

Liudmila Gamaiunova, Ph.D

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Profile

Empirical psychologist with a strong interest in mind–body practices, religious and spiritual phenomena, and non-ordinary states of consciousness, examining their cognitive, affective, experiential, physiological, and behavioral correlates. Trained in both quantitative and qualitative research methodologies.

Education

Ph.D. (Psychology of Religion)

May 2022

University of Lausanne, Switzerland

Advisors: Prof. Pierre-Yves Brandt, Prof. Matthias Kliegel

Dissertation: Contemplative Practices Rooted in Buddhism and Stress: Psychophysiological Perspective

M.A. (Psychology of Religion)

Feb 2014

University of Lausanne, Switzerland

Education Specialist

Jun 2011

Tula State Pedagogical University, Russia

cum laude

Additional Training

Advanced Bioscience Program

Oct 2025

UC Berkeley Extension, USA

Advanced Bioscience Program (10 semester units)

The Swiss Doctoral School in Affective Sciences

Feb 2014

University of Geneva, Switzerland

Interdisciplinary training in Affective Sciences (10 ECTS credits)

Research Skills

- Advanced statistical analysis in R, SPSS
- Design and implementation of behavioral experiments
- Psychophysiological assessments (proficient: heart rate variability, HRV; impedance cardiography, ICG; salivary cortisol and α -Amylase; basic: electrodermal activity, EDA; facial electromyography, EMG)
- Survey design and implementation (RedCap, Qualtrics)
- Design and management of randomized controlled experiments
- Qualitative interviews design, implementation, and data analysis (Interpretative-phenomenological analysis, Thematic analysis, Microphenomenology. Software: NVivo, MAXQDA)

Research and Teaching Experience

Postdoctoral Research Fellow
Nov 2024 –

University of Oxford, United Kingdom
Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology (Prof. H. Whitehouse)

- Lead in a multi-study project on identity fusion and contemplative practices

Postdoctoral Researcher
Feb 2024 – July 2024

Center for Primary Care and Public Health, Switzerland
Psychophysiology of stress and health group (Dr. P. Gomez)

- Participation in data collection in an ambulatory psychophysiological study on workplace telepressure and health outcomes
- Statistical analysis for a psychometric evaluation of a study's measure
- A teaching presentation during a psychophysiology tutorial

**Lecturer/
Postdoctoral Researcher**
Feb 2022-July 2023

University of Lausanne, Switzerland
Institute for Social Sciences of Religions (Prof. P.-Y. Brandt)

- PI in a psychophysiological study focused on the effects of mind-body interventions on the stress response: securing funding, study design, training of students in experimental procedures, formal analysis, manuscript preparation
- PI in a psychological cross-cultural study on non-ordinary states of consciousness: survey design, data collection and analysis
- University teaching in the field of psychology of religion

**Graduate Researcher/
Teaching Assistant**
Feb 2018-Jan 2022

University of Lausanne, Switzerland
Institute for Social Sciences of Religions (Prof. P.-Y. Brandt)

- Design, implementation, data analysis, manuscript writing in the framework of two psychophysiological studies focused on contemplative practice, emotion regulation and stress
- University teaching in the field of psychology of religion
- Leader role in a study focused on psychometric evaluation of a psychological measure

Visiting Research Fellow
Jan 2017-Jan 2018

Stanford University, USA
Department of Psychology (Dr. S. Kreibig)

- Assistance in study design preparation and data collection in a psychophysiological study on sleep bruxism and emotion regulation
- Training undergraduate students
- Assistance in creating study surveys and writing protocols for experimental tasks with EEG, EKG, and EMD measures
- Assistance in testing polysomnography (PSG) home visits

Research Collaborator
Feb 2016-Jan 2017

University of Lausanne, Switzerland
Institute for Social Sciences of Religions (Prof. P.-Y. Brandt)

- Assistance in study design, data collection, and analysis in a study on spiritual needs of elderly population

Research Collaborator
May 2014-Aug 2014

University of Neuchâtel, Switzerland (Dr. E. Mayor)
Institute of Psychology and Education

- Assistance in study design, data collection, and analysis in a study on wearable technology use in psychophysiological experiments

