

THE

OXFORD
CENTRE

for

HINDU
STUDIES

Report 2017



A RECOGNISED INDEPENDENT CENTRE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

The Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies

Annual Report 2017

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A RECOGNISED INDEPENDENT CENTRE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD

Message from the Director

A watchword for the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies has always been *relevance* – how do we make Indian thought and culture relevant to a world that changes rapidly and therefore to a future that we can't foresee?

This challenge requires us to be active on a number of levels (pp.25–7): public lectures, school visits, chaplaincy, broadcast and other media to name a few.

Of all these, I'd like to mention two major outreach programmes: ethical investment and continuing education.

We first worked on **ethical investment** in partnership with Dow Jones in the production of the Dharma Index (investment guidelines for dharmic traditions) in 2008. Ethical investment has grown into a multi-trillion dollar business since then and the OCHS has worked with the UN, ARC, and religious institutions to help guide this industry. This Faith in Finance initiative launches in Zug, Switzerland, in late 2017.

As for **continuing education**, that has always been an important part of OCHS life. In 2017, we redoubled our efforts (pp.21–3). We've made a return to taught courses in the UK and India, and we have commissioned six new online courses including a particular effort to create courses that are relevant to yoga practitioners and teachers – a group that is seeking to understand the deeper meanings behind their practice.

As always, our scholars are working prolifically, for example:

- ▶ Launching the Bhagavata Purana Research Project (p.7) – our fourth major research project – in India in co-operation with five major academic institutions;
- ▶ Holding one conference and one symposium;
- ▶ Publishing six new titles in our book series, three issues in our Journal of Hindu Studies (pp.8–9), and 45 other papers and books (pp.9–11).

Overall, this has been one of our most productive years and bodes well for a bright future as we head towards our twentieth anniversary. We hope to welcome you to one of our celebratory events!

With very best wishes,
Shaunaka Rishi Das



Director



1. THE ACADEMIC YEAR 2016–17

Academic appointments

Teaching

Research

Publishing for the academic year 2016–17

Named Lectures

Visiting fellows' reports

Conference papers and lectures by Research Fellows

Awards for OCHS students



Academic appointments

This year saw a commitment of funding for ten years for the role of Academic Director by Mr Ajay Pira-mal. The position will be called the Piramal Dean of Hindu Studies. We have selected an appointments committee and the search is in progress.

We have also appointed Bjarne Wernicke Olesen has been appointed as a Research Lecturer on a 0.5 time basis.

Teaching

In 2016–17 a new initiative in teaching, and in the life of Hindu Studies here in Oxford, bore fruit as Dr Jessica Frazier became part of a team (with Jan Westerhoff and Rafal Stepien) teaching Indian Philosophy at Oxford. She also examined two confirmations of status and two essays for the Theology and Religion Faculty, strengthening our ties with the Faculty along with Rembert Lutjeharms and Bjarne Olesen. Alongside this, she also continued the OCHS Readings in Phenomenology, through which we brought together interdisciplinary students from diverse faculties such as Modern Languages, Philosophy, Anthro-pology, and Oriental Studies.

In Michaelmas, Dr Wernicke-Olesen taught Sanskrit for the Faculty of Theology and Religion and Key Thinkers in Hindu Studies for the OCHS. He tutored undergraduate students in Hinduism and exchange stu-dents from Aarhus University in their BA projects. In Hilary he taught Sanskrit for the Faculty of Theology and Religion and Buddhist Sanskrit for the OCHS. He tutored Aarhus students in Pali, Study of Religion theory and method and Hinduism. In Trinity he taught Sanskrit for the Faculty of Theology and Religion and Buddhist Sanskrit for the OCHS and tutored undergraduate students in Pali, Sanskrit and Bud-dhism. Throughout the year he offered Sanskrit and Hinduism tutorials for DPhil students from Oxford and co-supervised a DPhil student from Northumbria University.

This academic year Dr Rembert Lutjeharms has taught Hinduism (in Michaelmas) and Hinduism (in Hilary) for the Faculty of Theology and Religion, and tutored BA stu-dents for the Faculty in Hilary and Trinity term, as well as for the Sarah Lawrence visiting student programme. He has also been supervising one DPhil student in Theology and Religion since Michaelmas, and had regular tutorials with other DPhil students.

Thank you for all the opportunities to increase my exposure and broaden my horizons. Thank you for the bursaries and scholarships. The centre provided me access to so many wonderful books and smiling, intelligent, and helpful people. It can be overlooked in compar-ison to the other aspects, but the cen-tre simply also serves as nice space to study and even warm my food in the microwave.

*Tilak Parekh
Alumnus*

Research

The Śākta Traditions Research Project

Project leaders: Professor Gavin Flood and Dr Bjarne Wernicke Olesen

The project has grown with a number of new colleagues, several book projects as well as a fieldwork dimension and the prospect of a research and study centre in Kathmandu. New researchers for 2016–17 include Professor Mikael Aktor (University of Southern Denmark), Dr Rajan Khatiwoda (Heidelberg), Dr Nirajan Kaffle (Leiden), PhD candidate Janaki Nair (Northumbria), as well as research assistant Ananya Shresthi (Oxford), and intern Gitte Poulsen (Aarhus).

Output

- Professor Gavin Flood and Dr Wernicke-Olesen are working on the volume ‘Models of the Human in Tantric Hinduism’. The book explores a distinctive Śākta anthropology.
- Professor Gavin Flood and Dr Wernicke-Olesen have also started working on a full trans-lation of the Netrat Tantra with an extensive introduction.
- PhD scholar Silje Lyngar Einarsen and Dr Wernicke-Olesen will publish the first Danish translation of the Haṭhayogapradīpikā with an extensive introduction and illustrations in

2017. Silje Lyngar Einarsen has been invited as a Shivdasani Postdoctoral Fellow in Trinity 2017 to work on the book project. Yoga practitioners Sudeep Kumar (Kerala) and Mathilde Kellberg (Aarhus) were invited to the OCHS for a photo shoot for the book in Trinity 2017.

- Dr Silvia Schwarz Linder is writing a monograph on the South Indian Tripurārahasya and has been invited as a Shivdasani Visiting Fellow in Michaelmas 2017.
- PhD candidate Janaki Nair (Northumbria) is producing a documentary movie for the Śākta project on the use of mudrās in dance and tantric Hinduism (Śrīvidyā) in South India.

Conferences, seminars and teaching

Dr Wernicke-Olesen, Professor Marianne Fibiger (Aarhus) and PhD scholar Silje Lyngar Einarsen (Oslo) held a successful OCHS-Aarhus seminar at Aarhus University on Text and Ritual in Śāktism on 11 December 2016. This will be followed up by a Text and Ritual seminar in Oxford on 15 January 2018. An international Śākta conference is planned for May 2018 with Prof Gavin Flood as keynote speaker. Dr Wernicke-Olesen also tutored several BA projects and an MA thesis (SOAS) on Śāktism and yoga.

Fieldwork

Dr Wernicke-Olesen did fieldwork amongst the Nāth Yogīs and Śākta Aghorīs in Nepal together with OCHS intern Gitte Poulsen and other OCHS students during summer 2016. He also examined the possibilities and challenges of establishing a research and study centre in Kathmandu. The fieldwork and the plans for a research centre continue in summer 2017.

Bengali Vaishnavism in the Modern Period

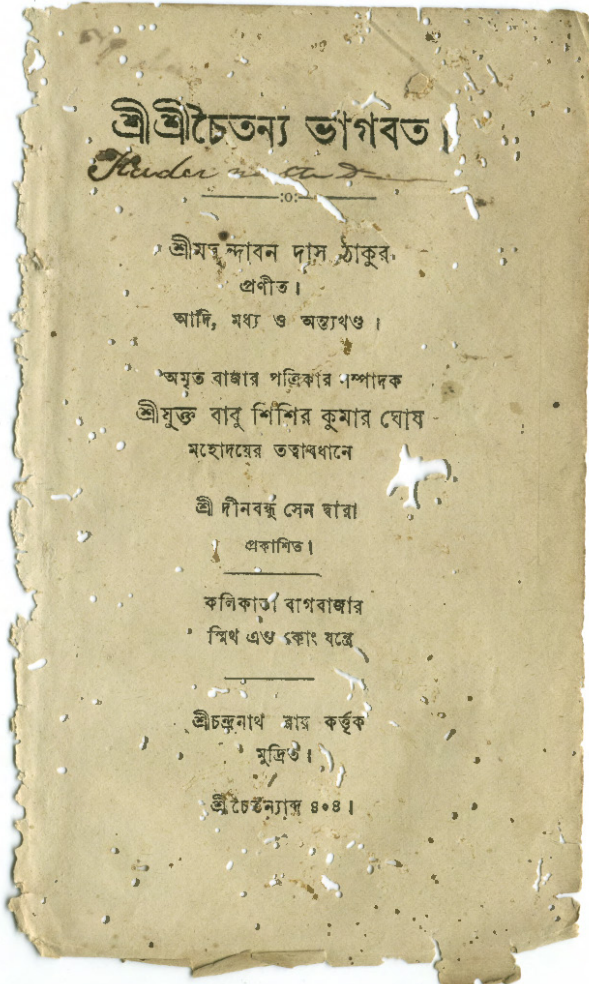
Project leaders: Dr Ferdinando Sardella and Lucian Wong

The Bengali Vaishnavism Project is led by Dr. Ferdinando Sardella (Stockholm University) in cooperation with Lucian Wong (University of Oxford), who has become the second project leader. Lucian Wong is a doctoral student at the Faculty of Theology, pursuing a doctoral thesis the theology of Kedarnath Datta Bhaktivinoda, a prominent Vaishnava intellectual in colonial Bengal.

The project leaders are currently editing a volume with the tentative title *Hinduism beyond the Renaissance: Bengali Vaishnavism in the Modern Period*, which has been accepted for publication in the Routledge Hindu Studies series and is due to be published in 2018. The volume contains a collection of chapters from the proceedings of the international conference, 'Bengali Vaishnavism in the Modern Period' that was organised by the OCHS in 2015. It deals with the complex network of mainstream, countercurrent, and antinomian Vaishnava practices that developed in Bengal during the colonial period.

