



ALBERTINA NUGTEREN - CURRICULUM VITAE

Albertina (Tineke) Nugteren (1955) received her primary education in Oud-Beijerland (1972). After this, she followed an extensive colloquium doctum trajectory at Utrecht University during which she was trained in Greek, Latin, and the writers of Western Antiquity (1974).

Her early interest in the academic study of religion found its specific course in the study of Indo-Iranian Languages, in which she graduated in 1979 (MA), specialising in Indian religions, Indian philosophy, and the comparative study of religion. As part of her MA thesis project she made her first research trip through India and Sri Lanka (1978-1979, partly funded by a Catherina van Tussenbroek grant), after which many more travels throughout Asia would follow.

From September 1979 until January 1981 she used a research grant (15 months, 0,5 fte), awarded by the same Utrecht Institute of Oriental Languages and Cultures to explore and set up a PhD research trajectory on the function and meaning of *Īśvarapraṇidhāna* in the *Yogasūtras* of Patañjali. She made this preliminary research into a full-fledged PhD trajectory after she was appointed as an assistant professor at Tilburg University by the then Theological Faculty in September 1981 (0,5 fte).

Her tuition there, at that time, consisted of introductory and advanced courses in Hinduism and Buddhism, and increasingly on more general subjects as well, such as the theoretical and methodical issues of the academic study of religion. Over the years she also built up an expertise on so-called alternative worldviews in the Western world. Through numerous MA courses she widened her field of expertise, such as on religion and violence, religion and the feminine, and meditation in religious traditions.

As author, co-author, and co-editor she added various titles to her name, such as a book on holism in the New Age Movement (1986), articles on various contemporary subjects, and contributions to India-related historical research.

In the year 1991 she received her PhD degree with a dissertation titled *God as an Alternative? Īśvarapraṇidhāna in the Yogasūtras of Patañjali and the commentaries on them* (Garant: Leuven/Apeldoorn, 1991). Her supervisors were prof. dr. G. Chemparathy (Utrecht University) and prof. dr. T. Vetter (Leiden University).

After having completed her dissertation she was in need of some lighter fare, and wrote a general introduction to Hinduism (Garant: Leuven/Apeldoorn, 1992) and a novel on ancient India (Wereldbibliotheek: Amsterdam, 1993).

In the years following that, her University-related research gradually shifted towards a closer proximity to her educational activities, but her main interest in that decade was on the nexus religion and nature. This major effort resulted in the publication of the voluminous *Belief, Bounty, and Beauty. Rituals around Sacred Trees in India* (Brill: Leiden/Boston, 2005).

Since then, and especially after she moved to the Department of Religious Studies, now Department of Culture Studies (where she was appointed fulltime in 2007, and associate professor in 2010) and in

closer cooperation with Babylon (a research centre focusing on (super)diversity in contemporary multicultural societies), she gradually shifted her research activities towards cultural-religious diversity in Western Europe. Her special attention is on Hindus in diaspora. One of the major outcomes of this was the publication of a special guest-edited issue of *Journal of Religion in Europe* (2/2, 2009), titled 'Hindu Ritual Dynamics: Case Studies from Contemporary Western Europe'.

At present she combines her major research interests (religion, nature, diversity, ritual) in a progressive research profile within the Religion & Ritual expertise group by focusing on Hindu rituals in the public domain and especially those characterised as religious processions (such as the *rathayātrā*, about which her ongoing research will result in various new conference papers and book chapters) and rites of disposal in so-called death ritual. Her special attention goes to material and symbolic aspects of representation. For instance, the environmental 'costs' of cultural-religious traditions may become highly problematic when and where wood for the traditional open cremation fire is increasingly scarce. With this research objective she lived in Bhaktapur (Nepal) in the Summer of 2011. One article in Dutch on Hindustani cremation rites in the Netherlands appeared in 2012, and some in English are in the press, such as 'Through fire. Creative aspects of sacrificial rituals in the Vedic-Hindu continuum.'

In addition to her scholarly activities she is the mother of two children, maintains a historic house and garden, is fond of travelling, loves wide natural spaces, and hopes to be able to once again take up her Indian musical instruments.