

Curriculum Vitae

Jonathan Robert Spencer, FBA, FAcSS, FRSE

EDUCATION

1986 Oxford University, DPhil.

1981 University of Chicago, AM (Anthropology)

1977 University of Edinburgh, MA with First Class Honours in Social Anthropology

CAREER since GRADUATION

2023- Emeritus Profess of South Asian Language, Culture and Society

2014-2023 Regius Professor of South Asian Language, Culture and Society

2013 Head of School of Social and Political Science

2009-11 Head of Social Anthropology

2000-05 Director, Graduate School of Social and Political Studies

1999-2014 Professor of the Anthropology of South Asia

1994-99 Senior Lecturer

1990-94 Lecturer, Department of Social Anthropology, University of Edinburgh

1989-90 Lecturer, Department of Anthropology, London School of Economics

1987 Lecturer in Social Anthropology, School of African and Asian Studies, University of Sussex

RESEARCH

Major Research Interests

Since 1981 my primary research site has been Sri Lanka. My original work there focused on rural change, politics and nationalism. I have since published on the causes and consequences of ethnic violence. Since 2004 I have been involved in a string of collaborative projects with Sri Lankan colleagues, on politics and religion, and most recently on urban housing, and the history of political dissent. I have also published occasional articles on Buddhism, and on the institutional history of British anthropology.

Principal Recent Research Grants

2020-2023 (£850k) ESRC/GCRF Navigating the grid in the "world-class city": poverty, gender, and access to services in India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka

2017-2019 (£300k) British Academy/GCRF Cities and Infrastructure, Rebuilding kinship and care after dislocation in urban South Asia: Colombo and Lahore compared

2016-2020 (€1.6m) ERC, A Comparative Anthropology of Conscience, Ethics and Human Rights (co-I with Prof T. Kelly)

2012-15 (£1.1m) ESRC, Alchemists of the Revolution? The Politics of Educated Unemployed Youth in South Asia (co-I with Prof C Jeffrey and Prof D. Gellner, Oxford)

2006-09 (£215k) ESRC Non-Governmental Public Action Programme: Conflict, Community and Faith: The Politics of Public Action in Sri Lanka

POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS SUPERVISED

I have supervised over 30 completed PhDs. Following the 2004 tsunami in Sri Lanka, I co-ordinated a number of initiatives to train researchers and build capacity for social science research in Sri Lanka. As a result of these, and similar initiatives in the 1990s, I have now supervised 20 PhDs on Sri Lanka, 13 of them by Sri Lankan students.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

- 2023 (with Iromi Perera) 'Beautification, governance and spectacle in post-war Colombo.' In Tom Goodfellow and David Jackson (eds) *Controlling the Capital: Political Dominance in the Urbanizing World*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 203-233.
- 2020 (with Tobias Kelly, et al. eds) *The Intimate Life of Dissent: Anthropological Approaches*. UCL Press.
- 2019 (with Asha Abeyasekera, Ammara Maqsood, Iromi Perera and Fizzah Sajjad) 'Discipline in Sri Lanka, Punish in Pakistan: Neoliberalism, Governance, and Housing Compared.' *Journal of the British Academy* 7(s2), 215–244
- 2019 'Afterword: We Have Other Ideas.' In David Gilmartin, Pamela Price and Arild Engelsen Ruud eds. *South Asian Sovereignty: The Conundrum of Worldly Power*, Routledge (in press)
- 2018 'Pillayar and the politicians: secularization and toleration at the end of Sri Lanka's civil war.' In Humeira Iqtidar and Tanika Sarkar eds. *Tolerance, Secularization and Democratic Politics in South Asia*, Cambridge University Press
- 2018 (with Sidharthan Maunaguru) "'You can do anything with a temple": religion, philanthropy, and politics in South London and Sri Lanka.' *Modern Asian Studies*. Special Issue, Charity and Philanthropy in South Asia, (eds) F. Osella and S. Ramaswamy. 52(1).
- 2016 'Securitization and its Discontents: The End of Sri Lanka's Long Postwar?' *Contemporary South Asia*. 24(1): 94-108.
- 2015 (with Harini Amarasuriya) "'With that discipline will come to them": the politics of the urban poor in postwar Colombo.' *Current Anthropology*. Special issue, The Politics of the Urban Poor. 56(S11).
- 2014 (with J. Goodhand, S. Hasbullah, B. Klem. B. Korf and K.T. Silva) *Checkpoint, Temple, Church and Mosque: A Collaborative Ethnography of War and Peace*. London: Pluto.
- 2012 'Performing Democracy and Violence, Agonism and Community, Politics and Not Politics in Sri Lanka.' *Geoforum*. Special Issue, Space, Contestation and the Political. 43(4): 725-731.
- 2010 (ed. with J. Goodhand and B. Korf) *Conflict and Peace-building in Sri Lanka: Caught in the Peace Trap?* London: Routledge
- 2007 *Anthropology, Politics and the State: Democracy and Violence in South Asia*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
- 2000 *A Sinhala Village in a Time of Trouble: Politics and Change in Rural Sri Lanka*, Delhi: Oxford University Press: revised paperback edition of 1990 hardback
- 1990 *Sri Lanka: History and the Roots of Conflict*, pp. 253, London: Routledge, ISBN 0-415-04461-8