

MOVEMENT AS INTERREGNUM

PEOPLE, TECHNOLOGIES, GOODS AND IDEAS

12-13 JUNE 2018



UNIVERSITEIT VAN AMSTERDAM



ARI
ASIA RESEARCH INSTITUTE
National University of Singapore

This workshop is funded by the University of Amsterdam, Netherlands, and hosted at the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore.

This concerns a joint seminar between the Moving Matters Research group of the University of Amsterdam and the Asian Migration Cluster of the Asia Research Institute. It brings scholars from both universities together to present and discuss each other's research projects. Scholars will be paired and will each present their own paper while also commenting on each other's papers. The workshop will revolve around three broad sets of interlinked themes: 1) moving ideas; 2) moving forms of infrastructure and technology; and 3) moving people. In doing so, the aim is to critically reflect upon and re-examine the rubric "Moving Matters."

In this workshop, we take inspiration from Gramsci's notion of the interregnum for our understanding of movement. The interregnum has a dual meaning, both referring to a temporal liminality between one sociopolitical order and another, as well as to the ambiguity and potentiality of the in-between time as the "old is dying" and the "the new" not yet born. As past frameworks fall away or become obsolete, in the interregnum new frameworks are still in the making, and subject to change.

The workshop will reflect upon the indeterminate, yet productive potential of the interregnum for our conception of movement in two ways. How might we think of movement as inherently akin to an interregnum? First, movement is an in-betweenness: between places; but also between pasts and futures—between what has already happened and is yet to come. Second, like the interregnum, movement is potentially creative and destructive, poised between the renewal of past experiences and shared histories, and futures that are as-yet unknown and potentially destabilizing. We might think, for instance, of how movement—such as of democratic political ideologies, development technologies, aesthetic hierarchies, and biopolitical infrastructure—is often partially driven by a utopian impulse to improve human life in another part of the world—yet such projects frequently fail, (re)producing inequalities, war, and conflict. Through a wide-ranging set of case studies, this workshop will look at these paradoxes produced by the in-betweenness of movement: homogenization and fragmentation; solidarity and anomie; inequality and its alleviation.

Organising Committee

Dr Michiel Baas

Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore

Dr Olga Kanzaki Sooudi

Moving Matters, University of Amsterdam

Dr Gerben Nooteboom

Moving Matters, University of Amsterdam

TUESDAY, 12 JUNE 2018

9.00 – 9.15 REGISTRATION

9.15 – 9.30 OPENING REMARKS

MICHEL BAAS, National University of Singapore

OLGA KANZAKI SOUDI, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands

9.30 – 10.50 PANEL 1 | STUDENT MIGRATION

CHAIRPERSON **OLGA KANZAKI SOUDI**, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands

9.30 “Why Do I Work in a Chinese Restaurant?” Middle-Class Chinese Students Narrating Their *Youxue* (Travel and Study) Experiences in Italy

SHANSHAN LAN, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands

9.50 ‘Alternative’ Trajectories of Higher Education: Policies, Perspectives and Experiences from the Global South

ZANE KHEIR, National University of Singapore

10.10 Comments by Presenters

10.30 Questions and Answers

10.50 – 11.10 MORNING TEA

11.10 – 12.30 PANEL 2 | DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING

CHAIRPERSON **GUSTAV BROWN**, National University of Singapore

11.10 The Travelling Model of Conditional Cash Transfers and its Social Consequences in Indonesia

GERBEN NOOTEBOOM, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands

11.30 The Local Politics of Inter-Urban Learning: A Critical Geography of Solo-As-Model

TIM BUNNELL, National University of Singapore

11.50 Comments by Presenters

12.10 Questions and Answers

12.30 – 13.30 LUNCH

13.30 – 14.50 PANEL 3 | CORPOREAL AND SOCIAL LIVES OF MIGRANTS

CHAIRPERSON **BARAK KALIR**, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands

13.30 Corporeal Geographies of Labour Migration in Asia

BRENDA S.A. YEOH, National University of Singapore

13.50 Violent Crime and the Social Lives of Chinese Male Servants in Colonial Singapore, 1910s-1930s

CLAIRE LOWRIE, University of Wollongong, Australia

14.10 Comments by Presenters

14.30 Questions and Answers

14.50 SHORT BREAK

15.00 – 16.20 PANEL 4 | POLICING BODIES AND THE POLITICS OF SECURITYCHAIRPERSON **ITTY ABRAHAM**, National University of Singapore

15.00 Security Narratives: Israeli Militarism and the Private Security Market

ERELLA GRASSIANI, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands

15.20 They Carry the Border on their Backs: Atypical Commerce and Bodies' Policing in Barrio Chino

DINA KRICKER, National University of Singapore

15.40 Comments by Presenters

16.00 Questions and Answers

16.20 – 16.40 AFTERNOON TEA**16.40 – 18.00 PANEL 5 | IRREGULAR MIGRATION AND DEPORTATION**CHAIRPERSON **ERELLA GRASSIANI**, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands

16.40 Police Agents in Spain Managing Deportation of Noncitizens

BARAK KALIR, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands17.00 *Kami Urang Sini* (We are the People of 'Here'): Irregular Migrants and the Agency of Equivocal Space**VILASHINI SOMIAH**, National University of Singapore

17.20 Comments by Presenters

17.40 Questions and Answers

18.00 END OF DAY 1

WEDNESDAY, 13 JUNE 2018

9.30 – 10.50 PANEL 6 | ART AND URBAN CREATIVITY

CHAIRPERSON **WILLEM VAN SCHENDEL**, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands

9.30 Artists and Autonomy in the Indian Contemporary Art World

OLGA KANZAKI SOUDI, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands

9.50 Translocal Urban Creativity: Worlding Hong Kong Cityscape from Below

MINNA VALJAKKA, National University of Singapore

10.10 Comments by Presenters

10.30 Questions and Answers

10.50 – 11.10 MORNING TEA

11.10 – 12.30 PANEL 7 | RACIAL DEMOCRACY AND SOCIAL MOBILITY

CHAIRPERSON **TINA HARRIS**, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands

11.10 Black Consciousness Beyond the Activist Circle?

Sanitation Workers' Sense of (In)Justice in Post-Reform Cuba

LUISA STEUR, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands

11.30 Intersecting Mobilities in Urban India: Fitness, Bodybuilding and the Changing Indian Urban Landscape

MICHIEL BAAS, National University of Singapore

11.50 Comments by Presenters

12.10 Questions and Answers

12.30 – 13.30 LUNCH

13.30 – 15.10 PANEL 8 | IN-BETWEEN SPACES AND CROSSING BORDERS

CHAIRPERSON **MAITRII AUNG-THWIN**, National University of Singapore

13.30 Framing Spaces between India and China

WILLEM VAN SCHENDEL, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands

13.50 Oral Narratives and Mobile Human Spaces between India, Myanmar China:
A Border Biography Approach

JASNEA SARMA, National University of Singapore

14.10 Trading Large by being Small: Lao Cross-Border Traders and their Untold
Stories of Cosmopolitan Entrepreneurship

SIMON ROWEDDER, Independent Scholar

14.30 Comments by Presenters

14.50 Questions and Answers

15.10 – 15.30 AFTERNOON TEA

15.30 – 16.50 PANEL 9 | MOBILITY AND MASCULINITYCHAIRPERSON **MICHEL BAAS**, National University of Singapore15.30 **Holding Patterns: Time and Labour in Nepali Aviation****TINA HARRIS**, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands15.50 **Uncertain Cartographies: Migrant Taxi Drivers in Kolkata****ROMIT CHOWDHURY**, National University of Singapore

