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# Roots and Routes

Monthly Newsletter of the  
Global Research Forum on Diaspora and Transnationalism



**GRFDT**  
Global Research Forum on  
Diaspora and Transnationalism

*There has been considerable increase in the trans-border migration movements which challenges the traditional understanding of nationality and urges the nation-states to develop new approaches on the matter.*

**Hande Unsal**

**In fact, Gandhi has made the 'Indian Diaspora' more prominently be part of public interest in India. Thus, Gandhi has been one of the monumental figures who will be always be part of the foreign policy, community life, cultural and political activities in India and abroad. He is the most important link between the mother country and her diaspora.**

**J C Sharma**

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**ROOTS AND ROUTES DISSEMINATES LATEST INFORMATION ON  
RESEARCH AND POLICY DEVELOPMENT IN DIASPORA AND TRANSNATIONALISM**

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# Editor's Message



Dear All,

Wish you a Merry Christmas and a very happy new year 2013 to you and your family. Wish the New Year will bring you happiness, prosperity and better academic productivity. Looking back, I must say that the 2012 has been incredibly a busy and productive year for all of us at GRFDT. Very successfully and modestly, we have created a culture for research and academic engagement. We have received voluntarily participation and supports from all of you at various levels in terms of contribution of article, ideas, guidance as well as moral support. With the continuous supports from you, the forum intends to emerge as a global platform for harnessing more productive research ideas and inputs in the years to come.

This issue covers the report of event organized by GRFDT on "Overseas Citizenship and Nationality: Study of Turkey and India" presented by Ms. Handey Unsal, Research Student, Ankara Law School, Turkey. The comparative perspective on citizenship law was highlighted. A lively discussion was followed where participants shared their views on citizenship and how it could affect lives in the age of globalization.

The book review examines the new dynamics that the media and diaspora play in the transnational spaces. It is quite interesting to learn the shifting notion of "home" that often virtually created and how media plays a very important role in fulfilling the needs of the transnational communities. The issue has a group interview with Dr. Els van Dongen, Researcher at Nanyang Technological university, Singapore, who shared her insights on comparative Chinese and Indian diaspora policies.

In the special article "Oak Creek Sikh Temple Killings: A Historical Perspective", Dr. Shinder S. Thandi narrates the challenges faced by the Sikhs in India as well as Sikh diaspora in spite of many societies evolving towards multiculturalism. The article throws insight into many aspects of media representation and challenges to the minority in the globalised world.

The issue also has information related to research, seminars, discussions, etc contributed by scholars from various parts of the globe. Thank you all and seeking your continuous support!

**Sadananda Sahoo**

### Overseas Citizenship and Nationality: *Study of Turkey and India*

#### Hande Unsal

GRFDT organized a talk on "Overseas Citizenship and Nationality: Study of Turkey and India" by Ms. Hande Unsal, Research Student, Ankara Law School, Turkey on 10 November 2012 (Saturday) at 3 pm, CSSS-II, JNU, New Delhi. The talk began with a background on the state policies on citizenship in both India and Turkey in general and diaspora in particular. She argued that there has been considerable increase in the trans-border migration movements which challenges the traditional understanding of nationality and urges the nation-states to develop new approaches on the matter. Generally accepted principles of the nationality law have already been opened to discussion and some of them are started to be qualified as obsolete. To live up with the current situation, many states adopted new nationality acts or made amendments in their nationality codes. The migrant sending countries in particular, facilitated various legal vehicles to maintain their relation with their overseas nationals. A striking example of the situation could be found in Turkish nationality law. Turkish nationality law has gone through a series of changes since the first mass migration movement out of Turkey took place in 1961. She observed that unlike Turkish diaspora, Indian diaspora is a huge in number and spread across the globe and reside in various countries whose political economy is very diverse. Turkish migrated mainly nearby countries, majority of whom are in Germany, followed by France, Netherlands and United States.

Ms. Unsal highlighted the policies of Indian government



Ms. Hande Unsal

towards its diaspora. The PIO card, Dual citizenship issues are some of the initiatives by the Indian Government towards promoting better relations with her diaspora. However, Turkey does not need to promote Dual citizenship in case of their own diaspora. She also highlighted there are many other issues which makes the Turkey to be more rigid in citizenship issues as compared to India.



Dr. TLS Bhaskar



Shankar Bag and Dr. Sadananda Sahoo (right)

Report By:  
Monika Bisht, Research Scholar, Indira Gandhi National Open University, Delhi

## BOOK REVIEW

**Thussu, Daya Kishan. (ed.) *Media on the move: Global flow and contra-flow*. London and New York: Routledge, 2007, ISBN: 978-0-203-001233.**

In a time when Migration and Diaspora communities appear to be the imperative rather than the exception, 'home' seems to be no longer a fixed place on the map. The shifting notion of home and identity compel the migrants to carry their 'home' with them – particularly all those perceptions which make them feel at home anywhere, or indeed everywhere in the physical world. It is their way of nurturing their roots. Media, in this context, then becomes the means and medium of keeping them in touch with home, or simply coming back after a full day to a 'home' that is familiar in its sights and sounds.

