

Flavio A. Geisshuesler

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SUMMARY

Fascinated by powerful psycho-physical practices encountered in Indian and Tibetan religions, I spent a total of over 3 years living in the Himalayan regions of Asia. I turned this first-hand experience into an academic career, receiving prestigious fellowships for field- and archival research, completing two PhDs, and publishing extensively. Having taught courses about meditation at universities on four continents, I am passionate about supporting leaders by teaching simple, science-based, and life-tested exercises as we all prepare for a rapidly changing world.

EDUCATION

2025	Executive MBA, HEC Paris, France
2019	Ph.D. in History of Religions, University of Virginia, USA
2018	Ph.D. in History of Religions, University of Bern, Switzerland
2013	M.A. in History of Religions, University of Virginia, USA
2008	B.A. in History of Religions, University of Lausanne, Switzerland

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

2024-present	Khyentse-Macready Senior Lecturer for Tibetan Buddhism, University of Sydney, Australia
2019-2023	Postdoctoral Fellow, Departments of Comparative Religion & Asian Studies, Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel
2018-2019	Postdoctoral Fellow, Institut für Religionswissenschaft und Zentralasiatische Kulturwissenschaft, University of Bern, Switzerland

AWARDS & FELLOWSHIPS

2021	Azrieli Foundation International Postdoctoral Fellowship (3 years)
2021	Mandel Scholion Postdoctoral Fellowship (3 years)
2020	Lady Davis Postdoctoral Fellowship (2 years)
2019	Khyentse Foundation Postdoctoral Fellowship (2 years)
2017	Dr. Josephine de Karman Dissertation Completion Fellowship (6 months)
2016	U.S. Department of Education, Fulbright-Hays Fellowship Dissertation Research Abroad Fellowship (12 months)
2014	Swiss National Science Foundation, Doc.Mobility Fellowship (18 months)
2013	U.S. Department of Education, FLAS Program Fellowship for Tibetan Studies

LIST OF PUBLICATIONS

Books

- 2024 *The Tibetan Sky-Gazing Meditation and the Pre-History of Great Perfection (Dzogchen) Buddhism*. London: Bloomsbury Academic
- 2021 *The Life and Work of Ernesto De Martino: Italian Perspectives on Apocalypse and Rebirth in the Modern Study of Religion*. Numen Book Series. Leiden/Boston: Brill.

Refereed Journal Articles

- 2022 “Meditation Between Open Skies and Deep Ravines: Revisiting the Ethos of Freedom in Great Perfection (*rdzogs chen*) Buddhism,” *The Journal of the International Association of Buddhist Studies*.
- 2020 “From Grounded Identity to Receptive Creativity: The Mythical-Historical Formation of the Nyingma School and the Potential of Collective Trauma,” *International Journal of Buddhist Thought & Culture*.
- 2020 “Luminous Bodies, Playful Children, and Abusive Grandmothers: Trauma, Dissociation, and Disorganized Attachment in the Early History of Great Perfection (*rDzogs Chen*) Buddhism,” *Religions*.
- 2019 “When Buddhas Dissociate: A Psychological Perspective on the Origins of Great Perfection Buddhism (*rDzogs Chen*),” *Cogent Psychology*.
- 2019 “The 7E Model of the Human Mind: Articulating a Plastic Self for the Cognitive Science of Religion,” *Journal of Cognition and Culture*.
- 2019 “A Parapsychologist, an Anthropologist, and a Vitalist Walk into a Laboratory: Ernesto de Martino, Mircea Eliade, and a Forgotten Chapter in the Disciplinary History of Religious Studies,” *Religions*.

Book Reviews

- 2016 “Review of Philippe Bornet’s *Rites et pratiques de l’hospitalité: Mondes juifs et indiens anciens* (2010)” in *Journal of Indo-Judaic Studies*.