Lucian Wong helped organise a Middle Bengali language retreat in Romania in August 2016 in cooperation with Prof. Imre Banga (University of Oxford) and Prof. Thibaut D'hubert (University of Chicago), in which both project leaders participated. The retreat was open to scholars and advanced students from all over the world and consisted of intensive group readings of Bengali texts from the medieval and early modern period led by experts in the field.

The project leaders are currently making preparations for a symposium related to the project in Hilary term 2018, when Bengali studies specialists Prof. Amiya Sen and Dr Santanu Dey will be at OCHS as visiting fellows.



The Bhāgavata Purāṇa Research Project

Project leaders: Dr Ravi M. Gupta and Dr Kenneth R. Valpey

2016–17 was a watershed year for the OCHS Bhagavata Purana Research Project. First, the project co-directors, Ravi M. Gupta and Kenneth R. Valpey, saw the publication of their annotated, abridged translation of the Bhagavata Purana with Columbia University Press. Second, they organised an international conference on the Bhagavata Purana in Chennai, co-hosted by the University of Madras and C.P. Ramaswami Aiyar Foundation. Conference participants included both seasoned and emerging scholars from India, the United States, Europe, Japan, and Australia. They are now in the process of collecting papers for publication in a special volume of the *Journal of Hindu Studies*. The conference has also spawned discus-



sions with several Indian scholars to lead smaller conferences and research groups on vernacular Bhagavata traditions, such as those in Tamil and Marathi. These groups are still in the preliminary stages of development. Finally, the conference provided an opportunity to interview scholars for a documentary film on the Bhagavata Purana, meant for use in university classrooms and other educational settings. The bulk of interviews have been completed, and the documentary is in the early stages of editing.

Human Transcendence: Philosophies Beyond Mere Materialism

Project leaders: Dr Jessica Frazier and Lucian Wong

The Human Transcendence Project continued and entered a new networked phase in which it has become linked to broader projects at Oxford, Glasgow, and Kent. In this project, themed symposia combine short papers with vigorous discussion to explore themes ranging across secular and religious, contemporary and classical, Western and Asian contexts. The focus is the notion of ‘verticality’ set out by Peter Sloterdijk, for whom examples of the ‘heightened life’ point to a human concern with the ‘vita vitalis, which stands vertical in relation to the axis of empirical existence’. (Sloterdijk 2013: 200). Thus, we explore the way in which both religious and secular contexts feature a basic human desire to transcend biological necessity, seeking extraneous but essential goals of creativity, development, exploration, and ideals of that which exceeds the stable systems of biological continuance. Across contexts we see the tension between the ‘horizontal life’ and ‘vertical aspirations’ at work, shedding new light on the contemporary debates about Human Flourishing. This year this project continued with a conversation on ‘Mind, Biology, Society: Intimations of Transcendence’ by Dr Isabelle Behncke Izquierdo, Dr Beau Lotto, and Dr Tamas David Barrett. They discussed the way in which popular understandings of evolutionary biology often take it to mean that human life is essentially a horizontal process of survival – that is, repeated adaptation to environment, ensuring that the organism lives long enough to procreate and continue the self-same process in a new generation. In such a view, there can appear to be no drive to exceed the minimal requirements of that unending process of adaptation, survival and procreation. The symposium challenged the assumption that humanity’s basic bio-social constitution favours ‘mere survival.’ These scholars of cognitive psychology and evolutionary anthropology explored the forces within the machinery of survival that lead humans ‘upward’, to develop higher levels of behaviour, psychology, culture, and ideas. In this session, we saw ways in which challenge, change, and playful innovation lie at the heart of the human, and in next year’s sessions there will be a focus on the contrasting themes of asceticism, pain, and the passions.

This project is now being linked to the establishment of a Comparative Mysticism Network and associated funding applications, incorporating scholars and activities in Oxford, Glasgow, Kent and Liverpool Hope Universities, and providing a platform further work among students and scholars at the OCHS.

Debating Religion

Project leader: Dr Jessica Frazier

A new project began this year, bringing together key scholars on film to discuss new solutions to classic problems in the Study of Religion. In these discussions, we seek to offer fresh perspectives on the questions that have shaped the field, from the conflict between science and religion, to the difficulties of inter-religious conflict, from the challenges of research in the field, to humanity's elusive search for the nature of reality itself. The goal of these discussions is not merely to establish a set of events, but to provide a lasting online resource of interviews that (a) provide cutting edge perspectives on classic problems from scholars who have the seniority to have formulated solutions to the perennial problems encountered by students of the Study of Religions, and practising scholars in the field, and, (b) bring students and scholars face to face across fields, levels, and international communities of scholarship through the direct style of filmed discussion. Discussions combine methodological, theoretical, and biographical conversation to fruitful effect.

Discussions are now available on the Debating Religion website, www.ochs.uk, with four more planned for Michaelmas 2017.

Publishing for the academic year 2016–17

Journal and book series

Journal of Hindu Studies

In the academic year 2016–17 there were three issues of the Journal of Hindu Studies, a co-publication with Oxford University Press.

- August 2016: Vedanta
- November 2016: Not Quite Divine
- May 2017: Making Gujarat Vaiṣṇava

The Journal's Editors are Professor Gavin Flood, Dr Jessica Frazier, and Dr Rembert Lutjeharms.

The Editorial Board is: Daud Ali, Mandakranta Bose, John Brockington, Gudrun Buhemann, 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.

Routledge/OCHS Hindu Studies Book Series

This series intends primarily the publication of constructive Hindu theological, philosophical and ethical projects aimed at bringing Hindu traditions into dialogue with contemporary trends in scholarship and contemporary society. The series invites original, high quality, research level work on religion, culture and society of Hindus living in India and abroad. This year's contributions to the series are:



- *The Future of Hindu–Christian Studies: A Theological Inquiry*
Francis X. Clooney, 20 June 2017
- *River and Goddess Worship in India: Changing Perceptions and Manifestations of Sarasvati*
R.U.S. Prasad, 30 May 2017
- *Indian Thought and Western Theism: The Vedanta of Ramanuja*
Martin Ganeri, 25 May 2017
- *Hindu Images and their Worship with special reference to Vaisnavism: A philosophical-theological inquiry*
Julius J. Lipner, 19 April 2017
- *The Integral Philosophy of Aurobindo: Hermeneutics and the Study of Religion*
Brainerd Prince, 24 January 2017

Archaeology and Religion in South Asia Book Series

This series, in association with the Routledge, 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 Archaeology of Sacred Spaces: The temple in western India, 2nd century BCE–8th century CE*
Susan Verma Mishra, Himanshu Prabha Ray. 16 August 2016

Fellows' publications

Professor Mandakranta Bose

- *The Rāmāyaṇa through Bengali Folk Paintings*, Niyogi Books.
- *Goddesses in the Hindu Tradition*, Oxford University Press. Forthcoming.
- 'Gender and the Spiritual Quest in Tagore's Poetry'. In *Tagore's Ideas of the New Woman*, eds. Chandrava Chakravarty and Sneha Kar Chaudhury. New Delhi: Sage/Stree, 2017. (Solicited)
- 'Designing Women: Felicitous Malice in A Bengali Ramayana' In *The Other Ramayana Women: Regional Rejection and Response*. Eds. John and Mary Brockington, Associate ed., Mandakranta Bose. London:Routledge, 2016.
- 'Afterword.' In *The Other Ramayana Women: Regional Rejection and Response*. Eds. John and Mary Brockington, Associate ed., Mandakranta Bose. London: Routledge. 2016.
- 'The Ramayana in the Hindu Tradition.' *Oxford Bibliography on Hinduism*. Online publication. (Solicited), 2016.
- 'Theme and Form in the Vaiṣṇava Idiom in Rabindranath.' in *Rabindranath Tagore, A Mind Staring into Infinity*. Edited by Cchanda Chatterjee. Delhi: Primus Books, 2016. (Solicited)
- *Hindu Goddesses*, (tentative title) a collection of articles edited by Mandakranta Bose, to be published by Oxford University Press in its series titled History of Hinduism, general ed. Gavin Flood. Expected in 2018.

Professor John Brockington

- *The Other Rāmāyaṇa Women: regional rejection and response*, ed. by John Brockington and Mary Brockington, with Mandakranta Bose, Routledge Hindu Studies Series (Abingdon: Routledge).
- 'Re-creation, refashioning, rejection,



response...: how the narrative developed’, in *The Other Rāmāyaṇa women: regional rejection and response*: 1–17.

- (with Mary Brockington and Rachel Loizeau-Pajaniradja), ‘Afflicted mothers and abused women: the words behind the pictures’ in *The Other Rāmāyaṇa women: regional rejection and response*: 71–88.
- (with Mary Brockington), ‘Rāma from India to Southeast Asia: the portrayal of a hero’, in *Śyāmadeśa saṃskṛtapuruṣaḥ ācārya Chirapat Prapandvidyaḥ, Felicitation to . . . Chirapat Prapandvidya*, ed. by Sombat Mangmeesukhsiri and Chainarong Klinnoi (Bangkok: Sanskrit Studies Centre): 68–127.
- ‘Illustrated Rāmāyaṇa texts: which, where, why?’, to appear in the proceedings of the 16th World Sanskrit Conference, Bangkok, 2016.
- ‘Regions and Recensions, Scripts and Manuscripts’, Proceedings of Enjeu de la philologie indienne / Issues in Indian Philology
- (updated) (with Mary Brockington), ‘Development and spread of the Rāma narrative (pre-modern)’ on Oxford Research Archive, accessible at <<http://ora.ox.ac.uk/objects/uuid:8df9647a-8002-45ff-b37e-7effb669768b>>.

Dr Angela Burt

- ‘Taking the Lead: Leadership in the International Society for Krishna Consciousness After the Death of the Founder’. In G. M. Schweig, ed. *Proceedings of The Worldwide Krishna Movement: Half a Century of Growth, Impact, and Challenge Conference*. Forthcoming 2017.
- ‘An Uncertain Future: The Crisis of Succession’ in the International Society for Krishna Consciousness. In K. Knott, M. Francis, eds. *Innovation, Violence and Paralysis: How do Minority Religions Cope with Uncertainty?* Farnham: Ashgate. Forthcoming 2017.

