

BHRIGUPATI SINGH

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ACADEMIC APPOINTMENTS

Assistant Professor, Department of Anthropology, Brown University, July 2014 onwards
Watson Institute for International Studies, Faculty Fellow, July 2014 onwards

Assistant Professor (UK equivalent: Lecturer): in Anthropology and Religious Studies, King's
India Institute, King's College, London. 2013-14.

Brown University, Watson Institute, Postdoctoral Fellow in Anthropology and International
Studies. 2011-13.

Harvard University, Weatherhead Center for International Affairs, Postdoctoral Scholar.
October 2009 – July 2011

Sarai-Center for the Study of Developing Societies (CSDS), Delhi. Research Fellow, 2001-2002.

EDUCATION

Johns Hopkins University
Ph.D., Department of Anthropology, December 2009
Dissertation Title: *Gods and Grains: Lives of Desire in Rural Central India*

School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, U.K., 2000-2001
M.A. in Anthropology of Media
SOAS Taught Masters Prize for Highest Marks Across all Anthropology Masters Courses

St. Stephen's College, Delhi University, India, 1997-2000
B.A. (Honors) in English
Muriel Wasi Prize for Highest Marks in Delhi University

AWARDS AND SCHOLARSHIPS

Finalist, Clifford Geertz Prize for the Anthropology of Religion, Society for the Anthropology of Religion, American Anthropological Association, November 2016

Award for Excellence in the Study of Religion, American Academy of Religion August 2016, Book prize awarded to *Poverty and the Quest for Life: Spiritual and Material Striving in Rural India*

Joseph W. Elder Prize for the Indian Social Sciences 2015, American Institute of Indian Studies, Awarded to *Poverty and the Quest for Life: Spiritual and Material Striving in Rural India*

American Institute of Indian Studies, Senior Research Fellowship, January-May 2016

Wenner-Gren Foundation for Anthropological Research, Post PhD Grant, 2015-2016

Office of the Vice President of Research, Humanities Research Funds 2015-16, Brown University

Dean's Teaching Fellowship Prize, Johns Hopkins University, 2008.

Nominated for Excellence in Teaching Award, Johns Hopkins University for course on Religion and Moral Economy, taught at the invitation of the Program for the Study of Women, Gender and Sexuality, 2007.

Andrew Mellon International Dissertation Research Fellowship, Social Science Research Council (SSRC), USA, 2005-2006.

Graduate Research Fellowship, Institute for Global Studies in Culture, Power and History, Johns Hopkins University, 2003.

Taught Masters Prize (for Highest Marks across all Masters Courses). School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London, U.K. 2000-01.

British Foreign Office - Chevening Open Social Sciences Scholarship for Masters Studies in the U.K., 2000-01.

Muriel Wasi Prize for Highest Aggregate in B.A. (Honors) English literature, St. Stephen's College, Delhi University. 1997-2000.

Scholarship for Proficiency in the German language from Max Mueller Bhavan (Goethe-Schule), New Delhi, 1996.

PUBLICATIONS

Books

Poverty and the Quest for Life: Spiritual and Material Striving in Rural India

University of Chicago Press (2015); Oxford University Press (South Asia Edition, October 2015)

Winner of the Joseph W. Elder Prize in the Indian Social Sciences, 2015

Winner of the Award for Excellence in the Study of Religion, American Academy of Religion, 2016

Finalist, Clifford Geertz Prize for the Anthropology of Religion, 2016

Book launch of the South Asia edition published by Oxford University Press. Book launch jointly hosted by the American Institute for Indian Studies and Oxford University Press at the India International Center, New Delhi, January 2016, with responses to the book by leading anthropologists, artists, and non-fiction writers in India.

Somatosphere Book Discussion Forum, March 2015 – Essays in response to the book by William Mazzarella, Lisa Stevenson, Naveeda Khan, William E. Connolly, and others:

<http://somatosphere.net/2015/03/book-forum-bhrigupati-singhs-poverty-and-the-quest-for-life.html>

Panel at the Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Washington DC, December 2014, titled “Vitality, Sovereignty, Agonistics, Ethics: A Conversation with Bhrigupati Singh on *Poverty and the Quest for Life*”

Brown University Book Adda (book event) on *Poverty and the Quest for Life*

Featuring responses to the book by Sudipto Kaviraj, Michael Taussig, Amanda Anderson and Leela Gandhi, and art works in response to the book by eleven leading Indian artists.

Edited Volumes

The Ground Between: Anthropologists Engage with Philosophy

Co-edited with Arthur Kleinman, Michael D. Jackson & Veena Das.

Duke University Press, 2014.