16.10 Comments by Presenters

16.30 Questions and Answers

16.50 – 17.30 CLOSING REMARKS & DISCUSSIONS**MICHEL BAAS**, National University of Singapore**OLGA KANZAKI SOUDI**, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands**GERBEN NOOTEBOOM**, University of Amsterdam, Netherlands

17.30 END OF WORKSHOP

“Why Do I Work in a Chinese Restaurant?” Middle-Class Chinese Students Narrating Their *Youxue* (Travel and Study) Experiences in Italy

Shanshan Lan

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Based on ethnographic fieldwork in China and Italy, this paper examines the motivations for middle-class Chinese students' participation in temporary and part-time jobs during their study abroad time in Italy. Unlike Chinese student migrants in Japan in the 1980s and 1990s who had to work hard as low-wage labors in order to cover their own tuition and living expenses abroad (Liu-Farrer 2009), the students in this research are generally relieved from financial concerns due to generous support from their parents. Differing from some middle-class Indian student migrants in London, whose goal is to use transnational education as a channel to find low-wage jobs in the developed world (Rutten & Verstappen 2013), the primary goal of my informants is to obtain an overseas degree in order to enhance their job opportunities in China. This research finds that middle-class Chinese students resort to temporary, informal employment as a strategy to cope with the psychological stresses of studying and living in a new environment (i.e. loneliness, boredom, social isolation), to develop personal qualities such as independence, hardworking, and perseverance, and to negotiate power relations with their parents (by earning money to fund their own traveling experiences and consumption of luxury goods). Many students consider casual work an integral part of their studying abroad experience, in the sense that it provides them opportunities to learn things outside the classroom, to expand their social network, and to become mature and responsible adults. While such narratives of personal growth have demonstrated students' agency in coping with the various challenges in the study abroad experiences, they also reinforce the neoliberal discourse of self-development, which is endorsed by the Chinese state and is also prevalent in China's private study abroad market.

Shanshan Lan is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Amsterdam. She received her PhD in Cultural Anthropology from the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign. Her research interests include transnational migration, race and immigration policy, trans-border trade activities and networks, urban China, African diaspora in China, global Chinese diaspora, class and social stratification in contemporary Chinese society. Her current project, transnational student mobility and the politics of social reproduction in post-socialist China, is a comparative study of the mobility experiences of Chinese students in South Korea, Italy and the United States. She is the author of *Diaspora and Class Consciousness: Chinese Immigrant Workers in Multiracial Chicago* (Routledge 2012), *Mapping the New African Diaspora in China: Race and the Cultural Politics of Belonging* (Routledge 2017).

'Alternative' Trajectories of Higher Education: Policies, Perspectives and Experiences from the Global South

Zane Kheir

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This study analyses the phenomenon of transnational higher education that has developed in and between countries that are classified as within the "Global South" by observing and comparing rationales of internationalization and the recruitment of international students from respective regional maritime spheres. Case studies in Malaysia and Taiwan have been chosen for this comparison, as they are states of relatively equal size and are utilizing very different higher education models and strategies, yet have set out to become higher education hubs in their respective regions. Both these case studies represent a break from the normalized trajectory of students from the developing world to the West, and contributes to a body of literature focusing on alternative destinations for higher education. These two case studies are most insightful as they highlight the elusive role of culture, language, religion and connected colonial, pre-colonial and Cold War histories. These factors will be connected by drawing together a framework of cosmopolitanism to characterize the students studying in these locations. This paper will present the preliminary results of fieldwork conducted over a 6-month period at a public university in Malaysia, as well as the work-in-progress at a university in Taiwan. Methodologically speaking, the study makes use to qualitative interviews with a wide range of current or recently-graduated degree-students as well as an online questionnaire to collect qualitative data to compliment qualitative findings. It is one of the objectives of this study to show how both Malaysia and Taiwan's recruitment of students from regional countries are possibly contributing to a remapping of these countries' connected histories across maritime spaces.

Zane Kheir is a PhD Candidate in Comparative Asian Studies (CAS) in the National University of Singapore (NUS). He has completed his MA in Asia-Pacific Studies at National Chengchi University in Taiwan and is fluent in Chinese (Mandarin) and Japanese. Originally from the United States, Zane has pursued his undergraduate and postgraduate education entirely in Asia. He was also a Visiting Research Student at the National University of Malaysia's (UKM) Institute of Malaysian and International Studies. His research interests include migration, higher education, language, Southeast Asian studies, maritime/oceanic research, Malaysia, Taiwan, ethnicity and multiculturalism. Zane is conducting a comparative study between transnational education strategies and student experiences in Malaysia and Taiwan. Having been an international undergraduate and postgraduate student in Asia himself, Zane is interested in further investigating international students in institutions of higher education. An underlying theme of his research is to contribute to a body of comparative literature in Asian studies that allows for cross-referencing, interdisciplinary analysis and focuses on inter-regional, supranational issues.

The Travelling Model of Conditional Cash Transfers and its Social Consequences in Indonesia

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In the field of international development, hypes, buzzwords and poverty alleviation strategies come and go (Cornwall & Brock 2006, Rist 2007, Lewis and Gartner 2015: 105). Some of these strategies become 'magic bullets', travelling models and technologies, taken from one country to be applied in others. Cornwall and Eade (2010) show how originally radical ideas, such as participation and empowerment, become standardised practices and depolitized buzzwords in development policies removed from their original political content and cultural context. A current example of such a travelling model is the implementation of Conditional Cash Transfers (CCTs) in The Philippines and Indonesia. In CCT-programmes, beneficiaries – mostly women and children - receive cash under certain conditions in order to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty by investments in health and education. The first CCT-programmes came up in Mexico and Brazil in the 1990s and early 2000s. After being picked up by large international development institutions such as The World Bank, they quickly gained popularity in the international development arena and were applied in a large number of countries. After being depoliticised, they become attractive technologies for populist politicians and state bureaucracies. In the paper, the introduction of the CCT model in Indonesia will be used as a lens to understand processes of depolitization of anti-poverty programmes and the complexities of the application of global developmental models and technologies. When the conditional Program Keluarga Harapan (PKH) was implemented in 2007 in Indonesia, almost a decade since the first programmes in Latin-America proved successful, there was political momentum for introduction, but implication on the ground turned out much more complex and problematic than expected.