We live in a digitally connected world, where information dissemination is at hyper-speeds. The book under review *Media on the move* thus deals with the role of new communication technologies and how they are redefining transnational solidarities and cultural identities. The various essays by scholars in the field of media and communications, study how global media flows, resulting from economic power, influence global audiences at a faster rate today than ever before. "Americana" – the dominant American media credo reaches homes around the world and in forms that are global and local at once – the "glocalisation" of media content or global customized to local taste. So while global media 'exports' messages around the world, meanings are negotiated in the local context within local sensibilities.

In the late 1990s, CBS coined a phrase "We keep America on top of the world". Essentially that meant that news, political, economic and social, were driven globally from the American perspective. Similarly, in *We keep America on top of the World: Television Journalism and the Public Sphere*, (1994) Daniel C. Hallin elaborates on this dominant American stance vis-à-vis hard news. With the rapid deepening of internet reach within developing nations and nations that now constitute an alternate worldview, American media has had to relinquish its 'top of the world' place. Contra-flows from other parts of the world shed light on points of view that have hitherto been out of reach. This volume describes and locates each 'kind' of contra-flow within the social context – whether it is news (Al-Jazeera) or cultural influence (Korean and Japanese soaps, Latin American telenovelas) or even the feminist movement (RAWA in Afghanistan and its lick, albeit tenuous, with the international feminist movement). In this way, this volume takes the conversation to a deeper level of engagement between Western and non-Western societies and media influences.

The volume is divided into four units. Unit 1 talks about 'Contextualising contra-flow,' Unit 2: 'Non-Western media in motion,' Unit 3: 'Regional perspectives on flow and contra-flow' and Unit 4: 'Moving media—from the margins to the mainstream.'

In his essay, "Bollywood and the frictions of global mobility", Nitin Govil narrates an incident when the legendary Dilip Kumar told foreign audiences while touring the USA in 1964 about how Indian cinema could achieve greater international success by focusing on "universal" themes while becoming more "specifically Indian". Bollywood's enactment of India is a kind of "multimedia spectacle" that gives a sense of the ways in which ethnic, regional, and national identities are being reconstructed in relation to the globalized process of intercultural segmentation and hybridization. It is noteworthy that in 2001, the Oxford English Dictionary online edition contained an entry for the first time, Bollywood. Bollywood is the Indian counter-flow to mainstream Western media.

In the present hyper networked global society, flows (capital, information, communication etc), have shown extraordinary growth in direction, volume and velocity. The editor's opening argument is to do with Diasporas that provide the contra-flow to popular media in the form of letters, videos, mobile phone texts, images, press, satellite TV and the internet. With internet, Diasporas are able to import home culture to their country and city of residence. As Castells says "Internet is not simply a technology. It is a communication medium (as the pubs were) and it is the material infrastructure of a given organizational form: the network (as the factory was). On both counts, the internet became the indispensable component of the kind of social movements emerging in the network society." (Castells, 2012:139) Hence, postcolonial and transnational cultural studies perspectives focus less on the institutional and political arrangements of the contemporary world and more on the cultural and symbolic world of lived experiences.

In his essay, "Thinking through contra-flows: perspectives from post-colonial and transnational cultural studies", Anandam P. Kavoori bases his arguments within the framework of the five scapes of interaction, i.e., ethnoscape, technoscape, infoscape, financescape and mediascape, all interconnected and even overlapping as defined by Arjun Appadurai (Appadurai, 1990:301).

In "Contra-flows or the cultural logic of uneven globalization? Japanese media in the global agora", Koichi Iwabuchi quotes (Robertson, 1995) "strategy of tailoring cultural products to local conditions, that has become a marketing strategy for transnational media corporate in

order to achieve a global market penetration". He believes globalization has been experienced unequally around the world in the context of modern history, and is, in a large measure, dominated by the West. Iwabuchi feels the power structure is being de-centered at the same time as it is being centered. Symbolic power in the age of globalization is not concentrated in the place where the culture originated; it is exercised through the process of active cultural negotiation that take place in each locality regardless of geography.

How else can one explain Brazilian telenovelas being exported to be aired in more than 130 countries. "Brazil and the globalization of telenovelas" by Cacilda M.Rêgo and Antonio C.La Pastina studies this Latin American export. The contra-flow exemplifies how "this international presence has challenged the traditional debate over cultural imperialism and the North-South flow of media products" (Sinclair, 1996; 2003). The widespread worldwide popularity of Latin American telenovelas is testimony to the increasingly global reliance of commercial TV on soap operas, echoing Robertson's idea that we are increasingly using globalised forms to produce the local, resulting in a 'glocalised' culture.