Courses taught

2025	Introduction to the Psychology of Religion: Psychological approach of religious field (Lectures/Bachelor/Taught) University of Lausanne, & University of Geneva, Switzerland
2018-2023	Introduction to the Psychology of Religion: Psychological approach of religious field (Lectures/Bachelor/Co-taught), University of Lausanne, Switzerland
2020, 2023	Introduction to the Psychology of Religion: Following a Master, learning to become free (Seminar/Bachelor/Co-taught), University of Lausanne, Switzerland
2018, 2021	Introduction to the Psychology of Religion: music, openness to the beyond (Seminar/Bachelor/Co-taught), University of Lausanne, Switzerland
2019, 2022	Introduction to the Psychology of Religion: meditations and other contemplative practices between tradition and modernity (Seminar/Bachelor/Taught and co-taught), University of Lausanne, Switzerland
2022	Religious and psychotic-like experiences (Seminar/Master/Co-taught), University of Lausanne, Switzerland
2022	Religion and spirituality in healthcare institutions (Seminar/Master/Co-taught), University of Lausanne, Switzerland
2016, 2024	Introduction to Psychophysiological Research (Invited lectures), Center for Primary Care and Public Health, Switzerland

Awards, Fellowships, and Honors

2024	Postdoc. Mobility fellowship from the Swiss National Science Foundation
2024	Prix Edouard Frommel for the Doctoral Thesis from the Société Académique de Genève
2021	Division 36 Seed Grant from the American Psychological Association Division 36
2018	Francisco J. Varela Research Grant from Mind and Life Europe
2016	Doc. Mobility fellowship from the Swiss National Science Foundation
2014	Faculty Prize for the Master Thesis from the University of Lausanne

Professional affiliations

- Swiss Society for Psychology of Religion, ASPsyRel (Committee Member)
- International Association for the Psychology of Religion, IAPR (Regular Member)
- American Psychological Association Division 36 (Regular Member)
- International Society for Contemplative Research, ISCR (Regular Member)
- Society for Psychophysiological Research, SPR (Regular Member)
- Micro-phenomenology laboratory (Regular Member)
- European Network for the Study of Islam and Esotericism, ENSIE (Regular Member)

Service

- Committee member at the Swiss Society for Psychology of Religion (2019-)
- Coordinator at the Interdisciplinary Center for History and Sciences of Religions (2018-2022)
- Reviewer at *Journal of Religion and Health*; *Psychoneuroendocrinology*; *Mindfulness*; *Frontiers in Psychology*; *Mental Health, Religion, and Culture*, *Scientific Reports*

Language skills

Russian (native speaker), English (C1-C2), French (C1-C2), Czech (C1), Italian (B1)

