

The Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies Annual Report 2014-15

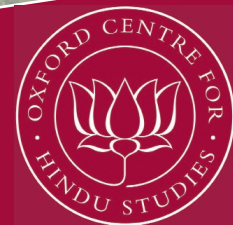


Gender and Narrative
in the *Mahābhārata*



सैन्धी कीचक तीमसेन

Edited by



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Academic report

The OCHS has continued to develop its research and teaching, offering core teaching to the Theology Faculty and supervising postgraduate students in Theology and Oriental Studies. The OCHS has continued to develop research in Hindu Studies with a number of publications coming out by members of staff and research projects developed.

Awards and Honours

Professor Flood was elected to fellowship of the British Academy 2014.

Dr Bjarne Wernicke Olesen was awarded associate fellowship at Aarhus University and research fellowship at OCHS as well as being awarded the prestigious Carlsberg Research Grant.

Teaching

In the current academic year the OCHS offered the usual teaching of Hinduism 1 and 2 for track three of the Honours School in Theology. The OCHS also offered Sanskrit Prelims. Two students took the paper and passed (one with distinction). The OCHS also offered additional seminar series. Dr Rembert Lutjeharms offered Readings in Sanskrit Commentaries. Prof. Flood offered Readings in Phenomenology, which have proved popular over the years and Readings in the Netra Tantra.

Professor Flood tutored six undergraduates, four M.St. students and thirteen DPhil students (six co-supervised).

Research

The OCHS has a number of research projects under four general categories: Classical Hinduism, Comparative Philosophy and Religion, Hinduism and Modernity, and Historical Perspectives. Projects within these continue to develop.

Classical Hinduism

This is a general category for research projects that may be of a textual or historical nature, and may include the preservation and critical editing and translating of material relating to particular traditions. It also might include thematic studies of topics within Hinduism.

The Shakta Traditions

Project Leaders: Dr. Bjarne Wernicke Olesen, Prof Gavin Flood

Researchers: Gudrun Bühnemann (Wisconsin-Madison); Marianne Qvortrup Fibiger (Aarhus); Silje Lyngar Einarsen (Aarhus); Rich Freeman (Duke); Mikael Aktor (Odense); Jessica Frazier (Kent); Sir (William) James Mallinson (Oxford); Shaman Hatley (Concordia); Uwe Skoda (Aarhus)

Output: Olesen, Bjarne (ed) Goddess Traditions in Tantric Hinduism: History, Practice and Doctrine Tantric Studies Series (London: Routledge, 2015 forthcoming)

This international research project on Hindu and Buddhist Shakta traditions in South Asia is an outcome of a Memorandum of Understanding by and

between the Faculty of Arts, Aarhus University, and the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies (OCHS) aiming at research, publication, and interdisciplinary and comparative collaboration as well as student exchange. The Shakta project is a collaboration between the Section for the Study of Religion, Aarhus University and OCHS. The project seeks to trace developments in the history of Goddess worship among the orthoprax brahmans, among the tantric traditions, and at village level. It aims at presenting an interdisciplinary survey of Shakta history, practice and doctrine in its diversity as well as to convey something of the Shakta religious world view and ritual practice that is distinctive and sets 'Shaktism' apart from other South Asian religious traditions. Any headway in this field will be of great value for the future study of religion in South Asia.

The project builds on the conference in 2011. The proceedings of the conference will be published this year. A further conference is being planned for 2016.

Bhagavata Purana Research Project

Project Leaders: Dr. Ravi M. Gupta, Director of the Religious Studies Program, Utah State University; Dr. Kenneth R. Valpey, Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies.

Outputs: Ravi M. Gupta and Kenneth R. Valpey (eds.) *The Bhagavata Purana: Sacred Text and Living Tradition* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2013); *The Bhāgavata Purāṇa: Essential Readings* (forthcoming for Spring 2016).

This project continues to develop. Drs Valpey and Gupta completed an abridged translation of the *Bhāgavata-purāṇa* to be published by Columbia University Press (*The Bhāgavata Purāṇa: Essential Readings*). This is the second volume that results from the project and completes the first phase of the project.

Planning for the second phase has begun. This will involve critical editions of the text and major commentaries along with translations from languages such as Sanskrit, Hindi, Marathi, Tamil, Telugu, and Oriya. Shaunaka Rishi Das has liaised with various universities in India who are interested in participating. These include the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, the Universities of Madras, Pondicherry, Mumbai, Shiv Nadar, and the CP Ramaswamy Aiyar Indological Institute.

There will be a meeting of the research project participants in December 2015 and a conference at Madras University in 2017.

The Gosvāmī Era: The Founding of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism in Early Modern South Asia

Project Leaders: Kiyokazu Okita (Kyoto University); Rembert Lutjeharms (Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies).

The early modern period in North India was one of the most socially turbulent and yet culturally vibrant times in its history. While the Mughal rulers were establishing the Pax Mughalana, their rule was far from uncontested. To achieve and maintain their hegemony, they fought against Afghan invaders from the west, rebellious Rajputs in Rajasthan, Śivajī in the south, and the Muslim rivals in the east. Culturally, the policy of religious

tolerance adopted by some of the prominent Mughal rulers helped to strengthen the Hindu-Muslim cooperation, while more law-oriented Orthodox Muslims condemned such policy. This was precisely the period when Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism was founded and became a major player in religiously competitive early modern North India. While Kṛṣṇa Caitanya inspired radical devotion to Kṛṣṇa, it was his immediate followers, some of them called the Gosvāmīs, who provided profound theological underpinning to the tradition through their Sanskrit writings. The project will include manuscript collection and digitisation; the production of critical editions, translations, and studies; monographs and articles on the Gosvami era; organising group-reading sessions; biannual conference / workshop; and publication of conference / workshop proceedings.

Comparative philosophy and religion

Having developed out from the Theology Faculty, one of the concerns of OCHS has been comparative Theology. This research field intends to include comparative religion within its remit and seeks to examine the ways in which Hindu thought can interact with non-Hindu philosophies and theologies. This research area partly grows out of the successful comparative seminars and conferences held at OCHS between Islam, Christianity, Hinduism and Buddhism and builds on the work of Prof F. X. Clooney who has written extensively on comparative theology.

Themes in Indian Philosophy

Project Leader: Dr Jessica Frazier.

Outputs: J. Frazier (ed.) *Categories in Indian Philosophy: Thinking Inside the Box* (London: Ashgate, 2015)

This project explores the use of categories as a way of doing philosophy in Indian intellectual culture. Indian categorical systems include linguistic categories, aesthetic and emotional categories, universals, logical, metaphysical, and ontological categories. The goal of this project is to shed a clear light on categorisation as a mode of reasoning in the Indian philosophical traditions, illuminating its relation to Western methods, and its unique contribution to philosophy across the globe. A book was produced as a result of the conference on categories in Indian philosophy. Follow up Conference planned for 2017.

Rethinking Religion

Project Leaders: Dr Jessica Frazier and Prof Gavin Flood

Output: Flood, Gavin *The Importance of Religion* (Oxford: Blackwell, 2013), *The Truth Within: a History of Inwardness in Christianity, Hinduism and Buddhism* (OUP 2014).

Seminars Series: *Readings in Phenomenology, Importance of Religion, Approaches to Religious Subjectivity* (linked to forthcoming monograph by J Frazier)

The OCHS "Rethinking Religion" project aims to refine current models of religion and the notions of religious meaning and experience which it entails.

Through research, publication, and interdisciplinary and comparative collaboration, it hopes to propose new perspectives on the importance of religion, the nature of religious experiences, and the way in which we define 'religiosity'. The proceedings of this project will be disseminated to the academic community through print and web access.

Hinduism and modernity

This general category seeks to examine Hinduism in relation to modernity, particularly with respect to questions about the place of religion in the public sphere, questions of social hierarchy and equality, and Hinduism in relation to globalisation, localisation, and glocalisation. Within this broad category research projects could deal with Hinduism and the plastic arts, Hinduism and politics, Hinduism and society, and Hinduism and literature.

Bengali Vaishnavism in the Modern Period

Project Leaders: Dr. Ferdinando Sardella and Lucian Wong

Outputs: a volume of papers from the conference will be published.

This project undertakes the mapping, collection, translation and investigation of literature and any other relevant material related to or dealing with the modern development of Bengali Vaisnavism from the mid-18th century to the mid-twentieth century. It aims at facilitating research in a number of areas such as theology, sociology, history of ideas, philosophy, gender studies and anthropology.

The movement initiated by Chaitanya (1486–1534) and his successors in North and East India was one of the last medieval cohesive expressions of a bhakti pan-Indian movement that began centuries earlier in South India. The movement refined the popular bhakti cult of Shri Radha and Krishna through an intricate study of emotions (*rasa*). It was also among the last ones to provide a Vaishnava commentary to the Vedanta in the early modern period in the shape of an articulated critique of Shankara's non-dualism by Baladeva Vidyabhusana. Bhakti as a personalist path of development and spirituality has remained one of the specific theological areas of exploration of the Vaishnava schools in South Asia. Within that broad religious field, Bengali Vaishnavism has produced new theoretical, cultural and social movements during the 19th and 20th century— among others as a result of the colonial presence of Britain—and it has now become a global phenomenon. Anthropological studies of Bengali Vaishnavism conducted in the West from the 1960s onwards have focused on folk religions in Bengal little touched by modernity particularly in regard to tantric, sexual practices. Important research has also been carried out on the pre-modern history and early texts of the movement. Sociological research has concentrated on new Vaishnava religious movements such as ISKCON but much less has been written about the modern and pre-modern period prior to the 1960s. The study in India of modern forms of Bengali Vaishnavism is scarce perhaps due to a neglect of currents of thought less supportive of Hindu nationalism or irrelevant to key social and political issues. There is little research about the transformations that the movement underwent during the early modern and modern period,

which have led to its globalisation. Another challenge in South Asia has been the lack of a tradition of religious studies as a systematic historical, sociological, and theological discipline

The project was launched at a conference held at Worcester College, Oxford in March 2015. The conference attracted an international body of scholars.

The Bengali Vaishnavism in the Modern Period Conference Report

Members of the Bengali Vaishnavism in the Modern Period research project organised an international research workshop on the theme “Bengali Vaishnavism in the Modern Period”. The workshop was held at Worcester College, Oxford, on 28–29 March 2015, and served as the official launch of the research project. It brought together scholars from across the disciplines working on various aspects of Bengali Vaishnavism from the mid eighteenth to mid twentieth century, creating a forum for focused exploration of the present state of the mapping, collection, translation and critical investigation of material relevant to research in this area. It showcased the current work of both established scholars and early career researchers, from Europe, Asia and the US, and concluded with a fruitful roundtable discussion on the future direction of the project. The workshop was deemed a success by all those who attended, demonstrating as it did the depth of the current the field and establishing a network of scholars eager to collaborate on developing the field. It was decided that the group would meet for another workshop in 2018. The workshop organisers (Ferdinando Sardella and Lucian Wong) are currently planning an edited volume based on papers from the workshop.

Sessions

- Tony K. Stewart (Vanderbilt University) – ‘Jaban Haridās: The Strange Tales of the Sufi who Practiced Kṛṣṇa Jikir’
- Richard Williams (Kings College London)– ‘Singing in tune with God: the eighteenth-century musicology of Narahari Cakravartī’
- Kiyokazu Okita (Kyoto University) – ‘When a Royal Paṇḍit is Refuted: Court, Conflict, and Controversy in Eighteenth Century Bengal’
- Amiya Sen (University of Heidelberg) – ‘Theorizing Bengal Vaishnavism: Bipin Chandra Pal and New Perspectives on Hindu-Bengali Religious Life’
- Santanu Dey (Jawaharlal Nehru University) – ‘Forms of Authority and Organization Within Vaishnava Institutionalization Processes in Colonial Bengal’
- Ferdinando Sardella (University of Stockholm) – ‘Legal Conflicts in the Post-charismatic History of the Gaudiya Math’
- Jason Fuller (DePauw University) – ‘Selling Salvation: Bhaktivinoda Thakura and the Re-branding of Vaishnavism in 19th Century Bengal’
- Gerald Carney (Hampden-Sydney College) – ‘Bābā Premānanda Bhāratī: A Trajectory into and through Bengal Vaiṣṇavism to the West’
- Abhishek Ghosh (Muhlenberg College) – ‘Bhaktivinod’s Doxography of World Philosophies’

- Kenneth Valpey (Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies) – ‘Claiming High Ground: Gaudiya Missionizing Rhetoric on the Adhikāra of Worship’
- Varuni Bhatia (University of Michigan) – ‘Enframing Caitanya: The Afterlife of a Saint in Troubled Times’
- Mans Broo (Åbo Akademi University) – ‘Being Modern but Authentic: Notes from Swami B. H. Bon’s ‘On the Way to Vaikuntha’
- Jeanne Openshaw (University of Edinburgh) – ‘Love of woman: love of humankind? Interconnections between Baul esoteric practice and social radicalism’
- Sukanya Sarbadhikary (Presidency College) (presented by Tony K. Stewart) – ‘The Sahajiya Body: Methodological Reflections on a Sensitive Ethnography’
- Lucian Wong (University of Oxford) – ‘Victorian Morals, Vaiṣṇava Quarrels: Sources of Nineteenth-century Anti-Sahajiyā Polemics’
- June McDaniel (College of Charleston) – ‘“Vaisnavas are the True Saktas”: Vaisnava and Sakta Bhakti in Modern West Bengal’
- Rebecca Manring (Indiana University) – ‘Rādhāntram: Appropriation and Linguistic Strategy’

Hindu Archive Project

The Hindu Archive is part of the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies (OCHS). The Centre is committed to preserving all aspects of Hindu culture and will establish a number of specialised archives to achieve this goal. The Hindu Archive is a collection of official documents, letters, diaries, memorabilia, newspapers, newsletters, photographs, audio and videotapes, films, CDs, and DVDs, that capture the history of Hindus in Britain and beyond. These materials have been generously donated by individuals who wanted to see their collections become part of an archive that documents the history of their culture and their community.

