

Manduhai Buyandelger

Curriculum Vitae

MIT Anthropology E53-335, 77 Massachusetts Ave. Cambridge, MA 02139
manduhai@mit.edu

Academic Positions

Director, WGS MIT	2025 (July) -
Professor	2021 (July)
Associate Professor with TENURE, MIT Anthropology	2016 -2021
Associate Professor, Anthropology MIT (AWOT)	2012 (July)
Assistant Professor, Anthropology MIT	2008-
Lecturer, Harvard Anthropology Department	2006
Harvard Society of Fellows (Post-Doctoral Fellow)	2004-2007
Instructor, Harvard University	2002
Lecturer, National University of Mongolia	1993-1995
Lecturer, College for Asian Studies in Mongolia	1993

Education

Harvard University, Ph.D. in Social Anthropology	2004
National University of Mongolia, MA in Philology	1995
National University of Mongolia, BA in Literature and Linguistics	1993

Selected Academic Honors, Awards, and Fellowships

MITHIC the SHASS+ Connectivity Fund	2024
Marion and Jasper Whiting Foundation Grant	2024
Alumni Class Fund	2024
The 2022 Onon Prize for contribution to Inner Asian Studies	2023
University of Cambridge, UK. Mongolia and Inner Asia Studies Unit	
2022 MIT Climate and Sustainability Consortium Seed Awards	2022-2024
D'Arbeloff Grant for Anthropologically-Informed Engineering of Fuel Independence in Mongolia and Central Asia	2022-2024
MISTI MIT Faculty Seed Fund for Anthro-Engineering Heat Banks	2021-2022
MIT SHASS Research Fund (to launch a new project on Virtual Realities)	2020
STL Faculty Research Seed Grant <i>Disjuncture and Resilience: A Holistic Approach to Real Estate Development in Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia</i> , MIT	2016
MIT Class of 1956 Career Development Chair (3 year position)	2015
Institute for Advanced Studies, School of Social Sciences, Princeton NJ	2014
The School for Advanced Research, Santa Fe, NM (declined)	2014
National Endowment for the Humanities NEH Summer Stipend	2014
Leviton Prize for the Humanities (MIT)	2013
MISTI Global Seed Funds Grant (MIT) (declined)	2013

MIT SHASS Research Fund	2012
MIT HASS Dean's Faculty Development Fund	2010
NSF (Gender and Technologies of Elections in Mongolia)	2008
Wenner-Gren Foundation Post-doctoral Grant	2008
William Milton Fund of Harvard University	2006-2007
Soros Foundation Grant, Global Supplementary Fund	2002-2003
Weatherhead Center Graduate Student Affiliate Grant (Harvard U)	2002-2003
Anthropology Department Conference Grant, Harvard University	2002
Eliot Fellowship for Dissertation Completion, Harvard University	2001-2002
Asia Center Travel Grant (dissertation follow-up research), Harvard U	2001-2002
Davis Center for Russian Studies Grant, Harvard University	2001-2002
Graduate School Conference Travel Grant, Harvard University	2001
Resident Fellowship, Center for the Study of World Religions, Harvard U.	2001-2002
Dissertation Fellowship, Center for the Study of World Religions, Harvard U.	2000- 2001
Social Science International Dissertation Research Fellowship	1999-2000
Wenner-Gren Dissertation Research Grant	1999-2000
Matsushita International Foundation, Japan Dissertation Research Grant	1999-2000
Mellon Foundation Dissertation Research Grant, Harvard University	1999
Religion in Contemporary Asia Travel Grant, Asia Center, Harvard University	1999
Population Center, Dissertation Research Grant, Harvard University (declined)	1999
Mellon Foundation Pre-dissertation Research Grant	1998
Fellowship in Social Anthropology, Department of Social Medicine, Harvard U	1997-1999
Harvard University Inner Asian and Altaic Studies Fellowship,	1995-1997
Harvard University Inner Asian and Altaic Studies Summer Travel Grant	1996
Fulbright Fellowship for Graduate Studies Awarded by the United States Information Service	1995-1999

Publications

Books

- ❖ *A Thousand Steps to Parliament: Constructing Electable Women in Mongolia.*
University of Chicago Press, 2022
 - 2023 Mongolian Writers Association 2023 Golden Quill Pen award for the best book in a category of human rights issues. Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia
 - 2022 Mongolian Anthropology Association Best Book Prize. Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia
 - Honorable Mention for the 2024 E. Gene Smith Prize from the Association for Asian Studies, the East and Inner Asia Council, for English-language scholarly books published on Inner Asia
- ❖ *Парламентад хүрэх мянган алхам: Монгол эмэгтэй сонгуульд нэр дэвшсэн нь*

A Mongolian Translation of *A Thousand Steps to Parliament: Constructing Electable Women in Mongolia*. University of Chicago Press, 2022. Published under UNDP's project Promoting gender equality in public decision-making and women's empowerment in Mongolia

❖ *Tragic Spirits: Shamanism, Gender and Memory in Contemporary Mongolia*, University of Chicago Press, 2013.