"Challenger or lackey? The politics of news on Al-Jazeera" critically analyses the Qatar based news channel. Al-Jazeera is viewed as a prominent example of contra-flow of news media. But is it also contra-hegemonic? Does it challenge the dominant world media? Some view it as reinforcing American hegemony and indeed, furthering American and Israeli designs against the Arabs. Despite various criticisms, Al-Jazeera has successfully opened the space for a pan-Arab public debate that does not blatantly surge in the contra-direction, but cleverly negotiates its space and standing so as to be an accredit-

ed voice.

Media flows and counter flows tell the story of the balance of power, political and economic, and its shifts, in the global information age. While contra-flows from Asia against the American media tide are still weak and largely uneven, they however represent an alternative voice that speaks in different tones of social values and has begun to be accepted and adopted by large sections of populations.

Some chapters while well written and internally cohesive somehow don't seem to tie up with the theme of the global media flow and contra flow. For example the chapter *Transnational feminism and the Revolutionary Association of the Women of Afghanistan* by Lisa McLaughlin is about a political organization's effort without giving the overall women's perspective including work done by women diasporas for the media mainstreaming of Afghan women.

Embodied with pertinent issues, debates and discourses in the field of media, migrations, cultures and communications, the present volume is therefore of great value to students and scholars of media studies and diaspora studies. It will also be useful to students of culture studies and international relations.



Abhay Chawla is a journalist and a visiting faculty in CIC, Delhi University. He teaches online journalism and his Ph.D topic is "Marginalizations and consumption of new media."

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## CALL FOR PAPERS

### Conference on Inter-Asian Connections IV: Istanbul (October 2-5, 2013)

**DEADLINE: Monday, February 11, 2013**

The Social Science Research Council, Yale University, the National University of Singapore (NUS), the Hong Kong Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences (HKIHSS) at the University of Hong Kong, Göttingen University, and Koç University—collectively the "Conference Organizing Committee"—are pleased to announce an open call for individual research paper submissions from researchers in any world region, to participate in a 4-day thematic workshop at an international conference titled Inter-Asian Connections IV: Istanbul.

Individual paper submissions are invited from junior and senior scholars, whether graduate students or faculty, or researchers in NGOs or other research organizations, for the following seven workshops:

- "After Neoliberalism?" The Future of Postneoliberal State and Society in Asia

- Asian Early Modernities: Empires, Bureaucrats, Confessions, Borders, Merchants
- Contemporary Art and the Inter-Asian Imaginary
- Inequalities in Asian Societies: Bringing Back Class Analysis
- Porous Enclaves: Inter-Asian Residential Projects and the Popular Classes from Istanbul to Seoul
- Rescuing Taste from the Nation: Oceans, Borders and Culinary Flows
- The Sounds and Scripts of Languages in Motion

Application materials are due by Monday, February 11, 2013. Selection decisions will be announced in March 2013. Accepted participants are required to submit a DRAFT 20-25 page research paper in June 2013; final papers are due September 6, 2013.

<http://www.ssrc.org/programs/pages/interasia-program/conference-on-inter-asian-connections-iv-istanbul-october-2-5-2013/>

## The potential of Indian culture is largely unexploited in India's Diaspora Policy: Dr. Els van Dongen

Apart from removing institutional obstacles that prevent people from engaging in FDI, I believe a clear outreach program is needed that explains why FDI would be a better option than remittances, says **Dr. Els van Dongen**, Researcher at Nanyang Technological university, Singapore. In an interview with the GRFDT team, Dr. Dongen shared her views on diverse issues of two biggest diasporas in the world- Indian and Chinese.



**Dr. Smita Tiwari:** Welcome to this interaction. Dr. Els your work is on comparative diaspora policies in India and China. While engaging their diaspora, which country do you think has used a better institutionalized approach, China or India?



First of all, I would like to emphasize that the institutionalization of the Indian diaspora policy in the context of economic reforms only goes back to the beginning of the twenty-first century, which means it is a very young policy, whereas the institutionalization of China's diaspora policy since its economic reforms goes back to the late 1970s, which implies the policy has had more time to grow. Hence, when comparing the two, we have to take into account this time difference. It should also be noted, however, that diaspora policies existed long before in both cases, but we are talking about institutionalization in the context of economic restructuring here.

