



# DOUBLE REEDS

## ALONG THE GREAT SILK ROUTE

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Shanghai Conservatory of Music &  
Logos Verlag Berlin



上海音乐学院  
SHANGHAI CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC



## Double Reeds along the Great Silk Route

Selected and invited papers related to the 25<sup>th</sup> International Council for Traditional Music (ICTM) Colloquium, *Double Reeds of the Great Silk Road: The Interaction of Theory and Practice from Antiquity to Contemporary Performance*, which was held on 29 November to 1 December, 2018, at the Shanghai Conservatory of Music in China.



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Impressum

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The double-reed instruments have been under-represented in ethnomusicology and related fields and deserve much more serious and sustained attention. The present volume aims to fill the void in current scholarship by gathering and analysing existing documents, whether written, iconographical, or ethnographical, and by providing information from previously neglected regions.

# The Cultural Function of the Sri Lankan *Horanawa*

Chinthaka Prageeth Meddegoda

## Abstract

The *horanawa* is the Sri Lankan version of the double-reed instrument, which can be found in other cultures with similar shapes and playing techniques under different names. The *horanawa* has been important especially to Sinhala Buddhists since it symbolizes “spirituality” and “locality”. Kulathillaka<sup>1</sup> writes, referring to previous musicologists, that the *horanawa* has its origins in Western Asia, and that it migrated later to Sri Lanka. To him, Sri Lankan drums reveal their history through the etymological features in Sinhala, unlike the term *horanawa*, which implies a foreign origin. He finds alternative terms used for *horanawa* in history as “*oththu thanthiri*” and “*pata thanthiri*”. The *horanawa* falls under the category “*sushira*” of the vernacular musical instrument classification system called “*panchaturya*”. The highly regarded royal and religious events and Sinhala popular plays such as *sokari*, *kolam*, and *nadagam* were musically accompanied by *panchaturya* instruments, where the *horanawa* was equally important to drums. Buddhist murals in the temples of the southern coast depicting musicians playing musical instruments reveal that such events were very well perceived all over Sri Lanka, as various historical sources provide evidence for. However, after the nineteenth century, in addition to these local musical instruments, the murals included the colonizers’ musical instruments, such as wind instruments made of brass, snare drums, harps, and the violin, documenting the impact of colonial culture on social changes in Sri Lanka. This research includes information gathered through interviewing musicians, scholars, and reviewing previous literature which is mostly unknown to the academic world outside Sri Lanka.

**Keywords** *horanawa*, Sri Lanka, Buddhism, *hewisi*, *naubat*

In this paper, the *horanawa* is explored from different perspectives, such as structure, function, repertoire, performance techniques, history of practices, and how this instrument might have been in contact with activities along the Silk Road. Two artists, Roshen Heenwella and Siril Ganegoda<sup>2</sup>, the drummer from Kandy, were interviewed in order to gather updated information and to add to the utilization of the existing literature.

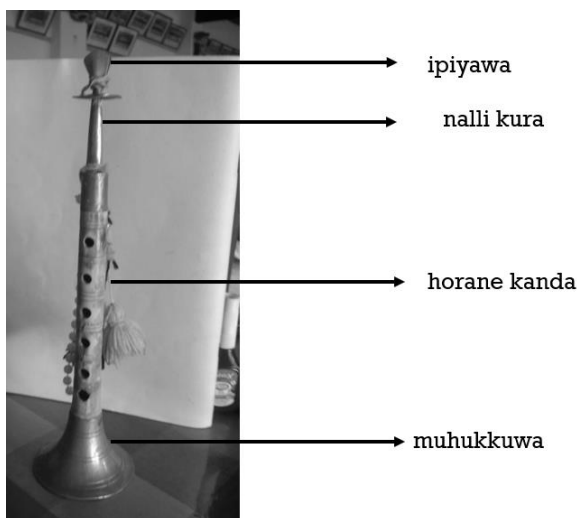
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<sup>1</sup> Kulathillaka, Ciril de Silva. 2000. *Asian and Pacific Regional Music Instruments*. Ratmalana: Wishvalekha Publishers.

<sup>2</sup> Siril Ganegoda is the artist who is responsible for the regular Hewisi performance in the Degaldoruwa Buddhist temple of Kandy.

