

Roots and Routes

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GRFDT
Global Research Forum on
Diaspora and Transnationalism



Roots and Routes disseminates the latest information on research and policy developments in Diaspora and transnationalism

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Editor's Message



Cultural changes are intrinsic to the migration processes and it varies in context. Migration process involves various actors- the migrants, those remaining in the countries of origin, and people already living in the countries of settlement. The dynamics of cultural manifestation varies in terms of actors and contexts. Natural migration and forced migration again have their own cultural manifestation. The Indian subcontinent provides a very interesting insight of cultural manifestation in different historical juncture especially pre and post partition. GRFDT Seminar on "Migration and Culture Connections" by Professor Partha S. Ghosh throws lights on the cultural changes in the post independence India and Pakistan. He finds that demographic composition and political powers in majority often marginalises the culture of the minority. He also relates the cultural connections in the diaspora context. He highlighted how the cultural expressions such as Jahaji Music, Chutney Music and Bhangra became part of the migration and became popular abroad.

This issue of the Newsletter predominantly talks about diaspora as a political actor. The interview brought out the growing role of diaspora in geopolitics. Professor Gérard-François Dumont mentioned about the political demography and the important role played by the diaspora in the present geopolitics in Europe and elsewhere. He observed that there are many diasporas who are important transnational geopolitical power today.

Dr. Mahalingam's article provides a historical overview of the evolution of diaspora policies in India and also explores how there is a convergence of Diaspora policy and foreign policy due to the embedded role of Diaspora in the foreign affairs in the context of Indian diaspora. The book review brings out debates both on the concept and application of diaspora in present times and its engagement with the global economic and political context.

The issue also features news and other information related to diaspora and transnationalism useful for our readers.

Sadananda Sahoo

Migration and Culture Connections

As a part of monthly seminar series, GRFDT organized a talk on "Migration and Culture Connections" by Professor Partha S. Ghosh, Senior Fellow, Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, Teen Murti Bhavan, on 21 September 2013 at JNU. Dr. Smita Tiwari, member of GRFDT, moderated the talk.

Professor Ghosh discussed about the cross-border migration in South Asia, especially focusing on the migration post-Partition. Professor Ghosh's talk was divided into two parts; in the first part, he discussed about the migratory processes in South Asia and its impact on culture and in the second part, he discussed about the diasporic culture (colonial experience of India-Pakistan-Bangladesh).

Began with a question "do culture migrate along with the people?" he says that culture goes with the movement of people. This has happened with partition too. The event which took place 66 years ago is still fresh in the minds of the two countries i.e. India and Pakistan. The two countries are still carrying the baggage and trauma of the Partition. As a result, in every walk of life Hindus and Muslims have got polarized and politicized. The Partition has also hugely impacted on the culture of the two countries.

While talking, Professor Ghosh cited the work by Anand Taneja i.e. "Impact of Refugee Movement on Delhi Muslims". He mentioned that any riot affects victim as well as perpetrators- Hindu, Muslim, Sikhs or any other communities. During the Partition, large number of Punjabis migrated to Delhi which changed the demographic composition of Delhi and hence there was change in the culture over the time. The overwhelming presence of Punjabis affected the Islamic culture, which was dominant earlier and gradually led to the minoritisation of Muslim in Delhi. The Islamic culture was rich in Tehzib which is reflected in Bollywood movies of 1950s and 60s. But gradually this Tehzib culture was eroded by influence of other communities. During the Partition, there was huge exodus of Hindu artists from Pakistan to Bombay. This consolidated Bombay as an important cultural centre post partition. Lahore theatre industry which used to produce plays, dramas, films in Urdu got marginalized. Calcutta film industry lost 40 per cent of its market after East Bengal partition. Though many forms of culture were affected due to partition, classical music did not get affected. Some artists were displaced, but this did not impact much on the classical music tradition.

The second part of Professor Ghosh's presentation was on Indian diaspora who were composed of indentured labour mostly from Bihar and U.P, Southern India, Gujarati Traders. After the Independence, there was many fold increase in



volume, origin and destination of migrants. Post independence people come from different parts of the country and migrated to different parts of the world. He discussed about the Jahaji Music, Chutney Music and Bhangra which have been popular today is the result of diaspora presence.

While concluding he said that "it is not necessary that culture always move with people. It can go with technology. T.V. shows across the border and making many cultures (such as food, dance etc.) popular in foreign lands.

The talk was followed by question answer session which include discussions on how power, space and memory shape the culture? How culture is influenced by protection and preservation process. Dr. G. Srinivas mentioned that generalisation of Indians in the diaspora is problematic as Indian diaspora is not a monolithic group. The talk ended with a vote of thanks by Kshipra Uke.



