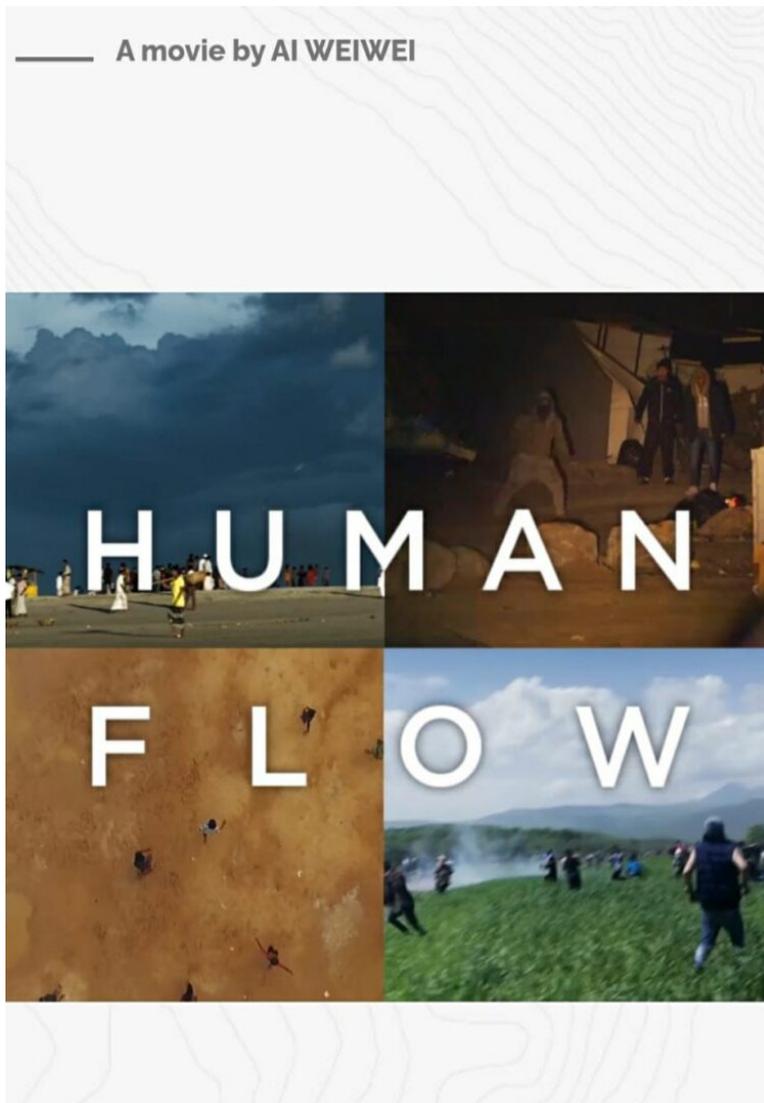


ROOTS & ROUTES

Vol 10, No. 12, December, 2021



Credits: <http://www.humanflow.com/>

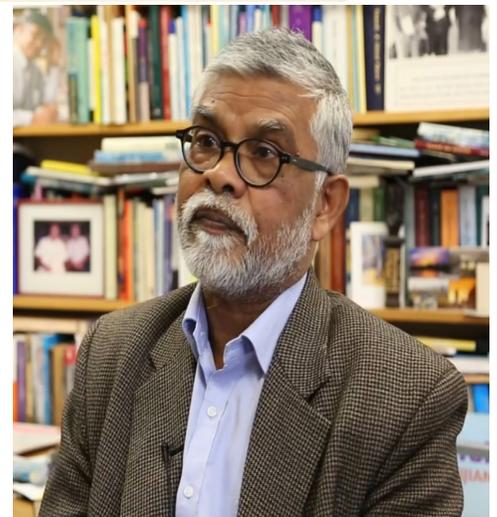
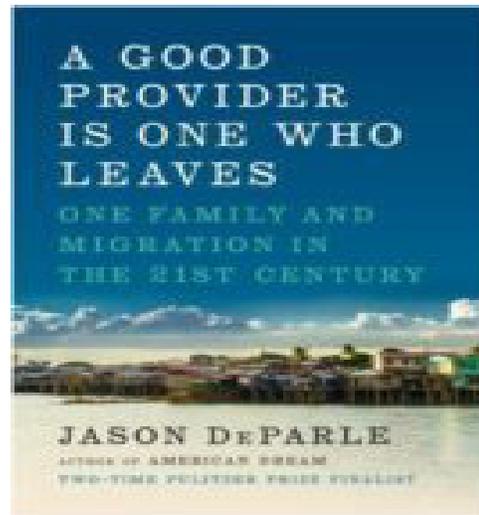


Photo credits: Wikipedia

www.grfdt.com



Editor's Note



Contents

GRFDT Events
Article
Obituary
Book Review
Movie Review

Editorial Information
©GRFDT. Roots and Routes is printed,
designed & circulated by
GRFDT

Editor

Feroz Khan

Editorial Committee

Abhishek Yadav
Ani Yeremyan
Arsala Nizami
Feroz Khan
Felix Tombindo
Manjima Anjana
Michal Tengeri
Monika Bisht Ranjan
Rakesh Ranjan
Sadananda Sahoo
Smita Tiwary
Snehal Mutha
Unnikrishnan V

Design and Production:

Rakesh Ranjan &
Feroz Khan

Email: editorinchief@grfdt.com

Website: www.grfdt.org

Dear Readers

Greetings!

The current issue presents the events organised by GRFDT in collaboration with other organisations in December 2021. These events range from the special lecture series to GCM objectives. The first section of the issue has covered some of the highlights of these events.

