

# Revival or Survival: Colonising Bodies in Folk Dance

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(ගිරි දේවි කවි)

I like to know which part of flesh you are talking about. You can carry your figure; you can expose your belly and its ok, you can do that if you have a figure to do that. Why criticise me, my culture, and techniques I do? Bodies are meant beautiful to be watched  
Channa Wijewardana (Choreographer)<sup>1</sup>

## Introduction

Folk dance is a terminology which has been a highly debatable term that signifies variety of meanings of human activities involved with recreational, ritual and healing practices. Folk dance has also been generally identified with the term ethnic dance which is involved with recreational activities performed by different communities and minority groups in many cultures. Majority of scholars of folk traditions and some ethnographers have been controversially as well as questionably employed contradictory terms to identify and analyse these folk traditions operative in major cultures and varied sub cultural terrains (Snoeyenbos & Knapp, 1979). This paper thus looks at this phenomenon of folk dance traditions and offers a categorical analysis of how these dance traditions can be analysed within contemporary social realities.

I will draw some ethnographic analyses of folk dance practices and their contemporary relevance of revival and related issues pertaining to survival and also resistance to dramatic social changes. Building upon such ethnochoreological<sup>2</sup> works, this paper argues that the cry of revival and sustainability of such traditions reflect the post-colonial adaptability and seeking of identity of communities and individuals whose ethnic traditions are being at stake. Further this paper illustrates how these folk dance groups adapt to the cultural comodification by colonising their bodies to be able to fit into the torrents of neo-liberal hegemonies.

## Terminological dispute

It is vital to discuss many variations of terms used by ethnographers and scholars who study diverse practices of folk dance in many cultures. Oxford Dictionary of Dance explains the term folk dance as any form of dance practice which has not been developed by an individual teacher or a particular choreographer (Craine and Mackrell, 2010). This explains how the folk traditions have emerged and been evolved through oral traditions or transferring this knowledge through genealogy of bodies. In folk dance, it is difficult to trace an individual inventor or a particular starting point of a dance form. All the practices and norms are passed down to generations of dancers through bodily imitation and repetition.



Fig. 1: Ball room dance in early 19<sup>th</sup> century regarded as upper class dance form.



Fig. 2: Peasant dance - Pieter Bruegel's painting

According to the Oxford Dictionary definition, it further reveals that the term folk dance in the Western cultures goes back to 18<sup>th</sup> century when the '*peasant dance*' traditions needed to be distinguished from the upper class social dances. Further some research have revealed that even in 15<sup>th</sup> century western society had been used the term 'folk dance' in contrast to the ballroom dance first emerged as a recreational dance in those societies. However, it is clear that the term folk dance is used to denote some community dance forms which can be categorised as less complicated and non-refined work of art in comparison to the other elite forms such as ballroom or classical ballet.

However, the term folk dance is generally referred to recreational and aesthetic body practices performed by different communities. As far as the folk dance is concerned, it is also labelled as *social dance* because the main purpose of the dance is to allow people to interact with each other in recreational settings without a particular instruction or formal guidance (Nielsen & Ebook, 2011, p. xvii). Further, folk dance can be considered as *ritual dance* when it is performed for healing or spiritual purposes. This folk dance also can be a *theatrical dance* if they are designed and choreographed by a group of people or an individual whose intention is to revive and celebrate a particular tradition or a heritage of a community. Neilson coins this modes of practice as ‘folksy peasant motif’ (Nielsen & Ebook, 2011, p. xix).



Fig. 3: Canadian folk dance



Fig. 4: Rajasthan folk dance

Nevertheless, ritual dance, social dance, communal dance or ethnic dance can be identified with the generic term, folk dance. In some instances, these folk dances can also be *national dances* because they are played and enjoyed by the mass during festive seasons or simply perform to enhance the national pride of the mass. For instance folk traditions such as Tarentella of Italy, the Hambo of Sweden, the Scárdás of Hungary, the Kolo of Surbia, Bharata nāṭyam in India are recognised as national dance forms performed for the national pride of the people.

