

# **A Comprehensive Study on Kuzanthai M. Shanmugalingam's Plays of 1980-1990**

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## **Abstract**

The period of 1980-1990 is remembered as perhaps the most violent period in Sri Lanka's history with the growing ethnic tension leading to a civil war with the LTTE against the Sri Lankan state. Due to the adverse situation faced by the Tamils during the war, their theatre was limited to the Northern Province and Mr Kuzanthai M. Shanmugalingam played a significant role in developing the Tamil theatre at this stage. Shanmugalingam has mainly focused on the influence of the outcomes of the ethnic conflict on both the civil population and terrorists. Most of Shanmugalingam's plays are in fact restricted to the Jaffna region. Most of the critics who have done empirical research on the topic have also argued that the dramas of Shanmugalingam are the best guide for a researcher to attain a comprehensive idea of the Tamil theatre during the war. The present research is focused on how Shanmugalingam's plays depict the mental condition of the war-affected civilians in the war-torn areas. This study is based on three of his acclaimed dramas; 'Man Sumanda Maniyar', 'Annei Ittaththi', 'Endeiyum Thayum' which presents a clear picture on the Psychological effect of war on unarmed civilians who suffered from war. The analytical facts of this study are based on the primary data collected from interviews conducted with the experts on the subject and secondary data collected from various scholarly sources.

**Keywords:** Shanmugalingam's plays, Tamil Theatre, Sri Lanka, War, Jaffna