## Physical Structure

The *horanawa* is a double-reed instrument, and therefore under the oboe family, according to the instrument classification system introduced by von Hornbostel and Curt Sachs. The *horanawa* falls under the category of “*sushira*” of the vernacular musical instrument classification system called “*panchaturya*”. The *horanawa* consists of four parts, known as *muhukkuwa* (a metal bell at the end), *horane kanda* (the main body with finger holes), *nalli kura* (a metal tube connecting the mouthpiece with the main body), and *ipiyawa* (the double or quadruple reed, bound with a thread, and made of palm leaves). Usually, the *muhukkuwa* and *nalli kura* are made of metals such as brass, copper, or silver. The mixture of five types of metals that are used for making temple bells are also used to make the *muhukkuwa* and *nalli kura* of the *horanawa*.



**Figure 1: Main parts of the current *horanawa* (photo courtesy of Chamilla Meddegoda).**

The *horane kanda* can also be constructed using horn, elephant teeth and tusk, and timber such as *nedun*, *kaluwara*, *wetahira*, tamarind, *araliya* (temple flower tree), or others. There is a standard method of constructing a *horanawa*, which was orally passed down among traditional music instrument makers. According to Heenwella, one of the key informants, there should be seven *vith* (finger holes) in a general *horanawa* used in the up-country region<sup>3</sup> (Heenwella and Meddegoda, 2018). The measurements of the *horanawa* are determined through the dimensions of the player’s hands, and sometimes the height of the player as well. Up-country, the *ipiyawa* is made of palm leaf, which is chosen from the tips of new leaves growing

<sup>3</sup> Heenwella, Roshen and Meddegoda, Chinthaka P. 2018. *Conversation about Playing Horanawa*. Kandy: Personal audiovisual collection of the author.

out of a palm tree. The leaf must have been boiled with turmeric powder and subsequently dried in light and open air. Then it has to be rubbed with the fingers to smoothen it. The *ipiyawa* has to be tied in a specific way which is known to most *horane*<sup>4</sup> players. The prepared piece of palm leaf should be folded two times, and tied up with a nylon thread, making a four-layer tongue. But only the middle two tongues will concussively vibrate while blowing the *horanawa*, by placing the lips on the outer palm tongues. According to the instrument maker I visited in Pilimatalawa, there are no better or replacement materials than palm leaves to make the *ipiyawa*. I was able to buy two *horanawa* from him, and he informed me not to change the *ipiyawa* between the two instruments as they might not sound properly if changed around. According to him, producing a good sound largely depends on the player's skill and experience in adjusting the *ipiyawa*. According to the *horanawa* player M. A. Balendra, most *horanawa* musicians make their *horanawa* by themselves<sup>5</sup>. In the National Museum of Sri Lanka in Colombo are some specimens of instruments exhibited which differ in construction from the description above. However, there are not yet sufficient studies conducted in order to give exact data on these exhibits, their use, and their history. This will be part of a later investigation aimed at delivering reliable data about these instruments. In this paper, only the *horanawa* in its current form is considered.

## Function

The *horanawa* is widely played on occasions such as various *hewisi* homages<sup>6</sup>, traditional theatre plays such as *sokari*, *kolam*<sup>7</sup>, *kavi nadagam*, *sindu nadagam*<sup>8</sup>, and a variety of processions.

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<sup>4</sup> *Horane* is the plural form of *horanawa*.

<sup>5</sup> Rajapaksha, Vaidyawathie. 2002. *Udarata Turya Wadana Puranaya* (Maradana: S Godage Brothers), p. 113; Hutchinson, Gaelyn. 2019. "Horanawa", Grinnell College Musical Instrument Collection (URL: <https://omeka1.grinnell.edu/MusicalInstruments/items/show/319>, last accessed 8 January 2019).

<sup>6</sup> The general *hewisi* ensemble includes a cylindrical drum (*dawla*), a kettle drum (*thammattama*), and a *horanawa*. In low-country tradition, the *hewisi* ensembles include a barrel drum, *yak beraya*, which is also known as *dewol beraya* or *pahatharata beraya*. In the up-country tradition, the *hewisi* ensemble includes *geta beraya* which is also known as *magul beraya*, *udarata beraya*, or the Kandyan drum. The *hewisi* ensemble is employed in various Buddhist practices for the purpose of offering sacred sounds. This is called *shabda puja* (sound homage/offering). The *hewisi* repertoire and functions are manifold, and need urgent study for preservation and new insights. The article written by Senevirathna (1979: 52-56) includes some information on *hewisi* and its functions.

