

## ELIZABETH A. CECIL

Florida State University, Department of Religion  
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### PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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**Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL**

August 2023 – present

Associate Professor, Religions of South & Southeast Asia, Department of Religion

**Florida State University, Tallahassee, FL**

August 2018 – July 2023

Assistant Professor, Religions of South & Southeast Asia, Department of Religion

**Leiden University, Leiden, the Netherlands**

February 2017 – August 2018

Lecturer & Researcher, South & Southeast Asian Studies, Institute for Area Studies

**British Museum, London, UK**

May 2016-February 2017

Post-Doctoral Researcher, European Research Council (ERC) Synergy Project: *Asia Beyond Boundaries: Religion, Language, Politics and the State*

### EDUCATION

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**Brown University, Providence, RI**

Ph.D. in Asian Religions & Sanskrit – 2016

Dissertation: 'Mapping the Pāsupata Landscape: The Skandapurāṇa, Lakuliśa, and the Śaiva Imaginary (c. 6th-10th century CE)' Supervisors: James L. Fitzgerald, Hans T. Bakker, Nancy Khalek

**Maharaja Sayajirao University, Vadodara, India**

Visiting Research Fellow, Department of Archeology and Ancient History – 2013-2014

**University of Groningen, the Netherlands**

Visiting Research Fellow, Institute of Indian Studies – 2011-2013

**University of Tennessee, Knoxville, TN**

M.A. in Religious Studies – 2008

**Hastings College, NE**

B.A. with High Distinction in Philosophy and Religion – 2005

## RESEARCH AREAS

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- Hindu Traditions
- Sanskrit Epigraphy
- Sanskrit Purāṇas
- History of South & Southeast Asia
- Religion and Material Culture
- Spatial Humanities
- Gender Studies
- Religion & Ecology

## PUBLICATIONS

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### Books

2020 *Mapping the Pāśupata Landscape: Narrative, Place, and the Śaiva Imaginary in Early Medieval North India.* Gonda Indological Studies no. 21. Leiden: Brill, 2020. (Open Access)

### Book manuscripts in progress

*Natural Wonders: Indigenous Ecologies and the Building of Hinduism in Early Southeast Asia*

*The Īśvara Principle: Religion & Empowerment in Gupta Period India*

### Edited Volumes

2021 *Primary Sources and Asian Pasts.* Co-editor with Peter C. Bisschop. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2021. (Open Access)

2020 *Framing Intellectual and Lived Spaces in Early South Asia: Sources and Boundaries.* Co-editor with Lucas den Boer. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2020. (Open Access)

### Journal Articles

*forthcoming* "Moving Mountains & Swallowing Seas: Śaiva Gurus as Ecological Agents in Early South & Southeast Asia," *Ars Orientalis*.

*forthcoming* "Venerated Stones & Eagle Banners: Material and Spatial Dimensions of Early Narāyaṇa Religion," *Religions of South Asia*

2022 "A Forgotten Family Portrait: Irenic Śaivism in the Art of Daśapura," *Archives of Asian Art* 72/2 (2022): 155-180.

2021 "Jayati Bhagavāñ Jinendraḥ! Jainism and Royal Representation in the Kadamba Copper Plates from Palāśika," co-authored with Peter C. Bisschop. *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 141/3 (2021): 613-635.

2021 "Kāma at the Kadamba Court: The Guḍnāpur Pillar Inscription of Ravivarman as a Text-Monument," co-authored with Mekhola Gomes, *Indo-Iranian Journal* 64 (2021): 10-50.

- 2021 "Innovation and Idiom in the 'Gupta Period': Revisiting Eran and Sondhni," *Indian Economic and Social History Review* 58/1 (2021): 29-71
- 2019 "Columns in Context: Venerable Monuments and Landscapes of Memory in Early India," co-authored with Peter C. Bisschop, *History of Religions* 58.4 (2019): 355-403.
- 2018 "Mapping the Pāsupata Landscape: Narrative, Tradition, and the Geographic Imaginary," *The Journal of Hindu Studies*, 11.3 (2018): 282-303.
- 2018 "Scenes of Love or Violence? The Abduction of Rukmiṇī in the Rijksmuseum's Miniatures," *Aziatische Kunst* 48.1 (2018): 64-70.
- 2017 "Medieval Temple as Material Archive: Historical Preservation and the Production of Knowledge at Mt. Harṣa in Rajasthan," *Archive Journal* (August 2017)  
<http://www.archivejournal.net/essays/the-medieval-temple-as-material-archive/>
- 2014 "Seeking the 'Lord with a Club': Locating Lakuliśa in the Early History of Pāsupata Śaivism (6<sup>th</sup>- 9<sup>th</sup> century CE)," *South Asian Studies* 30.2 (2014): 142-158.