Historical perspectives on Hindu cultures

The history of religion in South Asia is highly contested and has become a battleground for ideological conflict. But history is crucial for any understanding of religion, not only in the past but in the contemporary context. History might be seen both as a discourse about the past and the object of that discourse. This research trajectory seeks to raise questions about the nature of history in South Asia, questions about colonial vs non-colonial versions of history, and questions about how history relates to contemporary social, religious and cultural identities.

Archaeology and Text Project

Project outputs: Book Series: Archaeology and Religion in South Asia (editor Himanshu Prabha Ray). Published to date: Michon, Daniel Archaeology and Religion in Early Northwest India (London: Routledge, 2015); Ray, Himanshu Prabha (ed.) Negotiating Cultural Identity: Landscape in Early Medieval South

Asian History (Routledge, 2015). Two new books for the series are in the process of being published.

Led by Himanshu Prabha Ray, this project aims to contribute to an understanding of how sacred spaces came to be defined in the archaeological record from around the latter half of the first millennium BC onwards. It bridges the gap that exists between textual studies and archaeology through a focus on the Hindu temple, and aims to take the initiative to overcome these disciplinary rigidities by inviting scholars from a range of academic specialisations to lead the way, both in terms of developing new research methodologies, but more significantly in pioneering changes in pedagogy for studying a crucial element in the understanding of Indian culture, viz. the temple itself, and the concrete and performative actualisation of texts in the life of the temple.

Theistic developments in the Indian subcontinent have often been seen as later overlays on what has been termed the portable ideational religion of the Vedas concerned largely with sacrifices and rituals. The key concept here is the notion of religious spots as being mobile as opposed to these being defined in terms of specific locales and geographic places. The location of the temple at a defined spot indicated a change in its relationship with the community that provided patronage and maintained it. No doubt, the temple was a manifestation of philosophic and religious changes and by the early centuries of the Christian era emerged as the most important feature of the landscape. On account of its location and appeal within the community, the temple provided a platform for creativity in terms of literary compositions inscribed on its walls, as well as in dramatic enactment and recitation performed in its precincts. The temple thus evolved as a crucial link between the ruling elite and the community and through its wider linkages in the overall sacred geography connected to other major shrines, cult spots and centres of pilgrimage extending beyond political frontiers.

The project focuses on a number of key themes including: The Archaeology of the Temple; Texts and Religious Action; Asceticism and the Bhakti Tradition, and; Performance and Text. It engages leading scholars from India, Canada, the USA, Russia, France, Germany, and the UK in collaboration through key networks and outputs.

Shivdasani Fellowship

In Michaelmas we were pleased to welcome Prof. Shrikant Bahulkar, Adjunct Professor at the Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies, University of Pune and the K. J. Somaiya Centre for Buddhist Studies, Mumbai. In Hilary we welcomed Prof. Dilip Loundo, Coordinator of the Centre for the Study of Religions and Philosophies of India, Federal University of Juiz de Fora, Minas Gerais, Brazil. An overview of their work appears in the Visiting Fellows section below.

Visiting fellows

This we welcomed Chad Meister from Bethel College and Lubomír Ondračka from Charles University, Prague.

Majewski Lectures and IK Foundation Lecture

The academic year's first Majewski Lecture was Jan Westerhoff's exploration of Madhyamaka philosophy. In Hilary, Prof. Sondra Hausner spoke on ritual and hierarchy at the Kumbh Mela, and in Trinity term Dr Ankur Barua visited the vexing and vexatious topic of conversion in India.

Dr Anne-Marie Gaston gave the 2014 IK Foundation lecture on Odissi and Bharata Natyam dance and Prof. June McDaniel delivered the 2015 Lecture on Bhakti and Tantra in Balinese Hinduism.

Visiting scholar's report: Lubomír Ondračka

My stay at OCHS was very fruitful, albeit in a different way than I had expected. It turned out to be more a study visit than pure research visit, since I attended a number of courses, lectures, and seminars held at OCHS, as well as at the Oriental Institute.

On the research side of my visit, I have done the final proofs of my article 'Perfecting body, divine body and other bodies in the Nātha-Siddha Sanskrit texts' and this paper is going to be published in a summer issue of *The Journal for Hindu Studies*. For the same journal, I am in the process of writing a review of the book *Yoginī in South Asia*. Further, I wrote a review article (in Czech, published in December 2014) of the book *Hastābhinaya: Hand gestures in traditional theatre art of India*, and a profile of my late teacher Dušan Zbavitel for a new edition of his Czech rendering of Rāmāyaṇa (to be published in June 2015); I have also done a thorough revision of the whole book and corrected a number of errors in the first edition.

I have also done substantial editorial work: as a copy editor, I have prepared three books for publication: (1) a Czech translation of the *Eight Theories of Religion* by Daniel Pals, (2) a Czech translation of a Chinese text on painting *Lofty Message of Forests and Streams* by Guo Xi (to be published in September 2015), and (3) a Czech translation of *The Myth: A Very Short Introduction* by Robert Segal (work in progress, to be published in December 2015). Besides this, I am in the process of an evaluation of the manuscript *Puranic Stories* (Czech translation of selected stories from Puranas, translated directly from Sanskrit by a young Czech scholar).

Another important part of my research activities is preparation of three conference papers. The first one, 'Cheating Death: The Yogic Way to Immortality', will be presented at the 16th World Sanskrit Conference in Bangkok (June 2015), two others, 'Death Rituals in Pre-Buddhist Vedic India' and 'Death Rituals in Early Indian Buddhism', will be presented at the workshop *Death and Dying in Buddhism* (Prague, July 2015).

For all these activities, I have made intensive use of the Bodleian Library and the OCHS library. In August I plan to collect materials for my new courses in Prague: (1) *Sāṃkhyakārikā*, (2) *Religions of India in Practice* – lecture, (3)

Religions of India in Practice – seminar, and (4) Religions of India in Practice - visual presentation.

Besides these visible outcomes of my stay at OCHS, I have profited from many interesting discussions and informal talks with scholars, students and guests at OCHS. Delicious Wednesday lunches were always a great opportunity to meet people and to enjoy the warm environment of this place.

Report on Ramayana Symposium, 12–13 July 2014

On 12–13 July 2014 a small group of scholars drawn from Europe, North America and Oxford itself came together at the OCHS for a symposium on the Ramayana, under the title “Women in Crisis: the Regional Ramayanas”; the inspiration for the symposium had come from Mandakranta Bose and it was organised by her and John and Mary Brockington. Nine papers were presented and discussed during the two days, covering versions of the story in several regional languages of India and also of Tibet and Central Asia, with two papers presenting visual representations of the narrative in particular from South India. The programme was designed to give more adequate time than often both for the papers and for discussion with the aim of achieving deeper insights; the discussion greatly benefited from input by the small but interested audience. The symposium was also enriched by the friendly hospitality of the Centre, which not only offered the venue and technical backup, without which the symposium could not have taken place, but also provided lunch to the participants on both days, so facilitating further informal discussion.

The inter-play between verbal and visual text became a particular theme of the symposium, while the changing attitudes towards the minor female characters at different periods and in different cultural contexts was also explored. A major outcome of the symposium was agreement by the participants to produce a collaborative volume on its general theme which is now in the course of preparation for planned publication in the Routledge Hindu Studies series.

Other Lectures and Seminars

A full listing of the year’s lectures and seminars appears in Appendix Two.

Publishing

The Gaudiya Vaishnava Library and the Gaudiya Vaishnava Historical Library

The Gaudiya Vaishnava Library aims to provide authoritative editions of the principal texts of the Gaudiya Vaishnava tradition in Sanskrit, Prakrit, Bengali, Brajhasha, and Oriya, with a faithful and accessible English translation on facing pages. The series will publish works on theology, ranging from the tradition’s inception in the sixteenth century to the early twentieth century, with the intention to later include works of poetry and ritual.

The Gaudiya Vaishnava Historical Library will publish editions and translations of historical documents of the Gaudiya Vaishnava tradition in

Bengali, Hindi, Sanskrit, Brajhasha, Oriya, and Persian. The series will publish documents that have historical, sociological, or legal value that illuminate the historical development of the tradition.

Both series will be peer reviewed, giving special attention to the quality and accuracy of the translation and the reliability of the text edition. The first volumes of the Gaudiya Library are expected to be published in 2017.

The editorial board of both series is: Ravi M. Gupta (Utah State University), Rembert Lutjeharms (Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies), Kiyokazu Okita (Kyoto University), Ferdinando Sardella (Stockholm University), Kenneth R. Valpey (Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies), and Lucian Wong (University of Oxford). All are students or alumni of the OCHS.

Routledge Studies in Tantric Traditions

Series Editor: Gavin Flood

Routledge Studies in Tantric Traditions is a major new monograph series established to publish scholarship on south, east and southeast Asian tantric traditions. The series aims to promote the study of Hindu and Buddhist tantric traditions through the publication of anthropological and textual studies. The series aims to promote the view that anthropological studies can be informed by texts and textual studies informed by anthropology. The series will therefore publish contemporary ethnographies from different regions, philological studies, philosophical studies, and historical studies of different periods which contribute to the academic endeavour to understand the role of tantric texts and their meaning in particular cultural contexts. In this way, the series will hope to establish what the continuities and divergencies are between Buddhist and Hindu tantric traditions and between different regions. The series will be a major contribution to the fields of Indology, Sinology, History of Religions, and Anthropology.

- *Goddess Traditions in Tantric Hinduism: History, Practice and Doctrine*, Edited by Bjarne Olesen. To be published 17 August 2015.
- *Tantric Visual Culture: A Cognitive Approach*, by Sthaneshwar Timalisina. Published 12 February 2015.
- *An Introduction to Tantric Philosophy: The Paramarthasara of Abhinavagupta with the Commentary of Yogaraja*, by Lyne Bansat-Boudon and Kamalesha Datta Tripathi. Published 15 February 2013.
- *Tantric Mantras: Studies on Mantrasastra*, by Andre Padoux. Published 19 May 2011.
- *Identity, Ritual and State in Tibetan Buddhism: The Foundations of Authority in Gelukpa Monasticism*, by Martin A. Mills. Published 1 July 2010.
- *The Khecarividya of Adinatha: A Critical Edition and Annotated Translation of an Early Text of Hathayoga*, by James Mallinson. Published 1 April 2010.

Archaeology and Religion in South Asia

Series Editor: Himanshu Prabha Ray, Chairperson, National Monuments Authority

This series reflects on the complex relationship between religion and society through new perspectives and advances in archaeology. It looks at this critical interface to provide alternative understandings of communities, beliefs, cultural systems, sacred sites, ritual practices, food habits, dietary modifications, power, and agents of political legitimisation. The books in the Series underline the importance of archaeological evidence in the production of knowledge of the past. They also emphasise that a systematic study of religion requires engagement with a diverse range of sources such as inscriptions, iconography, numismatics and architectural remains.

Books published in the Series in 2015:

- *Archaeology and Religion in Early Northwest India: History, Theory, Practice*, Routledge, 2015. Daniel Michon, Associate Professor of Religious Studies, Claremont McKenna College, California
- *Negotiating Cultural Identity: Landscapes in Early Medieval South Asian History*, Routledge, 2015. Edited by Himanshu Prabha Ray, Chairperson, National Monuments Authority

Forthcoming:

- *Rediscovering the Invisible Believers: Women in Monastic Buddhism in Early South Asia*, by Garima Kaushik, Assistant Archaeologist, Archaeological Survey of India, New Delhi.
- *Deciphering Sacred Landscapes: Religious Diversity in Early Gujarat*, by Susan Verma Mishra, independent researcher, New Delhi.

OCHS-Routledge Hindu Studies Series

There are now 26 titles in this series, with four more in the pipeline. This year's additions are:

- *Debating 'Conversion' in Hinduism and Christianity*, by Ankur Barua. Published 27 March 2015.
- *Indian Thought and Western Theism: The Vedanta of Ramanuja*, by Martin Ganeri. Published 19 February 2015.
- *Textual Authority in Classical Indian Thought: Ramanuja and the Vishnu Purana*, by Sucharita Adluri. Published 17 November 2014.
- *Re-figuring the Ramayana as Theology: A History of Reception in Premodern India*, by Ajay K. Rao. Published 13 October 2014.
- *The Chaitanya Vaishnava Vedanta of Jiva Gosvami: When Knowledge Meets Devotion*, by Ravi M. Gupta. Re-published 12 September.

Forthcoming titles

- *Bhakti and Embodiment: Fashioning Divine Bodies and Devotional Bodies in Krsna Bhakti*, by Barbara A. Holdrege. To be published 1 July 2015.
- *Pilgrimage in the Hindu Tradition: Salvific Space*, by Knut A. Jacobsen. To Be Published 7 July 2015.

- *Religion, Narrative and Public Imagination in South Asia: Past and Place in the Sanskrit Mahabharata*, by James Hegarty. To be published 1 August 2015.
- *Interpreting Devotion: The Poetry and Legacy of a Female Bhakti Saint of India*, by Karen Pechilis. To be published 1 August 2015.

Journal of Hindu Studies

In the academic year 2014–15 there were three issues of the JHS, a co-publication with Oxford University Press.

- August 2014: Text and Reality in the Study of Balinese Hinduism
- November 2014: General issue
- May 2015: Vedanta.

The Journal's Editors are Prof. Gavin Flood, Dr Jessica Frazier, and Dr Rembert Lutjeharms, all of the OCHS.

