

Curriculum Vitae

Nina Mirnig

Personal information

Address Institute for the Cultural and Intellectual History of Asia
Austrian Academy of Sciences
Apostelgasse 23, 1030 Vienna, Austria

Phone +43 1 51581 / 6410

Email Nina.Mirnig@oeaw.ac.at

Website <http://www.ikga.oeaw.ac.at/Mitarbeiter/Mirnig>

Date of birth 29/03/1982

Nationality Austrian

Main areas of research

Hindu religions; Śaivism; Tantric traditions; History of early Śaiva literature, in particular Tantras, Purāṇas, and Śivadharma-literature; Formation of early Śaiva devotional practices (e.g. worship of the Śivaliṅga); Epigraphy, in particular Nepalese Licchavi inscriptions; early history of Nepal; Ritual, in particular death rites

Education

2005-10 D.Phil., Oriental Studies, Oxford University, United Kingdom
Thesis title: "Liberating the Liberated. A History of the Development of Cremation and Ancestor Worship in the Early Śaiva Siddhānta. Analysis, Texts and Translations", *Supervisor:* Prof. Alexis Sanderson

2004-5 Master of Studies (Distinction), Oriental Studies, Oxford University, United Kingdom
Thesis title: "The Cremation Ritual According to the *Somaśambhupaddhati*", *Supervisor:* Prof. Alexis Sanderson

2001-4 B.A. (First Class Honours), Oriental Studies, Oxford University, United Kingdom

Professional experience

06/2014 - present Research Fellow
Institute for the Cultural and Intellectual History of Asia, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Austria.

03/2014-06/2014	Research Associate, University of Cambridge, United Kingdom Project: "The intellectual and religious traditions of South Asia as seen through the Sanskrit manuscript collections of the University Library, Cambridge". Project Coordinator: Dr. V. Vergiani. (since March 2014)
10/2013-01/2014	J. Gonda Fellow, International Institute for Asian Studies, Leiden.
04/2010-07/2013	Postdoctoral Research Fellow, Institute of Indian Studies, University of Groningen, The Netherlands <i>Project: A Historical Enquiry Concerning the Composition and Spread of the Skandapurāna.</i> Project Coordinator: Prof. Hans Bakker.
01/2010-06/2010	Research Assistant, Oxford University, for Prof. Rosalind O'Hanlon: Sanskrit Translations of sections of the <i>Jātiviveka</i> and <i>Kāyasthadharmadīpa</i>
11/2009-12/2009	Research Assistant, Oxford University, for Prof. Christopher Minkowski: Compilation of a "List of Existing Catalogues and Handlists of Collections in the British Isles"

Invited lectures and papers

18–22/09/2017	"A Vaiṣṇava Path to Liberation in Śaiva Texts: 'Vaiṣṇava Yoga' in the Śaiva <i>Umāmaheśvarasaṃvāda</i> and <i>Lalitavistara</i> of the Śivadharmacorpus", at the Deutscher Orientalistentag, Jena, Friedrich-Schiller-Universitaet.
3–7/09/2017	"Inscriptions in the Kathmandu Valley: Significance and State of Preservation", invited paper at the workshop Heritage at Risk 2017: Pathways to the Protection and Rehabilitation of Cultural Heritage in South Asia", Kathmandu. Organizers: Prof. Robin Coningham. AHRC/UNESCO/ICOMOS/DOA Kathmandu.
27/02–10/03/2017	"Licchavi Inscriptions in Paśupatikṣetra: History and Typological Survey", invited presentation at the Workshop in Preparations of a New Comprehensive Master Plan for Pashupatikshetra, Kathmandu.
17–20/03/2017	"Rudras on Earth: The Worshipper's Spiritual Status in the <i>Śivadharmasāstra</i> ", invited paper presentation at the American Oriental Society Annual Meeting, Los Angeles. Panel organizer: Prof. Timothy Lubin.
15/02/2017	"Śivaliṅgapūja in the <i>Śivadharmasāstra</i> ", invited presentation at The Sanskrit Reading Room, All Souls College, Oxford University.
16/11/2016	"The "divine" worshipper in the <i>Śivadharmasāstra</i> . Conceptualizing the <i>śivabhakta</i> in the construction of a Śaiva social order", invited lecture at the monthly Séminaire Monde Indien, Université Sorbonne Nouvelle-Paris 3. Organizers: Isabelle Ratié and Françoise Nalini Delvoye.
04/11/2016	"Hindu Pilgrimage and Patronage", invited paper in the panel <i>South Asian Pilgrimage and World Heritage</i> at the conference <i>Intangible Heritage, UNESCO Durham World Heritage Site 30th Anniversary</i>

