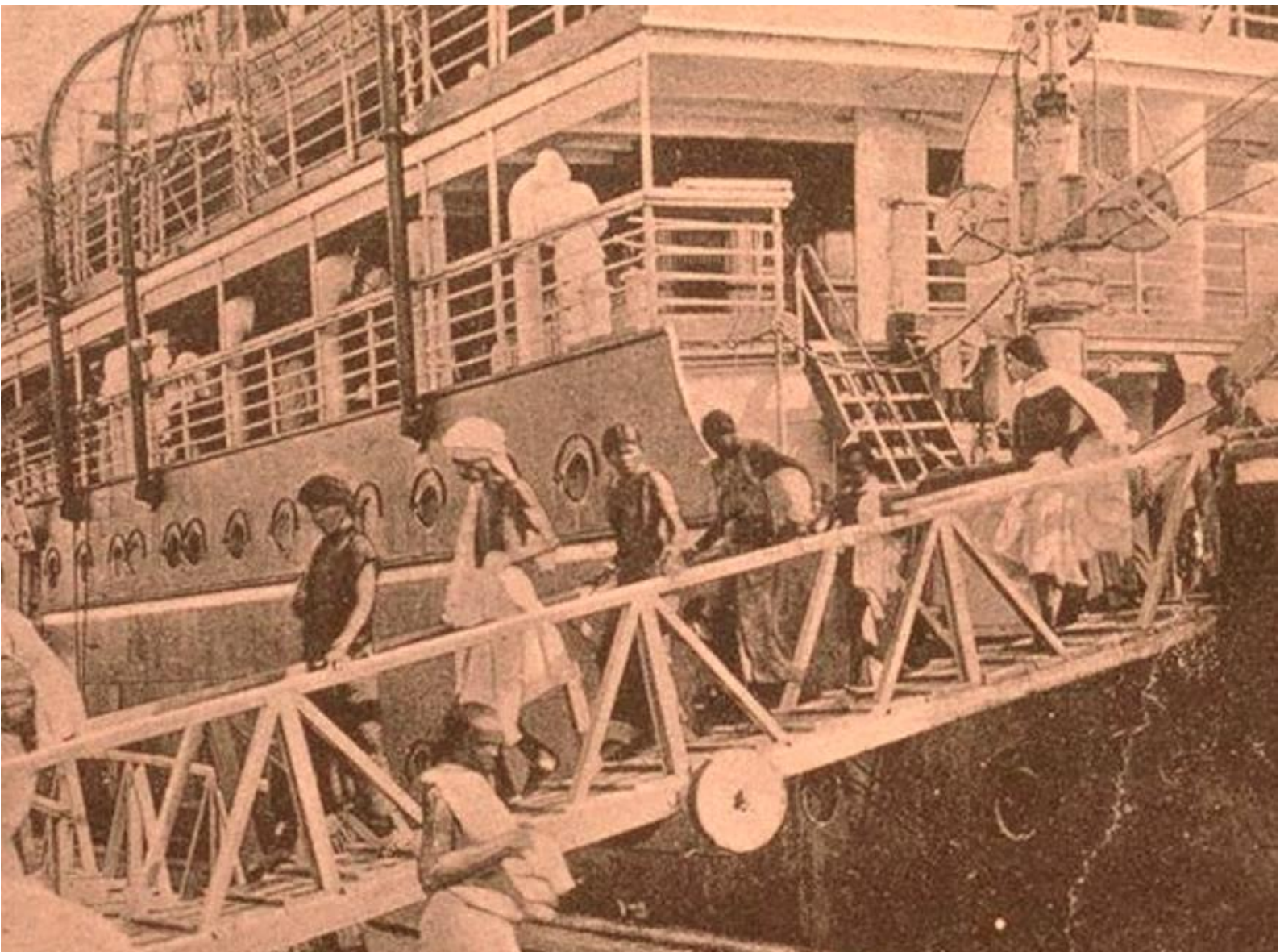


Gender Perspectives on Colonial Inter-Asian Labour Migration

9-10 February 2017, AS8 Level 4



Arrival of Migrant Coolies Penang
Source: National Archives of Singapore, Photograph Archives

Asian labour has played a foundational role in building the modern world of global capitalism around the world. While migration of Asian labour under various Empires to Caribbean, Africa, North America have attracted substantial scholarly attention, the labour networks and histories of Asian labour migration within Asia, past and present, have only begun to attract attention in the recent years. Inspiring work by historians of Indian Ocean Studies have deepened our knowledge on how Asian labour and slaves were circulated within the Indian Ocean region, and how these labour migration networks shaped the larger working of Empires. While labour migration has emerged as a central focus in the colonial history of the Indian Ocean, little of the existing scholarship has addressed the crucial role, which gender played in determining labour migration and network patterns. Gender-based roles and concerns have surfaced in these studies, but they have not been the focus of attention. On the other hand, postcolonial gender historians have inspired our understanding of how gender has been constitutive for imperial projects, but gender as an influence in labour migration has not been the focus of attention for these studies. This conference aims to contribute to the two fields of study mentioned above – Indian Ocean Labour Studies, and Gender and Empire, by focusing on the protean ways in which gender and colonialism mutually constituted and changed labour migration experiences and relationships.

This conference will examine the crucial role gender played in – framing colonial labour migration policies, labour expectations, or even in the creation of certain sites of ‘empowerment,’ contradiction and resistance, which offered fleeting agency to some labourers. The conference will focus on the history of Asian migrant labourers, which include but are not limited to – wage labourers, domestic labourers/workers, “non-labour” migrants. The conference aims to (re)visit and (re)conceptualize colonial labour migration networks and migrant labour experiences using gendered lenses of inquiry. It looks forward to revealing connections between gender, colonial policies concerning labour migration, the importance of various ‘spaces’ within migrant labour communities and construction of insidious stereotypes regarding migrant labour communities. Through inter-disciplinary panels, this conference aims to: First, create a dialogue between colonial pasts shared by Asian societies and second investigate how colonial legacies continue to influence present trends of labour migration and labour experiences. In doing so, the conference envisions a worthwhile contribution to the burgeoning field of inter-Asian studies and to create an alternative to the Eurocentric perspective of Asian labour.

