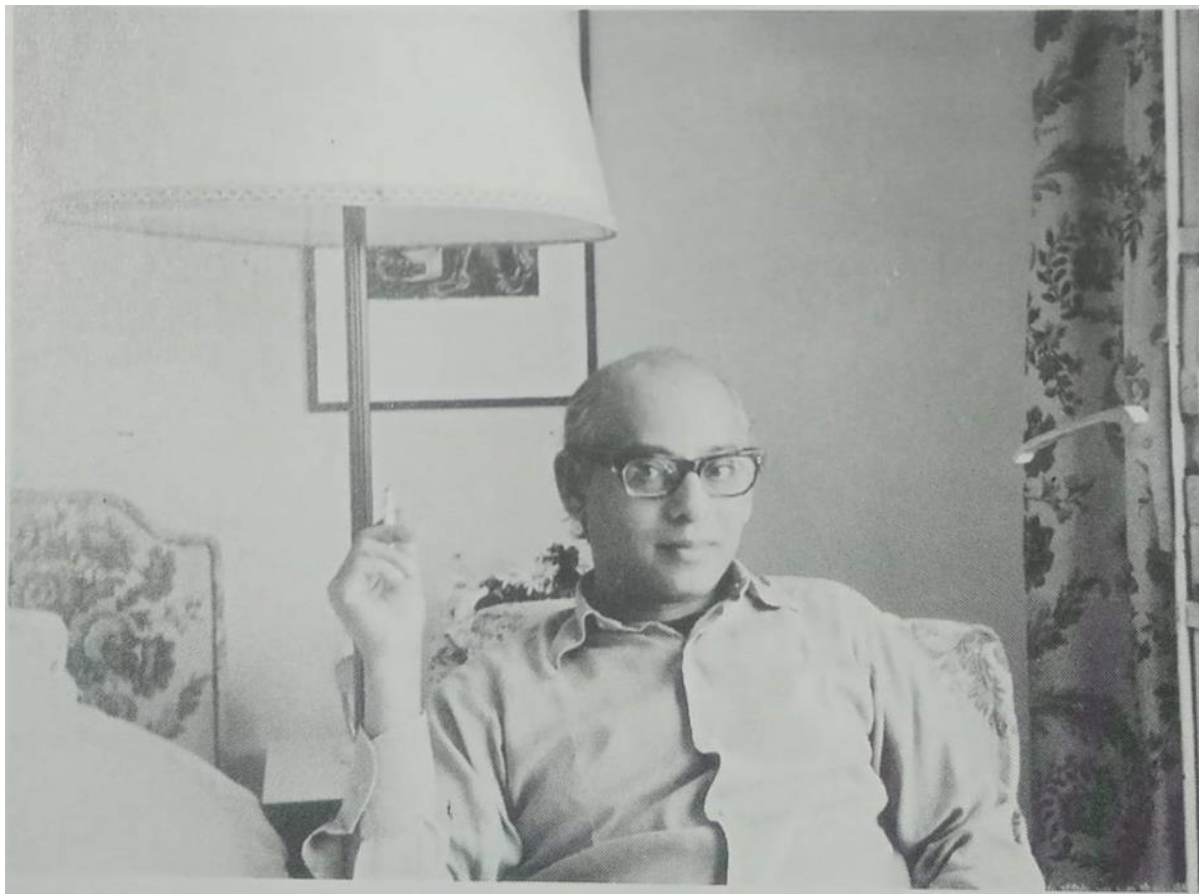


## Ranajit Guha 1923-2023; The Sussex Years or as his contemporaries there remember him.

Vinita Damodaran



Ranajit Guha in 1969, Source: Mechthild Guha, *Danube, Ganges and other life streams*, Permanent Black, 2014

Ranajit Guha's death in April, signals the passing of a significant historiographical moment. Guha who was born in Backergunge district, in British India, now in Bangladesh spent the best part of twenty years at Sussex University. Its solid tradition in radical history and the history of material culture and peasant society in the Global South, exemplified his work and that of the early Subaltern Studies School. His career spanned five decades as an academic, a writer and a radical intellectual and by the 1980s he had become a celebrated figure. His many recent obituaries however skate over his Sussex years from 1962 to 1980. Little is known about his time there, the period when he was developing his ideas on subaltern history along with a group of British historians working on 'history from below'. As one student remembers, Sussex in the 60s was 'a bit like Oxbridge without the punting, and with Basil Spence arches instead of dreaming spires. In the '60s everything was possible, and Sussex and the other new universities had a pioneering vision.'<sup>1</sup>