Geopolitics is now transformed by the importance of diasporas : G rard-Fran ois Dumont

Dumont has been working on geopolitics for quite some time and published many of his important research works. His recent work is focussed on diaspora and geopolitics. In an interview with **Dr. Sadananda Sahoo, Prof. Dumont** shares some of his ideas.

Sadananda Sahoo : Prof. G rard-Fran ois Dumont, as a scholar on geopolitics you have worked on various issues related to demography and politics, diaspora and geopolitics. How do you find the influence of diasporas in the globalized world today?

G rard-Fran ois Dumont : The geopolitical importance of the diaspora is very recent. For centuries, the word Diaspora has been defined as a singular word in dictionaries. It referred to the scattered Jewish communities in the world. Teachings of the Old Testament passed down from one generation to another. Jewish Community teach their children the history of their migration, and are, therefore, the only diaspora. These are the only communities to live in a country on the planet, while continuing to feel the identity of the origin of their ancestors territory. Their identity is simultaneously here and elsewhere.

Since 1990s, with the development of air transportation, communications, web technologies and networking, the physical limitations of distance are increasingly eliminated. In the context of globalization, modern transnational communities have the means to make themselves more visible inside the host country. The transnational networks are even more enhanced with the accessibility of global communications. The flowing information influences diaspora consciousness. The Internet plays an important role too. These new technologies open new possibilities and serve the interests of diasporic communities.

So, the immigrants and descendants of immigrants can maintain close ties with their homeland. So was born a phenomenon that, in my book Political Demography (Paris, Ellipses, 2007), I call "diasporization." That is to say that immigrant communities have become diasporas. The word diaspora has become plural. The main element that characterizes a migrant community as diaspora is its relationship with the homeland. These diasporas not only play an important role in tourism and investments in their country of origin, but they also play an important geopolitical role because they influence international relations.

SS :During colonial times, it was the colonial economy that triggered large scale international migration mostly from one colony to another. During the post colonial times, the destination for international migration are mostly to the USA and West Asia. How do you think the impact of this new direction impacting on the geopolitics?

G rard-Fran ois Dumont : The destinations of migrants are of great importance to measure the geopolitical influence of diasporas. The geography of immigrants and their offspring is essential for two reasons. First, when people reside in a country, not giving rights to immigrants, its geopolitical influence is weak. For example, the geopolitical role of diaspora living in the Gulf countries is low. However, when immigrants living in democratic countries, they have several important rights such as: freedom of association, freedom of religion, the right to be naturalized etc. Their potential geopolitical action is great.

The second reason is the geographical dispersion of diasporas. If diaspora is present only in one country, it can conduct geopolitical action only from that country. However, if a diaspora is scattered in many democratic countries, they can create more transnational impact covering more countries. Take one example to illustrate these two reasons. What allows the Dalai Lama to have such an international audience? On the one hand, the Dalai Lama is part of the Tibetan diaspora, considered as a resident by the democratic country Canada, even if he lives essentially in India. In fact, the



Dalai Lama fear traveling in many countries because it has a honorary Canadian passport. On the other hand, the action of the Dalai Lama is relayed especially since the Tibetan diaspora, though small in number in the world, about 200,000, is dispersed in many countries (see Gérard-François Dumont, "Demography of Tibet. What Geopolitical Scenarios?", *Diplomacy*, n°. 63, July-August 2013, p. 40-44).

SS : The UN data shows that there are about 3 % people who are international migrant constituting more than 200 million people. Unlike earlier labour migration, large sections of these are skill and knowledge migrants. What is your take on this?

Gérard-François Dumont : A few decades ago, hyper-globalizers predicted the globalization of culture. They predicted the eradication of differences (national as well as cultural). There is no evidence of a process of uniformization. Instead, the migrations are generating cultural hybrids. Some migrants reconfigure their spaces or their lives are lived simultaneously within two or more spaces. It is possible because the impact of modern technological progress as the major factor in the contemporary proliferation of diasporas. The political significance of diasporas grows, thanks to the globalization of the economy and the development of international relations. They influence the attitudes and aspirations of the home country, experience conflicts and cooperation with their host societies, and contribute massively to the functioning of the international networks which are central to our world.

SS : What are the challenges for France at the policy levels to manage the diaspora? One finds that there are issues related to identity and culture. There are examples of diasporas resisting various policy measures in France.