CONVENOR

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9 FEBRUARY 2017 (THURSDAY)

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|---------------|---|
| 09:30 – 09:45 | REGISTRATION |
| 09:45 – 10:00 | WELCOME REMARKS |
| 09:45 | JONATHAN RIGG, <i>National University of Singapore</i> ARUNIMA DATTA, <i>National University of Singapore</i> |
| 10:00 – 11:30 | KEYNOTE ADDRESS |
| Chairperson | MAITRII V. AUNG-THWIN, <i>National University of Singapore</i> |
| 10:00 | “Goodbye Darling, I Have to Get to the Ship”: Sailors and Prostitutes in Asia’s Port Cities BARBARA WATSON ANDAYA, <i>University of Hawai’i, USA</i> |
| 11:00 | Questions & Answers |
| 11:30 – 12:00 | TEA BREAK |
| 12:00 – 13:10 | PANEL 1 – (RE)CONCEIVING LABOUR MIGRATION PATTERNS |
| Chairperson | DANIEL J.R. GREY, <i>Plymouth University, UK</i> |
| Discussant | RICHARD B. ALLEN, <i>Framingham State University, USA</i> |
| 12:00 | Working with <i>Uba</i> : Gender, Nature and Risk in Early 20 th Century Mauritius ROB ROUPHAIL, <i>University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA</i> |
| 12:20 | A Male Sea and a Migrant Society of Men: Colonialism and the Indian Labour Migration to the Persian Gulf in the 20 th Century NISHA MATHEW, <i>National University of Singapore</i> |
| 12:40 | Discussant’s Comments |
| 12:50 | Questions & Answers |
| 13:10 – 14:10 | LUNCH |
| 14:10 – 15:40 | PANEL 2 – LABOUR INTIMACIES |
| Chairperson | RICHARD B. ALLEN, <i>Framingham State University, USA</i> |
| Discussant | DANIEL J.R. GREY, <i>Plymouth University, UK</i> |
| 14:10 | The Criminal Tribes: Gender, Domesticity and the Problem of Migration in Colonial India JESSICA HINCHY, <i>Nanyang Technological University, Singapore</i> |
| 14:30 | Wives, Widows, and Concubines: Migration, Family Law, and Chinese Transnational Households in the Straits Settlements, 1870-1930 SANDY F. CHANG, <i>University of Texas at Austin, USA</i> |
| 14:50 | Violence “They” Wrote: Representing Indian Coolie Intimacies in British Malaya ARUNIMA DATTA, <i>National University of Singapore</i> |
| 15:10 | Discussant’s Comments |
| 15:20 | Questions & Answers |
| 15:40 – 16:10 | TEA BREAK |

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| 16:10 – 17:40 | PANEL 3 – SEXUALITIES & “BODY” POLITICS |
| <i>Chairperson</i> | JESSICA HINCHY , <i>Nanyang Technological University, Singapore</i> |
| <i>Discussant</i> | KAMALINI RAMDAS , <i>National University of Singapore</i> |
| 16:10 | Migrating Remedies and the Gendered Body in 1930s Malaya FAIZAH BINTE ZAKARIA , <i>Yale University, USA</i> |
| 16:30 | Women in the Middle of the Wild Life in the East Sumatra Plantation, 1880-1940 MAIZA ELVIRA , <i>Andalas University, Indonesia</i> |
| 16:50 | “Destined for a Life of Prostitution?”: Colonialism, Gender and Sexuality in Labour Migration from Coastal Andhra to Burma PRAVEENA KODOTH , <i>Centre for Development Studies, India</i> |
| 17:10 | Discussant’s Comments |
| 17:20 | Questions & Answers |
| 17:40 | END OF DAY 1 |
| 17:50 – 20:00 | CONFERENCE DINNER (For Speakers, Discussants & Invited Guests) |

| 10 FEBRUARY 2017 (FRIDAY) | |
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| 09:30 – 09:45 | REGISTRATION |
| 09:45 – 11:15 | PANEL 4 – ALTERNATIVE HISTORIES |
| <i>Chairperson</i> | LAI LEI KUAN RONGDAO , <i>National University of Singapore</i> |
| <i>Discussant</i> | BRENDA S.A. YEOH , <i>National University of Singapore</i> |
| 09:45 | “What Made You Decide to Focus on Women in Your Work?”: Listening for Gendered Stories of Colonial Migration in Archived Oral History Interviews of Singapore DANIEL J.R. GREY , <i>Plymouth University, UK</i> |
| 10:05 | Revisiting the Early History of South Asians in Colonial Hong Kong RUDOLPH NG , <i>University of London, UK</i> |
| 10:25 | Discussant’s Comments |
| 10:35 | Questions & Answers |
| 10:55 – 11:25 | TEA BREAK |
| 11:25 – 12:55 | PANEL 5 – LABOURING THROUGH WAR |
| <i>Chairperson</i> | NISHA MATHEW , <i>National University of Singapore</i> |
| <i>Discussant</i> | PAUL H. KRATOSKA , <i>National University of Singapore</i> |
| 11:25 | Japanese Total War System, War Mobilisation and Migration: The Case of Comfort Women YASUKO HASSALL KOBAYASHI , <i>Osaka University, Japan</i> |
| 11:45 | Korean Comfort Women in Okinawa: From Japanese to American Military Sexual Slavery CAROLINE NORMA , <i>RMIT University, Australia</i> |
| 12:05 | Gender and Slave Labor in World War II: Romusha and Ianfu in Japanese Occupied Southeast Asia FRANK DHONT , <i>University of Brunei Darussalam</i> |
| 12:25 | Discussant’s Comments |
| 12:35 | Questions & Answers |
| 12:55 – 13:55 | LUNCH |

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| 13:55 – 15:25 | PANEL 6 – PAST CONTINUITIES |
| <i>Chairperson</i> | PRAVEENA KODOTH , <i>Centre for Development Studies, India</i> |
| <i>Discussant</i> | TERESITA CRUZ-DEL ROSARIO , <i>National University of Singapore</i> |
| 13:55 | Gender Perspectives on Labour Migration from Vietnam to Other Asian Countries, France and Beyond Under the Colonial Domination VU NGOC BINH , <i>Institute for Population, Family and Children Studies, Vietnam</i> |
| 14:15 | Gender, Labour and Migration: The Punjabi Diaspora in the Formation of Sarawak, Malaysia PARVEEN KAUR , <i>University Malaysia Sarawak</i> |
| 14:35 | Discussant's Comments |
| 14:45 | Questions & Answers |
| 15:05 – 15:35 | TEA BREAK |
| 15:35 – 16:20 | SPECIAL LECTURE |
| <i>Chairperson</i> | VINEETA SINHA , <i>National University of Singapore</i> |
| 15:35 | Colonial Labour Migration and the Tyranny of the Particular RICHARD B. ALLEN , <i>Framingham State University, USA</i> |
| 16:05 | Questions & Answers |
| 16:20 – 16:45 | ROUNDTABLE & CLOSING REMARKS |
| 16:20 | BRENDA S.A. YEOH , <i>National University of Singapore</i> ARUNIMA DATTA , <i>National University of Singapore</i> |
| 16:45 | END OF CONFERENCE |