Gerben Nooteboom is Associate Professor at the Department of Anthropology at the University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands. He teaches courses on State and Society, Asian Studies, Social Theory and Anthropology of Development. As a researcher, he has worked on issues of social welfare, poverty and development as well as on rural transformation, livelihood change and human adaptation to environmental change. Most of his fieldwork has been done in Indonesia (East and Central Java and East Kalimantan). Some of his recent publications include: 'Anthropology and Inclusive Development'. *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability* 24, 63-67 (with L. Bakker (2017)); *Forgotten people: poverty, risk and social security in Indonesia: the case of the Madurese* (2015) (Monograph) Leiden: Brill; *Beyond the Global Landgrab Hype* (with L. Bakker (2014)); *Magic Bullets and Development* (with Mario Rutten (2011)); *Out of Wedlock, Migrant-Police Partnerships in East Kalimantan* (in Aspinall and Van Klinken, eds. (2011)); *Against Green Development Fantasies: Resource Degradation and the Lack of Community Resistance in the Middle Mahakam Wetlands, East Kalimantan, Indonesia* (with De Jong (2011)); *Styles of Social Security in Upland East Java* (in Koning and Hüsken, eds. (2006)).

The Local Politics of Inter-Urban Learning: A Critical Geography of Solo-As-Model

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The rise of academic as well as media interest in the small Indonesian city of Solo over the past decade centres upon the political personality of Joko Widodo (“Jokowi”). He was mayor of the city from 2005 before going on to be elected as governor of Jakarta, and then president of the Republic of Indonesia. This paper concerns aspects of Jokowi’s political “rise” that speak to urban and regional studies debates on the politics of interurban learning (McFarlane, 2011; Peck & Theodore, 2010). I argue that the emergence and travel of Solo as a model city for aspects of urban development was a factor in Jokowi’s political upward mobility. The anointing of some of Jokowi’s policies and projects in Solo as national and international “best practice” not only conferred local legitimacy on his mayoral leadership, but also positioned him (as well as his home town) in more-than-local networks of visibility and possibility.

Drawing upon collaborative research carried out as part of a recently-completed research project on “Urban Aspirations” (Bunnell et al., 2017), I focus on the politics of learning from Solo in the municipality of Pak Kret in Thailand. Pak Kret was paired with Solo as part of a European Union-funded programme to share best practices in local governance in Southeast Asia. After sketching the dynamics of policy adoption and learning at the Pak Kret end of this inter-municipal programme, I show how Solo’s designation as a “best practice city” for Pak Kret to emulate facilitated the promotion of both Solo and Jokowi in national and international networks. Overall, the paper is intended to add to a growing body of work that pays attention to the implications of translocal learning initiatives for the “sending” or “exporting” end (McCann, 2013), especially in terms of possibilities for plugging both a city and its leader into wider (trans)national networks.

Tim Bunnell is based in the Department of Geography at the National University of Singapore. He is also Chair of the Global Urban Studies cluster in the Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences. Tim’s research centres upon issues of urban development in Southeast Asia, and that region’s global connections. His latest books are *From World City to the World in One City: Liverpool through Malay Lives* (Wiley, 2016) and *Urban Asias: Essays on Futurity Past and Present* (Jovis, 2018 – co-edited with Daniel P.S. Goh).

Rita Padawangi is Senior Lecturer at the Singapore University of Social Sciences. Previously, she was Senior Research Fellow of the Asian Urbanisms cluster at the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore. She received her PhD in sociology from Loyola University Chicago, where she was also a Fulbright Scholar for her master of arts studies. She holds a bachelor of architecture degree from the Parahyangan Catholic University. Her research interests include the sociology of architecture and participatory urban development. She is a member of the collaborative Southeast Asia Neighborhoods Network (SEANNET), a four-year initiative for urban studies research, teaching and dissemination through the prism of the neighborhood, funded by the Henry Luce Foundation through the International Institute for Asian Studies (IIAS).

Eric C. Thompson is Associate Professor in the Department of Sociology at the National University of Singapore (NUS). Before joining NUS, he completed a PhD in Sociocultural Anthropology at the University of Washington and was a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, University of California Los Angeles. He teaches anthropology, gender studies, urban studies and research methods. His research spans field sites across Southeast Asia, particularly Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand. His research interests include transnational networking, urbanism, agrarian transitions, and ASEAN regionalism. His work has appeared in the journals *American Ethnologist*, *Urban Studies*, *Political Geography*, *Asian Studies Review*, *Contemporary Sociology*, and *Contemporary Southeast Asian Studies* among others. He is author of *Unsettling Absences: Urbanism in Rural Malaysia* (NUS Press, 2007). He is co-editor of *Cleavage, Connection and Conflict in Rural, Urban, and Contemporary Asia* (Springer, 2012).

Corporeal Geographies of Labour Migration in Asia

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In Asia, contract-based migrant workers and their families contend with modes of temporariness which are institutionalized as a fundamental principle in neoliberal labour migration regimes. In applying a corporeal geographies lens to the study of temporary labour migration, scholars have engaged with a wide spectrum of concepts to help focus attention on the 'body' as a key site and scale of analysis. Managing migrants' bodies as part of managing the borders of the nation-state is part and parcel of governmental strategies to resolve the fundamental dilemma between the demands of 'markets [that] require a policy of open borders to provide as many migrant workers as demanded' on the one hand, and those of 'citizenship [that] require some degree of closure to the outside so as to protect the economic, social, political and cultural boundaries of the nation-state' on the other (Garcés-Mascreñas, 2010: 87). States try to resolve the dilemma by managing migrants as pure economic labour that can be governed by erecting multiple barriers to control inclusion and exclusion, an often Sisyphus task at best as migrants are irreducible to pure labour but continue to act as social, political, psychological, emotional, and relational subjects. We draw on the growing scholarship on temporary labour migrants in Asia in order to spotlight the embodied experiences of low-waged migrant workers in the region. We provide a mapping of relevant theoretical approaches to understanding corporeal geographies of migration, before turning to three significant themes which have emerged with particular reference to temporary labour migration in the context of Asia: migrant bodies and the politics of border control; the politics of control and care in migrant encounters, enclavement and enclosure; and the complex relationship between corporeal absence, mediated intimacy, and the implications for the conduct of transnational family life.

Brenda S.A. Yeoh is Vice Provost (Graduate Education) at the National University of Singapore (NUS). Prof Yeoh is concurrently 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. She also coordinates the Asian MetaCentre for Population and Sustainable Development Analysis. 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).

Kellynn Wee is a Research Associate at the Asia Research Institute. Her research interests are focused on migration brokerage, migration governance, feminist geographies, and social movements.

