

**PETER MICHAEL VALDINA**  
Associate Professor, Religious Studies, Albion College  
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EDUCATION

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- 2013      **Emory University**  
Ph.D., West and South Asian Religions Program, Graduate Division of Religion  
Dissertation: *Reading the Yoga Sūtra in Colonial India*.  
Committee: Dr. Laurie Patton (Director), Dr. Joyce Flueckiger, Dr. Paul Courtright.
- 2000      **The New School for Social Research**  
M.S.Sc., Psychoanalytic Studies
- 1999      **Columbia University**  
M.A., Religion
- 1997      **Hamilton College**  
B.A., Religious Studies, *magna cum laude* with honors

TEACHING EXPERIENCE

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- 2023-present    **Stanley S. Kresge Professor of Religious Studies**, Albion College
- 2019-present    **Associate Professor, Albion College**, Department of Religious Studies
- 2012-2019      **Assistant Professor, Albion College**, Department of Religious Studies
- 2010-2012      **Visiting Instructor, Furman University**, Department of Religion

PUBLICATION

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**Article**

“Yoga and Xenophilia: Ambiguity Now and Then.” *Common Knowledge*: 23:2 (April 2017)

**Works in Progress**

*In Progress.*                      *Translation and Community: Reading the Yoga Sūtra in Colonial India*  
(book project)

CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS

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- 2024              “Revealing the Secret in an Open Court: Heeralal Dhole, Paul Carus, and the Translation

- Assemblage,” Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, San Diego, California. November 23, 2024.
- 2022 “Decolonizing the Study of Religion: Debates and Practical Strategies,” Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, Denver, Colorado. Organizer and Respondent. November 21, 2022.
- 2021 “Elements of the Past's Return: Establishing the Place of Translation,” Annual Conference on South Asia, University of Wisconsin-Madison. “Textual Territorialities” panel. October 23, 2021.
- 2020 “The Allegorist and the Collector: A case study in nineteenth-century print culture ” Conference on the Study of Religions of India (CSRI), University of Madras, Chennai, India. July, 2020. Canceled due to the pandemic.
- 2018 “Patañjali's *Yoga Sūtra* and the Legacies of Colonial Translation,” Annual Conference on South Asia, University of Wisconsin-Madison. Symposium: “Art for Our Sake: The Aesthetics of Decolonization in Postcolonial South Asia.” October 11, 2018.
- 2017 “Sanskrit Commentary and Vernacular Translation in Nineteenth-Century Bengal.” Annual Conference on South Asia, University of Wisconsin-Madison. “Deep Vernaculars: Literary Cultures in History from South Asia” panel. October 28, 2017.
- 2016 “Seeking Information from a Ghost: The Lively Decay of Sanskrit in Colonial Bengal.” Annual Conference on South Asia, University of Wisconsin-Madison. Literary Preconference: “Margins and Marginalia.” October 20, 2016.
- 2015 “Binding Knowledge: Paratext and a Colonial Translation of the *Yoga Sūtra*.” Annual Conference on South Asia, University of Wisconsin-Madison. Panel: “South Asian Religions in the Age of Print.” October 25, 2015.
- 2015 “Text, Commentary, and Community: Translating the *Yoga Sūtra* in colonial Bengal.” XXI World Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions, Erfurt, Germany, August 28, 2015.
- 2014 “Translation Communities and Patañjali's *Yoga Sūtra*.” Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, Religion in South Asia Section. San Diego, November 24, 2014.
- 2012 “Patañjali in Print: the Value of Nineteenth-Century Translations.” Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, Yoga in Theory and Practice Consultation. Chicago, November 17, 2012.
- 2011 “The Mother of Yoga? Print, Patañjali, and Colonial Calcutta.” Presentation, Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion, Religion in South Asia Section: The Impact of Print Technology in the Nineteenth Century. San Francisco, November 22, 2011.

- 2011 "Translating the *Yoga Sūtra* and Theorizing Religion." Presentation, Southeastern Commission for the Study of Religion, American Academy of Religion, Religions of Asia: Multiple Models of Translation: Texts, Theory, and Theology. Louisville, KY, March 6, 2011.
- 2009 "Rajendralal Mitra and Modern Yoga." Presentation, American Academy of Religion, Religion in South Asia Section: New Directions in the Study of Religion in South Asia. Montreal, November 7, 2009.
- 2009 "Reading the *Yoga Sūtra* in Colonial India." Presentation, Southeastern Commission for the Study of Religion, American Academy of Religion, Religions of Asia: Negotiations of Religious Identity in South Asia. Greensboro, NC, March 15, 2009.