“Goodbye Darling, I Have to Get to the Ship”: Sailors and Prostitutes in Asia’s Port Cities

Barbara Watson Andaya
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The contributions to this conference have opened up new and exciting ways of thinking about the labour mobility of men and women in the Asian region during the colonial period. It is evident that motivations for this movement varied widely, being sometimes spontaneous, sometimes carefully planned, sometimes entirely voluntary but often the result of forcible recruitment. While a number of papers show that a major shift in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was the greater movement of women as workers, the mobility of men also increased dramatically. To a considerable extent this reflected the growth of Asia’s port cities and the expansion of communication networks, both by land and sea. However, we must be wary of associating this increased labour migration primarily to the dynamics of colonial policies, for the history of inter-Asian movement has deeper roots. This keynote address focuses on two areas where continuity and change can be tracked from the early modern period into late colonialism and even beyond. Often called “the world’s oldest profession,” female prostitution was characterised by mobility (often enforced, but also willing) between and within Asian regions from early times. The men who sought their services, and sometimes lived with them in temporary marriages, were frequently sailors, themselves highly mobile. In emphasising the importance of historical context, this presentation uses port cities as an entry point to highlight the continuities and changes in these two migratory occupations.

Barbara Watson ANDAYA (BA Sydney, MA Hawaii, PhD Cornell) is Professor and Chair of Asian Studies at the University of Hawaii. Between 2003 and 2010 she was Director of the Center for Southeast Asian Studies and in 2005-06 she was President of the American Association of Asian Studies. In 2000 she received a John Simon Guggenheim Award, and in 2010 she received the University of Hawaii Regents Medal for Excellence in Research. She has lived and taught in Malaysia, Australia, New Zealand, Indonesia, the Netherlands, and the United States. Her specific area of expertise is the western Malay-Indonesia archipelago, but she maintains an active teaching and research interest across all Southeast Asia. Her most recent book (with Leonard Y. Andaya) is *A History Early Modern Southeast Asia* (Cambridge University Press, 2015). Her present project is a history of religious interaction in Southeast Asia, 1511-1800.

Working with *Uba*: Gender, Nature, and Risk in Early 20th Century Mauritius

Rob Roupail

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The vast majority of Indo-Mauritian agricultural workers in early twentieth century Mauritius lived in a state of chronic poverty and political exclusion. In the middle of 1937, however, field labourers and small planters (many small planters were often also labourers) confronted Franco-Mauritian owners of the large estates. These estates were where many rural families both worked and sold the small amounts of cane they produced. Angered in part by a cut to the prices paid for *Uba*, the cane variety most used by small planters, these labourers took political matters into their own hands. Many stopped work, some marched on the estates, and a few were tragically killed.

Worker testimonies reveal two concerns at the heart of this political action: the economic vulnerability of their families and the price paid for *Uba*. Through an analysis of these labourer interviews and by reading the colonial archive “against the grain,” this examination argues that the family and *Uba* were constituent parts of political economy of Indo-Mauritian risk mitigation. The family divided the burden of domestic labour and wage earning. Similarly, *Uba* was ideal for small planters because it was cheap to plant and maintain. It was also resilient to disease and the winds of cyclones. A focus on these two analytical spaces—gender and nature—illuminates the gendered and racialized political spaces of diaspora specific to the ecological space of Mauritius. In so doing it situates Mauritius as an important site for understanding histories of Asian community(ies) throughout the Indian Ocean.

Rob ROUPHAIL is a PhD Candidate in African, Indian Ocean, and Environmental history at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. His professional interests are in the relationship between race, gender, and the natural world in East Africa, Asia, and the Indian Ocean. His dissertation, tentatively entitled *Disastrous Modernities: Risk, Race, and Community in Mauritius 1908-1980*, aims to understand the ways in which the risks posed by the landfall of tropical cyclones reshaped the social and cultural history of Mauritius, an island in Africa's Indian Ocean. It suggests that these landfalls were moments of economic, political, and social uncertainty, and that imperial efforts to navigate and mitigate this uncertainty produced normative ideas about gender, race and belonging that were both embraced and challenged by Mauritius' diverse population. Beyond this project, he is interested in Afro-Asian political history, decolonization, and the making of the "Third World".

A Male Sea and a Migrant Society of Men: Colonialism and the Indian Labour Migration to the Persian Gulf in the 20th Century

Nisha Mathew

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Contemporary patterns of male dominated labour migration from India, or South Asia to the Persian Gulf were set during the late colonial period and against the backdrop of the Second World War. Unlike indentured labour migration to plantation colonies defined and regulated by the colonial state in India, migration to the Persian Gulf was relatively unstructured, on a much smaller scale and undertaken in the private capacity of individuals. It was a customary sojourn of men leaving for the hajj, peddling their wares and offering their services to merchants, sheikhs and British oil companies, banks and other institutions in a punctuated historical continuity of earlier practices, than a migration designed to serve the needs of imperial capital or the colonial establishment. This mobility, in many ways heroic and daring, was enabled by the surging 'dhow' traffic in the region and restricted almost entirely, to men. Where there were steamers, they transported men again, in the capacity of soldiers to fight on the war front in Iraq. Indian women travelled less as spouses of merchants and pilgrims than as servants and caretakers of European families, their elderly and children—a pattern reflected in the design and spatial organisation of cabins and berths in British India steamers plying the Gulf line. The paper probes the gender dimensions of Indian, or South Asian mobility to the Persian Gulf through the analytic of labour and its meaning in the specific context of colonialism within this geography. It historicises the transformation of the Persian Gulf into 'a male sea' against such developments as the abolition of slavery as well as the creation of a pearl economy and its entrenchment within a global market, illustrating how the gendered structures of migration emerging during the times continues well into the present. It shows how labour and the social reproduction of labour in the Persian Gulf have, since the colonial period, been geographically and therefore politically alienated from its territory—a characteristic explaining how the new oil states have been successfully able to prevent naturalisation of migrant labour as citizens and stake holders within their societies.

Nisha MATHEW is Muhammad Alagil Postdoctoral Fellow in Arabia Asia Studies within the Inter-Asia Engagements Cluster at the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore. Dr Mathew received her PhD in History from Wits University, Johannesburg in 2014. Her dissertation, *Understanding Space, Politics and History in the Making of Dubai, A Global City*, is a commercial history of the city explored through the complex interface of commodity, capital and community across the Indian Ocean from the 19th to the 21st century. Her research interests include gold, money, mobility and the contours of the Indian Ocean after empire.