Guha was recruited by the Dean of the School of Social Sciences at Sussex in 1962, Asa Briggs a leading social historian in his own right; he retired in 1982 to join the Australian National University. On retirement from ANU, Guha moved to Vienna with his wife Mechthild (whom he had met at Sussex, as a post-doctoral researcher on the Maji Maji rebellion,) and spent the remainder of his life there. The beginnings of Sussex University in 1961, saw Asa Briggs become its first Professor of History, the

<sup>1</sup> Viv Griffiths, Campus and curfews: Sussex Uni in the '60s, <https://sussexbylines.co.uk/memories-of-sussexuniversity-in-the-1960s/>, 17 August 2022

founding Dean of the School of Social Studies and the first Pro-Vice-Chancellor. Institutional memory is short but a quick raid of the Sussex archives by Alice Corble, the new library fellow interested in Sussex's radical history, reveals the reading list for his special subject (a course which every history honours student takes as a rite of passage to a possible academic career) on Imperialism and a second document, a note by him to all African and Asian Studies faculty in 1973 which was an outspoken attack on then Dean, David Pocock and refers to the debate on the visit of Samuel Huntington to the campus which was being legitimised on the grounds of free speech. 'Let me make it quite clear to you Guha wrote: 'You may be the dean or God almighty himself. But you cannot decide for me on which side of the American war in Vietnam I should take my stand. As one who belongs to the third world I feel I have had enough of academics who would not condemn the rape of our continents, the defoliation of our forests, the pollution of our waters and skies, the destruction of our villages and the contamination of embryos in the wombs of our women by US Napalm bombing, germ bombing, defoliation bombing, nuclear bombing and yet come out with a load of sophistries on an American war mongers' freedom of speech on the campus.'<sup>2</sup> Here was Guha in full flow.

Guha's academic forays began when he left for France in 1946 having been selected to represent the Communist Party of India in the secretariat of the World Union of Democratic Youth in Paris and where he stayed for the next six years travelling around Europe before coming back to India in 1953. He returned to Europe, to England this time, in 1959 for a fellowship at the University of Manchester. It was in Paris, India, and Manchester that his early work, *A Rule of Property for Bengal* work was nurtured. Asa Briggs had met Guha on a British Council visit to Calcutta in 1957<sup>3</sup> and was so enamoured by his talent that he encouraged him to move to England. Frustrated by the conservatism of the Oxford university curriculum where he taught, Briggs had taken a new job in Leeds where he began to build Labour history embracing the work of E.J. Hobsbawm and E.P. Thomson. When he moved to Sussex in 1961, he was interested in constructing a new and innovative system of teaching and learning. He also encouraged the formation of the interdisciplinary Institute for Development Studies (IDS) which became highly influential in an emerging field.<sup>4</sup> Guha the brilliant Indian historian he had met in Calcutta was soon to become part of that vision.

As the renowned art historian Partha Mitter records: 'Guha's first book to draw scholarly attention was *A Rule of Property for Bengal: an essay on the idea of permanent settlement* (1963), an elegant, erudite and highly original discourse on the intellectual roots of the Permanent Settlement, introduced by the British in Bengal in 1793. In contrast to previous works on the subject which mainly relied on British sources, his novel approach demonstrated his deep knowledge of French theoretical writings, especially the Physiocrats.'<sup>5</sup> An earlier version of the manuscript was submitted to the Sorbonne for a PhD which was turned down. Appropriately, the work was published under the auspices of the École Pratique des Hautes Études at the Sorbonne, as it had been suggested by Daniel Thorner. 'C. Collin Davies, the doyen of Indian History at Oxford in the 1960s, warmly praised the work when it came

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<sup>2</sup> Ranajit Guha, 'To all AFRAS Faculty, Copy of a note June 18<sup>th</sup>, 1973 from Ranajit Guha to David F. Pocock (Dean AFRAS) in reply to the latter's memorandum (June 13<sup>th</sup>, 1973) concerning the Huntington Affair, Sussex University archives, (I owe this reference to Alice Corble). Alas his dates of joining and leaving Sussex university are not available via the alumni office.