The Editorial Board is: Daud Ali, Mandakranta Bose, John Brockington, Gudrun Buhnemann, Francis X. Clooney, Richard Freeman, Jonardon Ganeri, Ravi Gupta, John Stratton Hawley, Will Johnson, Richard King, Shashiprabha Kumar, Julius Lipner, Angelika Malinar, Vasudha Narayanan, Patrick Olivelle, Laurie Patton, Ted Proferes, Himanshu Prabha Ray, T. S. Rukmani, Deepak Sarma, Arvind Sharma, David Washbrook, Somdev Vasudev,

Other publications

Prof. Flood has had the following papers and books published:

Books

- (Editor) *The Bhagavad Gita, A Norton Critical Edition* (New York, London: W.W. Norton and Company, 2015).
- *The Truth Within: A Comparative History of Inwardness in Christianity, Hinduism and Buddhism* (Oxford University Press, 2013).
- *The Importance of Religion: Action and Meaning in Our Strange World* (Oxford: Wiley- Blackwell, 2012).
- *The Bhagavad Gita: A New Translation with Charles Martin* (New York: W. W. Norton & Company, 2012).

Papers

- 'The Body,' in Alf Hiltebeitel (ed.) *Oxford Bibliographies On Line*, New York: Oxford University Press, March 2015.
- 'Self and Fragmentation in the Modern World' *Oxbridge Philokalic Review: Christ and the Modern Self*. Issue 3, Pentecost 2014.
- 'Sacrifice as Refusal' in Julia Meszaros and Johannes Zachhuber (eds.) *Sacrifice and Modern Thought* (Oxford University Press, 2013), pp. 115-31.
- 'Secrecy' in Alf Hiltebeitel (ed.) *Oxford Bibliographies On Line*, Oxford University Press, March 2012.

Following on from the OCHS 2009 Shivdasani Conference, *Thinking Inside the Box*, Ashgate published *Categorisation in Indian Philosophy: Thinking Inside the Box*, edited by Dr Jessica Frazier. According to Lancaster University's Chakravarthi Ram-Prasad, 'This is a learned and insightful

collection of papers, focussed on a theme - categorisation - that has become widely recognized as both culturally informative and philosophically important.' It contains contributions Gavin Flood, Jessica Frazier, Eivind Kahrs, Stephen Phillips, Mikel Burley, Shashiprabha Kumar, Jonardon Ganeri, Jan Westerhoff, W. J. Johnson, and Johannes Bronkhorst.

Dr Frazier is also working on a book titled 'Hindu Worldviews' to be published by Bloomsbury in 2016 and a chapter on Indian Mysticism for a forthcoming volume on Mysticism and French Thought published by Ashgate.

Dr Kenneth Valpey published: 'Imaging Devotional Theologies: Seeing as Expanding the Depth of Believing.' In Sushma K. Bahl, Forms of Devotion: The Spiritual in Indian Art, and with Dr Ravi M. Gupta is co-authoring *The Bhāgavata Purāṇa: Essential Readings* (Columbia University Press). He also published 'The "Song of God" as a Journey of Discipleship: A Reflection on the Bhagavad-gītā and Christian Perspectives' in Journal of the Department of Humanities, Juraj Dobrila University of Pula, Pula, Croatia. Other publications are:

- 'Circling in on the Subject: Discourses of Ultimacy in Caitanya Vaiṣṇavism.' In Caitanya Vaiṣṇava Philosophy: Tradition, Devotion, and Reason, Ravi M. Gupta, ed., Franham, Surrey, U.K.: Ashgate, pp. 1-34.
- (Book Review) Gupta, Bina, An Introduction to Indian Philosophy: Perspectives on Reality, Knowledge, and Freedom. London and New York: Routledge, 2012. In Journal of Hindu Studies.
- 'Imaging Devotional Theologies: Seeing as Expanding the Depth of Believing.' In Sushma K. Bahl, Forms of Devotion: The Spiritual in Indian Art. Vol. 1. New Delhi: Niyogi Books & MOSA. pp. 57-73.
- (forthcoming) 'Precept, Practice, and Persuasion: Truth and heresy in the Visnupurana.' In Proceedings of the 5th Dubrovnik International Conference on the Sanskrit Epics and Puranas. Zagreb: Croatian Academy of Sciences and Arts
- (forthcoming) 'Animating Samādhi: Rethinking Animal-Human Relationships Through Yoga'. (Oxford Centre for Animal Ethics).

Dr Rembert Lutjeharms published 'An ocean of emotion: Rasa and religious experience in early Caitanya Vaiṣṇava thought' in Caitanya Vaiṣṇava Philosophy: Tradition, Reason and Devotion, edited by Ravi M. Gupta. Farnham: Ashgate Publishing, 2014, and 'First faith: On the meaning and role of śraddhā in Caitanya Vaiṣṇava thought', ISKCON Studies Journal 2.

Dr Kiyokazu Okita published *Hindu Theology in Early Modern South Asia: The Rise of Devotionalism and the Politics of Genealogy*, (Oxford University Press), and:

- (forthcoming) 'Ethic and Aesthetic in Early Modern South Asia: A Controversy surrounding the Bhāgavata Purāṇa Book X' in International Journal of Hindu Studies, Special Issue, Translating

the Bhāgavata Purāṇa, ed. by Anand Mishra and Monika Horstmann

- (forthcoming) 'Quotation, Quarrel and Controversy in Early Modern South Asia: Appayya Dīkṣita and Jīva Gosvāmī on Madhva's Untraceable Citations' in Adaptive Reuse in South Asian Literatures and Arts (tentative) ed. by Elisa Freschi and Philipp Maas, Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag)
- 'Hinduism (1): The Formation of Hinduism' in Yokuwaku Shūkyōgaku (Understanding Religion), ed. by Kikuko Hirafuji and Yoshihide Sakurai (Kyoto: Minerva Publisher), pp. 78-89 (in Japanese)
- 'Devotion and Poetry in Early Modern South Asia: A Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Interpretation of a Muktaka Verse Attributed to Śīlābhaṭṭārikā' in Journal of Indological Studies Vol. 24. pp. 187-201. (Kyoto: Kyoto University).
- 'Hindu Theology and the Question of Qualification: A Study of Gauḍīya Viṣṇavism' in International Journal of Hindu Studies, Vol.18, Issue 2, pp. 153-179.
- 'The Bhāgavata Purāṇa in Four Verses: Jīva Gosvāmī's Kramasandarbhā' in Ravi M. Gupta (ed.) Caitanya Vaisnava Philosophy: Tradition, Reason and Devotion (Farnham: Ashgate). pp. 61-66.
- 'Caitanya Vaiṣṇavism on trial: Continuity and transformation in the Eighteenth Century' in Ravi M. Gupta (ed.) Caitanya Vaiṣṇava Philosophy: Tradition, Reason, and Devotion (Farnham: Ashgate), pp. 75-112.

Our Aarhus partners produced:

- Olesen, Bjarne Wernicke; Einarsen, Silje Lyngar et al. 2015. "Āsana." In Haṭhayogapradīpikā - Haṭhayogaens lys. Højbjerg: Forlaget Univers.
- Olesen, Bjarne Wernicke; Einarsen, Silje Lyngar; Pedersen, Jens Toft. 2015. Varanasi - hinduismens brændpunkt. Aarhus: Systime.
- Olesen, Bjarne Wernicke (ed.). 2015. Goddess Traditions in Tantric Hinduism : History, Practice and Doctrine. Oxford: Routledge.
- Olesen, Bjarne Wernicke (ed.). 2015. "Introduction." In Goddess Traditions in Tantric Hinduism : History, Practice and Doctrine, edited by B. W. Olesen, 1-17. Oxford: Routledge.
- Olesen, Bjarne Wernicke. 2014. Śāktismen: Et bidrag til den religionsvidenskabelige og indologiske modellering af en indisk tradition. (English title: Mapping a Tradition: Conceptual Modeling in the study of Hindu 'Śāktism' from the Perspective of the Study of Religion and Classical Indology). Ph.D. dissertation, Aarhus University.
- Olesen, Bjarne Wernicke. 2014. Gudernes sprog : Klassisk sanskrit på dansk I: Skriften og sproget. Højbjerg: Forlaget Univers.

- Olesen, Bjarne Wernicke. 2014. Gudernes sprog : Klassisk sanskrit på dansk I: Tekster. Højbjerg: Forlaget Univers.

Fellows and students

Aarhus Sanskrit Students in Oxford

In recent years, the Department for the Study of Religion at Aarhus University has seen a great increase in the interest in the study of South Asian religions and classical languages such as Sanskrit and Pali due to the work of OCHS Fellow Dr Bjarne Wernicke Olesen and his colleagues at Aarhus, Silje Lyngar Einarsen and Marianne Fibiger.

Their work has resulted in the emergence of a new research unit for South Asian Religion (www.sar.au.dk) at Aarhus in collaboration with the OCHS as well as a Student association for Indian Religions (SIR) with more than a hundred members.

The Sanskrit course at Aarhus has been extended with intensive seminars at the OCHS for advanced-level Sanskrit students conducted by Dr Olesen. The latest seminar of this kind at OCHS in April 2015 attracted ten students for an intensive seminar on the Hathayogapradipika aiming at producing the first Danish translation of this text.

On the research side, the OCHS-Aarhus collaboration has resulted in the upcoming publication of the Shakta Traditions volume at Routledge edited by Dr Olesen. The book is the first serious attempt to publish a broad range of work concerned at understanding Shaktism. The book is the first of three planned conference volumes in relation to the Shakta Traditions research project) with the next Shakta conference taking place in Oxford in Autumn 2016. Another outcome of the SAR research unit activities and collaboration with OCHS is the upcoming publication this year of a new introduction to Hinduism for the Danish high school system with a focus on Varanasi (www.varanasi.systime.dk). The book is an attempt to publish teaching material on Hinduism for a broader Danish audience that is up-to-date and based on the latest research.

Dr Olesen has been awarded the prestigious Danish Carlsberg Foundation Research Grant and will be spending most of his time in Oxford during the following two years on research in relation to the Shakta Traditions project as a Fellow at OCHS.

Activities

Yoga, Tantra and Asceticism in Medieval India-seminar

OCHS, 13-15 April, 2015 by OCHS Fellow Bjarne Wernicke Olesen
10 advanced level Sanskrit students from Denmark, three days, 9 sessions of 1 hour each by BWO (including Buddhist Sanskrit) and 6 sessions by guest lecturers: Gavin Flood (Oxford), Lubomír Ondračka (Prague), Peter Thabiso Bustraan (Oxford), Silje Lyngar Einarsen (Aarhus), Dorte Effersøe (Aarhus) and Gitte Poulsen (Aarhus).

Haṭhayogapradīpikā translation project - 4 day intensive workshop

Ørslev Monastery, Denmark, 19-22 March, 2015

The translation project aims at producing the first full translation of the Haṭhayogapradīpikā (HYP) in a Scandinavian language. The team has 8 members and meets every month since spring 2014. The project is lead by Bjarne Wernicke Olesen and Silje Lyngar Einarsen and includes former and present Sanskrit students from Aarhus as well as a Danish author (Anders Bo Christensen) and a Danish yoga-expert (Jens Toft Pedersen). The full translation will be published by Forlaget Univers in Autumn 2016.

PhD defense (viva)

Aarhus University, Denmark, 9 January, 2-5pm, 2015.

Bjarne Wernicke Olesen successfully defended his PhD dissertation and received his doctorate degree. Title of dissertation: *Mapping a Tradition: Conceptual Modeling in the study of Hindu 'Śāktism' from the Perspective of the Study of Religion and Classical Indology.*

OCHS seminar for AU sanskrit students

OCHS, 1-2 December, 2014

The excursion was led by Bjarne Wernicke Olesen and included lectures by Gavin Flood, Rembert Lutjeharms and Jason Birch as well as Oxford Tour and afternoon tea with Shaunaka Rishi Das.

Aarhus University Summer School in Kathmandu

Religious Unity and Diversity Within Hinduism and Buddhism in Historical and Contemporary Perspectives, Kathmandu, Nepal, 27 July - 10 August, 2014.

The summer school was highly successful and attracted almost 40 students from Aarhus to spend their summer in Kathmandu with intensive courses in Hindu and Buddhist Studies combined with field work and language studies. Main organizers of the Summer School was Bjarne Wernicke Olesen and Cameron David Warner. Fellow organizers and lecturers were Marianne Fibiger, Jørn Borup and Silje Lyngar Einarsen. The course took place at Hotel Tibet International in Boudha.

Aarhus Student Report

Dorte Effersøe

I had the pleasure of coming to study at the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies in Michaelmas and Hilary terms of 2014–15. I am an MA student of History of Religion from Aarhus University, Denmark, and my main interest is the tantric traditions within Hinduism, in particular the Shakta traditions.

At the OCHS I was given the opportunity to immerse myself in the work that I found most interesting. In Aarhus the curriculum is quite set, and it took me a bit of adjusting to work out how to go about things in Oxford. I soon came to realise that there is an extensive amount of resources available at the OCHS and in Oxford as a whole for those who take initiative to use them. This meant that it was up to me to contact the people and find the material that I thought would be relevant for the work that I wanted to do, which was at the same time challenging and exciting. The library at the OCHS

is good and handy, and I also got access to the Bodleian Libraries, but the most important part of my experience was the people who were willing to help me regarding my subjects, which were mainly the Kubjikamata Tantra and related texts and traditions as well as commentary works of Sridhara Svami with Dr Rembert Lutjeharms. In addition to this I studied phenomenology with Professor Gavin Flood and took part in some of the many independent lectures at the OCHS. I did my thesis on the six cakra system mainly based on the Kubjikamata, and I studied the text with Professor Shrikant Bahulkar who was a visiting fellow at the OCHS in Michaelmas 2014 and later with Professor Alexis Sanderson from All Souls College whom I was referred to by students within my field at the OCHS. This is a great strength of the OCHS: networking. In connection with lectures or lunches at the centre there is an opportunity to talk to a lot of different people from all around the world working within the same field – or another field, which often turns out to be equally interesting! Everybody was very helpful in getting me settled initially and later in helping me with getting to know researchers, advising me on material etc.