The Criminal Tribes: Gender, Domesticity and the Problem of Migration in Colonial India

Jessica Hinchy

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Through an exploration of colonial efforts to control the mobility of marginalised people in India, this paper argues that a focus on 'short-distance' migration across land adds to our understanding of gender, migration and labour in Asia. In 1947, on the eve of Independence, almost thirteen million subjects of the British Raj were officially 'notified' as 'criminal tribes'. In the dominant colonial narrative, the criminal tribes were hereditary criminals by caste occupation and 'wandering' people. From 1871 until 1947, members of the criminal tribes were subject to a range of surveillance and punitive measures, including: police registration; a pass system that controlled their mobility; regular roll calls at police stations; coerced labour; and in some cases, forced migration to settlements. This paper begins by examining the patterns of migration within communities labelled 'criminal tribes'. Though the colonisers usually depicted the criminal tribes as 'wanderers,' this criminalising category included communities that were generally sedentary or migrated periodically and seasonally within the subcontinent. How did the British colonisers, as well as middle class Indians, understand the mobility of the criminal tribes in gendered ways? The second half of the paper explores the efforts of the colonial government in north India to police the criminal tribes, focusing particularly upon police measures to control criminal tribe mobility and transform and harness criminal tribe labour. I argue that an attention to the intimate lives of the criminal tribes deepens and alters our understanding of this wide-reaching colonial project and its impacts on marginalised peoples. Colonial efforts to manage migration patterns and labour also involved efforts to transform gender norms, sexual relations and domestic arrangements.

Jessica HINCHY's research investigates gender, sexuality and criminal law in colonial India. This research has been published in journals such as *Gender & History* and *Asian Studies Review*. Her book project examines the colonial regulation of gender and sexuality through a microhistory of the transgender *hijra* community in North India. After she received her PhD from the Australian National University in 2013, she relocated to Singapore, where she is an Assistant Professor in History at Nanyang Technological University.

**Wives, Widows, and Concubines:
Migration, Family Law, and Chinese Transnational Households
in the Straits Settlements, 1870-1930**

Sandy F. Chang

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This paper explores the history of Chinese female migrations across the South China Sea (Nanyang) to colonial Malaya as wives, domestic bondservants, and sex workers. At the turn of the century, modern migration control first developed as a system of racial and gender exclusion, tightly controlling Asian mobility into the British Empire. While the colonial government in Malaya monitored and circumscribed the movement of Chinese male laborers, it selectively encouraged Chinese female settlement in its territories. Why were Chinese female migrants subjected to a different mode of colonial surveillance and regulation than their male counterparts? How were these uneven policy impulses reflective of the colonial state's gendered preoccupations with laboring bodies and border management in British Asia? Drawing on immigration and marriage records, ship logs, and government proceedings, my research attends to the historical relationship between sexual economy and migration control. It revises a long-standing historiographical tradition that casts Chinese male sojourners as emblematic of migrations to Southeast Asia. Instead, I reposition Chinese females as central to our understanding of colonial border control and labor mobility in this region. By foregrounding the prominence of female labor in inter-Asian migrations – one that attends to the affective, immaterial, and intimate forms of work performed by migrant women – “Across of the Nanyang” contributes to interdisciplinary debates on migration, gender and sexuality, and imperial citizenship.

Sandy F. CHANG is a PhD Candidate at the University of Texas at Austin, where she specializes in the history of the British Empire in Asia. Her research interests include migration and sex trafficking, gender and sexuality, Chinese diaspora, and inter-Asian connections. Her dissertation project has received support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation, the Institute of New Economic Thinking (INET), and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC). At UT Austin, she has served as the coordinator for the *Symposium on Gender, History, and Sexuality* and as a special sections editor of the *E3W Journal of Book Reviews*. Prior to her graduate training, she worked as a Director of Teaching Administration for an international English school in Taiwan.

Violence “They” Wrote: Representing Indian Coolie Intimacies in British Malaya

Arunima Datta

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Recently literature has been flourishing on the manipulation of sex, sentiment and domestic arrangements in the making of the Empire. Yet, this body of scholarship remains limited by its preoccupation with relations between European men and “native” women, rendering some bodies and relations more relevant than others. Colonial construction of migrant Indian coolie households often depicts coolie women as burdened and passive victims of skewed ‘native’ patriarchy, while coolie men have been presented as irresponsible and violent partners. Further, the coolie house has frequently been showcased as a troubled space, regularly infested with physical abuse and even murder of coolie women by their men. Such sweeping depictions homogenized all coolie women into a single category of ‘victims’ and likewise all coolie men as perpetrators of violence against their wives. In doing so, the colonial constructions of coolie households and intimate relations amongst coolies disregard the diverse designs of coolie households and the plethora of relations coolie men and women engaged in within their households. This paper explores such neglected intimacies of Indian coolie households in British Malaya. It illuminates the struggles of women and men linked by complicated marital and material partnerships. At the same time, it raises questions about the colonial purpose in exhibiting the coolie households and judging the coolies and the crimes committed within domestic spaces of coolie houses on the grounds of Victorian morality, whereas the reality of the living space offered to coolies was far removed from the ideal structures of ‘morality’ and private housing. While violence occurred from time to time in coolie households, they were not necessarily because of marital issues, nor were the perpetrators of violence always coolie men. Such generalized depictions silence realities wherein, both coolie men and women – as husbands and wives often engaged in collaborative and enterprising efforts to ensure better living standards for the family. By critically analyzing everyday lives of coolie men and women, particularly their roles and relations in household work and socialization activities, this paper offers a balanced understanding of the complicated intimacies within coolie households and the estate societies. In the process, the study complicates the simplistic depiction of coolie relations within coolie households in Colonial and Indian nationalist discourses.

Arunima DATTA is a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore (NUS) and simultaneously lectures at the South Asian Program, NUS. Datta received her PhD in Southeast Asian Studies from NUS and maintains an active interest in the related fields of Asian history/studies, women’s and gender history, race, gender and sexuality studies, colonial and postcolonial studies. She has authored few articles on colonial law, Indian coolie women in Malaya and Japanese Occupation. She is currently working on two new book projects, concerning: *Indian Coolie Women in Malaya*; *Indian Travelling Ayahs in Britain*. Datta serves as Assistant Editor of the *Journal of Malaysian Branch of Royal Asiatic Society* and is also a member of the editorial board of *Asian Journal of Social Science Studies*.

