

The Art and Politics of Polyphony in Tamil Women Representation: A Reading of Meena Kandasamy's Prose *The Orders were to Rape You*

Rincy Saji

*The Sri Lankan civil war (1983-2009) remains one of the most disputed, and destructive wars in recent history for power devolution between the state and LTTE. The LTTE women's wing is renowned for its ferocious behaviour for the cause of Tamil self-determination. These empowered female cadres within militant organisation are defy the conventional gender construct of women as domestic, docile, and nurturing. However, once the LTTE was destroyed, they were ostracized and vulnerable in post-civil war society. The text under study, Meena Kandasamy's prose *The Orders were to Rape You* (2020), is significant for its account of narratives of three Tamil women along with a collection of translated poems by female guerrillas. This paper sets out to examine two objectives. Firstly, the text under study is polyphonic in its form and content, following Bakhtin's concept of polyphony. The second objective analyses this polyphony as a political tool to challenge the conventional gender construct for women endorsed by the patriarchal Tamil morality that shove misogynist judgements on their women survivors. Reading Kandasamy's prose as polyphonic in its structure and content serves as an analogy that informs its readers on multiple realities of the facets of conflict, rather than from a single authoritative voice of truth.*

Keywords: female emancipation, gender construct, Meena Kandasamy, polyphony, prose, Sri Lankan civil war, *The Orders were to Rape you*.

Introduction

Sri Lankan civil war (1983-2009) is one of the most violent and protracted wars in recent history. On May 21, 2009, LTTE leader Vellupillai Prabhakaran was shot dead at point-blank range by the Sri Lankan army, ending the brutal struggle for power devolution. The final stage of the war (2004-2009) alone accounted for more than 40,000 civilians dead, and 100,000 remain disappeared (Wickramasinghe 364; Kandasamy 29). However, this was not always the case: Since independence, Sinhalese extremists introduced a series of megalomaniacal reforms and acts to foster Buddhism and protect their Sinhala language. However, these reformations only polarized the nation politically, culturally, linguistically, and religiously. By the time the 13th amendment of 1987 was enforced, giving official status to both languages: Sinhala and Tamil, the country was already immersed in a bloody civil war.

That said: the Sri Lankan civil war provides an ideal context for researching the aspects of the female role in armed conflict. Since the inception of the ideology of Tamil self-determination, women's participation escalated in militant organizations for its cause. The LTTE was one such militant organisation that recruited female comrades and heavily trained them in fighting, shooting, murdering, and other skills, not only for the cause of an anticipated Tamil Eelam but also to lay the foundation for a radical revolution for women's emancipation. Scholars undertook several studies on women's participation in Sri Lankan armed conflict. (Rajasingham-Senanayake 2004; De Mel 2001). Some studies state that the dearth of male combatants enhanced women's recruitment in the organisation and not for the cause of women's emancipation (De Mel 2001). However, from a feminist standpoint, these fights are considered symbols of women's liberation, a source of denial in normal civic society (Allison 2004). Despite this, some studies claim that, while the militant group propagated female emancipation and liberation, the organization's mechanisms were hovering in male dominance (Jordan & Denov 2007). Kandasamy

rightly observes on these dynamic perspective of Tamil women within an organisation and in society when she writes, “While the war was on, Tigresses were objects of worship. After the war, they were unwelcomed in other people’s homes” (56). Nonetheless, with much dispute remaining, it is necessary to investigate the fidelity of women’s participation from multiple perspectives rather than a single authoritarian voice.

The study finds Michael Bakhtin’s concept of polyphony, as pronounced in *Problems of Dostoevsky’s Poetics* (1984) to be suitable for assessing the multiple perspectives of Tamil women’s participation in the Sri Lankan civil war. Hence, this paper sets out two main propositions. Firstly, Meena Kandasamy’s prose, *The Orders were to Rape You* as polyphonic in its nature and content. Secondly, the paper’s objective is to look at how the polyphonic narration might be used as a political tool to expose gendered atrocities against Tamil women within and outside the LTTE. Kandasamy rightly observes on dual reception of Tamil women within the militant organisation and when they are exposed in society after the war. She writes, “While the war was on, Tigresses were objects of worship. After the war, they were unwelcomed in other people’s homes” (56). The study is significant as it adds to the discourse of women’s participation in armed conflict and female emancipation.

