

DR. URMILA MOHAN

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ADJUNCT FACULTY, NEW YORK UNIVERSITY/ HONORARY RESEARCH FELLOW, UNIVERSITY COLLEGE LONDON

EDUCATION

PhD	University College London, Anthropology Dissertation: "Dressing (for) God: Clothing as Efficacious Intimacy in Iskcon" Advisors: Profs. Susanne Küchler and Christopher Pinney	2015
MFA	Pennsylvania State University, Studio Art Thesis and Exhibit: "Skin Deep - Body, Embodiment and Clothing"	2009
BA	Victoria University of Wellington, Anthropology	2000
BFA	National Institute of Design, Communication design	1998

PUBLICATIONS

Books and Special Issues

- Mohan, U. and S. Rodgers, eds. Forthcoming. "Classification Schemes Gone Awry: Implications for Museum Research and Exhibition Display Practices", *Museum Anthropology*, Special Issue.
- Mohan, U. and L. Douny, eds. 2021. *The Material Subject: Rethinking Bodies and Objects in Motion*. London: Routledge.
- Mohan, U. 2019. *Clothing as Devotion in Contemporary Hinduism*. Leiden: Brill Research Perspectives in Religion and the Arts.
- Mohan, U. 2018. *Fabricating Power with Balinese Textiles*. Chicago: BGC/University of Chicago Press.
- Mohan, U. and J. -P. Warnier, eds. 2017. "The Bodily and Material Cultures of Religious Subjectivation", *Journal of Material Culture*, Special Issue.

Chapters and Articles

- Mohan, U. Forthcoming. "Digital Materiality and the Shaping of Balinese Religio-Cultural Imaginaries" in Emily S. Clark and Rachel M. Lindsey eds. *Digital Humanities and Material Religion: An Introduction*, Berlin: De Gruyter Press.
- Mohan, U. 2021. "Religion and Ritual: The Modern Religio-colorscape" in Anders Steinvall and Sarah Street, eds. *A Cultural History of Color in the Modern Age*, London: Bloomsbury.
- Douny, L. and U. Mohan, 2021. "Subjects, their Bodies and their Objects" in U. Mohan and L. Douny eds., *The Material Subject: Rethinking Bodies and Objects in Motion*. London: Routledge.
- Mohan, U. 2021. "Devotion as 'Efficacious Intimacy' on the Home Altar" in U. Mohan and L. Douny eds., *The Material Subject: Rethinking Bodies and Objects in Motion*. London: Routledge.
- Mohan, U. and S. Bora. 2020. "'Mask Cultures' in the United States and India" *Anthropology News* website, September 25, 2020. DOI: 10.14506/AN.1506
- Mohan, U. 2019. "Historical and Contemporary Connections Between Indian and Indonesian Textiles: A Focus on Double-Ikat Patola", *7th ASEAN Traditional Textile Symposium*, Jogjakarta.
- Mohan, U. 2018. "Objecthood" In H. Callan, ed. *The International Encyclopedia of Anthropology*, Oxford: John Wiley & Sons, Ltd.
- Mohan, U. and J. -P. Warnier. 2017. "Editorial: Marching the Devotional Subject: The Bodily-and-Material Cultures of Religion." *Journal of Material Culture* 22(4): 369-384.
- Mohan, U. 2017. "When Krishna Wore a Kimono: Deity Clothing as Rupture and Inefficacy", In T. Carroll, D. Jeevendrampillai, A. Parkhurst and J. Shackelford, eds. *The Material Culture of Failure: When Things Do Wrong*, London: Routledge, pp. 39-55.

- Mohan, U. 2017. "Clothing as a Technology of Enchantment: Gaze and Glaze in Hindu Garments" *Magic, Ritual, and Witchcraft* 12(1): 225-244.
- Mohan, U. 2016. "From Prayer Beads to the Mechanical Counter: The Negotiation of Chanting Practices Within a Hindu Group" *Archives de Sciences Sociales des Religions* 174:191-212.
- Mohan, U. 2015. "Dressing God: Clothing as Material of Religious Subjectivity in a Hindu Group", In S. Küchler and A. Drazin eds., *The Social Life of Materials: Studies in Materials and Society*, London: Routledge, 137-152.

RESEARCH AND TEACHING EXPERIENCE

- Adjunct Faculty**, Dept. of Anthropology, New York University 2020 - now
- Developed and taught undergraduate courses on material and visual culture in museums.
 - Focused on museum display and representation as historical and contemporary forms of power with a focus on decolonization.
 - Introduced modules on archives and civic engagement as generative sites in museums.
 - Co-organized 2021 NYU Libraries public panel and brought together community activists and archivists for a discussion to educate the students and public.

- Honorary Research Fellow**, University College London 2016 - now
- Publication of 'The Material Subject'. Edited volume featuring a compilation of old and new work by members of the French *Matière à Penser* working group.
 - Project on Indian and Indonesian Heritage. Ethnographic research on textiles and heritage in Asia with a focus on techniques and their relationship to religion and ritual. This includes ongoing collaborations with universities, designers and scholars.

- Adjunct Faculty**, Gallatin School of Individualized Study, NYU Spring 2019
- Developed and taught an undergraduate course on history and anthropology of textiles and religion in South/Southeast Asia.
 - Focused on material/visual culture and study of history through museum objects/ archives.

