

**NTM Premiere: Two Poems by S. Vijayalakshmi
Translated From the Tamil by Thila Varghese**



For the first time since we started National Translation Month, we're featuring poetry translated from the Tamil: two beautiful poems by the accomplished author and activist S. Vijayalakshmi translated by Thila Varghese. "Fallacy of Perception" is from *Ella Maalaigalilum Eriyum Oru Kudisai* (Uyirezhuthu Padhippakam, Chennai, India, 2011) and "Seepages" is from *Peruvelipenn* (Mitra Arts & Creations Pvt. Ltd., Chennai, India, 2007). We hope you like them as much as we did.

We'd love to hear from you! Let us know how you like our posts, or attend, share, and spread the word about our readings. Open your heart to new experiences and the beauty of the world, and celebrate its cultures and new voices using #NTM2017. Happy National Translation Month!

—Claudia Serea and Loren Kleinman

Two Poems by S. Vijayalakshmi
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Fallacy of Perception

I am the breeze

a mystical ghost

raindrop

spiderweb

or a plant that has grown

transcending the limits of time

a flower that has sucked in

the moisture of blood

earth

water

sky

Your words personify me

as all of the above;

you had never ever perceived

the other inner body

that resides within

my physical body.

I have also tried

to love you

using any of such words

as the moon and the star.

In those moments

when I find myself at my wits' end

not being able to,

however hard I try,

how can I tell you the truth

that you always remain as

just a physical body?

Seepages

I related the emotional seepages oozing out of experiences endured;

some were moved to tears.

Not wanting their pity,

I toned down and recounted with a restrained voice;

they dismissed it as a display of fictitious fabrication.

I expressed my inner anguish in all its true dimensions;

they remarked that it was a clamorous outburst.

Passing beyond their continuously reverberating voices,

my journey moves forward

unstoppably ... in its own natural course....

About the author



A teacher by profession, **S. Vijayalakshmi** is actively engaged in the Tamil literary field, penning poetry and articles on literary and social issues. She has contributed poems and essays to several mainstream and alternate Tamil magazines, and has to her credit three published books of poetry and two collections of essays. The central theme of Vijayalakshmi's literary works focuses on women's issues. An ardent feminist, Vijayalakshmi participates in forums that explore the place of women in society, most notably presenting a paper on women's rights as exemplified in Tamil poetry at the World Classical Tamil Conference (2010) in India and delivering an address on women in the war zone at the Pengal Santhippu forum (2015) in Sri Lanka. More [here](#).