

Tyler W. Williams

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EDUCATION

Ph.D. in Middle Eastern, South Asian and African Studies, Columbia University, 2014.
Dissertation: "Sacred Sounds and Sacred Books: A History of Writing in Hindi."

M.Phil. in Middle Eastern, South Asian and African Studies, Columbia University, 2011.

M.Phil. in Hindi Literature, Jawaharlal Nehru University, 2007. Dissertation: "Bhakti Kāvya
Mem Nirgun-Sagun Vibhājan Kā Aitihāsik Adhyayan."

M.A. in Hindi Literature, Jawaharlal Nehru University, 2005.

B.A. in South Asian Studies, University of California Berkeley, 2000.

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Assistant Professor, Department of South Asian Languages and Civilizations, University of Chicago, July 2015-present.

Mellon Postdoctoral Teaching Fellow, University of Pennsylvania, 2014-2015.

Teaching Assistant, Columbia University, New York, 2010-2011.

Adjunct Lecturer, St. John's University, New York, 2009.

Adjunct Lecturer, The New School for Social Research, New York, 2008.

Lecturer, Columbia University, New York, 2007 – 2008.

HONORS AND AWARDS

National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship. 2019.

Fulbright-Nehru Academic and Professional Excellence Award. India, 2019.

Senior Research Fellowship. American Institute of Indian Studies, 2018 (declined)

Norman Cutler Research Grant. University of Chicago, 2017.

Mellon Postdoctoral Fellowship. University of Pennsylvania, 2014-2015.

Mellon Interdisciplinary Fellowship. Columbia University, 2012-14.

Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Abroad Fellowship, 2011-2012.

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS

Articles

"Publishing in a World Without Print: Texts and Paratexts." *Manuscript Studies*. Accepted, in revision. Forthcoming fall 2019.

"If the whole world were paper..." A History of Writing in the North Indian Vernacular." *History and Theory* 57, no. 4 (December 2018): 81-101.

"Notes of Exchange: Scribal Practices and Vernacular Religious Scholarship in Early Modern North India." *Manuscript Studies: A Journal of the Schoenberg Institute for Manuscript Studies* 3, no. 2 (2018): 265-301.

"Madhyakālīn Bhakti-Sampradāyom Ke Ṭakarāvōm Kā Bhautik Ādhār" ("The Material Foundations of Conflict between Medieval Bhakti Communities," in Hindi). *Bahuvacan*, no. 24 (2010): 24.

Edited works

Texts and Traditions in Early Modern North India. Co-edited with John S. Hawley and Anshu Malhotra. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2018.

Book chapters

"The Ties That Bind: Individual, Family and Community in Northwestern Bhakti." In *Bhakti and Power: Debating India's Religion of the Heart*. Edited by John S. Hawley, Christian Lee Novetzke, and Swapna Sharma. Seattle: University of Washington Press, forthcoming summer 2019.

"Between the Lines and in the Margins: Commentary and Impagination in an Early North Indian Vernacular." In *World Philology: Impagination*. Edited by Glen Most, Kevin Chang, and Anthony Grafton. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, forthcoming fall 2019.

"Commentary as Translation: the *Vairāgya Vṛnd* of Bhagvandas Niranjani." In *Texts and Traditions in Early Modern North India*, edited by Tyler Williams, John S. Hawley and Anshu Malhotra. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2018.

Translations

"Indian Culture and the Indian Woman." ("*Bharatīya Saṃskṛti Aur Nārī*" by Mahadevi Varma) In *Mahadevi Varma: Political Essays on Women, Culture and Nation*, edited by Anita Anantharam. Amherst: Cambria, 2010.

Reviews

Bodies of Song: Kabir Oral Traditions and Performative Worlds in North India by Linda Hess. *Journal of Asian Studies* 75:3 (August, 2016) 862-864.

INVITED TALKS

"*Prārambik Hindī Lekhan Kā Itihās Aur Bhakti Sampradāy* (Bhakti Sects and the History of Writing in Hindi)," Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Pune, November 2018.

"*Pūrv-aup, aniveṣik-kālīn Hindī kā adhyayan* (Pre-colonial Hindi Studies)." Gujarat University, Patan, July 2016.

“The Tongue and the Pen: Two Takes on Reading and Writing in Islamicate North India.” Western Michigan University, April 2016.

“Bhakti and Books.” St. Stephen’s College, Delhi University, August 2012.

PAPERS PRESENTED

“‘If all the world were paper’: The Beginnings of Writing in Hindi.” International Conference on Early Modern Literatures in North India, University of Warsaw, July 2018.

Invited paper: “Notes of exchange: scribal practices and vernacular religious scholarship in early modern north India.” Schoenberg Symposium on Manuscript Studies, University of Pennsylvania, November 2017.

Invited paper: “If the Whole World Were Paper: a History of Writing in Hindi.” *History and Theory* Conference, Vanderbilt University, May 2017.

Invited paper: “Commentary, Impagination, and Linguistic Difference in South Asia.” World Philology Conference, Academia Sinica, Taipei, March 2017.

