

# JONATHAN R. PETERSON

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## EDUCATION

- 2021 (exp.)      PhD, University of Toronto—Religion  
Committee: Ajay K. Rao (supervisor), Srilata Raman, Malavika  
Kasturi (History), Elisa Freschi (Philosophy)  
Dissertation: “Polemics and Power in Early Modern South Asia,  
1550-1700”
- 2015              Master of Arts, University of Colorado Boulder—Religion  
Department of Religious Studies
- 2009              Bachelor of Science, University of Colorado Boulder  
Department of Civil, Environmental, & Architectural  
Engineering

## EMPLOYMENT

- 2022 (Jan.)      Postdoctoral Fellow & Lecturer, Stanford University  
Department of Religious Studies
- 2019-present    Lecturer, University of Toronto  
Department of Historical & Cultural Studies (Scarborough)  
Department of Historical Studies (Mississauga)
- 2015-present    Teaching Assistant, University of Toronto

## RESEARCH & TEACHING INTERESTS

South Asian Religions	Indo-Persian Literary History
Sanskrit Intellectual History	Cultural History of the Deccan

## **PUBLICATIONS** REFEREED JOURNAL ARTICLES

- In Progress “Oral Commentary and Scholastic Debate in Sanskrit,” co-authored with Ajay Rao and Elisa Freschi for a special issue in the *Medieval Globe* titled “Practices of Commentary,” eds. Suzanne Akbari (Princeton) and Amanda Goodman (Toronto).
- In Progress “Polemic as Prayer: Rescuing Vyāsa from the Vīraśaivas,” for a special issue on Vīraśaivism in *New Explorations in South Asian Research*, eds. Elaine Fisher and Gil Ben-Herut, expected submission fall 2021.
- Under Review “Critique & Contextualism in the Polemics of Vādirāja, 1550-1600,” submitted to *Journal of South Asian Intellectual History*.
- 2020 “Pluralizing the Non-Dual: Multilingual Approaches to Advaita Vedānta, 1585-1891.” *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, 48, no. 1 (2020), 1-7.
- 2019 “The Language of Legitimacy & Decline: Grammar and the Recovery of Vedānta in Bhaṭṭoji Dikṣita’s *Tattvakaustubha*.” *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, 48, no. 1 (online 2019, print 2020), 23-47.
- 2018 “From Adam to ‘Ādil Shāh: Rethinking Religious Encounter in the *Tārīkh-i Firishte*,” *Journal of South Asian Intellectual History*, 1, no. 2 (2018), 155-182.

## REFEREED BOOK CHAPTERS

- Under Review “‘*Veda-Viplāvanam*,’ or How to Malign a Scripture: Charismatic Authority and the Limits of Exegesis in Early Modern Vedānta,” in *The Age of Vedānta*, ed. Lawrence McCrea & Ajay K. Rao. New York: Columbia University Press, expected 2022.

## **TEACHING** SOLE INSTRUCTOR

- 2022-spring “*Violence & Liberation—Jainism in South Asia*”: In-Person  
Department of Religious Studies, Stanford University
- 2021-fall “*Religion & Aesthetics in South Asia*” (GASB30): Online  
Department of Historical Studies, University of Toronto  
Mississauga

- 2021-summer      “*Asian Religions & Cultures—Images, Icons, & Iconoclasm in South Asian Religions*” (GASB30): Online  
 Historical & Cultural Studies, University of Toronto  
 Scarborough
- 2020-fall          “*Mughals & the World: 1506-1857*” (GAS/HISB53): Online  
 Historical & Cultural Studies, University of Toronto  
 Scarborough
- 2020-summer      “*Asian Religions & Cultures—Images, Icons, & Iconoclasm in South Asian Religions*” (GASB30): Online  
 Historical & Cultural Studies, University of Toronto  
 Scarborough
- 2020-spring        “*Jainism*” (RLG318): In-Person/Online  
 Historical Studies, University of Toronto Mississauga
- 2020-spring        “*Introduction to Hinduism*” (RLG210): In-Person/Online  
 Historical Studies, University of Toronto Mississauga
- 2019-fall          “*Mughals & the World: 1506-1857*” (GAS/HISB53): In-Person  
 Historical & Cultural Studies, University of Toronto  
 Scarborough
- 2019-summer      “*Asian Religions & Cultures—Dialogue & Debate in South Asian Religions*” (GASB30): In-Person  
 Historical & Cultural Studies, University of Toronto  
 Scarborough
- 2015-17            Graduate Tutor in Sanskrit: In-Person  
 Department for the Study of Religion, University of Toronto