- 2014 Francis L.K. Hsu Book Prize from the Society of East Asian Anthropology
- 2015 shortlisted by The Biennial International Convention of Asia Scholars (ICAS) with four other books out of 175 as one of the best books on Asian Studies
- Reviewed in (14) *American Ethnologist*, *American Anthropologist*, *London School of Economics Review of Books*, *Inner Asia*, *Journal of the Anthropological Society of Oxford*, *The Journal of Asian Studies*, *Anthropologie et Societes*, *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, *Journal of Folklore Research*, *Social Analysis*, *Asian Anthropology*, *Religious Studies Review*, *Anthropos*, *Newbooks.Asia* (*International Institute for Asian Studies*).

Articles in Refereed Journals

Writing Oneself Out of the Oppression: Biographies of Reconciliation and Re-Collection, In NLO (New Literary Observer) in Russian. January 2020

Asocial memories, 'poisonous knowledge', and haunting in Mongolia. In *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*. Vol. 25, Issue 1. March 2019. Pp. 66-82.

Engineers and Shamans as Heralds of the New Mongolia. Vital Topics Forum Anthropology in and of MOOCs, guest editor Graham Jones. In *American Anthropologist*. Vol. 116, No. 4. December 2014

Post-Post-Transition Theories: Walking on Multiple Paths. In *Annual Review of Anthropology*. 37:235-50. 2008

Dealing with uncertainty: Shamans, marginal capitalism, and the remaking of history in postsocialist Mongolia. *American Ethnologist*, February 2007, vol. 34, # 1, pp. 127-147

Who 'Makes' the Shaman? The Politics of Shamanic Practices among the Buriats in Mongolia. In *Inner Asia* 1 (1999; 221-244). The White Horse Press, 1999
Cambridge, UK.

Articles in edited volumes/special issue journals/encyclopedia/public journals

“The Medium’s Body: Permeability and Autonomy during Free Market Economy in Mongolia” in “The Cambridge Handbook of the Anthropology of the Body,” Cambridge University Press. (Available November 2026)

“Masks can reveal new possibilities” In “The Meanings of Masks,” series MIT SHASS, August 6, 2020. [<https://shass.mit.edu/news/news-2020-pandemic-meanings-masks-anthropologist-manduhai-buyandelger>]

“Disruptions: Racism, Virtual Realities, and World Building” In “Pandemic Diaries,” Gabriela Manley, Bryan M. Dougan, and Carole McGranahan, eds., American Ethnologist website, 2 APRIL 2020. [<https://americanethnologist.org/features/collections/pandemic-diaries/disruptions>]

“Spirits.” In *Indonesia* April 2020

“Women at MIT.” In MIT Faculty Newsletter. May/June 2018

[Mongolia’s Self-Styled Female Parliamentary Candidates](#). In *Anthropology News*. December 20, 2016. 57: e6–e15. doi:10.1111/AN.248

“The Queen Anu as a Feminist Film.” Film Commentary. In Sonin.MN. 02.06.2014 (in Mongolian)

“Mongolian Shamanism: The Mosaic of Performed Memory.” In *Genghis Khan and the Mongolian Empire*, Ed. by William W. Fitzhugh, Morris Rossabi, William Honeychurch. Smithsonian Press, 2009, pp. 65-72.

“Mongolia in 2009.” In Annual Register: World Events. Ed. by D.S. Lewis. Proquest Cambridge UK, 2009

["Tricky Representations: Buddhism in the Cinema during Socialism in Mongolia"](#). Silk Road. Summer 2008, Vol. 6.1; pp. 54-63.

A Follower of Shamanism. in *Calliope*, March 2008

Fire Worship Sutras in Mongolian and Tibetan, published in *Literature and Art*, 1993 Ulaanbaatar. Mongolia. (In Mongolian)

Book Reviews

Long Review: Economic volatilities, gold mining, and subjective transformations in Mongolia. J R Anthropol Inst, 30: 229-232. 2024 <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9655.14068>

Review of *Mongolia Remade: Post-socialist National Culture, Political Economy, and Cosmopolitics*. By David Sneath. *The Journal of Asian Studies*, May 2020.

Review of *The Lama Question: Violence, Sovereignty, and Exception in Early Socialist Mongolia*. By Christopher Kaplonski. *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 2017 76(3), 783-784.

Review of *Not Quite Shamans: Spirit Worlds and Political Lives in Northern Mongolia*, by Morten Axel Pedersen. *American Anthropologist* 2013

Podcast

March 11, 2019. Waltham MA

Podcast: *Women in Political Power*. For Recall This Book – a podcast that explores contemporary issues by looking at books that shaped the world we inherited
<https://recallthisbook.org/>

Select Conference Presentations, Keynotes, and Invited Talks

August 7, 2026

Zoom/Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia

"Laughing Off the Rape: Temporal Transformations of Gender and Feminism from Socialism to the Present" Steppe Socialism Conference hosted by the Mongolia and Inner Asia Studies Unit at the University of Cambridge, and the Department of Anthropology at the National University of Mongolia.

