

Curriculum Vitae

Michael T. Williams

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Academic Address:

Institute for the Cultural and Intellectual History of Asia,
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Personal Website

IKGA Website

Date of birth: 24 March 1985

Nationality: British Citizen

Employment and education

Employment History

- **November 2021–March 2026: Research Associate at the Austrian Academy of Sciences**
Project title: “Truth, Knowledge and Metaphysics in Three Traditions of Vedānta” (FWF Project no. 34618), headed by Dr. Marcus Schmücker.
- **January 2018–November 2021: Research Associate at the Austrian Academy of Sciences**
Project title: “Religion and Reason in Vedānta Traditions of Medieval India” (FWF Project no. 30622-G23).
- **April 2016–September 2016: Gonda Fellow at the University of Leiden**
- **October 2015–February 2015: Guest Researcher at the University of Vienna**
- **October 2012–September 2015: Research Associate at the University of Vienna**
Employed within the framework of the project “Metaphysics and Epistemology of the Nyāya Tradition III” (FWF Project no. 24388) headed by Prof. Karin Preisendanz.

Teaching Experience

- **March 2025–Present:** Course Lecturer on MA course “Readings in Jayatīrtha’s *Nyāyasudhā*” at the Department of South Asian, Tibetan, and Buddhist Studies (ISTB), University of Vienna.
- **July 2024** Course lecturer on the Vienna Summer School on the Cultural and Intellectual History of Asia.

- **July 2023:** Course lecturer on the Vienna Summer School on the Cultural and Intellectual History of Asia.
- **January 2011–September 2011:** Teacher of Sanskrit and Classics at St. James School for Senior Boys.
- **October 2009–July 2010:** *I was fully responsible for designing and teaching the following courses at the University of Manchester:*
 - Indian Philosophy (MA Level)
 - Advanced Sanskrit (MA Level)
 - Intermediate Sanskrit (Undergraduate Level)
- **October 2010–June 2011:** *I was fully responsible for designing and teaching the following courses at the University of Manchester:*
 - Questions in Indian Philosophy (Undergraduate Level)
- **October, 2009–June 2010:**
 - Visiting lecturer in the module “Hindu Religion and Theology” and the module “Death and Dying in Dharmic Religions” at Chester University
 - Co-lecturer on the undergraduate course “Women and Men in Indian Religion” at the University of Manchester

Education

- **June 2012: PhD “Non-Realism on Trial: a Mādhva Critique of Advaita Metaphysics”.**
School of Arts, Histories and Cultures, University of Manchester.
Supervised by Dr. Jacqueline Suthren Hirst.
- **July 2008: Awarded Master’s of Philosophy in Classical Indian Religion with Distinction.**
Wolfson College, University of Oxford.
Supervised by Prof. Alexis Sanderson, Spalding Professor of Eastern Religions and Ethics, All Souls College.
Thesis: “The Kṛṣṇa Upaniṣad: Critical edition, annotated translation and analysis of the text”. Supervised by Prof. Christopher Minkowski, Boden Professor of Sanskrit, Balliol College. *Awarded a distinction for thesis.*
- **July 2006: BA in Philosophy. Awarded First-class Honours.**
Department of Arts and Humanities, University of Cardiff.

Research interests

My research explores philosophy and religion in India during the early modern (*ca.* 1500–1800) periods. I focus particularly on the philosophy and theology of the Mādhva (Dvaita) tradition of Vedānta. This tradition, founded in South India by Madhva Ācārya in the thirteenth century, is one of the major schools of Vedānta and is known for its critical engagement with the philosophy of rival traditions such as Advaita Vedānta and Navya-Nyāya.

My published monographs and articles deal particularly with the life and work of the Mādhva philosopher Vyāsatīrtha (*fl.* 1510), who is widely regarded as a “second founder” of the Mādhva tradition and one of the most influential religious leaders in South India in the sixteenth century. My 2024 monograph, *Existence and Perception in Medieval Vedānta*, gives a philosophical reconstruction of Vyāsatīrtha’s defence of realism against the nondualism of the Advaita Vedāntins. It focuses particularly on how Vyāsatīrtha refutes the Advaitins’ arguments using the epistemology/theory of inference (*anumāna*) defended by Gaṅgeśa in the *Tattvacintāmaṇi*.