Institutionally, the main difference between the two is that China not only has an institution, namely the Overseas Chinese Affairs Office (OCAO), directly under the main executive organ, but that it also incorporates commissions under legal and consultative bodies, as well as two voluntary organizations and two research institutes. The Indian policy works mostly through the Ministry of Overseas Indians, in collaboration with other ministries. In addition, there is a big numerical difference. The OCAO has a staff of around 120, whereas MOIA only has about 20 staff. That being said, the Indian model is based on an institution at ministerial level, which means funding is secure; it has identified certain core areas and has created specific sub-organs; its consular services are integrated into the system, and it has also set up extensive research collaborations with universities abroad.

**Institutionalization of the Indian diaspora policy in the context of economic reforms only goes back to the beginning of the twenty-first century, which means it is a very young policy, whereas the institutionalization of China's diaspora policy since its economic reforms goes back to the late 1970s, which implies the policy has had more time to grow.**

I would say that it is not a question of who has a "better" institutionalization, not only because of the temporal difference mentioned, but also because of the different nature of the diasporas. In India, given the high number of low-skilled migrants in the Gulf, there is a strong focus on the regulation of emigration and labor abroad. A lot of work has been done in this and other core areas, but given the increasing numbers of Indian students abroad (the largest group after Chinese students), I believe institutionalization in this area in particular still needs to be increased.



**Dr. Mahalingam:** What are the suggestions for India's diasporic policies to improve Foreign Direct Investment?



Historically, the Indian model has been mostly based on remittances, NRI deposits, and philanthropic donations. Even after the reform policies of 1991, changes have been rather slow (between 1991 and 2003, diasporic FDI only amounted to around 4 percent of total FDI). It is not only a matter of changing policies, but also of changing the mindset of the Indians Overseas. Apart from removing institutional obstacles that prevent people from engaging in FDI, I believe a clear outreach program is needed that explains why FDI would be a better option than remittances. As the Ministry currently divides its services into the categories of general diaspora services, emigration, financial services, and management, this outreach could be done through its financial services section. The role of the Overseas Indian Facilitation Center (OIFC) could be strengthened here, and another important aspect would be to improve ties with business networks abroad.

However, we should keep in mind that the Chinese and Indian economies are fundamentally different in nature (manufacturing versus services) and that the Chinese in Southeast Asia in particular had built up not only an enormous wealth but also vast networks by the time of the start of economic reforms in China, which means we have to be a bit skeptical when comparing Chinese and Indian FDI. At the same time, however, the Chinese example clearly reveals the importance of business networks, and they still play an important role in Chinese diaspora policies.



**Dr. Sadananda Sahoo: What is the role of diaspora institutions and forums in shaping diaspora policies? For example, there are several diaspora organizations abroad, such as GOPIO. How do they influence the government policies?**



Although hitherto no systematic study of Chinese and Indian diaspora policies has been undertaken, some articles on the political influence of Chinese and Indian diaspora communities exist, particularly with reference to the United States. The Indian diaspora is more influential in this respect than the Chinese diaspora is. As for political influence, on the one hand, there is the role of diaspora groups in international relations. The most famous example concerns the role of the Indian diaspora with regard to recent nuclear agreements between the United States and India. In 1999, the Indian-American lobby also exerted pressure in the Kargil conflict. In the United States, Chinese communities have also increased their lobbying activities in recent decades, for example in the case of supporting unconditional most-favored-nation (MFN) trade status for China in 1996.

**As for the political influence with regard to their respective governments and diaspora policies, both the Chinese and Indian diasporas act as pressure groups.**

As for the political influence with regard to their respective governments and diaspora policies, both the Chinese and Indian diasporas act as pressure groups. In the Chinese case, this has happened with regard to the question of dual citizenship in particular. Naturally, the amount of pressure diasporas can exert depends on a number of factors, including the political system and the type of government involved and the level of organization of the diaspora. In China, although the debate on dual citizenship was started more than a decade ago, no concessions have been made. The political integration of diasporas is a sensitive and complicated issue, as it touches upon the core element of nation-states, namely the territorial basis of sovereignty.



**Dr. Mahalingam: Can you highlight some aspects of soft power diplomacy. Do you think India still need to do much?**



In this particular area, the Chinese policy is much more thorough. The active promotion of Chinese culture is an important element of Chinese diaspora policy and of Chinese policy overall. The clearest example of China's soft power diplomacy are the Confucius Institutes that have been set up in the last decade in particular. Although Indian culture is promoted to a certain extent in the Indian model in the form of the cultural program of the yearly Pravasi Bharatiya Divas (PBD) and the mini-PBDS, as well as through the magazine *India Perspectives* of the Ministry of External Affairs, it is clear that the potential of Indian culture is largely unexploited.



**Rajiv Mishra:** While talking about protection of their citizens abroad, the Chinese have done a better and prompt job than that of India. In the case of the Cairo crisis, the Chinese government took very prompt action in evacuating their citizens as compared to the Indian government's response to their citizens. Chinese government provide better security to their citizens as compared to India. Indian government's response to its diaspora is more uncertain but in the case of China, the response is more definite. See the case of Indian corporate case GMR in Maldives Airport contract. The same matter could have been different in the case of China. What is your view on this?