The Politics in Meena Kandasamy’s voice and *The Orders Were to Rape You*

Meena Kandasamy is an Indian poet, activist, translator, essayist, and novelist from Chennai. Kandasamy, among other social concerns, raised her voice for discriminated women and the oppressed Tamil ethnicity in her writings, owing to her familial history. Her father was a Tamil Scholar in Chennai. Following Indira Gandhi’s assassination, he had to resign because he taught Tamil in a private school run by Hindi-speaking Jain management (Kandasamy 10). Her mathematician mother, who worked at IIT Madras, was accused of undermining India by collaborating with the Tigers and Pakistan (Kandasamy 23). Meena maintains that her mother was utterly uninformed about the Sri Lankan Tamil struggle at the time. She was primarily framed because she was a “non-Brahmin Tamil”

(Kandasamy 23). Meena gravitated into anti-caste politics due to her mother's sustained battle against society's prejudiced perspective on the caste system, ethnicity, religion, and other issues, which influenced her main works. Growing up in Tamil nationalist culture, the author "looked up to the Tamil Tigers with admiration" (Kandasamy 17). Like many other Tamil girls, Meena was looking forward to Tamil Eelam and, by extension, Tamil women's independence.

Her captivating works include two collections of poetry: *Touch* and *Ms Militancy*. Her debut novel, *The Gypsy Goddess*, was critically acclaimed for the 1968 Kilvenmani Massacre narration. Her second novel, *When I Hit You or The Portrait of the Writer as a Young Wife*, is a work of auto fiction. It was nominated for the Women's Prize for Fiction in 2018, and *Exquisite Cadavers* was selected in 2019. Her most recent book, *The Orders Were to Rape You: Tigresses in the Tamil Eelam Struggle* (2020), chronicles the atrocities suffered by Tamil women in the aftermath of the horrific civil conflict. Her works predominantly condemn misogyny, challenge the caste system, and address the issues of corruption and feminism.

The Orders were to Rape You (2020), by Meena Kandasamy, is described as "an essay on writing and pain," "an essay about violence," "an exercise in intimacy," and finally "an exercise in trust" (Kandasamy 9). The text is divided into two sections. The first section features three Tamil women's testimonies: an ex-Tamil Tigress, the wife of a Tamil Tiger, and the author. The second half of the prose consists of Tamil resistance poetry penned by Tamil female warriors such as Captain Vaanathi, Captain Kasthuri, and Aatilatchumi. The prose not only emphasizes gender inequalities or female emancipation but also reveals the author's political and emotional affinity towards Tamil Tigress and her experiences while documenting these narratives. . As A. Satkunanathan writes: Kandasamy "wants to express her solidarity with the women about whom she writes and amplifies their voices" (para 2). The selected prose is an archive of transcripts, travelogue, testimonies and translated poems. The literary quest of the prose is to elevate and immortalise the Tamil women fighters, who were involved in the fight for Tamil self-determination. These

multiple voices rise to challenge the conventional gender construct for women endorsed by the patriarchal Tamil morality that shove misogynist judgements on their women survivors. As a result, the author employs these multiple voices to elicit a sense of outrage among readers, resulting in a demand for justice.

The Art of Polyphony

Mikhail Bakhtin developed the concept of polyphony in his monumental work, *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetic* (1963), to characterise Fyodor Dostoevsky's novels. Polyphony (poly - many and phony-voices/sound) means "multi-voicedness" (Bakhtin 163). However, according to Bakhtin, the author of a polyphonic narrative should eschew the conventional monologist technique of narration and instead use the characters "to collide in the 'great dialogue' of the novel, leaves that dialogue open and leaves no finalizing period at the end." (Bakhtin 165). The characters are not the ideological embodiment of the author but independent entities with whom the readers may interact in continual discourse (Bakhtin 6). In this sense, a polyphonic narrative can be regarded as the distinctiveness and autonomy of characters within a novel that is excluded from the author's mechanisms while remaining within his creative structure. Unlike a monologist novel, these multi-voices that are equally significant and exclusive empower its readers to grapple with the dynamic facets of a theme.

The art of polyphony extends beyond the multiple voices of characters inside a book to incorporate the thoughts and ideologies of several characters, the author's implicit and explicit voices, and even the reader's voice, who is in constant dialogue with the novel. Aside from these characteristics, the study expands the concept of a polyphonic prose/novel to encompass representatives of the external world, such as the historical, social-political, and cultural environment in which the narrative was created and consumed by the reader. In addition, a polyphonic report can also include the implementation of multiple genres within a text. Following Bakhtin's assertion that the eclectic nature of polyphony radically challenges the prevailing monological perspective on the world, this article validates Meena Kandasamy's prose *The Orders were to Rape You* (2020) as a

polyphonic narrative in its form and content that demands bilateral justice for both Tamil women and Tamil ethnicity.

