Program
Bearing Witness: Unspeakable Crimes, Invisible Atrocities
2nd Tamil Studies Symposium
May 6-7, 2016
York University

Friday, May 6
Room 519, Fifth floor Kaneff Tower

10:00 am
Introduction and Welcome
Philip Kelly (Director, York Centre for Asian Research)
Ananya Mukherjee-Reed (Dean, Faculty of Liberal Arts & Professional Studies)
Address by Laureen Blu-Waters (Cree and Metis Elder of the Micmac Wolf Clan)

10:30 am – 12:00 pm
Transitional Justice and the Military: Can There be Accountability While the North-East Remains Under Military Occupation?
Moderator: Dharsha Jegatheeswaran (Law, University of Toronto)

‘Normalization of the Abnormalcy: Long Term Objectives of the Militarization of North-East Sri Lanka’ – Kumaravadivel Guruparan (Co-founder of Tamil Civil Society Forum; University of Jaffna/University College London)
‘Effect of Militarization on Women’s Agency’ – Navaranjini Nadarajah (Consultant for human rights organizations in Sri Lanka)
‘Why Have the Violations Not Stopped?’ – Frances Harrison (Co-Founder, International Truth and Justice Project; Director, Politics of Sexual Violence Research Initiative)
‘Militarization and Sinhala Nationalism: Why Sri Lanka Will Continue to Maintain its Grip on the North-East’ – Mario Arulthas (Co-editor, Tamil Guardian; Advocacy Director, People for Equality And Relief in Lanka )

12:00 – 1:30 pm
Security, State Structures and the Language of Protest
Moderator: Neil Balan (Communications Studies, Global Studies, and Women's and Gender Studies, Wilfred Laurier University)
‘Pushing Back: the Securitization of the Tamil Diaspora in Canada’ – Jennifer Hyndman (Centre for Refugee Studies; Geography, York University) and Gayathri Naganathan (Public Health, McMaster University)

‘Racist Colonial Discourses: Comparing and Constrasting the Idle No More Movement and Tamil Canadian Protests in Canada’ – Harini Sivalingam (Socio-Legal Studies, York University)

‘The Law and Politics of the Use and Avoidance of ‘Genocide’ in Post-War Discourse for Accountability in Sri Lanka’ – Kumaravadivel Guruparan (Law, University of Jaffna/University College London)

1:30 – 2:30 pm
Lunch break

2:30 – 3:00 pm
‘Dances of Eezham’ – S. Balasukumar (Former Arts and Culture Director, Eastern University, Sri Lanka)

3:00 – 4:30 pm
Arts Roundtable/Workshop with T. Sanathanan

Dilani Balasubramaniam (Community artist/feminist photographer)
Luxshanaa Vasuntharadevi Sebarajah (Fine Arts, York University)
Shanthiya Baheerathan (Centre for Social Innovation; Studio Y; MaRS Discovery District)
Vidhya Manivannan (Immigration and Refugee Program at Church World Service, New Jersey)
Abirami Jeyaratnam (Program Facilitator, Pathways to Education)

4:30 – 5:00 pm
Tea break

5:00 – 6:30 pm
Health and Well-being in the Transnational Tamil Context
Moderator: Arabi Rajeswaran (Human Rights and Equity Studies, York University)

‘Intersectional Trauma, Disclosure & Erasure: Tamils and HIV Disclosure’ – Ramraajh Sharvendiran & Suruthi Ragulan (Alliance for South Asian AIDS Prevention)

‘Uprooted Tamil Youth’ – Zulfika Ismail (John Harvard Society; Vasantham Tamil Seniors Wellness Centre; Scarborough Addiction Services Partnership, Centre for Addiction and Mental Health)

‘Systemic Violence in Sri Lanka: The Tamil Immigrant Experience’ – Saruka Pararajasingam (History, York University)

6:45 – 8:00 pm

**Keynote: ‘Art and the Politics of Memory in Contemporary Sri Lanka’**
T. Sanathanan (Department of Fine Arts, University of Jaffna)

Introduction and moderation: Harshita Yalamarty (Gender, Feminist and Women’s Studies, York University)

Response: Francesca Bremner (Sociology, Queen’s College, City University of New York)

****
Saturday, May 7
152 Founders College (Assembly Hall)

1:00 – 3:00 pm
**Resistance and Resilience: Academia, Activism and Community Outcomes (Roundtable)**
Moderator: Talisha M. Ramsaroop (Sociology, York University)

‘Hip Hop Culture and the Black Arts as Cultural Strategy’ – Mark V. Campbell (RTA School of Media, Ryerson University; Co-founder, Nia Centre for the Arts)
‘Resilience Within Resistance’ – Jamaijas Da Costa (Host, *Indigenous Waves*; Director of Programming, Peace Theatre)
‘The Messengers: Artists as Advocates, Advocacy as Art’ – Gowri Koneswaran (Poet, performing artist, Washington D.C.)
‘Abuse Never Becomes Us’ – Jenny Starke and Tharshiga Elangeeran (Founders, Abuse Never Becomes Us)
‘Tamil Archive Collective’ – Vasuki Shanmuganathan, Arathy Sivasubramaniam, Israa Ahmed and Banusha Mahendran (University of Toronto)

3:00 – 4:00 pm

Talk by Sascha Ebeling (South Asian Languages and Literatures, University of Chicago)
Response: Arun Nedra Rodrigo (Humanities, York University)

4:00 – 4:30 pm
**Tea break**

4:30 – 6:00 pm
**Literatures of Conflict**
Moderator: R. Cheran (Criminology, University of Windsor)

‘Is There a Tamil Mode of Articulating Trauma?’ – Geetha Sukumaran (Humanities, York University)
‘Eezham: The War and Post-War in Contemporary Novels’ – A. Ramasamy
(Manonmaniam Sundaranar University, India)
‘Enacting Victimization: Trauma in Kuzhanthai Shanmugalingam’s Plays’ – P. Ahilan (University of Jaffna)

6:00 pm – 8:00 pm

**Keynote: ‘The Smoke of Burning Bridges: Refugee Lives and the Media of Survival’**
Suvendrini Perera (Cultural Studies, Curtin University, Australia)

Introduction: Arun Nedra Rodrigo (Humanities, York University)
Moderation: Amarnath Amarasingam (Resilience Research Centre, Dalhousie University)
Response: Jennifer Hyndman (Geography, York University)

**Book launch: Survival Media: The Politics and Poetics of Mobility and the War in Sri Lanka – Suvendrini Perera**

Launched by: Sunera Thobani (Institute for Gender, Race, Sexuality and Social Justice, University of British Columbia)

*****