The OCHS has to me been a place of academic exploration and new insights into how research can be carried out outside of my usual setting. It is a research facility with many resources at hand, which are available to those who show an interest. The purely academic aspects aside, it is also a place of warmth and helping hands, which meant a lot to me when I was getting settled.

Visiting fellows

Michaelmas 2014

Professor Shrikant Bahulkar has been teaching undergraduate and postgraduate courses in Sanskrit for more than 30 years, during which time he has been engaged in a wide variety of research projects. Both his research and teaching focus on Vedic Studies, Buddhist Studies, Ayurveda and Classical Sanskrit Literature. He has guided 14 students for their M. Phil. and Ph. D. Degrees. He has edited and written ten books and about sixty articles in English, Marathi and Sanskrit. After having done his M. A. and Ph. D. in Sanskrit from the University of Pune (1972 & 1977), he conducted his post graduate research at the Nagoya University, Japan. He worked in the Deccan College, Pune (1979-81), the Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune (1981-1993; 1995-2006; 2009) and the Central University of Tibetan Studies, Sarnath (1993-95; 2006-2009; 2010-2012). He has visited a number of foreign countries in connection with teaching, research and conferences. He has also worked as Visiting Professor at the University of British Columbia Vancouver, Canada (1993), Freie Universität, Berlin, Germany (1998-99) and Harvard University, Cambridge, U. S. A. (2010). He was instrumental in recording as many as six Veda Sakhas in India, for a research project funded by the Danish Government (1983-84). He has participated in the organization of a number of regional, national and international seminars and conferences, including the 5th International Vedic Workshop, held in September 2011 in Bucharest,

Romania and the 6th held at Kozhikode (Calicut), Kerala in January 2014. Presently he is Adjunct Professor at the Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies, University of Pune and the K. J. Somaiya Centre for Buddhist Studies, Mumbai. He is Chairman, Executive Board, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute and Editor of the Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute.

Hilary 2015

Prof. Dilip Loundo is Coordinator of the Centre for the Study of Religions and Philosophies of India (NERFI). NERFI is an integral part of the Postgraduate Program of Religious Studies (PPCIR) of the Federal University of Juiz de Fora (UFJF), Minas Gerais, Brazil. Prof. Loundo is a Ph.D. in Indian Philosophy from Mumbai University, an M.A. and M.Phil. in Philosophy from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, and a Postgraduate Diploma in Sanskrit from Mumbai University. His recent publications include: Comments on Nagarjuna's Two Truth Doctrine (São Paulo, 2014); Buddhavacana e Sabda Pramana in Mahayana Buddhism and Advaita Vedanta (Campinas, 2014); Ritual in Vedic Tradition: Openness, Plurality and Teleology (João Pessoa, 2012); What's Philosophy After All? The Intertwined Destinies of Greek Philosophy and Indian Upanisadic Thinking (Barcelona, 2011); The Seashore of Endless Worlds: Rabindranath Tagore's Encounters with Latin America (Belo Horizonte, 2011); The Apophatic Mystagogy of the Upanisads in Satchidanandendra Saraswati's Advaita Vedanta (Juiz de Fora, 2011); Poetry and Soteriology in India: The Devotional Lyricism of Jayadeva's Gita-Govinda (Campinas: 2011); Bhartrhari's Nondual Linguistic Ontology and the Semantics of atmanepada (Bangalore, 2010); An Anthology of Hindi Poetry (Rio de Janeiro, 2010); Tropical Dialogues: Brazil and India (Rio de Janeiro:2009). He is presently engaged in preparing the first direct translation into Portuguese of the main Sanskrit Upanisads.

New students

Vipul Arora

India

Vipul is pursuing a PostDoc in Speech Recognition.

Kalpesh Bhatt

India

Kalpesh is a visiting student studying Hindu theology, anthropology, and South Asian religious traditions.

Matthew Carlos

UK

Balliol College

Matthew is pursuing a D.Phil. in Theology and Religious Studies. His concentration is on monasticism, philosophy, and archaeology.

Shaunna Calpin

Netherlands
Pembroke College
Shaunna is studying towards an M.St. in religion.

Aniket De

India
Pembroke College
Aniket is a visiting student from Tufts.

Dimple Dhanani

USA
Blackfriars
Dimple is studying towards an M.St. in Women's Studies. Her main interests are ethnography, Indian feminist narratives of NW India, and women in Hindu texts.

Hope Edwards

UK
Mansfield College
Hope is studying Religion.

Christopher Fleming

UK
Balliol College
Christopher is studying Sanskrit, Dharmasastra, and Hinduism

Dorte Effersoe Martens

Denmark
Dorte is a visiting student from Aarhus University, Denmark. She is studying Hinduism and Sanskrit.

Silje Lyngar Einarsen

Norway
BA in Sanskrit and Religious Studies - University of Oslo (2009)
MA in Sanskrit and Religious Studies - University of Aarhus (2012)
Silje is a visiting student for Trinity 2014.

Samuel Maxwell Grimes

USA
Wolfson College
Samuel is pursuing an M.Phil. in Classical Indian Religion concentrating on Saivism. He has an MA in Asian Religion from the University of Hawaii.

Saba Halepota

UK
St Antony's College
Saba is studying for an M.Phil. in Modern South Asian Studies.

Anahita Hoose

UK

Balliol College

Anahita is studying Linguistics and Comparative Philology. Her concentration is on linguistics, Latin, Old English, and Sanskrit philology.

Joe McGee

UK

St Peter's College

Joe is studying Theology, concentrating on Hinduism and Judaism.

Nikhil Pandhi

India

Jesus College

Nikhil is studying for an M.Phil. in archaeology with a focus on South Asian Studies.

Charlotte Pence

USA

St Catherine's College

Charlotte is studying English and philosophy.

Gitte Poulsen

Denmark

Gitte is a visiting student from Aarhus University, studying Sanskrit, tantric Shaivism and Shaktism, and phenomenology.

Suzanne Sutton

USA

Suzanne is studying Islamic poetics and architecture.

Aleksandra Wenta

Poland

Wolfson College

Aleksandra is studying for an M.Phil. in Tibetan and Himalayan Studies, specifically in Shaivism and Tibetan Buddhism. She also has a Ph.D. in in Agama-Tantra from Banaras Hindu University.

Pandita Wong

Netherlands

Wolfson College

BA South Asian Studies – SOAS, University of London (2012) MSt Modern South Asian Studies – University of Oxford (2014)

Pandita has just completed the MSt in Modern South Asian Studies (2014). Her areas of academic interest are modern South Asian social and cultural history, art history, and Hindi.

Guzin A. Yener

Turkey

Wolfson College
Guzin is studying towards an M.St. in Tibetan Buddhist Studies.

Awards for OCHS students

Hanuman Bursary

Tara Heuze

Jiva Goswami Scholarship

Alen Herbert

Harish IK Patel Scholarship

Aleksandra Wenta

Amit Mishra Bursary

Pavlo Smytsnyuk

Hansraj and Kanchanben Popat Bursary

Christopher Fleming

Gupta Dan Bursary

Aniket De

Makhan Lal Roy Chowdhury Book Prize

Peter Thabiso Bustraan

Patel Book Grant

Yuge Ma

Okita Bursary

Seema Chauhan

Emily Kilburn

AKU's bursary

Natalia Lidova

Lucian Wong

Ramaiah Alagappan Bursary

Emily Kilburn

Student report: Ms Dimple Dhanani, M.St. candidate in Women's Studies

The OCHS provided me with a community and intellectual home that included my Hindu beliefs and ideas as well as the methodologies of religious studies and theology. As a student pursuing the M.St. in Women's Studies at Oxford, the opportunities for me to study Indian religions were sometimes limited. The Centre bestowed upon me the opportunity to conduct a Hindu feminist theological study; an experience which I know I would not have had been able to have anywhere else in England – and certainly not in the US, where study of Hinduism belongs to the secular field of religious studies and not theology.

At OCHS lunches and seminars, I was able to engage with students and scholars who examined Hinduism with both appreciation and respect. My discussions with students and scholars at the Centre has helped my work tremendously. I have been inspired and motivated to be confident to identify as a Hindu in an academic space and pursue critical Hindu discourse. As I complete my master's degree and prepare for doctoral study, I realise that it is possible to engage Hindu theology in the classroom – an opportunity I would not have been able to consider were it not for my introduction to OCHS.

I am confident that the OCHS will continue to pioneer the field of Hindu studies in the academy. OCHS provides a crucial opportunity for students and scholars of Hinduism to discuss Hindu theology and bring Hinduism out of the space of the secular critique of religious studies and into a constructive and critical theological discourse.

I am immensely grateful to the OCHS for not only allowing me to have a voice as a Hindu woman, but also encouraging me to use it.

Research student report: Kalpesh Bhatt

As a research student supported by a generous collaborative grant from the Universities of Toronto and Oxford, I would like to resoundingly say that I had an outstanding learning experience at OCHS.

The research project I had proposed to the Centre was a pilot project for my larger doctoral research. I worked with Professor Gavin Flood on a theological-anthropological project, tentatively titled 'Dynamics of Equanimity: Negotiating Hindu Theological Beliefs in Everyday Socioeconomic Struggles'. In this project, I trace how modern-day practical theology provides a tensile structure for creative agency, which engenders multifaceted ways in which its adherents understand, inform, and reshape both their interior and exterior worlds, and, thereby, negotiate their social, cultural, and personal concerns. In other words, I examine how subjective interpretations of theological doctrines influence and are influenced by contemporary commonplace concerns.

As an exemplary case for this study, I work on an interdisciplinary project that synthesises textual, theological study of the foundational texts and ethnographic study of contemporary praxis and lived experiences of followers of a modern Hindu tradition – BAPS Swaminarayan Sanstha – that has globalised in the last four decades. I engage with a recent methodological shift of employing ethnography to do theology, blurring the boundaries between ecclesiological and congregational studies, systematic theology and practical theology, and doctrinal precepts and normative ethics.

In this multidisciplinary study that attempts to integrate different research methods, the time spent at OCHS has been extremely productive, thanks no less to the insightful guidance I received from Professors Flood and Sanderson, and the robust fieldwork I could conduct among the BAPS Swaminarayan community in London. Furthermore, the weekly readings of Baladeva Vidyabhushana's *Tattvadipika* (An Illumination of Reality) with Dr. Kiyokazu Okita, and other lectures at the Oriental Institute and the Institute

of Social and Cultural Anthropology all proved very informative and contributive to my project.

I was especially impressed by the Centre's incredible sense of community and congenial spirit. Professor Gavin Flood, Director Shaunaka Rishi Das, Dr Rembert Lutjeharms, Lal Krishna, Judit McFarland, and all other staff members are friendly, supportive, encouraging, and intellectually engaging. I felt personally welcomed by all of them and many other scholars and students I met during the term. They were kind enough to be interested in learning about my project and at the same time shared their own academic explorations, results, and insights. These academic exchanges, often embedded in light-hearted conversation, serve to create a very wholesome and cordial intellectual atmosphere at OCHS. Moreover, the Wednesday lunches provided an opportunity to socialise and share ideas with scholars from a wide spectrum of Oxford faculties – from Sanskrit studies, theology, and South Asian studies in the humanities, to biology and physics in the natural sciences.

Oxford's world class libraries are of course a great attraction for their rich academic resources, not to mention the studious environment they provide for focused reading. The OCHS library also has a sizeable collection of books on Hindu and Indic studies. Indeed, these incredible resources, eminent scholars, supportive staff members, and the university-town vibes reverberating in centuries-old classic buildings made my academic explorations at Oxford as refreshing and invigorating as its spring-blooming serene gardens and cool canals.

Library

The OCHS Library currently holds approximately 18,000 titles, mostly in the fields of Hindu intellectual history (with an emphasis on Vedanta, Nyaya, and Mimamsa), Puranic texts, Sanskrit poetry, and comparative theology. Due to generous donations over the years, the library continues to be a rich resource for the study of Indian thought and philosophy and has gathered a rich collection of works and archival material on Indian Christianity and Hindu-Christian theological interactions. The focus this year has been to continue the cataloguing of the substantial collections we have received over the past years (particularly the collection of Prof. J.A.F. Roodbergen).

The Library has this year received donations from Martin Baybrooke, Shaunaka Rishi Das, Gavin Flood, Jessica Frazier, Sanjukta Gupta-Gombrich, Peter Heehs, Nanditha Krishna, Rembert Lutjeharms, June McDaniel, Ionut Moise, Datin Nesamalar Nadarajah, Stephen Peter Thompson, Alka Tyagi, Kenneth Valpey, and Archana Venkatesan.

Continuing Education Department

This year saw our first e-book publication, our first run of courses in India, and a start to production of new courses including a doubling of our video output. It also saw a limited return of Dr Sutton who despite ill health has started tutoring online courses, produced a chaplaincy course, and is in discussion about expansion of our publishing efforts.

Taught courses and lectures

With the absence of our stalwart teachers, Nick Sutton and Anuradha Dooney we were unable to continue taught courses in London. However, regular talks are going on in Birmingham and Leicester as part of the Friends programme. Anuradha also travelled to India to teach the 'Introduction to Hinduism: History, Text, Philosophy' to 75 students at Lady Shri Ram College thanks to sponsors of the Online Scholarship programme. This was an experiment in combining taught and online studies that was very well received by the students.

Online courses

Enrolments

The previous two years had each seen a 50% growth in enrolments. Growth slowed to 5% this year; good sustainable growth, but we think there's potential for much more and are addressing this with new courses and a site revamp.

Site revamp

When we began our online offering in 2008 our course website was one of the most modern available. With the explosion of online learning since then, it was starting to look a little dated. To resolve this we re-launched the site in April this year with an all-new look and improved functionality for students, teachers, and administrators. Early work has also been done on making the enrolment process much easier for students. This, and new courses, have been identified as the best ways of increasing enrolments. It is hoped that the new enrolment process will be launched in the next academic year.