Gérard-François Dumont : The first role of any government is to ensure social harmony in its territory. This assumes that diasporas agree to abide by the common rules in their country of settlement. The problem arises when diasporas consider themselves "fifth column". They believe they need not respect the values of the host country. But what is the reality? It is always complex. Thus, a very well known American author, Samuel Huntington, is very concerned about the development of the identity of the United States due to the rise of Hispanics. So he wrote the book *Who Are We? The Challenges to America's National Identity* (New York, Simon and Schuster, May 2004). I am not agree with Samuel Huntington. He forgets all the elements showing the integration of Hispanics in the United States (refer my paper "The Diversification of the Population and the Internal Geopolitics of the United States," *Geostrategic*, No. 23, 2009, p. 47-70). I will publish shortly a new text analyzing more precisely the two main books of Huntington. This text is called "Huntington's Clash of Civilizations in Sub-shock: A Scaling Contradictory"?

SS : You have published numerous works on geopolitical issues in France. But still one find very less research on this issue. . What is your opinion about the future of researches on diaspora and geopolitics as it is a growing phenomenon across the globe?

Gérard-François Dumont : We need to understand the importance of studying the geopolitical role of diasporas. That's why I called diasporas "third actor" in geopolitical relations. In other words, when we study international relations between two countries, we not only consider the positions of the governments of each country, but also the diasporas who live in these countries. Geopolitics is now transformed by the importance of diasporas. The concept of geopolitics is changed by the development of diasporas.

Gérard-François Dumont is Professorat the University of Paris IV-Sorbonne; President of the Population & Avenir association and Director of the journal *Population & Avenir* ; Editorial responsibilities in severalscientificjournals; Guest speaker in France, Europe and worldwide; AdministratorGeographical Society(association of public utility); Vice-President of the Academy of Geopolitics in Paris.The scientificactivity ofGérard-François Dumont focuses on demographics, but in an open concept of this discipline. In his opinion itshould not belimited to the processing of quantitative data, but open to otherpolitical, economic, social, and cultural knowledge... to achieve the understanding of manyfactorsexplaining the geography of settlement, of contemporary and past population dynamics. The qualitative and quantitative approachisalsoimperative to analyze the consequences of demographicprocesses, population projections and to conduct prospective studies. The scientificactivity of Gérard-François Dumont isthreefold: cognitive, conceptual and methodological.

India's Diaspora policy and Foreign Policy: An Overview

M. Mahalingam

Research Fellow, Centre For Policy Analysis, New Delhi.

There is a convergence of Diaspora policy and foreign policy of a country due to the embedded role of Diaspora in the foreign affairs, says Dr. Mahalingam*

Diasporas have emerged as powerful entities since they are recognized as 'soft power' in the realm of foreign policy strategy and also as an agent or catalyst of economic development of countries of origin beside their active role in the host countries. For instance, in the economic sphere, the Chinese Diaspora has been seen as a propelling force for its emergence as an economic super power. In the political sphere, the Jewish Diaspora has a strong grip over the US and European Union in terms of shaping their strategic relationship with Israel. Hence, Diasporas being transnational communities have become important non-state actors as well as deciding factors in international political and economic relations.

Due to globalization and liberalization of global economic system coupled with the rapid advancement of transport and communication technologies that have reduced time and space that have in turn intensified their socio-economic, political and cultural ties very stronger with their origin countries. Hence, not only have Diasporas attained due importance at the international level, but also in the domestic political and economic affairs of home countries than ever before. Eventually, they have emerged as an 'inevitable link' between their home and host lands along with major political and economic implications for both sides.

Indian Diaspora as a major component of global Diasporas is not an exception to concomitant developments that have been described above; it has increasingly become more influential over India's foreign policy and has evolved as a strategic asset for India in the recent decades. Realizing its due role at various levels, India has been taking concerted efforts to engage and leverage upon its Diaspora, that has been roughly estimated about 25 million dispersed in 136 countries. Considering its size and expansion, it is aptly mentioned in the High Level Committee Report on Indian Diaspora by the Government of India, "The Sun never sets in the Indian Diaspora". It is recognized that there is a convergence of Diaspora policy and foreign policy of a country due to the embedded

role of Diaspora in the foreign affairs. However, the Diaspora policy of India has been sporadic and patchy because of lackadaisical approach and compulsion of deep linkages between Indian Diaspora policy and India's foreign policy.

