parimalam. There are more than 5 Tamil dramatic texts written, and performed, based on true historical events in all genres of Tamil theatre. Poothathamby was executed for treason. He was handed over by Andrado, with all the zeal and promptitude of a loyal servant and citizen. The tragic event took place soon after the Dutch took over Jaffna from the Portuguese in 1658. The same year, Poothathamby was executed.

Each of the dramatic texts interprets or compares or alters the written histories of Poothathamby. This study will try to understand how the historical events documented in the form of dramatic text are visualized on stage in period style. There are some particular historical events repeated in an imaginative way to tell the whole story in dramatic texts.

Three dramatic texts have been selected for this study. They are selected based on the date of publication.

As these dramatic texts are one of the effective media to teach histories and raise awareness on culture, traditions and customs as substitutes for textbooks, collaborative work with a multidisciplinary approach will help to understand the historical dramatic texts in detail.

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