Dr Jessica Frazier

- *Hindu Worldviews: Theories of Self, Ritual and Reality* (Bloomsbury, Feb 2017)
- *Gadamer on Religion: Exploring Religious Worlds*, Routledge. Forthcoming.
- *An Introduction to Hindu Thought*, Pelican. Forthcoming.

Professor Ravi Gupta

- *The Bhagavata Purana: Selected Readings*. New York: Columbia University Press, 2016 (with Kenneth R. Valpey).
- ‘Translators’ Troubles: Seeking a Method that Suits the Bhagavata Purana’ in *International Journal of Hindu Studies*, in press, April 2018.
- ‘Hinduism and the Academy: Toward a Dialogue between Scholar and Practitioner,’ in *Journal of Hindu-Christian Studies*, vol. 29, 2016, pp. 62–66.
- ‘Finding Bhagavan in the Bhagavata: The Six Indicators of Meaning in Gaudiya Vedanta,’ in *Journal of Vaishnava Studies*, Fall 2016, pp. 191–204.
- ‘Jiva Gosvami’s Commentary on the Gayatri: Translation and Context,’ in *Journal of Vaishnava Studies*, Spring 2016, pp. 64–72.

Dr Natalia Lidova

- ‘Pūjā as Iconic Ritual’. In: *Religious Practice. The Oxford History of Hinduism*, ed. by G. Flood.
- ‘The Concept of the Divine Game in Ancient India’. In: *Proceedings of the 7th Dubrovnik International Conference*, ed. by M. Ježić. Zagreb (forthcoming).
- ‘The Ritual Boundaries of Ancient Indian Theatre’. In: *Cracow Indological Studies*, vol. 19, 2017 (forthcoming).
- ‘The Cosmography of Mount Meru and Early Pūjā Cult’, *Proceedings of the 6th Dubrovnik International Conference*, ed. by M. Ježić. Zagreb (Forthcoming)
- ‘Brahmayāga in the Atharvaveda-veda pariśista 19b – Vedic ritual or Agamic rite?’, *Proceedings of the Sixth Vedic Workshop*, ed. by M. Witzel (Forthcoming).

Dr. Rembert Lutjeharms

- ‘Narahari Sarakāra on Vaiṣṇavas, gurus, and the fate of the Gauḍīya tradition’ in *Journal of Vaiṣṇava Studies*.

Dr Kiyokazu Okita

- ‘From Rasa to Bhaktirasa: The Development of A Devotional Aesthetic Theory in Early Modern South Asia’, *The Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies*, 65: 3.

- ‘A Vedāntic Refutation of Buddhism in Eighteenth Century North India: The Tattvadīpikā of Baladeva Vidyābhūṣaṇa’, *Journal of Vaishnava Studies*, 25: 1.
- ‘The Influence of Śiṅgabhūpāla II on Bengali Vaiṣṇava Aesthetics’, *The Journal of Indian and Buddhist Studies*, 64, 1081–87.
- ‘Quotation, Quarrel and Controversy in Early Modern South Asia: Appayya Dīkṣita and Jīva Gosvāmī on Madhva’s Untraceable Citations’, *Adaptive Reuse in South Asian Literatures and Arts* eds. by Elisa Freschi and Philipp Maas, *Abhandlungen für die Kunde des Morgenlandes* (Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz Verlag).

Dr Brainerd Prince

- *The Integral Philosophy of Aurobindo: Hermeneutics and the Study of Religion*, Routledge.

Professor Himanshu Prabha Ray

- *The Archaeology of Sacred Spaces: The Temple in Western India* (2nd century BCE to 8th century CE), (with Susan Verma Mishra) Routledge.
- ‘Maritime Archaeology of the Indian Ocean’, *Oxford Research Encyclopedia of Asian History*, Online Publication Date February 2017.

Dr Kenneth Valpey

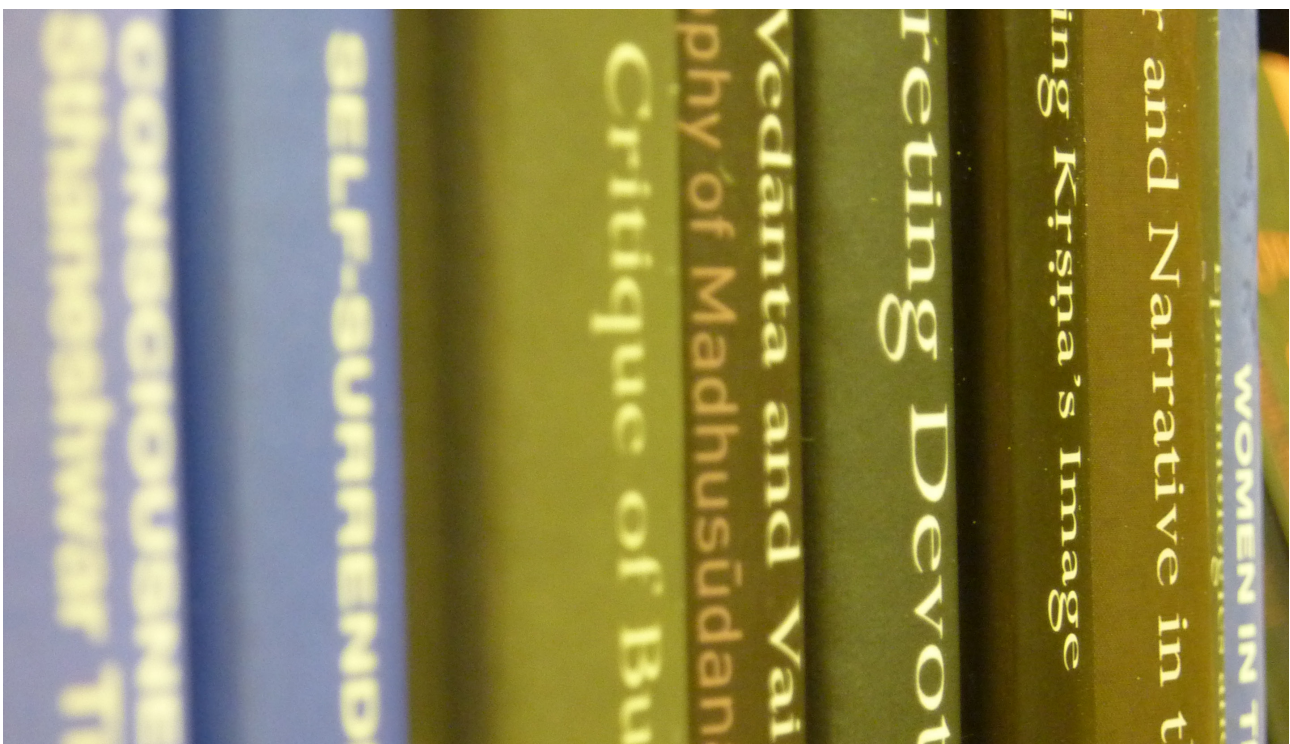
- ‘Igniting Hanuman’s Tail: Hindu Indian and secular views on animal experimentation’. *Journal of Animal Ethics*. Ethics vol. 6, Fall 2016, no. 2, pp. 213–22.
- *The Bhāgavata Purāṇa: Selected Readings*. Co-authored, with Ravi M. Gupta. New York: Columbia University Press.
- *Cow Care: The Heart of Hindu Animal Ethics*. Forthcoming.

Dr Bjarne Wernicke-Olesen

- *Haṭhayogapradīpikā, Højbjerg: Forlaget Systime*, 2017 (forthcoming). Full translation of the Haṭhapradīpikā with an extensive introduction.
- Olesen, B.W., ‘Übungswissen im Yoga, Tantra und Asketismus des frühen indischen Mittelalters’, in: Renger, A. & Stellmacher, A., *Übungswissen in Religion und Philosophie: Produktion, Weitergabe, Wandel*, Freie Universität Berlin, 2017 (forthcoming).
- *Theravada-buddhismen: Dhamma: Extra tekster*, Højbjerg: Forlaget Systime, 2017. Translations of classical Buddhist texts from Pali into Danish.

Archana Venkatesan and Crispin Branfoot

- *In Antal’s Garden: Art, Ornament and Devotion in Srivilliputtur* (Mumbai: Marg Publications).



Named Lectures

This year's Majewski Lecture was by Professor Tony Stewart, who spoke on 'The Colloquy between Muhammad and Saytān: The 18th century Bangla Iblichnāmā of Garībullā.'. This was held in conjunction with the Asian Studies Centre, St. Antony's College, and the Department of History.

Visiting fellows' reports

Professor Tony Stewart

Since arriving in Oxford in late September 2016, I completed a scholarly monograph tentatively titled 'Romance of the Pīrs: Fictive Discourse in Early Modern Bengali Sufism'. The manuscript is 135,000 words. I argue that these popular and entertaining tales that have circulated for nearly five centuries are performing a cultural and religious work that falls outside the prescriptive monologic of traditional Islamic history, theology, and law. The earliest tales argue for the equivalence of the Vaiṣṇava god Nārāyaṇ and Allāh. The tales operate in a subjunctive mode in which they explore the possibilities of appropriating a Bengali, fundamentally Hindu, cosmology into an Islamic cosmological framework. After the initial proposal of equivalence, the tenor of the stories shifts to one of appropriation. They employ parody as the primary rhetorical strategy and the approach is based on a recognition of Hindu gods and goddesses, but not as equivalents to Allāh, but to the pīrs themselves as subordinates of Allāh. In popular terms, it means that there is only one God, Allāh, and that all forms of Hindu divinity are incorporated into the unity of God (an informal or generic version of *wahdat al wujud* or 'unity of Being'; but not *tawhīd* because the latter would not tolerate such equivalences – a position that Shahab Ahmed's arguments in *What Is Islam? The Importance of Being Islamic* (Princeton 2016) would predict). These tales are key to understanding how Islam in Bengal gradually transformed into a uniquely Bengali Islam that operates according to a logic Hindu-Muslim inclusion and rapprochement.