Diaspora and India's foreign policy: During pre-independence period, though the focus of foreign policy lay with British interests, the then Indian government took earnest interest in terms of protecting the various concerns of the Indian Expatriates as they were 'British subjects' only living elsewhere in the British Empire. The Indian political elites had shown solidarity and shared their concerns with the Indian expatriates through deputations by the Congress delegates. In fact, the plight of Indians abroad was a major issue for the independence movement led by Indian National Congress. There was a remittance from the Indian labour migrants to their families back home. It can be argued that a symbiotic relationship existed between home and Diaspora which continued till 1947. After achieving independence in 1947, there was a paradigm shift in the position of Diaspora policy as a result of India's foreign policy being guided by Nehruvian ideals of anti-imperialism and racial apartheid, respect for Sovereignty and non-alignment. On the economic front, India chose to follow self-reliance as its goal for economic development. The then Prime Minister of India, Jawaharlal Nehru categorically announced that ethnic Indians who chose to remain abroad would consider themselves as citizens or nationals of their respective host lands. In fact, they were encouraged to integrate with host culture and fight for the liberation of their adopted lands. After a lull, Nehru's successor Lal Bahadur Shastri entered into an agreement with Srimavo Bandaranaike to resolve the question of Tamils in Sri Lanka. Otherwise, the Nehruvian trend was continued and extended to till 1980 by successive governments.

Later, in spite of a change of focus in the India's foreign policy from Nehruvian idealism to realism under the regime of Indira Gandhi, there was no change of position in the Diaspora policy or the Indian economic foreign policy. In fact, she made herself particularly unpopular during the East African Indian crisis of 1968-1972. However, owing to oil shocks and Balance of Payment crisis, the government pushed for a remittance-centric approach especially for the Gulf Indians. Later, when there was a switch

of foreign policy priorities from realism to inter- third world cooperation under the regime of Rajiv Gandhi, there was a slight shift in Diaspora policy as well. He offered his amicable support and tried to handle Fiji Indian crisis in 1986, which had strained our relationship with Fiji. Besides, having realized Indian Diaspora as a strategic asset, he invited Indian diasporic talents like Sam Pitroda to realize his vision of 21st century India and took administrative measures like the establishment of Indian Overseas Affairs department in 1984. At the same time, there were no constructive steps or consistent and clear-cut policies to deal or tap the overseas Indians until the coming of National Democratic Alliance government led by BJP.

After the end of Cold War, the emergence of a multi-polar centric foreign policy, a structural shift in the global economy and the relentless foreign reserve crisis of Indian economy in the 1990s, facilitated the Indian government led by Narasimha Rao to announce drastic economic reforms such as Liberalization, Privatization, Globalization (LPG). On the advent of new economic model, the Indian Diaspora was able to participate in the plethora of economic opportunities of the unregulated and open Indian economy. It resolved the foreign currency crisis due to substantial investment and remittance from the Indian Diaspora. Subsequently, the Indian government changed its outlook towards Diaspora and reviewed its Diaspora policy. The NDA government led by BJP had initiated major steps to leverage upon the Indian Diaspora for economic growth and also as part of its larger vision of cultural nationalism. The Chennai Declaration of BJP shows its position on Indian Diaspora that:

We believe that the vast community of NRIs and PIOs also constitute a part of the 'Great Indian Family'. We should endeavour to continually strengthen their social, cultural, economic and emotional ties with their mother country. They are a rich reservoir of intellectual, managerial and entrepreneurial resources. The government should devise innovative schemes to facilitate the investment of these resources for India's all-round development (BJP News Report, 28th and 29th December 1999).

In the light of this, long and short term comprehensive policy measures were unveiled to engage its diverse Diaspora during its regime such as the appointment of High Level Committee on Indian Diaspora, launching of PIO card scheme, organizing annual Pravsi Bharatiya Divas on 9th January, giving out Pravasi Bharatiya Samman Awards, offering Dual citizenship (OCI) and so on. The subsequent UPA government established a separate Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs which has taken several initiatives for engaging the Diaspora. From the above discussion, one can understand the mutual influence of Diaspora policy and Indian foreign policy.

Diaspora and Foreign Policy Implications: The linkages between Indian foreign policy and Diaspora policy, has also had many positive and negative implications for India. In retrospect, during independence struggle, the Indian independence movement was deeply influenced them. Heeding to the clarion call of Indian leaders, they took a plunge in the alien soil for the liberation of mother India. The Indian expatriates like Adi Patel, Chhedi Jagan and Koya led the Indian freedom struggle and the political awakening in their respective settled countries. The starting of Gadar movement, forming of Azad Hind Fauj (Indian National Army) and Komagata Maru incident had political impacts on India. Of course, Mahatma Gandhi who had come from Diaspora was a beacon of light for achieving political freedom for India. After independence, with a focus on Nehruvian high ideals in the realm of Indian foreign policy, the Indian Diaspora was not expected to play any political or economic development role for India. This position had political and economic implications. One of them was that India could not get involved when part of its Diaspora was going through political, economic or social discrimination or even a severe crisis. i.e. Burma, Sri Lanka and South Africa. The other drawback was that despite continuing informal ties of Diaspora with their families back home, they were encouraged not to part take in the economic development of independent India.