Migrating Remedies and the Gendered Body in 1930s Malaya

Faizah Binte Zakaria

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The development of the tin mining industry and corresponding influx of Chinese migrants in colonial Malaya has been fairly well documented in historical literature. Less studied, however, are the growth of auxiliary enterprises from Chinese tin mining settlements and their attendant social impact. This paper addresses that gap by focusing on one such connection between migration, market and families. It examines how Chinese traditional remedies travelled to British Malaya via tin mining settlements and expanded their markets to the non-Chinese population. Such products were pitched for Malay families in gendered ways that changed how Malay families perceived the male, female and children's bodies. Thus, this analysis builds on a critique of JS Furnivall's plural societies model and positions itself within emerging literature on how gendered bodies are enmeshed in networks of power by exploring how the medical marketplace also reshapes social worlds. By tracking the advertisements of Chinese tradition-based medicine companies in *Saudara*, the largest circulating Malay language newspaper in Penang during the 1930s, I argue that such remedies connects the well-being of migrants' families with that of their hosts. Through an analysis of the appeal of the new medical products to the Malays and their knock-on effects to the trade of traditional Malay medicine, a new picture emerges where intertwined connections between entrepreneurs, coolies and consumers extended beyond plurality and conflict. The outgrowth of medical enterprises from a Chinese-dominated tin industry suggests a dense, symbiotic flow of funds and ideas that reshaped her private sphere and the bodies of the host community.

Faizah Binte Zakaria is a PhD Candidate in the Department of History at Yale University, on track for graduation in 2017. Her primary field of interest is in modern Southeast Asia, with strong secondary interests in modern China and global environmental history. Prior to coming to the United States, she has studied in the National University of Singapore and obtained a B.Sc (Hons) in Mathematics and an MA in Southeast Asian Studies. Her dissertation research, tentatively titled "Sacred Ecologies: Conversion, Migration and the Environment in the North Sumatran Highlands, 1800 to 1928" seeks to train a historical lens at how religion drives the social metabolism of migration in Sumatra during the long nineteenth century. She examines Batak communities in Sumatra and their diasporas in British Malaya as well as other part of the Dutch East Indies through family histories of migrations. Her research has been supported by the Henry Luce Macmillan Center International Dissertation Research Grant, the Tan Ean Kiam Scholarship for the Humanities and Charles Kao Fund Research Grant, among others.

Women in the Middle of the Wild Life in the East Sumatra Plantation, 1880-1940

Maiza Elvira

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Since the enactment of *Koeli Ordonantie* (labor ordinance) in 1880 by the Dutch colonial government, especially in large estates on the east coast Sumatra began to open up opportunities influx of Javanese and Chinese women were employed as agricultural laborers. Many of those who followed her husband to work on the plantations. The presence of women on plantations used by the planters to create entertainment for male workers because so many workers who escaped from plantation. The planters finally makes a variety of entertainment events such as the night market which contains a variety of *Ronggeng* for Javanese workers, gambling, cockfighting, opium shop especially in those days workers receive their salary. Various events that make workers were able to spend their salary to enjoy the entertainment, and the planters with their kindness give them a loan to have fun. This situation is not only beneficial for the planters, but also for women who are on the plantation. Women workers finally have a double job as a laborer by day, and as prostitutes at night. Many wives who left her husband because of dissatisfaction in economic terms, and become a prostitutes. This situation raises a new problem for the planters because an outbreak of venereal disease in the plantation. According to the archives of the labor organization of Dutch colonial government report said that in 1920-1940 syphilis infection became champion in the plantation area of Sumatra. This study uses the archive as the main ingredient to get the data. The archive is derived from *Koloniaal Verslag, Verslag voor Geneeskundige, Verslag van den Dienst van Arbeidinspectie, Tijdschrift voor Geneeskundige, report of Deli Planter Vereniging and Memorie van Overgave*, as well as books and other support.

Maiza ELVIRA decided to study a Master's Degree at the Department of Historical Science, Andalas University, after completing her Bachelor's Degree at the Department of Political Science. Her Master's thesis talked about an outbreaks of disease in East Sumatra's plantation 1880-1942. Now, she works in History Department of Andalas University, West Sumatra Indonesia as a lecturer. The focus of her research is on disease outbreaks in the colonial period in Indonesia.

**“Destined for a Life of Prostitution?”:
Colonialism, Gender and Sexuality in Labour Migration from Coastal Andhra to Burma**

Praveena Kodoth

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Only around one fifth of Telugu labour migrants to Burma were women in the early 20th century. Unlike indentured migration, where the state employed policy instruments like a quota for women to impose a sex ratio, women migrated to Burma in less regulated ways through personal connections and intermediaries. Recent work on South Indian labour migration to Burma suggests that women’s labour migration was occasioned largely by the dearth of women to provide sexual and domestic services to working class men and that all poor women migrants were subject to stigma on account of this. Perspectives that gained visibility under colonialism (whether that of the state, missionaries or nationalists) framed women migrants as essentially ‘low caste’ and single women’s migration as a threat to families and as shameful. These frameworks precipitated a dichotomy in viewing women labour migrants as either illicit sexual agents or victims of irrepressible male sexual desire. Using gender as a critical perspective, I wish to problematise the discourse of sexuality that colonial and nationalist perspectives on labour migration gave visibility to. The paper will revisit scholarship on labour mobility from South India to Burma to probe the construction of a gendered discourse and use material generated through field work in the Godavari region (about migration to Burma, Bombay and the Middle East) to reflect on how colonial labour mobility opened up multiple and transgressive spaces for women from the socially disadvantaged castes and had implications for later mobility.

Praveena KODOTH is an Associate Professor at the Centre for Development Studies, Trivandrum, India. Her training was in economics but in her research and teaching she has drawn upon perspectives from history and anthropology. Her current research on gender, state and mobility focuses on women’s overseas migration from Kerala and Andhra Pradesh as domestic workers and in allied tasks. She has analysed the intersecting influence of class, caste and patriarchy in the systemic production of invisibility of poor women migrant workers from the historically disadvantaged social groups and am interested in the clustering of women migrants in specific regions in the context of adverse state policy. Some of this material has been published in the *Interdisciplinary Journal of Economics*, 2016, *CDS Working Paper*, 2014 and in edited volumes (forthcoming). She has worked on matchmaking in contemporary Kerala and on the transformation of property relations among matrilineal social groups in late colonial Malabar.