Publications

- 2026 Brandt, P.-Y., Laubscher, K., **Gamaiunova, L.**, & Dandarova-Robert, Z. (2026). Vieillir en institution : Prise en compte de la spiritualité et de l'importance de parler de la mort pour favoriser le bien-être. In P.-Y. Brandt, Z. Dandarova-Robert, G. Dessart, E. Rochat, & L. Stauffer (Eds.), *Vieillir à domicile dans le canton de Vaud : Santé globale, spiritualité et bénévolat à l'ère du (post)-covid*. Academic Press. <https://doi.org/10.55132/vdcv157>
- 2026 Loued-Khenissi, L., & **Gamaiunova, L.** (2026). Echoes of the abhidhamma in the component process model of emotion. *Journal of Theoretical and Philosophical Psychology*, 46(1), 39-54. <https://doi.org/10.1037/teo0000292>
- 2025 **Gamaiunova, L.**, & Pellerin, N. (2025). Anticipating Stress: To Focus on the Body or Do a Self-Inquiry? The Effects of a Focused and Deconstructive Meditation Session on the Stress Response. *Mindfulness*, 16(12), 3674-3686. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12671-025-02721-6>
- 2025 Semaan, R., **Gamaiunova, L.**, Teixeira, P. P., Nater, U. M., Heinzer, R., Haba-Rubio, J., Vlerick, P., Cambier, R., & Gomez, P. (2025). Psychometric properties of telepressure measures in the workplace and private life among French-speaking employees. *BMC Psychology*, 13(1), 329. <https://doi.org/10.1186/s40359-025-02616-0>
- 2024 **Gamaiunova, L.**, Shankland, R., Moore, M., Mayor, E., Dessart, G., Kotsou, I., & Fresco, D. (2024). Measuring Decentering – Development and Validation of the French Version of the Experiences Questionnaire (EQ-F). *Psychological Test Adaptation and Development*, 5, 229-241. <https://doi.org/10.1027/2698-1866/a000083>
- 2023 **Gamaiunova, L.**, Brandt, P. Y., & Kliegel, M. (2023). Challenge or threat? The effects of the standard and a second-generation mindfulness intervention with Buddhist practices on cognitive appraisals of stress: Secondary analysis of a randomized controlled experiment performed in Switzerland. *Journal of Religion and Health*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10943-023-01964-8>
- 2023 Sideropoulos, V., Van Herwegen, J., Meuleman, B., Alessandri, M., Alnemary, F. M., Rad, J. A., Lavenex, P. A. B., Bolshakov, N., Bölte, S., Buffle, P., Cai, R. Y., Campos, R., Chirita-Emandi, A., Costa, A. P., Costanzo, F., Des Portes, V., Dukes, D., Faivre, L., Famelart, N., Fisher, M. H., [including **Gamaiunova, L.**]... Samson, A. C. (2023). Anxiety, concerns and COVID-19: Cross-country perspectives from families and individuals with neurodevelopmental conditions. *Journal of global health*, 13, 04081. <https://doi.org/10.7189/jogh.13.04081>
- 2022 **Gamaiunova, L.**, Kreibig, S. D., Dan-Glauser, E., Pellerin, N., Brandt, P. Y., & Kliegel, M. (2022). Effects of two mindfulness based interventions on the distinct phases of the stress response across different physiological systems. *Biological Psychology*, 172, 108384. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biopsycho.2022.108384>
- 2021 **Gamaiunova, L.**, Brandt, P.-Y. & Kliegel, M. (2021). Contemplative Training and Psychological Stress: An Analysis of First-person Accounts. *Mindfulness*, 2034–2049. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s12671-021-01661-1>
- 2021 **Gamaiunova, L.**, Brandt, P.-Y., & Gallaz, P. (2021). La méditation pour réduire le stress : Quand méditer soulage l'esprit mais aussi le corps. *Psychoscope*, 1/2021, 22-24.
- 2021 Dukes, D., Van Herwegen, J., Alessandri, M., Alnemary, F., Rad, J. A., Lavenex, P. B., [et al., including **Gamaiunova, L.**] (2021). Introducing the COVID-19 crisis Special Education Needs Coping Survey. *PsyArXiv*. <https://doi.org/10.31234/osf.io/rtswa>
- 2019 **Gamaiunova, L.**, Brandt, P.-Y., Bondolfi, G., & Kliegel, M. (2019). Exploration of psychological mechanisms of the reduced stress response in long-term meditation practitioners. *Psychoneuroendocrinology*. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.psyneuen.2019.02.026>

- 2017 **Gamaiunova, L.**, Brandt, P.-Y., & Kliegel, M. (2017). Meditative insight: validation of a French version of Ireland's Insight Scale (2012) and exploration of relationships between meditative insight and perceived stress. *Mental Health, Religion & Culture*, 1-14. doi:10.1080/13674676.2016.1261334
- 2017 Brandt, P. Y., Laubscher, K., **Gamaiunova, L.**, & Dandarova Robert, Z. (2017). Vieillir en institution en Suisse romande: La prise en compte de la spiritualité pour favoriser le bien-être. *Working Paper*, 1-37.
- 2015 Mayor, E., & **Gamaiunova, L.** (2015). Mobile device-based mindfulness intervention promotes emotional regulation during anticipatory stress. In W. W. A. Alomainy, Y. Hao, K. S. Nikita and C. G. Parini (Eds.), *5th EAI International Conference on Wireless Mobile Communication and Healthcare - "Transforming healthcare through innovations in mobile and wireless technologies"* (pp. 258-262): ICST. <http://dx.doi.org/10.4108/eai.14-10-2015.2261617>
- 2014 Mayor, E., & **Gamaiunova, L.** (2014). Using wearable technology for psychophysiological experiments: Gender roles and cognitive appraisal impact cardiac response to socio-evaluative stress. In K. S. Nikita, B. Lo, D. I. Fotiadis, Y. Hao and A. Kiourti (Eds.), *Wireless Mobile Communication and Healthcare (Mobihealth), 2014 EAI 4th International Conference on* (pp. 15-18): IEEE. doi:10.1109/MOBIHEALTH.2014.7015897