The most distinguishing feature of a polyphonic narrative is its “multi-voicedness” (Bakhtin 163). According to Malcuzyński’s study, the use of polyphonic narrative in the literature attempts to “refute the objectification of man through the pluralistic interventions of the dialogue” (3). The prose accounts the voices of the author, a Tamil Tigress, a Tamil Tiger’s wife, and in the second part includes poems by Captain Vaanathi, Captain Kasthuri and Aatilatchumi along with the excerpts of other poems, which count to more than six voices enhancing the Bakhtin’s polyphonic features. These voices are exclusive yet inclusive in their discussion of female liberation and gendered atrocities against women.

The author’s performance method is another art of polyphony. Bakhtin observes that “the author’s technique will not be marshalled to harmonize everything into a single unified picture and to aid the reader to see that picture” (xxiii). In *The Orders were to Rape You*, Meena Kandasamy has not attempted to confine the prose into a single entity; instead, it is more engaged with scattered voices of shattered Tamil women’s lives across ethnic and geographical lines. In an interview on *Writers Mosaic*, Meena Kandasamy opines that “...a writer has a responsibility towards fighting for an equal and just society, but she also has an aesthetic responsibility towards her readers” (para 2). The author could employ a single literary genre to emancipate these Tamil women, such as autobiography, documentary, travelogue, memoir, or even a poetry anthology. Kandasamy, on the other hand, incorporates a variety of genres into her writing, demonstrating the polyphonic character to its highest degree.

For instance, the prose is structured into sections and components, each rendering style. Kandasamy commences the prose in an autobiographical tone with the title “MY STORY” (Kandasamy 10), then offers a testimonial narrative from the Militant’s Wife and female Tiger in their own words in the latter part. Thereafter the second section titled “THE STORY OF GATHERING THE STORIES” (Kandasamy 31) is more akin to a travelogue or documentary style of narration, taking its departure from the first

autobiographical section. And towards the end of the text, Kandasamy translates and presents an anthology of poems titled “THE POETRY OF FEMALE FIGHTERS” (Kandasamy 67) by three deceased Tamil Tigress on women emancipation. She explains the concept of having poems, not for aesthetic reasons, but because “...my search for poems were explicitly political” (Kandasamy 76). Reading Captain Vaanathi’s poem, ‘Get ready for Battle’ from the third section of the prose reveals the fact that the Tamil women were indulged in women separatist movement than nationalist separatist. Her poems goes; “When we get national freedom/that we desire so deeply, /we will build the tomb for women’s exploitation. /We will dig the graves for society’s backward ideas.” (Kandasamy 88). The same theme of female liberation echoes in Captain Kasturi’s poem when she poses a rhetorical question: “When will come a day, / where, marching as fire-gods/they torch away from their suffering?” (Ibid., 92). Resistance poetry, as Kandasamy believes, is open-ended and an appeal to poetry itself, mirroring Bakhtin’s polyphonic narrative’s essential element of open-endedness. The purpose of these polyphonic poems is to recover their proper, historical position, and reading them together, as Kandasamy opines, is to “embark on a resistance project, an attempt to undo imperialisms blacklisting of all guerrilla movement under the punishing, isolating banner of terrorism” (85).

Bakhtin characterizes the significance of incorporating the socio-political issues of the external world in a polyphony narration when he states, “the external world and the everyday life surrounding him are drawn into the process of self-awareness, are transferred from the authors to the hero’s field of vision” (Bakhtin 49). Considering this aspect, the prose does demonstrates on how this multi-voicedness provides diverse views on the external environment of Sri Lankan Tamil women. For instance, in the first autobiographical section, the author’s narrative obliquely discusses the Sri Lankan civil war and how it affected India, particularly Tamil Nadu. Meena Kandasamy claims that the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka “...caused an unforeseen influx of Tamil refugees into Tamil Nadu... From one day to the next, the war on the island began to enter our homes” (13). Here, it is significant to understand the bilateral impact of the civil war on both

Sri Lankan Tamil women and Indian Tamil women. Due to geographical as well as ethnic proximity of Sri Lankan Tamils and Indian Tamils, the Sri Lankan civil war posed great threat to India's integrity and security. As a result, the civil war must be examined through the perspective of an Indian novelist, such as Meena Kandasamy, who represents the psyche of Indian Tamil women. These incidents forced both Indian and Sri Lankan Tamils to revamp their gender identities and liberate from its constraints. In employing multiple genres within a text, such as combining autobiography, travelogue, socio-political issues of the external world, and poetry anthology, may be seen as an extension of Bakhtin's concept of polyphony in its structure.