**“What Made You Decide to Focus on Women in Your Work?”:
Listening for Gendered Stories of Colonial Migration
in Archived Oral History Interviews of Singapore**

Daniel J.R. Grey
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In the mid-1990s, researchers such as social anthropologist Dr Lai Ah Eng of the National University of Singapore conducted a substantial number of oral history interviews that have since been digitised by the Singaporean National Archives as the groundbreaking collection “Women through the Years: Economic & Family Lives”. These interviews, which include detailed discussions of women’s lives and family backgrounds both before and after Singaporean independence in 1965, provide an invaluable insight into the experiences of women moving to and living in Singapore from Asia and elsewhere over the course of the later twentieth century.

My interest here is in the secondary analysis of this rich set of materials in order to think about what these interviews can tell us about gender, work and migration in the colonial and postcolonial worlds of women living in Singapore. One interviewee, for example, was keen to explain to the researcher at the outset that, as the daughter of Indian migrants, her father had been ‘a JP [justice of the peace]... in the British time’, among other prominent roles within the community, after he came to Singapore from Madras. The re-use of archived interviews that were originally conducted by others and the potential benefits of this methodological approach has become the subject of increasing interest from social scientists and historians, who have demonstrated that while this under-utilized method generates its own issues for researchers, it can be a richly rewarding and important source of information (Godfrey & Richardson 2001, Bornat 2003, 2010, Gallwey 2013, Rickard et. al. 2011). Drawing on work by historians of colonial migration and gender in Southeast Asia such as Arunima Datta (2015; 2016), this paper aims to interrogate the “Women through the Years” collection in an attempt to understand how colonial legacies still exert an influence over present trends of labour migration and labour experiences. I am particularly interested in how stereotypes and assumptions about categories (social, economic, political, cultural) are represented in Singaporean women’s recollections of earlier decades.

Daniel J.R. GREY is Lecturer in World History at Plymouth University. His primary research interests are related to the history of gender and crime in modern Britain and India. He has published several journal articles on infanticide, child abuse, and gendered approaches to criminal justice in both India and Britain. Currently, he is working on two book projects; *Degrees of Guilt: Infanticide in England 1860-1960* (contracted to Liverpool University Press) and *Feminist Campaigns against Child Sexual Abuse: Britain and India 1860-1947* (contracted to Continuum). The co-edited special issue of *Women: A Cultural Review* that he and Esme Cleall contributed to as part of the History of Feminism Collective in 2010 on ‘Rethinking the History of Feminism’ includes some of the journal’s most frequently downloaded articles. He is a co-director of the interdisciplinary SOLON network, which encourages collaboration and dialogue between lawyers, historians and criminologists, and also serves on the Editorial Board of their journal *law, crime, and history*.

Revisiting the Early History of South Asians in Colonial Hong Kong

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This paper retraces the early history of the male-dominated South Asian migrant societies and their relations to local Chinese in nineteenth-century Hong Kong. As early as the 1800s, South Asians arrived in Canton and have since worked as seamen and traders. After the Opium War (1839-1842), as the British empire consolidated its power in Southern China, more Indians and Nepalese arrived the British colony and worked as policemen and military personnel. Separate communities of Parsee, Hindu, and Sikh heritages have long existed in the British colony, where the majority was Cantonese-speaking Chinese. However, few studies of their history exist; most in Hong Kong nowadays do not have any memory of them. A preliminary assessment of both English and Chinese primary sources from the nineteenth century indicates the existence of vibrant South Asian communities in Hong Kong since the 1850s. These early non-Chinese migrants in Hong Kong were mostly men, and a sizable number of them married local women. This appears to defy conventional understanding of both South Asian and Chinese traditions, as they typically did not marry outside of their own ethnic circles. How did gender play a role in the relations between the South Asian workers and the Chinese? What prompted them to cross the ethnic lines to form families? What were the British colonial policies regarding these communities and their descendants with mixed heritage? A critical examination of their stories will give us the much-neglected knowledge of Sino-South Asian encounters, which have continued until today.

Rudolph NG is Lecturer of Modern Chinese History and Director of MA Program in Global History at Birkbeck College, University of London. He did his undergraduate and graduate studies at the Universities of Heidelberg and Cambridge respectively. He is a historian of nineteenth and twentieth century China, specializing on Chinese migration to Latin America and interactions between Chinese and non-Chinese in cities such as Harbin, Hong Kong, Amoy, and Macau.

Japanese Total War System, War Mobilisation and Migration: The Case of Comfort Women

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WWII as a total war called the entire nation into service and created mass mobilisation which included colonised ethnic minorities, women, children and people with disabilities. This mobilisation was propagated and implemented under the War ideology (the national general mobilisation system), and in this ideological space each national was regarded as an equal subject of the Japanese Emperor to support the war, in return for state protection through various welfare systems. What is overlooked in this notion of a total war system is the presence of ethnic minorities, in particular, ethnic minority women, and their war mobilisation. A much debated issue – comfort women – is a case in point. Their mobilisation was not as equal subjects of the Emperor. This paper is a critical attempt to contextualise comfort women in a framework of the total war system and to understand their mobilisation as part of a war labour migration scheme, as they were sent to various places in the Asia and Pacific region. By doing so, this paper will highlight that the ways in which they were utilised through this labour migration scheme were highly gendered, raced and classed with scant protection afforded to them by the state. It also will attempt to understand comfort women in a framework of global labour migration issues before WWII, by observing that ILO (International Labour Organisation)'s worthy notions about workers' rights were applicable only to citizens, not to colonised subjects.

Yasuko Hassall KOBAYASHI has a PhD in SEA Studies from Australian National University (ANU). She has worked at National University of Singapore and in ANU College of Asia and the Pacific at ANU, and am now an Assistant Professor in the Graduate School of Letters, Osaka University. Having worked on inter-Asian labour migration in contemporary Singapore, she has now expanded her interests to include war and migration in the Asia and Pacific region during WWII.

Korean Comfort Women in Okinawa: From Japanese to American Military Sexual Slavery

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Why did the Japanese military traffic women from Korea into comfort stations on Okinawa in the final year of the Pacific War? Japanese entrepreneurs had already created a substantial sex industry on Okinawa from the time of colonisation in 1879, and nearly every single woman in this industry was mobilised for trafficking into Japanese military brothels in Okinawa and surrounding islands in 1945. Even before this, though, the Japanese military made plans to traffic women out of colonial Korea to Okinawa, almost as soon as high command began making plans for troop deployment there in late 1944. This was at a time of extreme resource shortage, maritime encirclement by the US, and command chaos among Japanese military leaders. Nonetheless, great efforts were made to organise the transport of women out of Korea to the distant islands of Okinawa. Many of these women died soon after in the intense fighting that took place on the islands between Japanese and American troops. A lucky few were evacuated to Saipan, and some ended up in US detention camps at war's end. This presentation will describe the experience of Korean 'comfort women' in the final year of the Pacific War on Okinawa, and offer an explanation as to why they were trafficked there in the first place.