Later, in the wake of globalization and radical structural changes in the Indian economy, India Diaspora was considered a viable and potential source to bail out the threatening foreign currency crisis of 1990s. The resumption of engagement with Indian Diaspora resulted in major implications on internal as well as external political and economic processes for India. US Indian community's stupendous lobbying efforts were laudable in relation with the cracking of the Indo-US Civil Nuclear Cooperation Agreement, defeating the Burton Amendment and justifying India's nuclear tests in 1998 and the Kargil war in 1999. On various occasions, Indian Caucus on Capitol Hill and various other advocacy and lobby groups were instrumental in pushing India's national and security interests forward.

The significant presence of diverse Indian community in the various parts of the globe has also had implications on India's diplomatic relationship with many countries. The exploitation and ill-treatment of Indian workers in the Gulf countries has always been a cause of concerns in India's relationship with those countries. The Sarita Chawla case is a classic example in this regard. During the First Gulf War, a large number of Indian migrants were forced to flee which resulted in reduction of remittance. . It augmented the adverse Balance of Payment crisis for India in 1990s. The Iraq and Kuwait wars, the recent Libyan Crisis of North Africa accelerated implications on our foreign relations with the regions. Further, the recent controversy over the evacuation of Indian

workers in Saudi Arabia posed major concerns over India's diplomatic relationship. The racial attack on Indian students in Australia also posed serious challenge and implications to India-Australia relations. Uneasy relationship between the Indian community and their respective governments have also led to deterioration of relationship. The Fiji Coup meant Indian diplomatic Mission had to be closed down. HINDRAF movement of Indians in Malaysia provoked reactions from both sides. The remarks of Radio Jockey in South Africa had also drawn some reactions from India. Subsequently, Indian Mission was directed to be in constant vigil between African and Indian communities. The ban on wearing turban by the Sikhs in France by 2004 gathered momentum after global Sikh mobilization in support of French Sikhs in India and Diaspora. Under the pressure from global Sikhs as well as pressure from the Indian government notably under the new leadership of a Sikh Prime Minister Manmohan Singh, France decided to find a solution.

On the domestic front, during the declaration of emergency, the Indian Diaspora in US and UK had shown solidarity for anti emergency groups. They had been funding the state elections of Punjab, Gujarat, Kerala and Andhra. Owing to their enviable position in countries like US, UK and Canada, their parliamentarians were put pressure to consider their interests and concerns with the domestic affairs of India. The visit of foreign secretary Jack Straw to Gujarat after riot in 2002 shows their active role when their community faces the threat of violence. Apart from political and foreign policy implications, the engagement with Indian Diaspora poses internal security implications as well.

Diaspora and Security Implications: Diaspora groups can fund sub-nationalist or ethno-nationalist movements which either pose a threat to national security or challenge the territorial integrity of the nation state since diasporas are increasingly perceived to represent the 'paradigmatic other of the nation state' as well as 'long-distance nationalism', as perceived by Benedict Anderson. The separatist movements namely Kashmiri, Khalistan, and LTTE had received massive political, financial and material support from large sections of its Diaspora. Kaniska crash was the master mind of Canadian Sikh Diaspora. Through money laundering and hawala, they have been instigating riots and militancy in different parts of the country. The Gujarat Ayodhya and Kandhamal riots, militancy in Kashmir and ULFA in North East India are the classic case studies in this respect. Further, they also fund extremist civil society groups like RSS, jihadi groups and other extremist political groups for communalization and the growth of violence and religious fundamentalism in the country. The Indian migrants of Gulf countries are indoctrinated and transformed to sleeper cells. On their return, they carry out terror activities and spread the Wahabi ideology. The SIMI and Indian Mujahideen have been aided by diasporic groups in clove with eternal religious extremist groups to plot ter-

rorist activities. The Diverse Indian diaspora is an easy target for the inimical forces of India like Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI), which uses them to destabilize peace and security in the country. In this regard, Headley and Tahavur Rana who were involved in Mumbai attacks of 26/11 are well known cases. Being a part of global drug cartel, they also act as drug pushers in India given their connections. Having said that, Diaspora has vast economic implications on the origin country.