The Politics of Polyphonic Narration: Gendered atrocities

"What is women?" (Beauvoir 13), a highly disputed question from time to time. In her masterwork, *The Second Sex*, Simon de Beauvoir seeks to settle this contested idea, stating, "One is not born, but rather becomes, a woman" (273). It means that gender roles for men and women are conditioned under socio-political-cultural tradition. They are not biological but rather constructive ones. Beauvoir opinion about the constructive designation endorsed on women has been pertinent for decades since. In the case of South Asian perspective on women one can comply with Rajasingham Senanayake opinion. He states that; "South Asian women rarely appear to be agents of their destinies – in war or peacetime" (142-143). The statement implies the gender design of how women are not welcomed in forefront socio-political activity; they were expected to confine to their domestic tasks. Given such details; the significance of the ferocious Tamil Tigress and their impact on Tamil women arises.

Vellupillai Prabhakaran, created its first women's front in 1983, namely: *Vituthalai Pulikal Munani* alias Women's Front of the Liberation Tigers or famously known as 'Birds of Freedom'. . An approximate figures suggest "a third of the fighting force of the Tigers" were women (Kandasamy 17; Allison 39; Jordon & Devon 43). The majority of these women were in the organization's two most lethal wings: the Sea Tigers (naval force) and the Black Tigers suicide squad. (Allison 18). The Tamil militant organization's female cadres were among the world's most ferocious, violent, and courageous warriors.

Prabhakaran addressed the female wing as “one of the movement’s greatest achievements” (De Mel 208). Here, it is relevant to consider the statistical representation and designation of Tamil women in the movement because they were in a complete departure from the conventional gender norms for Tamil women that include “*accham, madam, naanam, payirppu*,” which translates as “fear, ignorance, modesty, shrinking delicacy” (Kandaswamy 18). They were loudly challenging society to deconstruct the qualitative qualities associated with males, such as leadership quality, risk-taking judgments, adventures, and violence. This is one of the key reasons why, despite their involvement in fatal operations, young Tamil girls idolized the female Tamil Tigers. Although, the Tamil Tigress battled unrelentingly and executed everyone who hindered the progress of Tamil’s self-determination. However, in the façade of the civil war for Tamil national liberation, in reality, these Tamil women were fighting against the gender stereotypical doctrines endorsed on women.

Kandasamy, as an Indian Tamil, proves her political and emotional affinity towards the cause of Tamil nationalism. In her prose *The Orders were to Rape You*, she clearly represents on the psyche of every Tamil girl who looked up to the Tamil Tigress when she states, “young girls like me were carrying AK47S and killing the enemy, and here I was, cowering under the bed in fear of father waiting with a belt in his hand because a boy in my class had dared to phone me at home” (Kandasamy 18). Her perspective on Tamil Tigress sheds light on the socio-political dynamics that led to Tamil women voluntarily joining the organization. In this case, it is apparent that they joined the movement in order to transcend the gender construct for women in society or to escape other circumstances such as poverty, sexual assaults by the army, or perceived societal injustices. They were waging two battles: one for their race and one for their identity. The second conflict is still up in the air. However the Tamil Tigress were successful in deconstructing, as Balasingham claims, “some of the problems of male chauvinism and have managed to project a new image of Tamil Women” (4).

Aside from these social disparities, Kandasamy’s prose *The Orders Were to Rape You* documents the poignant testimonies of