#### Refereed & Edited Chapters

- forthcoming* "Adorning the Lord with a Garland: Liṅga Worship in the Kushan Period," co-authored with Laxshmi Greaves in *The Kushan World*, ed. Joe Cribb. London: Routledge.
- in press* "Śaiva Epigraphy," in *Brill's Encyclopedia of Hinduism*, ed. Knut A. Jacobsen. Leiden: Brill.
- 2022 "Building Belonging: Śaiva Temple Communities in South & Southeast Asia," in H.P Ray, Salila Kulshreshtha & Uthara Suvrathan (eds.), *Routledge Handbook of the Hindu Temple: Materiality, Social History and Practice* (pp. 375-393) London: Routledge, 2022.
- 2021 "A Natural Wonder: From Liṅga Mountain to 'Prosperous Lord' at Vat Phu," in Peter C. Bisschop, & Elizabeth A. Cecil (eds.), *Primary Sources and Asian Pasts* (pp. 341-383). Berlin: De Gruyter, 2021.
- 2021 "Primary Sources and Asian Pasts: Beyond the Boundaries of the Gupta Period," in Peter C. Bisschop & Elizabeth A. Cecil (eds.), *Primary Sources and Asian Pasts* (pp. 1-17). Berlin: De Gruyter, 2021.
- 2020 "Kāman & Kāmyakeśvara: Aspirational Art in a Medieval Frontier Boomtown," in Laxshmi Rose Greaves & Adam Hardy (eds.), *Bridging Heaven and Earth: Art and Architecture in South Asia* (pp. 18-36). New Delhi: Dev Publishers, 2020.
- 2019 "Architectures of Intimidation: Political Ecology and Landscape Manipulation in Early Hindu Southeast Asia," in N. Staring, H. T. Davies, and L. Weiss (eds.), *Perspectives on Lived Religion: Practices-Transmission-Landscape* (pp. 225-242). Leiden: Slidestone Press, 2019.

- 2017 “Power and Piety in ‘Emplaced Polities’: Temple Patronage and Donative Practice under the North Konkan Śilāhāras (9th-12th CE),” in Lucas den Boer & Daniele Cuneo (eds.), *Puṣpikā: Tracing Ancient India through Texts and Traditions* (pp. 213-231). Oxford: Oxbow Books, 2017.

### Invited Essays

- 2017 “Sanskrit: Across Asia and Beyond” in *International Institute of Asian Studies Newsletter* 77 (2017): 46-47. <https://iias.asia/the-newsletter/article/sanskrit-across-asia-beyond>

### SELECTED FELLOWSHIPS AND AWARDS

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#### Major Fellowships & Grants

- 2023 American Academy of Religion (AAR), *International Collaborative Research Grant* (together with Prof. Sonia Hazard)
- 2022-2027 European Research Council (ERC), *PURANA Project* (Research Collaborator with Profs. Peter Bisschop & Yuko Yokochi)
- 2022 National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), *Summer Research Stipend*
- 2022 – 2023 American Institute of Sri Lankan Studies (AISLS), *Senior Research Fellowship*
- 2020 – 2021 Council of American Overseas Research Centers (CAORC) & National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH), *Senior Research Fellowship*
- 2019 – 2020 Getty Foundation & American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS), *Fellowship for the History of Art*
- 2017 – 2018 Leiden Global Interactions Institute (LGI), *Global Asia Research Fellowship*
- 2016 – 2017 International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS), *Gonda Indological Research Fellowship*
- 2015 – 2016 American Council of Learned Societies (ACLS), *Mellon Dissertation Completion Fellowship*
- 2013 – 2014 Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR), *Mellon Fellowship for Dissertation Research in Original Sources*
- 2013 – 2014 Social Science Research Council (SSRC), *Mellon International Dissertation Research Fellowship*
- 2013 American Institute of Indian Studies (AIIS), *Dissertation Research Fellowship*
- 2013 American Councils for Overseas Education, *Critical Language Scholarship for the study of Hindi in India*