New courses

A promising development was a group of twenty yoga students in the Gulf who took three of our courses as a single cohort. Many yoga students are looking for an understanding of the philosophy and history behind their practice and the OCHS started to meet that need with the 'Philosophy of Yoga' course. A substantial addition to this is a series of three more courses on the fundamentals of yoga. Filming for this course was done with Dr Jason Birch. Jason has been practicing yoga for more than twenty years and completed his Doctorate at Oxford with a critical edition and translation of the Amanaksa, the earliest known Rajayoga text. Fortunately, he is also an excellent lecturer and these courses give an in-depth analysis of the links between modern yoga and its historical and philosophical antecedents.

Editing is in progress and we aim to have at least one of the courses ready for October enrolments.

Before his illness Dr Sutton completed extensive class notes for a dozen courses. Half of these are available and filming has begun on our second introductory course: 'Introduction to Hinduism: Ritual, Yoga, Caste and Gender' with Dr Jessica Frazier who has appeared on a number of BBC documentaries and has taught these courses in classrooms before. Editing of the class notes is continuing and this is also planned for an October release.

Other potential courses from Nick's work include, Hindu Ethics, Modern Hindu Teachers and Movements, Three Short Upanishads, and The Way of Bhakti.

As well as these we have begun early discussions in commissioning courses from other scholars to broaden the scope of the online offerings. One of the most exciting of these is a Hindu Chaplaincy course.

Hindu chaplaincy course

The Free University of Amsterdam has provided funding to the OCHS to produce a Hindu Chaplaincy course. This is to supplement their Masters chaplaincy course with an option for the OCHS to present a standalone course as well.

The course was designed and written by Dr Nick Sutton and Anuradha Dooney, who were employed by the Free University for a half-year, with Vineet Chander, Princeton University's Hindu chaplain providing a peer review. Students and lecturers from the Free University are coming to Oxford to pilot the course in June 2015.

There are plans to film the course and present it online in the academic year 2015–16.

Student report: Ms Shama Mehta

While our online courses are not accredited, two students have been able to use them as a useful addition to their academic studies. One of these is Shama Mehta, who reports:

As I continue my journey towards Board Certification as a Chaplain of the Hindu faith, it became increasingly apparent that I needed to do a more academic study of Hinduism.

I did a lot of research on where to study and kept coming back to the OCHS. I finally registered to take all six OCHS online courses last October and I am very happy with the studies. I was pleasantly surprised with the depth in which each course is taught and was very glad to discover that the material is taught without any bias.

Dr Sutton's video lectures are outstanding and his passion for teaching Hinduism reflects in each. The individual teachers for each course were also very helpful.

I am very grateful for these courses as they will go a long way in me receiving graduate level credit for Hindu studies as I continue to pursue my Master's at a local seminary. After having completed these courses, I feel very confident in my ability to use the Hindu scripture and its teachings in my

professional work as a chaplain as well as my personal practice. I hope OCHS is able to offer more courses in this manner - especially teaching the central Upanishads. I'd be more than willing to take up new courses as they are made available. Thank you to everyone for doing an awesome job at OCHS.

Ebooks

It took a few years of editing and a few editors, but in October our first ebook was published. Dr Sutton's Bhagavad-gita is a full translation and commentary on the Gita suitable for students and general readers alike. Sales have been quite slow but we are planning to release more books including an *Introduction to Hinduism* and *Three Short Upanishads*. In the medium term we are aiming for a series of ten or more books.

Management

Online courses and book production and sales are managed by Lal Krishna. Courses were taught by Nick Sutton, Rembert Lutjeharms, Anuradha Dooney, Ramesh Pattni, Tushar Shah, Bhavnisha Modi, and Jason Birch. Judit McFarland provides secretarial support and helps edit course materials.

Internet

The OCHS website's (www.ochs.org.uk) core audiences are prospective students, academics wanting more information about the Centre, students of Hinduism worldwide, and potential supporters of the Centre.

Our outreach to the wider community of academic and public interest in Hindu Studies has involved making audio of more than 500 OCHS lectures and seminars since 1998 available on the OCHS website. We also have a successful podcast of lectures and seminars and the internet has become a major focus of our Continuing Education classes.

The internet is also our main avenue for publicising our forthcoming lectures and seminars.

Development activities and achievements

HUM alumni

Led by Raam Chauhan, alumni of Oxford's Hindu students group are coming together to begin fundraising for the OCHS. For many of these young people, the OCHS provided a place to gather through their university years and this group would like to help support the OCHS now that they are in work. An initial meeting brought together 17 HUM alumni and plans for future events are afoot.

OCHS in Dubai and India

Following on from developments in the previous academic year, Shaunaka Rishi Das visited Dubai and India to raise awareness of the work of the OCHS.

He visited Dubai twice to develop further contacts and India to follow up on contacts made at the OCHS Summer School in 2014. In India he visited Delhi, Mumbai, Pondicherry, Chennai, and Bangalore.

Property Campaign

The building we were hoping for was sold to another buyer in December 2014. However, we have identified another very good option and are re-continuing with the campaign to raise funds for this. Namita Sharma has joined us to assist with the fund-raising programme; Nath Puri is advising on negotiations and surveying; and the process is being managed by Harish I.K. Patel and Shaunaka Rishi Das.

CED Online Scholarships Campaign

Launched in Dubai in August 2013, this campaign is aimed at extending the OCHS online courses to upper high school students and other young people in India and other countries. So far, 325 scholarships have been funded and recipients are being identified in India and the UK. In a pilot programme Anuradha Dooney travelled to India to teach 75 students at Lady Shri Ram College in Delhi to add a live presentation to the online course and 26 executive members of the national Hindu Students Forum UK took the online course.

Media

The OCHS serves as a useful reference for broadcasters seeking an authoritative voice for Hindu traditions.

Dr Jessica Frazier continues to appear on Radio Four's 'In Our Time' speaking on Ashoka the Great. She also appeared on Radio Four's History of Ideas, speaking on creation stories in different traditions and is currently consulting on an upcoming series on yoga by BBC TV.

Shaunaka Rishi Das recorded six prayers for the Day for radio Four and spoke on Beyond Belief, also on Radio Four.

Radio Four is a BBC station and is the UK's second-most listened to station.

Shaunaka Rishi Das's lectures in India garnered attention in several Indian newspapers.

Awards

Thanks to generous donors, the OCHS was able to award more than £5,500 to students this year.

Outreach

The OCHS was pleased to host visits by His Excellency the Indian High Commissioner and the Director of the Indian Council for Cultural Relations.

Shaunaka continued his busy outreach schedule this year. Events include:

- Meeting with the Indian Consul General in Birmingham,
- Lecturing at a J.P. Morgan event at Lord's Cricket Ground,

- Teaching a course on executive leadership along with Anuradha Dooney to Avicenna,
- Hosting and teaching a group of students from University of Florida,
- Teaching four classes in Hinduism at Cheltenham Ladies College,
- Hosting a visit by Sanskrit students from St James's School, Westminster,
- Hosting students from St Mary's Girls School,
- Speaking on religious perspectives on suffering, at St Edward's School,
- Speaking at the university of the Third Age (U3A), Whitney,
- Speaking at the Cambridge Student union,
- Lecturing at the Mishcon de Reya Academy.
- Lecturing at Mumbai University,
- Lecturing at Avid Learning, Mumbai,
- Lecturing at Pondicherry University.

He also did committee work including:

- Commission on Belief and Faith in British Public Life, which should produce its final report in September 2015.
- Serving on the International Advisory Committee for Auroville,
- Working on the Catholic Church's Blueprint for Better Business,
- Consulting on the World Congress of Faiths,
- Consulting with the Equality and Human Rights Commission.

Chaplaincy

Shaunaka Rishi Das continues as the University's Hindu chaplain with an average of three students per week seeking advice and guidance on a variety of issues – personal and academic. He also performed two weddings and a funeral.

The OCHS has also been developing a Hindu Chaplaincy course for the Free University of Amsterdam. Further details are in the Continuing Education report.

The OCHS facilitates HUM, the University's Hindu students group.

Bhumi Project: Hindu Response to Environmental Change

Japan meeting

Gopal Patel was invited to a meeting in Ise, Japan, to represent the Bhumi Project. This meeting was organised by ARC to discuss how future ARC programmes will be managed and run. Of focus was the future of the Green Pilgrimage Network (GPN), of which Bhumi is a major partner. It was agreed that for the following 12 months GPN India will focus on a program of developing pilot greening initiatives with Hindu temples based on the Hindu Green Temples Guide

Religions of the Earth conference

In mid-September Gopal was invited to attend the Religions for the Earth conference at Union Theological Seminary in New York City. The conference

attracted some of the leading religious and environmental leaders from across the world. Gopal was asked to lead a session on how Dharmic faiths can help address climate change.

Launch of Bhumi Pledge

In late-September Gopal visited Princeton University for the international launch of the Bhumi Pledge (www.bhumipledge.org). A new initiative, the Bhumi Pledge aims to reach out to Hindu students across the world, asking them to make an online pledge to care for the environment, and to organise an environmental awareness event on their college campus.

Meeting at the House of Lords

In November the Bhumi Project held a special meeting at the House of Lords bringing together members of the Hindu community to discuss how British Hindus can be more involved in raising awareness about environmental issues. This event was also used to mark the UK launch of Hindu Environment Week. The Hidden Forest, a publication commissioned by both ARC and Bhumi was also launched, with a short presentation by its author and illustrator, Jahnvi Harrison.

Hindu Environment Week

Held in February, we had over 10,000 people participate in events across India, England and America. This doubled the number of people who took part last year.

Funding and Support

Since 2009 the Bhumi Project has been funded by ARC. For Gopal, who is based in Oxford, funding for his position ended at the end of February. We have managed to secure part-time funding for his position from GreenFaith, an American based environmental organisation. This funding is until January 2016. We will soon be fundraising to ensure Gopal is funded full-time for his work. Funding for Jignesh Patel, who runs the Bhumi office in Mumbai, will end in late July. We are currently fundraising to secure Jignesh's position beyond July. We are on track to raise the required funds.

Interns

This year was a quieter one for interns following our bumper 2013–14 intake. However, the return of our best-ever intern, Ms Malvika Poddar ensured quality where quantity wasn't available. We were also fortunate to have the services of Ms Alysia Radder for a short time in Trinity term. Alysia is the wife of Dr Kiyokazu Okita, a visiting scholar and OCHS alumnus and we were grateful for her assistance.

Friends of the OCHS (FOCHS)

Friends groups are thriving in Leicester and Birmingham, raising awareness and funds for the OCHS.

Upcoming events are listed at www.ochs.org.uk/friends-events

Leicester Friends of the OCHS

As well as monthly talks programme FOCHS Leicester have continued their annual Tirath-Yatra – a walking tour of Leicester’s Hindu temples, and Yaadanjali – an evening of bhajans in memory of the departed. They are currently planning a semi-annual visit to Oxford for July.

Birmingham Friends of the OCHS

The FOCHS Birmingham have been holding bi-monthly talks. The talks given by the OCHS provide a further opportunity for the Centre to make its expertise available to as wide a section of the community as possible.

Benefactors and friends

Volunteers and donations in kind

In keeping with our tradition of encouraging voluntary service and keeping costs down, we are safeguarding the true charitable nature of the OCHS. The OCHS Director and other administrative staff continue to work on a voluntary basis or at reduced rates. This and other voluntary work saved the OCHS in the region of £215,000 this year.

Other friends and businesses have been kind to the Centre by charging greatly reduced rates for services. These include our accountants, Wenn Townsend.

As always, special thanks are due to David Smith, Washington DC, who funds and maintains our web server. Since 2002 David has been responsible for keeping us online in hardware and software saving us considerable expense and effort.

Also, during this period Harish I. K. Patel and Upendra Kalan worked hard to save expense and the time of OCHS staff. Harish also donated a car for the Centre’s use.

Other significant voluntary service has been very gratefully received from Dev Bahl (Honorary Financial Officer), Sanjay Gadhvi (mobile phone contract), and Musaret Siddiqui (proof-reading the new CED site).

Significant travel expenses to India, the US, and Dubai were covered by Mandala Publishing, Bob Cohen, Brian Bloch, Gopi Kinnicutt, Malvika Poddar, Andrew Walker, Ramesh Salwani and Family, Alpesh Patel, Biku Ahluwalia, Anjali Gupta, and the Auroville Foundation.

Our Wednesday lunches saw excellent attendances again this year. Managed by Anuradha Dooney and Judit Bajusz, this was greatly assisted by numerous helpers, but special thanks go to Nimish and Anita Desai and Lucy Barton for their steadfast help. The BAPS Swaminarayan Temple in Neasden has come forward as a major sponsor of this programme. We also hosted a dinner for the Bengal Vaishnava Conference which was made possible by the work of Anita and Nimish Desai, Pandita Wong, and Ionut Moise.

All these contributors are saving us considerable time, effort, and expense. Their service has been invaluable because of their heartfelt offering to the cause of good education and thousands of pounds have been saved and donated to the OCHS by their thoughtfulness and commitment.

Accounts and finance

The Centre has continued to benefit greatly from voluntary work and in-kind donations – these have amounted to more than £215,000 in this period – which add great value to the Centre.

Dev Bahl and Judit McFarland were our book-keepers for 2014–15. Our accounts were certified by Wenn Townsend, Oxford.

The Board has been successful in maintaining the sound financial management of the Centre and its responsibility to ensure the true charitable nature of the OCHS. The work to attain financial stability for the long term goes on and the Board is encouraged by the fundraising efforts of the Friends and Benefactors of the Centre.