<sup>7</sup> *Sokari* and *kolam* are folk plays practiced in certain places in Sri Lanka, asking for prosperity and prevention of plagues, and at the same time entertaining the audience. These plays are mainly humorous and often ridicule gender differences.

<sup>8</sup> *Kavi nadagam* and *sindu nadagam* are open theatre practices with a variety of stories, performed to entertain people of all social classes in Sri Lanka.



1) *Horanawa* in *hewisi* is involved in Buddhism-related practices, such as:

- Temple rituals where *hewisi* is played
- Temple processions which are periodically held (such as Tooth Temple procession, *Sri Paada*<sup>9</sup> procession)
- Welcoming ceremonies for Buddhist monks and sacred relics at various occasions

2) Funerals: welcoming Buddhist monks to the funeral to chant certain Buddhist verses, accompanying the procession to the site of burial or cremation, and post-funeral alms-giving ceremonies.

3) Traditional theatre:

- *sokari*
- *kolam*
- *kavi nadagam*
- *sindu nadagam*

The *horanawa* is used in three categories of dancing and drumming traditions in Sri Lanka. The way of using the *horanawa* in these three traditions is different from each other; moreover, the repertoire and meaning of the involvement of the *horanawa* in events can vary from each other within areas adhering to different traditions and places in Sri Lanka.

There are a few scholarly works where some information on *horanawa* can be traced. Kulathillaka<sup>10</sup> mentions that the *horanawa* is a duple reed oboe<sup>11</sup> which belongs to the Asian culture. He says that according to musicologists, it originates in Western Asia, and might have migrated to Sri Lanka. However, he has not provided any substantial evidence to support his claim. To him, the etymology of Sri Lankan drums reveal their history to some extent through using Sinhala terms, unlike the term *horanawa*. He finds alternative terms used for the *horanawa* in history, such as Oththu Thanthiri and Pata Thanthiri. Alawathukotuwa<sup>12</sup> says that most of the Sinhala folk plays such as *sokari*, *kolam*, *kavi nadagam*, and *sindu nadagam* were musically accompanied by *horanawa* and traditional drums. Folk theatre, such as *kolam* and *sokari*, always include certain Buddhist rituals at the

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<sup>9</sup> Sri Paada, or Adam's Peak, a mountain holy in a number of religions (Muslim, Christian, Buddhist, and Hindu), with a famous footprint on its top, claimed by adherents of different religions to be that of a relevant religious figure to them.

<sup>10</sup> Kulathillaka, Ciril de Silva. 2000. *Asian and Pacific Regional Music Instruments*. (Ratmalana: Wishvalekha Publishers).

<sup>11</sup> Kulathillaka uses the term "duple reed" for double reed.

<sup>12</sup> Alawathukotuwa, Manoj. 2004. *Jana Nataka Sangeethaya*. (Maradana: S. Godage Brothers)

beginning. People involved expect blessings from the triple gem<sup>13</sup> and from certain deities. There are a few tunes which are occasionally sung and accordingly accompanied on *horanawa* in sokari plays. The stories presented in sokari and kolam include plenty of humour throughout the long performances, which take place overnight and last until dawn. The *horanawa* does not necessarily follow the sung tune or vice versa, because of the difficulties in meeting the joint pitches<sup>14</sup>. Alawathukotuwa says the *horanawa* is the only music instrument that plays melodic phrases in the *sokari* theatre which promotes prosperity. He justifies the view of Curt Sachs<sup>15</sup>, who stated that the sound produced by wind instruments can contribute to the rituals which are dedicated to well-being and prosperity of the people and their harvest. Singing melodies are accompanied on the *horanawa* in the *kolam* plays as well. Most prominently, some independent melodies are played on *horanawa* after every two lines of the verses sung by the performers.

In the *kavi nadagam* and *sindu nadagam* practices, the *horanawa* is employed for accompanying the choir, which repeats the singing verses of the solo performers. Given the sound of *horanawa* is louder, it might have been played in unison with the choruses only<sup>16</sup>.

