

CALL FOR PAPERS

வீடும் வெளியும் தமரும் பிறரும்
Home, Space and the "Other"

Fourth Annual Tamil Studies Conference
University of Toronto, May 21-23, 2009

The fourth annual Tamil Studies Conference, "*Home, Space and the Other*" organized by the University of Toronto and the University of Windsor, will be held at the University of Toronto from May 21-23, 2009.

The objective of the conference is to map the various ways in which the Tamil regions and their spaces - linguistic, cultural, political, economic, religious etc. - have been constituted by, interacted with or responded to influences from within and outside their cultural norms, conventions, or geographical boundaries. The "other" could be defined internally as in constructions of "ur", "kaadu-naadu" and the "aham-puram" schema of Sangam literature, or it could be identified as the various languages, religions, peoples and political forces that impinged on the Tamil regions. How have "others" in turn conceptualized the Tamil region, peoples and traditions? What are the sources and ongoing relevance of Tamil theorization of the "other" and how has the impact of the "other" introduced new forms of such theorization or altered interpretive frames. In the colonial and modern era when the Tamil regions have been subject to new regimes of knowledge and when Tamils have traveled, been transported and expelled how have they encountered and conceptualized new "others" and how have they been conceived and transformed by these new "others" in their historic and diasporic worlds?

The conference organizers invite submissions of paper abstracts from all disciplines and welcome abstracts with an interdisciplinary focus. Scholars, graduate students, artists, writers, performers and activists are welcome to present scholarly papers in English or Tamil at this conference. The organizers also welcome the participation of non-Tamil Studies specialists whose work addresses the theme of this conference. The organizers encourage the submission of new scholarly work that can be included in the conference publication. Panel proposals are also welcome.

Requirements

- ❖ Submission of an abstract and biographical statement, or the full details of a panel by August 31, 2008 to: tamils@chass.utoronto.ca
- ❖ Confirmation of participation by registering and paying the registration fee within two weeks of the organizers official acceptance in September/October 2008.
- ❖ Ability to meet costs of the registration fee, travel and accommodation costs.
- ❖ Attendance and participation during the full duration of the conference.

Paper Proposals: Abstracts and Biographical Statement

- ❖ A 300 word abstract stating the argument to be presented.
- ❖ A one paragraph biographical statement, including: current affiliation, publications and research interests. Please note that this will be the biographical information used in conference publicity and introductions. Even if you have submitted a biographical statement before can you please resubmit it along with your abstract. (See sample statement, p.4)
- ❖ Abstracts must be submitted in the language in which you intend to present, English or Tamil.
- ❖ Panel proposals must include an abstract for the whole panel, and the abstracts and bios of each individual presenter and the chair.

Acceptance and Registration

- ❖ Participants will be selected based on the recommendations of the abstract evaluation committee.
- ❖ You will be informed in September/October if your proposal has been accepted for presentation at the conference.
- ❖ You will confirm your participation in the conference by completing the registration form and paying the registration fee on the conference website within two weeks of receiving notice of the acceptance of your proposal. *Please note there will be no refund of the registration fee and that registration fees and your place are not transferable to others.*

Finances and Costs

- ❖ All proposals are accepted on the understanding that scholars can meet the costs of their registration fee, travel and accommodation.
- ❖ If your participation depends on receiving any financial support from the conference organizers you must request this when you submit your abstract and not after acceptance of the abstract.
- ❖ Canadian graduate students (citizens of Canada, or students registered in graduate programs in Canadian Universities) will be exempted from the registration fee. They may also apply to the organizers for accommodation support.
- ❖ Graduate students who are members of the American Institute of Sri Lankan Studies (AISLS) may be eligible to receive a grant of \$300 from AISLS to participate in the conference. For further details information contact: treasurer@aisls.org
- ❖ South Asian scholars and graduate students based in South Asia do not need to pay the registration fee.
- ❖ The registration fee covers the costs of the opening reception (May 21), meals, (breakfast, lunch and dinner on May 22, breakfast and lunch on May 23) refreshments, and the conference brochure.
- ❖ Transport from the Airport to the University area is approximately \$100 by taxi (both trips), and \$6.00 by public transport.
- ❖ Accommodation costs will range from approximately \$50 a night (university rooms) to \$140 a night (hotel accommodation). We will make some suggestions on this after your registration.

Conference Duration and Participation

- ❖ The conference begins with a reception on the evening of Thursday, May 21, 2009 at 7 p.m. and it will end approximately at 7 p.m. on Saturday, May 23, 2009.
- ❖ Because these conferences aim at academic excellence but to also engage scholars, students and interested community members in a dialogue about Tamil Studies, we do ask that all those who are presenting papers be present for the full duration of the conference and participate in all the events of the conference.



CENTRE FOR SOUTH ASIAN STUDIES

Sample Biographical Statement

Leslie Orr is currently an Associate Professor in the Department of Religion at Concordia University. Her research interests include religious and social history of medieval South India, especially Tamil Nadu of the Chola period (9th to 13th centuries); women in pre-colonial South Asia; Hindu temples; devadasis; interaction of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Jainism; Brahmins (Brahmans); food and feeding; asceticism. She is the author of the book, *Donors, Devotees and Daughters of God: Temple Women in Medieval Tamilnadu* (2000) and numerous articles, including, most recently, "Identity and Divinity: Boundary-Crossing Goddesses in Medieval Tamilnadu," in *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 73:1 (2005) and "Processions in the medieval South Indian temple: Sociology, sovereignty and soteriology," in *South Indian Horizons: Felicitation Volume for François Gros* (2004).

Contact

Email: tamilstudiesconference@gmail.com Website: www.tamilstudiesconference.ca

Academic Organizers

Chelva Kanaganayakam

Professor, Department of English, University of Toronto

R. Cheran

Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology and Sociology, University of Windsor

Darshan Ambalavanar

Visiting Fellow, Centre for South Asian Studies, University of Toronto.