Articles in Peer-Reviewed Journals

(Article Under Review), “An Uncritical Encounter between Anthropology and Psychiatry: A response to *Affliction: Health, Disease, Poverty*”, under review in *Medicine Anthropology Theory*.

(Article Under Review) “Anthropological Investigations of Vitality: Life-force as a Dimension distinct from Space and Time”, under review with *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, as part of a Special Issue titled *Anthropology and Life Itself* (eds.) Bhrigupati Singh, Robert Desjarlais, Clara Han and Giovanni da Col.

(Forthcoming in 2017) “Depression”, in *Journal of South Asian Studies*, Special Issue on “Keywords in Indian English” (eds.) Craig Jeffrey, Assi Doron and Meera Ashar.

“Introduction: A Joyful History of Anthropology”, with Jane Guyer, *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, Vol.6, No.2, (2016) as part of a Special Issue titled *A Joyful History of Anthropology* (eds.) Bhrigupati Singh and Jane Guyer. Pp. 197-211.

“The Lives of Others as a Preparation for our own”, *Religion and Society: Advances in Research*, Vol.7 (2016), Issue 1, pp. 17-22

“On the Killing and Killability of Animals: Non-moral Thoughts for the Anthropology of Ethics”, with Naisargi Dave, in *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East*. Vol. 35, No.2, September 2015. Published with a response by Wendy Doniger (University of Chicago)

“Botched Enlightenment”, with Leela Gandhi, in *E-flux: Journal of Contemporary Art, Culture and Theory*, Special Issue for the 56th Venice Biennale, (eds.) June 2015.

‘The Headless Horseman of Central India: Sovereignty at Varying Thresholds of Life’, *Cultural Anthropology*, Vol. 27, Issue 2, May 2012, pp. 383-407

‘Agonistic Intimacy and Moral Aspiration in Popular Hinduism: A Study in the Political Theology of the Neighbor’, *American Ethnologist*, Vol. 38, No. 3, Aug 2011, pp.430-450

‘Frugality and Excess in Gandhi, Thoreau and Nietzsche’, *Borderlands*, Special Issue on Religion and Sexuality, Vol.9, No.3, December 2010, pp.1-34

‘*Aadamkhor Haseena* (The Man-Eating Beauty) and the Anthropology of a Moment: A Study of Cinema in an Un-cinematic City’, *Contributions to Indian Sociology*, 42, 2, May 2008. pp. 249-279.

‘Narrating *Injustice*: British Cultural Studies & its Media’, *Television and New Media*. Vol. 7, No.2, May 2006. pp. 135-153.

‘Another Investigation of Postcolonial Failure’, *Journal of Cultural and Religious Theory*, Vol. 7. No.1, Winter 2005. pp. 55-82.

‘A Critical Look at the Films of Anand Patwardhan’ in *Critical Asian Studies*, Vol. 34, No. 4, December 2002. pp. 623-636.

Edited special issues of journals

Anthropology and Life Itself, Special issue on Anthropology and Vitalism, (eds.) Bhrigupati Singh, Robert Desjarlais, Clara Han and Giovanni da Col, under review with *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory*

A Joyful History of Anthropology, Special issue on rethinking approaches to the history of anthropology (eds.) Bhrigupati Singh and Jane Guyer, December 2016, *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory*

Guest edited and wrote introduction to 'Unsettling Cinema', Special issue of the journal *Seminar* on Cinema Studies in India. Issue 525, May 2003.

Chapters in Edited Volumes

"Hunger and Thirst: Crisis at Varying Thresholds of Life", in *Living and Dying in the Contemporary World: A Compendium*. (Eds.) Clara Han and Veena Das. November 2015. University of California Press: Berkeley.

"Photography and *Prana* (Life-force): Towards a Vitalist Reading of Images" in *Origins* (eds. Raahab Allana and Nandita Jaishankar), British High Commission (India) and the Alkazi Foundation for the Arts (Delhi), October 2015. Accompanied by an art show on view at galleries in Delhi, Bangalore and London.

"Conceptual Vita" in *Wording the World: Veena Das and Scenes of Inheritance*. (ed) Roma Chatterji. 2015. Fordham University Press: Fordham. Published in South Asia by Orient Blackswan.

'How Concepts make the World Look Different: Affirmative and Negative Genealogies of Thought' in *The Ground Between: Anthropologists Engage with Philosophy*. (eds.) Arthur Kleinman, Michael D. Jackson & Veena Das and Bhri Gupta Singh. 2014. Duke Univ. Press: Durham, NC.