Caroline NORMA lectures in a master of translation and interpreting degree at RMIT University, Australia. She is the author of *The Japanese Comfort Women and Sexual Slavery during the China and Pacific Wars* (Bloomsbury, 2016), and is published in *Korean Studies*, *Japanese Studies* and *The Korean Journal of Policy Studies*. Her research pursues critical feminist analyses of prostitution in Japanese and Korean history. She is currently writing a book on the history of prostitution in Okinawa.

Gender and Slave Labor in World War II: Romusha and Ianfu in Japanese Occupied Southeast Asia

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During the Japanese Occupation of Southeast Asia a great number of people were needed as laborers. These were taken from densely populated areas to work in areas where there was a shortage of laborers. Despite the sparse data some picture does emerge allowing an insight in the mechanisms behind this exploitation especially if the cases of women and men are studied. The Paper will look at how Javanese were taken from Java to be put to work in Borneo as well as in other areas of Southeast Asia.

Frank DHONT is a Senior Lecturer in the University of Brunei Darussalam – Institute of Asian Studies. He works on the Japanese Occupation of Southeast Asia and also on Borneo and Southeast Asia in the 20th Century. He is interested in the transition from colonialism to nation-state both for elites as well as ordinary people.

Gender Perspectives on Labour Migration from Vietnam to Other Asian Countries, France and Beyond Under the Colonial Domination

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The main objective of this paper is to provide a situation analysis of Vietnam's past laws, policies and practices pertaining to labour migration from Vietnam to other parts of Asia, France and beyond from gender and historical perspectives under the colonial domination during 1858-1954. This paper first explores in simple terms the origins, trends and consequences of labour migration from Vietnam to other Asia countries, France and beyond, and reviews the move. Second, it examines the migration streams, recruitment patterns and state immigration policies during this period of times. Third, the paper focuses on Vietnam as a case study to draw out the links between historical and contemporary labour crossings. Finally, the paper provides concluding remarks.

VU Ngoc Binh has been a leading research expert in Viet Nam for several decades now years, in government research institutions, United Nations agencies, and international NGOs in Viet Nam since then until 2011. He has published and lectured extensively on human rights, focusing on marginalized groups of populations, especially women migrant workers etc in his country and at international forums. He has also provided training on human rights and rights-based approach to programming to parliamentarians in their legislative and oversight processes, government officials, policy makers, journalists, researchers, community leaders, prosecutors, judges, NGOs, university students, bilateral donors, and UN agencies for application in their daily operation. From a human rights and gender perspective, Mr Vu Ngoc Binh has provided substantive advisory and technical inputs to the National Assembly and government ministries on development or amendment of related laws such as the Labour Code, the Law on Gender Equality, the Civil Code, the Law on Vocational Training, the Law on Employment, the Law on Marriage and Family, the Penal Code, the Law on Social Assurance, etc and their guidelines for implementation. At present, he is Senior Adviser in the Institute for Population, Family and Children Studies (IPFCS) which is a national research institution in Ha Noi, Viet Nam.

Gender, Labour and Migration: The Punjabi Diaspora in the Formation of Sarawak, Malaysia

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This study is a pioneer study on the first Punjabi migrants in Sarawak, East Malaysia. The Punjabi migrants were brought to Sarawak, initially as Prisoners of War and subsequently, for defence purpose during the British occupation of Malaya in 1850s. The contributions of the Punjab defence force comprising Sikhs, Muslims and Hindus are great and without inclusion of which the history of Sarawak remains incomplete. The personnel of this regiment were known for their bravery and trustworthiness. This study focuses on Punjabi migrants, highlighting their sacrifices, roles in the defence and security of Sarawak. There is little research evidence available in literature, thus the data was collected through personal contacts, interviews and document analysis such as personal documents, case studies and archival records. James Brooke, the first White Rajah of Sarawak recruited the first 13 Sikhs for the Sarawak Police Force from Singapore. The Punjabis became a valuable strategy of colonial power in keeping subjects of the British colonies in the Far East in check. These Punjabi policemen then formed the genesis and subsequent establishment of Punjabi communities in Sarawak, Malaysia. The Punjabis then helped propel Sarawak to an industrialised country by adopting professions of cattle farmers, carpenters, merchants, milkmen, guards, craftsmen, coolies and tailors. This research will greatly help people understand the contributions of these migrants in the independence of Sarawak.

Parveen KAUR is a Senior Lecturer at the Department of Anthropology and Sociology, Faculty of Social Sciences, University Malaysia Sarawak in West Malaysia. She has over 20 years of academic experience which include leading, researching, teaching, training, supervising and consulting. Dr Parveen holds a Doctor of Philosophy in Sociology and a Master of Philosophy in Human Development from University Malaya, Kuala Lumpur. She is a recipient of the prestigious scholarship Ryoichi Sasakawa Young Leaders Fellowship Fund Japan. She is also an active research consultant and project collaborator with Sarawak State Library and South Korea. Her wide range of expertise is in Sociology, Education, Communication and Counseling. Her potentials are in gender studies specifically in disability, employment, health, education, power, poverty, language, culture, religion, information and communications technology (ICT) etc.

Arif Jawaid is the Director of Centre for Modern Languages and Communication at Linton University College, Negeri Sembilan, Malaysia. He has over 40 years of working experience in various professional engagements, which include leading, researching, teaching, training, developing curriculum and consulting. He is also a Director and Principal Consultant of QLM Associates (M) Sdn Bhd, Malaysia. He provides consulting and advisory services in TESOL, Teacher Training, Quality Assurance, Documentation, and Primary to Tertiary Education and Curriculum Development. Dr. Arif holds a PhD in Education/TESOL from the University of Wolverhampton (UK). His wide range of expertise has helped institutions in many ways. His potentials are developing curriculum for education, English Language courses for adults (non-native speakers) through his model SMART TESOL™, training of lecturers, leading in researches and finally setting up a conducive student centred learning environment for Centre for Modern Languages and Communication. He is also an active research consultant and project collaborator with Sarawak State Library, University Malaysia Sarawak and South Korea.