“Linguistic and Literary Change and Imagination Practices in Early Modern North India.” Turning the Page: New Directions in Book History, University of Chicago Center in Delhi, March 2017.

“Publishing and Publics in a World Without Print.” European Conference on South Asian Studies, University of Warsaw, July 2016.

Invited paper: “Paper Trails: Money, Manuscripts, Malis and Merchants in Northwestern Bhakti.” Exploring Bhakti: is Bhakti a Language of Power or of Protest? Yale University, May 14, 2016.

‘God’s account book’: Bhakti and Merchant Religiosity in Northwestern India.” International Conference on Early Modern Literatures in North India, Université de Lausanne, July 2015.

“Literary and Religious History from the Middle: Merchant Devotion in Early Modern Rajasthan.” Association of Asian Studies, Chicago, March 2015.

“‘Make my bones into a pen’: the Uses of Writing in Kabir.” Annual Conference on South Asia, University of Wisconsin Madison, October 2015.

Invited paper: “Scribbles, Script, and Scripture: Becoming Literate in Early Modern India.” South Asia Colloquium, University of Pennsylvania, November 2014.

Invited paper: “Scholarship, manuscripts and merchants in the bhakti public of early modern Rajasthan.” *Bhakti Between the Elite and the Popular: Religion, Poetics, and Audience in the South-Asian Vernaculars*, Harvard University, May 2014.

“The Problem of Nirgun Bhakti.” Regional Bhakti Scholars Network (pre-conference), Annual Conference on South Asia, University of Wisconsin Madison, October 2014.

Invited paper: “From Sacred Sound to Sacred Book in the Sant Tradition of North India.” International Conference on Rethinking Bhakti, Mangalore University, March 2013.

“From Sacred Sound to Sacred Book: Reading and the Senses in Early Modern North India.” Annual Conference on South Asia, University of Wisconsin Madison, October 2013.

“*Rājasthān Ke Nirāñjanī Sampradāy Mem Maukhik Tathā Likhit Paramparāyem* (Oral and Written Traditions of the Niranjani Sampraday of Rajasthan).” International Conference on Early Modern Literatures in North India, Indian Institute of Advanced Study, July 2012.

“Oral Yarns and Paper Trails: Tracing Exchange Between Niranjani Saints and Other Communities.” European Conference on South Asian Studies, Lisbon, July 2012.

“*Hindī sāhitya aur bhūmaṇḍalīkaraṇ: kal bhī, āj bhī.* (Globalization and Hindi Literature: Yesterday and Today).” International Seminar on Globalization and Literature, Presidency University, Calcutta, January 2012.

“*Nirgun and Sagun* in the Discourse of Literary Historiography: The Creation of Two Traditions.” International Conference on Early Modern Literatures in North India, Sapientia Hungarian University of Transylvania, July 2009.

“*Nirguna and Saguna* in Manuscript Anthologies: Canon Formation and Sectarian Identity in the Bhakti Movement.” Annual Conference on South Asia, University of Wisconsin Madison, October 2009.

SERVICE TO THE UNIVERSITY

Director of Undergraduate Studies, South Asian Languages and Civilizations, July 2016-July 2017.

Co-coordinator, University of Chicago South Asia Seminar, July 2015-June 2017.

Norman Cutler Fellowship Committee, Committee on Southern Asian Studies, 2017.

Invited speaker, Canvas Day, April 2018.

Invited speaker, Master of Arts Program in the Humanities recruitment event, February 2017.

SALC departmental website committee, 2017-2018.

Guest lecture: “Bhakti.” Introduction to the Civilizations of South Asia, February 2018.

Guest lecture: “Indian Aesthetics.” MFA Travel Research Program, University of Chicago, November 2016.

Guest lecture: “Bhakti.” Introduction to the Civilizations of South Asia, February 2017.

Lecture: “Burn Your Books! Ten Good Reasons to Destroy Books from the Middle East and South Asia.” Humanities Day 2016.

Guest lecture: “Bhakti.” Introduction to the Civilizations of South Asia, February 2016.

Dissertation Year Fellowship Committee, Humanities Division, 2016-2017.

SERVICE TO THE FIELD

Instructor, “Reading Material Texts: A Paleography and Codicology Workshop,” Delhi University, February 2019.

Conference co-organizer, “South Asian Paleography and Codicology Workshop.” University of Chicago Center in Delhi, May 2019.

Reviewer, *Studies in History* (journal), Jawaharlal Nehru University, Delhi.

Conference co-organizer, “Turning the Page: New Directions in South Asian Book History.” University of Chicago Center in Delhi, March 2017.

Conference organizer, “International Conference on Early Modern Literatures in North India.” Indian Institute of Advanced Study, July 2012.

MEMBERSHIPS / PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

Member, Association of Asian Studies

Member, American Academy of Religion

Member, European Association for South Asian Studies

Member, Regional Bhakti Scholars Network

LANGUAGES

Hindi (Distinguished); knowledge of literary dialects of Brajbhasha, Avadhi, and Marwari.

Urdu (Superior)

Persian (Advanced)

Sanskrit (Advanced)

TECHNICAL EXPERTISE

Proficient in XML, HTML, and Python programming languages.