My most recent research project (“Truth, Knowledge and Metaphysics in Three Traditions of Vedānta”) engaged with epistemology in Indian philosophy in the early modern period (ca. 1500–1800). Philosophically, the research discusses how knowledge is recognised and distinguished from error, and the foundational role of the Veda as a means of knowing God. My forthcoming monograph in the Harvard Oriental Series addresses Vyāsātīrtha’s critique of Navya-Nyāya rational theology, and his defence of the theory that knowledge of God can be gained exclusively through the Veda. The monograph presents a detailed study of the Mādhva and Navya-Nyāya theory of knowledge (*pramā*) and the nature and scope of inferential reasoning.

In addition to philosophical analysis, I also engage in philological research, particularly focused on the textual criticism of the *Tarkatāṇḍava* in handwritten Sanskrit manuscripts. I am currently preparing a new edition of the *Prāmāṇyavāda* of Vyāsātīrtha’s *Tarkatāṇḍava* (“Dance of Logic”) based on witnesses documented in institutes in Mysuru, Thanjavur, and Pune. I have also published articles on the theory and practice of loving devotion (*bhakti*) to the God Kṛṣṇa across the different Vaiṣṇava traditions.

Grants and Awards

- **2009:** Awarded a research grant by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (UK) to travel to India for the purpose of working on Sanskrit texts with Prof. D. Prahladachar of the Pūrṇaprajña Vidyāpīṭha, Bangalore
- **September 2008–June 2010:** Awarded a scholarship by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (UK) fully funding a two year period of PhD research at the University of Manchester
- **June 2007:** Awarded a research grant by the Bodin Fund, University of Oxford, to travel to India and procure and document Sanskrit manuscripts for dissertation research
- **October 2006–July 2008:** Awarded a scholarship by the Arts and Humanities Research Council (UK) fully funding a two year MPhil at the University of Oxford
- **July 2004:** Awarded scholarship for “Best Results in Year Two” at Cardiff University

Further conference work

- **December 2025:** Organiser of the Workshop *Intrinsicist and Extrinsicist Approaches to Knowledge in Indian Philosophy*, held at the Institute for the Cultural and Intellectual History of Asia, Vienna, 9th–11th December 2025
- **September 2009:** Co-founder and organiser of *International Indology Graduate Research Symposium*, held at Oxford University from 23rd–24th September, 2009
- **June–July 2009 and 2010:** Administrative assistant in the organisation of the conference *Sanskrit Traditions in the Modern World*

Peer-Reviewing Work and Advisory Board Membership

- I am a Member of the Advisory Board for the *Journal of South Asian Intellectual History*
- I have worked as an anonymous peer-reviewer for *Bloomsbury* and *Oxford University Press* as well as the journals *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, *Critical Study of Religion*, and *Religions of South Asia*

Recent Conference and Workshop Participation

- Williams, Michael (November, 2024). “Perceptual Error in *Tattvavāda*: Jayatīrtha and Vyāsatīrtha on Illusion.” *Colloquium of the Indian Philosophy Network (IPN)*, Indian Philosophy Network.
- Williams, Michael (August, 2024). “Knowledge and Object-Correspondence in Nyāya and Mādhva Vedānta.” *XXV World Congress of Philosophy*, Sapienza University of Rome.
- Williams, Michael (June, 2024). “Rediscovering Madhva’s Works in Late Dvaita Vedānta.” *An Intellectual History of Late Vedānta*, workshop held at Maison de l’Asie (EFEO), Paris.
- Williams, Michael (February, 2024). “Knowledge and Consciousness in the Dvaita Tradition of Vedānta.” *Inaugural Seminar of the Certificate course on the Bhagavadgītā*, Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Manipal.
- Williams, Michael (February, 2024) “Consciousness and Knowledge in Dvaita Vedānta: The Theory of the Witness (*Sākṣin*).” *Week-Long Course Work on Classical Indian Philosophy*, Bhaktivedānta Research Centre, University of Mumbai.
- Williams, Michael (December, 2023). “Knowledge and Truth in Satyanātha Tīrtha’s *Abhinavatāṇḍava*.” *Late Vedānta Texts in Sanskrit*; workshop held at the Institute for the Cultural and Intellectual History of Asia, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna.