The issue presents a thought-provoking article dealing with international student mobility written by Harjinder Singh. In the article titled – “International Student Mobility: An Emerging Route of International Labour Migration,” the author attempt to integrate student mobility with the labour market. The author argues that international student mobility also emerges as a new route of international labour migration. The policies of the advanced nations that have become the hub of educational services integrate it with the labour migration.

An internationally acclaimed scholar of the history of Indo-Fijian, Prof. Brij V Lal, died on 25th December 2021 in Australia. Prof. Lal, one of the prominent scholars, gave his entire life to Fiji. Prof. Lal authored many books – Mr Tulsi’s Store: A Fijian Journey (2001), Girmiyas: The Origins of the Fiji Indian (1983), ChaloJahaji: On a Journey through Indenture in Fiji (2000) and Bittersweet: The Indo-Fijian Experience (2004) are some of his few prominent work. The issue has two obituaries on Prof. Brij V Lal written individually by Professor Brij Maharaj and Dr Nitesh Narnolia.

The current issue carries a book review: “A Good Provider is One Who Leaves: One Family and Migration in the 21st Century (2019),” reviewed by Patricia Miraflores. In addition, the current issue also has a movie review titled ‘Human Flow,’ which has been reviewed by Harjinder Singh that focuses on the current global refugee crisis.

We invite readers to participate and share their experiences with us to have a meaningful engagement. You can communicate with us through email at editorinchief@grfdt.com. We wish you happy reading and look forward to your suggestions and comments.

Happy Reading!

Feroz Khan

GRFDT Events

Global Research Forum on Diaspora and Transnationalism (GRFDT) and other reputed organizations, including Migrant Forum in Asia (MFA), Cross Regional Center for Refugees and Migrants (CCRM), International Institute of Migration and Development (IIMAD), Metropolis Asia-Pacific, Alianza America (AA), PICUM, Freedom Collaborative, and South Asian Regional Trade Union Council (SARTUC) jointly conducted more than thirteen webinars and lecture series in the area of migration and diaspora.

On 4th December, GRFDT conducted a special lecture by Sahra Ahmed and Hari K C on “*Gender and Migration*”. The “*Regular Pathways and Irregular Migration*” programme was held on 7th December. On the same day, the organization conducted a webinar on

GCM Objective 9, that is, “*Strengthen the Transnational Response to Smuggling of Migrants.*”

On 11th December, a special lecture was delivered by Dr Jean-Pierre Gauci on “*Migration Governance (International Legal Provisions)*,” as a part of special lecture series on Global Compact for Migration.

On 14th December, the organization conducted a webinar on “*Climate Change and Migration*,” and GCM Objective 10 – “*Prevent, Combat and Eradicate Trafficking in Persons in the context of International Migration.*”

Readers can check the programme’s videos on GRFDT YouTube Channel titled “Diaspora Transnationalism”. Details of the upcoming programmes are also available on the GRFDT website.

REGULAR PATHWAYS AND IRREGULAR MIGRATION

Tuesday, 07 December 2021, 2PM CET
Simultaneous Interpretation in ARABIC, ENGLISH, FRENCH, SPANISH

SPEAKERS

- Nahida Sobhan**
Bangladesh Ambassador to Jordan
- Benny Rhamdani**
Head of Indonesian Migrant Workers Protection Agency (BP2MI)
- Cláudia Pereira**
Secretary of State for Integration and Migration, Portugal
- Pablo Rojas Coppari**
Senior Research Officer at the International Organization for Migration, Geneva

MODERATOR

REGISTER HERE
<https://bit.ly/r5pnc>

The poster also features logos for partner organizations: AMRE, IOM, UNHCR, IIMAD, MFA, PICUM, and SARTUC.



Metropolis Asia-Pacific



14 December 2021
16.00 - 17.30(CET)



GCM OBJECTIVE 10: PREVENT, COMBAT AND ERADICATE TRAFFICKING IN PERSONS IN THE CONTEXT OF INTERNATIONAL MIGRANTS

Speakers



Ekaterina Porras Sivolobova
Founder and Director
DO BOLD



Dr Jean-Pierre Gauci
Arthur Watts Senior Research Fellow
British Institute of International and Comparative Law



Timothy Akombo
Activist - Counter Human trafficking



Hannah Thinyane
Senior Product Manager
DIGINEX

Moderator



Naima Mungai
Project Manager -The Africa Women Journalism Project



Scan QR Code

Register here:

<https://bit.ly/r5pmc>

Session language: English

Visit <http://www.globalcompactmigration.com> to know more
Email: academy@grfdt.com



CLIMATE CHANGE AND MIGRATION

Tuesday, 14 December 2021, 2PM CET
Simultaneous Interpretation in
ARABIC, ENGLISH, FRENCH, SPANISH



Md. Nazrul Islam

Bangladesh
Ambassador to Ethiopia



Anare Leweniqila

Deputy Permanent
Representative of Fiji's
Permanent Mission to the
UN in Geneva



Dina Ionesco

Senior Advisor in the
Adaptation Division of the
UNFCCC Secretariat



Evalyn Tennant

Associate, GMPA and
Co-convenor of Climate,
Migration &
Displacement Platform

REGISTER HERE
<https://bit.ly/r5pmc>



SPEAKERS

MODERATOR



International Student Mobility: An Emerging Route of International Labour Migration

Introduction

The International cross-border movements of people have many forms in the contemporary world. On the basis of time-period of stay at destination country, it can be categorized as temporary migration and permanent migration. On the basis of purpose of cross-border movement, it can be categorized as international tourism, international labour migration, and international student mobility etc. These categories can not be defined in isolation from each other and are mutually inclusive. For example, transnational communities of a country which are formed on the basis of widespread emigrants, also play an important role for the promotion of international tourism. Similarly, the short term labour migration have a strong connection with permanent migration. As the distinction between permanent and temporary channels of migration blurs, because some of the major immigrant nations provides permanent residency easily to those immigrants who have entered through any temporary programme (Skeldon, 2013). There is also an emerging association between the international student mobility and permanent migration, which is barely discussed in migration studies. UNESCO (n.d.) defines internationally mobile student as “an individual who has physically crossed the international border between two countries with the objective to participate in educational activities in a destination country, where the destination country is different from his or her country of origin.” The following part of the given article deals with the different perspectives related with international student mobility.

