

KANCHUKA NAYANI DHARMASIRI

Department of English
University of Peradeniya,
Peradeniya
Sri Lanka

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EDUCATION

- Ph.D. in Comparative Literature** **2014**
University of Massachusetts Amherst
Dissertation Title: *Transgressing Space and Subverting Hierarchies: A Comparative Analysis of Street Theater Groups in Sri Lanka, India, and the United States*
Committee: Professor William Moebius(Chair), Professor Jenny Spencer, Professor Catherine Portuges, Professor Priscilla Page, Ms. Andrea Assaf
- MA in Comparative Literature** **2012**
University of Massachusetts Amherst
- Certificate in Advanced Feminist Studies** **2013**
University of Massachusetts Amherst
- B.A. in English** **2002**
University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka
Second Class, upper division
- Superior Diploma in Modern French Studies** **2001**
Alliance Française of Kandy, Sri Lanka
- Diploma in the French Language** **1999**
Alliance Française of Kandy, Sri Lanka

AREAS OF RESEARCH

Political street theater and alternative theater
Modern Sri Lankan Theater
Postcolonial theory and fiction
Feminism and early Buddhist women's writing
Translation theory and performance theory
Twentieth century American theater
The representation of the Other in film

TEACHING HISTORY

**Senior Lecturer, Department of English
University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka**

2017-present

Undergraduate courses

ENG 102: Introduction to the Study of English II

ENG 306: Developments in Twentieth and Twenty-First Century British Writing

ENG 310: Poetry, Fiction and Drama in English from 1400-1900

Courses co-taught

ENG 209: Cultural Practice and Theory

ENG 404: An Outline of Sinhala and Tamil Literature

**Lecturer, Department of Fine Arts,
University of Peradeniya Sri Lanka**

2013-2017

Courses Co-Taught, Postgraduate courses

MA/MPhil/FNA/601: Research Methodology

MA/MPhil/FNA/602: Art and Aesthetic Theories

MA/MPhil/FNA/603: Art and Society

MA/MPhil/FNA/604: Art in Asia with Special Reference to Sri Lanka

MA/MPhil/FNA/605: Genre Differences and Genre Specifics in Arts

MA/MPhil/FNA/606: Semiotics in Art and Culture

MA/MPhil/FNA/607: Theories and technologies of Performance

MA/MPhil/FNA/608: Developments in Twentieth Century Theatre Practices

FNA 501: Research Methods in Fine Arts

FNA 502: Theories of Aesthetics and Art Criticism

FNA 504: Introduction to Performing and Image Arts

Undergraduate courses

FNA 101: Introduction to Fine Arts

FNA 102: Introduction to Art History and Aesthetics

FNA 205: Theatre and Drama with Practical Component I

FNA 214: Theatre and Drama with Practical Component II

FNA 305: Theatre and Drama with Practical Component III

FNA 313: Theatre and Drama with Practical Component IV

FNA 315: Sri Lankan Theatre

FNA 404: Theatre and Drama with Practical Component V

Teaching Associate, University of Massachusetts Amherst

2007-2012

Courses Designed and Taught, Department of Comparative Literature

COMPLIT 121: International Short Story

COMPLIT 141: Good and Evil: East-West
 COMPLIT 121: International Short Story (online)
 COMPLIT 141: Good and Evil: East-West (online)

Teaching Assistant, University Massachusetts Amherst **2004-2012**

Department of English

ENG 397DH: Alternative Theaters: Navigating the Edinburgh Fringe.
 Professor Jenny Spencer, Summer study abroad program

Department of Theater

TH100: Introduction to Theater- the Politics of Performance,
 Professor Megan Lewis

Department of Comparative Literature

COMPLIT 382: Cinema and Psyche, Professor Catherine Portuges
 COMPLIT 151: Fictions East West, Professor Nerissa Balce
 COMPLIT 131: Brave New Worlds, Professor David Lenson
 COMPLIT 234: Myth, Folktales, and Children's Literature, Professor William
 Moebius
 COMPLIT 122: Spiritual Autobiography, Professor Elizabeth Petroff

Assistant Lecturer, Department of English
University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

2002-2004

Courses Designed and Taught

ENG 209: Cultural Practice and Theory
 Writing Skills

Courses Co-Taught

ENG 306: Developments in Twentieth-Century British Writing (with Dr.
 Lilamani de Silva)
 ENG 404: An Outline of Sinhala and Tamil Literature (I co-taught the Sinhala
 Theater section of the course with Mr. G.K. Haththotuwegama)
 ENG 101: Introduction to the Study of English 1 (I taught the language
 component)

Visiting Lecturer, University of Peradeniya

2010

ENG 404: A Survey of Sri Lankan Literature, "Street Theatre in Sri Lanka,"
 University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka

Invited Lectures

"Transcreating *Soranoito*: Manga to Performance." Department of Media,
 Communication, and Culture, international Christian University, Tokyo, 2017

"Pigeons and the Absurd: An Analysis of Roy Anderson's *A Pigeon Sat on a
 Branch Reflecting on Existence*." Symposium on Film and Its Translations.

