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Site Advisory Board



FAKIRS AT SURAT, 1676

Prof. Joseph Alter

Joseph Alter received his PhD from the University of California at Berkeley in 1989. He is a sociocultural anthropologist whose area of interest is South Asia. His research is in the field of medical anthropology on topics of physical fitness, public health, social psychology, and the relationship between health, culture, and politics broadly defined. [more...](#)

Prof. David Gordon White

David Gordon White received his Ph.D. (with Honors) from the Divinity School at the University of Chicago in 1988. He also studied Hinduism at the École Pratique des Hautes Études in Paris, France, between 1977-1980 and 1985-1986. A specialist of South Asian religions, he is the J. F. Rowny Professor of Comparative Religions at the University of California, Santa Barbara, where he has been teaching since 1996. [more...](#)

Dr Dominik Wujastyk

Dominik Wujastyk was born in London, and spent much of his childhood in Sudan, Uganda and Malta. He has degrees in Physics, and Sanskrit with Pali, and a doctorate in Sanskrit from Oxford University. He has published and taught on the history of Indian medicine and science, the history of Sanskrit grammar, Indian miniature painting, the study and preservation of Sanskrit manuscripts, and the history of yoga philosophy. [More...](#)

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Site Managers

Dr Elizabeth De Michelis

(Senior manager) Elizabeth De Michelis has a long standing interest in religions and religious phenomena, especially those concerned with the cultivation of contemplative and meditative, non-secular lifestyles and related practices and theorizations. She is also very interested in textual studies, languages, problems of authority validation, and in the dynamics of cultural and cross-cultural transmission. Her areas of academic expertise are the history of yoga... [more...](#)

Dr Suzanne Newcombe

Suzanne Newcombe is a Lecturer in Religious Studies at the Open University (UK) where she researches modern yoga from a sociological and social historical perspective. In July 2015, she joined a 5-year project funded by the European Research Council (Horizon 2020) entitled 'Medicine, Immortality and Moksha: Entangled Histories of Yoga, Ayurveda and Alchemy in South Asia', see: <http://www.ayuryog.org/> for more details... [more...](#)

Dr Mark Singleton

Mark Singleton works on yoga in tradition and modernity. He was research assistant to Elizabeth De Michelis at Cambridge University's Dharam Hinduja Institute of Indic Research in 2002-3, and went on to complete a Ph.D at Cambridge's Faculty of Divinity. He taught undergraduate and postgraduate courses at St. John's College (Santa Fe, New Mexico) for seven years, and has been a senior long-term research scholar at the American Institute of Indian Studies, based in Jodhpur (Rajasthan, India). ... [more...](#)

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Site Contributors

Dr Andrea Acri

Andrea Acri is a Visiting Research Fellow at the Nalanda-Sriwijaya Centre, Institute of Southeast Asian Studies (Singapore). He received his PhD from Leiden University, an MA in Southeast Asian Languages and Literatures (with focus on Old Javanese) from the same University, and a 'Laurea' degree in Oriental Languages and Cultures (with focus on Sanskrit and Classical Indology) from the University of Rome 'Sapienza'... [more...](#)

Dr Michel Angot

Indologist, vedic scholar, grammarian and philologist, Michel Angot has trained and worked both in India and in France (Sorbonne). His training in India included learning Veda recitation and traditional grammar with local scholars (*pandits*). Some of his more specialistic areas of expertise are in the domain of *svara* (sanskrit tonality, often translated as accent system), *Mahābhāṣya* of Patañjali, *Yoga Sūtra* and other yoga-related texts, including

the *Yogayājñavalkya* and the *Haṭhapradīpikā*... [more...](#)

Prof. Karl Baier

Karl Baier is Professor at the University of Vienna (Institute for the Study of Religions) and has a long standing interest in the history and modernisation of yoga and meditation, as well as in the study of spirituality in Christianity and other religions. His Habilitation, submitted in 2008, was on the topic of Meditation and Modernity ... [more...](#)

