

Rebecca J. Manring

**Rebecca J. Manring**

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**Education**

- 1995 Ph.D., University of Washington, Asian Languages and Literature (Sanskrit, Bengali, Hindi). Dissertation Title: "Sacred Biography in the Formation of Religious Community: Advaitācārya and the Genesis of Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism."
- 1989 M.A. University of Washington, Asian Languages and Literature
- 1974 M.A., University of Washington, Slavic Linguistics
- 1973 B.A., University of Montana, Russian (with honors)

**Professional Positions**

- 7/2019 Full Professor, Indiana University, 50% Religious Studies, 50% India Studies.
- 7/2019-2021 Director, Dhar India Studies Program, Indiana University
- 1-12/2010 Acting Director, India Studies Program, Indiana University
- 6/2008 – 1/2010 Director of Curricula, Bangla Summer Institute, Dhaka, Bangladesh.
- 7/2006 - present Associate Professor, Indiana University, 75% India Studies, 25% Religious Studies.
- 7/2002-6/2006 Assistant Professor, Indiana University, 75% India Studies, 25% Religious Studies.
- 8/2000 - 6/2002 Assistant Professor, Indiana University, Religious Studies.
- 1996 - 7/2000 Visiting Assistant Professor, Indiana University, India Studies and Religious Studies.

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- 1995 Faculty, Antioch College (Yellow Springs, Ohio) Buddhist Studies Abroad Program, Bodh Gaya, India.
- 1994-95 Predoctoral Teaching Associate, University of Washington.
- 1991-1992 Sanskrit Instructor, Gold Summit (Buddhist) Monastery, Seattle.
- 1988-1990 Teaching Assistant, University of Washington.

### **Languages**

Principal research languages: Sanskrit, Middle Bengali, (Modern Kolkata Standard) Bengali, Pali.

Reading languages: Sanskrit, Bengali, Hindi, Russian, French, German.

Other languages studied: Bulgarian, Ukrainian, Old Church Slavic, Latin, Spanish, Urdu, Cornish, Colville.

### **Awards**

John W. Ryan Award for Distinguished Contributions to International Programs and Studies, 2020.

### **International Service Appointments**

- Fall 2024 Elected to second 4-year term as Vice President, American Institute of Bangladesh Studies.
- Spring 2022 Elected to Chair, Executive Committee, South Asian Summer Languages Institute.
- Fall 2020 Elected to 4-year term as Vice President, American Institute of Bangladesh Studies.
- Fall 2019 Appointed to IU Islamic Studies Program Advisory Board.
- Dec. 2017 Elected to 3-year term as Language Representative to the Executive Committee of the South Asian Summer Languages Institute.
- April 2014 Re-elected to 3-year term as Secretary, American Institute of Bangladesh Studies
- August 2012- present Appointed Director of Language Instruction, Dhar India Studies Program, IU
- May 2012 Appointed Chair, Language Committee, American Institute of Indian Studies
- June 2011 Elected to 2-year term on IU India Studies Executive Committee
- April 2011 Elected to 3-year term as Secretary, American Institute of Bangladesh Studies

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- April 2011-2013 Elected to Executive Board, South Asia Microforms Project.
- Oct. 2010 Elected to South Asian Summer Language Institute executive board
- April 2010 Appointed to curriculum committee, Global Village Living Learning Centre
- March 2009 Appointed to Language Committee, American Institute of Indian Studies.
- Feb. 2010 Elected to South Asia Council of the Association for Asian Studies
- Nov. 2007 Named trustee for IU to the American Institute of Bangladesh Studies
- Nov. 2007 Religion Elected to Steering Committee, Religion in South Asia Section, American Academy of Religion
- April 2005 Appointed to Executive Committee, South Asian Language Resource Council.
- May 2002 Appointed to advisory board of Eurasian Languages Program.
- 2001-2003 Elected to Executive Board, South Asia Microforms Project.
- 11/00-2/01 Directed South Asia Microforms Project's (SAMP) first microfilming venture in Bengal, to film the Sukumar Sen (Barddhamān Sāhitya Sabhā) Manuscript Collection.
- July 1998 Leader, first Indiana Network for Development of India Awareness (INDIA) faculty summer study-tour to India.
- May 1998 Organizer and host, 32nd Bengal Studies Conference. Indiana University.

## **Research**

## **Books**

*The Fading Light of Advaita Ācārya: Three Hagiographies.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2011.

