

Even fish have an ethnicity...

A study on how ethnic identities mediate livelihoods
in a fishing community in post-war Sri Lanka

24th January 2018, 4.30 pm—6.00 pm

at the Sri Lanka Foundation (SLF) 100, Sri Lanka Foundation Avenue, Colombo 07



While discussions on tensions based on ethnic interactions are still very important in post-war Sri Lanka, these discourses are insufficient to explain the nation's post-war social tensions and the inequalities that lead to these relevant tensions. A study conducted in coastal Trincomalee over a period of thirteen months by Gayathri Lokuge for her PhD research, explored how these ethnic dynamics are manifested in the mundane day to day lives of men and women. From 'ethnicised' types of fish to 'ethnicised' fishing methods, from morality and legitimacy to 'illegal' fishing, ethnicity pervades life in post-war coastal Trincomalee. Further, similar to the way men and women do gender, men and women of different ethnicities, caste and class groups also do ethnicity. This doing is usually mediated by the interaction of ethnicity with other social identity categories such as gender, caste and location. Gayathri's study focused on these identity constructions and how they mediated differentiated access to livelihood spaces for men and women and in turn, how livelihood activities of men and women shaped ethnic and other identity categories and their meaning.

Presented by: Dr. Gayathri Lokuge
Chaired by: Dr. Malathi De Alwis
Discussants: Dr. Asha Abeyasekera & Dr. Vagisha Gunasekara

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If you would like to attend, please **RSVP** chaturanga@cepa.lk or 011 4690203