Even though there are three key traditions of dance which dominate Sri Lankan dance forms, kandyan dance is considered as the national dance for the Sri Lankans'.<sup>3</sup> In Nielsen's categorisation, it is inevitable that folk dance can be transformed and interpreted through many forms according to the ways of practicing them within certain social and cultural

happenings. In that sense, folk dance is transformed as ritual, social, national, or theatrical dance regardless of their roots of origins and contextual references.

### **Hierarchies of dance**

Among other south Asian countries such as India, Bangladesh, Nepal, or Bhutan, Sri Lankan folk tradition has been glorified as one of the unique traditions among other folk traditions remaining today in the region. Sri Lankan dance traditions are basically dominated by three key traditions which are recognised as Kandyan, Southern and Sabaragamuwa dance. These three dance traditions are regarded as heritage dance in the country and further recognised as complex traditions than that of ethnic folk traditions. Despite these major traditions, there are many communal and recreational performance activities adapted from those key traditions. They are practiced during harvesting times and other religious and social celebrations which take place throughout the year. *Kulu nátum, raban nátum, kalagedi nátum, chāmara nátum, pathuru nátum, govi nátum* are some of the recreational dance forms available in Sri Lanka today. Furthermore, there are some social sports and festival activities performed by communities which could also be categorised as folk dance because they not only possess recreational sport elements but also some dance forms and singing elements incorporated with them. *Mevara keliya, ankeliya, Olinda keliya, kurumbu keliya* are some examples for folk sports which are blended with dance and singing. Many practitioners who have direct links with these three dance traditions argue that folk traditions are not complex and refined enough to recognise as full fledge dance formations. However, according to Nielson's analysis, these hierarchies among complex dance and simple peasant dance forms cannot exist as stable categories. There is a play between categories because their utilitarian purposes are shifted according to the ways certain communities have used and applied these dance forms within varied social needs.

### **Revival model**

At this juncture, I would like to turn to the analysis of such folk dance activities whose works and revival strategies can be analysed through some of the insights provided by an ethnochoreologist Andriy Nahachewsky. Nahachewsky's extended field work with many folk

traditions and dance practitioners has given the opportunity to understand the variety of strategies used by folk dance groups whose connections to traditional roots are not clearly visible. As she affirms that folk dance has been recreated in ‘non-peasant setting’ for many years and this phenomenon also has been a significant turn in ethnographic studies of folk traditions. ‘Non-peasant setting’ here refers to the dance practitioners whose folk practices are not directly related to original practices of such dance. As I have discussed in the earlier sections, the contemporary dance groups whether they perform traditional, national or ritualistic dance practices, are rarely related to the traditional families whose profession is to perform such rituals or ceremonies for living. The majority of those contemporary groups are modern dance groups whose intention is to revive or preserve such traditions through reliving in the lost tradition of dance, rituals, customs and above all a way of living. But none of them are actually reliving the ways that their predecessors used to live and work within authentic social folk settings.

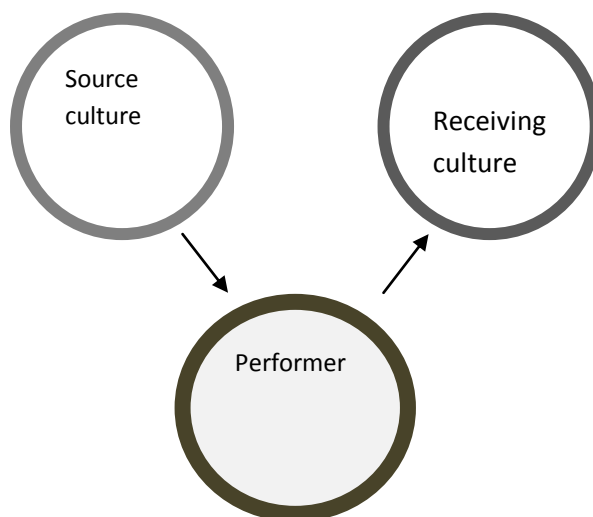


Diagram 1: Nahachewski's revival folk dance paradigm

Nahachewsky introduces two terms to identify contemporary adaptation of folk dance groups. According to her analysis, some groups are dedicated to revive and recreate the past performances as they used to be. These groups are revivals. Second group is called ‘vivals’. This group practically has no direct connection to the past performance or tradition but they follow the formations and movements of the folk performances for the reception of receiving culture. Nahachewsky introduces five strategies for understanding the strategies used by different revival and vival groups of dancers: 1. Enjoyers, 2. Preservers, 3. Presenters, 4. Creators and 5. All stars.<sup>4</sup> There are some variations between these five strategies and at the

same time they are sometimes overlapped. Interestingly, Nahachewsky's final category, All-star encapsulates all the elements discussed in other four categories. Therefore, I might look at it as to get the enough information to understand the whole aspect of these revival strategies.

