

## PROGRAM

### *"Being Human; Being Tamil: Personhood, Agency and Identity"*

**Third Annual Tamil Studies Conference**

**University of Toronto, May 15-17, 2008**

#### **MAY 15 • THURSDAY**

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##### **Scholars arrive**

##### **Reception** 7.00-9.00 p.m.

Combination Room, Trinity College

#### **MAY 16 • FRIDAY**

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##### **Registration** 08.30-9.30 a.m.

The Buttery, Larkin Building

##### **Welcome:** 9.30-10 a.m.

George Ignatieff Theatre

##### **Session 1** 10.00 a.m. - 12.00 p.m.

*Panel A: Cartwright Hall*  
*Synthetic Selves: Jain, Śrīvaisnavas, and*  
*Christian Conceptions of Personhood*

Chair: Anne Monius

##### Joseph Chandrakanthan

The Development of the Concept of Person in  
Christian Theology and its Influence on Tamil  
Christian Literatures of the 17th and 18th  
Centuries

##### Christoph Emmrich

The Thread Between the Pages: Traces of  
Worship and Learning in the Kanchipuram Jain  
Community

##### Katherine Young

Changing Views of Tamil Religious Personhood:  
The Intertwined Lives of Three Śrīvaisnavas

*Panel B: George Ignatieff Theatre*  
*Dominance, Subversion and Radical Humanism*

Chair: Leslie Orr

##### Brenda Beck

The "Polligars of Ponnivala:" A Community's  
Self Image Portrayed In Epic Legend

##### David Buck

Translating Literary Beauty and Some of its  
Ugly Consequences: the Case of Some of the  
Real People in Thiru-k-Kutralak-Kuravanji

##### S. Gunasekaran

Confronting Immoralities: Radical Humanism in  
Tamil Cittar Tradition

##### **Lunch** 12.00-1.00 p.m.

Munk Centre for International Affairs

##### **Session 2** 1.00-3.00 p.m.

*Panel A: Cartwright Hall*  
*Ideology, Translocation, and the Quest for*  
*Identity*

Chair: Vijaya Ramaswamy

##### Susanne Kranz

The Tamil Identity in the Marxist and Feminist  
Approaches of the Tamil Nadu Democratic  
Women's Association

##### Paul Younger

Tamil Identity; Hindu Identity: Why So  
Separate?

##### Tharshni Kankesan

The Psychological Meaning of Biculturalism

*Panel B: George Ignatieff Theatre  
Text, Genre, Literacy and Ideal Subjects*

Chair: Aparna Sundar

Lakshmi Holmström  
Rules and Transgressions: A reading of Salma's  
Irandaam jaamangalin kadai.

Preetha Mani  
Tamil Subject, Tamil Short Story: Tamil Short  
Story Writing in the Post-Independence Period

Frank Cody  
Arivoli's Humanism: Literacy Activism and the  
Making of Self-Making Subjects

**Refreshments** 3.00-3.30 p.m.  
The Buttery, Larkin Building

**Session 3** 3.30-5.30 p.m.

*Panel A: Cartwright Hall  
Constructing the Self in Religious Traditions*

Chair: Janet O'Shea

Francis X. Clooney  
Personhood and Identity, Divine and Human, in  
the Ajnananivaranam Attributed to Roberto de  
Nobili

Anne Monius  
Humour and Being Human in Medieval Tamil  
Jain Literature

Margaret Trawick  
A Tamil Saiva Siddhanta Concept of Self and  
Personhood

*Panel B: George Ignatieff Theatre  
Royalty and Exemplars*

Chair: Katherine Young

Gil Ben-Herut  
Divine and Human: Nayaka Elaborations of  
Personhood

Leslie C. Orr  
Image, Emblem, Actor: Women and the Gift in  
Medieval South India

Maithili Thayanithy  
Siddha as Rebel: Dissent and Complicity in the  
Tamil Siddha Tradition

*Panel C: Combination Room  
Identity, Landscape and Ecology*

Chair: Nadarajah Sriskandarajah

A. Velupillai  
Nature, Identity and Tamil Literature

Ponnabalam Ragupathy  
Human-Environment Relationship: The Tamil  
Idea and Identity Reflected Through Place  
Names in Sri Lanka

Nadarajah Sriskandarajah, Tharman Saverimuttu  
Environmental Pasts, Environmental Futures

**Refreshments** 5.30-6.00 p.m.  
The Buttery, Larkin Building

**Plenary Lecture** 6.00- 7.30 p.m.  
George Ignatieff Theatre

Chair: Lakshmi Holmstrom

Bama  
Being Human, Being Dalit

**Dinner** 19.30

**MAY 17 • SATURDAY**

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**Registration** 9.00-10.00 a.m.  
The Buttery, Larkin Building

**Session 1** 10.00 a.m. - 12.00 p.m.

*Panel A: Cartwright Hall  
Contesting Terms of Limitation*

Chair: Chelva Kanaganayakam

Gajendran Ayyathurai  
Limiting Categories: Seeing Tamils as  
Subalterns and Dalits