Conference presentations

- 2025 **Gamaiunova, L.** & Whitehouse, H. (2025). Meditators are More Bonded with Humanity and All Living Beings: Contemplative practice as a pathway to global cohesion and cooperation. Paper presented at the *International Association for the Psychology of Religion Conference* (Birmingham, UK, 19-22 August 2025)
- 2025 **Gamaiunova, L.** & Whitehouse, H. (2025). Meditators are More Bonded with Humanity and All Living Beings: Contemplative practice as a pathway to global cohesion and cooperation. Poster presented at the *Mind and Life Europe Summer Research Institute* (Rangjung Yeshe Gomde, Austria, 27-31 July 2025)
- 2024 Pellerin, N., **Gamaiunova, L.** (2024). Microphenomenological exploration of self-transcendent experiences in the framework of one-year intensive Buddhist training. Paper presented at the conference *Becoming Aware and Micro-phenomenology: Process, Practice, Outcomes* (Le Reposoire, France, 4-8 October 2024)
- 2024 **Gamaiunova, L.** (2024). Cardiophenomenology of stress anticipation experience in MBSR and meditation-naïve participants. Poster presented at the *International Society for Contemplative Research Conference* (Padova, Italy, 19-23 June 2024)
- 2024 Gao, J., **Gamaiunova, L.** (2024). Encountering with micro-phenomenology. Workshop presented at the conference *Field Philosophy: pushing the methodological envelope* (Lausanne, Switzerland, 13-14 June 2024)
- 2023 **Gamaiunova, L.**, Pellerin, N. (2023). Anticipating stress: to focus on the body or on doctrinal tenets? Poster presented at the *Mind and Life Europe Summer Research Institute* (Pomaia, Italy, 20-24 August 2023)
- 2020 **Gamaiunova, L.**, Dan-Glauser, E., Pellerin, N., Brandt, P.-Y., Kliegel, M. (2020). The Effects of Two Mindfulness Programs on the Stress-Related Changes in the ANS: Contrasting the Activity of Sympathetic and Parasympathetic Branches During Different Phases of the TSST. Poster presented at the *2020 Contemplative Research Conference* (online, 5-8 November 2020)
- 2020 **Gamaiunova, L.**, Dan-Glauser, E., Pellerin, N., Brandt, P.-Y., Kliegel, M. (2020). Mindfulness programs and prolonged physiological activation during stress: interventions effects on the sympathetic, cardiac parasympathetic and HPA-axis. Poster presented at the *2020 Society for Psychophysiological Research (SPR) Annual Meeting* (online, 4-11 October 2020)
- 2019 **Gamaiunova, L.**, Brandt, P.-Y., Kliegel, M. (2019). Mindfulness intervention effects on the anticipatory cognitive appraisals and associated cardiovascular profiles. Poster presented at the *Contemplative Science Symposium* (Fürstentfeldbruck, Germany, 25-27 October 2019)