## REVIEWS

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Book Review: Hatcher, Brian A. *Vidyasagar: The Life and After-life of an Eminent Indian*. *International Journal of Hindu Studies* (April 2017)

Book Review: David Gordon White, *The Yoga Sutra of Patanjali: A Biography*. *The Journal of Hindu Studies* (January 2017)

Book Review: Christopher Minkowski, Rosalind O'Hanlon, and Anand Venkatkrishnan (eds.): *Scholar Intellectuals in Early Modern India: Discipline, Sect, Lineage and Community*. *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies*, 79/2 (June 2016)

## CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

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Avalos, Natalie, Richard Newton, and Peter Valdina. "Decolonizing Religious Studies: Debates and Practical Strategies." *Bulletin for the Study of Religion* 52, no. 1 (2023): 26-36.

Valdina, Peter, and Rahul Parson, Amit Dey, and Vera Höke. "De-limiting 'Right Religion': Transgression, Innovation and Tradition in South Asia," in Christoph Bochinger and Jörg Rüpke. *Dynamics of Religion, Past and Present. Proceedings of the XXI World Congress of the International Association for the History of Religions*. Berlin, Boston: De Gruyter, 2016. doi:10.1515/9783110450934.

## PODCAST

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Valdina, Peter. *Yoga Remix 1800*. Podcast transcript. Ultimate Concerns Podcast. Accessed September 9, 2017. <http://ultimateconcerns.org/yoga-remix-1800>.

## GRANTS AND AWARDS

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2020 Faculty Development Committee Combined Grant (Declined due to pandemic)

2019	Faculty Development Committee Combined Grant (British Library research)
2013	James and Dorothy Blanchard Faculty Fellowship, Albion College
2009-10	Emory University Writing Center Graduate Fellowship
2009-10	Emory University Woodruff Library Graduate Fellowship (Declined)
2006-8	American Institute of Indian Studies Junior Fellowship
2006	Fulbright-Hays Doctoral Dissertation Research Fellowship (Declined)
2006	Foreign Language Area Studies Scholarship (Declined)
2006	Critical Language Scholarship (CLS), for AIIS Bengali
2006	American Institute of Indian Studies (AIIS) Advanced Bengali Language Fellowship
2005	Emory University Graduate Division of Religion Summer Research Grant
2004-5	AIIS Advanced Hindi Language Program Fellowship
2004	AIIS Advanced Sanskrit Language Program Fellowship
2004	Emory University Graduate Division of Religion Summer Research Grant
2003	Emory University Graduate Division of Religion Summer Research Grant
2002-6	Emory University Graduate Fellowship

## COURSES TAUGHT

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### **Albion College**

RS 102: Introduction to Eastern Religions  
 RS 104: Introduction to Islam  
 RS 211: Hinduism  
 RS 212: Introduction to Buddhism  
 RS 206: Women, Gender, Islam  
 RS 251: Yogis and Ascetics  
 RS 261: Death & Dying

## UNDERGRADUATE RESEARCH PROJECTS DIRECTED

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Desiree Comer, “Mainstream Tensions and Alternative Spiritualities: Making Sense of NRMs.”  
 Prentiss M. Brown Honors Program Senior Thesis. Fall 2020-Spring 2021.

Mickey Benson, “Pastel Spirituality: Finding Religion in the Online Spiritual Marketplace” Senior  
 Thesis. Fall 2020-Spring 2021.

Binderya Munkhjargal, “Iran’s Regional Politics,” Directed Study (S19) and Interdisciplinary Senior  
 Thesis. Fall 2018—Spring 2019.

Leaha Sinnaeve, “Greek Orthodox and Hindu Diaspora Communities in the United States.” Prentiss  
 M. Brown Honors Program Senior Thesis. Fall 2018—Spring 2019.

Madison Kase, “Killing the Sacred Cow: Ecology and Religion in South Asia.” Directed Study, and  
 Prentiss M. Brown Honors Program Senior Thesis. Fall 2017—Spring 2018.

Kenton McCosh, "Buddhism and Medicine," Directed Study, Fall 2016.