April 8, 2026

MIT, Cambridge MA

"The Connectivity of Memory, Ritual, and the Environment," Guest Lecture at Laura Anderson Barbata Class at MIT ACT (Art Culture and Technology)

March 8, 2026

Organizer of a Symposium Gender, Empire, and AI. MIT. Cambridge MA

March 24, 2025

UPenn, Philadelphia, PA

"Legacies and Electable Selves in Mongolia: A Thousand Steps to Parliament" Invited Talk. East-Asian Studies Department. University of Pennsylvania

March 24, 2025

UPenn, Philadelphia, PA

"Tragic Spirits: The Return of the Suppressed" Invited Talk. East-Asian Studies Department. University of Pennsylvania

Nov 12, 2024

Freiburg University, Switzerland

"Rescues at the Margins: Animal Infrastructures and Rethinking Urbanization in a Multispecies World" Invited Talk. Dep. of Anthropology

June 18, 2024

University of Cambridge. Cambridge. UK

Organized a workshop "Medical Socialities: Margins, Health, and Politics in Inner Asia." Mongolia and Inner Asia Studies Unit and Department of Anthropology. Cambridge U.

October 2, 2023

University of Cambridge. Cambridge. UK

Crisis in Animal Rescue: Urbanization in a Multispecies World. The Onon Prize Lecture.
Mongolia and Inner Asia Studies Unit.

June 19, 2023 The Hebrew University, Jerusalem
Why Do Mongolians Love Elections? Electable Selves, Postsocialism, and Campaigning. Invited
Lecture, Zoom

March 29, 2023 Oberlin College, Ohio
Why Do Mongolians Love Elections? Electable Selves, Postsocialism, and Campaigning.
10th Annual Jack Glazier Endowed Anthropology Lecture Series

May 03, 2022 MIT Asian American Student Group
“Orientalism, Ornamentalism, and Techno-Orientalism: Representations of Asia and Asian
Americans”

October 13, 2022 Harvard University, Department of
Anthropology “Rescues at the Margins: Spreading Compassion for Animals. Invited talk at the
Social Anthropology Colloquium series

September 18, 2021 Indiana University -Purdue University Indianapolis. Indianapolis, IN
“Time and Transformation of Mongolian Women: Revolutions, Representations, and
Experiences” Keynote: The Mongolia Society 60th Anniversary Annual Meeting Conference

August 25, 2021 Harvard University/Zoom
Invited Commentary
Book Launch for *Mixing Medicines: Ecologies of Care in Buddhist Siberia* by Tatiana
Chudakova (Fordham U Press: Thinking from Elsewhere Series)

March 23, 2021 Zoom/Ulaanbaatar Mongolia
Why Revolution Did Not End: International Relations and the Mongolian Women
Featured guest speaker in a workshop *Mongolia in 20th century*. American Center for Mongolian
studies

February 27, 2021 Zoom/Indiana University,
Elections, Virtual Reality, and Climate Change: What Can Anthropology of Mongolia Offer?
Keynote: (ACES) Association for Central Eurasian Students Annual Conference

February 12, 2021 Zoom/Pittsburg U
Invited Discussant at the Colloquia Race and Indigeneity in Siberia and the Arctic
New Directions in Research: Race, Gender, and Indigeneity in the American Arctic and Siberia

November 30, 2020 Philadelphia, PA
Trading History for Sheep: Memory, Migration, and Buryat-Mongol Identities through Shamanic
Practices. Guest Lecture at the Center for East Asian Studies (CEAS) at the University of
Pennsylvania.

November 22, 2019 Vancouver, BC, Canada
Shamans as Businessmen, Villains, and NGO Leaders: Discursive and Affective Spaces in Urban Mongolia. Presentation at the American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting

June 17, 2019. Hoh Hot, Inner Mongolia. China
Exchanging History for Sheep: Mongolian Buryat Shamans Carrying Their Past. Invited talk at The School of Social Anthropology and The School of Mongol Studies. Inner Mongolia University.

June 18, 2019. Hoh Hot, Inner Mongolia. China
Asocial Memories: 'poisonous knowledge', and haunting in Mongolia. Invited talk at The School of Social Anthropology and The School of Mongol Studies. Inner Mongolia University.

June 19, 2019. Hoh Hot, Inner Mongolia. China
From Secrecy to Flamboyance and In-Between: Shamanism, Migration and Urban Life in Mongolia. Invited talk at The School of Social Anthropology and The School of Mongol Studies. Inner Mongolia University.

June 20, 2019. Hoh Hot, Inner Mongolia. China
Women's Committee During Socialism and their Contribution to State Socialism. Invited talk at The School of Social Anthropology and The School of Mongol Studies. Inner Mongolia University.

June 20, 2019. Hoh Hot, Inner Mongolia. China
Self-Polishing: Women Running for Parliamentary Elections in Mongolia. . Invited talk at The School of Social Anthropology and The School of Mongol Studies. Inner Mongolia University.

April 19, 2019. Cambridge MA
MeToo in Mongolia. Presentation at the Workshop on MeToo in Asia. Radcliffe Institute. Harvard University.

April 8, 2019. Cambridge MA
Migration and Memory. Mahindra Humanities Center. Andrew W. Mellon Foundation Seminar. Harvard University

March 8, 2019. Cambridge MA
Invited discussant at the Workshop on Chinese Politics. The Chinese Socialist Origin of Taiwan's Gender Quotas. Harvard-Yenching Institute. Harvard University

March 29, 2019. Pittsburg PA
Keynote: *Self-Polishing and Electoral Selves: Elections and The New Economies of Democratization in Postsocialist Mongolia*. The 19th Annual Symposium of the Postsocialist Cultural Studies Network (SOYUZ). University of Pittsburg.

