

# Sussex Anthropologist

Newsletter of the Department of Anthropology, University of Sussex

## Student Prizes

The dissertations of two of last year's graduates have been **Highly Commended at The Undergraduate Awards.**



**Elena Corradi** was recognised for her essay on Fairtrade.



**Marta Verani** was awarded for her work on the Anthropology of Islam.

MA student **Philippa Fielding's** dissertation on the Psychiatrization of War



Survivors in the 'Developing' World has won The Anthropology and Mental Health Interest Group student paper prize.

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## Alice Wilson



Alice's research concerns the political and economic anthropology of the Middle East and North

Africa, and in particular transformations in the relationship between governing authorities and governed subjects.



Her book, *Sovereignty in Exile*, explores insights into sovereignty and state power by tracing revolutionary social change, legal reform, democratization, and economic entwinements of aid and informal trade in the Sahrawi refugee camps governed by the liberation movement for Western Sahara. In her current research, Alice is working on long-term legacies of, and recent aspirations for, social change in Dhufar, southern Oman.

## Three New Faces

### Beth Mills



Beth is joining us from IDS and was previously Deputy Director of the AIDS and Society

Research Unit at the University of Cape Town.

Her research, focused largely in Southern Africa and Latin America, lies at the interface of political and medical anthropology. It has explored women's embodiment of HIV and AIDS biomedicine and how this affected their perception of and political engagement with actors in a global network that governed the development and distribution of AIDS biomedical technologies.

Beth's research interests also include the political economy of gender and global health, women's political participation in post-conflict regions, and legal and policy strategies for addressing discrimination related to sexuality.

### Nayanika Mathur

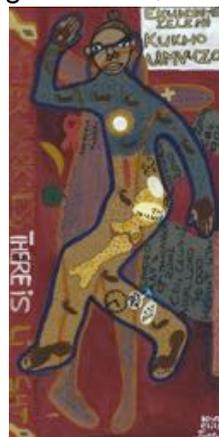


Nayanika's research and teaching interests center on the

anthropology of economics, politics, development, and law with an area interest in South Asia and the Himalaya. Her recent monograph, *Paper Tiger*, is an ethnography of the developmental Indian state. It traces the translation of two widely commended laws into practice through an ethnography of quotidian bureaucratic life.

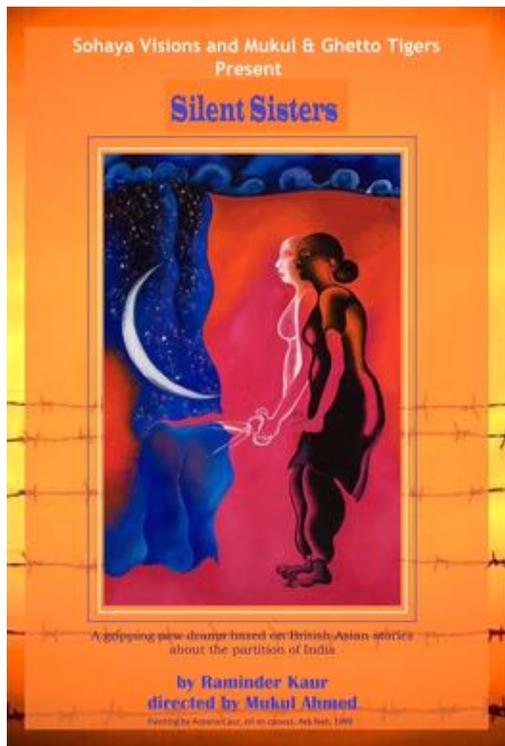
Nayanika is now building on this work with a postdoctoral project centred on human-big cat conflict in South Asia. Working with victims of attacks by big cats, hunters, conservationists, wildlife biologists, animal rights activists, and photographers as well as archival work in Delhi and London it describes how humans share space with big cats that might - but also might not - be predatory.

Nayanika's other long-term research interest is on the radical overhauling of India's identity infrastructure through the use of biometric technologies.



Bongiwe's body map redistribution.





## New Play by Raminder Kaur

Noor and Amrit find themselves thrown together while madness is let loose on earth around the time when the two countries, India and Pakistan, are born out of a bloody partition in 1947. One woman is Muslim, the other Sikh-Hindu. They are forced to make terrible decisions, and face the silences that they would rather suppress. Their only salvation seems to lie in the jaws of death. But even this seems to escape them.

