

THE OXFORD CENTRE *for* HINDU STUDIES

Report 2020



The Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies

Annual Report

2020

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Message from the Director

This year a pandemic has swept the world and has swept us off our feet. My heart goes out to the families of those we have lost.

At such a time Hindu Studies – with its profound approaches to happiness, suffering, life, and death – is more important than ever. Research into the texts and traditions that give us yoga, mindfulness, meditation, and mantra is now more relevant. We will need these tools to survive our difficulties, to recover ourselves, and to nourish better global thinking.

The OCHS has worked with the University of Oxford for twenty-three years. For fourteen of these we held the title of Recognised Independent Centre. The University is retiring this designation for all the bodies that held it. This marks a new maturation of our identity – in Oxford and globally – and a new formalisation of the relationship between Oxford and the OCHS. On the surface, all will look very similar, but a more collegial and cooperative arrangement with the University will permeate all our activities.

Among other developments this year, we are proud to note that one of our outreach projects, the Bhumi Project, has matured and will now act independently as Bhumi Global.

Our academics rose to the challenge of lockdown with merit and continue to teach students at all levels using web-based communication. And our Continuing Education Department shone with its online courses seeing a doubling of enrolments.

Even in these difficult days, our students and staff continue to explore topics from Hindu responses to environmentalism, contemporary Indian politics, feminism in Hindu texts, and study of classical texts.

I hope you will join me in thanking our scholars and staff for their dedication in making all the things in this report possible despite the challenges.

On behalf of all of us at the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies, I wish you a safe year ahead and one blessed with a peaceful heart, good thoughts, and the love of friends.

Warm regards,



Shaunaka Rishi Das
Director





An Evolving Relationship:

Joint Statement by the University of Oxford and the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies

In an administrative change, the University of Oxford is removing the category of ‘Recognised Independent Centre’. This change applies to all the Centres recognised by this title – the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies (OCHS) among them. It affirms the full independence of the OCHS and provides a new basis for continued collaboration with the University.

The University sees the OCHS as an outstanding research centre that is integral to the development and support of Hindu studies at Oxford University. Academics in the University and the Centre – some holding positions in both – have close relationships in teaching and research, and the OCHS is an important funder of research for Hindu Studies. Many University students and alumni have had their learning enriched by the academic activities and resources that the OCHS has generously made available. Both the University and the OCHS intend to continue to deepen this relationship in the future.

‘The focussed scholarship and deep expertise of the Centre has enabled it to provide a valued resource to the University’s academics and students who are active in the field of Hindu Studies, and we welcome continuing our close and collaborative relationship.’

Professor Louise Richardson,
Vice-Chancellor of the University of Oxford.

The OCHS and the Faculty of Theology and Religion have been collaborating since the inception of the OCHS in 1997. Building on the contribution that OCHS scholars currently provide to Hindu Studies at Oxford, we look forward to working together to establish our new relationship, anchored in the Faculty of Theology and Religion.

‘Moving forward together is not as dramatic as a rebirth, but a maturing of our relationship – standing together as two independent institutions, building on our success to nurture the emerging field of Hindu Studies in Oxford.’

Shaunaka Rishi Das,
Director of the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies.

Issued jointly by the University of Oxford and the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies.



1. The Academic Year 2019-20

Message from the Academic Director

Teaching

Research

Publication

Fellows' Publications

Visiting Fellows' Reports

Conferences

Awards for Students

Message from the Academic Director

This has been a particularly challenging year. While things started out quite alright, in February there were indications of problems ahead and by the end of March we were in lockdown. But the OCHS has managed to continue to function well under adverse conditions. The teaching online has gone ahead, and fellows have continued to do research and publish, in spite of two key members of the Academic Policy Committee coming down with Covid-19. Thankfully they have recovered and have taken up OCHS duties once again.

The turn to online activities has brought many new and exciting projects and approaches to the OCHS. We are developing a new and groundbreaking manuscript database, we have increased our presence on social media and moved our lectures and seminars to Zoom or YouTube reaching a new and broader audience.

The list of publications and teaching that we have undertaken bears witness to the dedication of colleagues under difficult circumstances. So, I think in spite of this year's problems, the Centre continued to pursue its core task of the academic study of Hindu traditions and we look forward to the challenges of the year ahead with confidence that we will continue to function well in the new environment and that we will be in a strong position to implement effectively Oxford University Covid policy.



Prof Gavin Flood, FBA
OCHS Academic Director

Teaching

The OCHS faculty provided teaching for the Faculty of Theology and Religion for undergraduates (Single and Joint Honours) and postgraduates (the MSt in the Study of Religion) as well as supervising DPhil and MPhil students and supporting the academic administration of transfer and confirmation of status for DPhil students. OCHS faculty were internal examiners for DPhil students and external examiners for PhDs from other universities. Undergraduate teaching involves offering Hinduism I and II in Michaelmas and Hilary Terms, the lectures being presented by Dr Rembert Lutjeharms. There is also a Further Studies in Hinduism paper that has been offered this year. Sanskrit is offered by Dr Bjarne Wernicke-Olesen for the Prelims in Theology and Religion.

Professor Gavin Flood continued to supervise DPhil students, convened the weekly seminar 'Readings in Phenomenology' and 'Readings in the Netra Tantra'. He taught two undergraduates Hinduism II, and supervised his remaining five DPhil students.

Dr Jessica Frazier taught Indian Philosophy in the Philosophy Faculty, and, in the Theology and Religion Faculty, tutored a total of 22 students. Together with Dr Lutjeharms, she co-organises the Hinduism I and II papers, and this year she helped in the running of the MSt in the Study of Religions. In addition, she taught the Further Studies in Hinduism paper, and added Hinduism-

based sections to the Faculty's courses 'Religion and Religions', 'Feminist Approaches to Religion', and 'Interreligious Relations'. She also convened eight 'Interdisciplinary Seminars in the Study of Religions'.

Dr Rembert Lutjeharms gave the lectures for Hinduism I and II in the Michaelmas and Hilary terms in the Faculty of Theology and Religion. For the Faculty, he tutored undergraduate students in both Hinduism papers, and supervised and tutored DPhil students. He also offered Sanskrit readings of Vedāntic texts, this year reading Bhāskara's *Brahma-sūtra-bhāṣya*.

Dr Bjarne Wernicke-Olesen taught Sanskrit Prelims for Theology and Religion students. He is the paper setter for Sanskrit Prelims and has developed the course to include a range of relevant Hindu and Buddhist texts. He has written his own Sanskrit grammar with a reader in two volumes, which is currently being translated into English and used in the course. He tutored Hinduism I and Hinduism for the MSt in the Study of Religions and BTh Suite (World Religions) as well as Buddhism for the Further Studies in Buddhism paper, Buddhism 1 and 2 revisions and Religion and Religions paper. He offered manuscript readings, specifically the *Netrat Tantra*, and taught Pāli for Sanskritists as well as advanced Sanskrit tutorials for DPhil students from Philosophy and Theology. He co-supervised and examined DPhil students and continued teaching on the Aarhus visiting student programme (e.g., extended essay, theory and method and manuscript reading).



Due to the pandemic, all teaching in Trinity Term 2020 has been remote teaching, via such platforms as Zoom and Teams. While there is no real substitute for face-to-face tutorials and classroom engagement, and while online teaching is affected both by the limitations of technology as well as the sometimes less than ideal social situations students in lockdown might find themselves, overall, the teaching went well. Some tutors even reported having had some of their best tutorial experiences this term, although it was noted that this was especially the case with students and tutors who had met in person in previous terms. It was furthermore noted that online tutorials are often considered more exhausting by both students and teachers than face-to-face tutorials.





Research

The OCHS has a number of ongoing research projects, each of which continues to develop in significant ways.

The Śākta Traditions Research Programme

Project Leaders: Dr Bjarne Wernicke-Olesen and Prof. Gavin Flood FBA

The Śākta Traditions research project, which was officially launched in 2011 with a two-day international conference in Oxford and subsequent publication with Routledge, has developed into a research programme encompassing a number of interdisciplinary projects, publications, and a growing international research network. The research programme aims to carve out space for Śāktism as a major Hindu tradition within the South Asian religious context by defining its theology, textual lineages, historical evolution, and its relationship to parallel traditions such as Śaivism and Vaiṣṇavism. It has produced several international symposia, workshops and seminars in Oxford as well as numerous volumes and articles.

