

The opulent, delicate and handcrafted Indian fashion pieces resemble the white lotus, India's national flower. The lotus too, with its beauty, grows out of the mud, mud that remains invisible and hidden.

What have the contemporary Indian spectacular fashion shows in common with the Western nineteenth century department store fantasy palaces, the royal durbars, the elaborate museum displays of the colonial era and the lives of erstwhile Indian royals?

What can Delhi International Airport reveal about the current obsession of Indians with Indianness, the 'local' and the refashioning of India for the global audience? How does the 'royal chic' — the current trend in luxury Indian haute couture that recreates the splendor of the aristocratic lifestyles of the bygone era — depend on poverty for its visual and material existence?

Why does the Indian government invest in the Northeast Indian fashion scene and into the production of ethnic glamour and tribal chic? How do the glamour seeking Kerala Muslim women appropriate the sexy Bollywood fashions while still retaining their codes of modesty? How do the world of Delhi and its fashion designers look from the perspective of the village craftswomen that work for them, mock them and laugh at them and their hectic life? What is the science and artisanship behind the production of traditional Kolhapuri sandals, turned into luxury items for the international consumer? Finally, how do Bollywood cinema and the changing male fashion and body ideals reflect the transforming India?

This anthology, written by an international group of anthropologists with hands-on experience from India and its multi-faceted fashion industry, explores the underlying dynamics of spectacular capitalism. The authors present a range of intriguing case studies that open up the potential for critique of the local as much as global system that reproduces hierarchies and inequalities, while providing us with a window into contemporary urban India.

This book explores a little known world of Indian fashion, stretching from traditional craftsmanship in the remote villages to the glamorous jet-set life of the elites – a world full of creativity and sexuality but also of hierarchy, injustice and exploitation. An astonishing book.

Professor Rane Willerslev – Aarhus University

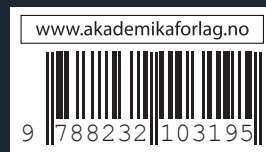


Photo: Kirsten Jensen Helgeland, Museum of Cultural History

Tereza Kuldova is a researcher and curator at the Museum of Cultural History, University of Oslo and has recently submitted her PhD thesis, *Designing Elites: Fashion and Prestige in Urban North India*, internationally one of the first academic explorations into the relation between fashion, luxury, craft, wealth, consumption and poverty in India. Tereza has been published on Indian fashion, craft, erotic masquerades, and the urban Indian male, among other topics.



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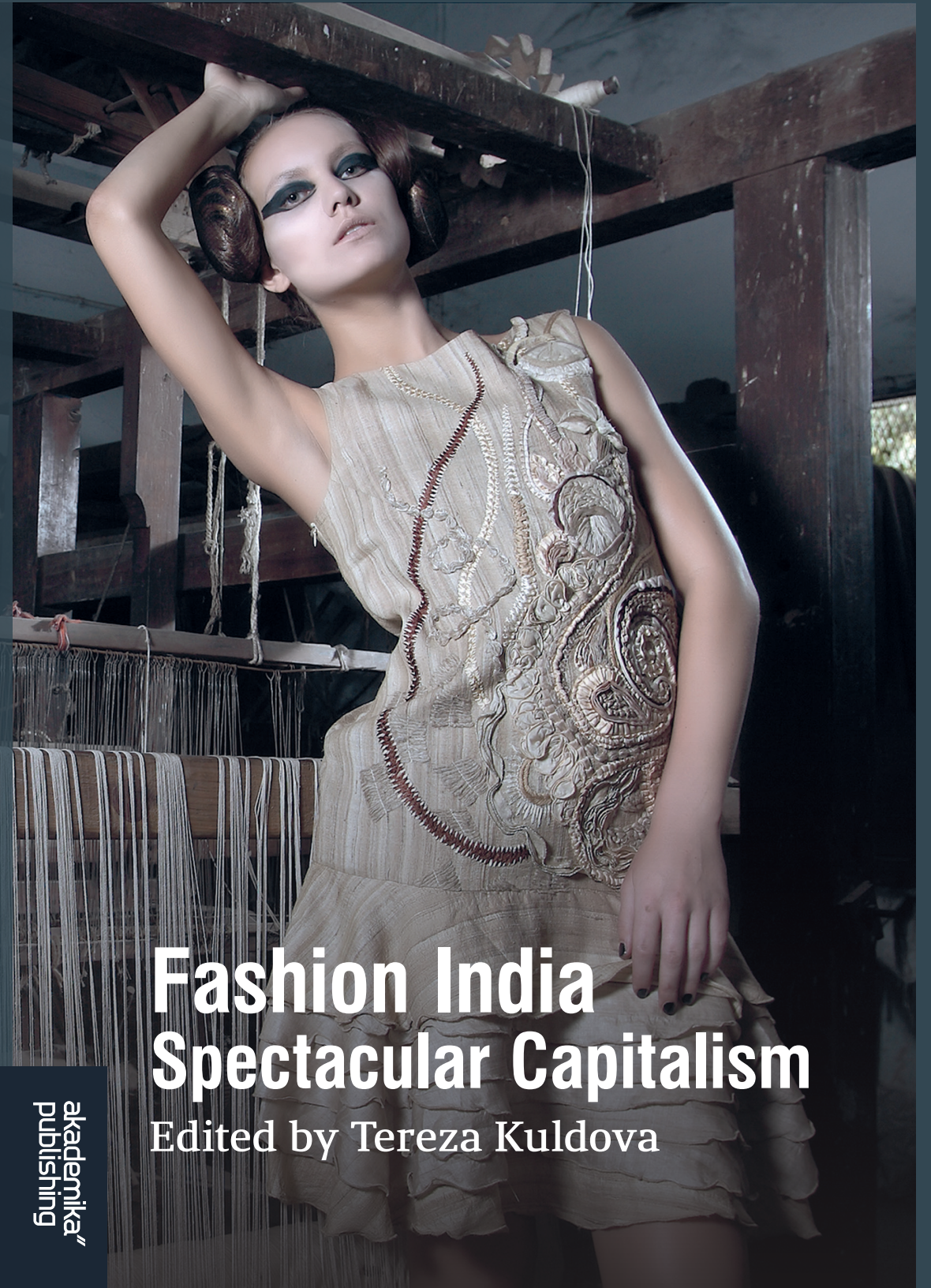


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Fashion India: Spectacular Capitalism | Tereza Kuldova (Ed.)



Fashion India Spectacular Capitalism

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