#### Internal Awards (FSU)

- 2023-2024 Arts and Humanities Program Enhancement Grant (\$20,000)
- 2022 Outstanding University Teaching Award (\$2K)
- 2022 Outstanding Undergraduate Mentor Award Nominee
- 2021 – 2022 Stephen Risley Family Fellowship (\$8K)
- 2021 Committee on Faculty Research Support Grant (\$20K)
- 2019 Outstanding Undergraduate Teaching Award Nominee
- 2019 First Year Assistant Professor Award (\$20K)
- 2019 Bradley Library Research Grant (\$7K)

## Other External Awards

2017	Scaliger Institute, Leiden University, <i>Brill Fellowship for Research in Special Collections</i>
2017	Mellon Foundation, <i>Visible Words: Digital Contextual Epigraphy</i>
2015 – 2016	Brown International Graduate Colloquium Fund (GICF), for the conference <i>Materializing Sanctity, Enacting Authority: Text, Image, and Performance in India and China</i>
2015	École française d'Extrême-Orient (EFEO), Paris, <i>Summer Fieldwork Grant</i>
2015	Brown University Center for Contemporary South Asia, <i>Graduate Research Fellowship</i>
2014	International Institute of Asian Studies (IIAS), <i>Mellon Summer Workshop Grant: 'Reading Craft: Itineraries of Culture, Knowledge, and Power in the Global Ecumene'</i>
2012	Association of Asian Studies (AAS) & Social Science Research Council (SSRC), <i>Dissertation Development Award</i>

## FIELD & RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

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March 2023 – August 2023	Visiting Scholar at the Center for Khmer Studies, Siem Reap, Cambodia
Summer 2022	Study of early Hindu temple sites and inscriptions in Bali, Indonesia with funding from NEH Summer Stipend
September 2019 – March 2020	Study of epigraphy, architecture, and iconography at early Hindu temple sites in Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, and Thailand with funding from Getty/ACLS Fellowship for the History of Art
Summer 2019	Fieldwork at Gupta period temple sites in Madhya Pradesh and Uttar Pradesh, India. Archival research at State Museum Lucknow, Allahabad Museum, and India Museum in Kolkata
Winter 2019	Fieldwork at Vat Phu in Laos—in cooperation with the <i>World Heritage Site Office</i> , Champasak and the <i>École française d'Extrême Orient</i> (EFEO), Vientiane; Archival research at the Bangkok National Museum
Summer 2018	Fieldwork at temple and archeological sites of Champa in Vietnam and Pre-Angkorian period sites in Laos—in cooperation with the <i>World Heritage Site Office</i> , Champasak
December 2016 – February 2017	Study of epigraphy and architecture of the Gupta and Cālukya rulers in Central and South India—in cooperation with the ERC Synergy Project <i>Asia Beyond Boundaries: Religion, Region, Language and the State</i>