February 12-13 2019. Heidelberg Germany

Keynote: *Parliaments, Elections, and Post-socialism* in the Workshop “*Parliaments and Political Transformations in Europe and Asia: Political Representation in Russia, China, Mongolia, and Ukraine in the Twentieth and Twenty-First Century.*” University of Heidelberg.

December 1 2018, Cambridge MA

An Experience of Being Someone Else. Presentation at a symposium to celebrate Mary Steedly’s scholarship and its broader influence: *Other Voices, Other Stories: Mary Margaret Steedly’s Ethnographic Legacies*, Harvard Anthropology Department, the Asia Center, and the Weatherhead Center for International Affairs. Harvard University

November 17 2018, San Jose CA

Spirits. Presentation at the Invited Panel *The Said and the Unsaid: Honoring the Legacy of Mary Margaret Steedly.* Annual Meeting of American Anthropological Association.

November 10 2017, Waltham MA

Invited presentation on Democracy, Elections, and Gender in a class Anthropology of Development taught by Professor Derek Sheridan. Anthropology Department, Brandeis University.

November 10 2017, Waltham MA

Electoral Selves and Campaigned Lives: The New Economy of Democratization in Postsocialist Mongolia. Invited Talk at the BARS (Brandeis Anthropology Research Seminar). Brandeis University.

April 26 2017, Cambridge MA

“Housing, Economic Class, and Heritage: What Empirical Studies from around the World (Boston Metro Area) Can Teach us about City Life.” Presentation at the Workshop on Urbanism, MIT-Mongolia Pilot Program. MIT

March 31 2017, Stanford CA

“Electionization as Governing: (Neo) Liberalism’s Disowned Outcomes?” Paper presented at the double panel: Limits of Exposure: the “crisis” of liberalism and the return of history at the American Ethnological Society Annual Meeting. Stanford University.

March 9 2017, Cambridge MA

“From Secrecy to Flamboyance and In Between: Shamanism, Migration, and Organized Religion in Urban Mongolia.” Paper Presented at Science, Religion, and Culture Colloquium at Harvard University.

Nov 17 2016, Minneapolis MN

“A ‘Census’ Changes Everything: Women, Elections, and Neo-Technocratic State.” Paper Presented in a panel: Performance, Persona, and Gendered Beings at the American Anthropological Association annual Meeting.

Nov 3 2016, Berlin Germany

“From Secrecy to Flamboyance: Shamanism, Migration, and Urban Life in Mongolia.” Paper presented at a Humboldt Foundation Workshop titled Religion and the City: Inter-Religious Exchanges in Urban Environments. Berlin-Brandenburgische Akademie der Wissenschaften.

Sept 28 2016, Berkeley CA

“Misfits of Higher Order: Inside and Outside the State.” Paper presented at The Mongolia Initiative, under the Institute of East Asian Studies, UC Berkeley.

Sept 27 2016, Berkeley CA

“*Electionization* and Postsocialist Subjectivity: Women Running for Parliamentary Elections in Mongolia.” Keynote at the Opening of the UC Berkeley Mongolia Initiative. UC Berkeley.

June 24 2016, Warsaw Poland

“Introverted Ethnicity: Rituals and Narratives of Origins among the Buryats in Postsocialist Mongolia.” A paper presented at the workshop *Facing the Challenge of Identification: New Approaches to Buryat Identities and Their Cross-border dynamics*. Institute of Artes Liberales, University of Warsaw.

June 21 2016, Hong Kong

“Beauty as a Political Project.” Presentation at the panel Gender Construction at the Society for East Asian Anthropology Conference, The Chinese University of Hong Kong. (Digital Presentation)

March 12 2016, Bloomington Indiana

“A Thousand Steps to Parliament: Elections, Gender, and New Political Subjectivities in Postsocialist Mongolia.” Keynote at the Association for Central Eurasian Students’ Annual Conference, Indiana University.

Feb 13 2016, Cambridge MA

“A Thousand Steps to Parliament: Women Running for Election in Postsocialist Mongolia.” A paper presented at the panel, Empowered: How Can Everyone Benefit from Asia’s Development? Harvard Project for Asian and International Relations Panel, Harvard University.

November 19 2015, Denver Colorado

“Broadcasting Female Candidates in the Mongolian Parliamentary Elections”

A paper presented at the American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting in a Panel: Migration, Materiality, and Political Subjectivity.

June 2015 Copenhagen, Denmark

“How Mongolian Elections Help to Steer Gender Theories in New Directions.” Presentation at one-day roundtable, “Mongolia as a Theory,” organized in conjunction with the 7th Asian Dynamics Initiative Conference held at the University of Copenhagen.

March 2015, Princeton NJ

“Technologies of Elections and Appearance of Democracy.” Presentation at the Seminar at the School of Social Science, Institute for Advanced Study, Princeton NJ.

December 6 2014, Washington DC

“Intellect-full Women: Creative Electoral Strategies and Parliamentary Politics in Postsocialist Mongolia.” A paper to be presented at the American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting in a Panel: The Artifice of Power: Technologies of Election and Production of Knowledge in Contemporary Democracies.

