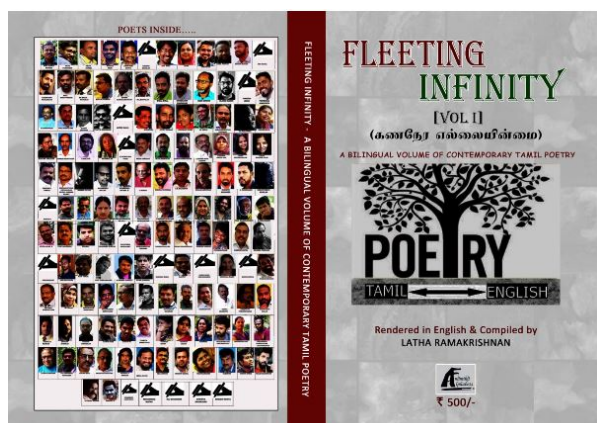


## Her poetry speaks!

Written by By K.S.Sivakumaran

Thursday, 09 May 2019 07:42 - Last Updated Thursday, 09 May 2019 07:52

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This is a 330-page volume of contemporary Tamil Poetry rendered in English and compiled by Latha Ramakrishnan, a prominent translator of literary works from Tamil to English and vice versa. She lives in Chennai. Published by Annamikaa Alphabets (her own publication) in January this year, it is priced at Rs. 500/= Indian currency. The writer's e-mail is: [lathaa.r2010@gmail.com](mailto:lathaa.r2010@gmail.com)

Latha Ramakrishnan (62) is not only a translator (more than 30 books) but also writes poetry (11 volumes), short stories (2 collections) literary criticism and essays (3 books). She is in Thamilaham literary world for the last 35 years. She also writes under various pseudonyms (Rishi, Anamika and her own name). She is on Facebook for the last three years. Most of the poems translated are poems by fellow poets that appeared on Facebook. They were in Tamil. Only a few are from Lankan Tamil poets. Among the latter, I happen to know only well-known

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people.

One thing good in this collection is that she has published the original Tamil version and her English translation side by side. Although she has translated about 600 such poems, she has included only 139 poets for volume one.

One should congratulate Latha Ramakrishnan for her genuine interest in translating these Tamil poems into English although in her Foreword she modestly says. "Of course, they may be imperfect and my translation may not be doing full justice to the original poem. Yet, I dared (and dare) to go on for the sheer joy it gives me and to my Facebook friends". The translator also says that she "found solace in, admiring their (the poets selected for this volume) style and content."

She is a Post-Graduate in English from Presidency College, Chennai. What I wanted to do here her version in English of some of the Lankan Tamil poems for the benefit of non-Tamil knowing readers. She has arranged the names of the poets according to the English alphabets and yet I wouldn't know who among them Lankans are. Therefore, I am selecting only those whom I know well.

### Anar Issath Rehana

Her original poem is titled "Alaiapukal Varatha Cellphone" Here is the English translation:

Cell Phones with no Incoming Calls-  
There might have been an earthquake  
In the underground hideouts of Earth:  
The signs of landslide are there to see.  
Deep down the Volcano fire  
Begins to emit cinders.  
Upon the Wall of house  
Cracks breaking it into two  
Appearing  
The porcelain vessel  
Which I had dusted and cleaned  
With great care yesterday  
Slipped from my hand so unexpectedly  
And smashed into splinters;

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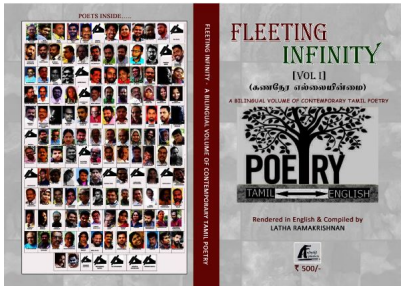
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In the new dress of the child  
The stitching has loosened  
From the number saved  
No call comes to  
My mobile at all.  
Dense Fog  
Stands to block the way  
At a distance is seen that human form;  
Whether coming or going  
Remains blurred.

(Anar comes from Kalmunai and I too has translated one of her poems into English.)



**Daniskaran Kandasamy**  
(from Pandiruppu) – I have known him too

## Avoiding Loneliness

All alone a dragonfly was going in circles  
my evening time circled just the dragon

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I felt it was searching for a blossom  
the flower born in clusters  
swayed in the wind as orphans.

The dragonfly intent on chasing away loneliness  
kissed my window-glass  
and returned  
I search for the dragonfly that drives of my loneliness  
in a solitary hour  
nowhere to be seen as yet.

Must-have acquired it ate. Or else,  
it must have destroyed itself  
in the figment of the imagination.  
Confused to the core  
I search for the dragon-fly  
that dives off loneliness  
nowhere to be seen as yet.

Going out I search for the dragon-fly  
that remains all in all in my memories,  
in front of the window also.  
The dragon-fly is nowhere;  
I see myself.

Writing down  
the strategy  
for driving away loneliness  
the dragon-fly had darted off

Some of the other poets I know are V N Giritharan , Lareena Abdul Haq, Leena Manimekalai, Mullai Amuthan, A Nasrullah, Rajaji Rajagopalan, M. M.rishan Shareef , Riyas Qurana, Thamizh Nathi, Thamizh Udaya, Termini and Theepachelvan Pratheepan

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Lankan Sinhala readers might be able to read and understand the contemporary Lankan and Indian Tamil poetry by reading this through English.