To the projects have been added a critical and interdisciplinary study of the Tripurasundarī tradition in Nepal by Dr Rajan Khatiwoda (Heidelberg) and Dr Ramhari Timalisina (Göttingen) resulting in a monograph to be published in 2022. Dr Silje Lyngar Einarsen (Oslo) was invited as a Visiting Fellow in Michaelmas Term 2019 and gave important lectures on text and practice in relation to the Devīmāhātmya. The Aarhus University visiting students programme continues with two MA students working on tantric and ascetic traditions under the supervision of Dr Wernicke-Olesen and Dr Ionut Moise in Michaelmas Term 2019 and Hilary Term 2020. During the year Dr Wernicke-Olesen has given a number of Śākta-related papers and taught a number of seminars and workshops such as a three-day seminar on Models of the Human in Tantric Hinduism at the Jnanapravaha in Mumbai in August 2019 and a one-week Netratatra workshop at Yale-NUS in Singapore in September 2019 as well as workshops on the Haṭhapradīpikā in Kathmandu and at the Royal Library, Aarhus. He has written a chapter on Śākta Traditions for the Blackwell Companion to Hinduism to be published in 2020.

In 2018, Dr Wernicke-Olesen established a study and research centre for the programme in Kathmandu with a focus on manuscript collection, preservation and fieldwork. While the work in Nepal came to a halt in spring 2020 due to the coronavirus pandemic, the work has now progressed to the next level by establishing an open access Śākta database containing the collected material and initiating a new Digital Humanities dimension to the Śākta programme. Dr Ulrik Lyngs from the Department of Computer Science, Oxford University, was invited as Online Visiting Fellow in

Trinity Term 2020 and continues as our Data Scientist and Digital Humanities Consultant for the research programme. Ms Tanja Louise Jakobsen continues to develop our important website for the research programme (<http://saktatraditions.org/>). It is expected that the work in Nepal will resume in 2021.

Dr Janaki Nair finished her PhD on Śākta Mudrās at Northumbria University in 2019. Dr Silvia Schwarz Linder is finalising her book Goddess Traditions in India: Theological Poems and Philosophical Tales in the Tripurārahasya, Routledge, London, forthcoming 2021. Prof Flood, Dr Wernicke-Olesen and Dr Khatiwoda continue their work on an annotated edition and full translation of the Netratantra in two volumes to be published in the Routledge Tantric Studies series. A sample chapter (NT 7) was published online in Michaelmas Term 2019. Professor Alexis Sanderson has become a consultant for the Netratantra project.

Bengali Vaiṣṇavism in the Modern Period

Project leaders: Dr Ferdinando Sardella and Lucian Wong

The Bengali Vaiṣṇavism in the Modern Period Project has had another productive year. The beginning of 2020 saw the publication of *The Legacy of Vaiṣṇavism in Colonial Bengal* (Routledge). Edited by project co-directors Ferdinando Sardella and Lucian Wong, the book brings together scholars from across the disciplines of social and intellectual history, philology, theology, and anthropology to systematically investigate Vaiṣṇavism in colonial Bengal. Not only does the book enrich the study of the history and development of Bengali Vaiṣṇavism, but it also sheds valuable new light on the texture and dynamics of colonial Hinduism beyond the discursive and social-historical parameters of an entrenched Hindu ‘Renaissance’ paradigm. Also on the publication front, the project produced a special issue of the *Journal of Hindu Studies* (13.1) on the theme ‘Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism and Modernity’. Guest edited by Lucian Wong, the issue contained articles by members of the project on various themes pertaining to the role of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism in shaping modern Hindu discourse. The issue’s publication, it is thus hoped, will serve to both nurture the growing sub-field of Modern Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇava Studies and, more broadly, encourage greater attention to the important contributions of other such sampradāyic Hindu currents to the texture and dynamics of modern Hinduism.

In terms of current work, members of the project from Indian and European institutions are engaged in *The Vaiṣṇava Periodicals of Colonial Bengal* Project. Vaiṣṇavas in colonial Bengal produced a voluminous range of periodical literature that remains largely untapped both in scholarship on Bengali Vaishnavism and modern Hindu intellectual history more broadly. The corpus itself is scattered across various public libraries and archives, not just within Bengal but also beyond, in Brindaban and in certain international institutions, such as the British Library. For the past year members of the project have continued to collate and digitise material that forms the corpus. The aim of this work is to produce a volume of English translations of a representative sample of material from the corpus, accompanied by critical introductions and annotations, that makes this material available to the broader domain of Hindu Studies for the first time. Members of the project will be meeting at the end of this year (either in person in Kolkata or, if the current global health crisis does not permit, digitally) to plan out the next phase of the project.

The Bhāgavata Purāṇa Research Project

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

Since last year, we currently continue pursuing the Project's components, especially the second (of four), namely, 'Collecting Materials and Surveying the Field'. Of particular significance is the Bhāgavata Purāṇa Bibliography initiative, now in progress at the Bhandarkar Oriental Institute under the direction of Dr Shrikant Bahulkar, with five years of funding from the Infosys Foundation (now in the second year), which has facilitated the hiring of two research assistants. This annotated bibliography will include, along with research articles and monographs on the Bhāgavata Purāṇa, manuscript catalogues and some popular Bhāgavata-related materials. Up to the beginning of 2020, some 5000 bibliography entries have been catalogued.

During Fall 2019, we developed collaborations with scholars in India, such as 'Bhāgavata Traditions in Maharashtra' with the University of Mumbai, and the beginnings of a conversation about 'Bhāgavata Traditions in Odisha' with professors at Ravenshaw University. Also, during Spring 2020, Dr Neeraja Poddar organized a groundbreaking conference on the Visual Culture of the Bhāgavata, to be held at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford. Sadly, the conference was cancelled soon after we completed all the planning for it, due to COVID-19. Similarly, the project helped organize a conference on the Bhāgavata Traditions of Maharashtra at the University of Mumbai, only to see it cancelled the day before it was meant to happen. Despite these disappointing outcomes, we are working toward producing edited volumes on both topics, drawing upon the networks of scholars that we built for the conferences.

We are editing a book, with Dr Shakuntala Gawde (University of Mumbai), called Bhāgavata Traditions of Maharashtra. We have received chapter commitments from 15 of the finest scholars of Maharashtrian history both in India and the United States, including Profs. Sadananda More, Abhay Tilak, Christian Novetske, and Jon Keune. We expect to submit a book proposal to publishers in the next three months, receive the articles within a year, and publish soon thereafter. This initiative is in cooperation with the Bhaktivedanta Research Centre, affiliated with the Department of Philosophy, University of Mumbai.

You can see our various initiatives as well as our network of scholars at our new website, developed this year: www.bhagavatapurana.org.



The Gosvāmī Era Research Project

Project leaders: Dr Rembert Lutjeharms and Prof. Kiyokazu Okita

This academic year, the principal researchers involved in the Gosvāmī Era research project have steadily continued with the research, editing, translation, and digitisation that was begun in the last academic year.

A Sanskrit Reading Week in Oxford was planned for Trinity Term, but the five day event had to be postponed due to coronavirus. During the Reading Week a group of about a dozen international Sanskrit scholars come together in Oxford to read and discuss texts by the Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana, or texts relevant to them, over five days. The event will be held at a later date, to be announced when there is more clarity regarding the development of the Covid-19 lockdowns, and it is hoped that this will become a regular event.

Dr Māns Broo (Åbo Akademi, Finland) continues his work on the critical edition of the Hari-bhakti-vilāsa, the earliest ritual text of the Gauḍīya tradition.

Prof. Kiyokazu Okita (Sophia University, Japan) is editing and translating, with S. Bhuvaneshvari, Vopadeva's Harilīlā and Hemādrī's commentary, the Harilīlāviveka, two little studied texts by authors that significantly influenced the Gosvāmīs of Vṛndāvana. He is also still working on his own monograph on the ethics of Gauḍīya aesthetics.

The digitisation of microfilms of Vaiṣṇava manuscripts, created in the 1980s by the Matsya Project, led by Prof. Charles S.J. White, is also still ongoing, now led by Prof. Okita. In the past year he visited, with Dr Satoshi Ogura from Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, several of the archives, libraries, and academic centres that keep the manuscripts the microfilms are based on: Adyar Library (Chennai), Government Oriental Manuscript Library (Chennai), Karnataka Sanskrit University (Bangalore), Sanskrit Academy (Melkote). At these institutions they requested permission to put our digital images online and are preparing Memorandums of Understanding between those institutions and Tokyo University of Foreign Studies, which is funding the digitization. The COVID-19 pandemic, however, has temporarily halted this, and the team is looking forward to being able to return to India to finalise these, and visit the remaining institutions.