There are three domains of activities involved with such strategies in making folk dance forms. First there should be a source tradition. Secondly, there should be a performer and finally a receiving culture. First category, Enjoyers typically come from the source culture or vaguely related to it and they want the enjoyment of performing folk dance movements. Their purpose is to have fun and they do not consider performing for the audience as a priority. Preservers generally are dedicative to dig down to the source culture to find the most authentic experience and ritualistic roots of the dance. They may have a close connection to the source culture and they spend their time, in some instances their whole life to study, preserve, and further recreate the exact replication of such a tradition. Next group is Presenters. They are the people who have ancestral connection to the source dance tradition and the authentic inheritors of such dance traditions. In some situations their roles as Presenters are shifted and become Preservers. They are much comfortable with their knowledge and inheritance of the tradition and they have the capacity to improvise the folk tradition within their known boundaries. Creators are interested in developing creative dance using traditional elements for the receiving culture. Their focus is to revitalise the source culture and bring forth a new version of folk tradition in favour of the aesthetic palette of the receiving culture. The final and the most interesting strategy is the All-star (I can do it all) approach.

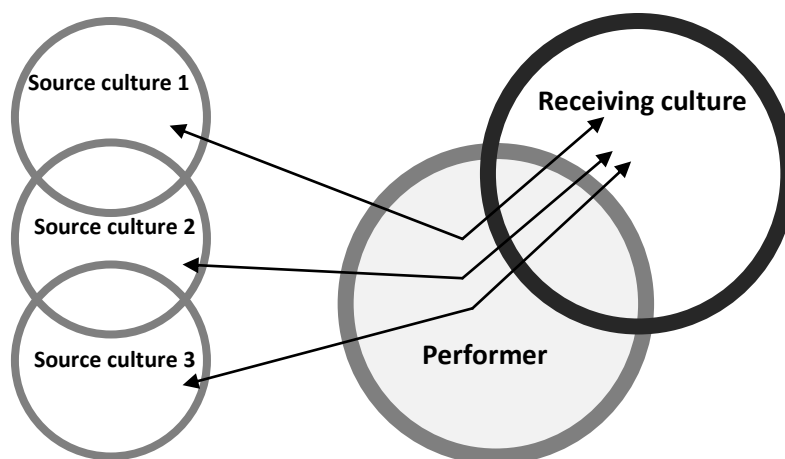


Diagram 2: All-star category (Nahachewsky's diagram only indicates a one-way channel of borrowing folk elements from source culture. But I have changed it providing arrows directing towards both source and receiving cultures to indicate it's intra-cultural and trans-cultural flows).

The case study I will offer in this paper clearly demonstrates this category which is known as All-star category in folk dance tradition. Nahachewsky further states that this group is generally capable of mixing all the other categories and create folk dance which does not directly refer to the source culture and its values. They are initially motivated by source culture and adapt folk dance aesthetics to recreate hybrid performance. As Nahachewsky explains, their motivations towards authentic revival of a folk tradition ironically work as a counterproductive effort. Nahachewsky further argues:

Many dance groups, then are, like home-built vehicles made of spare parts. The general impression that “authenticity is good” often leads to conservative instinct in leading a dance group. The result is often strongly blended activities which counter productively pulls our efforts in opposing directions (Nahachewsky, 2008, p.50).

These groups are all rounders or in Nahachewsky’s term, “jack-of-all-trades” (master of none) where their skills are refined through incorporating different source cultural elements from diverse roots and re-structured and presented as a hybrid form of cultural commodity.