Kulathillaka<sup>17</sup> lists instruments similar to the *horanawa* which he noted in other cultures, such as:

- Thailand – *pi-chanaai* (quadruple)
- Maharashtra – *sanaai*
- North India – *shanaai*, *sahanaai*
- Sumatra – *serune* or *serunaai*
- Kerala – *naagaswaram* or *khaththu*
- Orissa – *mohori*
- Malaysia – *serunaai*
- Persia – *suurnaai* or *kwarna*

It seems that the differences in its use in various places in Sri Lanka are not scrutinized in the literature. Some *horane* musicians decline to describe playing techniques on *horanawa* or its history. The current situation in this regard might

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<sup>13</sup> “Triple gem” is the English translation for *thunuruwan*, which connotes the trinity of Buddhism (Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha). Buddha is the one who discovered Buddhism. Dhamma is his philosophy or preaching. Sangha are his true followers who become monks.

<sup>14</sup> Alawathukotuwa, Manoj. 2004. *Jana Nataka Sangeethaya*. (Maradana: S. Godage Brothers), p. 52.

<sup>15</sup> Sachs, Curt. 1940. *History of Musical Instruments*. (New York: W.W. Norton), p. 134

<sup>16</sup> Alawathukotuwa, Manoj. 2004. *Jana Nataka Sangeethaya*. (Maradana: S. Godage Brothers), p. 108-109

<sup>17</sup> Kulathillaka, Ciril de Silva. 2000. *Asian and Pacific Regional Music Instruments*. (Ratmalana: Wishvalekha Publishers), p. 55

play an important role<sup>18</sup>. Heenwella asserts that “there has not been any specific methodology to learn *horanawa* since the pitches are not stable. We know that the repertoire and playing skills depend on the individually gained experience through practicing.”<sup>19</sup> Heenwella is currently associated with the Tooth Temple as a *horane* player of the *hewisi* ensemble, who contributes to the sound homage during the *thevava* occasions, a special Buddhist ritual held four times a day in the Tooth Temple. He says that there are no hereditary *horane* players who pass down the tradition and the repertoire from father to son, although some people in Kandy have surnames associated with musical instruments such as *Horanekarayalagegedara* (“the house of *horane* player”), *Berakarayalagegedara* (“the house of *bera* player”), or *Dawulkarayalagegedara* (“the house of *dawul* player”). Traditional instrument players fall under a specific caste which allows them to be identified as professionals of their work in society. As Heenwella points out, the *horane* lineage is not continuous, as being a *horane* player depends on talent, economical concerns, and interests.

The main purpose of the *horanawa* within society is determined as worshipping or homage to tangible and intangible remains of the Buddha. It mostly comes in the form of the *hewisi* ensemble, which contains *thammattama* (a pair of kettle drums), and a *dawla* (cylindrical drum played by hand and a stick). The Tooth Temple has four *hewisi* ensemble groups providing services in a prescribed schedule. The Tooth Temple maintains their musicians financially, offering a salary and lands to live on, on the condition that they have to serve the temple their entire life. *Hewisi* musicians assert that *hewisi* is hidden and artistically complex. It has evolved within the tradition and not influenced by outsiders. Heenwella says: “*Poya hewisi* is played continuously many hours, such as if you start in the morning then you will finish by evening, if you start by evening then you will finish by next morning.”<sup>20</sup> According to him, the complexity of the *hewisi* art can be experienced in *poya hewisi* activities taking place in the Tooth Temple and in many other Buddhist temples in Sri Lanka. The *horanawa* is crucial among the other musical instruments in *hewisi* practices, since it symbolizes spirituality and locality. The *hewisi* is a communication tool. People living around the temple get to know each step of the worship by listening to the *hewisi*. People can participate in the worship even when they are not coming to the temple, since they know what is going on by listening to the changes in the music.