Language Skills

- Sanskrit language, including the classical and Vedic languages
- Spoken/written Kannaḍa language
- Intermediate Pāli language
- Literary Hindi (reading only)
- Spoken and written German (C1 level)
- French as an academic language (reading only)

Publications

Peer-reviewed monographs and collected volumes

- Williams, Michael T. *Debating God's Existence in Medieval Vedānta: Vyāsātīrtha and the Death-Dance of Logic*. (Forthcoming in the Harvard Oriental Series.)
- Williams, Michael T. (Contributor). *The Trisūtrībhāṣya: Text, Sources and Transmission*. Karin Preisendanz, Yasutaka Muroya, and Alessandro Grahelli, with contributions from Sung Yong Kang and Michael Williams. (Forthcoming.)
- Williams, Michael T. *Existence and Perception in Medieval Vedānta: Vyāsātīrtha's Defence of Realism in the Nyāyamṛta*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2024. (DOI: 10.1515/9783110728521.)
 - Reviewed by: Singh, A. and Boruah, B., “Existence and Perception in Medieval Vedānta: Vyāsātīrtha's Defence of Realism in the *Nyāyamṛta*.” *International Journal of Hindu Studies* 29, 465–467 (2025). <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11407-025-09424-6>
- Schmücker, Marcus, Williams, Michael, and Fischer, Florian (eds.) *Temporality and Eternity: Nine Perspectives on God and Time*. Berlin: De Gruyter, 2021. (DOI: 10.1515/9783110698190)
- Williams, M., Szanto, P. and Mirnig, N. (eds.). *Puṣpikā: Tracing Ancient India Through Texts and Traditions*. Oxford: Oxbow, 2013. (DOI: 10.2307/j.ctvh1dqb0.)

Publications in peer-reviewed journals and collected volumes

- Williams, Michael T. “Vyāsātīrtha's Intrinsicist Account of Knowledge in the *Tarkatāṇḍava*.” (Article under preparation for the special issue of the *Journal of Indian Philosophy* *Intrinsic and Extrinsic Knowledge: The Debate about Validity in Indian Philosophy*.)
 - Indexing: Web of Science (Arts & Humanities Citation Index - A&HCI). Ranking: Q1 in Cultural Studies / Q2 in Philosophy (SCImago/SJR 2023). Impact Metrics: SJR: 0.301 / H-Index: 25.
- Williams, Michael T., Schmücker, Marcus, and Patil, Parimal G., eds. “Intrinsic and Extrinsic Knowledge: The Debate about Validity in Indian Philosophy.” (Special issue of the *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, under preparation.)
- Williams, Michael. “Truth and Knowledge in late Mādḥva Vedānta.” (Article under preparation for special issue of the *Journal of Indian Philosophy*.)
- Williams, Michael. “Madhusūdana's Analytical Account of Non-Dualism.” (Forthcoming in Duquette and Madaio's *Handbook of Non-Dualism*, Bloomsbury.)
- Williams, Michael. “Perception in Jayātīrtha's Refutation of the Materialists in the *Nyāyasudhā*.” *A Sourcebook in Global Philosophy*, edited by Mohammed Rustom, United Kingdom: Equinox Publishing, 2025, pp. 200–210.
- Williams, Michael T. (2025). “Independence and Nondualism in Madḥva's *Bhāgavatātātparyanirṇaya*”. *Journal of Vaishnava Studies*, 34(1), pp. 127–143.
- Williams, Michael T. (2024). “Review of Stephen Phillips' ‘Jewel of Reflection on the Truth about Epistemology: A Complete and Annotated Translation of the Tattva-cintā-maṇi’”. *Philosophy East and West*, 73(2), pp. 510–519. (DOI: 10.1353/pew.2023.a898084.)