Charmian Goh was a Research Assistant with the Migrating out of Poverty Research Consortium at the Asia Research Institute. Her research interests include transnational care and domestic work, migration infrastructure, and labour migration governance in Asia.

Violent Crime and the Social Lives of Chinese Male Servants in Colonial Singapore, 1910s-1930s

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The historical literature on domestic service in Singapore, Malaysia and Hong Kong has explored in some detail the living and working lives of the Chinese *amahs* who made up a majority of servants in these colonies from the late 1930s and into the post-colonial era. The working conditions and experiences of *mui tsai* (bonded servant girls) employed within Chinese homes has also been documented. Far less is known about the lives of the Chinese men who predominated in domestic service in the era prior to the *amahs*. This paper aims to extend the literature on colonial domestic service by exploring the experiences and, where possible, the perspectives of Chinese male migrants who worked as servants in Singapore. In doing so, I draw inspiration from Brenda Yeoh and Shirlena Huang's (1998) study of Filipina and Indonesian domestic workers in contemporary Singapore. Like Yeoh and Huang, I aim to highlight 'the "other" lives' of Chinese male servants 'beyond the domestic sphere' and within the public spaces of the city. I pursue this task by analysing cases of murder and physical assault perpetrated by these men between the 1910s and 1930s.

Cases in which Chinese male servants were convicted of murder or assault were rare. Nonetheless, they received a great deal of public attention in Singapore. Salacious details of the crimes and the arrests, the testimonies of the accused and of witnesses, and, the processes of conviction and sentencing were reported in detail in the local English-language press. I draw upon this rich newspaper archive to shed light upon the daily lives of these workers. Reading between the lines of my source material brings to the fore the 'social materiality' of domestic workers' lives (Yeoh 2003). We begin to understand how servants' moved around the city, how they lived and slept, what they did in their leisure time and the factors which resulted in them becoming victims or perpetrators of violent crime. By drawing out everyday details of domestic worker's lives from the criminal trials and by analysing the servant testimonies contained within those records, this paper provides new insights into the social lives of servants and provides hints about their attitudes and perspectives.

Claire Lowrie is a Senior Lecturer in History at the University of Wollongong, Australia. Claire's research focuses on the history of colonialism and labour in northern Australia and Southeast Asia. Her book, *Masters and Servants: Cultures of Empire in the Tropics, 1880-1930*, was published by Manchester University Press in 2016. The book explores the emergence of a shared colonial culture of male domestic service in Singapore and Darwin that was forged through the exchange of ideas, people and trade between the port cities. Claire undertook further research on the culture of 'houseboys' and colonialism in the tropics as part of a collaborative Australian Research Council Discovery Project based at the University of Wollongong with Julia Martinez, Frances Steel and Victoria Haskins. The forthcoming book from this project will be released later this year (*Colonialism and Male Domestic Service across the Asia Pacific*, Bloomsbury). She is a co-editor (with Haskins) of a volume on *Colonization and Domestic Service: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives* (Routledge, New York, 2015). Claire has published her work in *Modern Asian Studies*, *Pacific Historical Review*, *Gender and History*, *Journal of Colonialism and Colonial History* and *History Australia*. Her latest project is a history of the abolition of Chinese indenture across the Asia Pacific Region from 1919 to 1966 (Julia Martinez, Claire Lowrie and Gregor Benton, Australian Research Council Discovery Project, DP180100695, 2018-2020).

Security Narratives: Israeli Militarism and the Private Security Market

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Israel's security and defence export is considerable: every year a multitude of exhibitions, fairs and conferences are organized for an (inter)national public where products, such as cyber technology, anti-riot gear, weapons, and training packages are sold. Additionally, international guests come to Israel in order to learn about 'Israeli security' as a concept or system. These security products and services are accompanied by politically coloured stories of their historical and potential future use and the importance they have for defending Israel. I interpret these stories and histories as 'security narratives' and I will explore the ways in which private security and public security (military) actors (re)produce and perform them in their joint, blurred effort to sell Israeli made products internationally. I pose that neoliberal and commercial features, besides nationalist ones, characterize these 'security narratives', which serve to sell Israel's military/security image and its security products outside of Israel's borders and to empower the military/security elite within Israel. This narrative then works both on a more individual level of security and military actors and on a national one.

Theoretically, this work will contribute to the debate on Israeli militarism, taking materialist militarism (Levy 2007) as a starting point. These security narratives, I argue, epitomize processes of commercialization and internationalization of materialist militarism into a securitized discourse. Military and security actors use their military capital, not only to (re) affirm their own status within Israel, but also on the international market while promoting the state of Israel at the same time as the 'place to be' for the security industry.

Erella Grassiani is an assistant professor in anthropology at the University of Amsterdam. Her research is part of a wider project on privatization and globalization of security with a specific focus on Israel and security mobilities (SECURCIT). It traces the flows of the (Israeli) security worldwide and look at the way cultural ideas, technologies and consultants move around globally. In the past she has done extensive research on the Israeli military and has published a book on the topic in 2013 with Berghahn Books: *Soldiering under Occupation processes of Numbing among Israeli soldiers in the Al-Aqsa Intifada*. Her teaching involves issues around the anthropology of conflict and violence, identity, nationalism and power relations and research methodology.

They Carry the Border on Their Backs: Atypical Commerce and Bodies' Policing in Barrio Chino

Dina Krichker

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This paper contributes to discussion of the embodied border and demonstrates how the border becomes spatial through violence. It throws light on the construction of spaces of violence in border zones in the context of the exploitation of the bodies of porteadoras (cross-border workers in Melilla). Narratives of border guards, porteadoras and Melillan citizens demonstrate how violent discourse around the border pass of Barrio Chino is produced and normalised. The paper argues that a set of behaviours contributes to the social construction of Barrio Chino as a space of normalised violence, and this space is consequently employed to convey messages of Spanish territoriality in North Africa. The paper makes this case in three ways. First, it elaborates how the Spanish-Moroccan border is embodied by porteadoras, and how this process is gendered. Then, I analyse how border violence is spatial and how it is normalised in a particular territorial setting. Finally, I explain how the state utilises such spaces of normalised violence to strengthen its borders, and to reinforce its territoriality. By problematising spaces of normalised violence, the paper provides an alternative vision of border zone construction.

Dina Krichker is a PhD student with the National University of Singapore. She holds a Master's degree in Geopolitics, Territory and Security from King's College London. Her research interests lie in the field of border scholarship. For her Master's thesis, she wrote a biography of a border between Iran and Azerbaijan. She currently studies physical and social materialisations of the Spanish-Moroccan boundary in Melilla, the southern edge of the European Union, in various spatial and temporal scales.