### **Folk dance as hybrid**

Even though the traditional dance forms are categorised and split into high art or low art, the dance itself is a highly complex human behaviour. It is very difficult question for anthropologists and dance theorists to define why people dance. There are many definitions and explanations given by many dancers and theorists. It can be simply defined that there are certain ritualistic, cosmic, holistic or therapeutic reasons for people to dance and continue to be dancing throughout the human history. Whatever rationale lies behind these human practices, they dance because they gain pleasure or in some instance pain. But it is a difficult exercise to explain why people gain pleasure from engaging in stylised movements (Nielsen & Ebook, 2011, p. xviii). There are many varied reason for people to dance and move in different spaces through stylised forms of behaviours. There are some utilitarian views of having dance bodies because people believe that these dance brings them wealth and prosperity. Some people dance because it is used as a healing method to get rid of diseases or natural calamities. Some people dance because they gain pleasure, excitement or an exultation of being moved by certain rhythms and actions. Dance theorist Barbara Ehrenreich

suggests that people's motivations to dance is universally coded similar to other human activities such as sex, feasting or music.



Fig. 5, 6: Folk movements, costumes and rhythms are reinvented and inscribed within contemporary urban bodies. Photo by Sagara Lakmal De Mel.

However, folk dance traditions around the world despite their variations and complexities of codifications and performances have been reducing their utilitarian ways of using them. The original ritualistic, therapeutic or pleasurable purposes have been shifted to the current needs which are increasingly changing through social, political and economic systems. For instance, many folk dance traditions are performed or celebrated today not within their original venues. The originality of these performances and communal purposes has been dramatically declined but they are still being reinvented for the purpose of preserving, archiving or rather a way of resisting to the pressure imposed by the global cultural flows. In this way, most of the folk dance traditions have been re-contextualised as “nationalistic dance” where performers, group of people, or dance troupes showcase their resistance against the neo-liberal avalanches sweeping through the peripheries.

In fact, it is too early here to define whether these reincarnations of hybridised dance forms actually resist to the global pressures of economies which bring a new cultural logic for the peripheral regions. We should be aware of what these new forms of dance do and what kind of values and ideologies they carry and celebrate within contemporary dance industries.





Fig. 7: Tradition is showcased for colonial fathers – CHOGUM 2013

It should be noted that this apparent resistance (revival of traditional dance) towards the social changes taking place in relatively traditional societies such as Sri Lanka, India, or Burma, is a paradox. It is argued that due to globalisation, the national and cultural identities need to be protected and preserved. Therefore, folk traditions are increasingly renewed and reinvented with changing social conditions. But ironically, these creators of new folk performance are unconsciously been influenced by ideal narratives imposed by the trans-cultural flows. Therefore, folk art is transformed into an intercultural commodity blended with new technologies and idealised bodies to glorify nationalistic and chauvinistic sentiments. These folk traditions are being revised and re-performed within commercial venues, trans-national ceremonies, national state arenas where neo-liberal economies and trans-national policies take hold of internal affairs, arts and cultures while homogenising cultural identities of peripheral countries. But these folk dance and cultural pageants are unwittingly showcasing the fact that they celebrate the transnational hybrid of folk traditions and explicit trans-national bodies to cater the need of cultural commoditisation. Therefore, root course of ritualistic and communal purposes of folk dance performing have been diminishing and been shifted to reform new purposes of performance making. Folk tradition thus re-appears as a form of fake resistance to new forms of colonisation through neo-colonial mimicry (Bial, 2004, pp. 337-344) These new forms of colonial mimicry undoubtedly produce second rate colonial agents while mimicking coloniser's habits, social

relations, aesthetic paradigms and most importantly the mentality in the colonised. Homi K. Bhabha argues thus:

Colonial mimicry is the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, *as a subject of a difference that is almost the same, but not quite*'. Which is to say, that the discourse of mimicry is constructed around an *ambivalence*; in order to be effective, mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excesses, its difference (Bial, 2004, p. 338).

As I have argued so far, it is clearly inevitable that the true meaning of the folk tradition and the authentic ways of performing and connecting with communal, ritualistic or healing purposes are being transformed into a project of making *ambivalence* Others. Contemporary folk dance has reconstructed a new form of social ritual. It is a ritual that exploit bodies of women and men to be realised the colonial Other but cannot be fully realised in the course of its process.