- Conference, 4th–5th November 2016, Durham University. Organizer: Penelope Gibson.
- 03/11/2016 "Modern Hindu pilgrimage practice and heritage", invited paper at the Asian Cultural Heritage Workshop, for the MA International Cultural Heritage Management, Durham University. Organizers: Robin Coningham and Anouk Lafortune-Bernard.
- 02/11/2016 "Tracing the rise of Pashupatinath in Nepal: inscriptions as signposts through a sacred landscape (ca. 400–800 CE)", invited lecture for the Department of Archeology Research Seminar Series, Durham University. Organizers: Eva Fernandez-Domingue and Dan Lawrence.
- 26/09/2016 "Of moving (*cala*) and unmoving (*acala*) *līngas* in the *Śivadharmaśāstra*: early theological conceptions about the manifestation of Śiva on earth", at the *Śivadharma Workshop: Manuscripts, Editions, Perspectives*, 26th–30th September 2016, University of Leiden. Organizer: Peter Bisschop.
- 23/06/2016 "Manuscripts and textual history in the *Śivadharmaśāstra*'s opening chapter," at the workshop *Śivajñānapustakāni: Books of Śaiva Knowledge*, University of Hamburg. Organizer: Florinda de Simini.
- 24/03/2016 "The *Śivadharmaśāstra* in the "Śivadharma-corpus": an overview," invited lecture at the École française d'Extrême-Orient, Pondicherry, India. Organiser: Dominic Goodall.
- 13/10/2015 "The Śivaliṅga Cult on the Eve of the Tantric Age," invited lecture at the ERC Asia Beyond Boundaries Workshop, School of Oriental and African Studies. Organizer: Michael Willis.
- 26-28/03/2015 "Observations Regarding the Usage of the Terms *śivadharmin* and *śivadharmastha* in pre-modern Tantric Sources," at the symposium Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions: A Symposium in Honour of Alexis G. J. S. Sanderson, University College, Croft Chapter House, University of Toronto. Organizers: Srilata Raman, Shaman Hatley.
- 22/11/2014 "Saving the Unfortunates: A Tantric Rite to Rescue the Dead," at the American Academy of Religion Annual Meeting, San Diego, 22th–25th November, 2014.
- 17/06/2014 "Extant Sources on Early Śaivism in Nepal: Inscriptions and Palm-Leaf Manuscripts," at the Intensive Course in Old Javanese, Trawas, Indonesia. Organizer: Arlo Griffiths.
- 22-24/05/2014 "Spontaneous Expression or Formalized Spectacle? Exploring Performance as an Interface Between Religion and Art in the *Nāṭyaśāstra* and Early Śaiva Sources," at the conference Space, Culture, Language and Politics in South Asia: Common Patterns and Local Distinctions, 5th Coffee Break Conference, Rome. Co-presented with Elisa Ganser.
- 09/05/2014 "The Religious Centre of Paśupatināth: Early Nepalese Śaiva Inscriptions in Context," at the Ancient India and Iran Trust, Cambridge, 9th May.
- 23-28/03/2014 "Inscribing Merit, Obtaining Might. Recovering Early Strategies for Establishing and Solidifying Śaiva Practices in Licchavi Nepal," at the workshop History of Śaivism: Readings in Inscriptions and Early Manuscripts. Organizers: Dominic Goodall and Judit Törzsök.

