



Dr. Borayin Larios

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Postdoctoral Researcher: Material Religion of Contemporary Hindu Traditions

Job Description

The University of Vienna invites applications for a Postdoctoral Researcher position within the ERC-funded Synergy Project **MANTRAMS, Mantras in Religion, Media, and Society in Global Southern Asia**, specifically focusing on the material religion of Hindu traditions. While a specialization in Maharashtra is preferred, the role is open to broader research within the field.

Position: Postdoctoral Researcher

Department: Department of South Asian, Tibetan and Buddhist Studies

Job Vacancy Starting: November 1, 2024

Working Hours: 100%

Contract Duration: 24 months (with possibility of extension)

Your Field of Activity:

You will contribute to the MANTRAMS project's **Task Force 3 (TF3)**, which focuses on the **Materiality of Mantras**. TF3 investigates mantras in their inscriptional, visual, embodied, and digital forms, exploring their impact on individuals, communities, and environments. Research Component 6 within TF3 specifically examines how mantras in popular Hinduism are materially represented and used across various objects and surfaces. This includes studying the role of mantras in identity politics, social hierarchies, and their commodification in global contexts.

Your Future Tasks:

- Conduct interdisciplinary research on material religion, focusing on mantras in their various material forms. This includes gathering data through fieldwork and archival research in relevant areas.
- Examine mantras as multimodal media, with particular attention to artifacts used in contemporary Hindu traditions and in urban centers such as Mumbai and Pune, exploring their social and cultural significance.
- Publish your findings in peer-reviewed journals and edited volumes, and present at international conferences.
- Collaborate with our digital humanities expert to engage actively in the development and data curation for the "OMnibus of Mantras" project website. This involves mapping and archiving sonic and visual representations of mantras across global Southern Asia, contributing to the design process, refining content, and regularly updating the research blog with accessible, well-documented findings.

- Collaborate closely with the MANTRAMS team and Principal Investigator (Prof. Larios), including contributing to the planning and development of an interactive exhibition on material mantras at a prestigious museum.
- Work effectively as part of an interdisciplinary team, contributing to joint research activities and supporting your colleagues in the achievement of the project's goals.
- Assist in organizing conferences and workshops, and help prepare reports for the MANTRAMS project.

Your Profile:

- Completed PhD in South Asian Studies, Religious Studies, Anthropology, or a related field.
- Expertise or strong interest in material religion and contemporary Hindu traditions.
- Proven research and publication record in relevant areas.
- Experience and willingness to conduct ethnographic fieldwork in South Asia.
- Proficiency in Hindi or a modern South Asian language; knowledge of Sanskrit is advantageous.

Additional Skills:

- Strong analytical and organizational skills.
- Familiarity with digital humanities methods is a plus.
- Excellent communication skills in English, with a working knowledge of German or a demonstrated commitment to learning it if it is not your native language.
- Ability to work collaboratively in a diverse, interdisciplinary team environment.

What We Offer:

- Flexible working hours and a supportive work-life balance.
- A vibrant and inclusive international academic environment.
- Funded fieldwork and academic research activities (conferences and workshops).
- Access to extensive academic resources.
- Competitive salary.

Application Process:

Please submit by **September 22, 2024**, in a single PDF file:

- A cover letter detailing your research interests and how they align with the MANTRAMS project.
- A research proposal within the Task Force "Materiality of Mantras" (details on the MANTRAMS project upon request)
- A scientific curriculum vitae.
- A list of relevant publications.
- One letter of recommendation.

For all inquiries, contact:

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