**Dr. Mahalingam:** Yes, I also agree with what Rajiv says. The Indian Government could not do much in protecting the diaspora interests. This is evident in the case of Fiji, Malaysia and Uganda. What is your opinion?



I believe it is hard to draw a general conclusion from this one case with regard to the protection of Chinese citizens abroad. There is always a discrepancy between theory and practice, the latter which is often restrained by the realities of international relations. In theory, the Chinese government has always been committed to the protection of its citizens abroad. However, its foreign policy is also based on the so-called Five Principles of Peaceful Coexistence (Panchsheel), which includes non-interference in internal affairs. Especially in Southeast Asia, where the question of the Chinese overseas is a sensitive issue for historical reasons, this has resulted in non-action in some cases. I believe the Indian examples mentioned need to be understood from a similar angle, namely in the context of the complex realities created by the history of decolonization and the basic principles of India's foreign policy.

In recent years, the Chinese state has been more active in protecting the Chinese overseas through diplomatic mechanisms, and the Cairo case illustrates this, but I also agree that in those cases where a sensitive history is involved, more could be done to put pressure on governments through international institutions and mechanisms.



**Suraj Beri:** While conceptualizing the 'nation', one encounters the problem of several other sub-national identities- sikh diaspora, tamil diaspora, Kashmir diaspora etc. which are competing with the umbrella identities (of Indian diaspora). The term Indian diaspora cannot forcefully be imposed on people. How do you relate the Indian diaspora in your talk on (Re)framing the Nation?



I agree that there is an incredible diversity in the case of India. However, one should not forget that the question of sub-nationalities also exists in China. As mentioned before, in fact, it exists in every nation-state. The reason why it is interesting to study the diaspora policies of China and India is precisely because the "nationless state" is confronted with the same challenges that it faces on its territory on an extra-territorial level. It has to strike a balance between the unity of one "diaspora" (a term that is in itself a political construct designed to create this sense of unity) and the diversity that exist within this diaspora. In the Indian case, this diversity is certainly acknowledged in the form of, for example, institutions at state level and tailored policies.

At the same time, however, the diasporic nation is often defined in contradictory terms, which also has to be understood in the context of the history of Partition. The term Person of Indian Origin (PIO), for example, suggests descent as the main criterion for inclusion, but this is in fact restricted by territorial factors. Also, the inclusive term "diaspora" in reality excludes the less economically successful and privileges the "new" diaspora in industrialized countries, thereby excluding members of the indentured labor diaspora. These elements all need to be considered carefully and more conceptual clarification is needed.

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### Oak Creek Sikh Temple Killings: A Historical Perspective Dr. Shinder S. Thandi

This year Sikhs are celebrating the centenary of the establishment of the first Sikh Temple on American soil in Stockton, CA in 1912. The tragic killings of 6 Sikhs and an American police officer in the Oak Creek Sikh Temple, Wisconsin, Milwaukee have brought a premature and mournful end to these celebrations among the Sikh community and a tragedy particularly for the families of those killed. This was a sacrilege and an unprovoked, brutal and cowardly attack by a hate-filled white supremacist on innocent Sikhs in their place of worship. The incident marks the largest single act of violence inside a Sikh temple since the attack on Durbar Sahib (Amritsar) by the Indian army in June 1984 and the largest outside India involving Sikhs. No matter how we characterise this heinous act, whether as an act of domestic terrorism or a hate crime, it however is a stark reminder that even after more than a hundred years of settlement in the USA, the Sikhs remain largely an "invisible", unrecognised and mistaken religious minority in a land widely considered as a 'melting pot' or 'salad bowl' of multi ethnic and multicultural peoples having a shared experience of being immigrants and a belief in living the American dream.

Being victims of racism or hate crimes is nothing new for the Sikhs – called Hindoos in local discourses - as the painful experiences of the early Sikh pioneers testify. Although, the Sikhs only started arriving on the Pacific coast in the closing years of the 19th century, by the end of the second decade of the 20th century, the door to further immigration had been firmly shut. A number of racist laws were enacted which disabled Sikhs to bring their wives from India or marry local white women, to own land or to obtain the US citizenship. Sikhs could only work as farm labourers or leaseholders, although only some had managed earlier to gain employment in building railroads or in the lumber industry. Moreover, their presence was also detested by other immigrant groups because they were perceived as snatching away their jobs and /or offering their labour at a cheaper wage. Inter-ethnic tensions often erupted into violence. Two important incidents are worth recalling. In 1907, in the town of Bellingham (near Seattle, Washington), hundreds of Sikhs were woken from their beds during the night, and then physically thrashed and forced to flee across the border into Canada. In 1917, in Wheatland, California, a white gang made an unprovoked attack on Sikh farm workers which made a significant and enduring psychological impact on the political thinking of the community.