<sup>3</sup> In 1951 Briggs travelled to Africa, to Accra on the initiative of the Director of Extramural Studies at Oxford who arranged for him to write six articles on the political situation in what would soon be Ghana (then the Gold Coast) for a periodical, *West Africa*. He met Kwame Nkrumah, later leader of independent Ghana, who had just won the country's first general election.

<sup>4</sup> [https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/documents/1005/24\\_Briggs\\_F\\_1837\\_9\\_11\\_17.pdf](https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/documents/1005/24_Briggs_F_1837_9_11_17.pdf) Briggs had worked in military intelligence during the war, <https://www.thebritishacademy.ac.uk/publishing/memoirs/humanities-scholars-who-worked-military-intelligence-second-world-war/>

<sup>5</sup> Partha Mitter, 'In Memoriam, Ranajit Guha', May 2023. I would like to thank Prof Partha Mitter for his fulsome note.

out. Guha's intensive reading in this period particularly on Physiocracy was standing him in good stead for the 'work remains a landmark in economic history that challenged conventional wisdom, especially colonial writings about the Permanent Settlement.'<sup>6</sup> In his preface to *the Rule of Property in Bengal* dated August 1962 from Manchester, Guha thanks Dr K.A. Ballhatchet, Dr George Blyn, Professor Asa Briggs, Professor Holden Furber, Dr Daniel Thorner and Dr Peter Wexler for having read through the manuscript and offering their comments.<sup>7</sup>

By the time the book came out in 1963, he had joined Sussex University as a lecturer after his stint in Manchester, but his career progression was not as smooth as it could have been. Guha did not yet have a PhD. It was perhaps on the basis of his forthcoming work that Sussex University hired him. Briggs though was unconventional and was known for hiring people without PhD's on grounds of their brilliance. At the interdisciplinary School of African and Asian studies (AFRAS), which came to represent the promise of a post-colonial world, a new horizon of research beckoned. 'Sussex had also recruited some remarkable anthropologists of South Asia such as David Pocock, Scarlett Epstein and F.G. Bailey at that time.'<sup>8</sup> It was Briggs above all who had had built up the Indian History section in the University.<sup>9</sup> David Hardiman makes the important point that 'AFRAS thus came into being dedicated to the principle of studying Africa and Asia from a post-colonial perspective—in contrast to places such as SOAS, Oxford and Cambridge, where the study of regions that were a part of empire had been devised with the aim of training colonial administrators. With Anthony Low invited to be Dean by Briggs on a visit to Australia, Low's former student at the ANU, Peter Reeves, moved from Australia, as did Bruce Graham, a political scientist to join AFRAS. These were Sussex's radical years. In IDS the "Sussex Manifesto" led by Hans Singer, Charles Cooper, R.C. Desai, Christopher Freeman, Oscar Gish, Stephen Hill and Geoffrey Oldham called for radical change in international action about harnessing science and technology to improve the development outcomes of newly decolonised countries. Nor were the new South Asian faculty confined to just AFRAS in this period. In English, in the School of English and American Studies, the Sri Lankan Shakespearean scholar, Gamini Salgado held sway from 1963-76. He 'made Jacobean drama come alive, memorably produced *the Changeling* and *Sejanus* and played Lucio... in *Measure for Measure*'.<sup>9</sup> Minoli Salgado, Gamini Salgado's niece and herself a Sussex alumna from the vibrant period of the 1980's, reflects that 'the first lecturers in English at Sussex were drawn from across the globe creating an internationalist foundation for the university that spoke directly to its pioneering interdisciplinary model'.<sup>10</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> Partha Mitter, 'In Memorium'. See also, Review by C. Colin Davies,

<https://www.cambridge.org/core/services/aop-cambridge-core/content/view/FEB401C3D8A191C1C8CC2952960C74D2/S0041977X00071986a.pdf/ranajit-guha-a-rule-of-property-for-bengal-an-essay-on-the-idea-of-permanent-settlement-ecole-pratique-des-hautesetudessorbonne-sixieme-section-sciences-economiques-et-sociales-le-monde-doutre-mer-pa.pdf>

<sup>7</sup> R. Guha, *A Rule of Property for Bengal, as essay on the Permanent Settlement*, 1963

<sup>8</sup> David Hardiman, At Sussex with Anthony Low, 1970–1971, *Journal of South Asian Studies*.