Department of Media, Communication, and Culture, international Christian University, Tokyo, 2017

“Use of Theatre in Education and communication.” EX 2101 Principles of Human Behaviour. Department of Agricultural Extension, University of Peradeniya, 2014-2016

“Eugène Ionesco and the Theater of the Absurd.” COMPLIT 231: Comedy, University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2011

“Representation of War and Displacement in Prasanna Vithanage’s *Ira Mediyama*” COMPLIT 382: Cinema and Psyche, University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2009

French Instructor, Alliance Française of Kandy **1998-2002**

Intermediate levels 1 and 2

Beginners levels 1 and 2

Special program for economically underprivileged students in Kandy

PUBLICATIONS

“Voices from the Therīgāthā: Framing Western Feminisms in Sinhala Translation.” *Translating Women: Different Voices and New Horizons*. Eds. Luise von Flotow & Farzaneh Farahzad. Routledge: New York, U.S.A., 2017

“Modern Theatre in Sri Lanka.” *Routledge Handbook of Asian Theatre*. Ed. Siyuan Liu. Routledge: New York, U.S.A., 2016

“From Narratives of Nations to Bloody Streets: Contemporary Sinhala and Tamil Theatre in Sri Lanka.” *Mapping South Asia through Performance*. Ed. Ashis Sengupta. Palgrave Macmillan: Hampshire, U.K., 2015

“Brecht in the Streets of Sri Lanka.” *Translations*. Fondazione Universitaria San Pellegrino, Italy, 2014

Streets Ahead with Haththotuwegama: A Collection of Articles by and about Gamini Haththotuwegama. Ed. Kanchuka Dharmasiri. Assistant editors. Lohan Gunaweera & Nicole Calandra. Ravaya Publications: Maharagama, Sri Lanka, 2012

“Translation and the Emergence of a Modern Sinhala Theatre in a Postcolonial Context.” *The Mercurian: A Theatre Translation Review*. Vol 2. No 4, University of North Carolina, U.S.A., 2010

<http://drama.unc.edu/academic/mercurian/themercurianvol2number4.pdf>

“Taking to the Streets: Intersections of Space, Audience, and Power in the Wayside and Open Theatre” *Nethra Review*. Vol 11. No 1. International Centre for Ethnic Studies, Colombo, Sri Lanka, 2010

<http://www.ices.lk/publications/nethra_featured4.shtml>

“Space, Audience and Power in Wayside and Open Theatre Performances.” Tales About Hatha: GaminiHaththotuwegama Felicitation Volume. Ed. AthulaSamarakoon&SudeshMantilleke. Arts Council, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka, 2010

Translations

Published

“Children - Lost - Names.” (Sinhala to English. Co-translator. Harley Erdman). “Nam-Nethiwu-Lamai” by Kumari Kumaragamage. *City 5*. City Press, Karachi, 2017

Thatta Gaayikaawa (French to Sinhala. *La Cantatrice Chauve*. Eugene Ionesco. Co-translator. Lohan Gunaweera). Star Plus Publishers, Baththaramulla, 2017 (forthcoming)

Agni Opera. (Sinhala to English) *Opera Vinisa*, Eric Illayapparachchi. S. Godage: Colombo, 2012

Performed

Le Petit Prince. Antoine St. Exupery. (atrilingual adaptation-French, English, and Sinhala). , 2001

God. Woody Allen. (English to Sinhala), 2000

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

“Translating for the Theatre: Rethinking Translation through Multiple Subject Positions.” Translation Studies: New Directions, a key note speech, Savithribai Phule Pune University, India, 2018

“Translators and Directors in a Postcolonial Context” Asian Translation Traditions.” Monash University Malaysia. Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, 2016

“Reflecting on the Politics and 'Neutrality' of Observation and Mediation.” Rethinking Peace Studies Conference. International Christian University, Tokyo, Japan, 2016

“Translating with Bodies and Sounds: The Multilayered Translational Process in Theatre Practice.” Plurilingualism and Orality in Translation: Conference Festival. Indraprastha College for Women, University of Delhi, New Delhi, India, 2015

"The Multilayered Process of Devising Subha" Colombo Theatre Forum for Directors, Goethe Institut, Colombo, Sri Lanka, 2015

"Theatre and Community: A Few Questions." Colombo Theatre Forum for Directors, Goethe Institut, Colombo, Sri Lanka, 2014