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<sup>18</sup> Sykes, Jim. 2018. *The Musical Gift: Sonic Generosity in Post-War Sri Lanka* (New York: Oxford University Press), p. 158

<sup>19</sup> Heenwella, Roshen and Meddegoda, Chinthaka P. 2018. *Conversation about Playing Horanawa*. Kandy: Personal audiovisual collection of the author.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

## Repertoire, Performance Techniques, and History of Practices

As Heenwella asserts, *horane* musicians do not inherit a set of tunes which are fixed for the respective events to be played. Historical sources also do not mention certain melodies which were played on *horanawa*. This means that in practice a certain repertoire is not passed down through oral tradition, but taken from folk songs and religious chants, such as melodies of *vannam*, *kavi*, *gatha*, *ashthaka*, and some tunes suitable for walking in processions. However, *horane* musicians believe that there have been *dik ose* (long renditions) approximately six decades ago. *Dik ose* is played using circular breathing, thus continuously maintaining the tone. *Horane* musicians consider it an outstanding talent if someone can play *dik ose* for many hours. They have heard from senior musicians that *horane* players used to play *dik ose* while climbing up to the top of the *Sri Paada* Mountain (Adam's Peak) along with the processions of devotees. This procession is considered highly spiritual, and the participants had to be determined before beginning the pilgrimage. They had to undertake certain rituals before beginning the climb. However, current musicians are not aware of what tunes were played using the technique of *dik ose*. As Heenwella says, they played something fitting to the *hewisi* drum patterns. He says: "Since 50 to 60 years ago, traditional melodies such as *vannam*, Buddhist chanting melodies, and some folk melodies were played on *horanawa*. There are some melodies which are unique to some players. Such good melodies were adapted by other players as well. Seniority is highly valued in this tradition. We always follow the senior player. When he changes, we also change accordingly during *hewisi* practices. Therefore, we have this tradition until today."<sup>21</sup>

The traditional knowledge of playing *horanawa* such as playing *dik ose* is usually not practiced by the young musicians of today. The experts might not have known how to transmit the development of stamina and playing techniques, which they gained through self-study and experience as well as from their teachers. They also might not have thought of the importance of transmitting knowledge, and by not doing so, they did not see the potential danger to the tradition and the artistry. The technique of circular breathing is still known to some current *horane* players and to musicians from other cultures who play oboes and other wind instruments. However, associated melodies and methods of gaining a certain will power and physical strength through rehearsal might not have properly been transmitted to the current musicians due to the knowledge gap in transmission methods.

One of the main reasons to include *horanawa* in the *hewisi* ensemble could be its loudness and the sharpness of the sound, which could signal events to any village over a long distance. The drums are comparatively loud, but the sound is not as carrying as the *horanawa*. However, a bamboo flute would not have been heard

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<sup>21</sup> Heenwella, Roshen and Meddegoda, Chinthaka P. 2018. *Conversation about Playing Horanawa*. Kandy: Personal audiovisual collection of the author.

over the sound of the drums. *Hewisi* is practiced mostly as an outdoor event demanding high volume so that folk in the vicinity could hear and follow the steps of the ritual through changes in drumming patterns and mainly in the *horanawa* melody. The sound of *hewisi* was especially helpful for adults who could not walk to the place of the event. Today, these reasons are obsolete, due to the loud ambient noise in the environment, much higher than in earlier times. Being exposed to various types of loud machinery and living in modern housing constructions with a maximum of sound insulation, the sounds of rituals stay unheard.



**Figure 2: Telapatta Jatakaya, Cave no 5, Shrine Room, Exterior Front Wall at Mulkirigala Temple. The picture is reproduced by Manoj Alawathukotuwa.**

*Hewisi* ensembles may include one or two *horane* players. They have to adjust the tuning of the instruments while playing in unison. As musicians explain, there is no special method to meet the same tuning in two *horane*. It is up to the experience and special skill that are developed through self-exploration. Heenwella says that “there are no fixed intervals, but musicians have sense to play in unison in a group. There is a saying that there is no *swara* in *horana* therefore it became *swarane* to *horane*. ‘*Swara*’ means intervals and ‘*ne*’ means no and both together became *swarane* and then evolved as *horane*. We cannot find the origins of this because our history is messed up. *Horanawa* is the only music instrument that is our own melody instrument. In the up-country, *horanawa* playing was developed with

rather religious, traditional tunes, unlike other places where the occasions may include popular songs as well.”<sup>22</sup>



**Figure 3: Sivi Jatakaya, Cave no 5, Shrine Room, Exterior Front Wall at Mulkirigala Temple. The picture is reproduced by Manoj Alawathukotuwa; Figure 4: Katthahari Jatakaya, Plate 25, Shrine Room, Exterior Front Wall. The picture is reproduced by Manoj Alawathukotuwa; Figure 5: Seductive Forces, Plate 6, Shrine Room, Exterior North Wall at Karagampitiya Subodharamaya Temple. The picture is reproduced by Manoj Alawathukotuwa.**