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00856401.2016.1124232?journalCode=csas20>, vol 29, 2016

<sup>9</sup> David Hardiman, At Sussex with Anthony Low, 1970–1971, *Journal of South Asian Studies*.

<https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/00856401.2016.1124232?journalCode=csas20>

<sup>9</sup> Stephen Metcalf, Gamini Salgado's obituary in the Sussex Bulletin, June 25<sup>th</sup>, 1986

<https://archive.sussex.ac.uk/news/bulletin/bulletin/www.sussex.ac.uk/internal/bulletin/downloads/19801989/1985/June/19850625.pdf>

<sup>10</sup> Minoli Salgado, Personal Communication, May 2023

The teaching was excellent. Partha Mitter, who joined the Sussex history faculty in 1974, remembers that Guha took a great interest in his appointment and in interdisciplinary studies which Sussex and AFRAS was renowned for. As a young lecturer Mitter sat in on Guha's classes on Gandhi. 'I was riveted by his analysis, highly original and explained in a lucid and vivid manner. He took three early campaigns of Gandhi that were a prelude to the limited success of the first Non-Cooperation Movement at Chauri Chaura (1921). The stakeholders of these movements were respectively: poor peasants of Champaran in Bihar; prosperous Patidars of Kheda; and the mill-workers of Ahmadabad, each one demonstrating the diminishing returns of Gandhi's technique. This was strikingly demonstrated in the burning of the police station at Chauri Chaura in 1921. The class was a model of clarity and exemplary analysis.'<sup>11</sup> For Gill Scott, 'it was extremely fortunate to have been a student of Ranajit Guha and for that to have been at Sussex in the late 1970s when small group teaching was in its heyday.' She writes, 'A skilled and generous educator, he combined vast erudition and conceptual sophistication with a deep-seated belief in teaching as an integral and dynamic element of scholarly practice. He was also unusually willing to listen to and learn from his students. She notes 'In his preface to *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India* (1983), he records that he had tried out his ideas for the book with his undergraduates in 'seminars, tutorials and extra-mural conversations' and how encouraged he had been by the interest we took in his work'<sup>12</sup>

For David Hardiman, the pace was rigorous. Hardiman reminisces that he left the LSE because there 'was little Social History, even though in Britain this was the 'golden age' of the Social History of E.P. Thompson, Christopher Hill, Eric Hobsbawm and others'. He records his deep disappointment with regard to the change he looked for: 'I was after all a member of the 1960s generation, and LSE was at the heart of student dissent in the UK at that time. I found myself stirred by the passion of marches and demonstrations, and the belief—in retrospect utterly misguided—that society in the West was on the cusp of revolutionary change.' Sussex was different. When he arrived in Sussex in the autumn of 1970 it was a happening place. The School of Asian and African Studies which had been created under Briggs as part of the Sussex map of learning taught a BA in Indian history. 'I had never worked so hard in my life, and I felt drained at times and even depressed by the sheer unrelenting grind of it all. I found that this was the Sussex way—with its emphasis on face-to-face teaching in small groups and continuous assessment—rather than the one set of exams at the end of the three-year degree course, which was the system in London at the time. The end result was, however, that I had undergone a crash course in the subject, which was to stand me in good stead for the rest of my career as a historian of South Asia.'<sup>12</sup>

Hardiman was taught primarily by Anthony Low, with the assistance of Hew McLeod who replaced Guha who was on study leave in India that year and an expert on Sikh history and knew Punjabi fluently. When Hardiman finally met Guha as a doctoral student in India starting off on his research, the latter encouraged him to immerse himself in Gujarat, learn the language, read the rich literature in Gujarati, and take time to construct a real history of its people. It is interesting that Guha told Hardiman that he wanted to 'establish a whole new school of Indian History at Sussex to challenge the existing clusters in Oxford and Cambridge, which he said were still producing history in a nineteenth-century mode.' Instead, Guha invoked a new kind of history from below, 'the power of beliefs and myths in history, and how—for example—the idea of Gandhi was as important as the reality of the man.' 'I paid two more visits to Guha's apartment', Hardiman remembers where—besides telling him of my findings—I spent many hours listening to him talking on 'every subject under the sun'. Later after obtaining his DPhil (Sussex) for a dissertation titled 'Peasant Agitations in Kheda District, Gujarat 1917–1934' Hardiman joined the Subaltern Studies project and became an important member of it.