Laxmi Kotha, "Ayurveda: the Classical and the Contemporary," Directed Study, and Prentiss M. Brown Honors Program Senior Thesis. Fall 2014—Spring 2015.

Dustin Moretz, "Of Contact and Conflict: An Analysis of Cross-Communal Relationships in Indian Communal Violence," Prentiss M. Brown Honors Program Senior Thesis. Fall 2013—Spring 2014. Winner of Outstanding Thesis Award, 2014.

## RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

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### Archival Research and Language Training

October 2019 "Binding knowledge: Mapping print culture in nineteenth-century Bengal". Research project at the British Library, London. Supported by a combined Faculty Development Grant, Albion College.

June-July 2013 "The Social History of Two Yoga Translators." Research project in Kolkata and Serampore West Bengal, India. Supported by the James and Dorothy Blanchard Faculty Fellowship, Albion College.

2006-2008 Dissertation research supported by American Institute of Indian Studies Junior Fellowship. Based in Kolkata.

Summer 2006 American Institute of Indian Studies Bengali Language Program, Kolkata.

Summer 2005 Pre-dissertation Research, Kolkata.

2004-2005 American Institute of Indian Studies Hindi Language Program, Jaipur.

Summer 2004 American Institute of Indian Studies Sanskrit Language Program, Pune.

Summer 2003 Hindi Language Program, Landour School, Mussoorie.

### Academic Workshops

June 2015 Steering Committee Member, Participant, and Workshop Leader, Great Lakes College Association Expanding Collaboration Initiative: "Yoga: Body and Mind in a Global Setting," Denison University.

November 2014 Selected Participant, Council on Undergraduate Research: Creative Inquiry in the Arts and Humanities Institute, November 7-9, Wauwatosa, Wisconsin.

November 2013 Selected Participant, American Institute of Indian Studies, "Transforming Your Dissertation into a Book," Annual Conference on South Asia, University of

Wisconsin-Madison.

### Editorial Experience

- 2000-2 News Assistant, *The New York Times*.  
2002 Research assistance for Jacques Steinberg's *The Gatekeepers: Inside the Admissions Process of a Premier College* (New York: Penguin, 2002).  
2001 Researcher and intern, McSweeney's Books, Brooklyn, NY.

### INVITED LECTURES

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- 2015 "Translation in Context: Reading the *Yoga Sūtra* in Colonial India," Emory University.  
2007 "Translating the *Yoga Sūtra* in Colonial India." Jadavpur University, Kolkata, India.  
2004 "Psychoanalysis in India." Emory University Psychoanalytic Studies Program.

### SERVICE AT ALBION

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#### Academic Service:

- 2012- Chair, Daoud Family Lectureship in Middle Eastern Studies, Albion College.  
Organized lectures for the following visiting speakers: Julia Meltzer, Shadi Hamid, William McCants, Christopher Davidson, Shibley Telhami, Elizabeth Thompson.  
2012- Committee Member, Foundation for Undergraduate Research, Scholarship, and Creative Activity, Albion College.  
2012- Faculty Advisor, Muslim Student Association, Albion College (Awarded "Most Active Group Advisor Award," 2013-14).  
2020-23 Department Chair, Religious Studies  
2020-23 Budgets, Salaries, and Benefits Committee, Albion College (Chair, 2022-2023)  
2016-2019 Curriculum and Resources Committee (Chair, 2018-2019).  
2016-2017 Chair, Yinger Family Lectureship, Religious Studies, 2016-2017.  
Organized the lecture for visiting speaker Vasudha Narayanan

#### Public Intellectual Service in the Community:

"Yoga and Indian Traditions," Albion Area Lifelong Learners, Spring, 2015; 2018.

Academic Advisor, Albion College Muslim Student Association, 2013-

Guest lecture, Bridge Interfaith Group at Albion College, September, 2013.

Guest lecture on Hinduism for “Christianity and World Religions” class at the First United Methodist Church, Chelsea, Michigan, September, 2012

## LANGUAGES

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**Hindi:** Advanced proficiency in reading, writing, and speaking.

**Bengali:** Advanced proficiency in reading, writing, and speaking.

**Sanskrit:** Advanced reading proficiency, some proficiency in speaking and writing.

**German:** Intermediate reading proficiency.

## PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATION

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American Academy of Religion

## PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

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2019- American Academy of Religion, Academic Relations Committee, Member