- *Indexing*: Web of Science (Arts & Humanities Citation Index - A&HCI). *Ranking*: Q2 in Philosophy (2024). *Impact Metrics*: SJR: 0.180 (2024) / H-Index: 29.
- Williams, Michael T. (2022). “Theodicy in a Deterministic Universe: God and the Problem of Suffering in Vyāsātīrtha’s *Tātparyacandrikā*.” *International Journal of Hindu Studies* 25(3): pp. 199–288. (DOI: 10.1007/s1\01407-021-09304-9.)
 - *Indexing*: Web of Science (Arts & Humanities Citation Index - A&HCI). *Ranking*: Q1 in Cultural Studies and Religious Studies in 2024 (SCImago/SJR). *Impact Metrics*: SJR: 0.259 (2024) / H-Index: 17.
- Williams, M. (2021). “Mystical Experience and Theodicy in the Philosophy of Rāmakṛṣṇa.” *International Journal of Hindu Studies*, 25(1–2), pp. 135–139. (DOI: 10.1007/s11407-021-09299-3.)
- Williams, Michael. “New Theories of Time in Sixteenth Century India: Raghunātha, Vyāsātīrtha, and Mahādeva Bhaṭṭa.” *Temporality and Eternity: Nine Perspectives on God and Time*, edited by Marcus Schmücker, Michael Williams, and Florian Fischer, Berlin: De Gruyter, 2021, pp. 161–190. (DOI: 10.1515/9783110698190-009.)
- Williams, M. “The Impact of Navya-Nyāya on Mādhva Vedānta: Vyāsātīrtha and the Problem of Empty Terms”. *Journal of Indian Philosophy*, 49(2): 205–232 (2020). (DOI: 10.1007/s10781-020-09453-y).
 - *Indexing*: Web of Science (Arts & Humanities Citation Index - A&HCI). *Ranking*: Q1 in Cultural Studies / Q2 in Philosophy (SCImago/SJR 2023). *Impact Metrics*: SJR: 0.301 / H-Index: 25.
- Williams, Michael. “Vyāsātīrtha’s *Nyāyāmṛta*: An Analytic Defence of Realism in Mādhva Vedānta.” *The Bloomsbury Research Handbook of Vedānta*, edited by Ayon Maharaj, New York: Bloomsbury Academic, 2020, pp. 105–129. (DOI: 310.5040/9781350063266.ch-00.)
- Williams, Michael. “Raghunātha Śīromaṇi’s New Metaphysics in the Examination of the True Nature of Things.” *The Oxford Handbook of Indian Philosophy*, edited by Jonardon Ganeri, New York: Oxford University Press, 2017, pp. 623–643. (DOI: 10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199314621.013.33.)
- Williams, Michael. “Jayātīrtha and the Problem of Perceptual Illusion.” *The Oxford Handbook of Indian Philosophy*, edited by Jonardon Ganeri, New York: Oxford University Press, 2017, pp. 559–577. (DOI: 10.10-93/oxfordhb/9780199314621.013.30.)
- Williams, Michael. “Mādhva Vedānta at the Turn of the Early Modern Period: Vyāsātīrtha and the Navya-Naiyāyikas” in “Innovation in Hindu Traditions” ed. Jonathan Edelmann and Sushil Mittal, special issue, *International Journal of Hindu Studies* 18.2 (2014): 119–152. (DOI: 10.1007/s11407-014-9157-7.)
 - *Indexing*: Web of Science (Arts & Humanities Citation Index - A&HCI). *Ranking*: Q1 in Cultural Studies and Religious Studies in 2024 (SCImago/SJR). *Impact Metrics*: SJR: 0.259 (2024) / H-Index: 17.
- Williams, Michael. “Can we infer unestablished entities? A Mādhva contribution to the Indian theory of inference” *Puṣpikā: Tracing Ancient India Through Texts and Traditions*. Ed. Michael Williams, Nina Mirnig and Peter Szanto. Oxford: Oxbow, 2013, pp. 451–475.
- Williams, Michael. “Problems and Perspectives in Interpreting the Texts of the Mādhva Tradition” in “Tradition and the Re-Use of India Texts” ed. Jacqueline Suthren Hirst, special issue, *Religions of South Asia* 6.2 (2012): 22–31.
 - *Indexing*: Web of Science (Arts & Humanities Citation Index - A&HCI). *Ranking*: Q2 in Religious Studies (2024). *Impact Metrics*: SJR 0.167 (2024) / H-Index 7.