- Founder and Managing Editor**, The Jugaad Project: Material Religion in Context 2014 - now
www.thejugaadproject.pub
- Managed volunteer editorial team/working group since 2014 and developed core vision for this interdisciplinary publication as service to the profession.
 - Incorporated analytical approaches from diverse fields with a focus on practices and lived experiences. Emphasized the need for diversity and innovation in material culture studies.
 - Designed and maintained site and associated social media.

- AMNH-BGC Postdoctoral Fellow, Museum Anthropology** 2016 - 18
 Project titled "Fabricating Power with Balinese Textiles"
- Developed research into fabrication, design, and actions, and how these relate to cultural and spiritual values.
 - Curated exhibit on Balinese textiles (February 23 - July 8, 2018).
 - Fieldwork in Bali, Indonesia over Summer 2016. Artifactual and archival research in the Asian Ethnographic Collection at American Museum of Natural History, Nyc; Library of Congress, D.C.; and Tropenmuseum, Netherlands.

- Designed and taught Masters courses in Balinese history, exhibit curation and analysis. Student projects in both courses were designed around the close study of museum objects in art and ethnographic museums such as the American Museum of Natural History, Brooklyn Museum, and Cooper Hewitt Design Museum.

Curatorial and Museum Experience

2013 - now

- Co-curator with Dr. J. Hughes, *The Color of Memory – Claire Le Pape’s ‘Giottoesques’*, The Jugaad Project, Dec. 2020.
- Guest Curator, *Fabricating Power with Balinese Textiles*, Bard Graduate Center, New York. 2016-18.
- Documented South Asian artifacts in the Natalie Tolbert Collection, *Horniman Museum and Gardens*, London as part of “Collections, People, Stories: Anthropology Reconsidered.” 2013.
- Co-curated with Dr. J. Reese, *India: A Veneration Nation*, Symposium Exhibit, University College London, June 2012.

TALKS AND PANELS

Invited Talks

2017 - now

- “Reflections on Curating Balinese Textiles”, *Material Histories of the Indian Ocean World*, George Mason University’s Roy Rosenzweig Center for History and New Media, April 22, 2021.
- *Traditional Textiles to Contemporary Construction in Fashion*, Webinar organized by Indonesian Institute of the Arts, Denpasar, Bali, October 2020. Speaker in this international webinar for the public and students in the institute’s fashion design program.
- “Historical and Contemporary Connections between Indian and Indonesian Textiles”, *7th ASEAN Traditional Textile Symposium*, Jogjakarta, Indonesia, 6 Nov. 2019.
- “Contemporary Uses of Images in Bali, Indonesia”, *Gatty Lecture Series*, Organized by Cornell University, Ithaca, Feb. 14, 2019.
- *Future Textiles Panel*, Organized by Wearable Media Studio, Oct. 27, 2017, New York. Speaker in a panel on how human behavior shapes our surroundings through clothing, culture and technology.

Organization of Events, Panels and Workshops

2012 - now

- “Documenting a Crisis as it Unfolds”, Co-organizer of public panel on pandemic archives with NYU Libraries, March 22, 2021.
- “Efficacious Intimacy – Creating Dialogs Between Material Culture and Belief”, Series of Zoom working group meetings hosted by The Jugaad Project over 2020-21. Culminates in an edited book.
- Virtual Book Release Event for *The Material Subject* featuring panelists from UK and Europe in dialog with audiences around the world. Jan. 12, 2021.
- “Bali and Beyond: Culture, Power, and Indonesian Textiles”, Symposium Panel, February 2018, Bard Graduate Center, Nyc. Logistics and planning by Laura Minsky, BGC.
- “Borders and Boundaries: Politics of Mobility in Museum Settings”, Co-organized with Dr. Claire Heckel, Panel for the American Association of Anthropologists, Council of Museum Anthropology, Washington, D.C., November 2017.
- “The Bodily AND Material Cultures of Religious Subjectivation” co-organized with Jean-Pierre Warnier, Professor Emeritus, L’École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales (EHESS), Paris. A two-day conference at UCL, London, on the role of materials and techniques in making the religious subject. June 2014.
- “Material and Sensory Attachment: Intimate Engagement in Religion and Politics”, Panel at American Anthropological Association (AAA), D.C. December 2013.

HONORS AND AWARDS

- Asian Cultural Council Individual Fellowship 2018
\$17,500 for travel and research on textiles in Indonesia.
- Coby Foundation Exhibit Grant 2017
\$40,000 for Bard Graduate Center exhibit on Balinese textiles.
- AMNH-BGC Postdoctoral Fellowship in Museum Anthropology 2016-18
Support for curating an exhibit and developing the accompanying monograph.
- India Travel Award 2012
£1,000 from Nehru Trust for the Indian Collections, Victoria and Albert Museum.
- Rotary Ambassadorial Scholarship 2011-12
Grant of \$25,000 to study at University College London.

AFFILIATIONS

- *The Baron Thyssen Center for the Study of Ancient Material Religion*
Member of Advisory Board, Open University, London
- *American Anthropological Association*
Member, Society for Cultural Anthropology, Society for Humanistic Anthropology
- *American Association of Geographers*
Member, Cultural Geography, Religion and Belief Systems, Indigenous Peoples
- *Universitas Sebelas Maret*
Consultant, Department of Textile Design, Solo, Indonesia

COMMUNITY SERVICE

Peer-reviewer for

- Journal of Material Culture
- Material Religion: Journal of Objects, Art and Belief

LANGUAGES

English: Native Language

Hindi: Advanced Listener, Intermediate Speaker, Intermediate Reading and Writing

Bahasa Indonesia: Intermediate Listener, Beginner Speaker, Beginner Reading and Writing