Summer 2016	Study of Sanskrit epigraphy in Cambodia—in cooperation with the Mellon Initiative <i>Visible Words: Digital Contextual Epigraphy</i> and the <i>École française d'Extrême Orient</i> (EFEO), Phnom Penh
January – February 2016	Fieldwork at early medieval temple and archeological sites in northwest India—in cooperation with the ERC Synergy Project <i>Asia Beyond Boundaries: Religion, Region, Language and the State</i>
December 2015 – January 2016	Fieldwork at Angkorian and pre-Angkorian temple and archeological sites in Cambodia, Vietnam, and Laos—ACLS Fellow's Research Fund
Summer 2015	Fieldwork and study of epigraphy and medieval temple sites associated with the Muttaraiyar, Irukkevē], and Paḷuvēṭṭaraiyar dynasties in Tamil Nadu, India—in cooperation with the <i>École française d'Extrême Orient</i> (EFEO), Pondicherry
August 2013 – January 2015	Dissertation fieldwork and research in archives, manuscript libraries, museums, and early medieval temple sites in the Indian states of Maharashtra, Gujarat, Rajasthan, and Madhya Pradesh
August 2014	Fieldwork and training in lost-wax casting techniques in Chiang Mai, Thailand—in cooperation with the <i>Center for Ethnic Studies and Development</i> (CESD), Chiang Mai University
January 2014	Study of early medieval Śaiva temples and epigraphy in the Kathmandu Valley, Nepal
February – March 2012	Archeological survey at Vākāṭaka imperial and cult sites in Maharashtra, India
December 2011 – January 2012	Survey and study of early medieval Śaiva temples in Northeast India—in cooperation with the <i>International Skandapurāṇa Project</i>

## LANGUAGES

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Sanskrit – Highly proficient in reading and translating  
Hindi– Advanced proficiency in reading, speaking, and translating  
Old Khmer – Beginning experience in epigraphic reading  
Old Javanese – Beginning experience in reading and translating  
German – Academic reading proficiency; conversational speaking  
Dutch – Academic reading proficiency; basic speaking  
French – Academic reading proficiency; conversational speaking

## TEACHING COMPETENCIES

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- Religions of South and Southeast Asia
- Sanskrit Language & Literary Culture
- Cultural History of South & Southeast Asia
- Gender and Religion
- Material Culture of South & Southeast Asia
- Pilgrimage and Place-Making in South & Southeast Asia
- Religion & Ecology

## TEACHING & ADVISING

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2018 – present

**Florida State University**

*Graduate*

Pilgrimage in Asia  
Religion, Empire, and Colonialism  
Yoga Traditions and Guru Movements  
Place, Space, and Religion  
Śaiva Traditions  
Sanskrit II: Readings in Sanskrit Purāṇas

*Undergraduate*

Religions of South Asia  
What is Religion?  
Sanskrit I  
Religion and Ecology  
Goddesses, Women & Power in Hinduism

*Dissertation Committee Member*

Ian Reed (Co-Chair)  
Rebecca Peters (Co-Chair)  
Arya Adityan (Co-Chair)  
James Waters (Reader)

**Summer 2019 & 2021, University of Toronto**

3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Indian Epigraphy Workshop – 5<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> century CE  
2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Indian Epigraphy Workshop – The Gupta Script

**Summer 2019, Leiden University**

Sanskrit Epigraphy in South and Southeast Asia (Leiden Summer School for Language and Linguistics)

2016 – 2018

**Leiden University**

*Graduate*

Religious Architecture in Asia: Temple, Stupa, and Mosque  
Canon & Culture: Authority, Authenticity, and the Production of Knowledge

*Undergraduate*

Sanskrit I/II  
Introduction to Hinduism  
Classical Cultures of South and Southeast Asia  
Cultural Dynamics of South and Southeast Asia  
Academic Skills in Area Studies