This academic year, Dr Rembert Lutjeharms also launched a 'Gauḍīya Studies Programme', which provides tutorial-based academic adult education in Gauḍīya Studies, with a particular focus on the earlier period of the Gosvāmī era. In Trinity Term, the first course was run, online, with seven international students, and several different tutors, including Dr Māns Broo, Dr Rembert Lutjeharms, Shaunaka Rishi Das, Prof. Ravi Gupta, and Lucian Wong. This trial run was very successful and allowed the students to engage with current academic research in Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism and Hindu Studies more broadly. Three more programmes are scheduled for the academic year 2020-21.

Publications of the principal researchers of the project are listed below, with the publications of other OCHS fellows.



Comparative Philosophy Project

Project leader: Dr Jessica Frazier

This project continues, focused on dissemination through publication and conference presentations. Dr Frazier has published a position paper entitled 'The View from Above: A Theory of Comparative Philosophy' in a special issue of Religious Studies on cross-cultural approaches to the philosophy of religion, followed by an article examining passages in the Chandogya Upaniṣad from the perspective of Heidegger's phenomenology of religion. The year's work has been aimed at a schedule of interlinked publications including the forthcoming:

- Chapter on 'The Foundations of Hindu Philosophy' for the Blackwell Companion to Hinduism, 2nd Edition, paving the way for the following monograph;
- Book entitled The Sacred Continuum: Being and Divinity in Hindu Philosophy for the 'Cambridge Studies in Religion, Society and Philosophy' series;
- Edited volume Being and Substance in Indian Philosophy for the Routledge 'Dialogues in Indian Traditions' series;
- Invited article on 'Context in Indian ethical philosophy' for an issue on 'The Provinces of Moral Theology and Religious Ethics' in Religions (Dafydd Daniel ed., Oxford);
- Invited article for the Oxford Philosophical Concepts Series volume on The World Soul (James Wilberding ed., Humboldt University, Berlin);
- Invited article on 'The Self in Meditation' for the Oxford Handbook of Meditation (Miguel Farias ed., Oxford).

In teaching, this has paralleled the confirmation of Oxford University's first undergraduate paper in Indian philosophy, to run in Michaelmas and Hilary terms of 2020-21, taught jointly by Dr Frazier and Prof Westerhoff, with the prospect of embedding this subject through hiring an outside dedicated lecturer at some point in the future. The project has also prompted forthcoming invitations as:

- Keynote speaker at the European Society of Philosophy of Religion, August 2020;
- Keynote speaker at the Atheism and Unbelief in Global Philosophy and Religion, Bath Spa, Sept 2020;
- Vatican consultation on Liberation Theology across Cultures, Rome, May 2020;
- Invited speaker, SOAS Yoga Philosophy lecture series, May 2019, London.



The Beginnings of the Hindu Temple: Material Foundations of Indian Culture in Early Historic Deccan

Project Leader: Prof. Himanshu Prabha Ray

Prof. Himanshu Prabha Ray presented a paper entitled, 'The Archaeology of Sacred Spaces: Re-examining the Early Temple in Gujarat' at the Seminar on Religion, Culture & Nature: Research Methods & Perspectives on Precolonial South Asia, 5th – 6th February, 2019, Department of History, Jadavpur University, Jadavpur. The paper has since been revised and submitted for publication to the conference convenors.

Tabulation of data on temples was started based on inscriptions from the region of Andhra Pradesh dating from the Ikṣvāku period (3rd–4th centuries CE). These include both copper-plate and stone inscriptions from several sites in the Krishna valley: Ghantasala, Kondavidu, Chandavaram, Amaravati, Rentala, Jaggayapeta, Guntupalli, Nagarjunakonda and Phanigiri.

Fieldwork on the archaeological sites could not be undertaken due to lack of financial support for the project, besides India having been under lockdown since March and travel having been suspended.

The Comparative Study of Religion

Project Leaders: Prof. Gavin Flood FBA and Dr Bjarne Wernicke-Olesen

This was launched as a research programme in 2019 as the result of long discussion over the years about the possibility of a reinvigorated comparative religion focus at Oxford. Professor Flood's important book publications within the field of comparative religion (e.g. *Religion and the Philosophy of Life*, Oxford University Press 2019) provide a strong basis for such an undertaking as does the ground research and teaching by the fellows of the OCHS. Thus, building on the success of the OCHS and what has already been achieved in comparative philosophy and Hindu Studies, the Comparative Study of Religion research programme intends to articulate its intellectual agenda through publication, lectures, and teaching. Among its initial enterprises has been a webpage, establishing a research network and providing the Comparative Study of Religion Seminar Series I in Trinity Term 2019 convened by Prof. Flood and Dr Wernicke-Olesen. This will be followed by the Comparative Study of Religions Seminar Series II in Michaelmas term 2020: Comparative Religion, a Problematic Category convened by Professor Flood.

Among its planned enterprises will be to provide further reading seminars on a) contemporary approaches to the study of religions, and b) the comparative study of religions; for those within the research programme to continue to publish their research under its banner; to produce an Oxford Handbook for the Comparative Study of Religion and in due course to develop a book series and a journal, The Oxford Journal for the Comparative Study of Religion.

Hindu-Christian Dialogue in a Religiously Plural World

Project leader: Melanie Barbato, University of Münster

The project seeks to analyse how Hindu-Christian dialogue negotiates the plurality of interests and tasks between theological dialogue and public diplomacy. A book chapter has been published on the general relation between interreligious dialogue and public diplomacy. More specifically on Hindu-Christian relations, two articles were published on the Diwali greeting messages sent to the Hindu community by the Holy See and the World Council of Churches. The articles offer a politolinguistic analysis of metaphors, structure, and other qualitative and quantitative features of these messages. The studies have served as a pilot for the larger scale analysis of all official documents published by the Vatican and the World Council of Churches regarding Hindu-Christian relations. Completion of the book on this topic is expected for 2022. The current task is to obtain all relevant documents for analysis. A research visit to the World Council of Churches for interviews and archival work had to be postponed due to travel and access restrictions and is now scheduled for 2021.

In November 2019, the DFG-project Dialogue and Diplomacy officially started. During 2019/2020, Melanie Barbato also received a stipend from the Ursula von Euch Foundation for the relevance of her work for Peace Studies.

Publications

- Melanie Barbato (2020), 'Dear Hindu Friends': official Diwali greetings as a medium for diplomatic dialogue, *Religion*, 50:3, 353-371.
- Melanie Barbato (2019), Diplomatic Language in the Deepavali Messages of the Pontifical Council for Interreligious Dialogue, in: *Modern Papal Diplomacy and Social Teaching in World Affairs*, edited by Mariano Barbato, Robert Joustra, and Dennis Hoover, Routledge, 93-104.
- Melanie Barbato (2019), Interreligious Dialogue as Public Diplomacy: Word, Stage, and Image, in: *Perplexed Religion*, edited by Míriam Díez Bosch, Alberto Melloni, and Josep Lluís Micó Sanz, Blanquerna Observatory/Universitat Ramon Llull, 25-38.

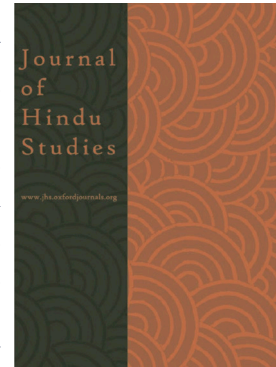


Publication

Journal of Hindu Studies

In the academic year 2019–20 there were three issues of the Journal of Hindu Studies including a themed issue on Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism and Modernity, one on Vernacular Hinduisms, and one open issue.

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, and 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 the religion, culture and society of Hindus living in India and abroad.

The following four new volumes appeared in the last year:

- The Legacy of Vaiṣṇavism in Colonial Bengal. Edited by Ferdinando Sardella and Lucian Wong.
- The Goddess and the Sun in Indian Myth: Power, Preservation and Mirrored Māhātmyas in the Mārkaṇḍeya Purāṇa. By Raj Balkaran.
- Salvation in Indian Philosophy: Perfection and Simplicity for Vaiśeṣika. By Ionut Moise.
- Vedic Practice, Ritual Studies and Jaimini's Mīmāṃsāsūtras: Dharma and the Enjoined Subject. By Samuel G. Ngaihte.

Archaeology and Religion in South Asia Book Series

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.

In the past academic year, the following new book was published in the series:

- Power, Presence and Space: South Asian Rituals in Archaeological Context. Edited by Henry Albery, Jens-Uwe Hartmann, and Himanshu Prabha Ray.