This incident also acted as a catalyst, along with the racist Komagata Maru incident of 1914 in Canada, for the members of the community to engage in radical politics through establishing the nationalist Gadar Party. It dawned on many in the community that their "dual" oppression - at home due to British colonial rule and abroad due to racist hostility in British Columbia and California - could only be resolved by liberating India from the British rule. Unfortunately, this utopian dream of liberation was not to last long and the Gadar Party leadership began to lose its way, making the Party fractured and then withered. The onset of the World War II, eventual independence of India in 1947, and relaxation of racist laws in both the USA and Canada ushered in new opportunities and dawned a fresh era for Sikh migration. From the mid 1960s onwards, we notice a rapid increase of Sikh communities on both the Pacific coast of the USA and Canada as well as on the east coast of America. Continuing political turmoil in Punjab in the 1980s gave further impetus to migration and led to the enlargement of the Sikh community with the opening of many more Sikh temples. Thus, by the turn of this century and by all accounts, 300,000 or so Sikhs were living the American dream and had fully bought into the white American characterisation of them as a fine example of a "model minority". But the 9/11 terrorist attacks (11 September, 2001) and subsequent events were to bring a rude awakening again. Almost 48 hours after the 9/11 attacks, the murder of Balbir Sodhi in 2001 in Mesa, Arizona – ironically by an

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immigrant – compelled many Sikhs to realise how their identity could be easily mistaken for Al Qaida terrorists. They felt vulnerable and defenceless as the number of cases of harassment, physical abuse, temple desecrations and violent crimes rose against them. Due to this serious state of anxiety, the community rallied around and went on a massive public relations offensive, to tell American that they had no links to Islamic terrorists. Rather, they were a peace-loving community despite the apparent similarities in their headgear and that they were very patriotic and proud to be Americans having a long history of presence in America.

In the subsequent weeks and months, a number of new Sikh organisations - Sikh Mediawatch and Resource Task Force (now SALDEF, Sikh American Legal Defense and Education Fund), Sikh Coalition, Sikh Education Council and Sikh Council on Religion and Education (SCORE) among them - emerged to convey these messages in a more organised and professional way to counter the effects of racial profiling strengthened through the Patriot Act of 2001. Media monitoring on misrepresentation of Sikhs, compilation of list of all hate crimes - estimated at well-over 700 since 2011 - and offer of legal defence to victims of such crimes took priority. However, over time, services provided by such groups and others that emerged later on expanded their objective to include immigration issues, human rights, humanitarian relief and advocacy on promoting Sikh civil rights across the globe. With the passage of time, the latter types of activities appear to have become more important than the actual contexts which gave birth to these organisations. There was perhaps a loss of direction, focus and emphasis on inward orientation. The Wisconsin Sikh killings will therefore undoubtedly lead to a period of deep introspection by community leaders again and pertinent questions will be asked about the nature and quality of community outreach strategies pursued over the past decade. No doubt, the other issues the community leaders have to confront are: were the lessons of 9/11 fully learnt, have the priorities shifted from educating their American neighbours about the Sikh tradition and Sikh values towards aggressive advocacy which at times has verged on becoming just an anti-India lobby.

All the religious communities in America, India and elsewhere have rightly condemned the Wisconsin killings and have been grieving with the Sikhs. President Obama has condemned the killings and Michelle Obama and other political leaders found time to visit the Oak Creek Temple and offer their condolences to the families of victims and the community. There has been a tremendous show of sympathy and goodwill towards the community from across North America and the globe; but the community now needs to utilize this tragic and sad occasion and take advantage of the renewed media

interest in Sikhs in order to present the case of this caring, sharing, progressive and hard-working global Sikh community. We should also not forget that the USA is the only country outside India where the Sikh community has been endowing Sikh Professorships since 1994 to promote the study of Sikhs and the Sikh tradition, and there are at least six of them in America now. Surely, the visionaries behind these community endowed academic positions must have had expectations of them to engage in wider community education and outreach. One could argue that these academics are in a unique position to play pivotal roles in effective community education, communication and inter-faith dialogue. We must remember that whilst raising awareness about the community is an important goal, ultimately, the reduction in hate crimes is, however, related to resolving wider issues around structural inequalities, exclusion and the US gun laws. Only an eternal optimist would argue that hate crimes can be eradicated altogether and the Sikh community has to fight with progressive elements in American society to counter hate and bigotry.