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<sup>11</sup> Partha Mitter, 'In Memorium'.

<sup>12</sup> David Hardiman, At Sussex.

<sup>12</sup> Gill Scott, AFRAS 1976-79 (South Asian History) personal communication

Whilst he made a deep impression on his younger colleagues and students, Guha found it harder to impress the Sussex history department and languished for nearly two decades as a mere lecturer. He had published little after his first book, *A Rule of Property in Bengal*. The Sussex school system meant that historians sometimes failed to connect with each other if they were in different schools which may sometimes have led to a sense of isolation. James Thomson, a brilliant economic historian, records that though they coincided he never really spoke to him being principally confined to the school of Social Sciences.<sup>13</sup> However, another contemporary of his, the pioneering historian of labour and cooperative history, Stephen Yeo recorded ‘I/ we just LIKED and RESPECTED him, politically, personally, intellectually as a fearless, frank, expert, radical, un pompous friend and colleague with no-illusions, in British terms class-less and so a real breathe of fresh air on campus and off. An innovative scholar and warm human being.’<sup>14</sup> Several Sussex historians were influential in conception and production of the *History Workshop* journal in its early days and Stephen Yeo was one of them.

The end of his Sussex sojourn was followed by *Subaltern Studies* volume 1 in 1982. Guha had moved to ANU in 1980 from Sussex being invited by the former Dean of AFRAS, Anthony Low who had returned to Australia. In the preface written from his new Canberra abode in August 1981, Guha wrote, ‘The aim of the present collection of essays, the first of a series, is to promote a systematic and informed discussion of subaltern themes in the field of South Asian studies, and thus help to rectify the elitist bias characteristic of much research and academic work in this particular area. The word ‘subaltern’ in the title stands for the meaning as given in the Concise Oxford Dictionary, that is, ‘of inferior rank’. It will be used in these pages as a name for the general attribute of subordination in South Asian society whether this is expressed in terms of class, caste, age, gender and office or in any other way’.<sup>15</sup> It had been his intention to set up a radical new school of history whilst at Sussex, but it was in ANU that this seed had germinated. His second classic, *Elementary Aspects of Peasant Insurgency in Colonial India* (1983) followed soon after, a project that had been brewing in his years at Sussex.<sup>16</sup> It turned our attention away from dominant elite groups to the peasants’ viewpoint and their agency in resisting both the colonial regime and exploitative landlords. As Mitter notes, ‘By common consent what will remain as Guha’s lasting achievement, is his intellectual leadership of a group of historians, known under the rubric of the Subaltern Studies Collective, which played a major role in the development of postcolonial studies by pioneering research in ‘history from below.’’<sup>17</sup> By the time Guha left Sussex, People’s history had become popular with the flag bearers at Sussex pointing to the limitations of Marxist orthodoxy. But as the critics were quick to point out, that ‘the people’ were unduly idealised. This was similar to the criticism that was to haunt Subaltern studies later. Subaltern history built on these traditions turning to Antonio Gramsci to ‘recover’ the ‘voice’ of the peasant with Guha arguing that the ‘historiography of Indian nationalism has long been dominated by colonialist elitism and bourgeois-nationalist elitism.’<sup>18</sup> Through his analysis of the Subaltern Guha had provided a radical new framework for understanding peasant protest.

How much of these ideas were carved in association with his compatriots at Sussex at that time? The development of radical historical scholarship, associated with ‘history from below’ and the work of figures like Eric Hobsbawm, George Rude, Christopher Hill and E.P. Thompson in the U.K. had transformed the field of history through a study of the poor, the workers and peasants, on their own

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<sup>13</sup> James Thomson, Personal communication, May 2023

<sup>14</sup> Stephen Yeo personal communication, April 2023

<sup>15</sup> Ranajit Guha, ed., Preface, *Subaltern studies 1, Writings on South Asian history and Society*, Oxford University Press, Delhi, 1082

<sup>16</sup> Among those to whom Guha extends thanks in the Preface are his former undergraduate students in AFRAS with whom he tried out ideas for the book ‘at tutorials, seminars and during extra-mural conversations’.