- 2018 **Gamaiunova, L.,** Brandt, P.-Y., Kliegel, M. (2018). Recovery from Stress in Long-Term Meditation Practitioners and Matched Controls: Mediative Role of Cognitive Emotion Regulation Strategies. Poster presented at the *2018 Society for Psychophysiological Research (SPR) Annual Meeting* (Quebec-city, Canada, 3-7 October 2018)
- 2018 **Gamaiunova, L.,** Brandt, P.-Y., Kliegel, M. (2018). The Phenomenology of Stress Experience in Long-term Meditators and Matched Controls". Poster presented *2018 International Symposium for Contemplative Research* (Phoenix, USA, 8-11 November 2018)
- 2018 **Gamaiunova, L.,** Brandt, P.-Y., Kliegel, M. (2018). Stress response to social-evaluative threat in experienced meditators and matched controls. Poster presented at the *Brain Mind Institute Symposium, EPFL "Stress in Health and Disease"* (Lausanne, Switzerland, 14-15 March 2018)
- 2017 **Gamaiunova, L.** (2017). Buddhist Meditation Practitioners under a Social-evaluative Threat: A Mix-method Exploration. Paper presented at the *Annual Meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion* (Washington DC, USA, 13-15 October 2017)
- 2015 **Gamaiunova, L.,** Brandt, P.-Y., Kliegel, M. (2015). Religious & spiritual coping: Current trends in research. Paper presented at the *14th congress of the Swiss Society of Psychology*, Geneva, Switzerland (Geneva, Switzerland, 8-9 September 2015)
- 2015 **Gamaiunova, L.** (2015; Chair). Psychology of Religion: Current research in French-speaking Switzerland. Symposium conducted at the *14th congress of the Swiss Society of Psychology*, Geneva, Switzerland. (Geneva, Switzerland, 8-9 September 2015)
- 2015 **Gamaiunova, L.** (2015). Spiritual/religious factor in mindfulness meditation effectiveness: theoretical considerations. Poster presented at the *Mind and Life Europe Summer Research Institute* (Chiemsee, Germany 28 August – 3 September 2015)
- 2015 **Gamaiunova, L.,** Kliegel, M., Brandt, P.-Y. (2015). Meditative Insight: further exploration of construct. Poster presented at the *Congress of the International Association for the Psychology of Religion* (Istanbul, Turkey 17-20 August 2015)
- 2015 **Gamaiunova, L.,** Mayor, E. (2015). Mindfulness Attention Awareness and Cognitive Appraisal. Poster presented at the *International Convention of Psychological Science* (Amsterdam, Netherlands 12-14 March 2015)
- 2014 **Gamaiunova, L.** (2014). Sufi practice of surrender: Involvement in coping process. Paper presented at the *Nineteenth Joint Postgraduate Conference on Religion and Theology* (Bristol, UK 7-8 March 2014).
- 2013 **Gamaiunova, L.,** Brandt, P.-Y. (2013). Surrender as a coping style among dervishes of the Nimatullahi Sufi Order. Poster presented at the *Congress of the International Association for the Psychology of Religion* (Lausanne, Switzerland 27-20 August 2013)

Public engagement & Invited talks

- 2025 From a cell to the global identity: on the relevance of biology in the study of religious phenomena. Invited talk given at the conference *Thinking Outside of the Box in the Psychology of Religion* (Lausanne, Switzerland, 9-10 May 2025)
- 2024 Scientific commentary on the use of religion for propaganda purposes for a *public art exhibition "Brainwashing Machine"* (6-15 December 2024, Oslo, Norway. <https://www.brainwashing.info>)
- 2023 Effets des pratiques religieuses et spirituelles sur la santé (Effects of religious and spiritual practices on health). Invited talk given at an *inter-religious day Les religions au service de la paix personnelle* (10 November, 2023, Bienne, Switzerland)
- 2023 "Qui aura le temps de t'écouter ? "(Who will have the time to listen?). Participation in the organization of a workshop in the framework of *Mystères de l'UNIL*-a several day scientific research event for general public (1-4 June 2023, Lausanne, Switzerland)
- 2019 Radio Interview about meditation research. Gamaiunova, L., Gallaz, P. *La méditation ne nous veut-elle que du bien* [Radio broadcast]. (8 June 2019, Lausanne, Switzerland)

<https://www.rts.ch/audio-podcast/2019/audio/la-meditation-ne-nous-veut-elle-que-du-bien-25054285.html>

2018

Co-creation of a short scientific film for general public on the subject of meditation and health. Oshoba, J.G., Gamaiunova, L., Mika, K., Rosenberg, N. (2018). Meditation [Film]. *SciFilmIt*