The Sikh history is replete with examples of adversity and setbacks and in the recent past only the Sikhs have had more than their share of challenges to their religious identity, whether in India or in diaspora. Sikhs are still coming to terms with Operation Bluestar of June 1984 and the mass killings of innocent Sikhs in Delhi in November of that year. But taking a broader historical perspective, I remain very confident that the Sikh community will learn quickly from this evil act of persecution in Oak Creek and come out even stronger, more resilient and more vibrant. This tragic event will not be forgotten but it may mark the beginning of a new chapter in the history of Sikhs in America.



*Dr. Shinder Singh Thandi is based at Coventry University, UK and was a Visiting Professor in Global Studies at the University of California, Santa Barbara during academic year 2011-12.*

## Up to 2 Postdocs and up to 5 PhD fellowships "Education Policy in India since the Nineteenth Century"

**Institution: German Historical Institute London, London**

**Start date: Earliest possible date**

**Application deadline: 31.01.2013**

**The Transnational Research Group: "Poverty Reduction and Policy for the Poor between the State and Private Actors: Education Policy in India since the Nineteenth Century"**

Applications should contain a full CV, copies of relevant examinations, a research proposal (max. 5000 words), a writing sample (a chapter or essay), and the names and addresses of two referees. They should be sent electronically by 31 January 2013 to Dr Indra Sengupta, German Historical Institute London, 17 Bloomsbury Square, London WC1A 2NJ. email: [isengupta@ghil.ac.uk](mailto:isengupta@ghil.ac.uk)

Contact: Sue Evans, German Historical Institute London 17 Bloomsbury Square, London WC1A 2NJ +44 207 309 2050, [evans@ghil.ac.uk](mailto:evans@ghil.ac.uk). [http://www.ghil.ac.uk/research/india\\_research\\_group.html](http://www.ghil.ac.uk/research/india_research_group.html)

## Latest UN Report emphasizes on harnessing Diaspora remittances and knowledge

Diaspora's role in home countries development has been increasingly a subject of mainstream development discourses these days. Leading multilateral institutions such as UNDP, WB have already emphasized the potential contribution of the diaspora since 1990s in the context of "brain drain". The recent Least Developed Countries (LDC) Report 2012 titled "Harnessing Remittances and Diaspora Knowledge to Build Productive Capacities" focuses on the issue of diaspora remittances and knowledge from a wider perspective.

Once not given much attention, remittances received by the least developed countries have become subject matter of development discourses in recent times. The LDC Report 2012 mentioned Remittances in the countries having large number of diaspora can be valuable for least developed countries if managed through appropriate policies. Most LDC countries have sizable population in the diaspora. Emigration from LDCs grew

rapidly in 1990–2010. With 27.5 million emigrants in 2010, LDCs as a whole accounted for 13 per cent of global emigration stocks, or some 3.3 per cent of the LDC population. This huge population has potential for development impact on the home countries. The Report mentioned that "Remittances are significant private financial resources for households in countries of origin of migration. There is a need for further efforts to lower the transaction costs of remittances and create opportunities for development oriented investment, bearing in mind that remittances cannot be considered as a substitute for foreign direct investment, ODA, debt relief or other public sources of finance for development".

The report also stressed the need for harnessing the human resources of diaspora for productive use for the development of the home country. The report mentioned that these skilled professionals can play the role of "development

agent" for the home country. However, the report also observed that "the effective mobilization of a diaspora for development depends on the existence of a critical mass of migrants in a given destination". This critical mass need not to be large, rather small number with proper mobilizing strategy can create a complementary impact on the country's development". The report mentioned that the majority of emigrants who have attained tertiary education tend to migrate to developed countries. In fact, Haiti (83 per cent), Samoa (73 per cent), the Gambia (68 per cent) and Tuvalu (65 per cent) have the highest emigration rates of tertiary-educated LDC population.

The UN Report identifies policies, including policy lessons from other countries that LDCs may wish to consider in designing policy frameworks for harnessing remittances and diaspora knowledge to build productive capacities. It provides inputs for large array of stake-holders development policies.

## Call for Proposals - International Conference on Gender and Migration: Critical Issues and Policy Implications

Irrespective of the causes of migration, there are a combination of factors that may play out differently for men and women at every stage of the migration cycle. While in many cases migration can improve the conditions of women's life by providing more income and social status, in other cases - especially if they are irregular migrants - they may also face abuse and discrimination. Approaches that link theory, policy and practice are needed in the global policy agenda to address the gender equality concerns in the migration context. This international conference invites expert contributions on the following areas:

- Transnationalism, diasporas and gender
- Gender and labour migration
- Gender-based violence and forced migration
- Migration and gender in the media
- Healthcare and migrant women
- Gender and migrant family relations
- Gendered experiences in Turkish migration

The conference is organised by the London Centre for

Social Studies (LCSS) in collaboration with the Gender Institute at the London School of Economics (LSE), the Centre for Migration Policy Research at Swansea University, and the Department of Sociology at Marmara University.