Appendix one: Organisation

Board of Governors

Mr Shaunaka Rishi Das
Lord Dholakia, OBE, DL
Dr Mark Edwards (Theology Faculty representative)
Prof. Bjarke Frellesvig (Oriental Studies representative)
Dr S. Bhattacharya-Ford
Prof. Richard Gombrich
Peggy Morgan
Prof. Polly O'Hanlon (General Board representative)
Mr Harish I. K. Patel
Mrs Neerja Sethi
Mr Ramesh Venkataraman
Dr Sushil Wadhvani

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Director

Mr Shaunaka Rishi Das

Academic Director

Prof. Gavin Flood

Development Administrator

Mr Lal Krishna

Librarian

Dr Rembert Lutjeharms

Finance Administrator

Mr Dev Bahl

Administrative Secretary and Book-keeping

Mrs Judit McFarland

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Prof. John Brockington
Anuradha Dooney
Dr Gillian Evison
Prof. Gavin Flood FBA
Dr Sanjukta Gupta
Dr Rembert Lutjeharms
Peggy Morgan
Dr Nicholas Sutton

Research Fellows

Prof. Mandakranta Bose
Dr Jessica Frazier
Dr Kiyokazu Okita
Dr Bjarne Wernicke Olesen
Dr Brainerd Prince
Prof. Himanshu Prabha Ray
Dr Ferdinando Sardella
Dr Kenneth Valpey

Senior Associate Fellows

Prof. Francis X. Clooney, SJ
Prof. Dermot Killingley
Prof. Julius Lipner
Prof. Patrick Olivelle
Prof. Thomas Hopkins

Post-doctoral fellows

Dr Jason Birch
Dr Angela Burt

Continuing Education Department

Dr Nicholas Sutton
Ms Anuradha Dooney

Patrons Council

Mr Amitabh Bachchan
Dr Karan Singh
HE The Indian High Commissioner

Academic Council

Prof. Gavin Flood (Chair)
Dr Gillian Evison
Dr Jessica Frazier
Dr Sondra Hausner
Dr Rembert Lutjeharms
Peggy Morgan
Prof. Polly O'Hanlon
Prof. George Pattison
Shaunaka Rishi Das

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Prof. Lord Bikhu Parekh
Prof. Chakravarthi Ram-Prasad
Dr David Smith

Fund Management Committee

Mr Upendra Kalan
Mr Akbar Moawalla
Dr Prashun Popat
Mr Ramesh Venkataraman

Friends of OCHS

USA

Mr Robert Cohen
Shaunaka Rishi Das
Dr S. Bhattacharya-Ford
Mr Todd Wahlstrom

Birmingham

Jyoti Patel
Raj Patel
Yogesh Patel
Subrata Roy
Meena Sodha
Nitin Sodha

Leicester

Alkaji Agarwal
Dr Virendra Agarwal
Raj Chauhan
Ramila Chauhan
Dr Ranjit Johri
Sumanben Johri
Pritesh Joshi
Yashwantbhai Lodhia
Bina Modi
Kamleshbhai Purohit
Prafullaben Raja

Hasubhai Saujani
Ranjanben Saujani
Ron Staff
Manishbhai Thakrar
Shobhaben Trivedi

Appendix two: Lectures and seminars

Michaelmas Term 2014

Hinduism 1: Sources and Development

Prof. Gavin Flood

Readings in Phenomenology

Prof. Gavin Flood

Phenomenology is one of the most important developments in philosophy in the twentieth century that has had a deep impact on Theology and Religious Studies. The reading group seeks to engage with some of the fundamental concepts of phenomenology that underlie much work in Theology and the Phenomenology of Religion. This term we will be reading Paul Ricoeur *Oneself as Another* (trans Kathleen Blamey, University of Chicago Press, 1992). Week 1 we will discuss Chapter one, 'Person and Identifying Reference, a Semantic Approach.'

Readings in the Netra Tantra

Prof. Gavin Flood

The *Netra Tantra* is an important text of Śaiva tantrism popular in Kashmir some time between the eighth and eleventh centuries CE. These readings will use the KSTS edition along with two manuscripts from Nepal.

Elementary Sanskrit

Prof. Gavin Flood

The course provides an introduction to Sanskrit for the preliminary paper of the Theology and Religion Faculty in Elementary Sanskrit. The class is designed to introduce students of Theology and Religion to the basics of Sanskrit grammar, syntax and vocabulary. By the end of the course students will have competency in translating simple Sanskrit and reading sections of the *Bhagavad-gītā* and passages from other texts. The course book will be Maurer's *The Sanskrit Language*.

Veda-stuti (Bhāgavata Purāṇa 10.87) with the Commentary of Śrīdhara Svāmī

Dr Rembert Lutjeharms

The Bhāgavata Purāṇa is undoubtedly the most popular and most sophisticated of the Purāṇas. Written in ornate prose and verse, and infusing Purāṇic narratives with Vedic, Vedānta, and Pāñcarātra thought, this monumental text influenced artists, architects, poets, and theologians for centuries.

The Veda-stuti ('The Vedas' prayers of praise') is one of the Bhāgavata's most significant theological passages, which offers an easy introduction to the Bhāgavata's nondual theism and its Vedānta. In this reading class, we will read these verses with the commentary of Śrīdhara Svāmī (thirteenth century), the most celebrated commentator on the text and an important Advaitin Vaiṣṇava author who profoundly influenced the development of Hindu thought in pre-modern South Asia.

This reading class aims to introduce students with an intermediate knowledge of Sanskrit to the poetry of the Bhāgavata Purāṇa, the method and reasoning of Sanskrit commentaries, as well as the intersections of Advaita and Vaiṣṇava Vedānta.

History of Rājayoga

Dr Jason Birch

This eight-week lecture series will begin with a detailed examination of the earliest Rājayoga text known to have been written. It can be dated to the 11-12th centuries. We shall also examine many of the scattered references to Rājayoga in later medieval yoga texts, and conclude with Swāmī Vivekānanda's book on Rājayoga, which is largely responsible for most of the twentieth-century interpretations of Rājayoga. Seeing that the history of Rājayoga is intimately connected with Haṭhayoga, this course will provide an explanation of how the relationship between the two has developed over the centuries.

Dr Jason Birch completed his doctoral thesis in 2013 on a twelfth-century Rājayoga text called the Amanaska, under the supervision of Alexis Sanderson at Oxford University. In 2014, he was a visiting scholar at Loyola Marymount University where he taught courses on the history of yoga for a Masters program in Yoga Studies. Dr Birch has taught Yoga professionally in Australasia and is currently researching several unpublished Sanskrit yoga manuscripts written between the sixteenth and eighteenth centuries, in an attempt to reconstruct the history of yoga on the eve of colonialism.

Religious Practice in Comparative Perspective Series

This series of seminars takes the theme of religious practice, broadly understood, as a focal point for comparison across religious traditions. In the history of the Humanities an emphasis on characterising the human as a thinking and reasoning being has been replaced in many fields of philosophy, sociology, and theology by an emphasis on the human as defined by action rather than thought. The meaning of action takes precedence, particularly as it is relevant to meaningful politics (one thinks of Hannah Arendt), as the main feature of social life (particularly the work of Bourdieu), and an emphasis on understanding practice in terms of performance (particularly the work of Schechner). Religious practices that might include the repeated acts of ritual or the unrepeatable moral act need to be understood in the broader context of human practices. A practice-based approach to religion and culture highlights important features of the world we experience as formed and reformed through routines or patterns of repeated action. The series of

seminars seeks to clarify concepts of practice, habit, and action with regard to religion. Habit is something we are compelled to do (and we can have bad habits as well as good ones) in contrast to practice that is always intentional, teleological, and often difficult because it meets resistance. On the one hand we can understand religions in terms of practice or even habit, while on the other we can understand religions in terms of wonder that disrupts habit. These seminars will raise questions about religious practice and begin an exploration in a comparative context.

Session One: The Anthropology of Islamic Prayer

Dr Mohammad Talib

The idea of prayer in Islam is vague in the sense that it ranges from the mandatory to the most optional and spontaneous. This lecture will deal with the issue of prayer from an anthropological perspective.

Dr Mohammad Talib is lecturer at the Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Oxford. He has taught Sociology at Jamia Millia Islamia University (Delhi), from 1979 to 2001. In 2002, he came to Oxford as the Sultan Bin Abdul Aziz fellow in the Anthropology of Muslim Societies at the Oxford Centre for Islamic studies. His research in the anthropology of Islam focuses on Sufi groups, and madrassahs. His current research work: Madrassahs in the Recent History: An Alternative view between Anthropology and International Relations is a critical examination of the state of social science scholarship on Islam in the contemporary world after 9/11. Among his publications are Writing Labour: Stone Quarry Workers in Delhi (2010), Delhi, Oxford University Press, 'Modes of Overcoming Social Exclusion through Education: Analysis of two Accounts from Pre-and Post-Independent India' in K N Panikkar and M Bhaskaran Nair (eds.) Emerging Trends in Higher Education in India: Concepts and Practices (New Delhi: Pearson Education India, 2011), 'Predicaments of Serving Two Masters: Anthropologists between the Discipline and Sponsored Research' in Raúl Acosta et. al (eds.) Making Sense of the Global: Anthropological Perspectives on Interconnections and Processes. (Newcastle upon Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2010), and 'Sufis and Politics' in The Oxford Encyclopaedia of the Modern Islamic World, John Esposito (ed). Oxford University Press, New York (2008).

Session Two: Practice and Making Perfect: Why There are Some Good Habits Too in Southern Buddhism

Dr Sarah Shaw

This lecture examines the idea of habit from a Buddhist perspective: the need to cultivate good habits and the necessity of regular practice to develop concentration and mindfulness for a fulfilling life.

Dr Sarah Shaw is a lecturer in the Oriental Studies Faculty at Oxford and Honorary Fellow of the Oxford Centre for Buddhist Studies. She is an expert in Theravāda Buddhism, particularly meditation, the Abhidhamma, and early Buddhist narratives. She is the author of An Introduction to Buddhist Meditation (Routledge 2008); Buddhist Meditation: an Anthology of Texts (Routledge, 2006), and The Jātakas: Birth Stories of the Bodhisatta (Penguin

2006). She was also co-editor with Linda Covill and Ulrike Roesler of *Lives Lived, Lives Imagined: Biographies of Awakening* (Wisdom Books, 2010).

Session Three: Why Don't Apes Point? Religious practice and the Nature of the Human

Prof. Gavin Flood

This lecture is a reflection on religious practice, drawing on contemporary primate research, ideas about shared intentionality, and phenomenology. To understand or explain religious practices we need to locate them within the broad context of human practices and contemporary knowledge about them in the soft and hard sciences.

Session Four: The Habit of Prayer and Prayer in a Habit

Dr Martin Ganeri

The routine activity of the 'hours of prayer' forms a major part of the daily life of the different Christian religious orders. This talk will consider what function this prayer plays in the life and goals of religious communities.

Dr Martin Ganeri O.P. is Vice Regent of Blackfriars Hall, University of Oxford and Director of the Centre for Christianity and Interreligious Dialogue at Heythrop College, University of London. His recent and forthcoming publications include, 'Theology and Non-Western Philosophy' in O. Crisp, G. D'Costa, M. Davies and P. Hampson (eds) Theology And Philosophy: Faith and Reason, London: T&T Clarke, 2012 and 'Selfhood, Agency and Freewill in Rāmānuja' in E.F. Bryant (ed.) Free Will, Agency, and Selfhood in Indian Philosophy, New York: Oxford University Press, 2014.

Majewski Lecture: What kind of Philosophical Theory is Madhyamaka?

Jan Westerhoff

The Madhyamaka school of philosophy has been credited as being the central philosophy of Buddhism and also as a kind of anti-philosophy of pure critique that simply seeks to demonstrate the contradictory nature of all statements about the world. This lecture explores the nature of philosophical argument in Madhyamaka and the kind of philosophical theory that the Madhyamaka is.

*Originally trained as a philosopher and orientalist, Jan Westerhoff's research focuses on philosophical aspects of the religious traditions of ancient India. Much of his work concentrates on Buddhist thought (especially Madhyamaka) as preserved in Sanskrit and Tibetan sources, he also has a lively interest in Classical Indian philosophy (particularly Nyāya). His research on Buddhist philosophy covers both theoretical (metaphysics, epistemology, philosophy of language) and normative aspects (ethics); he is also interested in the investigation of Buddhist meditative practice from the perspective of cognitive science and the philosophy of mind. Some publications (for more information see www.janwesterhoff.net) are 'The connection between ontology and ethics in Madhyamaka' in: *The Cowherds: Moonpaths: Ethics and Madhyamaka Philosophy*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 2014; *The Dispeller of Disputes: Nāgārjuna's Vigrahavyāvartanī*, Oxford University Press, 2010; *Twelve**

Examples of Illusion, Oxford University Press, 2010; Nāgārjuna's Madhyamaka. A Philosophical Introduction, Oxford University Press, 2009; 'The Madhyamaka Concept of svabhāva: Ontological and Cognitive Aspects', Asian Philosophy, 2007, 17:1, 17-45; Ontological Categories. Their Nature and Significance, Oxford University Press, 2005.

Shivdasani Lectures

Vedism and Brahmanism in Buddhist Literature: An Overview

Prof. Shrikant Bahulkar

There is seen the tendency of Vedism and Brahmanism throughout the Buddhist literature, right from the early Pāli canon through the Mahāyāna to the late Buddhist Tantric texts. In the Pāli canon, the terms such as veda, vijjā, tevijjā, yañña and so on. These terms have basically Vedic connotations; however they have been used in a different, typically Buddhist sense. In the Mahāyāna scriptures, there are a number of Vedic concepts used to praise the Buddhas and the Bodhisattvas. In the Vajrayāna rituals, we find a growing tendency of Vedism and Brahmanism. While borrowing the Vedic and Brahmanical vocabulary, concepts and ritual practices, the Buddhist did not necessarily adhere directly to particular traditions or texts. The proportion of the usage of such vocabulary and ritualistic practices has increased in the Mahāyāna and, more prominently, in late Buddhist Tantric tradition that involved the muttering of various mantras, offerings into fire and other practices, resembling the Vedic and Brahmanical sacrificial ritual.