Police Agents in Spain Managing Deportation of Noncitizens

Barak Kalir

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Based on a one-year nonconsecutive fieldwork among different police units and governmental offices responsible for deportation in Spain, this paper zooms in on the practices and dilemmas of police agents who detain and deport *illegalized migrants*. Police agents seem to be particularly torn between two dominant dynamics that govern the enforcement of deportation policies: first, agents need to apply ambiguous policies and unsatisfying laws that can be interpreted in different ways by superiors and colleagues; second, agents need to justify their course of action in ethically sensitive situations that are produced in face-to-face interactions with *deportable subjects*. The ethically sensitive work of police agents is often coming under heavy public critique by the media, NGOs and other non-state actors who regularly contest or condemn it. Police agents exercise much discretion in implementing policies and they often strive to inject their own meaning into deportation practices. An ethnographic exploration of police practices divulges the wide gamut of views and approaches that different agents adopt. The picture that emerges from this exploration is not of well-disciplined police that work in a regimented and uniformed manner, but of agents who struggle to reconcile their own moral views and a sense of doing meaningful policing work. Following recent changes in polices and political discourse in Spain I argue that some of the most important amendments to deportation policies are not simply meant to improve regulations and practices, but are in fact aiming to appease the police force.

Barak Kalir is associate professor in the Department of Anthropology, University of Amsterdam. He is the codirector of the Institute for Migration and Ethnic Studies (IMES) the PI of a European Research Council project: 'The Social Life of State Deportation Regimes: studying the Meso-level of the implementation interface'. In this project we ethnographically examined the implementation of deportation in Greece, France, Spain, Israel, and Ecuador and Indonesia. Among his recent publications are: 2018. "Care-full Failure: how auxiliary assistance to poor Roma migrant women in Spain compounds marginalization". *Social Identities* (with Ioana Vrabiescu); 2017 "State desertion and "out-of-procedure" asylum seekers in the Netherlands". *Focaal: Journal of Global and Historical Anthropology*; 2017 "Between 'voluntary' return programs and soft deportation: Sending vulnerable migrants in Spain back 'home'" in Russell King & Zana Vahti (eds.) *Return Migration and Psychosocial Wellbeing: Discourses, Policy-Making and Outcomes for Migrants and their Families*.

Kami Urang Sini (We are the People of 'Here'): Irregular Migrants and the Agency of Equivocal Space

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Sabah, Malaysia, is home to an estimated two million irregular migrants, a large number having descended from the Philippines. Since the 1970s, thousands have migrated every year through porous sea borders, increasing their numbers exponentially. The Malaysian government responds to the presence of irregular migrants with policies of detention and deportation, but despite this, many still find ways to return to Sabah by boat. Irregular migrants for this research have articulated that these journeys back are made possible by a maritime heritage that is still honoured till today, albeit having undergone reformation and adapted to suit their lifestyle in modern day Sabah. Ethnographic data collected over twelve months in Sandakan shows the repeated use of the phrase *saya urang sini* (I am a person from here), a common answer from irregular migrants when asked of their reasons for returning. The use of *sini* (here) indicates more than just their sense of belonging to Sabah; it is in fact an adaptation to their in-betweenness and reflects an affiliation to a space that includes the Sulu Sea and parts of southern Mindanao. What makes the concept of *sini* especially compelling to irregular migrants is its assistance in coping with the constant security roadblocks, immigration raids, detention and deportation facilitated by the Malaysian government and the limited (and at times missing) recognition and rehabilitative support from the Philippines Government in bringing them back. *Sini* comes alive through the everyday stories of encounters with the Malaysian government and its apparatus of security, which reflects upon a geo-political attachment to the Sulu Sea as a thriving borderland. Thus, this paper will demonstrate the significance of the sea-migrant nexus that is key in how irregular migrants in Sabah self-identify within an ecology of ongoing security and the various ways the Sulu Sea impacts this narrative.

Vilashini Somiah is currently in the final stages of her PhD at the Department of Southeast Asian Studies at the National University of Singapore. As a junior scholar, she has always had a keen interest for underrepresented narratives in Borneo and has focused a great amount of time understanding the different perspectives of these voices and their motivations. Her PhD thesis focuses on the issues of deportation and socio-political mobility and how this impacts the way irregular migrants in Sabah engage with the Sulu Sea. She also holds two masters; a Masters in Research from the University of Malaya and another in Visual Ethnography on Southeast Asia from Ohio University. Outside of academia, she is a filmmaker (*Living Stateless*, 2014) and a writer, having published articles on socio-political issues in *Malaysia in The Affair*, *The Malay Mail Online*, *MalaysiaKini* and the *New Mandala*.

Artists and Autonomy in the Indian Contemporary Art World

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One effect of the growth of Indian contemporary art worlds and the globalization of the art market has been the increased presence of globally recognizable forms of art world infrastructure like the white cube gallery; art fairs; private museums; auction houses; artist residencies; and art collectives in India. In Mumbai, one of India's two main urban art centers (alongside Delhi), there were only a few private art galleries until the mid-1990s; since the millennium, dozens have sprung up, some coming and going, others enduring. This paper will focus on the significance and polysemy of the "white cube" gallery in the Mumbai contemporary art ecology, drawing upon fieldwork conducted in Mumbai between 2012 and 2018. On the one hand, the gallery form is understood by local artists, dealers, and curators to be a foreign, Western import and critiqued by some as evidence of enduring Euro-American hegemonies in terms of how contemporary art should be accessed, defined, displayed, exchanged, and, by extension, valued. On the other hand, in the near-total absence of public modern and contemporary art museums, and little public support or institutions dedicated to art, the private gallery is commonly understood to be "the only game in town," as the primary institutions through which artists can build their careers and as gatekeepers of the Indian art world. Artists thus aspire to be part of a gallery's stable, and spend extensive time cultivating means of getting a gallery's attention and patronage. Furthermore, the gallery is key space of art world social interaction, namely via openings and other events for the art-consuming public including collectors, even as it remains inaccessible for most people. It is thus a space of desire as well as anxiety; both central to art world activities and simultaneously an alien, elitist, and commercialized space (and thus, for many, detrimental to art).

Olga Kanzaki Sooudi is Assistant Professor of Anthropology at the University of Amsterdam. She received her PhD in Anthropology from Yale University, and was previously a Postdoctoral Researcher at the Amsterdam Centre for Globalisation Studies. Olga's research interests include art worlds, artists, cities, migration, and cultural translation, and she has conducted fieldwork in Mumbai, Tokyo, and New York City. She is the author of *Japanese New York: Migrant Artists and Self-Reinvention on the World Stage* (University of Hawai'i Press, 2014), an ethnography about migration as a form of self-reinvention and artistic work. Her current research is on Indian contemporary art worlds and the art market, extending her longstanding interests in how art worlds and creative production are shaped through globalization and urban life.