Colonial Labour Migration and the Tyranny of the Particular

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The last half century has witnessed a revolution in our understanding of free and forced labour migration in the European colonial world. Historians now know much more than they ever did about the slave, convict, indentured, and other migrant labour trades that are hallmarks of the colonial experience, especially between the late seventeenth and early twentieth centuries. A review of published scholarship on these systems reveals, however, a propensity for conceptually, chronologically, and geographically compartmentalized studies that focus on a limited number of research questions and fail to situate these studies in appropriately developed contexts. Recent scholarship on the increasing interconnectedness of the slave, convict, and indentured labour trades in the Indian Ocean during the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries highlights the need for colonial migrant labour studies to transcend the prevailing historiographical “tyranny of the particular” by consciously seeking to explore hitherto ignored topics and issues, to engage in the comparative study of these migrant labour systems and the lives of the men, women, and children who participated in them, and to situate local and regional developments in well-developed regional and pan-regional contexts.

Richard B. ALLEN is an internationally-known scholar who works on the social and economic history of Mauritius, slavery and indentured labour in the colonial plantation world, and slave trading in the Indian Ocean. He is the recipient of two Fulbright research awards and prestigious research fellowships from the American Council of Learned Societies and the National Endowment for the Humanities. His publications include *Slaves, Freedmen and Indentured Laborers in Colonial Mauritius* (Cambridge University Press, 1999); *European Slave Trading in the Indian Ocean, 1500-1850* (Ohio University Press, 2014); many chapters in books published in the United States, Europe, and elsewhere; numerous articles in prominent academic journals including *Journal of African History*, *Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth*, *Journal of Social History*, *Journal of World History*, *Slavery and Abolition*, and *Revue française d’histoire d’outre-mer*; and articles in encyclopedias on Africa, the Indian Ocean, slavery, indentured labour, and global human migration. He co-authored the successful applications to designate the Aapravasi Ghat and the Le Morne Cultural Landscape in Mauritius as UNESCO World Heritage Sites and to inscribe the indentured immigration records of the Republic of Mauritius on UNESCO’s Memory of the World Register. He also serves as editor of Ohio University Press’s Indian Ocean Studies series and co-organizing the international conference on slavery in Asia to be held at Leiden University in June, 2017.

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Brenda S.A. YEOH is Professor (Provost's Chair) in the Department of Geography as well as Research Leader of the Asian Migration Cluster at the Asia Research Institute, NUS. Her research interests include the politics of space in colonial and postcolonial cities, and she has considerable experience working on a wide range of migration research in Asia, including key themes such as cosmopolitanism and highly skilled talent migration; gender, social reproduction and care migration; migration, national identity and citizenship issues; globalising universities and international student mobilities; and cultural politics, family dynamics and international marriage migrants. She has published widely in these fields. Her latest book titles include *The Cultural Politics of Talent Migration in East Asia* (Routledge, 2012, with Shirlena Huang); and *Migration and Diversity in Asian Contexts* (ISEAS press, 2012, with Lai Ah Eng and Francis Collins); *Return: Nationalizing Transnational Mobility in Asia* (Duke University Press, 2013, with Xiang Biao and Mika Toyota); as well as a paperback reprint of her book *Contesting Space in Colonial Singapore: Power Relations and the Urban Built Environment* (originally published in 1996 by Oxford University Press; reprinted by NUS Press in 2003 and 2013).

Jonathan RIGG is Director of the Asia Research Institute and Professor in the Department of Geography at the National University of Singapore. Prior to that, he was Head of the Geography Department at Durham University in the UK. He was also based at the School of Oriental & African Studies, London University where he was a Lecturer, British Academy Post-Doctoral Research Fellow, and PhD student. He is a development geographer interested in illuminating and explaining patterns and processes of social, economic and environmental change in the Asian region and the impacts of such changes on ordinary people and everyday life. In his work, he has tried to give a "face" to the individuals buffeted by modernisation and ascribe to them an agency which is sometimes absent in higher level interpretations of change. He has been concerned to treat ordinary people as special and the geographical contexts in which they live—and which they help to shape—as distinctive. He is currently working on three projects: an international, interdisciplinary study of resilience to earthquake risk in the continental interior of Asia; a study of the role of land in agrarian change in Thailand; and a project on the survival of the smallholder in East and Southeast Asia. His latest book *Challenging Southeast Asian Development: The Shadows of Success* was published in August 2015.

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Paul H. KRATOSKA is Publishing Director for NUS Press at the National University of Singapore. A former member of the Board of Directors of the Association for Asian Studies, he is a past editor of the *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* and currently edits the *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*. He has published books and articles on the Japanese Occupation, rice cultivation, and school textbooks in Southeast Asia, and regularly presents talks and workshops on academic publishing throughout East and Southeast Asia. His recent publications include the following, "Wartime Occupation by Japan" (with Ken'ichi Goto), *The Cambridge History of the Second World War* (Cambridge University Press, 2015), pp. 533-57, "Southeast Asia from the Japanese Occupation to Independence", in *The Routledge Handbook of Southeast Asian History*, ed. Norman G. Owen (2013), pp. 65-74, "Chettiar Money Lenders and Rural Credit in British Malaya", *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, vol. 86, 1 (2013): 61-78, *The Japanese Occupation of Malaya: A Social and Economic History*. London: C. Hurst, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1998. (Japanese translation: Kojinsha: Tokyo, 2005.) New edition forthcoming in 2017, [Edited] *Asian Labor in the Wartime Japanese Empire*. Armonk, NY: M.E. Sharpe, 2005, and [Compiled] *The Thailand-Burma Railway, 1942-1946*. London and New York: Routledge, 2005, six volumes.

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Vineeta SINHA is Professor and concurrently Head of the South Asian Studies Programme and the Department of Sociology at the National University of Singapore. She holds a Masters in Social Science from the National University of Singapore, a Masters of Arts degree and a PhD from the Johns Hopkins University. Her research has explored forms of Hindu religiosity in the Diaspora, intersections of religion, commodification and consumption processes, interface of religion and materiality, religion-state encounters in colonial and post-colonial contexts. At NUS she teaches courses about the sociology of everyday life, sociology and anthropology of religion, sociology of food, reading and writing ethnography, classical sociological theory and Bollywood. Her publications include the following books: *A New God in the Diaspora? Muneeswaran Worship in Contemporary Singapore* (2005m published by the Singapore University Press and the Nordic Institute of Asian Studies), *Religion and Commodification: Merchandising Diasporic Hinduism* (2010, London: Routledge); *Religion-State Encounters in Hindu Domains: From the Straits Settlements to Singapore* (2011 Dordrecht: Springer) and *Indians* (2015, Singapore: SPH, Institute of Policy Studies). She has recently co-edited (with Lily Kong) a volume on food in Singapore, *Food, Foodways and Foodscapes; Culture, Community and Consumption in Post-colonial Singapore* (2015, Singapore: World Scientific). She was elected Vice-President (Publications) of the International Sociological Association for 2014-2018.