



Tracing Conscience in Time of War: Archiving a History of Dissent in Sri Lanka 1960s to 2000s



Jonathan Spencer

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Language, Culture and Society,
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2 p.m., Tuesday 14th November
Headley Lecture Theatre,
Ashmolean Museum

Jonathan Spencer is Regius Professor of South Asian Language, Culture and Society at the University of Edinburgh. He has carried out research in Sri Lanka since the early 1980s. His most recent book, *Checkpoint, Temple, Church and Mosque* (2014) concerns the role of religious organizations in the Sri Lankan civil war, and was co-authored with a team of Sri Lankan and European researchers.

This talk is a progress report from the midpoint in a 5-year comparative project on the Anthropology of Conscience, Ethics and Human Rights. For the Sri Lanka case study in this project the researchers have been interviewing dissenters, Sinhala and Tamil survivors of the 30-year civil war who took a stand against the violent claims of rival ethnonationalisms. The talk will combine some reflections on the translatability of the idea of “conscience” with preliminary analysis of the dissenters’ accounts of their lives and motivations.

All are welcome

Convenors: Matthew McCartney, Mallica Kumbara Landrus and Rosalind O’Hanlon.
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