28/01/2014	"Śaiva Inscriptions Re-examined: Tracing the History of Śaivism in Early Medieval Nepal," at the South Asia Institute, Ruprecht-Karls-Universität, Heidelberg. Organizer: Axel Michaels.
4-5/06/ 2012	"Amshuvarman and the Rise of Pashupati as the Tutelary Deity of Nepal," at the symposium Epigraphical Evidence for the Formation and Rise of Early Śaivism, University of Groningen. Organizers: Natasja Bosma, Nina Mirnig.
12-13/10/2011	"The Emergence of Śaiva Tantric Death Rites: Practice over Doctrine," at the workshop Sites and Rites of Death. Spacing the Corpse in and Across Religious Contexts, within the project "Dynamics in the History of Religions," Ruhr-Universitaet Bochum, 12-13 October 2011. Organizers: Georgios Halkias, Ana Echevarria.
29-30/10/2010	"Liminality in Śaiva Death Rites. The Twisted Path to Liberation," at the inter-disciplinary symposium Death and Liminality. Concepts, Rituals and Iconography, University of Groningen. Organizers: Dr. Peter Berger, Dr. Justin Kroesen.
30/3-2/4/2009	"Introduction of Death Rites into the Śaiva Siddhānta in the Light of the Earliest Scriptural Evidence," at the Annual British Association of South Asian Studies Conference, University of Edinburgh. Panel Organizer: Prof. Peter Bisschop.
6/6/2009	"Adapting to the Mainstream in Early Medieval India: the Gradual Emergence of Death Rites in the Śaiva Siddhānta," at the workshop Religious Cultures in South Asia, c. 1500-1800, Oxford University. Organizer: Prof. Rosalind O'Hanlon.

Grants, scholarships, academic prizes

2013	Jan Gonda Foundation Fellowship, KNAW. Research grant for four months (1 October 2013-31 January 2014) at the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS), Leiden.
2012	Dutch Royal Academy of Arts and Sciences (Conference Grant, € 4000), Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies (€ 4000): grants for the organization of the conference "Epigraphical Evidence for the Formation and Rise of Early Śaivism" (June 2012). Co-applicant.
2012	Jan Gonda Foundation (€ 2000), Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies (€ 2000): grants to invite Prof. Diwakar Acharya for a visiting fellowship; Master classes in Indian and Nepalese Epigraphy (June 2012).
2009	Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), United Kingdom, Student-led Initiative Scheme (£ 1000), Department of Oriental Studies (£ 500): grants to organize the first International Indology Graduate Research Symposium (September 2009).
2005-9	Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), United Kingdom Full Doctoral Award (Doctoral Project Competition, full maintenance and university/college fees).
2004-5	Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC), United Kingdom

Professional Master's Award (Masters Competition, full maintenance and university/college fees).

Organization of international conferences and workshops

9-10/10/2017	[Organized with Jonathan Duquette, Elisa Freschi, Marion Rastelli, Marcus Schmuecker] Workshop "Interactions among Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava and other religious and philosophical schools", Institute for the Cultural and Intellectual History of Asia, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna.
5-7/2/2015	[Organized with Vincent Eltschinger & Marion Rastelli] Conference "Tantric Communities in Context: Sacred Secrets and Public Rituals", Institute for the Cultural and Intellectual History of Asia, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna.
23/01/2014	[Organized with Elisa Ganser & Jonathan Duquette] Symposium "Religious Ideas in Motion: Recovering Śaivism Through Texts, Context and Practices", International Institute of Asian Studies, Leiden University.
2012-13	[Organized with Peter Berger] Seminar series "Colloquium on Indian Religions", with invited speakers in the fields of Indology, Religious Studies and Anthropology. University of Groningen.
4-5/06/2012	[Organized with Natasja Bosma] Symposium "Epigraphical Evidence for the Formation and Rise of Early Shaivism. The Religious Landscape at the Time of the Composition and Spread of the Skandapurana", University of Groningen.
28-29/09/2009	[Organized with Bihani Sarkar, Péter-Dániel Szántó & Michael Williams] 1st International Indology Graduate Research Symposium. Oxford University.
2008 - 2009	Founder and organizer of the Indology Graduate Seminar, Oriental Institute, Oxford.

