



CALL FOR PAPERS

“Traces of the Past”

**Seventh Annual Tamil Studies Conference
University of Toronto, May 11-12, 2012**

This conference aims to understand the means by which people come to know, feel, and reflect upon their past. Questions of history, memory, and heritage are all guided by the ethical concerns of the present and by desires regarding the future. The production of alternatives to the dominant narrative might also entail their own forms of exclusion. Contestation arises precisely when the past becomes a resource to remake the contemporary world. But how do we narrate pasts? What counts as “evidence” in such narrations? Whose stories prevail? Which pasts are silenced?

Traces of the past need not refer to archives alone. We also invite papers that would interpret how memory is inscribed on the human body, the landscape, in practices of commemoration, cinema, through nostalgia, and images of utopia or revolution. We encourage scholars to examine how collectives and subjectivities are formed, reformed, and contested through recuperation and retrospection, and how conceptions of past selves engage critically with the world-scale economic projects of colonialism, neocolonialism, and nationalism.

We welcome individual or panel proposals from all disciplines, and from scholars, students, artists, writers and activists, including proposals that address questions that are not listed here. Papers on the diaspora can range beyond the theme of the conference, though preference will be given to those that do engage the theme more directly. We especially encourage proposals for papers in Tamil.

In addition, we ask for proposals from artists who are interested in showing work related to the conference theme at the conference itself or in our promotional materials.

Submission Deadline: August 31, 2011

info@tamilstudiesconference.ca

Requirements

Submission of an abstract and biographical statement, or the full details of a panel by August 31, 2011 to: info@tamilstudiesconference.ca

Confirmation of participation by registering and paying the registration fee within two weeks of the organizers official acceptance in September/October 2010.

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 in past years, 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. Tamil abstracts, should be accompanied by a Tamil bio, and an English translation of the abstract and bio.

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) are not exempt from the registration fee. However, they are welcome to apply to the suggested institutes on our website for funding support. Graduate students who present work on Sri Lanka or the Sri Lankan Tamil Diaspora may be eligible to receive a small grant of \$300 from the American Institute of Sri Lankan Studies (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 13),
- (breakfast, lunch and dinner on May 14)

-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

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.

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).

Academic Organizers

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Francis Cody,
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