From Myth to Ritual: The Horse of Pedu and the Remedy for Removing Snake's Poison

Prof. Shrikant Bahulkar

The Atharvavedic hymn (AVŚ X.4 = AVP XVI. 15, 16, 17) is a charm against snakes and their poison. It mentions *Paidva*, a slayer of snakes. The word *paidva-*, literally meaning 'of *Pedu*', is derived from the word *pedu-* that occurs in the ṚV as a proper name (ṚV 117.9; 118.9; 119.10). In the Ṛgvedic hymns, addressed to Aśvins, it is mentioned that Aśvins gave a white horse to Pedu. The word *paidva-* thus refers to the horse. This horse is said to have possessed the power to destroy snakes. The Ṛgvedic hymns in question mention the snake-destroying horse; however, they have no connection with the remedy for removing snake's poison. On the contrary, the Atharvavedic hymn (AVŚ X.4) does not mention Aśvins and their gift to Pedu; but mentions *paidva* that kills various kinds of snakes. In the ritual context of the Atharvaveda, *paidva* is to be employed in the remedy for removing snake poison, prescribed in the Kauśika-sūtra (32.20-25), the major ritual text of the Atharvaveda. It is obvious that *paidva*, mentioned in the rite of the Kauśika-sūtra, is not the mythical horse of the Ṛgveda. The Atharvavedic tradition simply uses the connection of the mythical horse of *Pedu* with the snake-killing power for the purpose of the ritual in which the main rite is to be performed as the remedy for removing snake's poison. It is difficult to identify *paidva* of the Atharvaveda. The commentators of the Kauśika-sūtra

identify it as an insect. It appears that there existed a remedy in the tradition of the Atharvaveda for removing the snake's poison and that the insect or some other substance to be used for that purpose was given the name *paidva* in order to connect it with the mythical horse known for its snake-killing power. The relevant myth and the ritual connected with the myth will be discussed in detail.

Shivdasani Seminars

Attempts towards Preservation and Revival of Atharvaveda

Prof. Shrikant Bahulkar

The Śaunaka Shakhā of the Atharvaveda has been regarded to be the most prominent school of the Atharvaveda, being studied mostly in Gujarat, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh. This Veda, although considered to be inferior to other three Vedas, was studied for the purpose of performing Shantika, pauṣṭika and ābhicārika rites in the tradition of that Veda. The followers of that Veda migrated to various parts of India, on invitations from kings and rich people. It has been observed however that the tradition of study of the Atharvaveda began to decline in the course of time. Having realised the necessity of preserving that tradition, the followers of that Veda as well as those belonging to other three Vedas made various attempts to preserve the tradition. Moreover, they endeavoured to revive the tradition of the study of the Veda, and to some extent, that of the performance of the rituals prescribed in that tradition. There was a good interaction between the Atharvavedins living in parts of Gujarat, Maharashtra and Uttar Pradesh. They sent their students to the knowledgeable Vedamūrtis in order to acquire proficiency in the recitation of that Veda. The teachers as well as the students did not necessarily belong to the Atharvaveda. Some of the Vaidikas attempted to compose ritualistic digests or prayogas in order to revive the ritualistic tradition. There was genuine faith in the tradition of that Veda as well as a professional need that prompted those Vaidikas to preserve the tradition. It is interesting to see how the tradition of the study of that Veda is being revived in India in recent years.

Medical Ritual in the Veda and Ayurveda

Prof. Shrikant Bahulkar

It is well-known that the medicine in the Atharvaveda is predominantly a pre-scientific medicine and is considered to be the forerunner of the Indian system of scientific medicine, known as the Āyurveda 'science of longevity'. Scholars have attempted to find roots of the Āyurveda in the medical charms of the Atharvaveda and the remedies against various diseases prescribed in the ritual texts in the tradition of that Veda. These charms and practices of the Atharvaveda were subsequently replaced by the therapeutics of Āyurveda. However, the magic practices for the cure of diseases continued despite the growth of scientific medicine. The classical Āyurvedic texts give due recognition to the medical charms and the practices mentioned in the tradition of the Atharvaveda. This kind of treatment is called *daivavyapāśraya*

‘(the treatment based on) the recourse to the divine’ and is prescribed for the cure of varieties of certain diseases that are supposed to have been caused by sinful deeds, curse of enemies, witchcraft or possession by demons. It involves recitation of mantras and certain acts that are similar to those found in the tradition of the Atharvaveda. The Āyurvedic texts also prescribe mantras that are to be recited during the preparation of certain drugs. This tradition survived not only in India, but spread to other countries, particularly to Tibet along with the Āyurveda and is still followed by the practitioners of Tibetan medicine (*sowa-rigpa*). It is possible to infer however that some of the notions found in the so-called ‘scientific’ medicine were caused by beliefs and superstitions. A survey of this material points to the fact that while the Āyurvedic texts prescribe medical charms and practices, they do not necessarily prescribe the mantras of the Atharvaveda. On the contrary, the mantras and the practices mentioned in the Āyurveda are similar to those prescribed in the Atharvavedic texts, but are not *Atharvavedic*. It appears that the tradition of the medical charms and the rites, elaborated in the Atharvaveda tradition, was replaced by post-Vedic religious traditions that influenced the Āyurvedic texts. Even in the tradition of the Atharvaveda, we do not find the *prayogas* or priestly manuals for the medical ritual mentioned in the Kauśika-Sūtra, a major ritualistic manual of the Atharvaveda and elaborated in the commentaries on that text. The tradition of the Atharvavedic medical ritual must have been disappeared long ago; what we find in the later texts is the post-Vedic mantra material mostly influenced by local traditions.

Professor S. S. Bahulkar has been teaching undergraduate and postgraduate courses in Sanskrit for more than 30 years, during which time he has been engaged in a wide variety of research projects. Both his research and teaching focus on Vedic Studies, Buddhist Studies, Ayurveda and Classical Sanskrit Literature. He has guided 14 students for their M. Phil. and Ph. D. Degrees. He has edited and written ten books and about sixty articles in English, Marathi and Sanskrit. After having done his M. A. and Ph. D. in Sanskrit from the University of Pune (1972 & 1977), he conducted his post graduate research at the Nagoya University, Japan. He worked in the Deccan College, Pune (1979-81), the Tilak Maharashtra Vidyapeeth, Pune (1981-1993; 1995-2006; 2009) and the Central University of Tibetan Studies, Sarnath (1993-95; 2006-2009; 2010-2012). He has visited a number of foreign countries in connection with teaching, research and conferences. He has also worked as Visiting Professor at the University of British Columbia Vancouver, Canada (1993), Freie Universität, Berlin, Germany (1998-99) and Harvard University, Cambridge, U. S. A. (2010). He was instrumental in recording as many as six Veda Shakhās in India, for a research project funded by the Danish Government (1983-84). He has participated in the organisation of a number of regional, national and international seminars and conferences, including the 5th International Vedic Workshop, held in September 2011 in Bucharest, Romania and the 6th held at Kozhikode (Calicut), Kerala in January 2014. Presently he is Adjunct Professor at the Department of Pali and Buddhist Studies, University of Pune and the K. J. Somaiya Centre for Buddhist Studies, Mumbai. He is Chairman, Executive

Board, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute and Editor of the Annals of the Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute.

Other Lectures

Aesthetics of Ecstasy: A Phenomenology of Emotional Expansion in Caitanya Vaiṣṇava Religious Experience

Dr Hrvoje Čargonja

In my lecture I will argue that expansiveness of emotions is not only the necessary condition for Caitanya Vaiṣṇava religious experience, but also a specific mode of givenness of the emotional dimension of experience. Such contention is grounded in my fieldwork on the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness (ISKCON), a Western 'religious transplant' (Bryant & Ekstrand 2004) of Bengal or Caitanya Vaiṣṇavism, a religion with theistic, devotional theology based on the ancient Indian theory of aesthetic experience known as the rasa theory. Based on the analysis of narratives of religious experience (from the scripture and interviews) I will show how tradition's 'embodied aesthetics' (Holdrege 2013) of emotional expansion can be described through aesthetic values of control, intimacy and play.

Following Alexander Baumgarten, philosophers studying aesthetics of everyday life (Mandoki 2007, Saito 2008), and some anthropologists (Coote 1994, Morphy 1992), aesthetics is understood as 'valued formal qualities of perception' enabled by human capacity for qualitative evaluation. In lieu of such reasoning, aesthetic values are seen as 'habits of attention' (James 1984; Throop 2008), or 'culturally appropriate ways' (Throop 2008) of and for experiences, 'that lend specific styles, configurations, and felt qualities to local experiences' (Desjarlais 1994).

In this somewhat Schelerian view on emotional embodiment as 'felt values', Caitanya Vaiṣṇava religious experience emerges as a gradual and repetitive unfolding in which appearance of emotional 'bodiliness,' belonging to the three distinct categories of aesthetic values, feeds back into the just past one, amplifying the emotional intensity of the experience. In other words, acts of consciousness, recurrently entangling emotions and feelings that conform to aesthetic values operating in a given cultural domain, become intensified or 'refined' (Higgins 2008) through the expansion of coherence in the flow of such 'emplaced' (Pink 2009) field of consciousness. Therefore, in terms of phenomenological reduction, a deeper insight into this religious tradition that deifies religious emotions brings to the foreground a very important, but often neglected feature of emotions and feelings – extended, periodic and expansive structure of their temporality.

Dr Hrvoje Čargonja is teaching assistant and postdoctoral student at Department of Ethnology and Cultural Anthropology, University of Zagreb, Croatia, where he obtained his PhD degree. He also holds a MSc degree in molecular biology awarded by Faculty of Science, University of Zagreb. His doctoral thesis was a research on the International Society for Kṛṣṇa Consciousness with special focus on the topic of religious experience. He conducted his fieldwork in Croatia and India and was awarded several

scholarships for a three year research stay at the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies where he worked under the supervision of Professor Gavin Flood. His special research interests include: anthropology of religion, phenomenology of religious experience in Caitanya Vaiṣṇavism, cultural phenomenology.

The Origin, Evolution and Role of Two Indian Dance Styles: Odissi and Bharata Natyam

Dr Anne-Marie Gaston

Inscriptions and texts from all over India suggest that dance was widely associated with temples, religious practices and social conventions in the past. Currently, most classical dances performed on stage in India are based on dances that were earlier associated with both religious and secular practices. Hence they are assumed to share a common ancestry with the earlier temple and secular dances.

Bharata Natyam, the classical dance of Tamil Nadu and Karnataka, has the best documented history of all the classical styles. There are abundant inscriptions on temples, royal courts records and observations made by European and Indian travelers, as well as firsthand accounts from members of the hereditary dance community (Isai Vellala), the caste of the musicians and dancers.

In contrast, despite a history of temple dance in the state of Orissa, Odissi, as seen on the concert stage today, originated in the 1950s-60s. It was a conscious creation by several theatre personalities, former gotipuas (boy actor/dancers) and Orissan nationalists, anxious to have recognition for the state's unique artistic traditions and to place them within the framework of classical Indian arts.

This illustrated lecture explores the different trajectories of the two styles and speculates about how the characteristics of the Odissi style may have been influenced by its unique history.

Anne-Marie Gaston (D.Phil Oxon, M Litt Oxon) is scholar and internationally recognised performer of several styles of South Asian classical dance: Bharata Natyam, Odissi, Kuchipudi, Kathakali, and Chhau. All of her training has been in India for over forty years, with some of the greatest teachers. Her dance repertoire includes both the traditional repertoire and innovative dance/theatre performances which seamlessly blend movement, original musical scores, text, video and images on a variety of themes: Environmental (Tagore's Mother Earth, In Praise of Wilderness, images from Great Himalayan National Park); Greek (Athena Brahmani, Demeter and Persephone); Mesopotamian myths (Ishtar and Gilgamesh); Buddhist (Avalokitesvara [images from Ladhak], Environmental Wisdom of the Buddha); Yoga and Dance (Siva: Creation of Destruction, Adishesha, Dance of Time, Dance Meets Yoga).

Anne-Marie was invited by the Government of India to perform for state visit of Indira Gandhi to Canada and by The Government of Orissa to perform as state guest in Bhubaneswar. Some of her other performances include the Madras Music Academy (also lectures), National Centre for Performing Arts,

Bombay (East West Encounter both sessions), India International Centre and Habitat Centre, New Delhi; Tropensmuseum, Amsterdam; National Arts Centre, National Gallery Ottawa and at numerous venues across Canada; Roundhouse, Commonwealth Institute, Edinburgh Festival Fringe, Dartington Hall, UK. She has lectured for the Oriental Institute and Centre for Hindu Studies, Oxford; Lancaster University In the US at Universities of Chicago, New York, Washington, Florida as well as Smith and Mount Holyoke Colleges. She has published three books: Bharata Natyam from Temple to Theatre, Siva in Dance Myth and Iconography, Krishna's Musicians: music and music-making in the temples of Nathdvara Rajasthan. She contributed the chapter on Embodied Movement for the Oxford Handbook of Sacred Arts, as well as numerous articles for magazines and journals. She is a Research Associate with InterCulture, University of Ottawa, Canada. She recently conducted research in Indonesia on aspects of the Ramayana in traditional arts. www.culturalhorizons.ca.

Hilary Term 2015

Hinduism 2, Hindu Traditions (Paper 21)

Gavin Flood

Beginning with the early medieval period, this paper traces the development of Hinduism in devotional (*bhakti*) and tantric traditions. The paper examines the development of Śaiva, Shakta, and Vaiṣṇava traditions along with ideas about liberation, ritual, asceticism, yoga and devotion. There will be some exploration of Hinduism and Modernity and there may also be reference to major schools of Hindu philosophy such as Vedānta.