The International Student Mobility and Enforcement of GATS

In the last quarter of twentieth century, the politico-economic world order has been transformed from state managed economic system to the market oriented

economic system. The international trade and capital flows are liberalised, the role of nation states also redefined from a commanding entity to a indicative one, and the global economy experienced a new level of integration in terms of trade and capital flows. In this context to facilitate and to manage the international trade of services, the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS) entered into force in January 1995. All WTO (World Trade Organisation) members are at the same time became members of the GATS. The GATS distinguishes between four modes of supplying of services: cross-border trade, consumption abroad, commercial presence, and presence of natural persons. The general framework of GATS also applied on the international trade of educational services. The commercialisation of higher education at the global level after the enforcement of GATS gave birth to the international student mobility at larger scale which falls under the consumption abroad mode of trade in services. If the cross-border movement of students for higher education between the countries of European Union (EU) is ignored¹ deliberately, then Australia and Canada, both are the English language spoken countries, are the two countries that become global hubs in case of enrollment of international students in higher education (OECD, 2018). Furthermore, good band scores in International English Language Testing System (IELTS) becomes a necessary requirement to get admission in any college of the given two countries. The integration of international student mobility with the labour market of destination country makes it economically viable for the internationally mobile students.

Integration between International Student Mobility and Labour Market of Destination Country

The immigration policies of advanced countries has got changed in the previous decades. The permanent

immigration policies of the traditional countries of immigration including The United States of America (USA), Canada, and Australia have turned into temporary and non-migrant programmes (Skeldon, 2013). Global trends of international student mobility makes it clear that student flows originated from developing world towards the traditional countries of immigration. Therefore, as the immigration policies change the route of labour migration from developing world to the advanced countries also changed from permanent migration to the temporary migration through international student mobility. The integration of labour market of destination countries through an opportunity to get post-study work permit, and to access the labour market as a part-time worker during the study program are strong economic drivers of the flows of students from developing world towards the advanced countries. Along with this, the immigration policies of advanced countries, provides an opportunity to the spouse of the student to get work permit directly. In the real sense, the international student mobility embodied with the labour flows from the developing world towards the advanced countries. Furthermore, after the completion of post-study work permit, the possibility to get permanent residency of the destination country also increases, as the policies to provide permanent residence are favourable for those migrants who are already on temporary work permit. Therefore, this will not be erroneous to describe the international student mobility as a new emerging route for emigration.

Economic Consequences of International Student Mobility for the Area of Origin

One of the positive economic consequences of the international migration for the area of origin is the remittances from migrants (Nayyar, 2018). Remittance flows may also increase the level of national income through its multiplier effect. But the given route of international student mobility is different from direct international labour migration. It leads to the direct outflow of economic resources in terms of educational expenses of the student. For the developing economy, due to exchange rate differentials, it becomes more costly to pay the fees in terms of the currency of destination countries whose currencies attains higher value in exchange rate market relative to the currencies of origin countries. The leakage of income in terms

of educational expenses adversely affects the level of economic growth in the destination country. The evidences from Indian Punjab where the incidence of migration through international student mobility is at its peak shows the similar negative economic consequences for Punjab Economy. In 2018, approximately 1.5 lakh youth go abroad through study visas from Punjab along with outflow of Rs. 27,000 crore in terms of their educational expenses (Kaur, 2018).

Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 10.7.1 deals with the reducing of recruitment cost in terms of percentage of yearly income earned in country of destination. The low cost of recruitment leads to the large flows of remittances and enhances the level of development in area of origin. Because of the least availability of the work permit for the workers of developing countries to get direct recruitment for work in advanced countries, they have to choose the costlier route of international student mobility to get work permit after completing the study program. Indirectly the educational expenses act as a recruitment cost, because it also adversely affect the remittances flows. Therefore the international student mobility also contradicts with the goal of SDG10.7.1, when it is analysed from the perspective of a new form of international labour migration.

Conclusion

There is no doubt that liberalisation of trade in educational services opens up new avenues for the citizens of developing countries to enhance the human capital endowments. Along with this, the international student mobility has also emerged as a new route of international labour migration as the immigration policies of advanced countries that have become global hubs of educational services integrate it with the labour migration. But, it has negative impacts for area of origin due to the outflow of resources in terms of educational expenses, in terms of leakage of multiplier and also in terms of deficit in balance of trade. Furthermore, the dynamics of international student mobility also demands in-depth researches to theorise the different perspectives associated with international student mobility.

1. Since the cross-border movement within the member countries of EU is not restricted.

References

Kaur, D. (2018, July 28). Cost of foreign dreams for parents in Punjab: Rs 27,000 cr. The Tribune. <https://www.tribuneindia.com/news/archive/punjab/cost-of-foreign-dreams-for-parents-in-punjab-rs-27-000-cr-628584>

Nayyar, D. (2008). International migration and economic development. *Narcis Serra & Joseph E Stiglitz (Eds) the Washington Consensus reconsidered. Towards a New Global Governance*, 277-305.