## **FELLOWSHIPS & AWARDS**

- 2022                Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada  
 Postdoctoral Fellowship  
 Department of Religious Studies, Stanford University
- 2019                Michael Smith Foreign Study Supplement (6k)  
 Social Sciences & Humanities Research Council of Canada
- 2019                Historical and Cultural Studies Student-Centered Initiative Fund  
 (0.6k)  
 University of Toronto Scarborough
- 2018-19            J. William Fulbright-Nehru Foreign Research Grant (USIEF)  
 India
- 2018                USIEF Critical Language Extension Award (CLEA) for Marathi  
 Pune, India

- 2017 India's 50th Anniversary Scholarship (1.5k)  
Asia Institute (Toronto)
- 2017-20 Joseph-Armand Bombardier Graduate Scholarship (105k)  
Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada
- 2017 Research Travel Grant (4.1k)  
School of Graduate Studies (Toronto)
- 2016 Diljit and Gulshan Juneja Award for South Asian Studies (0.8k)  
Centre for South Asian Studies (Toronto)
- 2016 Ontario Graduate Scholarship (15k)
- 2016 American Institute of Iranian Studies Language Fellowship, Persian  
Dekhoda Lexicon Institute, Tehran (Declined)
- 2016 Foreign Language Area Studies Fellowship (7.5k), Persian  
University of Wisconsin, Madison (Declined)
- 2016 Less Commonly Taught Language Grant, Marathi (Pune)  
School of Graduate Studies (Toronto)
- 2015 Jane Trombley Graduate Award (1.5k)  
Department for the Study of Religion (Toronto)
- 2015 Foreign Language Area Studies Fellowship for Persian (7.5k)  
University of California Berkeley/University of Washington
- 2015 Center for Western Civilizations Language Fellowship (1k) (Persian)  
Department of German & Slavic Languages, UC Boulder
- 2014 Eaton Travel Grant (0.5k) (Boulder)
- 2013-14 American Institute for Indian Studies Tuition Fellowship (3.5k)  
Pune, India
- 2013 Foreign Language Fellowship for Sanskrit (5k)  
Religious Studies, University of Colorado Boulder
- 2013 Eaton Travel Grant (0.5k) (Boulder)
- 2012 Department of Religious Studies Merit Scholarship (1.2k) (Boulder)

## INVITED LECTURES

- 2021 "The Limits of Exegesis in Early Modern South Asia." *Practices of Commentary Collaborative Research Group, University of Toronto.*  
January, 2021.

- 2020 “Reading the Body in Early Modern Vedānta: Taptamudrā and the Problem of Interpretation.” *Hebrew University of Jerusalem*, May, 2020. (canceled due to COVID-19)
- 2020 “Readings on Ritual Branding over the Longue Durée.” *Hebrew University of Jerusalem*, May, 2020. (canceled due to COVID-19)
- 2019 “‘Veda-Viplāvanam,’ or How to Break the Rules in Early Modern Vedānta.” Stanford University, November, 2019, Palo Alto, California.
- 2018 “*Khaṇḍana, Bhaṅjana, Dhikkāra*: Doctrine, Dispute, and the Question of Religious Controversy in early-modern India.” *The Research Question: A Dissertation Workshop at the French Institute of Pondicherry*, Institut Français de Pondichéry, Pondicherry, India.

## CONFERENCES PRESENTATIONS

- 2021 “Vedānta Commentaries: Between Continuity and Contemporary Practice,” with Elisa Freschi (Toronto) and Ajay Rao (Toronto). *Practices of Commentary*, Institute for Advanced Study, October 2021, Princeton, New Jersey.
- 2021 “The Hermeneutics of Exclusion: Ritual Branding and Scholastic Practice in Sixteenth Century Vedānta.” *26th European Conference on South Asian Studies*, July, 2021, Vienna, Austria.
- 2020 “Agni on the Banks of the Bhima: The Grammar of Devotion in Eighteenth Century Deccan.” *230th Annual Meeting of the American Oriental Society*, March, 2020, Boston, Massachusetts. (postponed due to COVID-19)
- 2019 “Paeon for a Critique of Heretics: Polemic and Community in Vādirāja’s *Pāṣaṇḍa-khandana Stotra*.” *Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion*, November, 2019, San Diego, California.
- 2019 Critique & Catharsis in Western Kanara: The Anti-Jain Writings of Vādirāja Tīrtha.” *48th Annual Conference on South Asia*, October, 2019, Madison, Wisconsin.
- 2019 “Community & Critique, or the ‘Art of Verbal Abuse’ in early-modern South Asia.” *2nd Annual Graduate Workshop on Reading, Writing, and Teaching South Asian Religions*, University of Toronto Mississauga.
- 2018 “Mādhava the Many: Disambiguating Mādhava, Vidyāraṇya, and Bhāratīrtha’s Bibliographic Legacy.” *Age of Vedānta Research Intensive*, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.