Translated anthology

I am also preparing an anthology of translations of some of the key tales that constitute the object of study of the monograph. The anthology is tentatively titled 'The Needle at the Bottom of the Sea: Miracle Tales of Bengali Muslim Saints'. The anthology will include full translations with annotations of seven tales of

The entire staff and faculty of OCHS have been very helpful in meeting every request and need. A special mention should be made of the library, which is already a fine asset. Rembert Lutheharm clearly knows the collection inside out, which has been quite helpful. And the Wednesday lunches, when I could attend, were very effective in getting to know students and faculty, not to mention the delicious food.

Prof. Tony Stewart
J.P. and Beena Khaitan Fellow

Sufi Pīrs, ranging from the late sixteenth century to the late nineteenth century. Tales include the story of Dakṣiṇ Rāy and Baḍa Khān Gāji in the Rāy Maṅgal of Kṛṣṇarām (late 16th c.); Gāji Kālu o Cāmpāvātī of Śekh Khodā Bakhś (early 17th c.); Bonbibī Juhurā Nāmā of Muhāmmad Khāter Sāheb (mid-18th c.); 'Khwaja Khijr' section of Nabivamśa of Saiyad Sultān (late 16th c.); Tinlakṣya Pīr by anonymous (18th c.), Satya Pīr Puthī of Kavivallabh (early 18th c.); and Satya Nārāyaṇ Pāñcālī: Nalanīler Pālā by anonymous (19th c.). I have completed a final translation of the most difficult text, the Rāy Maṅgal of Kṛṣṇarām, and Khwaja Khijr; I have complete drafts of the remaining texts that should reasonably be finished some time late in 2017.

Edited Bangla texts

I have prepared and am currently copyediting (final page proofs) a collection of five edited texts of tales dedicated to Satya Pīr which originate from the Dhaka University Library Manuscript Collection. The book is titled: *Satya pīrer pāñc punthi: bikalpita kāhinīr aitīhya* ('Five Texts of Satya Pīr: Alternative Narrative Traditions'). Includes: Tinlakṣyapīrer pāñcālī by Anonymous [Harinārāyaṇ], Trilakhya pīrer pāñcālī by Harinārāyaṇ, Galakāṭāphāsyarā pāla by Rasamay, Satya pīrer pāñcālī (Vallabha pāla) by Kṛṣṇaśaṅkar, and Satyanārāyaṇ kathā (Akṣoti pāla) by Kavi Kāṇva. With an introduction and postscript by Tony K. Stewart. In Bengali.

Public lectures

The lectures delivered this year include (six discrete lectures in nine venues):

- ‘Myth-History Conundrums in the Hagiographies of Satya Pir: Hindu God and Muslim Holy Man,’ Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies (27 October 2016)
- ‘Subjunctive Explorations of Fictive Vaiṣṇava-Sufi Discourse,’ Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies (10 November 2016)
- ‘The Hermeneutics of Religious Biography: The Life and Legacy of Pir Shah Abu Bakr Siddiqui,’ Aliah University, Kolkata, India (14 January 2017)
- ‘The Colloquy between Muhammad and Saytān: The 18th century Bangla Iblichnāmā of Garībullā,’ the annual Majewski Lecture co-sponsored by the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies, the Asian Studies Centre, St. Antony’s College, the Department of History (31 January 2017)
- ‘When Muslim and Hindu Worlds Meet in Fiction: Mapping the Bengali Imaginaire,’ Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies (16 February 2017)
- ‘Subjunctive Explorations of Fictive Vaiṣṇava-Sufi Discourse,’ Department of History, School of Oriental and African Studies (21 February 2017)
- ‘The Colloquy between Muhammad and Saytān: Conundrums in the 18th c. Bengali Iblichnāmā of Garībullā,’ British Library (27 March 2017)
- ‘Narrations: How Sufis Rehearse Relevance,’ Representing South Asian Sufism: International Conference on South Asian Literary Traditions, Gurmani Centre for Language and Culture, Lahore University of Management Science (13–15 April 2017)
- ‘Subjunctive Explorations of Fictive Sufi Discourse in Early Modern Bengal: or How to Be Serious about Erstwhile Entertainment for the Masses,’ Ústav jižní a centrální Asie FF UK a Orientální ústav AV, Univerzita Karlova v Praze (Charles University in Prague) (24 April 2017)

Publications

While working on the monograph and translations, I have held back from publishing, except to revise one paper: ‘Popular Sufi Narratives and the Parameters of the Bengali Imaginaire’ in *Aesthetics of the Sublime: Religious Texts and Rhetorical Theory*, edited by Jan Scholz and Max Stille, Transcultural Research–Heidelberg Studies on Asia and Europe in a Global Context (Heidelberg and Berlin: SpringerVerlag, forthcoming). I routinely attended lectures at the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies and was a regular participant in the weekly South Asia Seminar in the Asian Studies Centre of St Antony’s College. I have also attended a mix of other talks, most notably at the Oriental Institute and at the Oxford Centre for Islamic Studies (newly renamed the Oxford Institute for Islamic Studies).

Student and faculty consultations

In the course of the year, I have read and discussed in extenso a number of chapters of dissertations by several graduate students, including Sunit Patel, Patcharoyiral ‘Lily’ Chandepaheraporn, and Lucian Wong. I have also had very productive talks with a number of local faculty, including sharing works-in-progress, too many to name.

OCHS staff and facilities

The entire staff and faculty of OCHS have been very helpful in meeting every request and need. A special mention should be made of the library, which is already a fine asset (and will be to the Bodleian when that arrangement is finalised in the future). Rembert Lutheharms clearly knows the collection inside out, which has been quite helpful. And the Wednesday lunches, when I could attend, were very effective in getting to know students and faculty, not to mention the delicious food.

J.P. and Beena Khaitan Visiting Fellowship

Finally let me express my thanks to the donors whose fellowship afforded me the opportunity to secure better lodging than I was expecting and relieved some of the other expenses, all of which contribute directly to a higher level of production. I am very affected by my environment, so the fellowship paid even greater dividends than one might have expected. It was an honour to be so named the J.P. and Beena Khaitan Visiting Fellow for the year.

Silje Lyngar Einarsen

Assistant professor, Oslo University College/ Aarhus University



I had the privilege to visit the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies as Shivdasani Visiting Fellow for the 2017 Trinity term. During my visit, I worked on the Śākta Traditions research project with Dr Bjarne Wernicke-Olesen, which includes a collaborative translation project involving fellows and students of the Centre. Preliminary results of this project, based on several participants' work on the *Netratantra*, the *Kubjikāmatatantra*, and the *Haṭhpradīpikā*, is published later this year in a book chapter co-authored with Dr Wernicke-Olesen (published in Berlin by Lit Verlag under the title *Übungswissen in Yoga, Tantra und Asketismus des frühen Indischen Mittelalters*).

The Centre kindly facilitated the space for me to invite some of our Danish students who work on the Śākta Traditions project to a one-week Sanskrit reading seminar in the OCHS library. During this week, five students worked on the *Haṭhpradīpikā* under the supervision of Dr Bjarne Wernicke-Olesen and myself. Their efforts resulted in the completion of a first translation of the second chapter of this important work into Danish. We have a contract with Univers Publishers, Aarhus, for an illustrated edition with the full translation, which we expect to be in print early 2018. The students remain with the Śākta Tradition project, and those who have not already had the chance to do so, may be granted the unique opportunity to spend one or two terms in Oxford through a memorandum of understanding between Aarhus University and the OCHS.

It has been a great pleasure to be part of the life at the OCHS. I wish to thank the fellows and students at the Centre for the academically enriching and interesting conversations. A particular thank you to the Director, Shaunaka Rishi Das, for creating such an open and truly unique atmosphere in Oxford.

Dr Måns Broo

Through the kind sponsors of the J.P. and Reema Khaitan, I was given the opportunity to spend Trinity term 2017 as a visiting research fellow at the OCHS, working on a text-critical edition and annotated translation of the 16th century Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava text *Hari-bhakti-vilāsa*. On the very first day of my stay, Shaunaka Rishi Das told me to take advantage of three things in Oxford: people, books, and parks. I endeavoured to do so.

At my home university, I am the only person doing Hindu studies: here I was surrounded by so many brilliant academics.

Dr Mans Broo
J.P. and Beena Khaitan Fellow

When it comes to people, working at the OCHS proved extremely valuable for me. At my home university, I am the only person doing Hindu studies: here I was surrounded by so many brilliant academics. At the Centre itself I often met the literally epic scholars John and Mary Brockington, the distinguished Tony Stewart, Kenneth Valpey, and many others. I had stimulating discussions with Rembert Lutjeharms, Bjarne

Wernicke-Olesen, Jessica Frazier, Sunit Patel, and Lucian Wong. At the Centre, I attended thought-provoking lectures by Martin Gansten, Sunit Patel, Anne-Marie Gaston, and Rembert Lutjeharms. I gave two lectures myself as well, on my present work and on my previous project, the *Rādhā Tantra*.

Naturally, I took Shaunaka's advice about people to include people outside the Centre as well. I attended the Sanskrit Reading Room workshops at All Souls College and at SOAS in London, I heard lectures at the Oriental Institute, St. Anthony's and Somerville Colleges, took part in the Sanskritist Lunch on Mondays at Balliol College, and so on.

As far as books are concerned, few places are better than Oxford. As my project concerns a book that cites a great many other books, the extensive collections of the OCHS and Bodleian libraries proved very useful to my work. At the Bodleian library I found the *Rāmārcana-candrikā*, a rare book that I had for a long time unsuccessfully searched for.

Finally, the advice about the parks. I made great progress in my work while in Oxford, advancing in two months much farther than I had hoped for. While the people around me were even more important than the books, the parks did prove important as well, not only as places to relax after poring over medieval manuscripts for many hours, but also as affording moments of clarity and inspiration. I particularly enjoyed University Parks and meandering along the meadows by Cherwell River.

The OCHS is a wonderful institution, not only for the academic expertise of its scholars, but also for the friendliness of the staff. Anuradha Dooney, Lal Krishna, and Yogdeep Kalia never hesitated to help me with practical issues, from heaters to printouts – and wonderful food.

I have no doubts that the OCHS will continue to spearhead Hindu studies in Oxford and far beyond, and I look forward to co-operating with the Centre in the upcoming years.