Fellows' Publications

Prof. Purushottama Bilimoria

- Edited, with P. Wong, S. Bloor, and P. Hutchings, 'Considering Religions, Rights and Bioethics: For Max Charlesworth'. *Sophia Studies in Cross-cultural Philosophy of Traditions*. Springer, 2019.
- "'Why is there Nothing Rather than Something?' An Essay in the Comparative Metaphysics of Non-Being', in *Considering Religions, Rights and Bioethics: For Max Charlesworth*, edited by Purushottama Bilimoria, P. Wong, S. Bloor, and P. Hutchings. *Sophia Studies in Cross-cultural Philosophy of Traditions*. Springer, 2019, pp. 79-197.
- 'Hegel's Reading of the Logic of Indian Philosophy', with Response to Critics by Robert B. Pippins, *Australasian Philosophical Review*, 2:4 (2018), pp. 412-419.
- Edited, with Ricardo P. Silvestre, Jean-Vyes Beziau, B.P. Göcke, 'Beyond Faith and Rationality: Essays on Logic, Religion and Philosophy'. *Sophia Studies in Cross-cultural Philosophy of Traditions* (Series). Springer, 2020.
- 'Thinking Negation in Early Hinduism and Classical Indian Philosophy', in *Beyond Faith and Rationality. Essays on Logic, Religion and Philosophy*, edited by Purushottama Bilimoria, Ricardo P. Silvestre, Jean-Vyes Beziau, B.P. Göcke. *Sophia Studies in Cross-cultural Philosophy of Traditions*. Springer, 2020.
- Edited with Rita D. Sherma, *Contemplative Studies and Hinduism Meditation: Devotion, Prayer, and Worship*. New Delhi: Routledge India, 2020.
- 'Mantric Effect, noetic supplication and Apūrva in Mīmāṃsā', in *Contemplative Studies and Hinduism Meditation: Devotion, Prayer, and Worship*, edited by Purushottama Bilimoria and Rita D. Sherma. New Delhi: Routledge India, 2020.
- With Anand Vaidya, 'Experimental Philosophy and Analytic Philosophy in the Reflection of Comparative Philosophy' in *Ethno-Epistemology Culture, Language, and Methodology*, edited by Masaharu Mizumoto, Jonardon Ganeri, et al. Abingdon: Routledge, 2020.

Prof. Mandakranta Bose

- *Women in Hinduism*, OCHS CED course book, in press.
- "Hindumānase Nārī o Śakti" ('Women and Power in the Hindu consciousness' in Bengali), *Ārek Rakam*, 16-30 September 2019, 7th year, vol. 18, pp. 14-17.
- 'A Requiem for Women: the Bengali Rāmāyaṇa of Candrāvati' in *The Routledge Handbook of Translation and Religion*, ed. Hephzibah Israel, University of Edinburgh, in press.



Prof. John Brockington

- 'Stories in stone: sculptural representations of the Rāma narrative', in *Oral-Written-Performed: the Rāmāyaṇa narratives in Indian literature and arts*, ed. by Danuta Stasik (Heidelberg: CrossAsia eBooks, 2020): 37-51. (Proceedings of a panel at the 25th European Conference on South Asian Studies, Paris, July 2018.)
- 'Religious Practices in the Sanskrit Epics', *The History of Hinduism: Religious Practice*, edited by Gavin Flood. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020.
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Visiting Fellow's Reports

Shivdasani Visiting Fellow, Michaelmas Term: Prof. Mau Das Gupta

I am grateful to the OCHS for having given me the opportunity to enjoy the Shivdasani Visiting Fellowship for Michaelmas 2019. It has been a wonderful experience to visit the OCHS in Oxford. Not only the congenial ambience of the Centre but also its good collection of books needed for my study helped me a lot. The facilities that I received as a part of the Fellowship to utilise the Bodleian libraries and to attend various seminars and lectures in the University have been immensely helpful for my ongoing research projects. This Fellowship allowed me to interact with great scholars and others who study my own and allied disciplines. The two talks that I delivered at OCHS were a gateway for me to interact with people with keen interest in the topic I spoke on.

I have benefitted much from this Fellowship for my ongoing project on a text of Buddhism in Buddhist Sanskrit, and I could gather many materials for my ongoing works on the Bengali translation of the Jaiminīya Brāhmaṇa of Sāmaveda, and writing a monograph on a nineteenth century Bengali writer Kaliprasanna Ghosh assigned to me by the Sahitya Akademi, India. Not only that, but this Fellowship helped me gather research materials for my PhD students.

I made connections with many learned people in Oxford and academicians from across the world owing to the Shivdasani Fellowship.

I returned from Oxford with a rejuvenated spirit and enrichment of knowledge that will definitely benefit my coming academic years.

J.P. and Beena Khaitan Visiting Fellow, Michaelmas Term: Dr Silje Lyngar Einarsen

It has been a great honour to be named the J.P. and Beena Khaitan visiting fellow for the Michaelmas term 2019. Through the kind and generous donation I was given the opportunity to spend time at the OCHS as a research fellow of the Śākta Traditions research programme, of which I am also co-manager. During the stay, two important milestones related to my research activities in the programme were reached. Firstly, I completed the monograph *Glorification of the Goddess in text and ritual: Text, paratext and practice of the Devīmāhātmya in contemporary Varanasi*. This is a study of the Sanskrit text *Devīmāhātmya*, 'Glorification of the Goddess', approached in a site-specific context. I delivered two lectures at the OCHS based on this research, entitled 'Text, paratext and practice of the Devīmāhātmya' and 'Theorizing the interaction between textual tradition and contemporary practices in Hindu studies'. Secondly, a first full translation of the *Haṭhapradīpikā* into Danish was completed as part of the *Haṭhapradīpikā* translation project led by Dr Bjarne Wernicke-Olesen and myself. The annotated translation with an introduction and essays will be published by the Danish academic publishing house Forlaget Univers in December 2020. The translation group, consisting of former Sanskrit students from Aarhus University and the OCHS, is already planning the next translation project, which will be from Sanskrit into English.

It is always wonderful to be part of the life at the OCHS. With the closing of indological departments and other related disciplines at universities all over Scandinavia it is an intellectual treat to spend time among so many brilliant scholars at an academic institution devoted to Hindu Studies. I have benefited a lot from the conversations with fellows of the Centre and received very useful feedback on my project and ideas. Everyone at the Centre, staff, fellows and students, are friendly and helpful, and the Wednesday lunch is a great opportunity for socializing and meeting new, interesting people. A huge thanks to the OCHS, in particular Shaunaka Rishi Das and Dr Bjarne Wernicke-Olesen, for hosting me again. I am already contemplating my next visit.

Shivdasani Visiting Fellow, Hilary Term: Prof. Alexis Sanderson

During the Hilary term of 2020 I gave seven lectures at the OCHS in which I read and explained the 101 verses of Abhinavagupta's introduction (upodghātaḥ) to his magisterial Tantrāloka (1.22-123). In this he introduces his audience to the fundamentals of his understanding of Tantric Śaivism from the vantage point of his non-dualistic reading of the Śākta Śaiva system known as the Trika.

I also gave a reading on February 7 in Balliol College for the 'SOAS Sanskrit Reading Room', whose audience included that of my OCHS lectures. This was of a passage of the same text under the title 'The Natural-born (sāṃsiddhikaḥ) Guru: A Reading of Tantrāloka 724c-756b (4.40c-72b) and its Sources'. This addressed a point of fundamental difference between Abhinavagupta's soteriology and that of the then dominant Saiddhāntika Śaiva tradition, the former with its strongly gnostic orientation insisting on the possibility of the attainment of enlightenment and liberation by persons who were not formally initiated and trained but who nonetheless should be recognized as the highest of Gurus, and the latter with a rigidly ritualistic and thoroughly institutionalized perspective according to which access to liberation and the office of Guru could only be achieved through ritual processing by a Guru who had been granted authority through the same rituals performed by a qualified predecessor.

On February 21 I gave by invitation a short address to the Hindu congregation attending the annual celebration of Śivarātri in Aylesbury on the inner meaning and message of this festival as understood by the Śaivas of Kashmir.



From 5th to 8th of March I was absent from Oxford for four days to attend a workshop from the 6th to the 7th at the University of Hamburg's Centre for the Study of Manuscript Cultures entitled 'Śāradā: Goddess, Learning, Script. On the Sanskrit manuscript culture of Kashmir'.

I give a lecture to that workshop entitled 'The Book in pre-Islamic Kashmir and the History of Kashmirian Sanskrit Orthography'. I also spoke of the nature of the national goddess Śāradā after whom the Kashmirian script is named and put forward the hypothesis that this deity, located in the remote and inaccessible Kishenganga valley on the far side on the range of mountains that marks the northern limit of the Kashmir Valley, was an amalgam of Durgā, Sarasvatī, and a pre-Śaiva Dardic goddess.