OECD (2016). <http://uis.unesco.org/en/glossary-term/international-or-internationally-mobile-students>

OECD (2021), International student mobility (indicator). doi: 10.1787/4bcf6fc3-en (Accessed on 10 September 2021)

Skeldon, R. (2013). Global Migration: Demographic Aspects and Its Relevance for Development. Retrieved August 06, 2019, from <https://www.un.org/>

<en/development/desa/population/publications/pdf/technical/TP2013-6.pdf>

UNESCO (n.d.). *International (or Internationally) Mobile Student*. <http://uis.unesco.org/en/glossary-term/international-or-internationally-mobile-students>

Harjinder Singh has completed M.A. in Economics from the Department of Economics, Punjabi University, Patiala, Punjab. He is currently pursuing his Ph.D. in Social Sciences, focusing on International Migration with a multidisciplinary approach. He has been awarded Junior Research Fellowship from University Grants Commission. His areas of interest include – Political Economy of Development, Migration and Development Studies, Globalization and Local Transformations, Agrarian Studies of the Third World, and Economic Theories. He is also fond of reading poetry and historical studies.

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/harjinderecon?s=03>



MIGRANT FORUM ASIA **GRFDT** **CCRM** **IIMAD** **Metropolis Asia-Pacific** **FREEDOM COLLABORATIVE** **7 December 2021** **16.00 - 17.30(CET)** **Global Compact Migration**

GCM OBJECTIVE 9: STRENGTHEN THE TRANSNATIONAL RESPONSE TO SMUGGLING OF MIGRANTS

Speakers

Dr Noemi Magugliani
Research Fellow in Anti-trafficking Law and Policy at BIICL

Sophie Hoffmann
Program Manager Immigration and Border Management Unit (IBM) - IOM Niger

Rejimon Kuttapan
Journalist and Snr Research Fellow International Institute of Migration and Development

Michal Nobis
Immigration and Border Management Unit, IOM Mauritania

Moderator

Paddy Siyanga Knudsen
Vice President - Global Research Forum on Diaspora & Transnationalism

Scan QR Code | Register here: <https://bit.ly/r5pmc> | Session language: English

Visit <http://www.globalcompactmigration.com> to know more
Email: academy@grfdt.com

Obituary – Professor Brij Lal: 21 August 1952 – 25 December 2021

Professor Brij Maharaj*

Blessed by Mother Saraswathi (Hindu Goddess of Learning) with an extra-ordinary intellect, Professor Brij Lal was a multi-talented – internationally renowned scholar, activist for human rights and social justice (for which he was exiled from his beloved Fiji and had to move to Australia), with enviable writing skills

I knew Professor Brij Lal for about twenty years. We met at international conferences and kept in touch via email. Our last meeting was in October 2017 at the “Challenging Perspectives on the Indian Diaspora” Conference in Den Haag, Holland, marking the century since the abolition of Indian indenture where he gave the opening keynote address.

Professor Brij Lal was the quintessential historian, and as an urban-political geographer, I was very much an interloper in South Asian diaspora studies, our point of intersection. Despite our disciplinary differences, we shared several similarities – we had a common first name (I respectfully called him *Bada Bhai* (big brother), and he affectionately called *Chota Bhai* (younger brother); we were both third generation descendants of indenture labourers from Bihar and Uttar Pradesh, respectively; we followed cricket avidly; were fond of Indian music; had a self-deprecating sense of humour; opposed religious fundamentalism; and perhaps, above all, were committed to public intellectualism. He nominated me to serve on the International Advisory Board of the Global Girit Institute, and its flagship journal, *Indenture Papers*.

He taught history at several tertiary institutions, including the University of the South Pacific, the University of Papua New Guinea, the University of Hawaii at Manoa and the Australian National University where he was Professor of Pacific and Asian History from 1990-2016.

Professor Brij Lal’s scholarship had three strands – history of indentured labourers and their descendants;

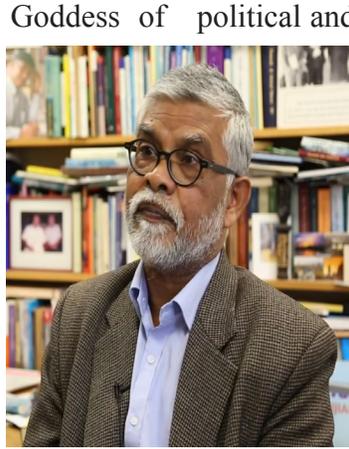


Photo credits: Wikipedia

political and social challenges in Fiji; and experiments in creative writing by blending facts and fiction, which he called “faction”. His ‘faction’ writing was very evident in his book, *Road from Mr Tulsi’s Store*. In my review of this book, I contended that: “Drawing from the experiences of the indentured Fiji community, Brij Lal has in this collection fused fact and fiction with eloquence and integrity and skill and passion, the hallmarks of his scholarship to produce a masterly work of enduring value about the life and journeys of a people in flux, the Fiji Indians. An exemplary achievement. Comparisons with VS Naipaul’s *House for Mr Biswas* are inevitable”.

He straddled the worlds of an academic historian; political activist and public intellectual. He said: “I think there’s a tension in my life: I inhabit the interface between scholarship and practical action ... Being an academic is not only an occupation, it is a sacred responsibility”. Professor Brij Lal emphasised that he wrote “not as some casual, disinterested bystander on the side lines passing lofty judgement. I write as an involved insider. I live within my history, not above or outside it. I declare my hand at the outset so that the reader is fully aware of my stance”.

He believed that any study of history must have contemporary relevance. At a public address on Fiji Remembrance Day in 2014, Professor Brij Lal said: “One of my life’s ambition[s] has been to remember what others have forgotten or chosen to forget—to give our people a voice and a modicum of humanity, to give them a place at the table of history. We need to remind the new generation about our history: history doesn’t only belong to the victors but to the vanquished as well. One thing I have done in life before I go is to give voiceless people a voice—a sense of place, a sense of purpose. People will remember this aspect by history. I do not celebrate struggles and sacrifices and sufferings of our people. What I marvel at is how ordinary people did extraordinary things in extraordinary circumstances”.