Translocal Urban Creativity: Worlding Hong Kong Cityscape from Below

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The vision to become the leading cultural metropolis in Asia reverberates throughout the cultural policies and redevelopment plans of Hong Kong. Along with the internationally known examples of the West Kowloon Cultural District development and Art Basel, numerous artistic and creative interventions are established with varying intentions to negotiate the diverse needs of city officials, urbanites, artists and people involved in creative industries. Deriving from continuous fieldwork periods since 2012, this paper sheds light on how varied forms of urban creativity are used against or in support of city image building in Hong Kong. While art and creativity are ever more important for Hong Kong's future that Yiu (2011) identifies as the "global creative metropolis", the varied aspirations and tensions between varied stakeholders are rarely addressed in previous studies. The aim of this paper is to elucidate how mediation between local, national, regional and global trends and discourses are inherent part of urban creativity in Hong Kong today. The engagement with the city image through acoustic spheres by Japanese sound artist, Akio Suzuki (b. 1941) is chosen for closer analysis in order to illuminate better the translocal site-responsiveness of urban creativity in urban fabric as well as the vibrations across the borders. I posit that critical examination of the intricate dissonances between both authorized and unauthorized forms of urban creativity and the spatial organization of the city benefits our understanding about not only on city branding but also how, urban creativity represent what Ong (2011) regards as situated experiments that are reinventing how to be global.

Minna Valjakka, PhD, is Research Fellow in the Asian Urbanisms Cluster at the Asia Research Institute. She holds a title of Adjunct Professor in Art History and Asian Studies at the University of Helsinki. During her MA and PhD studies, Dr Valjakka specialised in Chinese visual culture and in her doctoral dissertation, *Many Faces of Mao Zedong*, she analyzed Chairman Mao's image in contemporary Chinese art. Her current research focuses on alternative artistic and creative practices in urban public space and draws on extensive fieldwork and photographic documentation in East Asian cities since 2011. Through an interdisciplinary approach at the nexus of Asian Studies, Art Studies and Urban Studies, she examines urban creativity as a response to the distinctive trajectories of geopolitical circumstances, developments in arts and cultural policies, and translocal mediations. Dr Valjakka has published her research findings in journals and books, such as *China Information*, and *Routledge Handbook of Graffiti and Street Art*. She has also co-edited two volumes, *Visual Arts, Representations and Interventions in Contemporary China. Urbanized Interface* and an award winning Finnish-language volume on Chinese women and their agency.

Black Consciousness Beyond the Activist Circle? Sanitation Workers' Sense of (In)Justice in Post-Reform Cuba

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Raising "black consciousness" is central to the efforts of black anti-racist activists in Cuba. Despite the Cuban revolution's commitment to combatting racism, activists argue that "black experience" is still an everyday fact of life that, rather than being silenced through the myth of "racial democracy", should be built upon to achieve racial justice. Research amongst these activists, artists and intellectuals in Havana optimistically points to a growing trend of such black consciousness (e.g. Benson 2016, Clealand 2017, Perry 2016). But is black consciousness also on the rise amongst poor, working-class blacks in Havana – to those whom activists point to primarily when they talk of the increasing racial inequalities and poverty in contemporary Cuba? To answer this question, this paper draws on seven months of fieldwork amongst the state-employed, mostly black street sweepers and garbage collectors of a Centro Havana neighborhood where many black activists, artists and musicians gather. The paper analyzes the key elements that form black sanitation workers' sense of justice and injustice to see if workers indeed interpret some of the problems and conflicts they face as race-related. Following this analysis, then, the paper offers a critical, Gramscian discussion of the relevance of the anti-racist agenda to Havana's poor and of the extent to which a structural transformation of Cuba's "raceless" hegemony – and its stifling of anti-racist struggle – is indeed underway.

Luisa Steur is Assistant Professor at the Department of Anthropology of the University of Amsterdam and is also Lead Editor of *Focaal - Journal of Global and Historical Anthropology*. She gained her PhD from the Central European University (Budapest) in 2011. Her monograph *Indigenist mobilization: Confronting electoral Communism and precarious livelihoods in post-reform Kerala* came out with Berghahn in 2017. Her current research project investigates the relationship of Communist politics to the struggles of categorically oppressed people in Kerala (Dalits/Adivasis) and Cuba (Afro-Cubans) and analyzes the historical and political-economic circumstances that condition the different forms this relationship takes.

Intersecting Mobilities in Urban India: Fitness, Bodybuilding and the Changing Indian Urban Landscape

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In recent years the number of gyms in urban Indian have witnessed an explosive growth; a development closely connected to the dramatic increase in visibility of men with lean, muscular bodies in public space and popular media. This paper is particularly concerned with how the 'building' of such bodies relates to a rapidly changing Indian urban landscape. Building on extensive ethnographic fieldwork in a small neighborhood gym in South Delhi as well as interviews with gym trainers, bodybuilders and fitness enthusiasts across India, this paper draws upon a *mobilities* framework in order to understand how bodies relate to urban space, especially when the context is infused by notions of 'newness', 'change' and 'growth'. The paper suggests that mobilities need to be thought of as having both material (physical) and immaterial (social, cultural) dimensions. The material/physical here relates to India's urban landscape which is associated with the emergence of a new Indian middle class and concomitant spaces of leisure and consumption. Gyms need to be located within this context not just in terms of their physical location but also for the kind of social and cultural mobility that they facilitate especially within a middle class context. As fieldwork revealed, the (lean, muscular) body is often thought of and utilized as vehicle for this kind of mobility. By exploring a number of specific case studies this paper will show how gym/personal trainers make use of their (lean, muscular) body to diminish social distance between themselves (generally of lower middle class backgrounds) and their (upper middle class) clients . This will be situated within the context of India's rapidly changing urban landscape which in more general terms has the capacity to alter entrenched socio-economic markers of difference.

Michiel Baas is a Research Fellow with the Asian Migration Cluster of the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore. His current research work focuses on Indian mid-level skilled migrants in Singapore, India's migration industry, and new middle class professionals in urban India. Besides that he has published extensively on the trajectories of Indian student-migrants in Australia and Indian IT professionals in Bangalore.

Framing Spaces between India and China

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Which approaches do historians and other social scientists use to analyse social processes in the spaces between Yunnan and the Bay of Bengal? And how can these approaches contribute to scholarly critiques of state-centrism? To explore these questions, I examine some metaphors that researchers employ to frame these spaces. I distinguish four types: structured, liquid, spatial and sensory metaphors. I argue that these metaphors need closer scrutiny but that they can act as useful antidotes to the ways in which 'India' and 'China' (and 'Myanmar' and 'Bangladesh') routinely get framed in scholarly debate and policy discourse.

Willem van Schendel served as Professor of Modern Asian History at the University of Amsterdam and the International Institute of Social History. He works in the fields of history, anthropology, and sociology of Asia. Recent publications include *Embedding Agricultural Commodities: Using Historical Evidence, 1840s–1940s* (2017, ed.); *The Camera as Witness: A Social History of Mizoram, Northeast India* (2015; with Joy L.K. Pachuau); and *The Bangladesh Reader: History, Culture, Politics* (2013; ed. with Meghna Guhathakurta). For more publications, see: uva.academia.edu/WillemVanSchendel

Oral Narratives and Mobile Human Spaces between India, Myanmar China: *A Border Biography Approach*

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Colonial and post-colonial borders have distorted and divided spaces, which had historically, culturally and geographically been connected between India, China, and Myanmar. Decades of securitisation and fencing of ethnic corridors rendered them grey zones – difficult to access, prone to speculation and myth making.