- Williams, Michael. “Knowledge, God and the World in the Theology of Madhvācārya.” *Rivista di studi sudasiatici* 4 (2010): 63–74.

Unpublished conference papers, lectures, and podcasts

- Williams, Michael (December, 2025). “Vyāsātīrtha’s Defence of Intrinsicism against Gaṅgeśa Upādhyāya.” *Intrinsicist and Extrinsicist Approaches to Knowledge in Indian Philosophy*, Institute for the Cultural and Intellectual History of Asia, Vienna.
- Williams, Michael (November, 2024). “Perceptual Error in *Tattvavāda*: Jayātīrtha and Vyāsātīrtha on Illusion.” *Colloquium of the Indian Philosophy Network (IPN)*
- Williams, Michael Thomas (October, 2024). Interview with Raj Balkaran on the monograph *Existence and Perception in Medieval Vedānta: Vyāsātīrtha’s Defence of Realism in the Nyāyāmṛta*. Podcast published by the New Books Network.
- Williams, Michael (August, 2024). “Knowledge and Object-Correspondence in Nyāya and Mādhva Vedānta.” *XXV World Congress of Philosophy*, Sapienza University of Rome.
- Williams, Michael (June, 2024). “Rediscovering Madhva’s Works in Late Dvaita Vedānta”. *An Intellectual History of Late Vedānta*, workshop held at Maison de l’Asie (EFEO), Paris.
- Williams, Michael (February, 2024). “Knowledge and Consciousness in the Dvaita Tradition of Vedānta”. *Inaugral Seminar of the Certificate course on the Bhagavadgītā*, Manipal Academy of Higher Education, Manipal.
- Williams, Michael (February, 2024). “Consciousness and Knowledge in Dvaita Vedānta: The Theory of the Witness (*Sākṣin*)”. *Week-Long Course Work on Classical Indian Philosophy*, University of Mumbai.
- Williams, Michael (December, 2023). “Knowledge and Truth in Satyanātha Tīrtha’s *Abhinavatāṇḍava*”. *Late Vedānta Texts in Sanskrit*; workshop held at the Institute for the Cultural and Intellectual History of Asia, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna.
- Williams, Michael (September, 2023). “New Frontiers in the ‘Lost Age of Reason’: What was Truth for Early-Modern Indian Philosophers?”. *Twelfth Polish Congress of Philosophy*, University of Łódź.
- Williams, Michael (July, 2023). “Hagiography as Polemic: the *Madhvavijaya*’s Critique of Non-Dualism”. *Saints and Sacred Spaces in Peninsular Medieval India*; workshop held at the Institute for the Cultural and Intellectual History of Asia, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna.
- Williams, Michael (January, 2023). “Debating Knowledge in Early Modern South India: New Insights into the *Prāmāṇyavāda* of Vyāsātīrtha’s *Tarkatāṇḍava*.” 18th World Sanskrit Conference, The Australian National University, Canberra.
- Williams, Michael (Nov–December, 2022). “Readings in Śrīpatyācārya’s *Dvaitadyumaṇi*.” Late Vedānta Reading Group, University of Cambridge.
- Williams, Michael and Schmücker, Marcus (June, 2022). “On truth and knowledge in later Vedānta.” *Research Colloquium*, Institute for the Cultural and Intellectual History of Asia, Vienna.
- Williams, Michael (December, 2021). “How do we know that we know? Theories of Truth and Knowledge in Medieval India.” Research Colloquium, Institute for the Cultural and Intellectual History of Asia, Vienna.