Teaching experience

2016	Primary Instructor: MA module: Vorstellungen über die Seele im shivaitischen Tantra: Lektüre des <i>Kiraṇatantra</i> 1-3. Department of South Asian, Tibetan and Buddhist Studies, Vienna University.
2016	Primary Instructor: MA module: Die "Kanonisierung" früher śivaitischer Verehrungspraktiken: Ausgewählte Lektüre zum <i>Śivadharmaśāstra</i> . Department of South Asian, Tibetan and Buddhist Studies, Vienna University.
2013	Primary Instructor: Indian Religions II (Hinduism and Buddhism), B.A. in Religious Studies (second year). Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Groningen. (February-June 2013)
2013	Primary Instructor: Sanskrit II, B.A. in Religious Studies (third year).

	Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Groningen. (February-April 2013)
2012	Primary Instructor: Sanskrit III, B.A. in Religious Studies (third year). Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Groningen. (March-June 2012)
2012	Primary Instructor: Indian Religions II (Hinduism and Buddhism), B.A. in Religious Studies (second year). Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Groningen. (February-June 2012)
2012	Primary Instructor: History of Indian Religions, B.A. in Religious Studies (third year), with BA Thesis supervision. Course Topic: Death and Afterlife in Indian Religion. Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Groningen. (February-June 2012)
2012	Primary Instructor: Sanskrit II, BA in Religious Studies (third year). Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Groningen. (January-March 2012)
2011	Teaching Replacement for Prof. Hans Bakker: Sanskrit I, B.A. in Religious Studies (second year). Faculty of Theology and Religious Studies, University of Groningen. (November 2011)

International collaboration

- Project: Collaboration on Licchavi inscriptions and new archeological excavations at Paśupatināth in Nepal, carried out in collaboration with Durham University, the Pashupatinath Area Development Trust (PADT). Project Coordinator: Prof. Robin Coningham, Durham University.
- Collaboration with Diwakar Acharya (Oxford University) on new editions of Licchavi inscriptions.
- Project: Contributions to the fourth volume of the *Dictionary of Technical Terms from Hindu Tantric Literature (Tantrikābhidhānakośa)*. General editors: Dominic Goodall and Marion Rastelli. To be published with the Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, Vienna.
- Project: Collaboration on Nepalese palm-leaf manuscripts and contributions to the Cambridge Digital Library, within the AHRC funded project "The intellectual and religious traditions of South Asia as seen through the Sanskrit manuscript collections of the University Library, Cambridge". Project Coordinator: Dr. V. Vergiani.

PUBLICATIONS

Monographs

(forthc.)

Liberating the Liberated. A Socio-religious History of the Formation and Institutionalization of Śaiva Tantric Funerary Practices in the Siddhānta. With Editions and Annotated Translations of Selected Passages of the *Svāyambhuvasūtrasaṅgraha*, *Sarvajñānottara*, *Kiraṇa*, and *Jñānaratnāvalī*. Book manuscript under preparation, to be submitted to the Austrian Academy of Sciences Press in December 2017.

Edited volumes

(forthc.)

Tantric Communities in Context, (eds) Nina Mirnig, Marion Rastelli, Vincent Eltschinger. Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press.

2013 *Epigraphical Evidence for the Formation and Rise of Early Śaivism*, (eds) Natasja Bosma and Nina Mirnig (Special Issue of the *Indo-Iranian Journal* 56:3/4.), Leiden: Brill, 2013.

2013 *Puṣpikā: Tracing Ancient India through Text and Traditions. Contributions to Current Research in Indology.* (eds) Nina Mirnig, Peter Daniel Szanto, Michael Williams, Oxford: Oxbow Books.

Articles

(forthc.)

