PhD Scholarship announcement

DEPARTMENT OF INDOLOGY (SANSKRIT STUDIES)

THE MAJOR FORMS OF ŚIVA
COMPARING REPRESENTATIONS IN ART & ICONOGRAPHY WITH THE SAIVA AGAMA-S AND RELATED TEXTS ON ICONOMETRY
(Tamilnadu-Pondicherry region)

The Tamilnadu-Pondicherry region is dotted with hundreds of temples, most of them granite structures. Constructed by many royal dynasties beginning with the 6th century CE, these temples contain a number of statues of divinities mostly in granite, stucco and bronze. In the case of God Siva, the forms of the God represented by these images under different epochs are myriad and varied. While the sculptors and artisans followed the basic norms in modelling the images of Siva, they also appear to have had some amount of personal freedom in portraying the different features of the God.

The basic texts of authority are obviously the Saiva Agamas and the related texts on iconography and iconometry, of which some are published while others remain in manuscript form. A detailed study comparing the images and icons in the temples with the fundamental texts, in order to bring out the points of agreement as well as the deviations, will be a definite addition and contribution to the history of Temple Iconography in particular and Art History in general.

The Department of Sanskrit Studies of the French Institute of Pondicherry holds a very important manuscript resource. The majority of the manuscripts contain texts related to Saiva Agamas and allied subjects. Apart from texts on Śaiva religious practices and Śaivasiddhānta doctrines, a good number of the texts deal with temple architecture and iconography along with iconometric details. The French Institute also holds another resource in the form of a huge collection of photo negatives of a large number of temples, their structure, the granite statues and the bronze icons. This valuable tool also can serve as a guide for this research project.

A detailed research leading to a doctorate on the close correlation between the descriptive/prescriptive texts (both published and unpublished) and the various temples (mainly in the Tamilnadu-Pondicherry region) along with the statues (in stone, stucco and bronze) will definitely be a great contribution to the knowledge in this domain. In the process, both the collections of the IFP — the manuscripts as well as the photo collections — which are basic resources for the study of Indian Culture, will be used for an in-depth study. Such a research project does not seem to have been undertaken so far.

Required Profile
- Master’s Degree in Sanskrit with a good training in reading manuscripts.
- A fair knowledge of temple architecture and of idols (icons) will be an additional qualification.

Name of the co-guide at IFP: Ganesan T.

The scholarship is open to students from all over India, preferably already registered for a PhD at an Indian University or affiliated colleges/centers recognized by the local University/UGC. Students with a good potential to register at an Indian University are also welcome to apply.
Applications must consist of 1) A written project proposal summarizing a potential project in the above-mentioned topic and listing the candidate’s previous experience if any in a similar project 2) Detailed CV of the candidate. 3) A certificate of eligibility for registration as a PhD student in an Indian University/ Affiliated Institution.

Selected applicants will be tested and interviewed online by an appropriate selection committee whose decision will be final.

**Deadline for scholarship applications**

The deadline for submitting applications is: June 5, 2020.
The application materials must be sent to: ganesan@ifpindia.org and ifpcom@ifpindia.org