Diaspora and Economic Implications: Diaspora finance in the form of remittance and investment helped India to come out from its foreign reserve crisis and fuelled its economic growth. India has overtaken China in terms of receiving foreign remittance recently. Indian Diaspora has acted as mediators, as facilitators of international trade and investment, given the high profile of Indian entrepreneurs, technocrats and management consultants. The number of companies in IT and BPO are owned by Indian Diaspora is more than two hundred in 2000. The Indus Entrepreneur and Silicon Valley Bank had brought two delegations of Venture capital companies to explore potential investment opportunities. Some Venture capitalists of Indian origin in the US have funded Indian R&D companies who are likely to produce Intellectual Property and innovative products in the areas of wireless technology, semiconductor design technology. West Bridge Capital, Kleiner Perkins Caufield & Byers and Norwest Venture Group are the best examples in this regard. Thus, they have been playing a very active role for India in becoming a knowledge based economy. In healthcare, they have established hospitals like Escorts, Medicity and Apollo for providing healthcare at par with global standards. Major Diaspora organizations are actively involved in the philanthropy activities in the different parts of India. In the field of education, they are setting up new institutions like India Business School in Hyderabad and several others that are being set up. No doubt, they have become an agent of economic development after structural changes in the Indian economy.

Indian Diaspora as a strategic Asset: The twenty million diverse Indian Diaspora, has enriched their profile with the help of acquired skills and inspiration from their civilizational values. Though they are heterogeneous, drawn from different historical and cultural contexts of migration, they are identified and held together by their 'Indianness' and a deep cultural and emotional attachment towards Mother India. In fact, they are microcosm of India. They are indeed a tool for 'soft power diplomacy' for its retention of cultural richness of India. They have been bridges, mediators, facilitators, lobby and advocacy groups for taking primacy of India's national security and economic interests. The expertise of Indian academic intellectuals in various US and European Union universities could be an asset for revamping our falling standards of higher education. India can harness upon its well-exposed diasporic youths and make them partners for raising India's human capital. The East African Indian

successful entrepreneurs who are key players in the global economy can be a spring board for India to play its role in the international trade. Many diasporic Indians are members of parliament in many countries who could be a liaison between their government and India.

Conclusion: One could argue that Diaspora policy and Indian foreign policy are two sides of the same coin. As discussed above, it is productive and counter-productive as well. India is yet to utilize the potential of Indian Diaspora in its domain of foreign affairs. For instance, India has been demanding for permanent seat in the UN Security Council, but it has not been realized so far. Indian Diaspora can be utilized for achieving the long due aspirations of India. In the recent decades, the international migration of semi-skilled and high skilled Indians has seen an upsurge due to demand of software Industry and H1-B visa phenomena. A tangible and scrupulous Diaspora policy is imperative to leverage upon the growing Indian Diaspora population. With the versatile role of Diaspora, India could fulfill its cherished dream of being a super power and it could make much head way in its international and foreign affairs.

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Book Review

Sheffer, Gabriel (2003) Diaspora Politics: At Home Abroad; Cambridge University Press; pages, 290.

What forms the basis of Diaspora politics? What are the main formational tools that leads to Diaspora formation within the ambit of a trans-national network? How do we associate Diaspora politics within this increasingly globalised world? These some the questions Gabriel Sheffer tries to tackle in the book "Diaspora Politics Home and Abroad. With this book, Sheffer tries to analyse the extent to which Diaspora networks play within the context of both homeland and the host country. This is a question that has particularly come within the fore front of the global stage. The book itself is structured in a form which looks to first discuss, then debate the question of the driving forces towards the formation of Diaspora politics within the homeland and looks to provide an analytical framework which could be used for further research.

The central focus of Sheffer's Diaspora analysis is set on the factor of "ethno-nationalism", a term he underlines while putting forward the Primary Questions and Hypotheses of the book. It is with this focus that Sheffer then builds on his various conclusions within the book itself. By ethno-national Sheffer tries to understand the politics of diasporas founded solely on the basis of a feeling on nationhood led by similar "ethnic and national traits, tendencies and familiarities" (p. 11). This acts as the

foundation which the author uses to analyse the extant theories regarding the formation of diasporas so as to distinguish them from other sets of immigrants. With this important note, the first few chapters deal with the clarification of certain terms as well as the setting out of certain caveats while analyzing the role diaspora politics in the global scenario. Having set out the types of diaspora to focus on in the opening chapters, Sheffer then attempts to show how the concept of a diaspora lobby group influencing politics in both the homeland and the host is not a new concept. Tracing the histories of ancient diasporas such as the Jewish, the Greek and the Armenian diasporas and subsequently the Chinese and the Indian diasporas, Sheffer shows how these groups had already formed a precursor to the sort of diaspora politics found today.