By any yardstick, Professor Brij Lal was an internationally renowned scholar. He was a towering intellectual in South Asian Diaspora studies and more specifically a pioneering trailblazer in the field of indentured labour and their origins in India. Any study about the indentured diaspora would be incomplete without reference to his work.

In a career spanning over forty years, Professor Brij Lal had a phenomenal record of peer-reviewed publications, which few peers could match. His prolific scholarship included: ten books; thirty edited volumes, including the magnum opus *The Encyclopaedia of the Indian Diaspora*; and scores of peer-reviewed journal articles.

He was the founding editor of *Contemporary Pacific* and *Conversations*, the series editor of the University of Hawaii Press Topics in the Contemporary Pacific Series, review editor of the *Journal of Pacific Studies*, and several terms as editor of the *Journal of Pacific History*.

He was dismayed by political developments in Fiji. He was not an ‘armchair critique’ but was actively involved in trying to contribute to a better society. He served on the Fiji Constitution Review Commission in the 1990s which influenced the adoption of Fiji’s democratic constitution. Professor Brij Lal argued that “Fiji was a country of cacophonous voices, sometimes discordant even, but that was a condition for a vibrant democratic society. The Parliament was not a bull pit for belligerent politicians with insufferable egos and overweening ambition. The Parliament was the people’s house to discuss matters with dignity and decorum (and, yes, a bit of pungent humour, too).

He was vocal in his opposition to the military coups which displaced democratically elected governments. He hoped that “the coup culture of the last three decades in Fiji will not permanently corrode the spirit of critical enquiry”. He argued that the coups “were not about race

and are best thought of as a competition between vested interests to maintain or expand their own power”.

In 2009 the Fiji military junta deported him from Fiji, and he and his wife Padma were banned for life from returning to the country. He told my colleague Professor Goolam Vahed that the ban “is so silly. I lecture to students in Fiji via skype. They see my face, hear my voice, read my words and discuss my ideas and yet the government won’t allow us in. It is petty vindictiveness, ... They can banish me but they can’t ignore my work”. He was critical of “those in Fiji who could, but did not speak out against the violations sustained to its civic and international integrity ... One cannot be neutral on a moral battlefield, and for me what is happening in Fiji raises both political as well as moral questions: the fate of democracy, the rule of law, freedom of speech ... I will speak out whenever and wherever I see injustice and oppression.”

Professor Brij Lal had some foreboding or premonition that he had limited time, as is evident in his opinion piece published in the *Islands Business* on 30 November 2021: ‘Three scores and ten’ is the age allotted to humans, the Good Book tells us. Modern medicine might add 10 odd years, but the end is in sight, the shadow lengthening visibly. By that measure, my time is up or will soon be ...”. He concluded by quoting TS Eliot: “*Where is the life we have lost in living? Where is the wisdom we have lost in knowledge? Where is the knowledge we have lost in information?*”

Notwithstanding his outstanding academic achievements, Professor Brij Lal was above all, a kind, humble, simple human being – in many respects a perfect gentleman.

Professor Brij Maharaj, University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa

“The end is in sight, the shadow lengthening visibly.”

Homage to Prof. Brij V. Lal

Dr Nitesh Narnolia*

“‘Three scores and ten’ is the age allotted to humans, the Good Book tells us. Modern medicine might add 10 odd years, but the end is in sight, the shadow lengthening visibly. **By that measure, my time is up or will soon be.**”

These are the lines, Prof. Brij V. Lal, who died on 25 December 2021 in Australia, wrote in his latest article “Fiji made me, but which Fiji is mine?”, published in *Islands Business* on 30 November 2021. Such a close assumption of ‘death’ can only be expected from a renowned scholar like Lal.

Despite being an internationally acclaimed scholar of history of Indo-Fijian community, Prof. Lal was ‘forced exiled’ from Fiji due to his critic to the current government and died in Australia. A prominent scholar, a pillar to democracy in Fiji and a *girmitiya* descendant who gave his whole life for Fiji, had to die in ‘exile’ is significant to understand the racial discrimination, Indian diasporic communities face.

Prof. Brij V. Lal, born in 1952 in a small village of Labasa, Fiji, was a *Girmitiya* descendant and Indo-Fijian historian who dealt extensively with the history and politics of Fiji. He went to the University of South Pacific, the University of British Columbia and the Australian National University. Later on, he became a Visiting Professor at University of the South Pacific and Emeritus Professor of Pacific and Asian History at Australian National University. He also worked as head of the Centre for Diasporic Studies, University

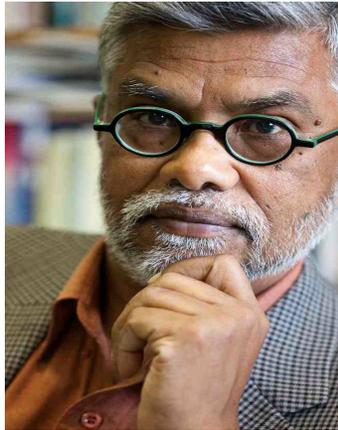


Photo credits: <https://reporter.anu.edu.au/history-pacific>

of Fiji. Apart from his academic positions, he authored many books – *Mr. Tulsi’s Store: A Fijian Journey* (2001), *Girmitiyas: The Origins of the Fiji Indian* (1983), *Chalo Jahaji: On a Journey through Indenture in Fiji* (2000) and *Bittersweet: The Indo-Fijian Experience* (2004, edited book). First one is an autobiography in which he remembers his life in Fiji, from childhood in a remote village to an internationally acclaimed historian. The latter books recount the history of the Indo-Fijian community.