April 11 2014, Boston MA

“Millennial Haunting: The Social Life of Ghosts, Shamanism, and Memory against Culture in Postsocialist Mongolia.” Presented at the Annual Meeting of American Ethnological Society Meeting.

April 4 2014, MIT Cambridge MA

“Intellect-*full* Women: Strategies in Running for Parliamentary Elections in Postsocialist Mongolia.” Presentation at the Women and Gender Studies Intellectual Forum.

March 29 2014, Harvard University, Cambridge MA

“Millennial Haunting: The Social Life of Ghosts, Shamanism, and Memory against Culture in Postsocialist Mongolia.” Presented at Hauntology: Anthropological and Psychoanalytic Perspectives. (A special two-day meeting of the Friday Morning Seminar in Culture, Psychiatry and Global Mental Health).

March 27 2014, Philadelphia PA

“Millennial Haunting: The Social Life of Ghosts, Shamanism, and Memory against Culture in Postsocialist Mongolia.” Presentation in a Panel Memory, Narrative, and Violence among Contemporary Mongolians and Mongols on the Margins of Russia and China at the Annual Meeting of the Association for Asian Studies

March 2014, Cambridge MA

“Why is there Cross-Cultural Misunderstanding?” Presentation as part of a workshop on Building Cross-Cultural Awareness, for students doing internships and research abroad. Sponsored by MIT International Science and Technology Initiatives (MISTI).

February 26 2014, UC Santa Barbara

The Social Life of Ghosts: Shamanism, Buddhism, and Counter-Memory in Postsocialist Mongolia. Department of East Asian Languages and Cultural Studies, Buddhist Studies Center and Vesna Wallace Research Fund.

February 24 2014, UC Santa Cruz

“Millennial Haunting: The Social Life of Ghosts, Shamanism, and Memory against Culture in Postsocialist Mongolia.” Department of Anthropology Colloquia

February 14 2014, Harvard University Cambridge MA

“One-Thousand Steps to the Parliament: Femininity, Media, and Women’s Strategies for Gaining Visibility during Parliamentary Elections in Mongolia.” Presentation at the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies.

November 24 2013, Chicago, IL

“Tragic Spirits: shamanism and a production of agency and identity against postsocialist spiritual publics.” A paper presented at the American Anthropological Association at a panel organized together with Sara Shneiderman (Yale University) Spirituality, Secularism and Sovereignty: Forging New Religious Publics in Asia

October 17 2013, Medford MA

“Tragic Spirits: Production of the Past after Socialism in Mongolia.” Guest lecture at a Freshman Seminar by Professor Rosalind Shaw titled: The Presence of the Past. Anthropology Department, Tufts University.

October 3-5 2013, Hamilton Canada.

“One-Thousand Steps to the Parliament: Elections, Media, and Gender in Contemporary Mongolia.” Presentation in Workshop on Political Representation of Women in Asia. McMaster University.

April 26, 2013, MIT Cambridge MA.

Discussant at the Workshop on Sex Trafficking and Technology.

Co-Organizer with Mitali Thakor, Heidy Gonzales, Kim Surkan, and Sally Hasslanger.

April 20, 2013. Columbia University, NYC, NY

“One-Thousand Steps to the Parliament: Elections, Media, and Gender in Contemporary Mongolia.” Presentation at the 18th Annual ASN (Association for the Study of Nationalities) World Convention.

April 17 2013, Boston MA

“People and Culture of Contemporary Mongolia.” A presentation at the 20-20 Investment Association Annual Meeting.

March 8 2013, NYC NY

“One Thousand Border-Crossings: Gender, State, and Parliamentary Elections in Neoliberal Post-socialist Mongolia.” Presentation at the Rethinking the Global: An INTERACT Lecture Series, Columbia University Harriman Institute.

March 6 2013, Cambridge MA

“Exchanging History for Sheep: Remaking Memory after Suppression in Contemporary Mongolia.” A talk at the Burchard Scholars and Faculty Dinner. MIT Faculty Club.

March 2012, Toronto Canada

“Impossibility of Knowing the Past: the politics of silencing after socialism in Mongolia” American Association for Asian Studies Meeting.

April 1 2011, Miami, FL

“Provincializing Neoliberalism through Culture(s).” Conference on Imagining Culture(s), Rethinking Disciplines. University of Miami April 1-2, 2011

March 11 2011, Urbana-Champaign, IL

“Spiritual Economies during Neoliberal Capitalism.” New Postsocialist Ontologies and Politics. The Annual Symposium of SOYUZ, the research network for postsocialist cultural studies. March 11-12, 2011 –University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

May 18 2010, Cambridge UK

“Skimming the cream off the top: why women do not always rule the elections.” Mongolia and Inner Asia Studies Unit. Cambridge University, Cambridge UK, May 18 2010

May 20 2010, Cambridge UK

“Impossibility of Knowing the Past: the politics of silencing after socialism in Mongolia.” Department of Anthropology, Cambridge University

Oct 2009, Boston MA

“The Revival of Shamanic Practices Among the Buryats of Mongolia.” Annual Meeting for Mongolia Society in Boston, American Association for Asian Studies Annual Meeting

November 2008, Vancouver Canada

“Women and Technologies of Election: From the 2008 Parliamentary Elections in Mongolia.” Mongolia Conference, University of British Columbia.