There are two basic points of reference where Sheffer tries to draw our attention towards while discussing the political and cultural group formation within diaspora groups. One important point of distinction is the difference between a "state-linked" diaspora- those diaspora groups who have a concrete and politically recognized notion of a homeland- and a "stateless" diaspora- those groups who lack the former. This point of difference is an important one according to Sheffer and the author keeps bringing the reader back to this point regularly

throughout the remainder of the book. The other point of reference is the historicity of diasporas. Hence, as the author leads from the fact that diaspora formation is quite an old concept, he also shows that various new diaspora groups keep springing up everywhere in the world. This plays an important part in their participation within the politics of both homeland and host countries and the strategies that the various diasporas use when dealing with these two nations and vice versa. It is this difference between the historical and established diaspora and the incipient diasporas as well as the stateless and the state-linked diasporas that the book tries to analyse throughout the remainder of the book.

Given these two points of contention, it is then that the author proposes the questions of strategies used by the diasporas to exist and bargain both with the host country as well as the homeland. This process, as Sheffer notes, is not merely a one-way relationship, as homeland and host countries are always on the lookout to woo the diaspora groups to their advantage. Within this complex web of transnational politics, what Sheffer then tries to analyse is the way in which diaspora political groups are formed and even unmade (put forward in the chapter "The Making, Development and Unmaking of Diasporas"). One of the most interesting aspects of the book comes when Sheffer tries to place state-linked and stateless diasporas within the ambit of six broad strategies of integration – assimilationist, integrationist, communalist/corporatist, autonomist, irredentist and separatist- within the host country. Each diaspora group owing to its identity as a state-linked/ stateless diaspora as well as its history of establishment, will pick and choose one strategy from the former so as to increase their spheres of influence regarding their socio-economic and political mandates.

It is from this angle also that Sheffer views the issues of trans-national networks, their relationship with traditional nation- states in an increasingly transnational world and

finally and importantly, the question of a diaspora pledging its loyalty towards either the host country or a homeland. Again through the lens of ethno-nationalism and the previous criss-crossing identities, Sheffer points out that a diaspora groups loyalty depends on a whole host of prevalent political conditions in both the homeland and the host country.

It is in the final chapter that Sheffer tries to look beyond the conventional categorization of diaspora groups (making a direct reference to particularly the features of a diaspora group given by Safran and the types of diaspora as given by Cohen). In order to understand the true nature of diaspora functioning within a global context requires a departure from these narrow view towards a more holistic view, which consists of a primordialist view as well as a mytho-symbolic view as well as the instrumental approach already mentioned in the book. It is only when one sees the making and development of diaspora groups within the country, according to Sheffer, can one truly contextualize the role of diaspora politics within a globalized world. Thus, as the title refers, it is important to understand how the diaspora makes itself home abroad that will define its role with respect to the world. Sheffer does a good job of identifying and then analyzing the various issues and strategies used to overcome those issues by various sets of diaspora groups. His justification for using the ethno-nationalistic perspective for doing so is also put forward adequately. The book also provides adequate insight into the historicity of the formation and development of diaspora groups for those not aware of it. All in all, the book does provide a clear perspective on how to go about analyzing the role of diaspora groups within a globalized economic and political system.

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Forthcoming GRFDT Event

GRFDT talk on "Settled Strangers Asian Business Elites in East Africa, 1800-2000, (Sage 2013)"

Speaker: Prof. Gijsbert Oonk

Head of the Department of History, Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication, Rotterdam, The Netherlands

Chaired by : Dr. Ned Bertz,

Visiting Faculty Member at Ambedkar University Delhi (2013-14) and Assistant Professor of History, University of Hawaii

On 28th October 2013 at 5 p.m. Room No-13, Centre for the Study of Social System, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. Website: <http://www.grfdt.com/EventDetails.aspx?Type=Events&TabId=69>

Employers' Conference 2013, Dubai

Organisers:

Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA), Government of India and India Centre for Migration (ICM)

Migration for employment continues to prevail as the dominant mode of globalization as it addresses the labour shortages and contributes to development, both in the country of destination and origin. Although the international market provides immense opportunities for migrant workers across the globe, the mismatch between the skills that prospective migrants offer and the ones that employers need is an issue of critical importance. In the Indian context, this challenge provides an opportunity for channelizing India's huge youth population by providing appropriate skills and sustained interaction with the employers from overseas.

The Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA), Government of India, had organized the first Employers Conference in 2011 in Hyderabad, and it now proposes to organize the second Employers Conference in Dubai on 27th & 28th October 2013. The Ministry believes this conference will provide an opportunity to bring together the employers from overseas, especially the GCC countries on to a common platform, debate and understand the concerns relating to employment of Indian workers. The Conference will also be a platform for the Government of India to bring officials from both the Central & State Governments to express their views and interact with the overseas employers. The Conference will be organized by the Ministry in association with the India Centre for Mi-

gration (ICM) and Overseas Indian Facilitation Centre.