"What Do You Prefer, the Hammer or the Nail? Language and Transcreations in the Wayside and Open Theatre Performances." Crossroads Conference, University of Massachusetts Amherst, Amherst, 2012

"No Tickets: The Wayside and Open Theatre's Critique of the Commercialization of Theatres and Public Spaces." American Comparative Literature Association, Brown University, Providence, 2012

"You Saw, I Saw: An Analysis of The Wayside and Open Theatre's Performances in Public Spaces." Spaces of Alterity Conference, University of Nottingham, Nottingham, 2011

"Everything O You Can Sell: An Exploration of The Wayside and Open Theatre's Performances in Public Spaces." 2011 Sri Lanka Graduate Conference, India- China Institute, the New School for Social Research, New York, 2011

"Rolling in Money!": The Wayside and Open Theater's Critique of Neocolonial and State Power Structures through Language and Performance." American Comparative Literature Association, Harvard, Cambridge, 2009

"Taking to the Streets: Intersections of Space, Audience, and Power in the Wayside and Open Theater in Sri Lanka." 30th Annual Mid-America Theater Conference (MATC), Chicago, 2009

"In the Streets: Space, Power, and the Wayside and Open Theater in Sri Lanka." Crossroads Conference, University of Massachusetts Amherst, Amherst, 2008

"Chekhov's Site of Paradise and Lawrence's Dark Apathy: Accounts of Sri Lanka by Late Nineteenth- and Early Twentieth-Century Literary Figures." Southern comparative Literature Association, Chapel Hill, 2007

"Tonesco in Sinhala: A Critical Investigation of the Challenges and Complications in Translating and Directing *TattaGayikawa*" Third Annual Binghamton Amherst Translation Conference, State University of New York, Binghamton, 2007

"Translations in Sinhala Theater." Second Annual Translation Conference, Kandy, Sri Lanka, 2006

“Creating Feminist Dialogues.” Second Annual Binghamton Amherst Translation Conference, University of Massachusetts Amherst, Amherst, 2006

“Translation and Sinhala Theater in a Postcolonial Context” First Annual Binghamton Amherst Translation Conference, State University of New York, Binghamton, 2005

Conference Activity

Discussant. Rethinking Peace Studies Conference. Session VI. International Christian University. Tokyo, 2016

Reviewer. iPURSE, University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, 2014

Co-organizer and moderator. Colombo Theatre Forum for Directors, Colombo, Sri Lanka, 2016 & 2014

Panel Chair, Crossroads Conference, University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2012

Co-organizer, Seminar: Narrativity, Performativity and the New Globality. American Comparative Literature Association, Brown University, Providence, 2012

Panel Chair, Junior Year Writing Conference, University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2011

Panel Chair, Crossroads Conference, University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2008

Panel Chair, Junior Year Writing Conference, University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2008

Co-Organizer, Second Annual Binghamton Amherst Translation Conference, University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2006

AWARDS AND HONORS

Graduate School Travel Grant, University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2011

College of Humanities and Fine Arts Dissertation Fellowship, University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2010

American Institute for Sri Lankan Studies Dissertation Planning Grant, 2009

Leigh Smith Memorial Prize for English, 2002

E.F.C. Ludowyk Memorial Prize, 2002

Alliance Française Scholarship, 2002

Leigh Smith Memorial Prize for English, 1999

Pettah Library Prize for English, 1999

M.F.Khan Prize for the Greatest Competence at the General Arts Qualifying Examination, 1999

LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

Sinhala (Native speaker)

English (Fluent)

French (Good)

Japanese (Beginner)

Public Talks

“Disintegration of the Nation and the Family in King Lear.” Organized by the British Council and Sri Lanka Foundation, Sri Lanka Foundation, 2016

“Greek Theatre Today.” Classics Day organized by the Department of Classical Languages, University of Peradeniya, 2016

“Pigeons, Humans and Existence: Roy Anderson’s A Pigeon Sat on a Branch Reflecting on Existence.” Digital Film Academy. Sri Lanka Foundation, 2016

“Introduction to Augusto Boal’s Forum Theatre.” One-Health Conference. Faculty of Medicine. University of Peradeniya, 2015

“Staging the Struggle: The Past and the Future of Street Drama.” Invitation to a New Discourse. N.M. Perera Centre, Borella, Sri Lanka, 2010

“Translation and Contemporary Sinhala Theatre with a Focus on Harold Pinter’s *Ashes to Ashes*.” National Library Services Council Auditorium, Colombo, Sri Lanka, 2010

THEATER

Directing

Thatta Gaayikawa, a Sinhala adaptation of Eugène Ionesco’s *La Cantatrice Chauve*, Sri Lanka, 2002-2016

