



# Exile Testimonio in Rudhramoorthy Cheran's *A Second Sunrise*

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## ***Abstract***

*Literature envisions socio-political realities, and also, at the same time, it acts as a bridge between the known and unknown. Texts in contemporary times are gaining momentum owing to the showcase of political monopolisation. At the same time, they draw a line between the personal and the political to understand the veracity of original truths. The historicity of text and the textuality of history are the predominant factors which determine the literariness of a text, and it also makes literature Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary. Exile Testimonio, as a theoretical discourse, acts as a threat to the power structures which operate at different levels owing to the impact of political monopolisation. Rudhramoorthy Cheran is a renowned poet who firmly emphasises the fact that poetry is a tool to foreground the unheard truths of the oppressed voices of his country and also, at the same time, attacks history, which exemplifies the falsified truths and histories. Researchers here emphasise the fact that Exile and Testimonio are not irreconcilable binaries, and exile testimonio confronts the impact created by the falsified truths and how these truths have ramified the political discourses which created havoc for the natives, which resulted in the mindscape and the landscape of the people.*

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Literature is said to be a culture-specific production. History is one of the predominant factors in contemporary times, making literature Interdisciplinary and Multidisciplinary. (Re)-visiting and (Re)-telling the truths in the text are gaining momentum in the current scenario, and it also determines the credibility of the presented fact. The literariness of a text is determined by the authenticity of truths and the validation of historical facts which the literary writers put forth. Literature encompasses all disciplines in a single entity. At the same time, it traverses the unexplored binaries, redefining the literary paradigm, which is the need of the hour. The outcome is that anthropologists and literary scholars have an intellectual platform that can thrive on their give and take; thus, the interdisciplinary approach to knowledge is enriched.



Rudhramoorthy Cheran, a renowned poet from Srilankan literature, is known for his renowned poems. His poetry foregrounds the voices of Srilanka and also the impact of cultural genocide, which has created a devastating impact in the minds of the people. Cheran presents himself as an insider and an outsider and culls out the brutalities which happened in the name of war. The landscapes were demolished, and the supreme irony is that subversion and containment were state-sponsored in the Srilankan discourse. In the name of nation and nationhood, common people's lives were threatened. However, books are said to be the repository of cultures which will keep the wounds alive. Home and Homelessness have become a common phenomenon in the Srilankan discourses, and the saddest truth is that initially, it was the norm, and later, it became a mode.

Exile Testimonio, as a political and theoretical discourse, vehemently protests against the politicised brutalities of the institutions that were not brought to the limelight due to political monopolisation. Writers of Exile Testimonio envision the political insight of the marginalised natives so that history will be re-read from the native's perspective, and it also puts an end to the manipulated truths. History is properly augmented, and the exile testimonialistas are said to be the torchbearers of their nativism and need to be documented properly in literary texts. The literary sensibility of the texts is made known to the world through a contrapuntal and bi-polar reading.

Rudhramoorthy Cheran is a socio-political writer, and his poetry articulates the political credibility of the natives concerning Srilankan soil at the same time, he questions the authenticity which encompasses the veracity of falsified truths and history. Through Rudhramoorthy Cheran, Exile Testimonio talks about the impact of the term after postcolonialism. The word post in postcolonialism has three meanings, i.e., After, Humanity, and Analysis. The texts of exile testimonio foreground the uncharted terrains in literary paradigms, and it has made literature rise above the horizons, cultural studies act as an impetus for Exile Testimonio, which makes the writers dwell upon literature, anthropology, economics, politics, social sciences and so on.

No wind that day;  
even the sea was dead,  
no waves rising. (ASS 1-3)

Rudhramoorthy Cheran, the pioneer in documenting people's mindscapes and landscapes, is known for his exuberant writing style. While pursuing his undergraduate studies, he was on the terrace of his residence. He looked at the brutalities that happened in the name of preserving and destroying one's cultural identity, which is said to be an unerasable and unforgettable one in world history. The militants at that time took a vibrant decision which is completely against the human race, and the poet Cheran who was caught up in the political and cultural clutches, could not resist the resistance of the institutions which happened at that time. History is made known to the world only through books that act as a reservoir and serve as a cultural medium.