As Neilson also argues that modern conception of folk dance can be identified with a group of dancers whose intention is to perform and replicate the imaginary phantom tradition that is not existed anymore in the current context (Nielson 2011). They perform, develop and reaffirm a lost tradition which is believed to be revitalised through hybridising various aspects of dance. These forms of *neo-folk* (fake) *movements* perhaps travel beyond the national boundaries while celebrating the hybrid nature of trans-national cultural flows. In other words, these globalised folk traditions are performed in front of multicultural audiences, particularly for the colonial Other whose project is to homogenise the cultural identities. But ironically, cultural autonomies of different folk traditions are simultaneously being put forward and at the same time being homogenised through the act of reviving.



Fig. 8: Mimicking coloniser's mind and exploring new lands. Photo by Sagara Lakmal De Mel.

Due to contemporary development of media and digital technology, folk dance performances are commonly available artefacts via which spectators around the world can consume at any time when they want to have a glimpse of this art as well as ideal bodies of dancers. The authentic setting where folk dance used to be performed and received by the audience has been changed. In the contemporary trans-national folk performances, audiences can be specific and consisted of multicultural groups, perceiving the performance as to sympathise and over empathise with the colonised. While dance groups are performing with the mentality of “being transformed as a coloniser” and embodying the Other’s values, language, behaviours, and the way of life, the coloniser laments for guilt of being a coloniser. However, these audiences are limited and perhaps enclosed within selected elite communities including entrepreneurs, politicians, artists and scholars. Therefore, contemporary folk dance is performed and appreciated with ‘non-peasant setting’ where the authentic communities in which these dance forms are originally performed are not present. The traditional face to face audience is shifted by the virtual audience developed through cameras, mobile phones, internet and digital media. They are captured, manipulated, and later distributed through the World Wide Web, attracting wider audiences in the every corner of the world.

### **Bodies of folks: a case**

Sensualities of dancer’s body and the mimicking of coitus movements of female bodies seem to be a common development of the contemporary revival dance traditions. Not only female bodies that are highly eroticised according to the global floors of idealised body whose unprecedented ‘skinny-ness’ are highly erotic commodity for the global audience, but the feminising male bodies is also an accelerating tendency. In order to discuss this matter, I would like to take a case study via which this point can be elaborated. This case is taken from one of the most popular and highly regarded Sri Lankan dance troupe formed and managed by a well-known dancer and a choreographer Channa Wijewardana.

Channa is a dancer mastered in traditional Sri Lankan kandyan dance form and later becomes a choreographer forming a dance troupe, which fulfils the contemporary need of mediatised dance performance. His dance troupe first becomes popular when the dance acts are incorporated within early music videos and variety programs in television medium. He demonstrates the ability to develop what he calls a Sri Lanka ballet through hybridising local

dance, Western classical dance and popular culture, regimens of sports movements, and international modelling. Yet his expertise in dance has been exemplified within the selection of female bodies which mirror the contemporary ideal bodies. These bodies have a high demand for the modelling industry and TV commercials in the national and global media. Channa as a (ethno) choreographer generously offers these ideal models while developing his choreographed body movements and postures which are not so much of connected to a particular tradition but signifies highly erotic connotations for the onlooker.



Fig. 9: Sigiri (Lion Rock) frescoes painting (477 – 495 CE) in Sri Lanka believed to be the princess and her servant painted on the wall of the Sigiri rock.



Fig. 10: Twenty first century recreation of lost kingdom by Channa Wijewardana – CHOGUM 2013.

Channa's dance troupe perhaps creates the idealised harem in which the female dancers appear as princesses or perhaps courtesans. Further his way of choreographing female body movements, garnishing with a bit of folksy flavour, breaks the boundaries of female performance in Sri Lankan folk traditions. Their ways of interacting, moving and further creating body postures while connecting with each others' bodies signify erotic sentiment for the spectator. While choosing tall, skinny bodies with larger hips and exposed bellies, Channa purposely recreates a cosmetic body for us. These bodies of women are surgically crafted through Channa's ability to manipulate and select ideal bodies.<sup>5</sup> One significant aspect of his dancers is that in some instances, his dancers do not dance (perhaps in these revival strategies, the dance is a second layer of meanings inscribed on the dancer's body. What matter is the persona which brings forth the flesh of the performer to the spectator) but offer certain poses and sculptured body parts and postures, enhancing certain erotic parts of the body for the spectator. He undoubtedly knows that the audience does not really want to see a

particular folk or traditional dance but their sole intention is to see the bodies of his beauties. Therefore, Channa does not need to bother about finding a particular authenticity of ‘folksy’ movements or he does not need to stick to a particular tradition. He knows that what the spectator wants is the pleasure of gazing at bodies despite the tradition they perform on stage. Channa therefore brings forth our idealised bodies of women in front of us and showcase them for a few minutes while our sexual fantasies are temporary satisfied.