Tamil woman survivors who had experienced and witnessed the gendered atrocities during and after the civil war. Atrocities against women were widely reported in Manik Farm, one of the world's largest refugee camps at the time in Sri Lanka. Although the Sri Lankan government alluded to the Manik Farm camps as a 'welfare village', people who lived there had an alternate narrative to share. There were allegations of rape, torture, kidnapping, medical misconduct, and other horrors, but the administration dismissed all of them. Torture, rape, and kidnapping in white vans persisted, but no one was charged. Even if there had been, no processes would have taken place since the state failed to provide the victims with the requisite suspects to identify. The country was witnessing widespread violence everywhere, leaving no civilians untouched. Women, in particular, were multifariously affected. Firstly, "as direct victims of the violence," secondly as "refugees or internally displaced", and finally as "victims of loss of male relatives" (Wickramasinghe 336). Even after the island's official peace was restored, Tamil lives were still in jeopardy. They were living in the shadow of a protracted conflict, not just in Sri Lanka but also in the diaspora. This prevailing ethnic tension gets reflected in the voice of the militant's wife, who is now a refugee in Malaysia. The ordeal of the militant's wife goes as; "I came here to flee the difficulties. But here again I had to face the same...I suffered there. I suffered here...I had no connection to the liberation movement...But because of his connection I became a victim"(Kandasamy 45-48). These situations eloquently highlight how society deprives women of their own identity in preference of one that is related to men. It is rarely acceptable by the society to regard them as individuals with their own self-identity and functionality. In this case, despite the fact that she has no affiliations to the organization and has committed no crimes, the militant's wife is haunted by the spectre of ethnic conflict and gendered atrocities solely grounded on her identity as a Tamil Tiger's wife.

Studies reveal that the gendered atrocities contested in the refugee camps or rehabilitation centres after the war were "well-coordinated policy, devised and planned at the highest level of the Government of Sri Lanka and its security forces, which would

constitute crimes against humanity” (*An Unfinished War* 16). Among other atrocities, rape is torturous political technique used to degrade and demoralise the adversary. “Raped women who are not broken down by the experience are seen as continuing to exercise their sexual autonomy: they are condemned by a spectre of fear that they will wreck families” (Kandasamy 40), thus goes the ordeal of the female tiger in Meena Kandasamy’s prose *The Orders were to Rape You*. Here, the Tamil Tigress is paradigmatic for thousands of Tamil women who have fled refugee camps’ physical and emotional torment. The female Tigress, unlike many, brace up to voice against the crimes perpetrated in the camps. The Tamil Tigress recalls; “Everyone from a top army official to the low-level soldiers wanted a piece of my flesh...the first time there were four men. Later on, the number would increase. In the worst episode, seven men were involved” (Ibid., 50-51). Such testimony reveals the army’s dark side, which the state has never acknowledged. The state constantly repudiate these allegations. As Srinivasan comments the Sinhala psyche “cannot accept that their “war hero” engaged in a “humanitarian operation” could unleash sexual violence” (para 5). Consequentially, it is significant to evaluate the employment of rape as a tortures tool during conflicts. The Tamil Tigress answers to this highly disputed notion. She recalls the army personnel’s scathing comment; “They wanted the wombs of our women to bear their children” (Kandasamy 52). Her comment demonstrates that rape committed during warfare is not only confined to terrorizing the enemy populace but also extends in altering the ethnic make-up of adversary’s next generation. It is worth noting here that the militant’s wife and the Tamil Tigress are both subjected to similar magnitude of mental and physical torture, but one is a member of the movement and the other has no function other than being the wife of a Tamil Tiger. In both circumstances, they are objectified war subjects, and the state or army considers tormenting and abusing these women as their legitimate duty.

Conclusion

Kandasamy says in an interview for *Writers Mosaic* that the author should “step back as a writer and let documents tell the story, or let people tell the story” (para 5). In this sense, *The Orders Were*

to Rape You (2020) can be considered as an instance of “great dialogue” (Bakhtin 40) among other narratives, demonstrating that readers, characters, the author, the form and content, and the socio-political-cultural context all play an equal role in problematizing gendered atrocities on women and female emancipation. Using Bakhtin’s concept of polyphony to analyse Meena Kandasamy’s statement underlines the fact that, in a rapidly changing world and its realities, it is critical to distinguish numerous meanings and truths rather than relying on a single authoritative vantage point. The mentioned polyphonic narratives inside the prose performs as a political tool to call attention to the covert atrocities committed against Tamil women. It is significant to reconsider the reasons that incite these women to join a militant organization. Studies show that factors such as national beliefs, the experience of domestic violence, sexual abuse by the army, loss of loved ones, in search of identity were all incentives to join the cause. On the contrary, there have been accounts of teenage girls and boys being forcefully conscripted into the organization, implying that Tamil women’s participation in the militant organization was not a collective alternative to women’s liberation. However, despite the brutal violence LTTE was engaged in, the participation of young Tamil girls in the battlefield indeed created a new social latitude for women empowerment.