CONFERENCE PARTICIPATION

Panels Organized

- 2018 “Ernesto De Martino’s Multiple Identities: Between Coherence and Contradiction,” 16th Annual Conference of the European Association for the Study of Religions (EASR), Bern, Switzerland, June 17-21

Papers Presented

- 2022 “Cosmic Eggs, Domesticated Sheep, and Flying Kings: An Overview of Pre-Buddhist Motifs in Great Perfection (*rdzogs chen*) Buddhism,” 16th Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies (IATS), Prague, Czech Republic, July 3-9
- 2022 “Become the Monkey! A New Paradigm for Meditation Research,” Azrieli International Postdoctoral and Early Career Faculty Fellows’ Conference, Tel Aviv, Israel, April 26

- 2021 “Ernesto de Martino and the Eschatological Turn in Continental Philosophy,” Crisis, Apocalypse and Millenarianism in the Contemporary World, University of Cologne, Germany, November 30
- 2021 “Intentional Spontaneity: Some Examples of Transformative Experiences in Tantric Buddhism,” Intentional Transformative Experiences - Theorizing Self-Cultivation in Religion and Philosophy, Bern, Switzerland, August 28-30
- 2021 “Clothed in Nakedness: Direct Transcendence Meditation and the Contemplative Experimentation with Consciousness,” 2° Convegno dell’Associazione Italiana di Studi Tibetani Himalayani e Mongoli (AISTHiM), Sapienza Università di Roma, July 7-9
- 2021 “Ernesto de Martino (1908-1965) as a Classic Figure in the 20th-Century Study of Religion: Practical, Theoretical, and Methodological Ideas for Recovering Dialectical Thinking for Religious Studies,” SGR-SSSR Jahrestagung, Zürich, Switzerland, March 12-13
- 2019 “History, Meditation, Brain: Great Perfection Contemplation in Context,” 15th Seminar of the International Association for Tibetan Studies (IATS), Paris, France, July 7-13
- 2019 “Meditating Texts or Meditating Texts? Understanding the Agency of Great Perfection Philosophy Through Extended Mind Theory,” 17th Annual Conference of the European Association for the Study of Religions (EASR), Tartu, Estonia, June 25-29
- 2018 “Brain, Meditation, History: Plasticity and the Cognitive Science Approach to Religion,” Annual Meeting of the American Academy of Religion (AAR), Denver, Colorado, November 17-20
- 2018 “The Palingenesis of Something New: Ernesto de Martino’s Civil Religion between the Individual and the State,” 16th Annual Conference of the European Association for the Study of Religions (EASR), Bern, Switzerland, June 17-21
- 2018 “Ernesto de Martino’s Critical Thinking: Biographical, Thematic, and Systematic Reflections,” 16th Annual Conference of the European Association for the Study of Religions (EASR), Bern, Switzerland, June 17-21
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TEACHING EXPERIENCE

University of Basel

“Ritual” and “Meditation” in Buddhism: A Fresh Look at Two Key Concepts in Religious Studies (Spring 2022)

University of Fribourg

History and Practice of Meditation (Fall 2021)

Hebrew University of Jerusalem

Thinking about Meditation in Buddhism and Beyond (Spring 2021)

The Great Perfection: Exploring Continuities and Ruptures in the World of Buddhism (Spring 2020)

University of Bern

Woke, Wake, Waken: An Epistemological and Historical Exploration of Identity in Western Civilization (Fall 2023)

“Mindfulness” (*sati*): A Buddhist Practice and its Reception in Global Modernity (Fall 2020)

Buddhism, Meditation, and Cognitive Science (Fall 2019)

The Tibetan Renaissance and the Tibetanization of Buddhism (Spring 2019)
Old Questions, New Answers? The Italian School History of Religions (Spring 2019)

University of Virginia

Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism (Fall 2017)
Contemporary Hinduism (Fall 2012)
Introduction to Buddhism (Teaching Assistant, Spring 2012)
Introduction to Tibetan Buddhism (Teaching Assistant, Fall 2011)
Faith and Doubt in the Modern Age (Teaching Assistant, Spring 2011)
Introduction to Hinduism (Teaching Assistant, Fall 2010)

SERVICE TO PROFESSION

Manuscript Reviewer

Journal of Cognition and Culture
Religions
Acta Asiatica Varsoviensia
International Journal of Buddhist Thought & Culture
Journal of Dharma Studies

Advisory Board

ARGOS: Perspektiven in der Religionswissenschaft

LANGUAGES

Modern

Native: Swiss-German
Fluent: German, English, Italian, French, Hebrew
Advanced: Spanish, Hindi, Urdu, Nepali, Tibetan
Intermediate: Russian, Persian, Yiddish
Basic: Chinese, Arabic

Classical

Advanced: Tibetan, Sanskrit, Biblical Hebrew
Intermediate: Pali
Basic: Chinese, Mongolian