Prof. Lal was actively involved in the political development of Fiji and was critical to the military coup of 2006. He was an advocate of democracy, as he says in *Broken Waves: A History of Fiji in the Twentieth Century* –

“The moral vision that has shaped my interpretation is essentially modernist, democratic, and egalitarian. I will not contest that my approach is necessarily more justified or better than others with different points of departure. Value is a matter of judgment, and there can be no question of finality in scholarly discourse.”

Due to his critical nature towards the 2006 military coup and the current government led by Frank Bainimarama, Prof. Lal was expelled from Fiji in 2009 and later in 2015, when he applied to return to Fiji, he was

prohibited indefinitely from returning to Fiji because he was considered ‘prejudicial to the peace, defence, public safety, order and security of Government of Fiji’. He denied those allegations and claimed that his wife, Padma Lal had never spoken a word about politics in Fiji, then why she is denied entry in her own country. This decision of expelling Lal and then banning him and her wife to return to Fiji seems a foul play against a voice appeared a threat to the nation-state.

On top of his political views, Prof. Lal is known for his contribution to the Indo-Fijian community by writing extensively about its indentured migration and development in Fiji. Prof. Lal’s grandfather came to Fiji in 1906 after serving in indentured labor for five years. He was aware of the hardships his parents had to go during indenture and as a child, had faced poverty and discrimination. He had experienced every bit of the development of Fiji from establishing the first university to the decaying of the constitution and military coup.

Prof. Lal’s legacy for India lies in his *Encyclopedia of the Indian Diaspora* (2006) which is considered the first comprehensive survey of Indian diasporic communities living all over the world. It covers approximately 44 countries/regions where the Indians/Indian descendants are living and contributing in the development of the nation-state. Prof. Lal’s contribution to Indian diaspora cannot be minimized in just one book/encyclopedia, as it is beyond that. He had been actively involved with the diaspora departments of Indian universities, scholars of

diaspora studies, specifically the ones working on Indo-Fijian communities and also shared his knowledge through various conferences and lectures in India. Along with that, Prof. Lal established the ground for researchers to understand the evolution of Indo-Fijian community. He not only explored the history of Indo-Fijian communities and how they constructed their life in Fiji, but also identified “every minute shift in trends”. It was his research that opened up the new areas for discussion for Indian scholars and provided a solid base to carry forward the understanding of Fiji Indian society.

Prof. Brij V. Lal and his writings will remain significant for Indian diaspora communities all over the world, especially in Fiji. Though death is inevitable, losing such an eminent scholar/historian has created a void that can’t be filled. The end remains half-unfinished as he could not visit the country, where his heart remained, for one last time.

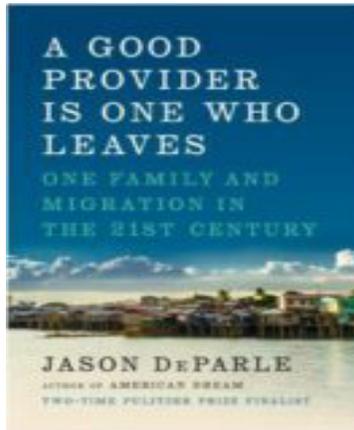
I pay my homage and gratitude to Prof. Brij V. Lal for his noteworthy contribution for Indian Diaspora in Fiji. Prof. Lal will remain a revered person, cherished across the world for his implausible vision and naïve views.

Dr. Nitesh Narnolia is an Assistant Professor of English in Government Girls College, Churu, Rajasthan. He is a researcher in Diaspora Studies and his area of expertise remains African-American Slave migration.

A Good Provider is One Who Leaves: One Family and Migration in the 21st Century (2019)

Jason DeParle's *A Good Provider Is One Who Leaves* navigates modern migration through the riveting multi-generational saga of the Portaganas, a family of overseas Filipino workers (OFWs) whose decades-long journey unfolded across three continents. DeParle first met the family matriarch, Tita Portagana Comodas, in 1987 as an American reporter whose original intent was to write about global poverty and slum life. While staying at her home in Leveriza, a shanty town in Manila, he developed a friendship with the family and shifted his focus from poverty to migration. His self-described "light bulb moment" led him to a bigger realization on migrant remittances as "the world's largest antipoverty program, a homegrown version of foreign aid" (10). DeParle also discovered the social costs of migration in the marriages of the family members, which led him to ask Peachy, one of Tita's nieces, if these sacrifices were worth it. In response, she told him their "unofficial family creed: 'a good provider is one who leaves'" (12).

By turns an intimate family portrait and a panoramic review of the Age of Migration, the book benefits from DeParle's dual position as a journalist and a family friend of the Portaganas. As DeParle himself notes, this book is not about one family, rather it is about the "broader epoch of migration that is transforming much of the world" (330). Within this framework, he situates the Portaganas' stories which he gathered from his three-decade friendship with the family, who are both product and reflection of the unfolding national and global trends of mass migration. Despite this, the family's stories were the linchpin of the book and, even in his discussions of the larger forces behind mass migration, DeParle infuses vivid anecdotes from the family's lives to illustrate his points.



The first few chapters narrate the stories of Tita and her husband Emet Comodas whose courtship and eventual marriage as a young couple in Leveriza was described by DeParle as a product of internal migration. In the 1960s, Tita's father, Venancio Portagana, decided to send Tita, one of his eleven children, from the fields of Cavite to the slums of Manila. DeParle contextualizes this within the backdrop of a postwar population boom, increased migrations from rural to urban, and the allure of overseas migration. He opines that "city life, for all its hardships, promised freedom, excitement, and dreams, however slim, of making it big" (23) which also "promoted an awareness, if vague, of life beyond the Philippines" (28).

