

Proposal to Organise Summer School 2018

- 1. Theme of the Summer School:** *Aham* and *Puram*: An Exploration of Female Genealogy in Indian Culture.
- 2. Name of the Coordinator:** Dr. V. Bharathi Harishankar, Professor & Head, Department of Women Studies, University of Madras.
- 3. Proposed Dates :** 09.04.2018 –23.04.2018 (15 Days)

4. Concept Note:

India provides a study of contrasts in the way it foregrounds women. On the one hand, there is an exclusive pantheon of Hindu goddesses including Saraswathi (knowledge/wisdom), Lakshmi (wealth) and Durga (strength and valour). The principles of Shiva-Sakthi and Purusha-Prakriti focus on the complementary nature of the masculine and feminine. On the other, there is an increasing trend in violence against women including rape, acid attacks, honor killings, to name a few. How do we disentangle this paradox?

Indian poetics delineates and designates private and public spheres as *aham* and *puram*. Classical myths, legends, history and literature extol the glory of men in war and their nobility in the familial sphere. Given that women are part of both these spheres, there is a need to re-inscribe them in order to make them visible.

The proposed Summer School plans to trace the evolution of a female genealogy in India from myths through history to contemporary reality. In doing so, it seeks to review and revise the continuing myths and misconceptions about the “ideal feminine” and situate the “actual woman.” This will be done by examining texts and discourses from different spheres – myths, legends, folk tales, classical treatises, fine and performing arts, religion, literature, to name a few.

5. Details of Sub Themes:

- Creation Myth and the Female/Feminine Life Principle
- Women across various Indian Mythologies

- Status of women in the Vedic period
- History of Women's Writing and Representation in Indian Literature
- Indian Philosophy and its views on the feminine
- Women in Bhakti Movement -- - Avvayar, Andal, Akka Mahadevi, Mirabai
- Women in Leadership – Indian Queens, Warriors, Social Reformers, Political Leaders -- Velu Nachiyar, Rani Laxmi Bai, Sultan Jahan Begum, Jyotiba Phule, Pandita Ramabai, Rukmini Devi, Sarojini Naidu
- Culinary Genealogies of Women
- Men in Indian Feminism – Social Reformers, National Leaders
- Education, Employment, Empowerment – National Policies and Legislations
- Micro finance, Self Help Groups and Women's Development
- Women in Media, Literature and Arts

6. Time –Table:

The Summer School schedule includes lectures, interactive discussions, workshops, lecture-demonstrations, library visits, film screening and field visits. There will be two sessions every day. The forenoon session will include lectures, interactive discussions and lecture demonstrations. The afternoon session will include workshops, film screening, local visits and field visits within Chennai and its suburbs. The weekends will be spent in travel to locations outside Chennai.

7. List of Resource Persons (Tentative List):

- Dr. C. T. Indra, Prof & Head (retd), Department of English, University of Madras
- Dr. Anita Ratnam, Director, Arangham Trust
- Dr. Swarnamalya Ganesh, Director, RangaMandira Academy
- Dr. Padma Subramanyam, renowned dancer
- Dr. ChitraMadhavan- Temple Architecture
- Dr. V. K. Devika – Arts and Culture scholar
- BharatiThirumagan- Villupattu (folk arts)
- Hariharan/Dr.UmaVangal – Media Studies
- Theodore Bhaskaran – Cinema Critic

- Dilip Kumar – Tamil Writer
- Dr. Ranjana Harish, Prof & Head, Department of English, Gujarat UniversityHindustani Vocalist and Feminist scholar
- Dr. PramodNayar, Prof & Head, Department of English, University of Hyderabad – Scholar in Literature of the British Raj
- Dr. M.D.Muthukumaraswamy- Director, National Folklore Support Centre.
- Dr. V. Kadambari – Feminist Scholar
- Dr. A. Mangai – Feminist Theatre
- Dr. ShrutiJauhari – Classical Music
- Olga Aaron- Transgender Rights Activist
- Dr. PraveenaKodoth- Professor, Centre for Development Studies – Specialist in Women’s Labour
- Ms. Sheila Jayaprakash/ Ms.PrabhaSridevan – Lawyer/Judge
- Dr. S. Anandi, Associate Professor, Madras Institute of Development Studies
- Dr. Padmini Swaminathan – Women and Work
- Dr. Jeyam Kannan – Gynaecologist (specialist on *Tirumoolar’sTirumandiram* and Pregnancy)
- Dr. R. Azhagarasan- Associate Professor, Department of English, University of Madras, (Dalit Feminism and Social Stratification)

8. Details of Field Visits:

- Kanchipuram, Tanjavur, Viralimalai, Pudukottai,Mahabalipuram, Ooty-Toda settlements
- DakshinChitra, Kalakshetra, Lalit Kala Academy, Women’s Indian Association, Theosophical Society, RojaMuthaih Research Library, National Folklore Study Centre
- NGOs, Field Visit to Self Help Groups, Banyan

9. Pre-requisites for the Course: Any Under Graduate Degree (Preferably with interest inIndic Studies – Indian Literature/ Culture/History/Religion/Women’s Studies/Gender Studies).

10. Reading List (Minimum 10 Articles and 2 Books) :

1. Thapar, Romila. *The Penguin History of Early India: From the Origins to AD 1300*. Penguin Books, 2002.
2. Tharu, Susie, and K. Lalita. *Women's Writing in India (2 Volumes)*. Oxford, 1993.
3. Tharoor, Shashi. *From Midnight to the Millennium*. Penguin Books, 2012.
4. Kosambi, Meera. *Crossing Thresholds: Feminist Essays in Social History*. Permanent Black, 2007.
5. Hiriyanan, M. *Outlines of Indian Philosophy*. MotilalBanarsidass Publishers, 2014.
6. Ramanujan, A K. *Poems of Love and War*. OUP, 2006.
7. Sethuraman, V S. *Indian Aesthetics*. Macmillan, 1992.
8. Kersenboom, Saskia C. *Nityasumangali: Devadasi Tradition in South India*.
9. One Retelling of the *Ramayana*
10. One Retelling of the *Mahabharata*
11. Janu, C K. *Mother Forest: The unfinished Story*
12. Sastri, Nilakanta. *Aspects of India's History and Culture*
13. Sastri, Nilakanta. *Development of Religion in South India*
14. Sen, Amartya. *Development as Freedom*. OUP, 2000.
15. Limbale, Sharankumar. *Towards an Aesthetics of Dalit Literature*

11. Cultural Component:

- Concerts- Music/Dance/Instruments at Sabhas/Cultural Centres and by students/scholars
- Kolam Workshops, Poothoduthal, Puppet show, Tholpavai Puppetry, Basics of music, Visits and Workshop participation at Chennai's Cultural Centres, Temple Architecture, Food Walks, Heritage Walks, Tamil New Year Celebrations.