The decision process for the contributions will include two steps: in the first instance abstracts (up to 350 words) will be reviewed by the conference committee and those invited for the second step will be asked to submit a full proceedings paper (up to 4000 words). All papers invited for the final programme will be published in the conference proceedings and will also be considered for a potential edited book that will be compiled by the organisers after the meeting. Formal meetings will be followed with a social programme and relevant site visits organised by the host institutions.

Dates: 11-13 May 2013

Venue: Marmara University, Istanbul, Turkey

# Seminars/Conferences/Call for Papers

## **Development and Distress: 21st Century Indian Immigrants in Persian Gulf**

11th to 12th March 2013  
Hyderabad, India  
: [http://www.uohyd.ac.in/images/news/csid\\_conf\\_march2013.pdf](http://www.uohyd.ac.in/images/news/csid_conf_march2013.pdf)

## **AAGS Conference - On the Move: People, Protest and Progress**

23rd to 24th March 2013  
Bangkok, Thailand  
[http://asia-globalstudies.org/aags\\_2013\\_\\_call\\_for\\_papers](http://asia-globalstudies.org/aags_2013__call_for_papers)

## **International Conference on Development-Induced Displacement and Resettlement**

22nd to 23rd March 2013  
Oxford, Oxfordshire, United Kingdom  
<http://www.didrconference.org>

## **Food and Immigrant Life**

18th to 19th April 2013  
New York, United States of America  
<http://www.newschool.edu/cps/events/>

## **Sixth International Conference on the Inclusive Museum**

23rd to 24th April 2013  
Copenhagen, Denmark  
<http://onmuseums.com/the-conference>

## **War and Displacement Conference**

3rd to 4th May 2013  
Munich, Germany  
: <http://wdrn.blogspot.de/2012/11/call-for-papers.html>

## **4th Global Conference: Experiencing Prison**

12th to 14th May 2013  
Prague, Czech Republic  
<http://www.inter-disciplinary.net/probing-the-boundaries/persons/experiencing-prison/call-for-papers/>

## **8th Global Conference: Cybercultures**

15th to 17th May 2013  
Prague, Czech Republic  
<http://www.inter-disciplinary.net/critical-issues/cyber/cybercultures/call-for-papers/>

## **Transnational Women's Literature in Europe**

24th to 26th May 2013  
Budapest, Hungary  
<http://www.femtranslit.eu/>

## **Immigration, Toleration, and Nationalism**

30th to 31st May 2013

Helsinki, Finland  
<http://www2.gsu.edu/~wwwcfe/14177.html>

## **Going Against the Grain: Contemporary Approaches to the Study of Literature, Language and Culture**

6th to 8th June 2013  
Banja Luka, Bosnia and Herzegovina  
<http://www.cellsbl.com>

## **10th International Conference on Greek Research**

27th to 30th June 2013  
Adelaide, South Australia, Australia  
<http://flinders.edu.au/greekconference>

## **Race, Migration, Citizenship: Post-colonial and Decolonial Perspectives**

4th to 5th July 2013  
Birmingham, United Kingdom  
<http://rmconference.wordpress.com/>

## **6th Global Conference: Diasporas**

6th to 8th July 2013  
Oxford, United Kingdom  
Website: <http://www.inter-disciplinary.net/at-the-interface/diversity-recognition/diasporas/call-for-papers/>

## **CALL FOR PAPERS**

### **International Conference**

### **"Development or Distress: 21st Century Indian Immigrants in the Persian Gulf"**

**The Centre for the Study of Indian Diaspora, University of Hyderabad is organizing an International Conference on "Development or Distress: 21st Century Indian Immigrants in the Persian Gulf", during 11th and 12th March 2013.**

The main purposes of this two days conference are to bring together scholars from India as well as from overseas to a common platform to discuss and debate the following:

- ◆ Contemporary patterns of Indian immigration to the Persian Gulf
- ◆ Human trafficking, gender and gulf immigration
- ◆ Issues of return, re-migration and the government response

- ◆ Implications of immigration to the host country and the country of origin
- ◆ Comparative perspective of South Asian immigration to the Persian Gulf

**Proposals:** Abstract of 200-250 words for a 20 minute paper should be sent to ([ajayacsid@yahoo.com](mailto:ajayacsid@yahoo.com)) by 31st January 2013. Abstracts should be accompanied by a brief (100 word) CV of the presenter. Full paper should be submitted latest by 28th February 2013.

**Conference Venue:** Centre for the Study of Indian Diaspora, School of Social Sciences, University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad -500046, Andhra Pradesh, India.

**Note: The list of information about Conferences/Seminars/Call for Papers in this newsletter are compiled from the web-sources and researchers are requested to contact the organizers and cross check the details before sending the abstract/paper and most importantly before registering.**