The militants at that time erased the history of Srilanka by burning the library, which is at Yalpanam, Srilanka. The library at Yalpanam is said to be the biggest asset of the Srilankan Tamils owing to the historical evidence, which was alive in the form of books. Also, the cultural heritage was documented and preserved effectively. Cheran, a philanthropist, could not tolerate the brutality that happened then and started to express his resistance through his poems. When the nation's history is erased, even nature condemns it, and it feels pity for the natives of the soil. Erasing the history of one's own country is said to be cultural assimilation which is tantamount to trauma and painful turmoil.

What happened?

My town was set on fire,  
my people lost their faces;  
upon our land,  
upon the wind that blows upon it,  
an alien stamp. (ASS 8-13)

The brutalities in the name of war were so painful, and as a poet and philanthropist, he has expressed his pain through his poetry. Through Cheran, it is evident that Srilanka as a landscape is known for mental trauma, and the natives of the soil are being tormented about the cultural implications which happened in the name of war. Cultural genocide has ruined the Srilankan civilisation and exemplifies how pathetic the present is, how horrible the past was, and how terrible the future will be. The natives of Srilanka underwent a cultural turmoil which happened with the support of institutions, and the supreme irony is that the institution never felt bad for its gruesome activities and also, at the same time, they tried to validate their activities which is completely against the human ethics. Romesh Gunsekera states, " In the sense that writing is to retrieve the past and stop the passing of time, all writing is about loss. It is not nostalgia in the sense of yearning to bring back the past, but recognition of the erosion of things as you live". (3) Writing gives an individual a sense of comfort, whereas in the Srilankan discourses, writing has become a painful phenomenon it makes the writers re-think and re-live the past, which is one of the essential traits for the literary writer whereas from the Srilankan literary sensibility, it makes an individual to cry upon the havoc. The element of nostalgia in the Srilankan discourses is a painful process, and it always reverberates upon the past, which has been a horrifying experience that makes the writer of Srilankan Literature undergo mental trauma when they write about their landscapes, which is evident in the writings of Cheran.

*Who were you waiting for,  
your hands tied behind your backs?  
The fire has written its message*



*upon the clouds.*

Who waits, even now?

Out of the streets

where the embers still bloom,

rise, march forward. (ASS 14-21)

Rudhramoorthy Cheran depicts the painful mindset of a common citizen of Srilanka, where the physical landscape has ruined the mental mindscape. The people were aware of the impending doom, but they were completely shattered after the impact of political devastation, which happened in the name of civil war. Exile Testimonio through Cheran asserts the fact that the voices of the natives blur the line between personal and political, and also at the same time, they act as a threat to power structures. Through Cheran, books are said to be the repository of cultures which will keep the wounds alive. Srilankan Civilisation is known for bloodshed, and the literary voices that sprung from the Srilankan region depict the vulnerability of the power structures that operate at different levels. The poetic lines of Rudhramoorthy Cheran foreground the political ideologies, and the people have become the victims of the masses and the territorial space has made the power structures revamp their political inhibitions, and the outcome is that the natives of the Srilankan soil underwent/undergo de-territorialisation and re-territorialisation.

Exile Testimonio, to a greater extent, acts as an eye-opener and can also be called a social documentary. John Beverly states, " The best way to learn Subaltern is through Testimonial Literature". Testimonios are the socio pivotal roles in identifying one's own identity. In the Heyman world of postmodernism, the voices of the oppressed are not brought to the limelight and testimonio questions history which is a welcome augury. Most of the history books from the good old past have spoken only about the importance of an individual, whereas they have not spoken about the collective plight or the voices of the oppressed. Whereas testimonio talks about the voices of the oppressed and, simultaneously, the plight of the collective self is brought out.

Exile Testimonio talks about internal colonisation, a burning topic in contemporary times. Home and Homelessness in the current scenario deals with the problems and conflict of interest from their own space. Topographical conflict and Spatial discourses are the key elements in exile testimonio that make literature gain Autotelic status.

Exile Testimonio has also made the readers understand the fact that text does not confine itself only to books, and also at the same time, it has made the readers transcend the credibility of the text. The writings of Cheran serve as an impetus for exile testimonio which questions the history and counter histories of the time. The elements of displacement, dislocation, and disjunction are the striking features of exile testimonio, where the people find their native land to be an alienated one.



In conclusion exile testimonio culls out the authentic truths and also showcases the history and historiography which paves the way for the authenticity of facts which is prevalent through the poems of Cheran by considering the exile testimonio as a suitable impetus.

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