

DR. SRAVANA BORKATAKY-VARMA  
Instructional Assistant Professor, University of Houston  
Email: [SBORKATAKY-VARMA@UH.EDU](mailto:SBORKATAKY-VARMA@UH.EDU)

## EDUCATION

2016: Ph.D., Department of Religion, Rice University  
2013: M.A., Department of Religion, Rice University  
2003: M.B.A., Symbiosis University, India  
2000: P.G.D., Gender and Work, Hannover University, Germany  
1998: M.A., Buddhist Studies, Delhi University, India  
1995: B.A., English Literature, Delhi University, India

## ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

2022 - Present: Instructional Assistant Professor, Hindu Traditions, University of Houston  
2022 - 2025: Research Affiliate, Center for the Study of World Religions, Harvard University  
2020 - 2022: Lecturer, Harvard University  
2017 - 2021: Lecturer, University of North Carolina Wilmington  
2018 - 2019: Lecturer, University of Montana  
2014 - 2016: Lecturer, Rice University  
2012 - 2013: Lecturer, University of Houston  
2005 - 2007: Lecturer, Dalian Neusoft University of Information, P.R. China

## PUBLICATIONS

### PUBLISHED BOOKS

- *The Serpent's Tale: Kuṅḍalinī and the History of an Experience*, co-authored monograph with Anya Foxen (forthcoming, 2025)
- *Embodied Pedagogy in the Study of Religions: Transforming the Classroom*, co-edited volume with Sarabnh Levy-Brightman (forthcoming, 2025)
- *Religious Responses to the Pandemic & Crises: Isolation, Survival, and #Covidchaos*, co-edited volume with Christian A. Eberhart, and Marianne Bjelland Katrzow, 2024
- *Living Folk Religions*, co-edited volume with Aaron Michael Ullrey

## BOOKS IN PROGRESS

- *Divinized Divas: Superwomen, Wives, Partners, and Hijrās in Hindu Goddess Tantra*, monograph
- *Altered*, co-authored monograph with Anya Foxen

## BOOK CHAPTERS

- 2026 (forthcoming): Hijrās,” *Oxford Bibliographies in Hinduism*, Chief editor Prof. Tracy Coleman, Oxford University Press
- 2026 (forthcoming): “Imaginal Siddhis, Engines of Insights,” in *The Tantric World*, edited by Anna A. Golovkova, Hillary Langberg, and Hugh B. Urban, Routledge Press
- 2025 (forthcoming): “Arousing Pedagogy: Troubling the Scholar-Practitioner Model” in *Embodied Pedagogies in the Study of Religions: Transforming the Classroom*, edited by Sravana Borkataky-Varma and Sarabindh Levy-Brightman, Routledge Press
- 2024: “From the Fringes to the Center Stage: Hijrās and Fertility Rituals in Kāmākhyā,” in *The Oxford Handbook of Tantric Studies*, edited by Richard K. Payne and Glen A. Hayes, Oxford University Press
- 2023: “WhatsApp Bagalāmukhī: Experiences Deemed Religious” in *The Ethnography of Tantra: Textures and Contexts of Living Tantric Traditions*, edited by Carola Erika Lorea and Rohit Singh, SUNY
- 2022: “The Yogic Body in Global Transmission” in *The Handbook of Yoga and Meditation Studies*, edited by Suzanne Newcombe and Karen O’Brien-Kop, Routledge Press
- 2022: “Taming Hindu Śakta Tantra on the Internet: Online Pūjās for the Goddess Tripurasundarī” in *Digital Hinduism*, edited by Xenia Zeiler, Routledge Press

## JOURNAL EDITIONS AND ARTICLES

- 2022: Co-editor of the special issue *Digital Tantra*, *International Journal of Hindu Studies*, DOI: 10.1007/s11407-022-09314-
- 2019: Editor for the special issue *Out for Blood: Sacrifice, Tantra, and Normative Hinduism*, *International Journal of Hindu Studies*, DOI: 10.1007/s11407-019-09256-1
- 2019: “Red: An Ethnographic Study of Cross-Pollination between the Vedic and the Tantric,” *International Journal of Hindu Studies*, in *Out for Blood: Sacrifice, Tantra, and Normative Hinduism*, *International Journal of Hindu Studies*, Chief Editor Sushil Mittal, DOI: 10.1007/s11407-019-09258-z
- 2018: “The Dead Speak: A Case Study from the Tiwa Tribe Highlighting the Hybrid World of Śakta Tantra in Assam,” *Religions* 2017, 8(221), DOI: 10.3390/rel8100221

- 2018: “Menstruation: Pollutant to Potent” in *Encyclopedia of Indian Religions: Hinduism and Tribal Religions*, edited by Arvind Sharma, Springer, DOI: 10.1007/978-94-024-1036-5\_481-1
- 2015: “The Ancient Elusive Serpent in Modern Times: The Practice of Kuṇḍalinī in Kāmākhya,” *International Journal of Dharma Studies*, DOI <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8589-1871>
- 2014: “Hinduism,” for the accompanying website for Jeffrey J. Kripal's “Comparing Religions: Coming to Terms,” Oxford: Wiley Blackwell.

## BOOK REVIEWS

- 2015: “Religion, and Identity in South Asia and Beyond: Essays in Honor of Patrick Olivelle” *International Journal of Hindu Studies*
- 2015: “Hinduism Beliefs & Practice: Major Deities and Social Structures” (Vol. I), in *Journal of Hindu Studies*
- 2014: Book Review of “Introduction to World Religions,” in *Religious Studies Review*
- 2014: Book Review of “Invitation to World Religions” in *Religious Studies Review*

## FOREIGN LANGUAGES

Hindi (native speaker & fluent reading)  
 Assamese (native speaker & basic reading)  
 Bengali (native speaker & basic reading)  
 Sanskrit (advanced reading)  
 French and German (basic reading)

## AWARDS

2021: Recognition for significant contributions to student success, University of North Carolina Wilmington  
 2017: Teaching Fellowship, Asian Religions, Millsaps College  
 2017: Invited to the United Nations Human Rights Commission in Geneva as a Witchcraft and Human Rights Expert focusing on religion and sacrifice in Assam, India

## SERVICE

2020 - Present: Elected member of the Board of Trustees, Esalen Institute  
 2022 - Present: Advisor, Compassionate Houston  
 2015-2022: Co-Chair, Yoga in Theory and Practice, American Academy of Religion  
 2015-2022: Elected member of the Steering Committee, Tantric Studies Group, American Academy of Religion

## **CORPORATE EXPERIENCE**

2003-2005: Head of Customer Service, Manhattan Cards, Standard Chartered Bank, India

2000-2003: Manager, Corporate Human Resource Development, Wipro Limited, India

1998-2000: Assistant Manager, Corporate Human Resources and Training, GE Capital International, India

1995-1998: Gender Training Institute, India