Key Objectives:

- Discuss the policy perspective of the Government of India on emigration from India
- Create awareness on safe, humane and legal emigration, and the steps taken by the Ministry
- Present details of various schemes/initiatives of the Ministry and other State Governments in skill development
- Establish sustainable linkages with employers from overseas and certification agencies
- Understand the emerging challenges in qualifications systems in the Gulf and other regions

For further queries please contact

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http://icm.net.in/employers_conference/employers_conference.aspx

Global civil society invites governments to collaborate on international migration and development

The UN General Assembly which had its meeting on 16th July brought together more than 300 representatives of grassroots, regional and international civil society organizations, 100 representatives of governments, UN agencies and other international organizations to discuss the action plan for the long term collaboration on International Migration and Development (HLD)

The day long Hearings focused explicitly on four key issues put forward in civil society's 5-year agenda: [1] migrant labour and mobility, [2] migrant rights and protection, [3] human development and diaspora action and [4] migration governance and partnerships.

The civil society has been emphasising on greater collaboration among all stake holders to facilitate the eight point agendas, namely:

- (1) Regulating the Recruitment Industry,
- (2) Migrants Stranded in Distress,
- (3) Migration and the Post-2015 Development Agenda,
- (4) Rights and Contributions of Diaspora Communities,
- (5) Labour Rights for Migrant Workers,
- (6) Rights for Migrant Women,
- (7) Exchange of Promising Practices in National Legislation,
- (8) Institutional Mechanisms of Migration

CALL FOR PAPERS

Globalization: Texts · Performances · Practices

April 24-26, 2014

Hosted by the Communication Department at Saint Louis University Madrid

In the provocative book *Vermeers' Hat*, historian Timothy Brooks teases out the signs of nascent globalization in Johannes Vermeer's seventeenth century paintings of Delft, Holland. These signs include the eponymous hats from "New World" pelts, textiles from Turkey, ceramics from China that were already established features of the Dutch quotidian and within the frame of the paintings. In other words, globalization predates Bretton Woods, the 1989 Revolutions, and the rise of Facebook!

Almost four centuries later, the depth and breadth of what we now regularly reference as globalization is still expanding. At the same time, in most moments, we as subjects are situated in palpable, immediate, super-organic localities. This and other paradoxes demonstrate that, however

much "globalization" has become a widely circulated buzzword, we are still probing what it means for subjects in everyday terms.

Across three days, participants from all over the globe will reflect on the many registers in which the "structuring structures" of globalization play out as the conference assays to unpack "what's going on." While the event will be hosted by a Communication department, the organizers welcome cross-disciplinary effort.

To be considered as a presenter, please email the following by 16 December 2013, 18:00, Madrid local time (GST+1)

Conference email address: madrid.comm.conference2014@gmail.com

Conference website: <http://slucommconf.cloudysea.com/>

The University of Texas Africa Conference African Diasporas: Old and New

Venue: The University of Texas at Austin
April 3-6, 2014

The goal of this conference is to create an interdisciplinary dialogue concerning Africa and Africans throughout the world from both historical and contemporary approaches. This conference seeks to bring together a vast array of scholars on a variety of academic levels to discuss the complex experiences of African descended peoples across the globe.

What is the African Diaspora? How are old and new diasporas discussed in a variety of disciplines? How can we conceptualize the African Diaspora? What is the role of the African Diaspora in modern politics? How do various groups within old and new African diasporas conceptualize themselves in relation to others? How do diasporic voices shape conceptualizations of individual and collective identities? What will the African diaspora look like in the future?

The deadline for submitting paper proposals is November 30, 2013. Proposals should include a 250-word abstract and title, as well as the author's name, address, telephone

number, email address, and institutional affiliation.

Please submit all abstracts to Cacee Hoyer/Danielle Sanchez: africainconference2014@gmail.com and toyinfalola@austin.utexas.edu.

A mandatory non-refundable registration fee of \$150 for scholars and \$100 for graduate students must be paid immediately upon the acceptance of the abstract. This conference fee includes admission to the panels, workshops, and special events, as well as transportation to and from the conference from the hotel, breakfast for three days, dinner on Friday night, lunch on Saturday, and a banquet on Saturday evening.

The University of Texas at Austin does not provide participants with any form of funding support, travel expenses, or boarding expenses. If the conference obtains outside funding this will be used to help subsidize graduate students' accommodations on a competitive basis but it is not guaranteed.

Convened by Dr. Toyin Falola

Coordinated by Cacee Hoyer and Danielle Sanchez

We invite Students, Researchers and Faculty Members to submit a small write up of their achievements and awards to the editor. It will provide the scholars a platform to connect with peer groups working on themes related to Diaspora and Transnationalism. Information related to seminar/conferences/events can be sent to the Editor at: editor@grfdt.com