<sup>17</sup> Partha Mitter, In Memorium

<sup>18</sup> Ranajit Guha, Introduction, *Subaltern studies 1, Writings on South Asian history and Society*

terms, and sought to understand the inner logic of their experiences of oppression and resistance – a Marxist history that took issue with some of the dominant ideas of the Marxist tradition. An even deeper influence came from the work of the Italian Marxist Antonio Gramsci, who had died in a Fascist jail as a political prisoner in the 1930s. Sussex University at this time boasted J.F.C. Harrison, at Sussex from 1970 as Professor of Social History. His book, *The Common People* (1984) was a long-period survey that is focused on the lives of ordinary people who were still very much left out of history when the book was written. Asa Briggs as we know was one of the most important figures in the development of social history. Sussex historians who were influential in the conception of this new history included Peter Burke, Stephen Yeo, Eileen Yeo and Alun Howkins. A rare recording made at a 1976 conference on Interpretation of Public Rituals held, at King's College, London included two Sussex historians Ranajit Guha, and Peter Burke. The other members were Bernard Cohn, Terence Ranger and Keith Thomas.<sup>19</sup> Peter Burke who was at Sussex from 1962 to 1979 was part of the School of European Studies and on his way to becoming a leading historian of culture of early Modern Europe.<sup>20</sup>

Whilst some of Guha's colleagues missed the significance of his intellectual achievements, there is no doubt that his creative understanding developed at Sussex in association with a group of distinguished Sussex colleagues and doctoral students, David Arnold, David Hardiman and others. Eileen Yeo the gifted historian of class and gender politics remembers his years at Sussex in that, 'In intellectual and political life, Ranajit was fiercely committed. At a time when we were exploring history from below, he was pioneering subaltern studies in Indian and global history. In politics, Ranajit passionately defended the right to demonstrate on campus against the Vietnam war, citing the horrific image of the little girl in agony, wrapped in flames of napalm, as the most compelling case against inaction'.<sup>21</sup> Another academic star Homi Bhabha who was also at Sussex university at this time records a pleasant evening in Guha's home when after a dinner in Brighton, Guha playfully remarked: 'You see unlike you I am no 'the-orientalist''<sup>22</sup>

The post-colonial moment had changed. Guha was in India in 1970-71 on a sabbatical from Sussex at the start of what was to be an important decade for India manifesting the crackdown against Maoist resistance in the form of the Naxalbari movement. For the *Frontier* magazine Guha penned 'For all who care, it is time to wake up to the fact that, so far as political torture is concerned, we already have a bit of Algeria in West Bengal.'<sup>23</sup> Post-colonial nationalism was beginning to devour its children.

There are other stories one can piece together from his time at Sussex. Richard Price, one of his early graduate students at Sussex who had worked with him on British working-class attitudes towards imperialism had joined his special subject class on European Imperialism and noted that 'this was not the usual course that began with the age of explorations. It began instead with the theorists of empire and then went on to study the British, French and German cases within that context. Ranajit was the first person to teach me that the problems of history could be conceptual, rather than being a problem

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<sup>19</sup> Shahid Amin, 'Reminiscing about Ranajit Guha'. May, 2023, The video of the 1976 conference on Interpretation of Public Rituals King's College, London includes Ranajit Guha, Bernard Cohn, Peter Burke, Terence Ranger and Keith Thomas in discussion, *The Wire*, May, 2023, <https://thewire.in/history/remiscing-about-ranajit-guha>

<sup>20</sup> Peter Burke, *The Italian Renaissance* (1972) and *Popular Culture in Early Modern Europe* (1978)

<sup>21</sup> Eileen Yeo, Personal communication, May, 2023

<sup>22</sup> Last two 90<sup>th</sup> birthday tributes to Ranajit Guha by David Hardiman and Homi. K. Bhaba, <https://permanent-black.blogspot.com/2013/06/last-two-90th-birthday-tributes-to.html>

<sup>23</sup> Guha, 2009, 565, quoted in Alf Gunvald Nilsen, Alex Callinicos Stathis Kouvelakis ed., *Routledge Handbook of Marxism and Post-Marxism*, 2022 [https://www.academia.edu/44551402/RANAJIT\\_GUHA](https://www.academia.edu/44551402/RANAJIT_GUHA)

of events.<sup>24</sup> He also writes that as a doctoral student he was inspired both by Guha's interest in empire and the "new social history" associated with British historians such as Asa Briggs, Edward Thompson and Eric Hobsbawm, that led to his first book, *An Imperial War and the British Working Class* (London, 1972) Adi Cooper's experience was different. Her work, later published as a book *Sharecropping and sharecroppers struggles in Bengal, 1946-50* (1988) started off as a PhD in Sussex with Ranajit Guha but it never met his standards and she changed to work instead with Terry Byres. Her daughter conjectured whether Guha had had difficulty in mentoring a woman through her PhD.<sup>25</sup> This view was not necessarily held by other women who he tutored or his female colleagues.