Silent Sisters is part of research and development for the 70 year commemoration in 2017 of India and Pakistan's independence and partition. Over 10 million people crossed the border to what they hoped was safety with their own religious communities. Thousands were abused, abducted, forcibly converted and killed. Based on interviews and workshops, Silent Sisters is a fictional story in tribute to those who were affected by partition, and to those who struggle with violence and displacement across the world today.

The play is supported by the Arts Council and the Sussex Asia Centre. Performances at Crawley Hawth (3rd October) and the Attenborough Centre (4th October).

## Congratulations to our recent PhDs

### Ellen Vandenberghe:

Networks, masculinities and social control: exploring the connections between inequality and violence in Venezuela

### Santiago Ripoli:

Food Sovereignty and Campesino moral economies: Market embeddedness, autonomy and solidarity in the Matagalpa Highlands of Nicaragua

**John Spall:** The Ethics of Manhood in Postwar Huambo, Angola

**Shrikant Borkar:** An Ethnographic Study of DFID's Social Exclusion Policy (1997-2010)

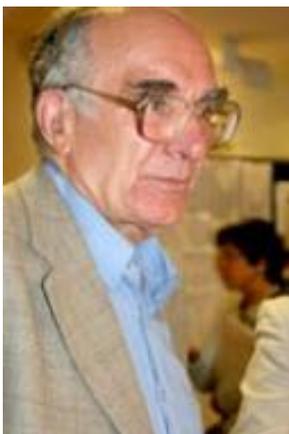
**Bronwen Gillespie:** Much More than Malnutrition: Motherhood and the State in the Peruvian Andes

And finally **Sajida Ally** whose thesis on Sri Lankan transnational domestic workers' health experiences in the Arab Gulf investigates the complexity of what 'wellness' means to migrants through the Tamil notion of 'suham'. Suham's complexity involves its distinct inclusion of moral, existential and spiritual dimensions of health, as well as physical and mental conditions. The thesis examines how migrant women negotiated suham through changing kin and communal relations

and materialities of livelihood, recruitment and sponsorship regimes that spanned rural Muslim Sri Lanka (Kalpitiya) and Kuwait. It builds the case that health and wellness is simultaneously experienced and constructed by migrant women in a process that is as much political as it is biological.



## Other News



**Professor Emeritus Ralph Grillo** will be awarded this year's RAI Lucy Mair Marsh Medal for Applied

Anthropology. The award is for excellence in the application of anthropology to the relief of poverty and distress, and to the active recognition of human dignity.

**Raminder Kaur** gave the keynote speech at the recent Sexing the City workshop organised by the University of Amsterdam.



CONFERENCE

**SEXING THE CITY**

EXHIBITION SCREENINGS TALKS WORKSHOP

Read our new **Culture and Capitalism Blog**, with pieces written by staff and students on a range of current issues. <https://cultureandcapitalismblog.wordpress.com>

## From the Field: Istanbul

### The Anthropologist's Brexit



#### The Business of Homelessness



by Joe Baldwin Homelessness in Brighton, UK 'is so in your face...you just can't avoid it,' said one frontline worker at a volunteer-run day-centre for homeless people. The organisation works with young people in the city who sleep rough or are insecurely housed. I volunteered there one day a week as a frontline worker beginning in... [Read More](#)

#### On the UK Referendum

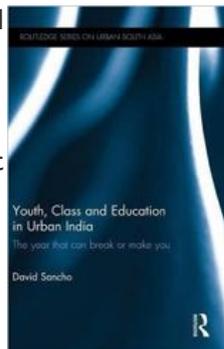


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### Hot Off the Press!

**David Sancho**, *Youth, Class and Education in Urban India* (Routledge, 2016)

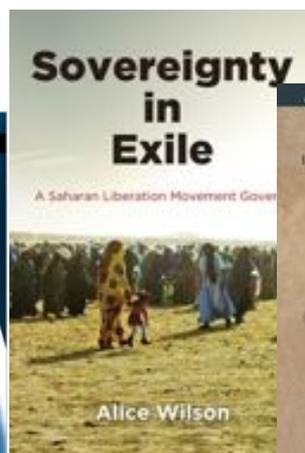
Set in urban Kerala David's book discusses changing educational landscapes in the South Indian city of Kochi, a local hub for trade, tourism, and cosmopolitan middle-class lifestyles. Based on his extensive fieldwork David examines the way education features as a major way the transformation of the city, and India in general, are experienced and envisaged by upwardly-mobile residents. Schooling is shown to play a major role in urban lifestyles, with increased privatisation representing a response to the educational strategies of a growing and heterogeneous middle class, whose educational choices reflect broader projects of class formation within the context of religious and caste diversity particular to the region.