'Re-inhabiting Civil Disobedience' in *Political Theologies* (eds.) Hent deVries and Lawrence Sullivan. 2006. Fordham University Press: Fordham. pp. 365-382

Other Scholarly Publications

"Writing with Love and Hate" in a series titled "Writer's Workshop" (inviting anthropologists to reflect on the practice of writing) in *Savage Minds: Notes and Queries in Anthropology*, December 2015.

'What is to be done?' in *Crisis/Media*, Sarai Reader 04, Sarai-CSDS and Society for Old & New Media, De Waag, Delhi/Amsterdam 2004. pp. 60-71.

'Race, Violence and Media Flows' in *Cities of Everyday Life*, Sarai Reader 02, Sarai-CSDS and Society for Old & New Media, De Waag, Delhi/Amsterdam 2002. pp. 85-91.

'One Week in Aman Chowk: On the Aftermath of Collective Violence in Gujarat, India', *Seminar*, Issue 517, September 2002. pp. 78-85.

PRESENTATIONS

Invited Lectures

Poverty and the Quest for Life: Spiritual and Material Striving in Rural India

Book panel: Jaipur Literature Festival, Jaipur, India January 2017

Poverty and the Quest for Life: Somewhere between Rural and Urban India [Lecture on how the themes of my book *Poverty and the Quest for Life*, relate to my new ethnographic research in urban India] Emory University, Department of South Asian and Middle East Studies Lecture Series, August 2016.

Syracuse University, Department of Anthropology and Religious Studies, Invited Lecture, October 2016

McGill University, Institute for the Study of International Development, November 2016

University of Minnesota, Department of South Asian studies, November 2016

University of Washington, Seattle South Asia Center, February 2017

Poverty and the Quest for Life: Spiritual and Material Striving in Rural India

Book talks: Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, Delhi (August 2015); Azim Premji University, Bangalore (August 2015), South Asia University (October 2015), Mumbai Literary Festival (October 2015).

Anthropology and Philosophy: Affinities and Antagonisms, Institute for Education, University of London, April 2014

Caste and Conflict in Contemporary India: Thoughts on the Political Theology of the Neighbor

- King's India Institute, King's College, London, March 2014
- Harvard University, Department of South Asian Studies, November 2013

Sacrificial Life and Death in Contemporary Hinduism, Center for the Study of World Religions, Harvard University, February 2013.

What does Accumulation do to us? An inter-disciplinary conversation at the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston. November 2012.

'Gods and Grains: Political Theologies of Popular Hinduism (A Book Overview)', Street Scholars Collective, Bangalore (India), January 2011.

'Erotics and Agonistics in Rural Central India: Notes on the Political Theologies of Neighborliness'

- Harvard University, Department of Anthropology Colloquium Series, September 2010.
- Brown University, Department of Anthropology Colloquium Series, September 2010.
- UC Berkeley, Department of Anthropology Colloquium Series, October 2011
- University of Pennsylvania, Department of South Asian Studies, November 2012
- UNC-Chapel Hill, Department of Anthropology, October 2010

'*Gandhi and Thoreau: Signals and Affinities*', Invited Lecture, Humanities Lecture Series, York College, Pennsylvania. December 2009.

'*Preliminary Work for a Future Morality: Spiritual and Political Exercises in Gandhi, Thoreau and Nietzsche*', Johns Hopkins University, Department of Politics Colloquium Series, October 2008.

Selected Conference presentations

"Spiritual Afflictions and Mental health in Contemporary India", in a panel titled *Hawa: Air, Spirit, Wind and Breath in South Asian Moral and Medical Imaginaries*, Annual Conference of South Asian Studies, Madison October 2016.

"Opium for the Masses" (conference presentation on heroin and urban poverty in two resettlement colonies of Delhi) in a panel titled, *Rituals of Death, Rituals of Debt*, American Anthropological Association Meetings, Minneapolis, November 2016.

"Metaphysics as a Threshold between Life and Death", in *Annual Conference on Metaphysics and Politics*, organized by the Backwaters Metaphysics Collective (consortium of scholars in the US and India) and the Kochi Biennale, Kochi (Kerala, India) – 16th July 2016

"After Life: Design Ideas from the Spirit World" in *Critical Design/ Critical Future*, Rhode Island School of Design, April 24th, 2015

"Thinking Bureaucratically", Seminar on the *India Exclusion Report*, Watson Institute, Brown University, April 29th, 2015

Discussant, Brown University India Initiative Book Adda on Pradeep Chhibber's *Religious Practice and Democracy in India* (Cambridge University Press, 2014), February 2015

Organizer and Discussant, Brown University India Initiative Book Adda on Leela Gandhi's *The Common Cause: Postcolonial Ethics and the Practice of Democracy, 1900-1955* (University of Chicago Press, 2015)

Author's Response, "Vitality, Sovereignty, Agonistics, Ethics: A Conversation with Bhrigupati Singh on *Poverty and the Quest for Life*," Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Washington DC, December 2014. Speakers include William Mazzarella (UChicago), Lisa Stevenson (McGill), William E. Connolly (Johns Hopkins), Naveeda Khan (Johns Hopkins)

Discussant, for a panel entitled "Animate Encounters: Responses to the Ontological Turn in Anthropology", Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, December 2014.