“The ‘Divine’ Worshipper in the *Śivadharmasāstra*: Conceptualising the Śaiva Lay Devotee (*śivabhakta*) in the Construction of a Śaiva Social Order,” in *Tantric Communities in Context*, (eds) Nina Mirnig, Marion Rastelli, Vincent Eltschinger. Vienna: Austrian Academy of Sciences Press.

(forthc.)

“Lokadharminī Dīkṣā: tracing the history of the most exoteric form of Śaiva initiation in medieval sources,” *Śaivism and the Tantric Traditions: Essays in Honour of Alexis Sanderson*, ed. by Dominic Goodall, Shaman Hatley, Harunaga Isaacson, & Srilata Raman. Leiden: Brill.

2017 “Umā and Śiva’s Playful Talks in Detail (Lalitavistara): On the Production of Śaiva Works and their Manuscripts in Medieval Nepal. Studies on the Śivadharmā and the Mahābhārata 1.” Together with Florinda De Simini. In: V. Vergiani, D. Cuneo and C.A. Formigatti (eds), *The South Asian Manuscript Book. Material, Textual and Historical Investigations*, De Gruyter: Berlin. (2017, in print), pp. 587–653.

2016 “Early Strata of Śaivism in the Kathmandu Valley: Śivaliṅga Pedestal Inscriptions from 466–645 CE,” in the *Indo-Iranian Journal*, Volume 59 4/4, Brill, pp. 309–362.

- 2016 “Exploring Ancient Pashupati: Preliminary Results of Archaeological Surveys and Excavations at Bhandarkhal, Kathmandu Valley UNESCO World Heritage Property (Nepal)”, Coningham, R.A.E., Acharya, K.P., Davis, C.E., Manuel, M.J., Kunwar, R.B., Hale, D., Tremblay, J., Gautam, D. and Mirnig, N.; in *Ancient Nepal 191-192*, pp. 94–112.
- 2015 “Hungry Ghost or Divine Soul? Post-Mortem Initiation in Medieval Śaiva Tantric Death Rites,” in *Ultimate Ambiguities. Investigating Death and Liminality*. Eds. Peter Berger and Justin Kroesen. Berghahn Books.
- 2013 “Favoured by the Venerable Lord Paśupati. Tracing the Rise of a new Tutelary Deity in Epigraphic Expressions of Power in Early Medieval Nepal,” in the *Indo-Iranian Journal*, Volume 53, 3/4, Brill.
- 2013 “Śaiva Siddhānta Śrāddha. Towards an Evaluation of its Performance in the Early Medieval Period,” in *Puṣpikā. Tracing Ancient India Through Texts and Tradition. Contributions to Current Research in Indology*. Oxbow Books, Oxford.

Manuscript Descriptions for the Cambridge Digital Library

- 2014 *Nityasodaśikārṇava* (<https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-OR-00722-00007/1>)
- 2014 *Yogiṇīhṛdaya* (<https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-OR-00722-00006/1>)
- 2014 *Kuśopadeśanītisāra* (<https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-OR-00722-00001/1>)
- 2014 *Kriyākāṇḍakramāvalī* (<https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-ADD-01406/1>)
- 2014 *Śītalāṣṭaka* (<https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-ADD-01701-00003/1>)
- 2014 *Jñānadīpavimarśiṇī* (<https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-ADD-02248/1>)
- 2014 *Vāmakeśvaratantraṭīpani* (<https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-OR-00156-00002/1>)
- 2014 *Prāyaścittasamuccaya* (<https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-ADD-02833/1>)
- 2014 *Nityāṣoḍaśikārṇava* (<https://cudl.lib.cam.ac.uk/view/MS-OR-00156-00001/1>)

Entries for the Dictionary of Tantric Terms, Tantrikābhidānaśośa, Vol. 4 (Austrian Academy of Sciences Press, forthcoming)

Bahirbali, Maṭha, Maṭhapraṭiṣṭhā, Mṛtadikā, Mṛtoddhāra, Mṛtaka, Mṛtakasūtaka, Rudrabali, Rudrapada, Rudrāṃśa, Rudrāṃśāpādana, Lokadharmiṇī