I read and photographed various Kashmirian manuscripts in the Bodleian Library, mostly texts promoting the various pilgrimage sites of Kashmir, in an endeavour to preserve knowledge of a sacred topography that is fast fading now that almost all the Hindu population of Kashmir has fled the Valley.

I continued my work on my critical edition and translation of, and commentary on, the Tantrāloka. I met with students and colleagues to discuss their work. I attended and participated in the readings of Sanskrit verse given by Prof. Harunaga Isaacson.



J.P. and Beena Khaitan Visiting Fellow, Hilary Term: Prof. Harunaga Isaacson

During the Hilary term of 2020 I gave three readings of Sanskrit poetry at the OCHS. All sessions were well attended and attracted students and faculty from the Oriental Institute as well as the Theology and Religion Faculty. I conducted research on the Vajrayāna and on Sanskrit poetry, and had constructive conversation with colleagues, particularly Professor Sanderson. My time as a Shivdasani Fellow at OCHS was most fruitful and pleasant indeed.

I was due to leave the UK on March 15 but have had to stay on in Oxford because of the Covid-19 pandemic. During the months since March I have continued my work on the Tantrāloka and, beginning last month, have been giving online three readings each week of Sanskrit texts:

- The Netratāntra and its commentary by Kṣemarāja (Netroddyota) for Dr Bjarne Wernicke-Olesen and Prof. Gavin Flood of the OCHS.
- The commentary of Bhaṭṭa Rāmakaṇṭha on the Saiddhāntika scripture Maṭaṅgapāramesvara for Dr Akane Saito (Pondicherry), with Prof. Harunaga Isaacson (Hamburg) and Dr S.A.S. Sarma (Pondicherry) also participating.
- The Śivadharmasāstra with Dr Nina Mirnig (Vienna).

I am very grateful to colleagues and staff at the OCHS for their very kind support throughout my time here, both during the two months of my scheduled visit and thereafter. They have made this a very fruitful and pleasant experience for me.

Visiting Fellow, Hilary Term: Dr Miyako Notake

I spent a very pleasant and productive time while I was at the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies as a Visiting Fellow during the Hilary Term, 2020. My main purpose during that time was to complete my research on the situation of the view of texts and manuscripts in the field of Rabbinic literature. This was because while I was preparing my Japanese translation of a lecture by Prof Jonathan Silk, in which he was talking about his manuscript project on Mahāyāna sūtras in Leiden in relation to the views of the scholars of Rabbinic literature, I found their way of seeing manuscripts introduced by him very different from the knowledge of it that I had acquired from my own experience in handling manuscripts in the field of Indian philosophy, and so felt the need that I should know more about their ideas. I then discovered that actually there are at least two very different ideas among the scholars of Rabbinic literature about how to see the origin and development of a text, which leads to two different views on handling manuscripts. I summarised these very interesting arguments and from that perspective analyzed Prof Silk's approach towards texts and manuscripts. This was published later as a postscript to my translation of his lecture in the journal of Thought and Religions of Asia (Tōyō no Shisō to Shūkyō). I also benefited during my stay from the opportunity it gave me to consult Prof. Harunaga Isaacson, who was then a Visiting Fellow at the OCHS, on his views of problems that face those who work with manuscripts of texts of this kind.

It was a great pleasure also to be able to attend the lectures of Prof. Alexis Sanderson and the reading sessions of Prof. Harunaga Isaacson.

I am also grateful for the opportunity I had to attend the Śivarātri festival in Aylesbury. It was a moving experience to hear authentic Vedic chanting by Nandana Nagaraj and to see the effort of the Hindu community to maintain their traditions in a foreign land.

The environment of the OCHS was always stimulating, and I am very grateful to the people there who were always very kind and encouraging.

Visiting Fellow, Trinity Term: Ulrik Lyngs

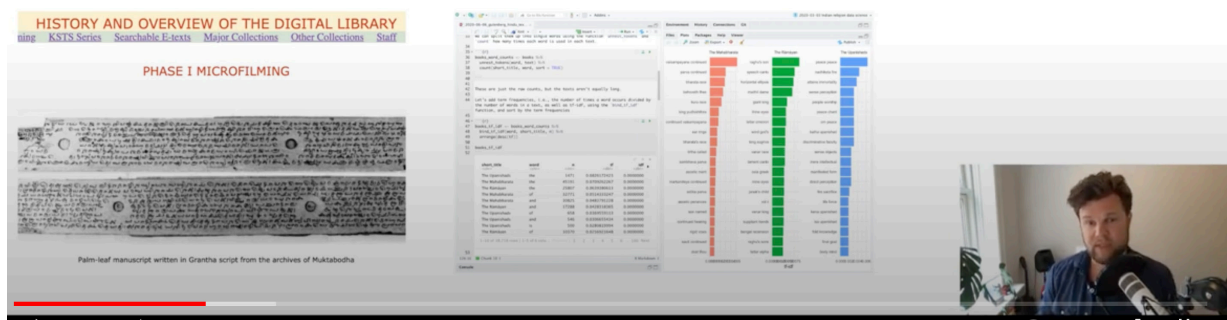
Trinity term 2020 was unusual in every way as the corona pandemic disrupted life everywhere, the UK went into a lockdown, and everyone at the University of Oxford was forced into working remotely. However, the OCHS partly used the pandemic as an opportunity, namely to investigate how tools from the Digital Humanities might be useful to scholarly understandings of Hindu texts, and for creating a future database for the Śākta Traditions project.

As a finishing DPhil student at Oxford's Department of Computer Science - with an MA in the Study of Religion (Aarhus) and an MSc in Cognitive and Evolutionary Anthropology (Oxford) - I had already had regular conversations with Dr Bjarne Wernicke-Olesen about the potential for using text mining tools from data science in Hindu Studies. As an extension of these conversations, I was grateful to be given an opportunity to work with the OCHS as a remote Visiting Fellow during this term.

During the term, I hosted an online workshop for OCHS researchers on basic workflows in data science, methods for text mining and visualisation of large corpora, and how to make analyses available to other researchers, or the public, via interactive websites. Towards the end of the term, I published a lecture series which extended the conversations from the workshop. This series consists of six videos on YouTube, aimed at a general audience, explaining reproducible data science workflows & tools for text mining. They also contain a step-by-step tutorial (with open materials) of how to use a program called RStudio to download and analyse text from the Göttingen Register of Electronic Texts in Indian Languages (GRETIL).

At the end of the term, I facilitated contact with key figures within Oxford's Digital Humanities milieu, worked to speed up work on a publicly accessible database for the Śākta Traditions project, and investigated how transcriptions of Sanskrit texts might be helped by computer algorithms for optical character recognition. Some researchers in related areas, such as Professor of Asian Studies at University of British Columbia Edward Slingerland, have started to show how data science tools can be used to supplement traditional methods, and the OCHS may be in a position to pioneer these approaches in Hindu Studies. I will continue to consult the OCHS on these exciting avenues in the future and thank the Centre once again for the opportunity to be a Visiting Fellow.

‘Digital humanities’ :
systematic use of digital and
computational tools in the humanities



Conferences

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the OCHS had to postpone four international conferences and workshops that had been scheduled to take place in Trinity Term: the annual Sanskrit Traditions in the Modern World conference; the Bhāgavata Purāṇa in the Visual and Performing Arts, organised by Dr. Neeraja Poddar, in collaboration with the Ashmolean Museum; a Sanskrit Reading Week for the Gosvāmī Research Project, organised by Dr Rembert Lutjeharms and Prof Kiyokazu Okita; and an Indian Philosophy conference, organised by Dr Jessica Frazier. All these conferences will now be held at a future date still to be decided.

Nevertheless, during the academic year 2018-19, the OCHS organised two workshops.

June 2019 to March 2020: Haṭhapradīpikā Seminars and Workshops Convened by Dr Wernicke-Olesen

The first full translation of the Haṭhapradīpikā (also known as the Haṭhayogapradīpikā) into Danish is being done by a team of nine former and present Sanskrit students from the research unit for South Asian Religion (SAR) at Aarhus University. The team is lead by Dr Wernicke-Olesen and PhD Fellow Silje Lyngar Einarsen. The translation is annotated with an introduction and essays by Danish yoga scholars and includes the full Sanskrit text in devanāgarī and in transliteration. The book is illustrated with photographs of traditional and modern yoga practitioners to show different ways of interpreting āsanās and mudrās presented in this work. The translation is based on Svāmī Digambarjī and Pītāmbara Jhā's edition of Svātmārāma's Haṭhapradīpikā (Lonāvlā: Kaivalyadhāma Śrīmanmādhava Yogamandira Samiti, 1980). The workshops took place in Kathmandu, 24-26 August, at the Royal Danish Library, Aarhus, 6-8 September, at the OCHS on 8 November, and online on several occasions in Hilary and Trinity Term 2020.