Susan Schomburg  
Hey, Girl! Dance the Kummi Called Motcam  
The Sufi Poetics of Ilaiyankuti  
Kaccippillaiyammal

Christer Norström  
Situating Adivasi Identity: Contested Resources  
Among Castes and Tribes of the Palni Hills in  
Tamil Nadu, South India

*Panel B: George Ignatieff Theatre  
Recalling a Gesture - History, Identity and  
Memory in Bharatanatyam Dance*

Chair: Davesh Soneji

Hari Krishnan  
From Gynemimesis to Hypermasculinity: The  
Multiple Identities of Male Performers of  
Bharatanatyam

Janet O'Shea  
From Temple to Battlefield: Bharatanatyam in  
Sri Lanka

Davesh Soneji  
Memoria Technica: Performing Nostalgia,  
Stigma, and Loss in Modern Tamil Devadasi  
Communities

*Panel C: Combination Room  
Diasporic Figures? - Elder, Gangster and  
Refugee*

Chair: Sharryn Aiken

Richard Antony  
Diasporic Youth Gang Culture of Sri Lankan  
Tamils in South East England

Raoul Boulakia  
Constructing Tamils as Person in Canadian  
Immigration Hearings

Glynis George  
Bearing Culture and Servicing Seniors: 'Older  
Tamils', Multiculturalism and the Constructions  
of Personhood in Toronto's East End

**Lunch** 12.00 - 1.00 p.m.  
Munk Centre for International Affairs

**Session 2** 1.00-3.00 p.m.

*Panel A: George Ignatieff Theatre  
The Self in the Crucible of War and Nation*

Chair: Ravi Vaitheespara

Dagmar Hellmann-Rajanayagam  
Female Identity Under Conditions of War:  
Tigresses and Others

Sidharthan Maunaguru  
Human/Non-Human: Work of doubt in everyday  
life in the time of war

Nicole A Wilson  
Women's Empowerment Through Nationalist  
Discourse: A Comparative Study of Sri Lankan  
and Indian Tamil Nationalism

*Panel B: Cartwright Hall  
Figuring the Self in Tamil Literature (in Tamil)*

Chair: Prof. Subramaniam

Balasundaram Elayathamby  
A Study of Purananuru: The status of Humanity and  
personhood in Sangam Age

R. Cheran  
Challenging Mythical and Liberation Narratives:  
the Poetry of Solakkili

Chelva Kanaganayakam  
Poetry and Humanism: After Maranothul  
Valvom

*Panel C: Combination Room  
Cultural Psychology of Gender and the  
Psychological Well-Being of Tamil Immigrants*

Chair: Mark Whittaker

Sundari Balan  
“Super Amma”: Idealized Representations of  
Tamil Motherhood Among Tamil Immigrant  
Women

Shanta Kanukollu  
“Pure” Woman Ideals and the Silencing of  
Sexually Abused women: Clinical Implications

Jennifer Yim  
Brown Masculinities and the Contours of  
Resistance to Hegemonic White Masculinities:  
Implications for Psychological Well-being

**Refreshments** 3.00-3.30 p.m.  
The Buttery Larkin Building

**Session 3** 3.30-5.30 p.m.

*Panel A: George Ignatieff Theatre  
Fragmentation and Imagination*

Chair: Haema Sivanesan

Cyrus Sundarsingh  
Chino Amer-Indo Jam-African Dread: Defining  
Home & Identity

Anurendra Jegadeva  
Political Persuasion and Personal Choices;  
Studio Investigations of the Migrant Experience

T. Sanathanan  
A Stranger and a Suspect; Being a Sri Lankan  
Tamil: Narratives of Personhood in Visual Art

*Panel B: Combination Room  
Locating, Transforming and Transmitting  
Identity in the Diaspora*

Chair: R. Cheran

Mark Bradley  
The Importance of the Temple in the  
Transmission of Tamil Identity

Anne Sigfrid Grønseth  
Being Tamil in Norway: Negotiations of Well-  
Being and Identity

Mark P. Whitaker  
Trauma and Agency in Sri Lanka and Toronto in  
the ‘New Media’ Age

*Panel C: Cartwright Hall  
Formations of Tamilness and Personhood in the  
Colonial Era*

Chair: Maithily Thayanithy

Vijaya Ramaswamy  
Gender, Language and the Quest for a Tamil  
Identity: A Study of the politics and Persona of  
Neelambikai Ammaiyar

Ravi Vaitheespara  
From Vallalar to Maraimalai Adigal:  
Interrogating the Genealogy of Thamilar  
Matham (Tamilian Creed)

Srilata Raman  
Saving the Body, Killing the Soul: Tamil Saiva  
Theology Between Pre-colonialism and  
Colonialism

**Refreshments** 5.30-6.00 p.m.

**Plenary Lecture** 6.00-7.30 p.m.

Chair: Srilata Raman

David Shulman  
Glimpses of the Unitary Self in Sixteenth  
Century Tamil Literature