Scholars have looked at these spaces both from IR or geopolitical perspective, as well as through valuable critical and ethnographic research challenging the notion of borders and grand narratives of state-making. But the accounts of people who lived their entire lives precariously, defying and crossing these borders with ease or who were itinerant travellers and settlers, living mobile lives forced on them through necessity, civil war or escape from the state – their histories and perceptions are few and far between. My paper offers a 'border biography' approach, derived from long term interviews with a group of Kachins (now based on the China Myanmar border), who made the dangerous journey to India in the heyday of both the Kachin war as well as India's crackdown on the Assamese 'insurgents' in the late 80s and who were eventually exiled back to a tumultuous Kachin state in 2011. Through their oral histories of traveling across homes, conflicts, and languages, I ask – what did places like the Naga council, Laiza, Hukong Valley, Tengchong, Ruili and Assam mean for trapped in ethno-nationalist, mobile histories? What can we as scholars learn from their inside stories of war, resource exploitation and moving borders? Lastly, how do their subversive and clandestine journeys shed light on the connected nature of space, and dis-logics of borders in the 20th-century histories between India, Myanmar, and China?

Jasnea Sarma is a Doctoral Candidate in Comparative Asian Studies at the National University of Singapore. Her research uses ethnographic and cartographic methods to explore conflicted and connected borderland spaces and routes in between India, Myanmar, and China, particularly around questions of resource exploitations, invasive infrastructures/ investments and their impacts on migration, militarization, and ethnicities in these frontiers.

Trading Large by being Small: Lao Cross-Border Traders and their Untold Stories of Cosmopolitan Entrepreneurship

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This paper examines how small-scale traders in the northwestern Lao province of Luang Namtha conceive, articulate and perform their everyday cross-border trade activities in a context of transnational connectivity recently intensified through regional transborder infrastructure projects and development programs, such as the Greater Mekong Subregion (GMS) interlinking Thailand, Laos and China through the 'Kunming-Bangkok Highway'. Instead of translating those regional initiatives reestablishing cross-border openness and fluidity as a revival of 'premodern flows' (Davis, 2003) along notions of ethnic or kinship ties, I provide an account of a borderland in which socially and ethnically diverse small-scale traders in Laos play a key role in facilitating the transnational circulation of a wide range of Chinese and Thai commodities. I demonstrate in different contexts and sites of this economic 'borderworld' (Sadan 2013) that their understudied centrality in fashioning multidimensional transnational social spaces resides in their rhetoric and performance of different facets of smallness, ranging from self-mockery at their economic inferiority vis-à-vis Thai and Chinese trading counterparts to narratives of downplaying and downscaling their trade activities to low-key performances at international trade fairs in China. I argue that their 'art of being small', in a sense of seeming insignificant, is a key factor contributing to their trading success.

The traders' narratives and practices I attend to stand for a truly new emerging profile of economic actors who engineer their transnational trade activities through versatile experimentation across social, ethnic, urban-rural and geographical boundaries, representing a diverse range of individuals with their different socio-economic backgrounds, narratives and ranges of experience tied to heightened cross-border mobility. A closer examination of their commonly shared downplaying language of ordinariness, discounting their efforts by referring to the convenience, easiness and triviality of crossing borders reveals significant, but scholarly rather neglected, trajectories involving high levels of risk-taking, resilience, pragmatism, and mostly self-taught transnational entrepreneurial sophistication.

Simon Rowedder has recently completed his PhD studies in the Department of Southeast Asian Studies at National University of Singapore. His thesis explores how small-scale cross-border traders perceive, and operate within, the borderlands of Yunnan, northern Laos and northern Thailand. He particularly develops the perspective of Lao traders whom he considers central to the functioning of this borderland economy. During his 11-month multi-sited fieldwork, Simon was affiliated with the Regional Center for Social and Sustainable Development (RCSD) at Chiang Mai University (Thailand). His longstanding interest in Yunnan-Southeast Asian borderlands is rooted in one year of studying at Yunnan University (China) as an undergraduate. Following his undergraduate degree in International Cultural and Business Studies with focus on Southeast Asia at the University of Passau (Germany), he received his master's degree in Asia-Pacific International Relations from the Research School for Southeast Asian Studies, Xiamen University (China).

Holding Patterns: Time and Labour in Nepali Aviation

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There has been a significant increase in new flight paths, low-cost airline fleets, and growing investment in airport infrastructure across Asia over the past decade. These developments in 'hyperbuilding' have been attributed to changes in labour mobility and the (often China-driven) creation of new markets and economic corridors through seemingly 'remote' regions of Asia. In Nepal in particular, new Gulf and Southeast Asian airline routes through Kathmandu accommodate growing groups of migrants who work in Doha and Kuala Lumpur, as well as more Nepali-speaking cabin crew. Expansion and improvement plans for Tribhuvan International Airport in Kathmandu proceed in tandem and in tension with continuing national post-earthquake reconstruction. Sino-Nepali joint ventures in aviation and infrastructure are becoming more common via the backdrop of the China-led One Belt One Road initiative. This paper uses ethnographic case studies in order to explore how we can theoretically and methodologically understand the relationships between three overlapping spheres of growth in aviation infrastructure and geopolitical change in Asia: 1) broad developments in cross-border and airspace infrastructure across Asia and the Middle East, 2) the increase and expansion of air routes and airports to, from, and within Nepal, and 3) the experiences on the ground (and in the air!) of those who directly experience such changes in Nepal: flight attendants, air route and airport planners, and migrant workers.

Tina Harris received her PhD in Anthropology in 2009 from the Graduate Center, City University of New York (CUNY). She is currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Amsterdam, and is a member of the AISSR Moving Matters research group. Her main research interests include globalization in Asia and the movement of people and goods across borders; her most recent project investigates how aviation workers experience efficiency measures and route changes at several airports around the world. She has conducted field research in Tibet, Nepal, and India, and has published articles on competing discourses over the reopening of a Sino-Indian mountain pass, borderland airports, and vertical borders. She is author of *Geographical Diversions: Tibetan Trade, Global Transactions* (UGa Press 2013), a book that examines how state power is both articulated and circumvented by cross-border traders in the Himalayas.

