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## École française d'Extrême-Orient

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I am an Indologist, specialist of first millennium material culture (temples and inscriptions) of South India, more particularly Tamil Nadu, permanent member of the Ecole française d'Extrême-Orient and posted in Paris. I was invited to deliver a paper in the 10<sup>th</sup> annual SARI/SMU (Southern Methodist University) conference on the 10<sup>th</sup> of October 2015 in Dallas. Five scholars gathered around a topic which was cleverly chosen, since it touches upon the ancient as well as modern practices of transforming temples.

I was unaware of the existence of SARI until then. And I must say that I was extremely pleased to have accepted this invitation for a few reasons. First of all, the scholars who participated in the conference were well selected in the sense that each of them presented a different aspect of the topic (religious history, anthropology, history of art, etc.); then the selected topic resonated well with our personal research; the public who attended the conference was particularly interesting to engage with, receptive to our presentation and enthusiastic; finally, the conference was particularly well organized and the warm welcome we all received made this event a pleasant and fruitful experience. It is not easy to create an intellectually challenging yet convivial conference, but the efforts developed by SARI made it possible. It is, I believe, an important contribution to Indological research, which is worth encouraging. I hope that SARI will receive all the attention and recognition it deserves.

Yours truly,

Valérie Gillet