**2015 – Brown University**

The Shape of the Divine: Images in the Religions of India

**2012 – University of Groningen**

Sanskrit I: Introduction to Grammar, Syntax, and Literature

**ORGANIZATION & LEADERSHIP**

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- 2023 Workshop Organizer, '*Material Texts: Religion, Mobility, Responsibility*,' Leiden University.
- 2021 Co-organizer of the *Third Annual Indian Epigraphy Workshop*, University of Toronto (Online due to COVID)
- 2019 Panel Co-organizer, 'Designing Landscapes: Encounter, Reception, and Aleatory Effects of Monuments,' *College Art Association Annual Conference*, New York, NY
- 2018 Panel Organizer, 'When People Met Monuments: Encounter, Reception, and Transformation of Landscapes in South Asia,' *47<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference on South Asia*, Madison, WI
- 2017 – 2018 Co-conveyor of the International Conference *Asia Beyond Boundaries: Transdisciplinary Perspectives on Primary Sources from the Premodern World*, Leiden University
- 2017 – 2018 Co-organizer, *Asia Year Lecture Series*, Leiden University
- 2017 Colloquium Organizer, *Innovative Epigraphy: New Perspectives & Digital Methods in the Study of Inscriptions*, Leiden University
- 2016 – 2018 Co-organizer of *Canonical Cultures: Workshop and Colloquium Series*, Leiden University
- 2017 Curator of the Exhibition *Sanskrit – Across Asia and Beyond*, Leiden University Asia Library
- 2016 Panel Organizer, 'Material Matters: Icons, Objects, and Religion in Pre-modern South Asia,' *7<sup>th</sup> Annual International Asian Studies Symposium*, Leiden University
- 2016 Conference Organizer, *Materializing Sanctity, Enacting Authority: Text, Image, and Performance in India and China*, Brown University
- 2015 Workshop Leader, *Brown Religious Literacy Project*, Brown University
- 2013 Panel Organizer, 'Merchants, Traders, and Economic Institutions in Indian Religions,' *42<sup>nd</sup> Annual Conference on South Asia*, Madison, WI

**SELECTED CONFERENCE PAPERS & PRESENTATIONS**

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- March 2021 'A Natural Wonder: From Liṅga Mountain to Prosperous Lord at Vat Phu,' *South & East Asian Online Series (SEASONS)* – University of Virginia, Arlington



- July 2019 'Transposing Landscapes: Epigraphic Terrain and Political Geography in Early Southeast Asia (c. 5<sup>th</sup> - 10<sup>th</sup> century CE),' *Monumentality and Transposition of Writing in Inscriptions*, Oxford University Center for Manuscript and Text Cultures
- May 2019 'Innovation and Idiom in the Gupta Period: Revisiting Eran and Sondhni,' Invited Lecture, University of Chicago Delhi Center, New Delhi, India
- March 2019 'No Roosters and Dogs in the Ashrama: Jayavarman's Gentrifying Mission at Vat Phu,' *American Oriental Society Annual Meeting*, Chicago, IL
- February 2019 'Building Hinduism in the Land of the Khmer: From Liṅga Mountain to Prosperous Lord,' Invited Lecture, University of Chicago Divinity School, Chicago, IL
- February 2019 'Multivalent Monuments: Inscribed Columns as Venerable Objects in Gupta North India,' *College Art Association Annual Meeting*, New York, NY
- November 2018 'Tracing the Arc of the Sun: Sūrya Worship in the Borderlands of Early South and Southeast Asia,' *Interdisciplinary Conference on Cultural Geography*, Rijksmuseum van Oudheden, Leiden, the Netherlands
- October 2018 'Monuments Misunderstood? Inscribed Columns as Venerable Objects in Early South Asia,' 47<sup>th</sup> *Annual Conference on South Asia*, Madison, WI
- August 2018 'Architectures of Intimidation: Manipulating Landscapes and Manufacturing Awe in Early South and Southeast Asia,' *Asia Beyond Boundaries: Transdisciplinary Perspectives on Primary Sources in the Premodern World*, Leiden University
- July 2018 'The Triumphal Act: Self-Garlanding and Self-Coronation in Early Śaiva Iconography,' Paper presented with Laxshmi Greaves at the 2018 *Conference of the European Association of South Asian Art & Architecture*, Naples, Italy
- April 2018 'Adorning the Lord with Garlands: Liṅga Worship as Lived Religious Practice' *Spalding Symposium on Indian Religions*, Durham University, UK
- March 2018 'Seeing Double in Daśapura: New Perspectives on the Twin Inscribed Columns of Yaśodharman,' 228<sup>th</sup> *Annual Meeting of the American Oriental Society*, Pittsburgh, PA
- March 2017 'An 'Arm of the Earth', an 'Eagle Banner', and a 'Spear of Dharma': Inscribed Columns and Civic Religion in Early Medieval India,' *South Asia Institute/ERC Workshop Series*, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) London, UK
- December 2016 'The Sondhni Monuments: Traces of Sovereignty & The Temporality of Landscape,' *International Conference and Workshop: Breakdowns & Ruptures in Temple Life*, École française d'Extrême Orient (EFEO) Pondicherry, India
- September 2016 'Epigraphic Encounters: Inscriptions, Monuments, and Museums in South and South East Asia,' 7<sup>th</sup> *Annual International Asian Studies Symposium*, Leiden University
- September 2016 'Gods Imprisoned: Theft, Heritage, and the Value of the Past in Rajasthan,' *The Past Before Us: Heritage and History in South Asia*, School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) Centenary, London, UK
- July 2016 'Community, Collective & Competition: Materializing Religions Life in Medieval Kāmyaka,' 23<sup>rd</sup> *Meeting of the European Association for South Asian Archeology & Art*, Cardiff University
- June 2016 'Meeting Places: The Interactions and Intersections of Vaiṣṇava and Śaiva Religiosity in Northwest India (4th-7th century CE),' 2<sup>nd</sup> *Zurich International*