Dr Jason Birch

Jason Birch received a doctorate in Oriental Studies from the University of Oxford in 2013. His area of research is the medieval yoga traditions of India, in particular, those called *Haṭha*- and *Rājayoga*. His thesis, which was supervised by Professor Alexis Sanderson, focused on the earliest extant *Rājayoga* text called the *Amanaska*. A critical edition and annotated translation of this Sanskrit text is accompanied by a monographic introduction ... [more...](#)

Prof. Christian Bouy

Christian Bouy received his doctorate from Paris-Sorbonne University, Paris IV, in 1981. His thesis was entitled 'Matériaux pour servir à l'étude de l'Āgamaśāstra de Gauḍapāda'. From 1981-2011, his work focused mainly on Sanskritic Hindu philosophical texts. The main areas of his research have been 1. a comparative study of the Upaniṣads, which led him to become interested in the whole of Hindu Sanskritic texts and their chronology; 2. the philosophical literature of non-dualist (advaita) Vedānta; 3. Hindu Purānic texts; 4. yogic texts of the Nāths; 5. Hindu tantric texts. [more...](#)

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Prof. Johannes Bronkhorst

After initial studies of Mathematics and Physics with Astronomy at the Free University in Amsterdam (Kandidaats/B.Sc. in 1968), Johannes Bronkhorst took up the study of Sanskrit and Pali, first at the University of Rajasthan (Jaipur, India), then at the University of Pune (India). In Pune he obtained an M.A. in 1976 and a Ph.D. in 1979. After his return to the Netherlands he obtained a second doctorate from the University of Leiden in 1980 (with the highest distinction). [more...](#)

Prof. Gudrun Bühnemann

Gudrun Bühnemann is a Professor of Sanskrit and South Asian Studies in the Department of Languages and Cultures of Asia, The University of Wisconsin-Madison, USA. She received her Ph.D. from the University of Vienna in 1980. Her recent work on Yoga includes the book *Eighty-four Āsanās in Yoga: A Survey of Traditions* (with Illustrations) (D.K.Printworld, 2007; 2nd edition, 2011) and the article "The Śāradātilakatantra on Yoga: A New Edition and Translation of Chapter 25" [more...](#)

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Dr Ann Gleig

Ann Gleig recently received her Ph.D. in religious studies from Rice University and is currently a teaching fellow at Millsaps College. Her areas of specialization are Asian religions in America as well as religion and psychology. She has published and presented on numerous aspects of her research, and is presently working on a co-edited book collection (with Lola Williamson) titled *Homegrown Gurus: From Hinduism in America to American Hinduism*. [more...](#)

Prof. Ellen Goldberg

Ellen Goldberg is currently Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Queen's University, Kingston, Canada. Ellen obtained an MA and a PhD in Religious Studies from the Centre for the Study of Religion at the University of Toronto, Canada. Her doctoral work published in 2002 under the title *The Lord Who Is Half Woman: Ardhanārīśvara in Indian and Feminist Perspective* (SUNY Press) includes an extensive analysis of the significance of Ardhanārīśvara in *haṭha* and *tantric* yoga. [more...](#)

Dr Philipp André Maas

Philipp André Maas is assistant professor at the Department of South Asian, Tibetan and Buddhist Studies at the University of Vienna, Austria. He received his M.A. (1997) and Dr. phil. (2004) degrees from the University of Bonn, Germany, where he studied Indology, Comparative Religious Studies, Tibetology and Philosophy. [more...](#)

Prof. Paolo Magnone

Paolo Magnone is currently professor of Sanskrit Language and Literature at the Catholic University of the Sacred Heart, besides teaching Study of Religions: Hinduism & Buddhism at the Higher Institute for Religious Sciences (both in Milan, Italy). His main research interests include studies in the mythological narratives of the epico-purāṇic literature with variously thematic, hermeneutical, text-critical, and comparative approaches. [more...](#)