November 2007 Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada

“The Impossibility of knowing the past in post-socialist Mongolia.” Department of Asian Studies, University of British Columbia

Nov 2007, Santa Cruz CA

“The Impossibility of Knowing the Past in Post-Socialist Mongolia.” Presented at the Department of Sociology and Anthropology, University of California

Nov 2007 Burnaby, British Columbia, Canada

“If You Want to Get Something Done, Go to a Woman: Gender, State, and Power in Mongolia.” Simon Frazer University.

Jan 2007, Cambridge MA

“Exchanging History for Sheep: Proliferation of Shamanic Practices in the Aftermath of the Collapse of Socialism in Mongolia.” Presented at the Anthropology Program, Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Nov 2006, San Jose CA

“Raised Corpses: Transformations in the Constituency of the Shamanic Spirit World After Socialism in Mongolia,” American Anthropological Association

Nov 2006, Cambridge MA

"Raised Corpses: Transformations in the Constituency of the Shamanic Spirit World After Socialism in Mongolia," Harvard University East Asian Studies.

March 2006, Paris France

"Celestial Court: Imagining the Nation-State in the Margins of Post-Socialist Mongolia." International Conference on Inner Asian Statecrafts jointly organized by Cambridge University, UK and École pratique des hautes études.

Nov 2005, Waltham MA

"Dialogues on Democracy: 'Yellow Media' and the Internet during Mongolia's 2005 Presidential Election." New England American Association for Asian Studies Annual Conference, Bentley College

Dec 2004, Boston MA

"Healing, Health, and Gender: Strategies and Struggles to Restore Well-Being After Socialism." American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies Annual Meeting,

Oct 2004, Boston MA

"(Un)Protected Individuals: Shamanism and Gendered Survival in a Dangerous Economy of Mongolia." Central Eurasian Annual Association Meeting.

April 2004, Portland OR

"Sacrificing for the Nation? Memory, Fear, and Desire for Sovereignty." Conference for the Society for Cultural Anthropology.

Nov 2003, Chicago IL

"Striking the Balance? Civil Society, Shamanism, and Political Imagination in Mongolia." American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting.

Oct 2003, Cambridge MA

"The Spirits of My Homeland is Recalling Me: Nationalism, Landscape, and Religion Among the Buryats of Mongolia." Central Eurasian Annual Association Meeting, Harvard University.

May 2003, Cambridge, MA.

"Violence, Memory and Moral Community." Conference on Law and Disorder in the Postcolony. Harvard University.

Nov 2002, New Orleans, LA.

"Hidden Exploitation of Women: Making Shamanic Paraphernalia Among the Buryats in Post-Socialist Rural Mongolia." American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting.

Feb 2002, Cambridge, MA

"Where are the Female Shamans? Gender and Political Economy of Post-Socialist Mongolia." Peabody Museum, Harvard University.

Oct 2001, Cambridge MA

“Divine Blacksmiths and Profane Seamstresses: Gender, Power and Merit in Making Shamanic Paraphernalia Among the Buryats of Mongolia.” Center for the Study of World Religions, Harvard University.

November 1997, Boston MA

“Who Makes the Shaman?” Presentation at the Mongolia Society Meeting. The Hynes Convention Center.

May 1996, Washington DC.

“Fire Worship Sutras in Tibetan and Mongolian from Three different periods.” Presentation at the Mongolia Society meeting.

Ethnographic Field Research

2017 Pilot Research on Real Estate and Urban Development, Ulaanbaatar Mongolia (July-August)

2012 Research on Technologies of Elections, Media, and Women’s Participation during Mongolia’s 7th Parliamentary elections. Participant Observation and Interviews, with politicians, candidates, media professionals, and voters in Ulaanbaatar (March-July)

2008 Research on Technologies of Elections, Media, and Women’s Participation during Mongolia’s 6th Parliamentary elections. Participant Observation, Interviews, and Focus Group Interviews with Politicians, Candidates, Media professionals, and Voters in Ulaanbaatar, Darkhan, Erdenet, Tov Aimag and other provinces (January -July)

2007 Participant Observation on Political Decision Making, Role of Women, and Women’s NGOs. (Post-Doctoral Project) Ulaanbaatar Mongolia (June-August)

2006 Research towards book manuscript *Tragic Spirits*: Interviews and Library research on Political Violence in Ulaanbaatar Mongolia (Center for the Study and Rehabilitation of the Victims of False Accusation) (July-August)

1999-2000 Dissertation Research on Shamanic Practices in Mongolia: Participant Observation and Interviews with the Buryats and Buryat Shamans, Dornod Province, Bayan-Uul and Bayan-Dun, Mongolia (August 1999-August 2000)

1998 (Summer) Dissertation Research on Shamanic Practices in Mongolia: Participant Observation and Interviews with the Buryats and Buryat Shamans, Dornod Province, Mongolia (June-August)

1997 Dissertation Research on Shamanic Practices in Mongolia: Participant Observation and Interviews with the Buryats and Buryat Shamans, Dornod Province, Mongolia (June-August)

- 1996 Preliminary Dissertation Research on Shamanic Practices in Mongolia: Participant Observation and Interviews with the Buryats and Buryat Shamans, Ulaanbaatar, Nalaikh, and Dornod Province in Mongolia (June-August)