Fig. 11: Idealising women through men's body. Photo Sagara Lakmal De Mel.

Later part of Channa's dancing career, he begins to introduce an ideal model of the male figure. Although his ideal male figure is a product replicating the ideal model of man developed and enhanced through the media, he further garnishes his model dancer with a touch of feminine flavour. His male figures are a representation of male bodies but connote shifting maleness and blurring their gender identities. In that sense, his male figure is placed in between ideal female and male body. Channa's dance troupe in Sri Lanka is highly spirited, as well as well trained and perhaps cleanly groomed group of people who travel around the globe, demonstrating Sri Lankan heritage and folk culture to the anonymous audiences mainly organised by the Sri Lankan foreign diplomacy.<sup>6</sup> What Channa and his dance bodies successfully demonstrate is how our sensualities are a construction of certain social and cultural discourses and the “sex” is not a stable condition or a pre-given biological state of the dancer but a shifting condition or a possibility (potential) of alteration, change and

further reiteration according to the certain norms governed by the social values. Judith Butler clearly states this idea thus:

Thus “sex” is a regulatory ideal whose materialization is compelled, and this materialization takes place (or fails to take place) through certain highly regulated practices. In other words, “sex” is an ideal construct which is forcibly materialized through time. It is not a simple fact or a static condition of the body, but a process whereby regulatory norms materialize “sex” and achieve this materialize through a forcible reiteration of those norms (Welton, 1998, p. 71).

Dance bodies of Channa thus offer a commodification of the folk dance and simultaneously transcend these folk identities into elaborate sexualised performative bodies. Here, this symbolic transformation of sex as a performativity is an important factor to understand as Butler further argues, how these female and male performative bodies produce “what it is not”. The presence of his dancer’s body hides the absence which simultaneously makes the dancer’s folksy body a symbol of tradition and modernity. Thus the female body is split into two domains: one expresses the idealisation of localised folksy body, its values and ethics; while the absence body expresses the popular culture, its values and contemporariness. What really matters is not what Channa and his girls and boys really want to convey through their dance practice but what it really represents through these performative bodies beyond their artistic practice and cultural coding.



Fig. 12



Fig. 13

Aseka Wijewardana as an ideal model in both folk and daily life. Photos by Hasith Prasanna Athukorala and [srilankanhotbeauties.blogspot.com](http://srilankanhotbeauties.blogspot.com)

Channa's hybridised bodies confirms and demands a performative body which cannot really be achieved by the general public whose idealisations of these young men and women bodies are suppressed as sexual fantasies. These dance bodies of folk tradition affirm that they are not "naturally given" bodies but highly selective and performatively crafted in order to be able to achieve the current needs of body commodification. But ironically, what these bodies do in the dance industry is to reaffirm the conception of beauty and womanhood in a challenging way.

Whether these bodies are cosmetically changed or psychophysically crafted through dance habituation, (selectively chosen for representing and preserving so called "dying cultural heritage"), these bodies are inherently succumbed to the surgical knife of the choreographer (father) whose aesthetic sentiments are displayed on these bodies. In that sense, no difference can be made between a choreographer and a cosmetic surgeon, whose expertise on women's bodies, boobs and buttocks or other body parts are surgically transplanted and enhanced by incisions, stiches and staples.



Fig. 14 Body as a "primitive entity" that is seen only as a potential.

My question is that many folk dance troupes mushrooming in the country pathetically demolish their own argument that the dance revives and revitalises the cultural heritage. It superficially appears as a cry against the colonizer's project but what it really does instead is re-affirming the coloniser's project by looking at the women's bodies as a cite of 'raw material to be exploited in terms of appearance, eroticism, nurturance, and fertility' (Welton, 1998, p. 334). Kathryn Pauly Morgan's writing further affirms that this colonial impairment

of female body is so defuse to the fact that the consciousness of the woman is itself succumbed to such a mutilation without knowing that she is being controlled by an anonymous power or a system.