Professor G.C. Tripathi

To be associated with the Oxford Centre of Hindu Studies is not only a matter of honour but also an intellectual treat. I deem myself to be fortunate to have been chosen for the Shivdasani Fellowship for the second time and to have resided at OCHS for a little less than two months in October and November, 2016.

During my stay at Oxford I made full use of the rich library of the Centre to enrich my knowledge of Vaishnavism and to embellish my Paper for the Bhagavata-Purana Conference in Chennai, January 2017.

The OCHS is an ideal place for interaction with scholars working on different aspects of Indic Studies at the University because all such scholars tend to visit the Institute either to use its library facilities or to participate in its special lecture programme, or simply to enjoy its delicious vegetarian meals on Wednesdays.

While associated with the OCHS as a Fellow, I had occasion to meet and interact with a number of graduate students and research scholars. Quite a few came with some problems as well, or were eager to know more about a certain topic pertaining to their field. I listened to them patiently, tried to clear their doubts and gave them additional information and valuable suggestions.

During my Fellowship I gave two lectures which were well-attended:

- The Monastic and Ascetic traditions of India and their ramification towards the West
- Influence of Kashmir on the Tantric Tradition of Orissa

My stay at the OCHS as a Shivdasani Fellow was academically very useful and productive for me personally as well and I hope that it also enriched the academic programme of the OCHS.

I have also previously been a Fellow at OCHS some eight years ago but this time I felt and observed a marked improvement and was impressed to note its impact on the academic world. The Centre has a bright future and it is going to play a major role in making people better and more informed about Indian religious sects, philosophical schools, history, and culture.

I am thankful to the energetic Director of the Centre, Shaunaka Rishi Das, and all my other colleagues at the OCHS who made our stay most comfortable, academically useful, and really memorable.



Conference papers and lectures by Research Fellows

Professor Mandakranta Bose

- An Art for Everyone: The Rāmāyaṇa Scrolls of Bengal.

Professor John Brockington

- Regions and Recensions, Scripts and Manuscripts, at 'Issues in Indian Philology', Paris.

Dr Jessica Frazier

- Comparative Mysticism in Glasgow, Logic and Religion, Warsaw
- Religion and Nationalism, Sweden
- Sanskrit traditions, Manchester
- Dialogue in Indian Society, Lancaster
- Philosophy and Education, Bath Spa University.

Professor Ravi Gupta

- Restoring Sight to Blinding Love: The Bhagavata Purana's Transformation of the Urvasi-Pururavas Narrative. International Conference on the Bhagavata Purana, University of Madras. January 2017.
- Churning the Milky Ocean: A Recipe for Creation from the Bhagavata Purana. Invited Lecture at the Princeton University Museum of Art. December 2016.
- Religious Site Visits as Pedagogical Method. Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, San Antonio. November 2016.
- Restoring Sight to Blinding Love: The Bhagavata Purana's Transformation of the Urvasi-Pururavas Narrative. Annual Conference on South Asia, University of Wisconsin-Madison. October 2016.
- Toward an Interfaith Theology for ISKCON: Lessons from Caitanya's Encounter with the Qazi of Navadvipa. Center for the Study of World Religions, Harvard University. April 2016.

Dr Natalia Lidova

- Language of Priest – Wording of Poet: Sacral Speech in the Earliest Genres of Sanskrit Drama. The Annual Roerich Conference, The Institute of Oriental Studies, the Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, Russia, 2016.
- Kūṭiyāṭṭam – Ancient Theatre in the Contemporary World. The Institute of Philosophy of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Moscow, Russia, 2016.
- Rasa as Aesthetic Emotion and Religious Ecstasy. OCHS, Oxford, 2016.
- The Cult of Pūjā and the Genesis of Hindu Iconography. OCHS, Oxford (scheduled for Michaelmas term, 2017).
- Lokapālas - the Guardians of the World. Symbolism and Imagery, 8th Dubrovnik International Conference on the Sanskrit Epics and Purāṇas (DICSEP 8) (September 11–16, 2017).

Dr Rembert Lutjeharms

- The Bhāgavata as Sātvata-saṃhitā: Some reflections on Śrīnātha Cakravartī's Caitanya-mata-mañjuṣā for the Bhāgavata Purāṇa conference held in January in Chennai

Dr Kiyokazu Okita

- The Number of Bhaktirasas: Jīva Gosvāmī's Prītisandarbhā on Bhāgavatapurāṇa 10.43.17, The Bhāgavata Purāṇa: Its Histories, Philosophies, and Cultures, January 6–8, 2017.
- Vaiṣṇava Perceptions of Muslim Authority in Early Modern South Asia: Based on Bengali Hagiographies of Caitanya, Culture and Society in Early Modern South Asia: Cross-Linguistic Comparative Studies of Literary and Religious Texts, December 11, 2016.

- Transcultural Dynamics in South Asian Religions, Transcultural Dynamics of As and Europe: Mobility, Negotiation, and Transformation, September 26, 2016.
- Hindu-Muslim Encounters in Early Modern South Asia: According to Bengali Hagiographies of Caitanya, The 29th Annual Session of the Japanese Association for South Asian Studies, September 25, 2016.
- From Rasa to Bhaktirasa: The Development of Devotional Aesthetic Theory in Early Modern South Asia, The 67th Annual Conference of the Japanese Association of Indian and Buddhist Studies, September 3, 2016

Dr Kenneth Valpey

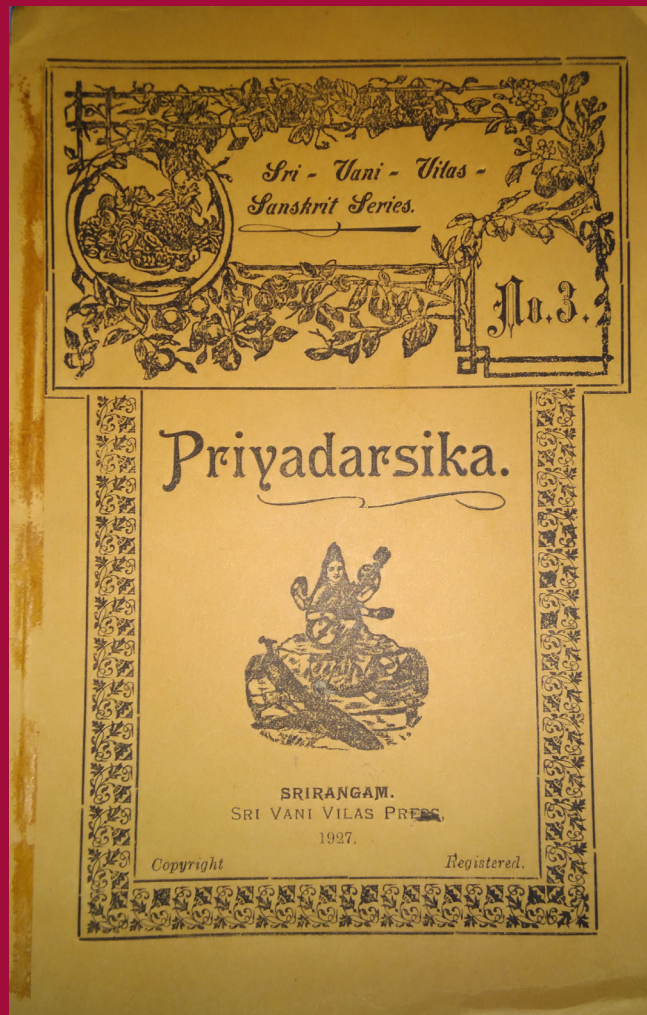
- Delivered key presentation, on Hindu personalism, at a Personalism conference at Western Carolina University, 1 August 2016.
- Several lectures in universities in Beijing, China, plus one lecture in Guangzhou, China, November/December 2016.
- The Bhagavata Purana Conference in Chennai, India. Organised in conjunction with Dr Ravi Gupta, January 2017.

Awards for OCHS students

Aku's Bursary	Ionut Moise
Amit Mishra Bursary	Rishi Rajpopat
Gupta Dan Bursary	Tilak Parekh
Gupta Dan Bursary	Puja-Arti Patel
Hansraj and Kanchanben Popat Bursary	Ionut Moise
Hanuman Bursary	Christopher Fleming
Harish IK Patel Bursary	Dr Kenneth Valpey
Jiva Goswami Scholarship	Alan Herbert
Leicester Friends Bursary	Pavlo Smytsnyuk
Okita Bursary	Paul Gerstmayr
Patel Book Grant	Sunit Patel
Prof. Makhan Lal Roy Chowdhury Book Prize	Sunit Patel
Ramaiah Alagappan Bursary	Rishi Rajpopat
Ramlal B. Patel Bursary	Dr Kenneth Valpey



2. LIBRARY



THE OCHS Library has continued to grow tremendously in the past year. In the beginning of the academic year, part of the collection moved into a new, separate reading room. The new reading room doubles the shelf space the Library had and gives additional desk space, which allows readers to use our collection even when a lecture is going on in the main reading room.

The Library collection has also increased substantially, as we received several large collections this year. Prof. Kathleen O’Connell donated the library of her late husband, Prof. Joseph O’Connell, which consists mostly of rare Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava texts and books on Bengali culture more broadly. Prof. Kapila Vatsyayana donated her library, mostly of works on Indian art, aesthetics, and archaeology, of which the first boxes have arrived in the mail. We also received the library of the late Arvind Oza, donated by his family, which too focusses on art and aesthetics. Finally, with the help of Prema Goet, in February 2017 we acquired the extensive library of the late Prof. Tuvia Gelblum, which his family kindly donated to us. Prof. Gelblum’s collection is impressively broad, but is particularly strong in works on Indian philosophy (which was the focus of most of his own research). Prema Goet himself also donated a substantial part of his own library to the OCHS.

The Library also received donations from Diwakar Acharya, John and Mary Brockington, Måns Broo, Shaunaka Rishi Das, Jessica Frazier, Rembert Lutjeharms, Amita Nathwani, Ravindra Rao, G. C. Tripathi, Yadunandana Swami, Kenneth Valpey, Hari Vaudrey, the Bodleian Library, and the Oxford Centre for Mission Studies Library.

The Library has received significant help from several volunteers and interns at the OCHS, most notably Yogdeep Kalia, Syama Dasi, and Rachna Bahl, all of whom helped catalogue new acquisitions.