Dr James Mallinson

James Mallinson's interest in yoga grew out of a fascination for India and Indian asceticism – he spent several years living with Indian ascetics and yogis, in particular Rāmānandī Tyāgīs. His MA thesis, part of a major in ethnography, was on

Indian asceticism. He became dissatisfied, however, with (to quote Sheldon Pollock) the “hypertrophy of method” that afflicts much of the humanities, and anthropology in particular, so sought to ground his future research in philology. [more...](#)

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Prof. Andrew J. Nicholson

Andrew J. Nicholson is Associate Professor of Hinduism and Indian Intellectual History at the State University of New York, Stony Brook. His primary area of research is Indian philosophy and intellectual history, most recently focusing on medieval Vedanta and theistic yoga philosophies, and their influence on modern India and Europe. His book, *Unifying Hinduism: Philosophy and Identity in Indian Intellectual History* was published in 2010 by Columbia University Press.

[more...](#)

Prof. Federico Squarcini

Federico Squarcini taught at Florence University and at the Università La Sapienza, Rome, before joining the Università Ca' Foscari in Venice, Italy, where he is currently Associated Professor of History of Religions. Prof. Squarcini lectures on a range of South-Asia related topics, including Indian philosophy and religions. He is also Director of doctoral studies with regard to Asian subjects and In 2012 he launched the Ca' Foscari Yoga Studies MA (information in Italian here), which he continues to direct. [more...](#)

Prof. Smriti Srinivas

Smriti Srinivas is Professor in the Department of Anthropology at the University of California, Davis. Srinivas' research focuses on cultures of the body, urban space, social and cultural memory, and religion. Her most recent book, *In the*

Presence of Sai Baba (2008), examines a transnational religious movement centered on the Indian guru, Sathya Sai Baba (1926-2011) in three cities—Bangalore, Nairobi, and Atlanta—and the reworking of *bhakti* or devotion in a global milieu. [more...](#)

Prof. Hugh B. Urban

Hugh B. Urban is a professor of religious studies and South Asian studies in the Department of Comparative Studies at Ohio State University. He is primarily interested in Tantra and in the complex interactions between Tantra and new religious currents in America and Europe. He is the author of seven books, including *Tantra: Sex, Secrecy, Politics and Power in the Study of Religions* (2003)... [more...](#)

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Dr Raphaël Voix

Raphaël Voix holds an MA and a PhD in Anthropology from the University of Paris West Nanterre la Défense where he is a part-time lecturer, and also an MA in Bengali from the Institut National des Langues et Civilisations Orientales (Paris) where he teaches Hinduism. He is an associate member of the Centre d'Études de l'Inde et de l'Asie du Sud (CEIAS : <http://ceias.ehess.fr>). [more...](#)

Dr Maya Warrior

Maya Warrior is Senior Lecturer in Religious Studies at the University of Wales, Trinity Saint David, Lampeter. Her research explores popular Hindu traditions in modern transnational contexts. Her monograph, *Hindu Selves in a Modern World: Guru Faith in the Mata Amritanandamayi Mission* (Routledge-Curzon, 2005) examines contemporary forms of *bhakti* (devotion) and *seva* (service) practised by the urban Indian 'middle class' devotees of the transnational guru Mata

Amritanandamayi (popularly known as Amma). [more...](#)

Prof. Lola Williamson

Lola Williamson's research centers on Hinduism in the United States with an emphasis on yoga and meditation movements. She founded the Hinduism in America Consultation of the American Academy of Religion. Her book, *Transcendent in America: Hindu-Inspired Meditation Movements as New Religion* (New York University Press, 2010) uses Self-Realization Fellowship, Transcendental Meditation, and Siddha Yoga as case studies to argue that these and similar groups form a distinct category of new religion. [more...](#)