The woman who check her makeup half a dozen times a day to see if her foundation has caked or her mascara has run, who worries that the wind or the rain may spoil her hairdo, who looks frequently to see if her stockings have bagged at the ankle, or who, feeling fat, monitors everything she eats, has become, just as surely as the inmate of the Panopticon (Cited in Welton, 1998, 334-335).

In this instance the power of the subject is transference as the dancer in this case, operates as a 'self-policing subject'. In this way, Sandra Lee Bartky argues that the contemporary female subject is manipulated by the non-presence of the coloniser (Cited in Welton, 1998, pp. 334-335). The irony of the folk dance troupes and their strategies is to resist the power of the new waves of social change and cultural dominations. But they are blind to the fact that they are also the victims of such colonisation in which they are a part and the parcel of the colonising process.

## **Conclusion**

In this paper, I have attempted to explore the strategies and techniques that are used to revive folk tradition and perhaps survival strategies in folk dance pertaining to contemporary dance scene in Sri Lanka. I have first introduced the definitions and arguments related to folk traditions in the world and how these folk traditions of dance have been defined with varied terminologies that are debatable among ethnographers and dance scholars. I have drawn five key strategies that revival groups of dancers use in order to engage with source cultures and dance traditions and reform them for receiving cultures. Among these strategies, I have particularly focused on the category named All-star to discuss how this category explains current practice of dance group formed by Channa Wijewardana in Sri Lanka. Taking this dancing group as a case study, I have argued that revival strategies of contemporary folk dance troupes implicate hybridisation of bodies, dance aesthetics and folk culture to mimic the coloniser's project. In these trance-cultural dance projects, these hybridised bodies are reiterated and reinscribed through contemporary ideal models of men and women. But these



dance bodies cannot fully realise their project which is becoming Other and remained as a “difference” between coloniser and colonised.

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## Notes

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- <sup>1</sup> See Channa Wijewardana in MTV 1 All about success, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yTsbLK-XWVU>
- <sup>2</sup> This term has been derived from the term ethnochoreographer. It is used to identify people who adapt folk dance and physical movement create new dance acts.
- <sup>3</sup> This conclusion in regards to the national dance in Sri Lanka does not present the author's view of this dance form. It is the general conception among people, dance choreographer and dancers to unconsciously think and consider Kandyan dance as the national dance of Sri Lanka. This conclusion may have made upon the fact that in contrast to other major traditions such as Sabaragamuva and Southern dance form, Kandyan dance is perceived as graceful and vigorous.
- <sup>4</sup> More details about these categories and how they work can be accessed through Andry Nahachevasky's paper, Nahachewsky, A. (2008). Folk Dance Revival Strategies. *Ethnologies*, 30(1), 41-57. doi: 10.7202/018834ar.
- <sup>5</sup> In an interview conducted by a journalist in MTV 1 channel in Sri Lanka, Channa replies to this critique and argues that he does not purposely 'select' girls for his dance troupes but most of the girls are being brought up within his dance school and later become matured, young dancers. However, it is clearly inevitable that all his students have not become key dancers of his groups but a very few. See: MTV 1, all about success, <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yTsbLK-XWVU>.
- <sup>6</sup> One can read many articles, photos and descriptions about Channa-Upuli dance group's foreign travels and performances in the World Wide Web. They have performed and represented Sri Lanka at many national celebrations, business forums and cultural festivals organised by Sri Lankan missions or Sinhala Diaspora in many cities including, New York, Chicago, Tokyo, Sydney and many more .

උක්ත ලිපියෙහි පර්යේෂණ සංක්ෂිප්තයේ සිංහල පරිවර්තනය පහත දැක්වේ.