Netra Tantra Workshop at Yale-NUS College, Singapore, September 2019

The Netra Tantra Workshop was held at Yale-NUS College, Singapore, from September 10th to September 16th 2019. The purpose of the workshop was to develop a critical edition and translation of the Netrat Tantra. Participants: Professor Gavin Flood, Dr Wernicke-Olesen and Dr Rajan Khatiwoda.



Awards for Students

Aku's Bursary

Prema Goet

Amit Mishra Scholarship

Lena Molin

Dr Sivaswami and Dr Renuka Nagraj Bursary

Hershini Soneji

Gopal and Elizabeth Krishna Bursary

Valters Negribs

Gupta Dan Bursary

Marianne Arnshof

Hansraj and Kanchanben Popat Bursary

Priyesh Patel

Hanuman Bursary

Barbora Sojkova

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Marianne Arnshof

Ramaiah Alagappan Bursary

Marianne Arnshof

Sri Swami Haridas Giri Scholarship

Ranjamrittika Bhowmik, Valters Negribs, Barbora Sojkova, Nana Røes Dahl, Iana Lukina, Mohini Gupta

Tristan Elby Bursary

Prema Goet

Urmimala and Diptendu Ghosh Bursary

Yizhou Liu

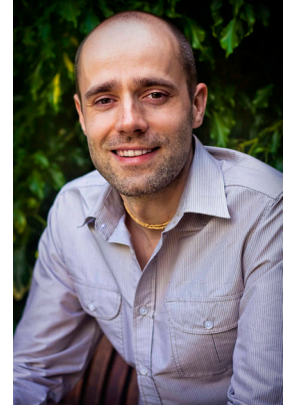
Nainka's Bursary for Kashmiri Shaivism and Kashmir Hindu Studies

Tanja Louise Jakobsen



Thank You from a Student

I would like to thank the Oxford Center for Hindu Studies (OCHS) for the warm welcome and invaluable support it offered me during my Master of Studies (Study of Religions) in 2019–2020. Despite the challenges of the pandemic, the past year has been a highly rewarding experience for me, both on an academic and personal level. I was fortunate to be supervised by Dr Jessica Frazier from the OCHS, as well as to receive tutorials from Dr Rembert Lutjeharms on the Vedānta tradition and to attend his excellent weekly lectures on Hinduism. In addition, Dr Bjarne Wernicke-Olesen kindly allowed me to join his Sanskrit classes at the OCHS and provided additional Sanskrit tutorial support. With its lively academic community, significant collection of academic resources, and regular seminars by leading scholars on a wide range of academic topics, the OCHS is a real asset for the University.



Research: My dissertation for the Master of Studies explored the teaching methods of the Bhagavadgītā, with a focus on definition as a rhetorical teaching strategy. I also had the opportunity to produce original research on textual re-use and eclecticism in the Upadeśāmṛta, a text attributed to Rūpa Gosvāmin (1489–1564 ce). The Master of Studies course of the Faculty of Theology and Religions has given me a strong academic foundation to now pursue doctoral studies.

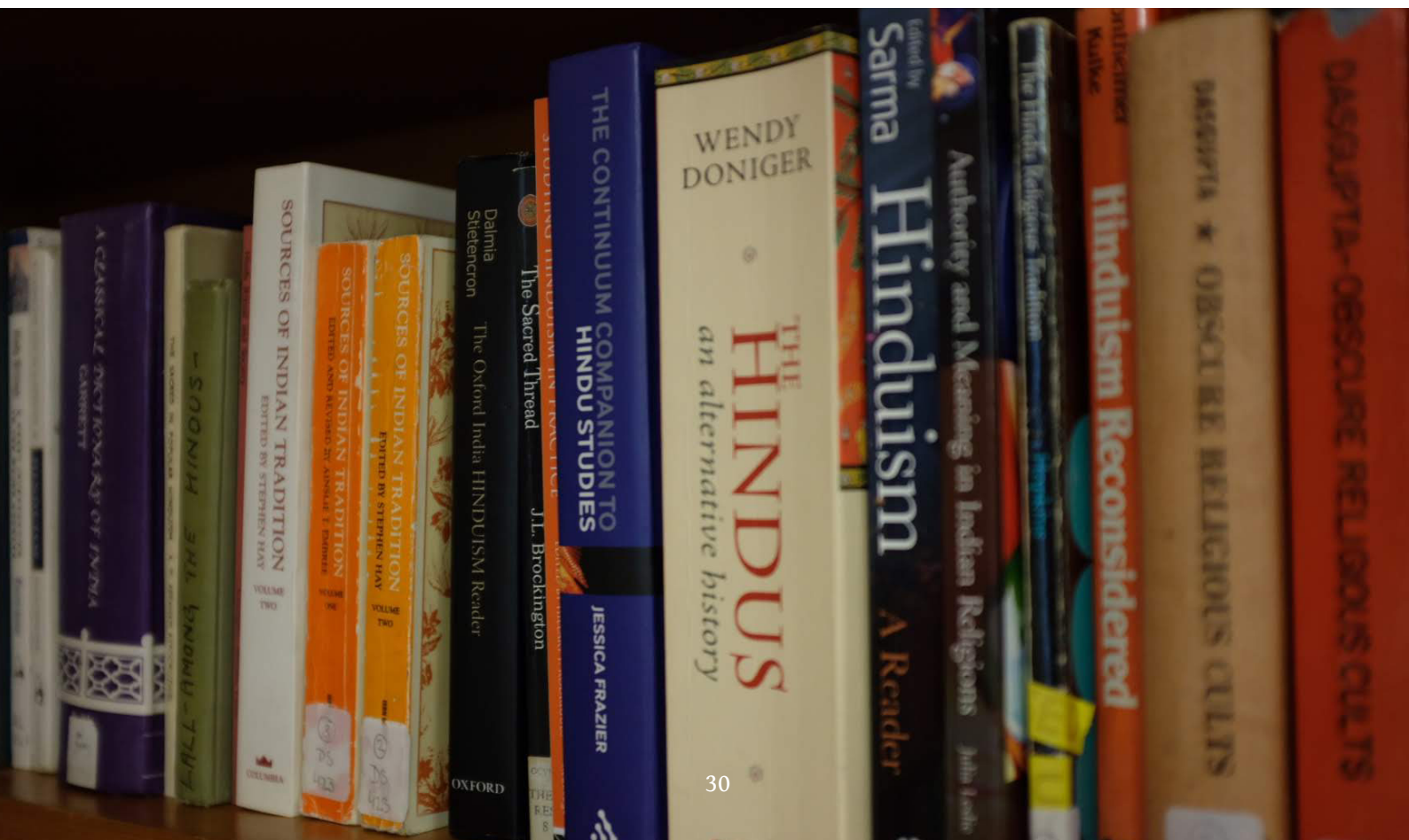
Simon Haas

2. Library

The cataloguing of the OCHS Library collection—a considerable task, with the many large collections the Library has received in recent years—has received an enormous boost with the help of volunteers this year. Mrs. Elizabeth Krishna, a librarian of the former Indian Institute Library, Oxford, has offered much of her time this year to help with the cataloguing. Mr. Rajen Joshi, who started volunteering last year, also continued to catalogue one day a week. Their timely and consistent support has meant that significant progress has been made on the collection, and the chief challenge now is to accommodate all the newly catalogued books into the space of the library.

Both reading rooms of the Library have been in regular use throughout the year, especially so during the term breaks, when visiting scholars and doctoral students find the OCHS Library a quiet and friendly space not just to work but also to meet other students and scholars.

This year, the Library has received substantial collections of books from Katya Langmuur and from Harry Falk, and donations from Shree Swaminarayan Mandir Karelibaug, Peggy Morgan, Elizabeth Krishna, Kapila Vatsyayana, Kenneth Valpey, Gavin Flood, Jessica Frazier, Veena Howard, and Simon Haas.



3. Continuing Education Department

Online Courses

New Courses

Courses in Development

Bursaries

Course Development Board

Taught Courses

Personnel Changes

Books

Online Courses

Enrolments for online courses were steady for late 2019 and early 2020 and jumped significantly with the onset of the coronavirus in April and July 2020. This led to a 50% increase year on year.