The advent of *horanawa* in Sri Lanka has not been studied, though the function of *horanawa* has been discussed by a few scholars. Figures 1 to 4 show some depictions of the *horanawa* which can be found on wall paintings of some Buddhist temples built from the 3<sup>rd</sup> century to the 19<sup>th</sup> century. However, the paintings may not be as old, as they might have been drawn much later. We can assume these paintings may tell us more about the history and need further examination. Since most of the paintings shown are not exactly dated and have little context, it is very difficult to evaluate them at this point in the research. Another follow-up study will be dedicated to this problem. So far, it is interesting regarding the cultural function of the *horanawa* that they were depicted at all, and that they are even reproduced in print, though with little information. The simple fact of printing them in books indicates their importance to more recent history (from the 19<sup>th</sup> century onwards) and to popular imagination, implied considering the various colonial backgrounds of the depictions.

Some aspects in the *hewisi* practices are similar to *naubat* practices in North India. The word *naubat* connotes “turn” or “rotation”<sup>23</sup>. Flora finds three aspects of *naubat* which were practiced in Islamic history. “Firstly, it refers to a suite of musical items that may be traced to the practice of Abbasid court musicians performing ‘in turn or in ‘rotation’. Secondly, *naubat* also refers to compositions

<sup>22</sup> Heenwella, Roshen and Meddegoda, Chinthaka P. 2018. *Conversation about Playing Horanawa*. Kandy: Personal audiovisual collection of the author.

<sup>23</sup> Webber, Natalie M. 1984. “Horaneva.” *NGDMI* 2, p. 234-235.

performed at certain hours of the day. The idea of ‘in turn’ or ‘in rotation’ is applicable in this instance as well. Thirdly, the term refers to a military band that served the highest political leaders in various contexts, as in part the *naubat* would perform at certain hours of the day, and also came to play suites of compositions as desired.”<sup>24</sup>



Illustration 2  
Naubat ensemble of the Mukharrak Shih Murid Bukhari dargah in Mandra, Kutch, western India. From the left: Sumar Jummani, *tābālī*; Abdullah Rahmatullah, *tar*; Saleman Jumma, *saqqā*.



Illustration 1  
Detail from a picture of the Surrender of Kandahar in the collection of Sitaran Lal of Benares. Seventeenth century (Fox Strangways 1914-Plate 6).

### Figures 6 and 7: Taken from the article by Flora (1995:55)<sup>25</sup>

The *horanawa* is in some ways similar to the *nadaswaram* or *nagaswaram* which migrated from South India to Sri Lanka<sup>26</sup>. All the parts of the *nadaswaram* are rather larger in dimensions than those of the *horanawa*, while it has principally the same technique of producing sound. The *nadaswaram* played in Sri Lanka was known to have twelve finger holes, but only seven holes were used to produce different tones, as Rajapaksha points out<sup>27</sup>. There have been musicians who were invited from South India for serving in the tooth relic ceremony in the Tooth Temple. These musicians were appointed by the king during the Kandy period (1594-1815)<sup>28</sup>. Even in the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Tooth Temple management has allocated a time slot every Wednesday for playing a south Indian music instrument ensemble that includes *tavil* and *nadaswaram*. These instruments, as has been observed, were played by the same musicians who play for *hewisi*. However, this

<sup>24</sup> Flora, Reis. 1995. Styles of the Śahnāī in Recent Decades: From naubat to gāyakī ang. *Yearbook of Traditional Music*, 27, p. 53.

<sup>25</sup> Flora, Reis. 1995. Styles of the Śahnāī in Recent Decades: From naubat to gāyakī ang. *Yearbook of Traditional Music*, 27, p. 58 and p. 55.

<sup>26</sup> The *nadaswaram* or *nagaswaram* played in Sri Lanka is in some details different from that originating in South India, i.e. the number of finger holes, the shape of the bell, the dimension, and a number of other features.

<sup>27</sup> Rajapaksha, Vaidyawathie. 2002. *Udarata Turya Wadana Puranaya*. (Maradana: S Godage Brothers), p. 106.