	<i>Conference on Indian Literature and Philosophy, The Nārāyaṇīya: Reconsidering an Epic Text and its Contexts</i> , University of Zurich
March 2016	'Kāman, Kāmyaka & Kāmyakeśvara: Piety and Polity in Early Medieval Rajasthan,' <i>Annual Meeting of the American Oriental Society</i> , Boston, MA
October 2015	'Power and Piety in 'Emplaced Polities': Patronage and Donative Practices in the Early Medieval North Konkan (9 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> century),' <i>International Indological Graduate Research Symposium</i> , Leiden University
August 2015	'Local Powers, Local Patrons: Patronage and Donative Practice under the Cāhamānas of Śākambharī and the North Konkan Śilāhāras (9 <sup>th</sup> -12 <sup>th</sup> century)' <i>Archeology of Bhakti: The Bhakti of Minor Dynasties</i> , École française d'Extrême Orient (EFEO) Pondicherry, India
June 2015	(with Hans T. Bakker), 'Trade of All Sorts: The Spread of Early Śaivism along an Ancient Caravan Route,' <i>ERC Synergy Seminar: Asia Beyond Boundaries</i> , School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) London, UK
March 2015	'Śiva and Salt: Religious Life around the Salt Lakes of Northern Rajasthan (7 <sup>th</sup> -10 <sup>th</sup> century),' <i>Annual Meeting of the American Oriental Society</i> , New Orleans, LA
August 2014	'Temple and Museum: Conservation, Memory, and the Value of the Past in Rajasthan,' <i>Reading Craft: Itineraries of Culture, Knowledge, and Power in the Global Ecumene</i> , Chiang Mai University and International Institute of Asian Studies (IIAS), Chiang Mai, Thailand
July 2014	'Acts of Devotion, Acts of Destruction: Revaluating Local Models of Historical Preservation in Northwest India,' <i>International Conference: Meaningful Destruction, Contingent Preservation</i> , Institut für Ethnologie, Universität Heidelberg
January 2014	'Śiva in the City: The Politics of Preservation in Mumbai's Urban Landscape,' <i>Conference on Cultural Heritage: Environment, Ecology and Inter-Asian Interactions</i> , Nalanda University and International Institute of Asian Studies (IIAS), Rajgir, India
October 2013	'Merchants and Pāsupatas: Rethinking the History of the North Konkan Śaiva Caves,' <i>Annual Conference on South Asia</i> , Madison, WI
April 2013	'Lakuliśa in the Early History of Pāsupata Śaivism,' <i>Empires of Faith: Seminar on Politics, Ritual, and State Formation in Early India</i> , Ruhr-Universität Bochum
March 2013	'Merchants, Women, and Pāsupatas: Investigating the Śaiva Landscape of Mandasor,' <i>Annual Meeting of the American Oriental Society</i> , Portland, OR
September 2012	'Religious Competition and Political Rivalry in the Pāsupata Landscape,' <i>International Indological Graduate Research Symposium</i> , University of Edinburgh
March 2011	'Childless Mothers and Rejected Wives: A New Perspective on the Mātṛs' <i>Annual Meeting of the American Oriental Society</i> , Chicago, IL

## DIGITAL HUMANITIES

2016	EpiDoc & Digital Epigraphy – <i>Training in Digital Humanities</i> , Brown University
2015	GIS Institute – <i>Institute for Spatial Structures in the Social Sciences (S4)</i> , Brown University