"On the Killability of Animals in India: Immoral Thoughts for the Anthropology of Ethics" on a panel entitled 'Undeading Death', Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Chicago, December 2013.

“Against the Dominance of History in the Study of South Asia: Thoughts for the Present from Mythologies and Political Theologies”, on a panel entitled ‘Other Times in South Asia’, Annual Meeting of the South Asian Studies Association, Madison, Wisconsin, October 2013.

The Quality of Life (A non-economist’s view) on a panel entitled ‘Anthropology and Life Itself’, Executive Panel, Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, San Francisco, November 2012. Co-organized panel with Robert Desjarlais and Clara Han

The Vulnerability of Power’ on a panel entitled ‘Anthropology and Political Theologies’ Invited Panel, Society for Cultural Anthropology, Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, Montreal, November 2011. Co-organized panel with Stefania Pandolfo.

‘Mitra-Varuna: A Bipolar Concept of Sovereign Power’, on a panel entitled ‘Law and the Politics of Religion’, Lassnet (Law and Social Science Network) Conference, Pune (India), December 2010.

‘Philosophical Allegiances and Ethnographic Attentiveness’, on a panel entitled ‘Deleuze and Anthropology’, Invited Panel, Society for Cultural Anthropology, Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association, New Orleans, November 2010.
Co-organized panel with Joao Biehl & Peter Locke

TEACHING

Introduction to Cultural Anthropology (Undergraduate)
Spring 2017, Department of Anthropology, Brown University

Anthropology of Mental Health (Undergraduate)
Fall 2016, Department of Anthropology, Brown University

Religion and Culture (Undergraduate)
Spring 2015, Spring 2013, Department of Anthropology, Brown University

Anthropology of State Power and Powerlessness (Graduate Seminar)
Fall 2016, Fall 2014, Spring 2012, Department of Anthropology, Brown University.

History of Anthropology (Undergraduate)
Fall 2014, Fall 2012, Department of Anthropology, Brown University

The Politics of Religion and Secularism (Undergraduate)
Fall 2011, Watson Institute, Brown University. Cross-listed with International Relations.

Religion and Moral Economy
Fall 2007, Program for the Study of Women, Gender & Sexuality, Johns Hopkins University.
Nominated by students for JHU Excellence in Teaching Award.

PROFESSIONAL SERVICE

Associate Director (Undergraduate affairs), Center for Contemporary South Asia, Brown University

Member, Steering Committee, Center for Contemporary South Asia/Brown India Initiative, Brown University, July 2014 onwards

[Involves monthly committee meetings, co-running seminar series with Leela Gandhi, reviewing graduate and undergraduate funding applications for research on India, helping with the formation of a Center for the Study of Contemporary South Asia at Brown]

Associate Editor, *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, July 2013 onwards

[Involves reviewing 7-8 article manuscripts/year, putting together Special issues, helping create network of copy-left academic institutions across the world]

Reviewer for *Cultural Anthropology*, *Critique of Anthropology*, *American Anthropologist*, *Asian Ethnology*, *Political Theory*, *Journal of Cultural and Religious Theory*, *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*

Brown University First-Year Advising Program AY2016-17: Ananya Poddar, Eleanor Meshnick, Srinjoy Srimani, Mengqi Wang

PhD Dissertation Committee Member (Department of Anthropology, Brown University): Rama Srinivasan, Brian Horton, Andrea Wright, Malay Arora, Jessica Katzenstein, Parsa Bastani, Previous years: Yana Stainova, MA Committees: Samee Sulaiman, Mariz Kelada.

Undergraduate Thesis Advisor (Brown University):

Current AY 2016-17: Jonas Johnson (Anthropology), Elizabeth Gaccione (Anthropology), Stefanie Kaufmann (Contemplative Studies), Pranav Sharma (Development Studies/Watson), Steven Velasquez (Anthropology), Adriel Barrios-Anderson (Cognitive Science)

2015-16 (during research leave): Pia Brar

2014-15: Theo-Peck Suzuki,

2011-12 (as Postdoctoral fellow): Ana Carolina Barry Laso,

Member, Search Committee, Watson Institute – Department of Anthropology junior faculty search, Fall 2014.

External Examiner for MA/PhD Thesis: Temple University, Rhode Island School of Design, Harvard Graduate School of Design