Eileen Yeo's deeply evocative memory of the Sussex years needs to be shared in full. 'I remember Ranajit in the early days at Sussex as a rare mixture of gentleness and fierce commitment. In personal relations he was modest, courteous (even courtly), friendly and warm. He once invited us to a special Indian meal in his London flat. As his cooking took hours, we realised that we were in danger of missing the last train back to Brighton. But we couldn't bear to ruin his generous gesture, so we waited on tenterhooks 'til dinner was served. I have never eaten a feast so fast! Years later in Australia, he was reluctant to meet me on campus for tea, possibly because, when he finally agreed, he was lionised by admiring colleagues – perhaps modesty still made him uneasy about his fame. His death has meant the loss of a distinguished radical historian and a very nice person.'<sup>26</sup> Prof Maya Unnithan who joined Sussex University in 1991 as an anthropologist remembers 'being drawn to Sussex by the subaltern perspective of AFRAS.'<sup>27</sup> Sadly, these were the last years of AFRAS which was abolished in 2002 as interdisciplinary Area studies was deemed too outdated for a restructured school system. AFRAS's demise which was mourned by its faculty was commemorated with a farewell dinner by the last Dean, Mick Johnson in 1 Paston Place, Brighton not far from where Dean Mohammed, one of the first Bengalis to travel to England in the eighteenth-century century, practised his Shampoo therapies.<sup>28</sup>

After first teaching at Sussex in 1993 on a temporary contract and a brief stint in Plymouth, I was delighted to land a job back at the Sussex history department with its amazing lineage of historians. My own work had moved on from the politics of nationalism in Bihar to the history of *Adivasi* and tribal groups in Jharkhand, Eastern India. In many ways Guha's search to find a subaltern consciousness rooted in cosmologies and myth, found resonances in my research on *Adivasi* testimonies in Eastern India. In his classic paper, the prose of counter insurgency Ranajit Guha writes about the ways in which colonial power silences the historical record of the Santhals communities by representing their popular resistance of the 1850s as pathologies, problems of order or symptoms of religious fanaticism. Similarly in bourgeois nationalist historiography as he argued such rebellions were assimilated into the career of the nation and the history of Indian nationalism denying a will to the mass of the rebels themselves and resulting in a failure to comprehend the nature of tribal consciousness. For me, the recuperation of *Adivasi* narratives against the forces of unrelenting globalisation and an analysis of local landscape cosmologies became vital to understanding the nature of tribal resistance to land alienation and globalisation and the developmental agendas of a post-colonial nation state. For Richard Grove, the co-founder of the Centre for World Environmental History at Sussex, Guha's comment that Grove's

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<sup>24</sup> Richard Price <https://networks.h-net.org/node/5293/discussions/12805860/remembering-ranajit-guha1923-2023>

<sup>25</sup> Cooper, Adrienne. 'Sharecropping and Sharecroppers' Struggle in Bengal, 1930-50'. Ph.D. thesis, University of Sussex, 1984 see also <https://mayday.leftword.com/blog/post/adi-cooper-and-her-research-on-the-tebhagaand-tankamovements-1946-50>

<sup>26</sup> Eileen Yeo, Personal communication

<sup>27</sup> Maya Unnithan, Personal Communication, May 2023

<sup>28</sup> Fisher, Michael H. (2000). *The First Indian Author in English: Dean Mahomed (1759-1851) in India, Ireland, and England*. Oxford University Press.

work was addressing the ‘sticks and stones of history’<sup>29</sup> also resonated in terms of Richard’s own pioneering environmental history contributions. Guha’s Sussex years saw the flowering of his original conceptions of History in the company of an exceptional group of historians, dedicated to a new kind of history. He was a particularly creative and influential scholar whose ideas came into full focus in the freer institutional environment of Sussex in the 60s and 70s.

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<sup>29</sup> Richard Grove, Personal Communication, 2005