Uncertain Cartographies: Migrant Taxi Drivers in Kolkata

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This dissertation is set out as an ethnography-led exploration of the linkages between heterosexual masculinities and urban spaces in India. Drawing on insights from Urban Sociology, Mobility Studies, and Critical Studies on Men and Masculinities, the project responds to two broad research questions. The first, which is an empirical query, asks: In what ways do men inhabit city spaces? The second, which is a theoretical one, asks: How do men's relations to urban spaces produce the city as gendered? I attend to these concerns by following the mobile lives of two groups of male public transport workers – auto rickshaw – and taxi operators – in contemporary Kolkata, and their interactions with traffic police and commuters. The chapters through which this project unfolds, sketch the contours of three kinds of urban masculinities which emerge at the vortex of everyday interactions between law enforcers, commuters, and transport workers – a) 'neighborhood masculinity' of auto-rickshaw drivers, who see themselves as belonging to particular localities, b) 'migrant masculinity' of taxi drivers, who are immigrants from poorer states in the region, and c) 'police masculinity' of law enforcers, who consider themselves to be both saviors and victims of the urban public. By tracking men's mobile geographies in the city, the dissertation demonstrates the connections between ideologies of masculinity in everyday life and the reproduction of patriarchal power in urban spaces.

Romit Chowdhury is a doctoral student in Sociology at the National University of Singapore. In 2016, he held a 3-month visiting position in Anthropology at the University of Amsterdam. He works in the fields of Urban Sociology and Masculinity Studies. He has published on masculinity in the contexts of care-giving, men's rights movements, higher education, feminist methodology, sociability, and sexual violence in India. A volume he has co-edited – *Men and Feminism in India* – has been published by Routledge in 2018.

ABOUT THE CHAIRPERSONS & ORGANISERS

Itty Abraham specializes in international relations and science and technology studies. For his PhD dissertation, he compared the experiences of India and Brazil with respect to the development of indigenous high technologies. He has worked at the Social Science Research Council, East West Center, George Washington University and The University of Texas at Austin, where he was Director of the South Asia Institute. He moved to National University of Singapore in 2012 and is currently head of the Department of Southeast Asian Studies. He has written about nuclear power, foreign policy, geopolitics, and digital technologies. His most recent article is “The Andamans as a ‘sea of islands’: Reconnecting old geographies through poaching,” in *Inter-Asia Cultural Studies*, 19, 1, 2018.

Maitrii V. Aung-Thwin is Associate Professor of Myanmar / Southeast Asian History at the National University of Singapore. His research is concerned with nation-building, heritage, identity-politics, and resistance in Myanmar. His publications include: *A History of Myanmar since Ancient Times: Traditions and Transformations* (2013), *The Return of the Galon King: History, Law, and Rebellion in Colonial Burma* (2011) and *A New History of Southeast Asia* (2010). Dr Aung-Thwin served on the Association of Asian Studies (AAS) Board of Directors and chaired the AAS’s Southeast Asia Council. He is currently a trustee of the Burma Studies Foundation (USA), member of the AAS’s Conference Program Committee (2017-2019), Convener of the Comparative Asian Studies PhD Program, and editor of the *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*.

Michiel Baas is a Research Fellow with the Asian Migration Cluster of the Asia Research Institute, National University of Singapore. His current research work focuses on Indian mid-level skilled migrants in Singapore, India’s migration industry, and new middle class professionals in urban India. Besides that he has published extensively on the trajectories of Indian student-migrants in Australia and Indian IT professionals in Bangalore.

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Erella Grassiani is an assistant professor in anthropology at the University of Amsterdam. Her research is part of a wider project on privatization and globalization of security with a specific focus on Israel and security mobilities (SECURCIT). It traces the flows of the (Israeli) security worldwide and look at the way cultural ideas, technologies and consultants move around globally. In the past she has done extensive research on the Israeli military and has published a book on the topic in 2013 with Berghahn Books: *Soldiering under Occupation processes of Numbing among Israeli soldiers in the Al-Aqsa Intifada*. Her teaching involves issues around the anthropology of conflict and violence, identity, nationalism and power relations and research methodology.

Tina Harris received her PhD in Anthropology in 2009 from the Graduate Center, City University of New York (CUNY). She is currently an Assistant Professor in the Department of Anthropology at the University of Amsterdam, and is a member of the AISSR Moving Matters research group. Her main research interests include globalization in Asia and the movement of people and goods across borders, with a particular emphasis on exploring the theoretical connections between cultural anthropology, human geography, and political economy. She has conducted field research in Tibet, Nepal, and India, and has published articles on competing discourses over the reopening of a Sino-Indian mountain pass, borderland airports, and vertical borders. She is author of *Geographical Diversions: Tibetan Trade, Global Transactions* (UGa Press 2013), a book that examines how state power is both articulated and circumvented by cross-border traders in the Himalayas.

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Gerben Nooteboom is Associate Professor at the Department of Anthropology at the University of Amsterdam, The Netherlands. He teaches courses on State and Society, Asian Studies, Social Theory and Anthropology of Development. As a researcher, he has worked on issues of social welfare, poverty and development as well as on rural transformation, livelihood change and human adaptation to environmental change. Most of his fieldwork has been done in Indonesia (East and Central Java and East Kalimantan). Some of his recent publications include: 'Anthropology and Inclusive Development'. *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability* 24, 63-67 (with L. Bakker (2017)); *Forgotten people: poverty, risk and social security in Indonesia: the case of the Madurese* (2015) (Monograph) Leiden: Brill; *Beyond the Global Landgrab Hype* (with L. Bakker (2014)); *Magic Bullets and Development* (with Mario Rutten (2011)); *Out of Wedlock, Migrant-Police Partnerships in East Kalimantan* (in Aspinall and Van Klinken, eds. (2011)); *Against Green Development Fantasies: Resource Degradation and the Lack of Community Resistance in the Middle Mahakam Wetlands, East Kalimantan, Indonesia* (with De Jong (2011)); *Styles of Social Security in Upland East Java* (in Koning and Hüsken, eds. (2006)).

Willem van Schendel served as Professor of Modern Asian History at the University of Amsterdam and the International Institute of Social History. He works in the fields of history, anthropology, and sociology of Asia. Recent publications include *Embedding Agricultural Commodities: Using Historical Evidence, 1840s–1940s* (2017, ed.); *The Camera as Witness: A Social History of Mizoram, Northeast India* (2015; with Joy L.K. Pachuau); and *The Bangladesh Reader: History, Culture, Politics* (2013; ed. with Meghna Guhathakurta). For more publications, see: uva.academia.edu/WillemVanSchendel

Olga Kanzaki Sooudi is Assistant Professor of Anthropology at the University of Amsterdam. She received her PhD in Anthropology from Yale University, and was previously a Postdoctoral Researcher at the Amsterdam Centre for Globalisation Studies. Olga's research interests include art worlds, artists, cities, migration, and cultural translation, and she has conducted fieldwork in Mumbai, Tokyo, and New York City. She is the author of *Japanese New York: Migrant Artists and Self-Reinvention on the World Stage* (University of Hawai'i Press, 2014), an ethnography about migration as a form of self-reinvention and artistic work. Her current research is on Indian contemporary art worlds and the art market, extending her longstanding interests in how art worlds and creative production are shaped through globalization and urban life.