New Courses

Sanskrit Level 6
Sanskrit Level 7
Sanskrit Level 7b
Śaivism
The Yoga of the Haṭhapradīpikā
Women in Hinduism

Courses in Development

Buddhism
Colonial Hinduism
Ecology in Hinduism
Hindu Philosophy
Indian Visual Arts
Mahābhārata
Sanskrit Level 7b
Śākta Traditions
Study of Religion
Tantra
Yoga Psychology
Yoga Sūtras



Bursaries

A promising development has been the offer of bursaries to enable students from India to take our online courses. An initial anonymous gift of £1100 encouraged two further gifts of £200 and £500 (also anonymous), allowing us to sponsor more than 20 students who couldn't otherwise afford to enrol.

Curriculum Development Board

In a significant development, a Course Development Board has been appointed to our Department, by the OCHS Academic Planning Committee. The Board's members include Lucian Wong (Chair), Dr Raj Balkaran, and Dr James Madaio. With our growing online and publishing presence the Board will help to develop courses, encourage course creators and tutors in the ethos that has proved successful, and maintain our scholarly standards.

Taught Courses

As with so much else, our weekend schools have gone online. It has been a successful transition with very good online retreats run by some of our top tutors. We ran three courses since the pandemic, with excellent attendance, and are considering making these a regular feature of our programme.

Personnel Changes

This year we were sorry to lose the services of Dr Ramesh Pattni as a tutor. An OCHS alumnus, Ramesh swung into action when Dr Sutton took unwell and was unable to tutor. We were not sure we would still have an online course programme if it weren't for his efforts at such a crucial early stage of our development. We also lost the services of our expert editor, Christopher S. Wood, also an OCHS alumnus. We will continue to work with both of these people in other capacities in the future.

Meanwhile we were delighted to add new faces to the team. Dr Raj Balkaran, University of Toronto, joined us as a tutor and provided a great jolt of energy and new ideas to the programme. Gitte Poulsen, another OCHS alumna also joined us as a course developer and has taken on four courses as a tutor.

And as mentioned, Dr James Madaio and Lucian Wong have joined our Course Development team.

These appointments highlight the vitally important interaction between the OCHS as a whole and the Continuing Education Department. The CED has both provided the OCHS with scholars and employs OCHS scholars. It is also supporting the work of the OCHS through fees.

Books

The first full year of sales with our Mandala book series saw 4500 books sold. A promising beginning and one that encourages us to continue producing titles. We are currently working on four new titles including *Women in Hinduism*. As well as being very useful texts, these act as a form of content marketing that promotes our online courses.



4. Development Activities and Achievements

Media

Outreach

Chaplaincy

Bhumi Project

This year, outreach activities began as normal with a busy international programme but soon the world went online and so did most of our engagements. The Director's activities included:

Media

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

- An online interview with Dr. Ed Kessler from the Wolf Institute in Cambridge as part of his Covid-Chronicles Series.
- Did an interview for the BBC Beyond Belief Programme, episode "prayer".
- Did a number of online interview for community programmes often dealing with the CoVid-19 crisis
- Published a chapter in book written in Spanish in latin america, which was first written in English for the London Interfaith Centre and carers at Northwick Park Hospital, in London,
- Was contacted by a number of journalists to comment on the current crisis.

Outreach

Speaking Engagements

- Held the keynote speech at an event to mark the 150th Birth Anniversary of Mahatma Gandhi held on 2 October 2019 in the City Hall, Cardiff.
- Held the keynote speech at a conference organised by the North American Hindu Chaplains Association to inaugurate the invitees
- Did an after dinner speech at a Diwali in the Oxford Hindu Temple and Community Centre Project.
- Gave a presentation on creativity and leadership to a group of business executives from the Dutch executive training organisation, Avicenna.

Other Outreach

- Became a board member of Faith Invest. An international nonprofit organisation that empowers faith groups to invest in line with their beliefs and values.
- Supported an Anglican-Vaishnava dialogue that's been meeting at Christ Church College with representatives from the Anglican Church and the Vaishnava community.
- Hosted the Indian Deputy High Commissioner and the Centre.
- Gave a talk to the students of religious education at the Faculty of Education, Oxford University.



Chaplaincy

Even though the last year has been challenging, our chaplaincy has continued its work helping students and staff of the university. During the term the chaplaincy has organised weekly Bhagavad-gītā study sessions for students, and continued work with the Hindu Student Society at the University - facilitating their meetings at the Centre for pujas and bhajans. In addition to this the OCHS was visited by 120 people for the celebration of Diwali in 2019 and the chaplaincy has hosted monthly Sunday kirtans at the OCHS. Important to underline is our chaplains work in developing a pastoral care course for the Freie Universität in Amsterdam, where he has recently been appointed a Visiting Lecturer.

Bhumi Project

The Bhumi Project, a major OCHS outreach project, has started a new life as “Bhumi Global”.

The Bhumi Project began at the OCHS in 2009 in cooperation with the Alliance for Religions and Conservation, and was backed by the United Nations Development Programme. The Project was launched at Windsor Castle in the presence of HRH Prince Philip, The Duke of Edinburgh, and HE Mr Ban Ki-moon, Secretary-General of the United Nations, in the same year.

The Project, named Bhumi after the Sanskrit word for Mother Earth, is an outreach project of the OCHS, aimed at exploring Hindu perspectives on environmental issues, creating networks of awareness and action among Hindu communities, and advocating these perspectives and awareness to a wider audience.

Mr Gopal Patel, starting as an intern at the OCHS in 2009, went on to lead this environmental outreach programme. He became Director of the Project in 2014. During this time, he consulted with Hindu communities in India and around the world on Hindu responses to environmental change and sustainable development, and on practical steps to make the ideals of the Bhumi Project a reality.

In this leadership role, Gopal established the Bhumi Project as the leading Hindu voice in these fields at the UN, and has represented Hindu concerns as co-chair on UN committees, as a speaker at international gatherings, and as a spokesman for Hindu groups and communities.

I've thoroughly enjoyed leading the Bhumi Project. We've done some outstanding work to ensure Hindus worldwide are addressing the environmental crisis. I'm excited for the next chapter with Bhumi Global as we work to reach more people and increase our impact in service to Mother Earth.

Gopal Patel

The Bhumi Project, having been founded by the OCHS, is now spreading its wings as a separate entity, called Bhumi Global (www.bhumiglobal.org).

In the capable hands of Gopal Patel and his colleagues we anticipate that Bhumi Global will flourish; developing new alliances and networks, inspiring action among communities around the world, highlighting good practice, and creating resources for education and training. The Board of Governors of the OCHS, and its scholars and students wish all good fortune to Bhumi Global.

We would like to thank the Alliance for Religion and Conservations and GreenFaith, for the help they have given to develop the Bhumi Project to date. We would also like to thank the many volunteers who offered their time, skills, advice, and commitment. The Project was always dependent on the help of a global family of concerned citizens from many religions and cultures. We thank them all and ask them to join us in wishing great success to this new manifestation of Bhumi.



Major milestones of the Bhumi Project:

- In 2011 Bhumi announced its Green Temple and Compassionate Living programmes.
- In 2015 Bhumi announced its plans to implement the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals.
- Since its inception the Project has endeavoured to help Hindu temples become more environmentally friendly.
- The Project authored the Hindu Declaration on Climate Change in 2015.
- Founding of Hindu Environment Week engaging tens of thousands of Hindus worldwide for environmental action.
- In 2016 the Bhumi Project was awarded the Dharma Seva Award by the Hindu American Foundation.
- The Bhumi Project organised and co-organised major environmental and multi-faith events, consultations, and training days in India, Africa, the USA, and Europe.
- The Bhumi Project conducted a successful Clean Kumbh campaign, in 2015, at the Kumbh Mela in Nashik.



5. Investment Committee Report to the Board of Trustees

Trustees

Value of Portfolio

Investment Strategy

Investment Performance and Target Returns

Financial Results Year ended 31st March 2020

Notes to the Financial Summary

The Investment Committee have pleasure in submitting their annual investment report to the Board of Trustees.

Value of Portfolio

The Investment Portfolio overseen by the Investment Committee amounts to £414,514.63 as of 30th September 2020. This comprises:

The Property fund	£166,912.99
The Sri Gnianananda Giri Peetam Society Fund	£206,414.76
General Endowment's	£41,186.88

Investment Strategy

These funds are managed on behalf of the OCHS by Sanderson Financial Limited. They are invested in a mix of equity, fixed income, and property funds. The investment adviser is mandated to recommend investments which conform to ethical investment principles as much as is possible and or available within specific asset classes and apply a cautious risk strategy to the overall portfolio, which over the long term provide steady positive income and capital growth.