The greatest strength of DeParle's approach is its ability to illuminate the fundamentally human aspects in what can otherwise be lost in the broader lenses used by scholars and experts on migration. For instance, when Emet takes his first overseas job in Saudi Arabia, DeParle poignantly comments: "The two main themes of Overseas Filipino Worker life are homesickness and money. Workers suffer the first to get the second." (34-35) During Emet's time, Filipino labor migration was a male-dominated phenomenon, which also affected the gender dynamics at home as migrants' wives became the authority. A few decades later, when migrant labor became a feminized phenomenon, he mostly followed the story of Rosalie, Tita and Emet's daughter, who ended up as a nurse in Galveston, Texas. Once again, migration shifted gender dynamics in the household during this period as exemplified by Rosalie's need to make her husband Chris "feel like he's the head" (103) and how she felt guilty when her children missed her yet felt alarmed when they didn't. Through these details alone, the book offers a profound clarity even on phenomena that other experts may dismiss as

human error. For instance, when Tita decided to use the remittances from Emet's first job abroad to install a toilet – a luxury in the slums – DeParle saw it as both a symbol of their family's prosperity and Tita's newfound empowerment. Many investment-minded economists at that time would have criticized this as short-sighted consumption without truly understanding why poor remittance-receiving households tend to spend money on new comforts such as concrete walls, roofs, televisions, and stereos.

DeParle also illuminates the darker side of these arrangements with the rise of infidelity, which he exemplifies through Tita's brother Fortz's string of extramarital affairs and the weakened bond between the migrants and their children. He also argues that these unfolded at a time when then-president Ferdinand Marcos ushered in a period of migration fever, creating an industry of private recruitment that was "impossible to police" (42), leading aspiring emigrants to fall victim to fraudulent schemes. Despite these many costs and risks, poverty-stricken Filipinos would continue to seek employment opportunities abroad because there was no other way to be a good provider if you don't leave – a recurring sentiment DeParle highlights throughout the book. He also explores the hidden truths and paradoxes behind otherwise celebrated aspects of modern migration such as ethnic solidarity, which he found could also be a coping mechanism for ethnic rivalries. This was exemplified by Kuya Ben who hired Chris, an engineer, to improve his reputation in Galveston since he felt disrespected by his more educated fellowmen, as he eventually confided to DeParle. In this case, DeParle uncovers these complex "stor[ies] of ethnic solidarity and rivalry in one" (219) that do not quite fit into either category.

It is important to note that the idea to write this book came at a later time in DeParle's career while working for The New York Times. In 2006, he returned to the Philippines on an assignment to write about the culture of migration and to follow up on the Portaganas. The difference in motivation from his first visit was evident, seeing how most chapters of the book follows Rosalie's journey in the United States. Although the three-decade time frame serves as an effective longitudinal study of one family's multisite migrations, the book could be rather convoluted in its attempts to summarize the global

and national contexts that unfolded throughout those years. Nevertheless, it was DeParle's recollection of his formative years in the 1980s as "Leveriza's journalist in residence" (51) that stood out mainly because of the humbled, self-aware perspective it offered. Coming from a young American reporter who initially expected to study poverty, it is refreshing to read about DeParle's unlearning of his initial assumptions of what exactly being poor entailed when he discovered migration as the force altering the fabric of slum life for households like Tita's.

In this sense, it is important to contextualize the publication of this book in modern American politics when heated debates on immigration dominate public discourse. Several of the chapters on Rosalie were interspersed with discussions of the Trump administration's "campaign of fear" and spite against immigrants (241). As such, the book seeks to make larger claims about the real forces behind migration, as DeParle stated explicitly, in an attempt to counter these politicized narratives. However, even without these bigger motives to direct the narrative, this multi-generational family saga offers more than enough perspective, albeit microscopic, to stand on its own; though, the "value" of this perspective may vary from reader to reader. For instance, many of these stories may resonate with readers from traditional sending countries such as the Philippines where these emigrant narratives have been ingrained in the local culture for decades. Whereas, American readers, especially those who are keen to denounce anti-immigration policies, may perceive these as novel groundbreaking insights, though one may wonder if it is preaching to the choir. Regardless of the limitations, DeParle provides a much-needed and hard-earned perspective to a phenomenon that has always been a primarily human-centered one in spite of all the propaganda that threatens to dehumanize it.

Review by Patricia Miraflores

Patricia Miraflores is a graduate student pursuing a joint Master's degree in M.A. Euroculture at the University of Groningen and Uppsala University. She is a recipient of the 2020 Erasmus Mundus scholarship award from the European Commission.

Email: p.e.c.miraflores@student.rug.nl

Human Flow: A Deep Insight into Forced Migration

Whenever any hurdle arises in international trade flows, it acquires over the top attention at the global level. The ‘Suez Canal’, which is the shortest sea trade route between Asia and Europe, got blocked in the March 2021 for a few days, when one of the longest shipping containers named as ‘Ever Given’ ran aground in middle of it. A similar incident about the supply chain disturbance involving the route disruption of cargo shipping from China and Vietnam towards the Europe and North America was hitting the headlines as well. These issues are articulated as the crisis of global economy and the losses from these disruptions are quantified in billions of dollars. Besides these global issues, a human flow incidence, involving a gathering of thousands of Haitian migrants, who wanted asylum, under a bridge connecting Mexico with The United States of America (USA), didn’t attract as much media coverage as trade flow incidents did. The American security forces started to deport them back to their country. The misery of these migrants has not been articulated as the crisis of the global system. Many migrants have lost their lives, especially in case of asylum seekers and refugees travelling through dangerous routes, which they choose to cross their national borders. The loss of their lives has not received the attention it deserves at the global level.