Professional Activities, Organizations, Services

Manuscript Referee

HAU

JRAI

Ethnography

American Anthropologist

American Ethnologist

Cultural Anthropology

Ethnography

Journal of Royal Anthropological Institute

Journal of Asian Studies

Inner Asia

Ethos

Berg Publishers

Mongolian Studies

Études mongoles & sibériennes, centrasiatiques & tibétaines (EMSCAT)

Area

2024	The University of Arizona Press
2021	Cornell University Press
2019	Fordham University Press
2016	Manuscript Reviewer, Yale University Press
2015	Manuscript reviewer, Cornell University Press
2013-2014	Manuscript Reviewer, Toronto University Press
2011	Manuscript Reviewer, Berg Publishers, University of Hawaii Press
2016 to present	Editorial Board Member, University College London Press book series, <i>Economic Exposures in Asia</i>
2016 to present	Editorial Board Member, Amsterdam University Press book series, <i>North East Asian Anthropologies</i>

LIST OF THESES SUPERVISED

Ph.D.

- 2027
Expected Alisa Sopova, Materiality of War in Ukraine. Princeton U. Anthropology
- 2024 Björn Reichhardt, “Practicing Protection: Spatial Security, Transition, and Uncertainty in Rural Mongolia,” Frieberg University, Switzerland (Co-Advisor).
- 2022 Tyler Adkins, “The Feast that Lasts Forever: Food and Time in an Altai Village,” Anthropology. Princeton University. External Reader.
- 2021 Malthe Lehrmann, “Shadow Wolves: Tragic verticality, a mythopoetic emergence of revolutionary subjects in Mongolia”, Anthropology, Aarhus University, Denmark (External Examiner).
- 2021 Jessica Madison-Pískatá, “In Any Crystalline Land: The Social Geologic in Eastern Mongolia”, Anthropology, University of CA, Santa Cruz. (Committee Member).
- 2020 Elisa Kohl-Garrity, “Khundetgekh Yos: Forms of respect and disregard in Mongolian culture 13th – 21st century,” Social Anthropology, Martin-Luther University and Max-Planck Institute, Germany (External Advisor).
- 2018 Undarya Tumursukh, “Interrogating Women’s Activism in the Age of Neoliberal Democratization in Mongolia”, Anthropology, Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand (External Advisor).
- 2015 Benedikte Moller Kristensen, “Returning to the Forest: Shamanism, History and Landscape among the Duha of Northern Mongolia”, Cross-Cultural and Regional Studies, University of Copenhagen, Denmark, (External Examiner).

M.A.

- 2021 Andrea Shinyoung Kim, “VRChat as Global Village: Techno-Orientalism, Virtuality, and Embodied Performance,” CMS, MIT (Committee Member).
- 2020 Alisa Sopova, “Angry Little Cloud: Civilian Strategies of Resilience in the War Zone in Eastern Ukraine”, Russian and Eurasian Studies, Harvard University (Advisor).

B.S or B.A.

- 2022-2024 Javhlan Amgalanbaatar. Thesis on Mongolian Cashmere, Middlemen, and Environment. Thesis advisor. Social Studies. Harvard University.

- 2020 Lia Hsu-Rodriguez, "Face mask use on Navajo Nation, COVID-19 and health systems in the United States" 21S (Engineering and Humanities) MIT
- 2019 Eric William Koch, "The Frayed Frontier: Implications of the Sixth Dalai Lama's Biography for Qing Control Over Border Provinces During the 18th Century Dzungar-Qing Wars", Humanities, MIT (Committee Member).
- 2004 Celeste Le Compte, "If You Get Your Soil Healthy: Narrative Practice and Community Building in Central Illinois, Social Studies, MIT (Advisor).

Professional Organizations

Mongolia Society
American Center for Mongolian Studies (2020)
American Anthropological Association
American Association for Asian Studies
Association for Cultural Anthropology
Society for East Asian Anthropology,
Association for Anthropology of Religion
Association for Feminist Anthropology
Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies
Society for Urban, National, and Transnational Anthropology

Professional Service (Committees)

- 2025 A Member of the 2025 E. Gene Smith Inner Asia Book Prize Committee. Association for Asian Studies
- 2019 A member on the 2019 Clifford Geertz Prize in The Anthropology of Religion committee
- 2016 Book Prize Committee Chair for Francis Hsu Book Prize for East Asian Anthropology, American Anthropological Association
- June 25 2015 Copenhagen Denmark
University of Copenhagen, Department of Cross-Cultural and Regional Studies. An external examiner for a Ph.D. thesis by Benedikte Moller Kristensen "Returning to the Forest: Shamanism, Landscape and History among the Duha of Northern Mongolia."
- 2014 Panel Organizer, American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting, Panel on "The Art of Electioneering: Interests, Discussions and Agreements in Electoral Competition." Washington DC.