3. CONTINUING EDUCATION DEPARTMENT

Online enrolments

Course development

Classroom-based courses

Publications

Partnerships

Website

Volunteers

Tutoring and management

Development

A modest increase in online enrolments, largely due to the addition of a fourth term; the re-introduction of classroom-based courses; and a new book title were the highlights of this year's Continuing Education Department.

Online enrolments

This year we had 623 enrolments on our online courses, a 15% increase on the previous year.

As well as being a great contribution to our core aim of making Hindu Studies matter, our online courses are making a useful contribution to our finances helping to sustain our research, teaching, and publishing work.

Course development

We currently have eight courses available online. Plans to increase our offerings this year haven't come to fruition leading to a lower than expected growth. However, we do have the course book for a new course on Vedanta and Samkhya ready and hope to film the lectures over the summer, allowing for a January launch. One of our great Danes, Silje Lyngar Einarsen, has agreed to prepare and film a course on the Shakta Traditions in time for the April 2018 term. And Dr Layne Little of UC Davis has been filming a very interesting and picturesque course on Hindu Temples – a course he has also been teaching at Davis.

Online courses in an earlier stage of development are Hindu Law and Dharma; a History of Yoga; and a Chaplaincy Course, for which we already have course notes. We are planning to contact a wider cohort of potential course-contributors this year.

Classroom-based courses

Returning to its roots, somewhat, the CED has begun running classes in London and is running another Summer School in Oxford. Initial uptake has been good and more are planned.

Publications

Our earlier publication of Dr Nick Sutton's well-regarded translation and guide to *Bhagavad-gita* as an ebook met with moderate success. We feel that expanding this publishing programme will aid students and add to the visibility of the Continuing Education Department.

To this end, we are now publishing hard copies of Dr Sutton's Gita and his translation and guide to the *Yoga Sutras*, as well as an ebook version of the *Yoga Sutras*. The pundits may have been wrong on the declining future of hard copies as these have proven more successful than our ebooks.

Our Hindu Chaplaincy book is in the final layout stages and there are a number of our course handbooks, such as Vedas and Upanishads, that would make excellent publications.

We have managed to streamline the publishing process so hope to be able to publish more quickly in future.

Partnerships

Last year we began a partnership with Rebecca Ffrench at YogaLondon. The first stage – YogaLondon helping us market our online courses – proved very successful, and we are planning a shared yoga course in February 2018 with YogaLondon providing the moves and OCHS providing the philosophy. The YogaLondon partnership has also brought some very talented people our way, three of whom have joined us as tutors.

Website

Our new course website was subject to an intensive usability study in late 2016. Associated surveys of users showed a high level of satisfaction, but naturally the more in-depth study highlighted some modest room for improvement for our next iteration.

Of greater concern was our old enrolment process, essentially unchanged since 2008. Although functional, it wasn't very intuitive, leading to frustration with some users and a corresponding need for support. To this end a completely new enrolment website was introduced in late 2016 offering a greatly streamlined and simplified process while remaining very secure and stable.

Volunteers

As with all aspects of the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies, the Continuing Education Department is significantly aided by volunteers. An online student herself, Musaret Siddiqi has been a constant help, particularly in proof-reading new course material and searching for new marketing avenues. Kiran Rawal, one of our Leicester Friends, has provided expert advice and assistance in audio-visual matters and Suresh Lakshminarayanan has shared his wealth of marketing knowledge.

Tutoring and management

Nick Sutton responded to each of my observations during the course. He was gentle and gracious in handling issues without compromising on his conviction. I am deeply appreciative of his scholarship and intellectual integrity.

*E.R Gopalakrishnan
New Zealand*

Our online tutoring team this year has been: Dr Layne Little, Dr Ramesh Pattni, Tushar Shah, Daniel Simpson, and Dr Nick Sutton. The CED is managed by Lal Krishna.

Development

The Development Planning Committee has identified the Continuing Education Department as needing additional resources if it is to grow strongly. The CED was traditionally a small side-project of the OCHS, but it has since grown to become a very useful way to engage scholars (as tutors and course developers) and part-time students (from around the world). Attempts to significantly expand our offerings have tended to run into the same problems of lack of people to do the work. We are looking at ways to overcome this.



BHAGAVAD-GITA

Nicholas Sutton



OXFORD CENTRE FOR HINDU STUDIES GUIDES

4. DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES AND ACHIEVEMENTS

Development Planning Committee

Property campaign

Media

Outreach

Awards

Chaplaincy

Internet

Bhumi project

Hum Alumni

Interns

Friends of the OCHS (FOCHS)

Volunteers and donations in kind

Development Planning Committee

The Development Planning Committee supplies planning and operational support to the OCHS through charting the development agenda of the Centre and overseeing operational matters. It meets fortnightly as a PMO (Project Management Office) by teleconference.

The Committee has taken a leading role in establishing the OCHS on a firm footing both financially and structurally. Activities include:

- identifying a suitable property for the Centre's expansion;
- commissioning a fundraising agency;
- focussing energies on the Continuing Education Department (CED) as an income source;
- clarifying and establishing partnerships with other institutions and scholars;
- funding academic staff positions;
- clarifying the Centre's budgeting and financial reporting;
- and identifying other ways to fund the Centre's operational costs.

With these interim goals achieved, the OCHS will be in a much better position to continue its endowment campaign and its effort to establish the Centre's finances on a permanent basis.

Property campaign

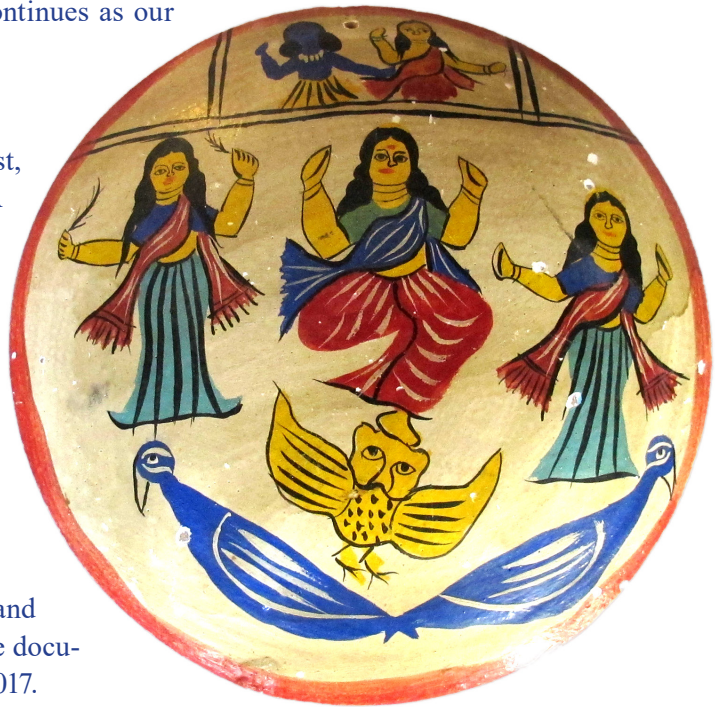
The search for a new home for the OCHS continues as our staffing levels increase and our library grows.

Media

Dr Jessica Frazier participated in a podcast, 'History of Philosophy Without any Gaps'. A co-operative effort between Kings College, London, and LMU, Munich, it attempts a survey of all the world's philosophical traditions. Jessica speaks on Indian philosophies (one of the gaps).

OCHS Director Shaunaka Rishi Das's media output this year included:

- Consultation on the Tale of Five Temples – The Story of Hinduism in Britain, a documentary produced by the BBC and partly filmed at the Centre. The documentary came out in October 2017.
- Six Prayer for the day broadcasts on BBC 4 radio.
- BBC Radio Oxford, Sunday programme on Hindu medical ethics.
- Presented a Talk on Diwali at Pinsent Mason LLP in Birmingham which was broadcast to 15 of their offices around the world.
- Edited a special edition journal of the Muslim World on the Hindu Muslim relationships, was present at the book launch at the Harford Seminary, Hertford in Connecticut USA.



Outreach

Visits to the Centre

Each year the OCHS hosts a number of visits from schools, colleges and universities and this year we had visits from United States, Denmark, and Oxford.

- Visit from AS students of Warwick Jessop St. James Girls School.
- Shaunaka hosted a visit by Indian students from the B.D. Somani International School at the Oxford Union, followed by a presentation to 60 students on the work of the Centre.

Other outreach events include:

This year the Director, Shaunaka Rishi Das, continued his busy outreach programme which included:

- Speaker at a Hindu-Christian forum panel discussion in London.
- Participated in the meeting of the International Advisory Council with Auroville, in Pondicherry, India
- Presented at the Syama Prasad Mookerjee research foundation in Delhi about the work of the OCHS.
- Ran a day workshop on Hinduism and Creativity at Avid Learning in Mumbai.
- Talk at the Oxford Hindu Society Alumni dinner, East India Club, London.
- Two presentations at the Dutch leadership group, Avicenna, on executive leadership in September and October in Oxford and organised the group to meet with Oxford students.
- Worked with an Oxford student Prakhar Mishra researching issues around Caste Legislation and Equality which included a consultation at the House of Lords.
- Was called to consult with the Department of Communities and Local government about the Hindu communities in the UK.
- Spoke at the J.P. Morgan Diwali function.
- Talked on a panel about Cultural Simulation, the Campaign for Racial Awareness and Quality organised by Oxford University Students Union.
- Two consultations on Vaishnava-Anglican dialogue at the Christ Church college.
- Attended an interfaith luncheon forum on the UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in London, where scientists and religious leaders came together to discuss climate change.
- Talk on Religion in the Modern World at St Mary's school for girls in Ascot.
- One on One Interfaith dialogue with the Bishop of Leicester, at a Hindu mandir in Leicester.
- Talk in York with the York Interfaith Association on the subject of Interfaith Principles found in the Bhagavad Gita.
- Talk at Schroders, an inaugural talk for their Hindu Diversity Team.
- Received the Indian High Commissioner at the Centre
- Number of meetings with Oxford University Students to form two groups, Environmental Study group and Caste, which form part of the Centre's Chaplaincy work including attending Student Ministry Forums Society.
- Meeting with Avanti Schools Trust to discuss and help develop their principles of operation and education.