<sup>28</sup> Sivasundaram, Sujit. 2010. Ethnicity, Indigeneity, and Migration in the Advent of British Rule to Sri Lanka. *American Historical Review*, 115(2): pp. 428–452.

information is not confirmed, though it is mentioned by Rajapaksha as a narrative by the temple servants<sup>29</sup> (2002:51).

Heenwella, the currently most active *horanawa* player at the Tooth Temple in Kandy, described the way he embarked on *horanawa* playing as follows: “I was learning flute in the Aranayake cultural center. Eleven years ago, the students wanted to participate in a competition, and there was no *horanawa* player there. I was invited to play *horanawa* as they thought I would be able to play this instrument after a few rehearsals since I can already play flute. Then, I learnt it at the beginning on my own.” Supposedly, while he was learning alone, he could use his musical memory as a resource, since he had grown up in the area and was used to the sound environment of his current workplace. So, he also said that he could learn the Kandyan style on the *horanawa* from people such as Malagammala Thilakarathna, Upali, Molagoda, and Susantha.

Heenwella continued to speak about technical matters: “The finger holes are quite similar to the Indian bamboo flute. In the up-country, we do not separate tones using the tongue, instead we continue to blow and change the tones through the finger holes. That is the main difference between Kandyan *horanawa* playing style and low-country *horanawa* playing style.”<sup>30</sup>

By saying this, Heenwella, as one of the most prominent and currently most active *horanawa* players of Sri Lanka, reduces local cultural differences in playing techniques and identifies his playing with his professional task and the requirements he has to accomplish. The cultural function of the *horanawa* seems to have become a matter of technical representation, rather than a matter of the senses and a specific melodic repertoire. It is, so to say, not very important to meet specific frequencies or melodic aesthetics through using the *horanawa*; it is, nonetheless, important to have the sound of the *horanawa* in the context of certain important events.

## Conclusions

The incorporation of musical instruments in Buddhist practice was prohibited in Theravada Buddhism, which was deeply rooted in the culture of Sri Lanka before Mahayana Buddhism was introduced. However, the script *Mahāvāṇsa* provides a reference regarding the sound of *turya vadana* (playing musical instruments), saying that King Vijaya could hear the sound of musical instruments as he arrived in Sri Lanka in the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC. The musical accompaniment of *hewisi* might

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<sup>29</sup> Rajapaksha, Vaidyawathie. 2002. *Udarata Turya Wadana Puranaya*. (Maradana: S Godage Brothers), p. 51.

<sup>30</sup> Heenwella, Roshen and Meddegoda, Chinthaka P. 2018. *Conversation about Playing Horanawa*. Kandy: Personal audiovisual collection of the author.



have been permitted in Theravada rituals as long as it was not considered music for entertainment. Until today, the *hewisi* is regarded as part of an offering, and indispensable in some Theravada events. *Hewisi* might have become included in Theravada practices through Mahayana Buddhist practices. The kings of Sri Lanka welcomed the ideology of Mahayana Buddhism, since it allowed them a certain satisfaction through less restrictions on entertainment activities.

Apparently, the Sri Lankan *horanawa* is more similar to the Malay *serunai* and the North Indian *surnas* than to the South Indian *nadaswaram*.

Open questions requiring further discussion and investigation include the following:

- Is the *horanawa* the same instrument that was played in the *naubat* practices of North India?
- Was the Sri Lankan *thammattama* a replacement for the kettle drums (*naqqaara*) used in that *naubat* ensemble?
- Did the transformation that Mahayana Buddhism adapted the *naubat* music ensemble to honour Buddha and accompany certain Buddhist rituals take place in Northern India?
- Were similar practices adopted in Sri Lanka through Mahayana influence?
- Why was the *nadaswaram* not adapted for *hewisi*, and instead the *horanawa* was used?
- How is it that the *horanawa* is rather similar in size and structure to the North Indian *surnas* or shawms (later known *shahnaai*) that were used in the *naubat*?
- How is it that the *horanawa* is rather similar in size and the structure to the *serunai* used in the Malay world?

These and other questions will be part of a larger research project in the coming years, in which this paper is a first humble part.

