

CENTRE FOR ASIAN AND
TRANSCULTURAL STUDIES
SOUTH ASIA INSTITUTE



**UNIVERSITÄT
HEIDELBERG**
ZUKUNFT
SEIT 1386

GUEST LECTURE

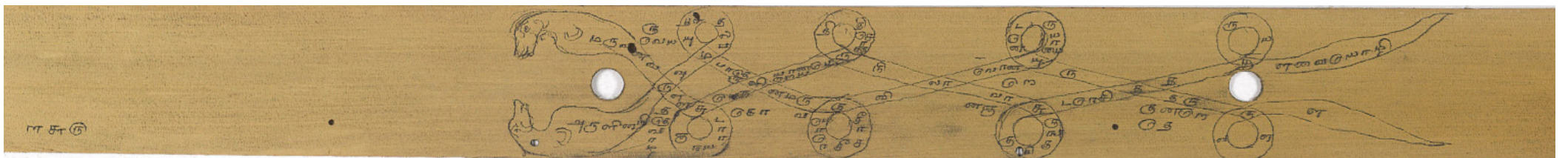
Department of Cultural and Religious History of South Asia (Classical Indology)

The Recreation of Citrakāvya in Tamil

Dr. Victor D'Avella

(Oriental Institute, University of Oxford)

My presentation will focus on the poetic figures known as *cittirakavi* (Sanskrit *citrakāvya*) and described in the *Taṇṭiyalaṅkāram*, a 12th century translation of Daṇḍin's *Kāvyaḍarśa*, with examples of pictorial representations of the figures found in a BnF manuscript, Indien 206. By way of introduction to this genre of poetry, which is largely borrowed from Sanskrit, I will discuss attitudes toward the "language of the north" as found in the *Taṇṭiyalaṅkāram* as well as the commentaries to the *Tolkāppiyam*. These passages shed light on the linguistic classification of literary languages at the start of the second millennium CE and justify the incorporation of Sanskrit poetics into Tamil *ilakkaṇam* ("grammar") including the genre of *citrakāvya*. After a discussion of the list of *cittirakavi* figures and its origins, I will end with a more detailed discussion of the *nākapantam* ("snake diagram", Sanskrit *nāgabandha*), a particularly difficult figure that seems to have its origin in South India.



Pictorial representation of the *nākapantam* in the manuscript BnF Indien 206



Dr. Victor D'Avella earned his PhD from the University of Chicago at the Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations, where he studied Sanskrit, Tamil and Telugu. Subsequently, he joined the NETamil project at the University of Hamburg and concentrated on the Tamil grammatical traditions. He is currently Lecturer in Sanskrit at the Oriental Institute, University of Oxford. Dr D'Avella's research interests focus on the linguistics traditions of South Asia broadly defined, with a particular emphasis on the interaction between Sanskrit and Dravidian languages.

Thursday, 21st July

14.15–15.45 Hrs

CATS room 010.01.02