- 2014 Panel Organizer, Annual Meeting of the Association of Asian Studies, Panel on “Memory, Narrative, and Violence among Contemporary Mongolians and Mongols on the Margins of Russia and China.”
- 2013 Panel Organizer with Sara Shneiderman (Yale University), American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting. Panel on “Spirituality, Secularism and Sovereignty: Forging New Religious Publics in Asia.” Chicago IL.
- 2012 Committee Member, Student Prize Committee, Association for Slavic, East European, and Eurasian Studies.
- 2007-2012 Consultant Oral History of 20th c. Mongolia, University of Cambridge. Located and worked closely with the team of interviewers in Mongolia on an ongoing basis. Helped to select the topics and the directions of interviews. Wrote interview summaries and helped to translate interviews and interview summaries. Participated in several workshops during the project in Mongolia as well as the completion workshop at University of Cambridge, UK.
- Nov 2002 Panel Organizer at the American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting, New Orleans, LA. “What Really Matters? On the Crossroads of Gender, Ideology and Everyday Practices.”
- 2000-2001 Curator, Buryat Shamanic paraphernalia, Peabody Museum of Archaeology and Ethnology, Harvard University

MIT ACTIVITIES AND COMMITTEES

Departmental and School Activities and Committees

2026

Search Committee Member, Anthropology Department

A Committee Member for Jim Howe Prize Essay Competition Committee Member

Director, WGS 2025 July-

2025

Director, WGS 2025 July-

WGS Steering Committee Member

A Committee Member for Jim Howe Prize Essay Competition Committee Member

Co-Organized WGS Retreat May 15 2025 with Lerna Ekmekcioglu (Director) and Sana Ayar.

2024

Tenure Promotion Committee Chair for Bettina Stoetzer

Tenure Promotion Committee Member for Amy Moran-Thomas

Curriculum development for 21E (focusing in climate change) with Dr. Lauren Bonilla, MCSC, and Professor Mike Short.

May 2024 Organized Inauguration of the MIT Mongolian Student Association

April 2024 Organized a guest lecture [title] by Elan Abrell. Wesleyan University

A Committee Member for Jim Howe Prize Essay Competition Committee Member

05.10.2024. Guest Judge of Students final course work for Laura Anderson Barbada's class Introduction to Three-Dimensional Art Work: Textiles, Fashion, and Performative Art (Spring 2024)

4.322 U / 4.323 G

04.05. 2024 "Memory, Material Culture, and Shamanism in Mongolia." Guest Lecture in Laura Anderson Barbada's class Introduction to Three-Dimensional Art Work: Textiles, Fashion, and Performative Art (Spring 2024)

4.322 U / 4.323 G

2015 - 2000 Faculty Newsletter Editorial Board

2019 HASTS Graduate Program Admissions Committee

2019 SHASS Education Advisory Committee

2019 Women and Gender Studies Curriculum Committee

2019 Undergraduate Officer (UGOFF)

2018 HASTS Colloquium Series (Computational Culture and Democracy)

2018 SHASS Faculty Diversity Committee

2018 Department Representative for MIT Diversity Initiative

2018 Minor Adviser

2018 James Howe Prize Committee

2018 Academic Advisor for Anthropology (Attended CAP meetings)

2018 Faculty Newsletter Editorial Board

2018 HASTS Graduate Program Admissions Committee

2018 Undergraduate Officer

2017	SHASS Faculty Diversity Committee
2017	Presentation about Anthropology Department to the prospective graduate students during HASTS Visiting Day
2016	Undergraduate Officer (UGOFF) shared with Amy Moran-Thomas
2016	Departmental Representative; Graduate Student Colloquium
2016	Academic Advisor for Anthropology (Attended CAP meetings)
2016	James Howe Prize Committee
2014	Course development of “How Culture Works” for Singapore University of Design and Technology (SUTD)
2014	Faculty liaison for MIT-Mongolia Program
2014	James Howe Prize Committee
2013	Organizing Committee, MIT Symposium on Sex Trafficking and Technology, sponsored by Women’s and Gender Studies
2012-2013	Steering Committee Member, Women’s and Gender Studies
2011	Undergraduate Officer
2010-2011	Women’s and Gender Studies Curriculum and Programming Committee

Educational Commons

2025-2026	Supervisor for Iselle Barrios on Anthro-Engineering Project with MIT NSE Department
2024	Faculty Mentor for Professor Burenjargala, Anthropology, Inner Mongolia National University. China.
2024	Faculty Mentor for Dr. Lauren Bonilla
2024	UROP co-advisor with Prof. Mike Short (fall semester) and Dr. Lauren Bonilla (spring semester) for Iselle Barrios
2016	Anthropology Concentration Advisor
2016	Anthropology Minor Advisor
2015	Concentration Advisor, Anthropology
2013-2014	Faculty Mentor for Mellon Postdoctoral Fellow, Maria Vidart-Delgado
2013-2014	Student Events Coordinator
2012-2014	Concentration Advisor, Asian and Asian Diaspora Studies
2012-2014	Minor Advisor, Anthropology
2009	Undergraduate Curriculum Officer, Anthropology

Languages: Fluent in Mongolian, Russian, and English

Classes Taught

MIT

Anthro-Engineering: Decarbonization at the Million-Person Scale (co-taught with Prof. Mike Short at NSE, MIT)

Meaning of Life

Virtual and Other Realities

Ethnography and Fieldwork

Memory Culture and Forgetting

How Culture Works

Slavery and Human Trafficking in the 21st Century

Dragon Ladies and Lotus Blossoms: Images of Asian Women

Cultures of East-Asia

God, Violence and Media

Harvard University

Modernity of Shamanisms

Introduction to Anthropology

Junior Seminars