**Alice Wilson**, *Sovereignty in Exile: A Saharan Liberation Movement Governs* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 2016)

Alice's book explores sovereignty and state power through the case of a liberation movement, The Sahrawi Arab Democratic Republic (SADR), that set out to make itself into a state.

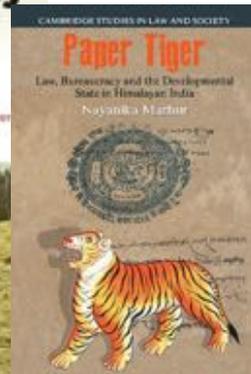
Drawing on her time living with Sahrawi refugee families, Alice examines how tribal social relations are undermined, recycled, and have reemerged as the refugee community negotiates governance, resolves disputes, manages social inequalities, and improvises alternatives to taxation.



**Nayanika Mathur**, *Paper Tiger: Law, Bureaucracy and the Developmental State in Himalayan India*. (Cambridge University Press, 2015)

A big cat overthrows the Indian state and establishes a reign of terror over the residents of a Himalayan town. A welfare legislation aimed at providing employment and commanding a huge budget becomes 'unimplementable' in a region bedeviled by high levels of poverty and unemployment. *Paper Tiger* provides a lively ethnographic account of how such seemingly bizarre scenarios come to be in contemporary India.

Nayanika's book presents a unique explanation for why and how progressive laws can do what they do and not, ever-so-often, what they are supposed to do. It reveals the double-edged effects of the reforms that have been ushered in by the post-liberalization Indian state, particularly the effort to render itself more transparent and accountable.



## A summer sojourn on Lesbos: epicentre of refugee arrivals into Europe - Jane Cowan

This July I returned to the seaside town of Plomari, on the Greek island of Lesbos to teach at the University of the Aegean - University of Amsterdam Summer School. With Lesbos itself at the epicentre of refugee arrival into Europe this year's focus was on 'the refugee phenomenon'.

When I left Plomari last year about 1000 people per day were crowding into inflatable dinghies to make the 6-mile sea crossing from Turkey, washing up somewhere on an 8-mile stretch of Lesbos' northern coast. In subsequent months, from November 2015 until March 2016, those numbers increased, often to 5000 per day. In the early phase of this human flow, when Greek authorities were unable to cope, a humanitarian presence mushroomed, with international and Greek activists, NGOs, volunteers and UNHCR professionals setting up facilities and being there to receive the refugees. International media brought us thousands of images of refugees climbing out of overcrowded boats, queuing for food or dry clothes and trudging exhausted, soaked by winter rains, on the coastal highway some 40 miles to the capital city, Mytilene. With the signing of the EU-Turkey Agreement of 18 March 2016, the situation has changed dramatically.



Local fishing and rescue boats used to rescue migrants



two sides took measures to reduce 'irregular migration' from Turkey to Greece, the refugee flow to Lesbos has dwindled to an intermittent trickle.

In seminars, fieldtrips and panels at the school we considered various aspects of the refugee phenomenon: the humanitarian industry it has spawned, the ethics of photographic representation, the challenges of hearing the many voices involved (refugees, activists, NGOs, volunteers, humanitarian professionals, state officials and locals) and the ways local communities were responding and being affected. We visited Karatepe, a reception centre on the outskirts of Mytilene, where 'vulnerable refugees'—in this context, primarily families—were housed until they could be resettled. A second group visited Moria, a now-notorious facility where mostly young men live in overcrowded conditions.

Wanting to place these vivid—sometimes visceral—experiences in a historical context, I aimed in my seminars to remind students of the origins of the categories of

'refugee' as well as 'minority' in the logics of bounded and internally homogeneous nation-states of the 'New Europe' constructed by diplomats after the First World War. I told them how international bureaucrats at the League of Nations, along with state officials, NGOs and internationalist activists, tried in the 1920s to manage and monitor migrant and refugee movement across the newly configured European space; in certain ways, this resonated with what some students knew about contemporary border techniques in Europe and elsewhere. Consideration of the historical dimension was crucial in building an international and comparative perspective on cultures, migrations and borders.

Further information on the summer school is available at: <https://migbord2016.pns.aegean.gr/>



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### Sussex Anthropology: Who We Are

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