Awards

Thanks to generous donors, the OCHS was able to award just over £7000 to students this year. The donors and their awards are:

Ananthi Al Ramiah	Ramaiah Alagappan Bursary
Anonymous	Aku's Bursary
Anonymous	Gupta Dan Bursary
Anonymous	Hanuman Bursary
Anonymous	Patel Book Grant
Atul Mishra	Amit Mishra Bursary
Dr Ravi & Mrs Amrita Gupta	Jiva Goswami Scholarship
Jayesh Popat	Hansraj and Kanchanben Popat Bursary
Kiyokazu Okita	Okita Bursary
Leicester Friends of OCHS	Leicester Friends Bursary
Prof. Mandrakanta Bose	Prof. Makhan Lal Roy Chowdhury Book Prize
Anonymous	Gupta Dan Bursary
Pyarelal and Saroj Patel	Harish I.K. Patel Bursary
Pyarelal and Saroj Patel	Ramlal B. Patel Bursary

Chaplaincy

Shaunaka Rishi Das continues to serve as the University's first Hindu Chaplain and also serves local hospitals in the same capacity. He regularly meets with students and patients on a wide variety of personal matters.

Work is continuing on development of a chaplaincy course. The course notes were prepared last year by Dr Nick Sutton, Vineet Chander (Princeton), and Shaunaka. Work is progressing towards developing these into a full course to be taught online and on-site.

The OCHS also facilitates Hum, the University's Hindu students society.

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 one of our main avenues for publicising our forthcoming lectures and seminars.

Bhumi project

US meetings

Our Bhumi Project Director, Gopal Patel, was based in New York from June–November 2016. The purpose of this trip was the strengthen Bhumi's presence in America in order to raise funding for Bhumi's work internationally and further solidify Bhumi as the go-to Hindu organisation working globally on climate change. During this time Gopal had fruitful meetings with a number of Hindu leaders and organisations. He was also invited to speak at a number of institutions about the work of Bhumi. Some highlights of Gopal's visit were:

- US Catholic Bishops Conference
- Gopal was invited to speak at the annual Hindu-Catholic dialogue hosted by the US Catholic Bishops Conference in Washington, DC.
- On behalf of the Bhumi Project, Gopal was presented the 'Dharma Seva Award' by the Hindu American Foundation at a gala event in Washington, DC. The award was in recognition of the work Bhumi Project has done internationally in mobilising Hindu communities to address climate change.

UN conference

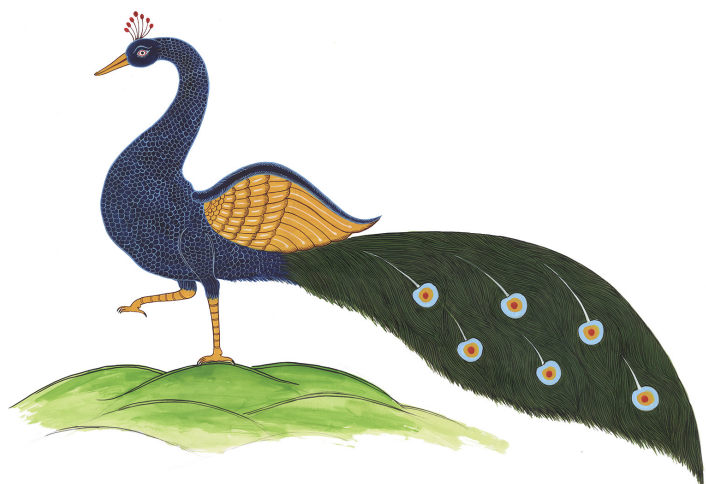
Gopal was invited to speak at the United Nations Headquarters in New York at their annual Department of Public Information conference on how faith-based organisations can participate in international development.

Hindu Mandir Executive Council

Gopal addressed the annual meeting of Hindu temple leaders from North America at their annual meeting in Atlanta. In his remarks, he stressed the need for Hindu temple leaders to create safe spaces where young Hindus can talk about and address the growing tensions in American society.

Departure of India Project Manager

In July 2017, Jignesh Patel, Bhumi's India Project Manager since August 2013 left the Bhumi Project due to funding for his position expiring.



Interfaith work in India

In June Bhumi organised a multi-faith event in Delhi with Islamic Relief and EcoSikh. The event featured speakers from each religious tradition and how they are addressing climate change. The event received full-page coverage in the Times of India.

Prana

In August we piloted a new healthcare initiative named 'Prana – Healthcare for all'. This initiative places Hindu medical students from universities in the UK with Hindu healthcare facilities in India. This year we placed three students with hospitals in Gujarat, Mumbai, and Kerala for up to ten days. The feedback received from both the students and hospitals was overwhelming positive that we aim to expand the program in 2017. The program is run by Bhumi volunteers based in England.

COP22

Gopal attended the annual UN climate change negotiations, which were held in Marrakech, Morocco. During his time there he met a number of representatives from other religious and environmental organisations to discuss possible collaboration.

India Renewable Energy Consultation

In February Bhumi hosted a renewable energy consultation in Mumbai. This national gathering brought together religious NGOs and leaders from the renewable energy industry. The aim of the meeting was to better understand the landscape of renewable energy in India and how to encourage more religious organisations to adopt renewable energy.

New international connections

In April Gopal visited Geneva, Switzerland, for meetings with the World Economic Forum and the World Council of Churches. Representatives from both organisations expressed their difficulty in finding strong and committed Hindu organisations to work with and welcomed the opportunity to work with Bhumi. Gopal is in continued dialogue with both organisations about how to increase Hindu presence in their initiatives.

US Fundraising

Gopal Patel returned to America in April for three months to continue fund development work. He is currently a number of substantial leads and hopes to secure funding later this year.

Hum Alumni

Hum is Oxford University's student-run Hindu society, which was founded in 2000 and has always been closely connected to the OCHS. The Hum Alumni network was founded in 2015 with the premise of ensuring bonds that were formed at Oxford not only continue but also develop. Moreover, the alumni society supports the work of the OCHS and has set up an annual dinner to raise awareness and funding for the Centre.

This year will be the third dinner of the Hum Alumni and we hope to return to the impressive East India Club in central London. These events are open to all and we want to continue growing our network of active alumni as well as welcoming new people with similar interests in Hindu values and culture. These events are held in early autumn and are becoming a firm fixture in the calendar.

Interns

This year we were very pleased to welcome Abigail Wong. Abigail brought some much-needed artistic skill to the OCHS. While interning at the OCHS, Abigail completed her MA in Communication Design at Kingston University and has a particular interest in Hindu iconography. She created some artwork for the Continuing Education Department's marketing and was always ready to help with whatever needed doing at any moment.

We also hosted Kalika Sunger for a short internship while she contemplated how best to use her degree in European Law.

And finally, Yogdeep Kalia joined us in early 2017. Yogdeep was a great help in many areas including the expansion of our social media presence.

We try to make the internships as useful to our interns as they are to the OCHS. They enable interns to develop useful skills in a stimulating environment while making a real difference to the Centre's operations.

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 a monthly talks programme, FOCHS Leicester have continued their annual Tirath-Yatra – a sponsored walk of Leicester's Hindu temples, and Yaadanjali – a sponsored evening of *bhajans* in memory of the departed. In the coming year we are hoping to expand our presence in Leicester with some day schools.

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.

5. ACCOUNTS AND FINANCE

Summary results

Volunteers

THE audited accounts for 31 March 2017 have been prepared by Wenn Townsend Chartered Accountants, Oxford.

The Board has been successful in maintaining the sound financial management of the Centre and are pleased to report a healthy increase in the overall reserves of the Centre.

This increase has been as a result of the Board undertaking several initiatives which have borne fruit with ongoing donations and endowments being made to the Centre to cover long term academic-staff and administrative costs.

Summary results

	Total Funds 2017	Total Funds 2016
Income	£	£
Donations	269,680	228,979
Charitable Activities	79,787	47,671
Investment Activities	1,462	1,173
Endowment	200,000	0
Gains on Investment	6,654	0
Total Income	557,583	277,823
Total Expenditure	276,768	248,947
Net Increase in Funds for the Year	280,815	28,876

Volunteers

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.

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.

Ajay Khaitan, Ramesh Venkataraman, and Namita Vibanshu-Sharma gave significantly of their time and expertise on our Development Planning Committee.

Other significant voluntary service has been very gratefully received from Kirk Ott (audio editing), Dev and Rachna Bahl, Sanjay Gadhvi (mobile phone contract), and Alan Herbert (secretarial help).

The Continuing Education Department has been greatly assisted Suresh Lakshminarayanan (digital marketing), Kiran Raval (editing CED videos), and Musaret Siddiqui who has been an invaluable asset to the Continuing Education Department (proof-reading, cataloguing international scholars of Hinduism, and advertising research).

Our Wednesday lunches saw excellent attendances again this year. Managed by Anita Desai, this was greatly assisted by numerous helpers, but special thanks go to Tilak Parekh and Syama Dasi for their steadfast help. The BAPS Swaminarayan Temple in Neasden has come forward as a major sponsor of this programme.

All these contributors save us considerable time, effort, and expense. Their service has been an invaluable and 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.