It is deducible that the women’s perspective on the separatist Tamil national aspiration was primarily focused on women’s liberation rather than national liberation. However with complexities of forced conscription and LTTE’s fundamental ideologies formed and governed solely by the male fraternity, the women empowerment is still problematized. As a consequence, these circumstances raise the question of whether Tamil women were merely objectified instruments employed to attain the political objective of a separate state or were indeed empowered to shackle from the constructive traditional norms designed for women. With LTTE’s downfall, the empowered women freedom wings have been severed, and they are now marginalized and vulnerable in civil society, demonstrating their part in the movement as mere political tool.

The study concludes with optimism that, similar to how polyphony is used inside a text to reveal the multiple realities of the external world, one should endeavour to understand others not from a single vantage point but as a community with shared internal commonalities. Applying this concept, the debate over whether Tamil women were objectified or emancipated, agents or victims is inconsequential, because the reality lies in-between. As Kandasamy opines in an interview, “The participation of women in the armed struggle was a choice they made for themselves. It was out of various complex reasons” (Shalini para 7).

References:

- An Unfinished War: Torture and Sexual Violence in Sri Lanka* 2009. International Truth & Justice Project Sri Lanka, 2015. https://itjpsl.com/assets/stoptorture_report_v4_online.pdf
- Alison, Miranda. “Cogs in the Wheel? Women in the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam.” *Civil Wars*, vol. 6, no. 4, 2003, pp. 37–54. Crossref, <https://doi.org/10.1080/13698240308402554>.
- Balasingham, Adele. “Women Fighters of Liberation Tigers.” *TamilNet*, 6 June 1994, tamilnation.org/books/eelam/adeleann.
- Bakhtin, Mikhail. *Problems of Dostoevsky's Poetics (Theory and History of Literature)*. Minnesota UP, 1984.
- De Beauvoir, Simone. *The Second Sex*. 1949. Vintage Classics, 1989.
- De Mel, Neloufer. *Women & the Nation's Narrative: Gender and Nationalism in Twentieth Century Sri Lanka*, Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 2001.
- Dissanayake, S. Women in the Tamil Tigers: Path to Liberation or Pawn in a Game? *Counter Terrorist Trends and Analyses*, vol. 9, ed.8, pp. 1–6, 2017. <https://doi.org/10.2307/26351541>
- Jordan, Kim and Denov, Myriam. Birds of Freedom? Perspectives on Female Emancipation and Sri Lanka's Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam. *Journal of International Women's Studies*, vol. 9, pp. 42-62, 2007.
- Kandasamy, Meena. *The Orders Were To Rape You: Tigresses in the Tamil Eelam Struggle*. Navayana, 2020.
- Malcuzyński, M. P. Polyphonic Theory and Contemporary Literary Practices. *Studies in 20th & 21st Century Literature*, vol. 9, 1984. <https://doi.org/10.4148/2334-4415.1153>
- Satkunanathan, Ambika. “Surviving War and Victimhood: Women and Tamil Nationalism.” *The Wire*, 28 Mar. 2021, thewire.in/books/surviving-war-and-victimhood-women-and-tamil-nationalism.
- Senanayake-Rajasingham, Darini. “Between Reality and Representation.” *Cultural Dynamics*, vol. 16, no. 2–3, 2004, pp. 141–68. Crossref, <https://doi.org/10.1177/09213740040407741>.

- Shalini, S. “‘My Writing Is Informed by Personal, Collective Resistance:’ Meena Kandasamy on Genocidal Violence against Tamils, Poetry as Resistance.” *TwoCircles.Net*, 12 Mar. 2021, twocircles.net/2021mar12/441350.html.
- Srinivasan, Meera. “‘The Orders Were to Rape You: Tigresses in the Tamil Eelam Struggle’ Review: Surviving War.” *The Hindu*, 25 Apr. 2021, www.thehindu.com/books/books-reviews/the-orders-were-to-rape-you-tigresses-in-the-tamil-eelam-struggle-review-surviving-war/article34390900.ece.
- Votta, Neil de. *Blowback: Linguistic Nationalism, Institutional Decay, and Ethnic Conflict in Sri Lanka (Contemporary Issues in Asia and the Pacific)*. Stanford UP, 2004.
- Wickramasinghe, Nira. *Sri Lanka in the Modern Era: A History*. Oxford UP, 2014.

Rincy Saji
Research Scholar
School of Letters
Mahatma Gandhi University
Kerala, India
Pin: 686560
Ph: +91 8156896788
email: rin4.rins@gmail.com