- Williams, Michael. (June, 2021). “Can God be a Disembodied Creator? A Sixteenth Century South Indian Critique of Nyāya Rational Theology.” Presented at the Conference *Global Philosophies of Religion*, University of Birmingham.
- Williams, Michael (September, 2020). “God’s Existence in Medieval Vedānta: Vyāsātīrtha vs. the Navya-Naiyāyikas.” Presented at the event *Spalding Online 2020*.
- Williams, Michael (November, 2019.) “Knowledge, God and Yogic Practice in Bhāsarvajña’s Theory of Liberation.” Presented at the symposium, *Paths to Liberation in Hindu and Sikh Traditions*, Austrian Academy of Sciences, Vienna.
- Williams, Michael (June, 2019). “Rational theology in sixteenth century India: Vyāsātīrtha’s *Īśvaravāda* in the *Tarkatāṇḍava*.” Research Colloquium, Institute for the Cultural and Intellectual History of Asia, Vienna.
- Williams, Michael (November, 2018). “Madhva’s interpretation of the *Bṛhadāraṇyakopaniṣat* and its Implications for his Theology.” Bangalore, Karnataka Sanskrit University.
- Williams, Michael (August, 2018). “New Theories of Time in Sixteenth Century India: Raghunātha, Vyāsātīrtha and Mahādeva Bhaṭṭa.” Unpublished conference paper presented at the international workshop *God and Time II: Philosophical and Theological Perspectives on Time*, Vienna, Austria
- Williams, Michael (July, 2018). “Vyāsātīrtha’s Arguments Against Gaṅgeśa’s Rational Theology.” Unpublished conference paper presented on the panel *Key Debates about Theology and Society in later Viśiṣṭādvaita-Vedānta and Mādhva Vedānta* at the World Sanskrit Conference, Vancouver, Canada.
- Williams, Michael (October, 2017). “Readings from Jayātīrtha’s *Tattvodyotaṭīkā*.” Presented at the workshop *Interactions among Śaiva, Vaiṣṇava and other religious and philosophical schools*. Vienna, Austrian Academy of Sciences.
- Williams, Michael (September, 2015). “The Metaphysics and Epistemology of Supernormal Perception in Early and Late Nyāya.” Unpublished conference paper presented on the panel *Knowing the Unknown: Extra-Ordinary Cognitions in Brahmanical Philosophies* at the Sapienza University of Rome
- Williams, Michael (May, 2013). “Debate and Reason in the Vijayanagara Empire: The Impact of Navya-Nyāya on Vyāsātīrtha.” Unpublished conference paper presented at the Oxford Early Modern South Asia Workshop “Discipline, Sect, Lineage and Community: Scholar Intellectuals in India, c. 1500-1800”, Oxford, United Kingdom
- Williams, Michael (September, 2010). “A Mādhva critique of the Nyāya theory of Inference: Vyāsātīrtha on *vyāpti*.” Unpublished conference paper presented at the Second International Indology Graduate Research Symposium, Cambridge, United Kingdom
- Williams, Michael (June, 2010). “The value of traditional commentaries in the study of Mādhva texts, including a translation of the the first portion of the *Nyāyāmṛta* and its commentaries.” Unpublished conference paper circulated at the Sanskrit Traditions in the Modern World Conference, the University of Manchester
- Williams, Michael (September, 2009). “The relationship between God and the world in the theology of Rāmānuja and Madhvācārya.” Unpublished paper presented at The 14th World Sanskrit Conference, Kyoto, Japan

- Williams, Michael (June, 2008). “Madhva’s defence of the concept of difference (*bheda*).” Unpublished conference paper presented at the Indology Graduate Research Seminar, Magdalen College, University of Oxford, United Kingdom
- Williams, Michael (March, 2008). “The problem of Kṛṣṇa’s Consorts and the Kṛṣṇa-Upaniṣad.” Unpublished conference paper presented at the Indology Graduate Research Seminar, Magdalen College, University of Oxford, United Kingdom
- Williams, Michael (November, 2005). “The concept of nothingness in the philosophy of Nishida Kitaro.” Unpublished conference paper presented at the University of Wales Undergraduate Philosophy Conference, Gregynog Hall, Powys, Wales