

Architecting the Nation from Ceylon to Sri Lanka, and the Role of the Evil Other

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Nation narration is instrumental in the process of nation building, and diverse narratives disseminated by leading political figures of Sri Lanka have had a significant impact on shaping the national identity of the country. However, in the process of nationbuilding, these leaders have often constructed another, who, in most cases, is evil. The present study aims to investigate this phenomenon by analysing two texts produced at significant political junctures of Sri Lanka, namely, *A Message to the Young Men of Ceylon* by Anagarika Dharmapala (1922) and the President's Speech to the Parliament on the defeat of the LTTE by the former Sri Lankan President Mahinda Rajapaksa (2009), with a view to critiquing the theories and politics of nationalism, nation construction, and nation narration imbued in the two texts vis-à-vis the concept of the other (Bhabha, 1996) via an in-depth textual analysis. The key theories utilised in critiquing these narratives are nation-building and narration theories of Homi Bhabha (1990) and Frantz Fanon (1963). The analysis revealed that both narratives have created another/s as a foil to the homogenous Sri Lankan nation the speakers envisioned, which poses a threat to the implied unified nature of the nation.

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