- 2018 “Delinquency & Dereliction in the Śāstras: Linguistic Authority in Early Modern Vedānta Polemic.” *17th World Sanskrit Conference*, Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada.
- 2017 “God’s Outsider: Situating Arguments Against the Vaiṣṇava Initiation Practice of Ritual Branding.” *46th Annual Conference on South Asia*, Madison, Wisconsin.
- 2017 “Circumscribing *Vaidikatva*: Eligibility and the Language of Exclusion in Early Modern Religious Polemic.” *4th Biennial Graduate Conference on South Asian Religions*, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario.
- 2017 “Censure in Circulation: Tracing the Movement of Polemic Literature in early-modern India.” *Society for the History of Authorship, Reading, & Publishing (SHARP)*, University of Victoria, Victoria, British Columbia.
- 2017 “Economies of Speech: Patronage and Polemic in Early Modern India.” *Canadian Society for the Study of Religion (CSSR)/Société Canadienne pour l’étude de la religion Annual Meeting, Congress of the Social Sciences & Humanities*, Toronto, Ontario.
- 2015 “The Body of God—Controversy and Consensus in an Advaita Theory of Language.” *3rd Biennial Conference on South Asian Religions*, University of Toronto, Toronto, Ontario
- 2014 “Who Knows? A Comparative Study of the Jñāna-Jñātr Relationship: Śaṅkara and Abhinavagupta.” *3rd Annual Ways of Knowing Graduate Conference*, Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts.
- 2013 “A Case for Comparative Philosophy.” *Brihan Maharashtra Sanskrit Conference*, Pune, Maharashtra, India.
- 2013 “Vedānta in Post-1857 Colonial India.” *American Academy of Religion Rocky Mountain and Great Plains Regional Conference*, Denver, Colorado.

**CONFERENCES**    PANELS ORGANIZED

- 2020 “New Approaches to Sanskrit Language Analysis,” w/ P. Cummins. *230th Annual Meeting of the American Oriental Society*. March, 2020, Boston, Massachusetts. (postponed due to COVID-19)

## CONFERENCES PANELS ORGANIZED

- 2019 “Rethinking Hinduism: A Roundtable Discussion on ‘*Hindu Pluralism*’ (UC Press, 2017) & ‘*Polemics and Patronage in the City of Victory*’ (UC Press 2016).” *Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion*, November, 2019, San Diego, California.
- 2019 “Mādhva Vedānta in Context: Charisma, Critique, and the Legitimation of a Religious Movement.” *48th Annual Conference on South Asia*, October, 2019, Madison, Wisconsin.
- 2018 “Vedānta’s Polyglot Lives: Vedānta in the Vernacular, 1650-1900,” w/ P. Singh. *17th World Sanskrit Conference, Vancouver*, British Columbia, Canada.
- 2017 “Sites of Contention: Doctrine, Dispute, & the Development of Religious Discourse in South Asia,” w/ M. Akepiyapornchai. *46th Annual Conference on South Asia*, October, 2017, Madison, Wisconsin.

## RESEARCH DEVELOPMENT

- 2016-20 Project Manager, Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute Vedānta Manuscripts Project for the *Prosopographical Database for Indic Texts* (PANDiT) in collaboration with Yigal Bronner, Hebrew University of Jerusalem
- 2016-19 Project Manager, “Age of Vedānta” Partnership Development Grant  
Social Sciences & Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC)

## PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS

- American Oriental Society (AOS)  
European Association of South Asian Studies (EASAS)  
American Academy of Religion (AAR)  
Canadian Society for the Study of Religion (CSSR)

## **RESEARCH LANGUAGES**

Sanskrit  
Classical Persian  
Marathi (modern)  
Old Marathi (Modi)  
Farsi  
German

## **REFERENCES**

Ajay K. Rao (supervisor)  
Associate Professor  
Department for the Study of Religion  
University of Toronto  
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