*Reconstructing Tradition: Advaita Ācārya and Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism at the Cusp of the Twentieth Century.* A study of the biographical corpus of Advaitācārya and its position in and impact on Gauḍīya Vaiṣṇavism. New York: Columbia University Press, 2005.

*Catalogue of the Sukumar Sen (Barddhamān Sāhitya Sabhā) Manuscript Collection.* With Hena Basu. Resources for Scholarship on Asia Series. Ann Arbor: Association for Asian Studies, 2006.

**Publications** (\* indicates peer-reviewed publications)

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\*"Rādhātantram: Rādhā as Guru in the Service of the Great Goddess." *International Journal of Hindu Studies*, 23(3), 259-282.

\*"Pāli Buddhist and Christian Analyses of Gender," with Carol S. Anderson. *Journal of Buddhist and Christian Studies*, Vol. 38, 2018.

\*Rebecca J Manring; Child Sacrifice in Rūparāma's *Dharmamaṅgala*, *The Journal of Hindu Studies*, hiy003, <https://doi.org/10.1093/jhs/hiy003>.

"Radha in Tantra," in Harsha Dehejia, *Radha: From Gopi to Goddess*, New Delhi: Niyogi Books, 2013.

\*"Does Kṛṣṇa Really Need His Own Grammar? Jiva Gosvamin's Answer." *International Journal of Hindu Studies*, Vol. 12, No. 3 (2008):257-286.

\*"Sītā Devī: An Early Vaiṣṇava Guru." In *The Graceful Guru: Hindu Female Gurus in India and the United States*, Karen Pechilis-Prentiss, editor. Oxford University Press, 2004. pp. 51-64.

"The Sukumar Sen (Bardhamān Sāhitya Sabhā) Manuscript Collection." In *Śraddhālekhamālā, the Sukumar Sen Centenary Volume*, Pavitra Sarkar, editor. Kolkata: Paścimabaṅga Bāṅglā Academy, 2003. pp. 437-444.

### **Work in Progress**

The Vaiṣṇava Sensorium. Multi-year project partially sponsored by the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies.

Body and Embodiment in the Middle Bengali Imaginary. Multi-year project jointly sponsored by the Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies and Jagiellonian University (Cracow, Poland).

Rūparāma's *Dharmamaṅgala*, translation of this 26,000-verse Middle Bengali epic poem, with articles published separately. Under contract with Oxford University Press.

Rūparāma's *Dharmamaṅgala*, ethnographic project describing contemporary celebrations of the *baramati* of the god Dharma.

### **Conference Papers and Invited Lectures**

"Human Rights in *Maṅgala-kāvya*," Bangla Academy, Dhaka, Bangladesh, May 7, 2024.

"Animals in Rūparāma's *Dharma-maṅgala*," Bengali Department, Jahangirnagar University, Dhaka, Bangladesh, May 6, 2024.

Chinmayee Chatterjee memorial lecture, Bengali Department, Jadavpur University, April 3, 2024.

"Magic and Maya in Rūparāma's *Dharma-maṅgala*," Annual Conference on South Asia, Madison, Wisconsin, October 20, 2023.

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“What Makes a Woman, or, Can We Trust Our Senses? Visual Testimony in Viṣṇudāsa’s *Sītā-guṇa-kadamba*.” All-day Vaiṣṇava Sensorium symposium at the Annual Conference on South Asia, Madison, Wisconsin, October 18, 2023.

“Is Death Really the End?” Paper presented to the 20<sup>th</sup> annual conference of the European Association for the Study of Religions, Vilnius, Lithuania, September 5, 2023.

“Magic and Mystery in Maṅgala-kāvya.” Keynote address at the International Conference on South Asian Literature and Culture at Gour Banga University, Malda, April 26, 2023.

“Sukumar Sen and the Place of Popular Literature: Why Story Matters.” Invited lecture at the National Institute of Technology, Silchar, April 20, 2023.

“From Bardhamana to Bloomington: How Lausena Made the Sun Rise in the West.” Invited lecture for the Comparative Literature Department, Jadavpur University, April 10, 2023.

“Rupram’s *Dharma-maṅgala* and the Importance of a Good Story.” Valedictory lecture, *Literature and Aesthetics: Poetics of the Affective: An International Seminar* organized by the Departments of Comparative Indian Languages and Literature and English, University of Calcutta, March 28, 2023.

