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GERMAN ARCHAEOLOGICAL INSTITUTE
COMMISSION for the
ARCHAEOLOGY of NON-
EUROPEAN CULTURES



INTERNATIONAL WORKSHOP

University of Bonn – 18-21 October 2023

Rheinische Friedrich-Wilhelms-Universität Bonn
Institut für Archäologie und Kulturanthropologie
53111 Bonn, Römerstraße 164

South India between the 4th and the 6th century CE

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Chairs: Valérie Gillet (École française d'Extrême-Orient),
Ariane de Saxcé (German Archaeological Institute), and
Coline Lefrancq (CNRS, ArScAn UMR 7041)

Recent developments in the fields of archaeology and epigraphy of the Tamil country have led to reconsider the period running from the end of the 3rd century CE until the beginning of the 7th century, previously thought to be a 'Dark Age'. This denomination, based on a few inscriptions and a certain scarcity of sources, needs to be reviewed in the light of currently available material and reinterpretations of old data.

In that period, a profound societal transformation seems to occur, in the domains of trade, political power, land management and religious organization. For example, the exchanges with the Roman Empire have restarted after the crisis of the 3rd century but at a lesser scale (compared to Sri Lanka), whereas West Asian material becomes more abundant. Some elements of the political structures in place in the 7th century already begin to appear, as well as an increase of land donations to Brahmins, instead of donations to Buddhist institutions.

We wish to apprehend this period in a comparative perspective, in order to put into context the specific situation of the Tamil-speaking South, as opposed to Central and North India, as well as Sri Lanka. Our approach will be multidisciplinary, combining history, art history, epigraphy, numismatics and archaeology.

Speakers are expected to give a 30 minutes talk followed by 15 minutes of discussion. A round table will conclude the two-day workshop. The chairs may want to publish the presentations, depending on the conclusions of the workshop.

The workshop is funded by the German Archaeological Institute, the École française d'Extrême-Orient and the Franco-German University. It is hosted by the University of Bonn.

Program

Thursday, October 19th

Session 1. Written sources and archaeology of Tamilakam

9.30 – 10.15 am: Valérie Gillet, *Constructing temples and endowing lands in the 5th century-Tamil country: the Pulankurricci inscriptions*

10.15 – 11 am: V. Selvakumar, *Archaeology of the Cultural Developments in South India from 3rd century CE to 7th century CE*

11 – 11.30 am: coffee break

11.30 am – 12.15 pm: K. Rajan, *Foundations for the emergence of Early Historic Tamil Nadu – with special reference to recent excavations (to be confirmed)*

12.15 – 1 pm: V.P. Yathees Kumar, *Archaeology of Thamirabarani river valley, Tamil Nadu*

1 – 2 pm: lunch break

2 – 2.45 pm: S. Vasanthi, *Formation of town and Urbanization in ancient Tamil Nadu from the recent archaeological findings (to be confirmed)*

Session 2. Written sources and archaeology of Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana

2.45 – 3.30 pm: P.J. Cherian, *Role of State, Market and Religions as reflected in the material and written evidence of Muziris*

3.30 – 4 pm: coffee break

4 – 4.45 pm: K. P. Rao, *Eastern Deccan during the 5th and 6th c. CE: archaeological evidence from Amaravati, Ghantasala, Keesaragutta, Nagarjunakonda, Nelakondapalli, Peddavegi, and few other sites from Andhra/Telangana regions*

4.45 – 5.30 pm: Sabita Kumari, *Revisiting Buddhist Sites of Andhradesa (4th century CE-6th century CE)*

Friday, October 20th

Session 2. Written sources and archaeology of Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh and Telangana (continued)

9.30 – 10.15 am: Sreelakshmi Thota, *Archaeological investigations in South coastal Andhradesa - excavations at Gottiprolu - a case study*

10.15 – 11 am: Suchandra Ghosh, *Internal trade networks between Karnataka, Telangana and Andhra (Kanaganahalli)*

11 – 11.30 am: coffee break

11.30 am – 12.15 pm: Kathleen Morrison, *A Disciplinary Dark Age: Defining and Finding Early Historic to Early Medieval settlements in Karnataka*

Session 3. Perspectives in a wider regional context

12.15 – 1 pm: Ariane de Saxcé, *Regional contacts between Sri Lanka and India (4th – 7th c. CE)*

1 – 2 pm: lunch break

2 – 2.45 pm: Heidrun Schenk, *Tissamaharama pottery from 4th to 6th c. CE*

2.45 – 3 pm: Sampath Garusinghe and Nimal Perera, *Recent light on the Archaeological evidence of mid-early historic Northern Sri Lanka from the 2nd century CE until the end of the 7th century, with special reference to the Excavation of Kurundi vihara Stupa and the Image house in Mulaitivu*

3 – 3.30 pm: coffee break

3.30 – 4.15 pm: Pia Brancaccio, *The Western Deccan in the 5th and 6th century between Buddhism and Shaivism*

4.15 – 5.30 pm: Coline Lefrancq, *Southern versus Northern India: comparisons of the settlement occupation during the 4th to 6th c. CE from an archaeological perspective*

5.30 – 6 pm: Round table