The investment advisers approach to ethical investment principles is to try, as much as possible, within each asset class to recommend funds to the portfolio which undertake “negative screening” of their investments, thereby minimising the potential of the portfolio being invested in so called “sin stocks” such as companies which profit from the sale of tobacco, gambling and weapons.

Investment Performance and Target Returns

The Committee is happy to report that since the first investment made in October 2016 the Investment Portfolio has seen a net capital growth of 14.85% which implies an annual net rate of return of 3.71%.

This capital growth has allowed the committee to distribute £21,100 of funds since 2019 to the OCHS to support its scholarship and research activities

Despite the recent volatility in the financial markets, due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the portfolio has preserved its capital and achieved a positive return of 11.1 % between 1st April 2020 and 30th September 2020.

The committee aims to return 3.5% of the total Investment Portfolio on an annual basis to the OCHS to fund scholarships and research activities. This requires it to target annual net capital growth of 5%.



Financial Results Year ended 31st March 2020

The audited Financial Statements for 31 March 2020 have been prepared by Wenn Townsend Chartered Accountants, Oxford.

Summary Results

	2020	2019
	£	£
Income from:		
Donations (Note 1)	199,843	252,729
Charitable Activities (Note 2)	206,416	205,312
Investment Income	2,284	885
Endowment - Designated	-	215,205
Grants	4,918	-
(Loss) / Gain on Investment (Note 3)	(12,623)	10,123
Total Income	400,838	684,254
Total Expenditure (Note 4)	541,934	502,596
Net Movement in Funds for the Year	(141,096)	181,658

The results of the year reflect the ongoing challenge of the Centre to maintain its Research and Education activities with limited operational and fund development capacity. The outbreak of the Covid 19 Pandemic has further impacted the finances of the Centre for this financial year (see Note 1 below). With this in mind The Board and operational committees continue to monitor its current cost base, as they look to implement plans to create a long-term fund-raising strategy which would allow the Centre to continue to meet its ongoing costs and long-term ambitions.

Notes to the Financial Summary

Note 1 – Donations

The Covid 19 Pandemic which emerged towards the tail end of the financial year has resulted in Donors deferring donation to the Centre. This has had a direct impact on donations.

Note 2 – Charitable Activities – Continuing Education Department

Charitable Activity Income has remained stable during the year and the Board are encouraged by its continued development. The CED element of the OCHS continues to provide a solid and reliable source of revenue to the overall cost base of the Centre.

Note 4 – Investments

The loss on investments arose as a direct consequence of the Covid19 Pandemic which saw the investment portfolio lose significant value in the last three months of the financial year. The Investment Committee have worked conscientiously post year end, to recover the losses and return the portfolio to a healthy positive position. The accompanying investment committee note details the overall investment strategy and returns.

Note 3 - Expenditure

Staff Costs represent the greatest share of the organisation's overall expenditure. Historically the organisation has benefited from employees working on a volunteer, part time or economically unsustainable basis. The Board have recognised that this model is neither sustainable or one which will attract and retain the best employees in the future. A process of addressing staff remuneration continued in 2020 which is in line with the Boards previous stated ambitions of addressing historical remuneration anomalies. The addressing of the disparity has seen remuneration costs rise by 18%. Governance Costs represent 7% of overall expenditure.

Appendix One: Organisation

Board of Governors

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

Research Fellows

Prof. Mandakranta Bose
Prof. Purushottama Bilimoria
Prof. John Brockington
Mary Brockington
Dr Måns Broo
Dr Santanu Dey
Prof. Daniel J. Ehnborn
Prof. Ravi M. Gupta
Dr Rajan Khatiwoda
Dr Silvia Schwartz Linder
Dr James Madaio
Dr Kiyokazu Okita
Dr Neeraja Poddar
Prof. Himanshu Prabha Ray
Dr Ferdinando Sardella
Prof. Amiya P. Sen
Dr Kenneth Valpey



Administration

Director

Shaunaka Rishi Das

Academic Director

Prof. Gavin Flood, FBA

Finance Director

Manish Thakrar

Librarian

Dr Rembert Lutjeharms

Fellows

Prof. John Brockington
Mary Brockington
Anuradha Dooney
Dr Gillian Evison
Dr Jessica Frazier
Dr Rembert Lutjeharms
Dr Bjarne Wernicke-Olesen
Dr Nicholas Sutton
Lucian Wong



Senior Fellows

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

Kathmandu Office

Dr Silje Lyngar Einarsen
Dr Rajan Khatiwoda
Dr Bjarne Wernicke-Olesen
Gitte Poulsen

Investment Committee

Martin Sanderson
Manish Thakrar
Ramesh Venkataraman



Continuing Education Department

Dr Nicholas Sutton, Academic Director
Lal Krishna, Operations Director
Manish Thakrar, Finance Director

Curriculum Development Board

Dr Lucian Wong, Chair
Dr Raj Balkaran
Dr James Madaio

Publications Review Board

Dr Lucian Wong, Chair
Prof. John Brockington
Dr Avni Chag

Tutorial and Course Development

Prof. Guy Beck
Prof. Mandakranta Bose
Richard Coldman
Anuradha Dooney, MSt
Silje Lyngar Einarsen
Dr Jessica Frazier
Dr Layne Little
Dr Rembert Lutjeharms
Danny MacGregor
Dr Karen O'Brien Kop
Gitte Poulsen
Prof. Himanshu Prabha Ray
Musaret Siddiqui
Daniel Simpson
Zoë Slatoff

Patrons Council

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. Gavin Flood
Shaunaka Rishi Das
Dr Jessica Frazier
Dr Rembert Lutjeharms
Dr Bjarne Wernicke-Olesen
Lucian Wong

Development Planning Committee

Shaunaka Rishi Das
Lal Krishna
Manish Thakrar

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
Deepak Samani
Manishbhai Thakrar
Shobhaben Trivedi

USA

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

Appendix Two: Lectures and Seminars

Michaelmas Term 2019

Hinduism: Sources and Formations
Dr Rembert Lutjeharms

Sanskrit Prelims I
Dr Bjarne Wernicke-Olesen

Pāli for Sanskritists
Dr Bjarne Wernicke-Olesen

Readings in the Netratantra
Dr Bjarne Wernicke-Olesen

Readings in Vedānta: Bhedābheda Vedānta
Dr Rembert Lutjeharms

Lectures of the Shivdasani Visiting Fellow
The philosophy and world-view of the women of the Ṛg-veda
Prof. Mau Das Gupta

How did unmarried women live in the Ṛg-vedic age?
Prof. Mau Das Gupta

Lectures of the J.P. And Beena Khaitan Visiting Fellow

Text, paratext, and practice of the Devīmāhātmya
Dr Silje Lyngar Einarsen

Theorizing the interaction between textual tradition and contemporary practices in Hindu studies
Dr Silje Lyngar Einarsen

Hilary Term 2020

Hinduism II
Dr Rembert Lutjeharms

Sanskrit Prelims II
Dr Bjarne Wernicke-Olesen

Readings in Vedānta: Bhedābheda Vedānta
Dr Rembert Lutjeharms

Readings in Phenomenology
Prof. Gavin Flood FBA

Lectures of the Shivdasani Visiting Fellow
The Tantrāloka of Abhinavagupta: Introduction and Readings
Prof. Alexis Sanderson

Other Lectures

Rethinking the Sacred: Philosophies of the Divine Nature in Indian and Western Sources
Dr Jessica Frazier

Pārthasārathi Miśra and Kumārila Bhaṭṭa on Intrinsic “Validity” (svataḥprāmāṇya)
Dr Malcolm Keatingis

Cannabis use by yogis in India
Dr Matthew Clarke



Trinity Term 2020

Sanskrit Prelims

Dr Bjarne Wernicke-Olesen

Readings in Vedānta: Bhedābheda Vedānta

Dr Rembert Lutjeharms

Readings in Phenomenology

Prof. Gavin Flood FBA

Lectures of the Shivdasani Visiting Fellow

Deus ex Machina: What Does Digital Humanities have to offer Hindu Studies?

Dr Ulrik Lyngs

Hindu Studies + Digital Humanities III.1: Importing and cleaning text with RStudio

Dr Ulrik Lyngs

Hindu Studies + Digital Humanities III.2:

Visualising term frequencies & tf-idf with RStudio

Dr Ulrik Lyngs

Hindu Studies + Digital Humanities III.3:

Interactive dashboards/web apps

Dr Ulrik Lyngs

Hindu Studies + Digital Humanities IV:

Reproducible work with R Markdown

Dr Ulrik Lyngs

Digital Humanities Workshop for researchers at the OCHS

Convenor: Dr Ulrik Lyngs and Dr Bjarne Wernicke-Olesen

Thank you