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## Appendix - Glossary of Terms

|                                   |   |
|-----------------------------------|---|
| araliya                           | temple flower tree  |
| ashthaka                          | 8-line poetry   |
| berakariyalagegedara              | the house of bera player  |
| dawla                             | cylindrical drum played in horizontal position with one hand and one stick  |
| dawulkarayalagegedara             | the house of dawul player   |
| dewol beraya                      | barrel drum (also pahatharata beraya or yak beraya) used in low-country dance and ritual practices  |
| dik ose                           | Long rendition using circular breathing   |
| gatha                             | chanted Buddhist verses   |
| geta beraya                       | Kandyan drum (also magul beraya or udarata beraya) used in up-country dance and ritual practices  |
| hewisi                            | A <i>hewisi</i> ensemble is employed in various Buddhist practices for the purpose of offering sacred sound. This is called <i>shabda puja</i> (sound homage/offering).   |
| horanawa / horane                 | Double-reed instrument in Sri Lanka   |
| horane kanda                      | The main body of the <i>horanawa</i> , recently produced of valuable wood and with finger holes drilled in a row  |
| horanekarayalagegedara            | the house of horane player  |
| ipiyawa                           | double or quadruple reed made of palm leaves  |
| kaluwara                          | ebony   |
| kandyan drum                      | two headed cylindrical or double-conical drum (also known as geta beraya) used in up-country dance and ritual traditions  |
| kavi nadagam                      | kavi nadagam (as well as sindu nadagam) are open air theatre practices with a variety of stories performed to entertain people of any social class in Sri Lanka, kavi emphasizes poetry and the story is performed through rendering poetry |
| kolam                             | Sinhala popular play  |
| magul beraya                      | two headed drum (also geta beraya or udarata beraya) used in up-country dance and ritual traditions   |
| muhukkuwa (metal bell at the end) | metal bell at the ending part of the <i>horanawa</i>  |

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| nadagam  | Sinhala popular play, open air theatre genre practiced for entertainment in Sri Lanka   |
| nalli kura (metal tube connecting the mouthpiece with the main body) | tube connecting mouthpiece with the main body (where the finger holes are placed) of the <i>horanawa</i>  |
| naqqaara   | kettle drum   |
| naubat   | royal music instrument ensemble used for various ceremonial occasions (in the context of a Muslim court)  |
| nedun  | type of timber (Pericopsis mooniana)  |
| oththu thanthiri   | another term which might have been used to name the <i>horanawa</i> in Sanskrit literature of Sri Lanka   |
| pahatharata beraya   | barrel drum (also dewol beraya) used in low-country dance and ritual practices  |
| panchaturya  | Historical type of musical classification in Sri Lanka  |
| pata thanthiri   | another term which might have been used to name the <i>horanawa</i> in Sanskrit literature of Sri Lanka   |
| Pilimalalawa   | A settlement near Kandy   |
| poya <i>hewisi</i>   | the entire <i>hewisi</i> ritual embedded in its schedule of the full moon poya (see also shabda puja)   |
| ralahami   | a title used for police officers and similar administrators   |
| serunai  | double-reed instrument of the Malay world   |
| shabda puja  | sound homage/offering produced by the <i>hewisi</i> ensemble of instruments   |
| shahnaai   | a double-reed instrument of Hindustan   |
| sindu nadagam  | sindu nadagam (as well as kavi nadagam) and are open air theatre practices with variety of stories performed to entertain people of any social class in Sri Lanka, sindu emphasizes the songs |
| sokari   | Sinhala popular play  |
| surna  | double-reed instrument of East Asia   |
| sushira  | wind  |
| tamarind   | type of timber (Tamarindus indica)  |
| thammattama  | a pair of kettle drums played with bend sticks and used in Sri Lankan dance and ritual traditions   |
| thevava  | special Buddhist ritual that is held four times a day in the Kandyan Tooth Temple   |

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|----------------|--|
| thunuruwan     | Triple gem is the English translation for it, which connotes the trinity of Buddhism (Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha). Buddha is the one who discovered Buddhism. Dhamma is his philosophy or preaching. Sangha is his true followers who became monks. |
| udarata beraya | two headed drum (also geta beraya, udarata beraya, or magul beraya) used in up-country dance and ritual traditions   |
| vannam         | specific sung lyrics describing animals, especially for dances, originating in the Kandyan period  |
| vith           | finger hole  |
| wetahira       | type of timber ( <i>Gliricidia sepium</i> )  |
| yak beraya     | barrel drum (also pahatharata beraya or devol beraya) used in low-country dance and ritual practices   |