මෙම ලිපියෙහි අරමුණ වන්නේ ජන නැටුම් ආශ්‍රිත නර්තන ප්‍රයුක්තය සහ විචාරය පිළිබඳ නවමු එළඹුමක් යෝජනා කිරීම යි. ජන නැටුම් යන යෙදුම විවිධ අරුත් සපයන වදනක් බව අමුතුවෙන් කිවයුතු නොවේ. ඒ අනුව මේ ලිපිය ආරම්භයේදී ජන නර්තනය පිළිබඳ විවිධ විද්වත් මත පළමුව පිරික්සුමට ලක්කෙරෙන අතර ජන වර්ග සහ ජාතිකත්වයන් තුළ ජන නර්තනය එකී වාර්ගිකත්වයන් සහ මානව ක්‍රියාවලියන් ඇසුරේ විවිධාකාර ලෙස අර්ථ නිරූපනය වන අයුරු පෙන්වා දෙයි. ජන නර්තන විෂය අරභයා මෙකී අදහස් පළමු කොටසෙන් සාකච්ඡා වෙන අතර ඊට සමගාමීව අන්දි නහවෙවුස්කි (Andriy Nahachewski) මානවවංශ නර්තන ශාස්ත්‍රඥවරිය ගේ ජන නර්තන මොඩලය විමසුමට ලක් කෙරේ. මෙම ජන නර්තන ප්‍රත්‍යානයන (Folk Dance Revival Model) මොඩලය ජන නර්තන විධික්‍රම සහ ඒවායේ ප්‍රත්‍යානයන උපක්‍රම (Revival Strategies) පිළිබඳ ව්‍යුහාත්මක විග්‍රහයක යෙදෙන අතර තත්කාලීන ජන නර්තනය සහ ඒ ආශ්‍රිත නර්තන සංරචනා ‘සකල නර්තන ප්‍රත්‍යානයන මොඩලයක්’ (All-Star Revival Model) ලෙස හඳුනා ගැනේ. මේ සංවාදයේ පසු භාගයේදී මෙම ප්‍රත්‍යානයන මොඩලය ශ්‍රී ලාංකේය නූතන ජන නර්තන සංරචනා සමග සංසන්දනාත්මක කියවීමකට ලක් කෙරෙන අතර නූතන නර්තන රචකයෙකු වන වන්න විජේවර්ධන ගේ සංකලනාත්මක (Hybrid) නර්තන රචනා කලාව මේ ඇසුරෙන් විමර්ශනය කෙරේ. විජේවර්ධනගේ නර්තන සංරචනා ජන නර්තනය, නූතන නර්තනය, සම්ප්‍රදායික ශ්‍රී ලාංකේය නර්තනය සහ ක්‍රීඩා වලන ඇසුරෙන් නිර්මිත සංකලනාත්මක නර්තන භාවිත කිරීමක් ලෙස මේ පර්යේෂණ පත්‍රිකාවෙන් යෝජනා කෙරෙනු ඇත. ඒ අතර ඔහුගේ ජන නර්තන ප්‍රත්‍යානයන ක්‍රියාවලිය එකී ජන නර්තනයන් ගේ මූලික මානවවංශ ස්වරූප හෝ ජන මූල නර්තන සංඥාර්ථ කේන්ද්‍රීය කොටගත් නර්තන භාවිත කිරීමක් නොවන බව තවදුරටත් පෙන්වා දෙනු ලැබේ. අවසාන වශයෙන් විජේවර්ධන ගොඩනංවන නර්තන ශරීරය ජන සංස්කෘතික පරාමිතීන් හෝ නිශ්චිත ශ්‍රී ලාංකේය ජාතිකත්වයක් උත්කර්ෂණය නොකරන අතර එය පාර-ජාතික, පාර-සංස්කෘතික, පුමතිරි ශරීරයක් අභිවහනය කරන බවට තර්ක කෙරෙයි. මෙයින්ද පාර-සංස්කෘතික ස්ත්‍රී ශරීරය සංඥාර්ථ කෙරෙන්නේ ශ්‍රී ලාංකේය ජන මූල නර්තනත්වයක් නොව නව්‍ය යටත්විජිත හිමියා නිර්මාණය කරන උත්සවමතික, විච්ඡේදිත ස්ත්‍රී කය යි. මෙකී විච්ඡේදිත ස්ත්‍රී ලීලාව අප තුළ ජනිත කරන්නේ කිසිදා පූර්ණත්වයට පත් නොවන, අනෙකා බවට රූපාන්තරණය වීමේ විපරිත අනුකරණයේ ආශය යි.