“Devotional Self-Destruction: How a Narcissistic Dancer Fell to Earth and Birthed a Mighty Champion.” Madison Conference on South Asia, October 21, 2022.

“Prayer and Practice: Surviving the Worship of Lord Dharma in Premodern Bengal.” Conference on the Study of Religion in India, Colby College, Waterville, Maine. June 24, 2022.

“Does Critical Editing Really Help?” Madison Conference on South Asia, October 21, 2021.

Keynote address, South Asian Language Teachers’ Association annual meeting (virtually), “Don’t Give Up Until It’s Done.” June 26, 2021.

“Hanumāna’s Leaps of Faith: Intertextuality in the *Dharma-maṅgala*,” invited talk, 37th annual symposium, Sanskrit Traditions in the Modern World, Oxford Centre for Hindu Studies (virtually), May 28, 2021.

Who Cares About the Past? Rūparāma’s *Dharmamaṅgala*. Small Talks Series sponsored by Heritage Walks Calcutta, Neogi Books, Kolkata, India, January 25, 2020.

Unity in Diversity in Premodern Bengal: Rūparāma Cakravartī’s *Dharma-maṅgala*, invited lecture at the Centre for the Study of Social Sciences, Calcutta, January 22, 2020.

“A Journey to 1650,” International Seminar on Bengali Literature, St. Xavier’s College, Kolkata, India, January 21, 2020.

“Human Rights and Middle Bengali Literature,” keynote address at International Conference on Human Rights: Context and Concerns, Bijoy Krishna Girls’ College, Howrah, India, January 17, 2020.

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### **Fellowships and Grants**

- 2022-24 Fulbright-Nehru Academic Excellence (flex) Award for “Rūparāma Cakravartī’s *Dharma-maṅgala* and Performing Devotion from Precolonial Bengal to the 21<sup>st</sup> Century.”
- 2019 IU OVPIA Global Gateway Seed Grant to host Translation Across Time and Space seminar at India Gateway, January 10-12, 2020.
- 2016 Indiana University OVPIA International Conference Award, for the first Middle Bengali retreat-cum-workshop in Mircurea Ciuc, Romania, August, 2016.

### **Teaching**

#### *Religious Studies*

- Introduction to Hinduism (R220)  
Bollywood and Beyond: Religion in South Asian Cinema (R335)  
Medieval Devotional Literatures of India (in translation) (R352/I370)  
Women in South Asian Religious Traditions (I380/580)  
The Goddess in Contemporary India (R202)  
Religion in Practice: Yoga (R D-325)

#### *India Studies*

- Elementary Sanskrit  
Intermediate Sanskrit  
Advanced Sanskrit Readings  
Sanskrit for Yogis  
Literatures of Ancient and Classical India (in translation) (I370/570)  
Medieval Devotional Literatures of India (in translation) (I371/571; R352; CMLT 301/645)  
The Indian Epic in Comparative Perspective: The *Mahabharata*  
Introduction to India (I100)

### **Conferences and Programs Organized**

Translation Workshop, BRAC Institute of Languages, Dhaka, Bangladesh, May 5, 2024.

*Śītalā-maṅgalas* and Their Places in Pre-modern Bengali Literature. Virtual symposium held on three successive Fridays (Oct. 29, Nov. 5, Nov. 12, 2021) with scholars from India, Russia, Poland, the U.S., and more.

Middle Bengali Reading Group: *Śītalā-maṅgala*. Scholars from around the world meet weekly via Zoom to read and discuss this premodern epic treating the smallpox goddess.

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Translation Across Time and Space, international conference held at Indiana University India Gateway, Delhi, India, January 11-12, 2020.

Organizer (with Thibaut d'Hubert and Imre Bangha), fourth Annual Middle Bengali Reading Retreat-cum-Workshop, Bab Zouina, Morocco, August 4-12, 2019.

Organizer (with Thibaut d'Hubert and Ishan Chakrabarty), third Annual Middle Bengali Reading Retreat-cum-Workshop, to be held at Deer Park, Himachal Pradesh, India, August 1-10, 2018.

American Institute of Bangladesh Studies Conference on Bengali *Maṅgalakāvya* and Related Literature, University of Wisconsin-Madison, October 22, 2015.

(Near) Annual Faculty Development Workshop, American Institute of Indian Studies, early January in New Delhi, India; since 2012.

Bengal Studies Conference, IUB, Spring 1998.

3/11/2024