Subha, a devised theatrical creation based on Rabindranath Tagore's short story, "Subha." Performed at E.O.E.Pereira Theatre, Santinikethan, Kolkata, 2014-2015

365 Plays/365 Days by Susan Lori Parks. New WORLD Theater, Rooke Theater, Mount Holyoke College, South Hadley, 2007

The Zoo Story by Edward Albee, E.O.E. Pereira Theater, Peradeniya, 2002

Le Petit Prince/ Punchi Kumaraya, a trilingual production of an adaptation of Antoine de Saint Exupéry's *Le Petit Prince*, Alliance Française of Kandy, 2001

Deyyo, a translation of Woody Allen's *God*, E.O.E. Pereira Theater and Sarachchandra Open Air Theater, Peradeniya, 2001

God by Woody Allen. E.O.E. Pereira Theater, Peradeniya, 1999

Stage Managing

Shekadii-Walaaloo: Sister Stories. A Somali community based project directed by Andrea Assaf. Bowker Auditorium, University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2009

Ramble-Ations: A One D'Lo Show. By D'Lo, Painted Bride Art Center, Philadelphia, 2007-2008 The Flea Theater, First National Asian American Theater Festival, New York and Holden Theater, Amherst College, Amherst

Fronteras Desviadas/ Deviant Borders by Dora Arreola and Andrea Assaf, Holden Theater, Amherst College, Amherst, 2005

Theater Workshops

"Leadership Building." Faculty of Agriculture. Mahalluppallama. University of Peradeniya, Peradeniya, 2014

"Space, movement, and translation." University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka, 2014

"Exploring movement and space" Wayside and Open Theatre Workshop, Sudharshi, Borella, Sri Lanka, 2011

"Teaching Theatre Practice." A workshop for teachers. Giriulla College, Giriulla, Sri Lanka, 2010

"Theater Exercises." Jayalath Manorathne Theater Festival. John De Silva Memorial Theater, Colombo, 2009

"Movement and Language: A workshop with a special focus on the Theater of the Absurd." Sri Palee Campus, University of Colombo, Horana, 2009

“On Space and Movement: Effectively Using the Body and the Stage for Performance.” University of Peradeniya, 2008

“Introduction to Acting Basics and the Theater Space.” Dunuwila Mahabodhi Vidyalaya, Teldeniya, 2003

Internships and apprenticeships

Bread and Puppet Theater, Glover, Vermont, Apprentice, 2011

New WORLD Theater, Amherst, Production Intern, 2005 & 2007

Other Theater related activities

Seminar participant, Mellon School of Theater and Research at Harvard University, Cambridge, 2014

Volunteer, New WORLD Theater Intersection V, Creative Uprising(s), 2008

Production Team, New WORLD Theater Intersection IV, Re/Generations, 2006

Community Organizing and Outreach

Reviewer and translator. *Sagna*. Fine Arts Department journal, 2015

Member. Faculty English Committee, Faculty of Arts, University of Peradeniya, 2016

Co-Chair, Postcolonial Studies Group, University of Massachusetts, Amherst, 2006-2007

Organization of Graduate Students in Comparative Literature (OGSCL) Newsletter, Co-editor, 2006 & 2007

Worked in the Asian American Theater Archives and mounted an exhibition of the Asian American Theater Archives, University of Massachusetts Amherst, 2006

Committee Member, The Association for Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies, Sri Lankan Branch, 2003-2004

Vice-President, Ceylon University Dramatic Society, University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka, 1999-2000

OTHER

Assistant, documentation and coordination of archival information for New WORLD Theater's Project 2050, New World Theatre, 2005

Coordinator of the University activities, Intercollegiate Sri Lanka Education, Bowdoin College, 2003

Research Assistant, to Professor John C. Holt. Conducted and translated interviews. Did on-site illustrations, 1999-2000

PAINTING

“Untitled” An exhibition of paintings held at the Alliance Française Gallery in Kandy, Sri Lanka, September 6-13, 2003

Selected book covers and book illustrations

Buddhist Vishnu: Religious Transformation, Politics, and Culture. John C. Holt. Columbia University Press, 2004

SwabhawayeSwabhawayak. W.M. Gunathilake and CharithaHerath, Nipuna Printers, Sri Lanka, 2004

SaddharmaPundarikaSutraya (A Translation of the Lotus Sutra). GunapalaDharmasiri. YN Printers, Sri Lanka, 2003

DivulKumari, ChandimaWijebandara, Godage Publishers, Sri Lanka, 2002

Fundamentals of Buddhist Ethics. (third edition) GunapalaDharmasiri, Paramita International Buddhist Society Ltd, Singapore, 1998