6. APPENDIX ONE: ORGANISATION

Board of Governors

Prof. Diwakar Acharya (Humanities Division representative)
Mr Shaunaka Rishi Das
Lord Dholakia, OBE, DL
Dr Mark Edwards (Theology Faculty representative)
Dr S. Bhattacharya-Ford
Prof. Richard Gombrich
Mr Ajay Piramal
Mrs Madhu Ruia
Mr Azad Shivdasani
Prof. Mark Smith (Oriental Studies representative)
Mr Ramesh Venkataraman
Francis X Clooney
Pujan H Patel

Administration

Director

Mr Shaunaka Rishi Das

Academic Director (interim)

Prof. John Brockington

Development Administrator

Mr Lal Krishna

Librarian

Dr Rembert Lutjeharms

Fellows

Prof. John Brockington
Mary Brockington
Anuradha Dooney
Dr Gillian Evison
Dr Rembert Lutjeharms
Dr Nicholas Sutton

Research Fellows

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

Senior Fellows

Prof. Francis X. Clooney, SJ
Prof. Gavin Flood FBA
Dr Sanjukta Gupta
Prof. Dermot Killingley
Prof. Julius Lipner
Peggy Morgan
Prof. Patrick Olivelle
Prof. Thomas Hopkins

Continuing Education Department

Dr Nicholas Sutton
Anuradha Dooney
Lal Krishna
Dr Layne Little
Dr Ramesh Pattni
Tushar Shah
Daniel Simpson
Zoe Slatoff-Prime

Patrons Council

Mr Amitabh Bachchan
Dr Karan Singh
HE The Indian High Commissioner

Academic Council

Prof. Diwakar Acharya
Prof. John Brockington
Dr Gillian Evison
Dr Jessica Frazier
Dr Ravi Gupta
Dr Sondra Hausner
Dr Rembert Lutjeharms
Peggy Morgan
Shaunaka Rishi Das
Prof. G.C. Tripathi
Dr Bjarne Wernicke Olesen

Academic Planning Committee

Prof. Brockington
Mr Shaunaka Rishi Das
Dr Jessica Frazier
Dr Rembert Lutjeharms
Dr Bjarne Wernicke Olesen
Mr Lucian Wong

Development Planning Committee

Shaunaka Rishi Das
Ajay Khaitan
Lal Krishna
Manish Thakrar
Ramesh Venkataraman

Friends of OCHS

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
Sumanji Johri
Bina Modi
Prafullaben Raja
Manishbhai Thakrar
Shobhaben Trivedi

USA

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

7. APPENDIX TWO: LECTURES

Michaelmas Term 2016

Hinduism 1: Sources and Development

Dr. Rembert Lutjeharms

Sanskrit Prelims

Dr. Bjarne Wernicke-Olesen

Readings in Phenomenology

Dr. Jessica Frazier and Lucian Wong

Key thinkers in Hindu Studies

Dr. Bjarne Wernicke-Olesen

Lectures of the J.P. And Beena Khaitan

Visiting Fellow

Myth-History Conundrums in the Hagiographies of Satya Pīr: Hindu God and Muslim Holy Man

Prof. Tony K. Stewart

Subjunctive Explorations of Fictive Vaiṣṇav-Sufi Discourse

Prof. Tony K. Stewart

Lectures of the Shivdasani Visiting Fellow

The monastic/ascetic tradition of India and its ramification towards the west.

Prof. G. C. Tripathi

Influence of Kashmir on the Tantric traditions of Orissa

Prof. G. C. Tripathi

Other lectures

Śākteya Mudrās: Hand Gestures in Tantric Goddess Worship

Janaki Nair

Mind, Social Behaviour, and Intimations of Transcendence Symposium

Dr Isabelle Behncke Izquierdo, Dr Beau Lotto, Dr Tamas David Barret

Hilary Term 2017

Hinduism 2: Hinduism in History and Society

Dr. Rembert Lutjeharms

Sanskrit Prelims

Dr. Bjarne Wernicke-Olesen

Readings in Phenomenology

Dr. Jessica Frazier and Lucian Wong

Key thinkers in Hindu Studies Series

Convenor: Dr Bjarne Wernicke-Olesen

Hermeneutics, Philosophy and Religion: Gadamer

Dr. Jessica Frazier

Lectures of the J.P. And Beena Khaitan

Visiting Fellow

The Colloquy between Muhammad and Saytān: The 18th century Bangla Iblichnāmā of Garībullā

Prof. Tony K. Stewart

When Muslim and Hindu Worlds Meet in Fiction: Mapping the Bengali Imaginaire

Prof. Tony K. Stewart

Lectures of the Shivdasani Visiting Fellow

Moral Reasoning through Narratives: dharma and exegesis in medieval Advaita Vedānta

Dr. James Madaio

Narratives selves and embodied conditioning: Advaitin techniques for waking up within the saṃsāric story

Dr. James Madaio

Early Modern Hindu Theologies Seminars

Convenor: Dr. Rembert Lutjeharms

More than Manu: Trends and Topics in Early Modern Dharmasāstra

Christopher Fleming

A theological basis for social engagement during the rule of Jai Singh II in Early Modern North India

Sunit Patel

Trinity term 2017

Elementary Sanskrit

Dr. Bjarne Wernicke-Olesen

Buddhist Sanskrit

Dr. Bjarne Wernicke-Olesen

Lectures of the J.P. And Beena Khaitan

Visiting Fellow

Rādhā Tantra and the agonies and ecstasies of studying obscure texts

Dr. Måns Broo

Haribhaktivilāsa as the meeting of Vedic, Tantric and Puranic ritualism

Dr. Måns Broo

Early Modern Hindu Theologies Seminars

Convenor: Dr. Rembert Lutjeharms

Constructing a theological basis for social engagement during the rule of Jai Singh II in Early Modern North India

Sunit Patel

Caitanya and the Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana

Dr. Rembert Lutjeharms

Debating Religion: Key Scholars in discussion on the Study of Religions

Convenor: Dr. Jessica Frazier

Fieldwork, Durkheim, and the Study of Religious Community

Prof Sondra Hausner

Expanding Religion: Studying Migration and Diaspora

Prof John Hinnells

Other lectures

'The lotus in the mire': the Indian reception of Tājika astrology

Dr. Martin Gansten

What does it mean to be a playful agent? The Kashmiri Śaiva reformulation of Naṭarāja

Dr. Aleksandra Wenta

8. APPENDIX THREE: VISITING FELLOWS

Shivdasani Visiting Fellow, Michaelmas term: Professor G. C. Tripathi

Prof. Gaya Charan Tripathi was born at Agra (India). He went to school and pursued higher studies at Agra, Pune, and Benares. He has a Masters in Sanskrit (1959) from the University of Agra with a Gold Medal and first position in the University. He received his Ph.D. from the same university in 1962 on Vedic Deities and their subsequent development in the Epics and the Puranas supported by a Fellowship of the Ministry of Education. He is a Fellow of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) for Higher Studies in Germany. He has a Dr.Phil. from the University of Freiburg/Br (1966) in History of Religions, Comparative Indo-European Philology, and Latin (besides Indology) as elective subjects in the grade Summa cum Laude. D.Litt. in Ancient Indian History and Culture from the University of Allahabad on 'A critical Study of the daily Puja Ceremony of the Jagannatha Temple in Puri' (published under the title Communication with God). He has taught at the Universities of Aligarh, Udaipur, Freiburg (twice), Tuebingen (twice), Heidelberg, Berlin, Leipzig, Philipps-Universität Marburg, and British Columbia (Vancouver). He is Chief Indologist and Field Director of the Orissa Research Project (1970–5) of the German Research Council (DFG), and has been Principal of the Ganganatha Jha Research Institute, Allahabad, for over twenty years. He was Professor and Head of the Research and Publication wing of the Indira Gandhi National Centre for the Arts, Delhi, and is presently Director of the Bhogilal Leherchand Institute of Indology in New Delhi. He has published 22 books on subjects mostly pertaining to religions and literature of India. His specialisations are: Indian Religions and Philosophy, Vishnuism (especially Pancharatra school), Vedic studies, Sanskrit Literature, Grammar, and Philology, Cult practices of Orissa, and Gaudiya Vishnuism.

Shivdasani Visiting Fellow, Hilary term: Dr. James Madaio

Dr. James Madaio is a fellow at the Oriental Institute of the Czech Academy of Sciences in Prague. He received his PhD from the Religions and Theology department at the University of Manchester and has held research positions at New Europe College in Bucharest and at the University of Maryland, USA.

JP and Beena Khaitan Visiting Fellow, Michaelmas and Hilary term: Professor Tony Stewart

Prof. Tony K. Stewart specialises in the literatures and religions of the Bangla-speaking world, with a special emphasis on the early modern period. His most recent monograph, *The Final Word: the Caitanya Caritāmṛta and the Grammar of Religious Tradition* (Oxford, 2010), culminated a decades-long study of the Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava hagiographical tradition that included translating with Edward C. Dimock, Jr., *The Caitanya Caritāmṛta of Kṛṣṇadāsa Kavirāja*, Harvard Oriental Series no. 56 (Harvard, 1999). From the literatures of the Muslim–Hindu mythic figure, Satya Pīr, he published *Fabulous Females and Peerless Pīrs: Tales of Mad Adventure in Old Bengal* (Oxford, 2004) and is currently working on a monograph on the popular Bangla romance literatures of the pīrs. With prominent American poet Chase Twichell, he has published the first ever translations of Rabindranath Tagore's pseudonymous Bhānusiṃha poetry titled *The Lover of God* (Copper Canyon, 2003). Stewart currently holds the Gertrude Conaway Vanderbilt Chair in Humanities and serves as a Professor and Chair of the Department of Religious Studies at Vanderbilt University.

JP and Beena Khaitan Visiting Fellow, Trinity term: Dr. Måns Broo

Dr. Måns Broo is a university researcher in comparative religion at Åbo Akademi University, Finland. His main research interests include yoga – both its history and contemporary forms – and the intersections between Vaiṣṇavism and Tantrism in pre-modern Bengal. He is at present engaged in compiling a critical edition and translation of the mediaeval Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava ritual compilation *Haribhaktivilāsa*.

9. APPENDIX FOUR: NEW STUDENTS

Gautam Bhanu Prasant Bondara

India
Jesus College

Monica Desai

UK
Wolfson College

Lisette Hededal Hansen

Denmark

Khushwant James

UK
St John's College

Yamini Jangir

India

Asho Kumar

Singapore

Shreya Lakhani

UK
Balliol College

Sriharsha Masabathula

India
Lady Margaret Hall

Prakhar Misra

India
Trinity College

Lena Molin

Denmark

Molly Ann Moore

UK
Christ Church

Harshavardhan Raghunandan

India
Wadham College

Brinda Raval

USA

Rhianna Reechay

UK
St Peter's College

Ushaben Reifsnider

UK

Abishek Sankaranarayan

India
Brasenose College

Yash Saraf

India

Anwasha Sengupta

India
St Catherine's College

Haisen Zhang

China
St Hugh's College

Quek Jian Zhz Jared

Singapore
Mansfield College