Elementary Sanskrit

Gavin Flood

The course continues an introduction to Sanskrit for the preliminary paper in Elementary Sanskrit. The class is designed to introduce students of Theology and Religion to the basics of the Sanskrit grammar, syntax and vocabulary. By the end of the course students will have competency in translating simple Sanskrit and reading sections of the story of Nala. The course book is Maurer's *The Sanskrit Language*.

Readings in the Netra Tantra

Gavin Flood

The *Netra Tantra* is an important early medieval Śaiva text. We will read and discuss sections of the text based on the two manuscripts in the NGMPP Library and compare these with the published KSTS edition. Apart from reading the text we will discuss its meaning.

Readings in Phenomenology and Religion

Gavin Flood

Phenomenology is one of the most important developments in philosophy in the twentieth century that has had a deep impact on Theology and Religious Studies. The reading group seeks to engage with some of the fundamental

concepts of phenomenology that underlie much work in Theology and the Phenomenology of Religion. This term we will continue reading Paul Ricoeur *Oneself as Another* (University of Chicago Press, 1992).

Veda-stuti (Bhāgavata Purāṇa 10.87) with the commentary of Śrīdhara Svāmī

Dr. Rembert Lutjeharms

The Bhāgavata Purāṇa is undoubtedly the most popular and most sophisticated of the Purāṇas. Written in ornate prose and verse, and infusing Purāṇic narratives with Vedic, Vedānta, and Pāñcarātra thought, this monumental text influenced artists, architects, poets, and theologians for centuries. The Veda-stuti ("The Vedas' prayers of praise") is one of the Bhāgavata's most significant theological passages, which offers an easy introduction to the Bhāgavata's nondual theism and its Vedānta. In this reading class, we will read these verses with the commentary of Śrīdhara Svāmī (thirteenth century), the most celebrated commentator on the text and an important Advaitin Vaiṣṇava author who profoundly influenced the development of Hindu thought in pre-modern South Asia.

This reading class aims to introduce students with an intermediate knowledge of Sanskrit to the poetry of the Bhāgavata Purāṇa, the method and reasoning of Sanskrit commentaries, as well as the intersections of Advaita and Vaiṣṇava Vedānta.

Majewski Lecture: Ritual, Inversion, and Hierarchy at the Kumbh Mela, the Great Festival of India

Prof. Sondra Hausner

At the *Kumbh Mela*, a religious festival that takes place every twelve years in four North Indian pilgrimage locations, multiple divisions in Indian society are put on display. The social distinctions between ascetics and householders are exposed in a classic example of ritual inversion: ascetics take centre stage while householders attend as worshipping pilgrims. By contrast, everyday hierarchies between women and men appear reified rather than reversed at the great festival: women ascetics remain on the farthest margins of both ascetic social orders and householder ones, behind the scenes or erased from view. This lecture will ask why gender relations seem more static than the categories of caste, occupation, or region during India's largest ritual event.

Sondra L. Hausner is Associate Professor in the Study of Religion and a Fellow of St. Peter's College. An anthropologist by training, she has worked on Indic religions, and particularly asceticism, since 1996, publishing Women's Renunciation in South Asia: Nuns, Yoginis, Saints, and Singers (Palgrave, 2006), and Wandering with Sadhus: Ascetics in the Hindu Himalayas (IUP, 2007), which won the Joseph W. Elder Prize in the Indian Social Sciences. She has also published on living and legendary religious practice in the Himalayas, diaspora religions, gender and society, and Durkheimian sociology. At Oxford, she teaches the anthropology of religion in 19th and 20th century thought.

Shivdasani Lectures

Textual Authority (*śruti*) and Soteriological Reason (*tarka*) in Advaita Vedānta

Prof. Dilip Loundo

Far from antinomic terms and more than just compatible terms, *śruti* and *tarka* seem to converge, in Advaita Vedānta, to the same soteriological discipline that constitutes the only means to attain liberation (*mokṣa*). Accordingly, *śruti* is revelation in the sense that it, basically, reveals a method of dialogical reasoning (*anugṛhita tarka*) that succeeds in eliminating one's ignorance about Reality. Special emphasis will be given to the teachings of Śaṅkarācārya, Sureśvarācārya and Satccidanandendra Saraswati.

The Meaningfulness of the 'Meaninglessness of Ritual': Vedic Ritual (*yajña*) as Renunciation (*tyāga*)

Prof. Dilip Loundo

Though debatable in textual interpretation, Staal's provocative idea of the 'meaninglessness of ritual' points to intrinsic self-justifying dimensions of Vedic ritual. Perhaps the most important of these dimensions is the ritual's intrinsic component of renunciation (*tyāga*) that co-exists, in a complex form, with other external goals. Renunciation forms the structural basis for the continuity between *yajña* and *pūjā* and for the organic link that binds together the *karmakāṇḍa* and the *jñānakāṇḍa* of the Vedas.

Shivdasani Seminars

The 'Two Truths' and the Nature of *upāya* in Nāgārjuna

Prof. Dilip Loundo

In the *Mūlamādhyamaka-Kārikā*, Nāgārjuna sustains that the Buddha's teachings combine, in a unique manner, *saṃvṛti-satya* ('conventional truth') e *paramārtha-satya* ('supreme truth'). This peculiar combination of the 'two truths', involving a re-orientation of the original meaning of *saṃvṛti-satya* meant to suit the requirements of the meta-conceptual level of *paramārtha-satya*, is, precisely, what constitutes an *upāya* ('skillful means'), the fundamental rational tool of (*mahāyāna*) Buddhist soteriology.

Ātmanepada as *saṃvidhāna* in Bhartṛhari's Linguistic Ontology

Prof. Dilip Loundo

Bhartṛhari's *Vākyapadīya* contributes to the clarification of Pāṇini's seminal definition of *ātmanepada* ("the results of the acts are intended for the agent") by postulating *saṃvidhāna* (lit., 'making provisions/arrangements' or 'bringing things together') as its major semantic component. Both in worldly and Vedic matters (*dharma* & *mokṣa*), *ātmanepada* seems to develop, through the suggestive power of *saṃvidhāna*, a capacity to convey purportful unity of action and the agent's dynamics of ego-decentration.

Prof. Dilip Loundo is Coordinator of the Centre for the Study of Religions and Philosophies of India (NERFI). NERFI is an integral part of the Postgraduate Program of Religious Studies (PPCIR) of the Federal University of Juiz de Fora (UFJF), Minas Gerais, Brazil. Prof. Loundo is a Ph.D. in Indian Philosophy from

Mumbai University, an M.A. and M.Phil. in Philosophy from the Federal University of Rio de Janeiro, and a Postgraduate Diploma in Sanskrit from Mumbai University. His recent publications include: *Comments on Nāgārjuna's Two Truth Doctrine* (São Paulo, 2014); *Buddhavacana e Śabda Pramāṇa in Mahāyāna Buddhism and Advaita Vedānta* (Campinas, 2014); *Ritual in Vedic Tradition: Openness, Plurality and Teleology* (João Pessoa, 2012); *What's Philosophy After All? The Intertwined Destinies of Greek Philosophy and Indian Upaniṣadic Thinking* (Barcelona, 2011); *The Seashore of Endless Worlds: Rabindranath Tagore's Encounters with Latin America* (Belo Horizonte, 2011); *The Apophatic Mystagogy of the Upaniṣads in Satchidanandendra Saraswati's Advaita Vedānta* (Juiz de Fora, 2011); *Poetry and Soteriology in India: The Devotional Lyricism of Jayadeva's Gītā-Govinda* (Campinas: 2011); *Bharṭṛhari's Nondual Linguistic Ontology and the Semantics of ātmanepada* (Bangalore, 2010); *An Anthology of Hindi Poetry* (Rio de Janeiro, 2010); *Tropical Dialogues: Brazil and India* (Rio de Janeiro:2009). He is presently engaged in preparing the first direct translation into Portuguese of the main Sanskrit Upaniṣads.

Other lectures

Nineteenth-century Hindu discourse on image worship

Dr Sharada Sugirtharajah

Nineteenth-century colonial India offers examples of both Hindu iconoclasts and iconic worshippers, but there has been a tendency to privilege the former and regard them as agents of modernity, and the latter as backward. Most nineteenth-century studies of Hindu attitudes to image worship have mainly focussed on two prominent figures—Rammohan Roy (1772–1883) and Dayananda Saraswati (1824–1883) who denounced image worship. This paper seeks to widen the discourse and to include the often overlooked nineteenth-century Sri Lankan Shaivite 'reformer', Arumuga Navalar (1822–1879) who took a very different stance on the issue of image worship. While Roy and Dayananda rejected image worship, Navalar affirmed it. Situating these three 'reformers' in their respective historical and cultural contexts, the paper will draw attention to the significant differences between Navalar and the two Indian Hindu responses to the Protestant missionary critique of image worship. It seeks to problematise the conventional approach which situates the debate on image worship within the narrow confines of the tradition verses modernity paradigm.

Dr Sharada Sugirtharajah is Senior Lecturer in Hindu Studies in the Department of Theology, at the University of Birmingham. Her research focuses on representation of Hinduism in colonial and postcolonial writings.

New Manuscript Evidence for the Practice of Numerous Yoga Postures (Āsana) in the 16–17th centuries

Dr Jason Birch

Many of the *āsana* of modern yoga are not mentioned in the well-known scriptures of Haṭhayoga, such as the *Haṭhapradīpikā*. This has led to recent

claims that relatively few *āsanas* were practised in traditional Hathayoga and those we see today are largely the invention of twentieth-century Indian gurus. In this talk, these assertions will be assessed in the light of three unpublished manuscripts which contain long lists of *āsana*. It is apparent that brief references to eighty-four *āsanas* in the early literature on Haṭhayoga were replaced by actual lists and descriptions of eight-four *āsanas* after the sixteenth century. During this time in the history of yoga, medieval yoga practices were synthesised with more orthodox Brahmanical literature including Pātañjalayoga.

Jason completed his DPhil in 2013 at the University of Oxford. The title of his thesis is, "The Amanaska: King of All Yogas: A Critical Edition and Annotated Translation along with a Monographic Introduction." For first half of 2014, he was a visiting scholar at Loyola Marymount University where he taught courses on the history of yoga and Sanskrit for a Masters program in Yoga Studies. Since that time, he has been a visiting research fellow at the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies.

Trinity Term 2015

Hindu Theology for a King: Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa's Tattvadīpikā

Dr. Kiyokazu Okita

The *Tattvadīpikā* (*An Illumination of Reality*) is an unpublished Vedāntic work written by Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa (ca 1700-1793), a prominent Bengali Vaiṣṇava author in the early modern period. The manuscript is held in the library of the Maharaja Sawai Man Singh II Museum in Jaipur (Manuscript #5693 in Gopal Bahura's Literary Heritage of Rulers of Amber and Jaipur). The work is not widely circulated among Bengali Vaiṣṇavas, and its existence was practically unknown till the catalogue of the library was published in 1976. This suggests that the work was probably written exclusively for Jaisingh II (1688-1743), a famous Rajput king of Jaipur Baladeva worked for, who was known for his keen interest in Hindu Theology.

The text is primarily concerned with a refutation of other schools of thought such as Buddhism, Nyāya, Vaiśeṣika, Sāṅkhya, and Advaita Vedānta, providing us with an excellent insight into the intellectual climate in early modern North India. This reading class aims to introduce students with an intermediate knowledge of Sanskrit to the style of theological debate in Sanskrit writings as well as to the methodology of editing a text based on a manuscript.

Dr. Kiyokazu Okita is Assistant Professor at The Hakubi Center for Advanced Research, Kyoto University, Department of Indology, Faculty of Letters, Kyoto University.

Readings in Phenomenology

Prof. Gavin Flood

Levinas argues against the Heideggerian perspective on Being in favour of the other who/that makes injunctive demand upon us. We will continue reading Levinas *Totality and Infinity* beginning with chapter 2.

Readings in the Netra Tantra

Prof. Gavin Flood

We will continue reading the text from the Nepalese manuscripts.

Early Modern Bengali Vaiṣṇava Texts

Lucian Wong

We will read sections from key devotional and theological Vaiṣṇava texts in Bengali from the early modern period and discuss their meaning. Some proficiency in Bengali is a requirement.

Majewski Lecture: Is it 'Intolerant' to 'Convert' Other People? Revisiting a vexed debate in Hindu–Christian dialogue

Dr. Ankur Barua

A recurring theme in Hindu and Christian conversations over the last hundred years or so is the 'intolerance' of the very attempt to produce conviction in other people to move across religious boundaries. I argue that an examination of these conversations reveals that crucial terms such as 'tolerance', 'conversion', and others are often not carefully defined, so that these encounters have become a dialogue of the deaf. However, when these terms are located in the distinctive Hindu and Christian theological universes, it becomes clear that the *necessity* or the *impossibility* of conversions is related to deep metaphysical disputes over what, *in fact*, is the true Religion. Therefore, from a philosophical perspective, the real debate lies *not only* over the political structures of 'toleration' *but also* over the epistemic reach of reason to settle the most famous (and lamentably blood-splattered) question in the entire religious history of humanity: what is, in truth, the nature of the divine?

Dr Ankur Barua is Lecturer in Hindu Studies, Faculty of Divinity, University of Cambridge. He was raised by a Roman Catholic aunt and Vaishnavite Hindu parents, and the question of 'conversion' across Hindu-Christian theological boundaries has remained a matter of deep existential concern, and, of course, a central focus of much of his published work. His articles have appeared in the International Journal of Hindu Studies, Journal of Hindu-Christian Studies, Journal of Hindu Studies, The Heythrop Journal, The Journal of Ecumenical Studies, and Sophia.

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