There is an asymmetry in the present phase of globalisation. The biasedness in its liberal architecture skews towards the free movement of goods, capital, and finance across the national boundaries, while the process of international migration regulates through border security and restricted immigrant policies. It dehumanises the cross-border movements of millions of people, when they have to cross the national borders through irregular channels as refugees. The need to discuss the issue of refugee crisis also becomes clear

from the World Bank’s Migration and Development Brief 33. The report highlights the fact that there are 79.5 million forcibly displaced persons around the world as of June 2020. These persons include – 26.0 million refugees, 45.7 million internally displaced persons, 4.2 million asylum seekers, and 3.6 million Venezuelans displaced abroad. In the context of forcible mobility of human beings, a documentary named as “[Human Flow](#)” directed by Ai Weiwei provides a deep insight into the given global crisis. The documentary includes short interviews of the Migration Studies’ experts, The United Nation’s employees, and refugees residing in different countries. In addition to this, the director captures the living conditions of displaced population in different refugee camps and the route flows of the displaced population.

Forcible Displacement of People and the Global South

Political wars, terrorism, religious and racial conflicts, and natural disasters are the identified factors that cause the forcible displacement of people. There can be a single factor to drive displacement or the presence of various interwoven factors that cause forced displacement. Displaced population is categorized as internally displaced or internationally displaced population, which is similar to the volunteer migration. The flow of internationally displaced population from the global south to the global north is greater than the flow that occur within the global south countries. Some of the global south countries act as transit points in the international flow of displaced people. Due to the border restrictions, the transit countries also become final destinations when displaced persons fail to reach at their planned destinations. “Human Flow” covers



Credits: <http://www.humanflow.com/>

the problem of forcible displacement across all the regions of global south with their own regional specific characteristics. According to the given documentary, Syria is the biggest driver of displacement and The Syrian war is its driving force. About 1.3 million Syrians have crossed the Syrian-Jordan border for seeking shelter. Europe has also received a greater number of Syrian asylum seekers in near past. In Asia, Myanmar and Afghanistan are the two main countries in which forced displacement occurs on a large scale. Due to the religious conflict of Muslim minor community known as *Rohingyas* in Myanmar, approximately half million *Rohingyas* have fled to Bangladesh, Thailand and, Malaysia. Afghanistan is the most violent and unstable country in the world. Insecurity, violence, and violation of fundamental human rights displaced the citizens of Afghanistan, who then fled to Pakistan, Europe, and North America for asylum. In Africa, the climate change is the major driving force of displacement. The number of refugees from Africa is rising due to famine and hazardous climate conditions. Similarly, the director focuses on the cases of displacement population in Iran, Iraq, Turkey, Palestine, Mexico and Lebanon. Among the global south countries, Lebanon, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Turkey, and Kenya are the host countries for the refugee population.

Europe and its hosting of Forcible Displaced People

The Charter of the Fundamental Rights of European Union (EU), 2000 describes that the union founded the basis of indivisible and universal values of human dignity, freedom, equality, and solidarity. Nevertheless, the documentary shows that treatment received by the refugee migrants, lacks these fundamental rights. Greece, Italy, Germany, Turkey, and France are the major hosting European countries for refugees. During the year 2015-16, 30 lakhs refugees stayed in Turkey, followed by 12 lakhs in Germany, 10 lakh in Greece, 2.10 lakh in Italy, and 0.10 lakh in France. The location of Turkey attracts a specific attention, acting as a stop enroute for refugees towards Europe, since it is a transcontinental nation and plays the bridge between Western Asia and Eastern Europe. The given documentary highlights that the official camp for refugees in Turkey provides shelter only to the ten percent of refugees. Furthermore, in March 2016, EU and Turkey ratified an agreement to stop the

refugee flow from Turkey to Europe. According to this agreement, EU can send the refugees back to Turkey. In return, EU provides 6 billion Euros in aid to Turkey. Dr.Cem Terzi from the Association of Bridging People states that the EU-Turkey agreement is not favourable for refugees, as Turkey only provides the temporary protection to the refugees. In other European countries, the director displays that the conditions of refugees are not well in political and economic terms. One of the African refugees in Paris states that Europe has been seen as the pillar of democracy, freedom, human dignity, and human respect. However, these democratic values have been absent in the treatment for refugees.

Dehumanisation of Human Mobility

Multiple elements can make cross-border movements precarious for refugees. An economically and politically well-being person perceives the journey of sea through ship and desert safari as a holiday trip. The given documentary displays the different images of overseas movement and desert crossing. The overseas and desert crossing pose life threats to displaced people due to the lack of basic facilities for their survival. When 700-720 refugees from North Africa crossed the Mediterranean in small boats and reached at Southern Italy, the security forces of Italy wrapped them with polythene sheets to save them from the cold wind. It clearly indicates the position of refugees, as human beings are being dehumanized by the host countries. Dr. Hanan Ashrawi, who is the head of Palestine Liberation Organisation states, “Being a refugee is much more than a political status. It is the most pervasive kind of cruelty that can be exercised against a human being by depriving the person from all forms of security, the most basic requirement of a normal life.” The routes chosen by the forcibly displaced persons are life threatening. In 2016, more than 5000 refugees drowned while crossing the Mediterranean Sea. Also, the refugees, once they enter into Europe, need to cross the borders of at least three countries if they want to reach Paris to apply for asylum.

Gender and Children related Perspectives of Forcible Displacement

In migration studies, women and children capture specific attention owing to their vulnerable positions. The director focuses on these issues to articulate the

problems of displaced women and children specifically. As far as the women are concerned, the documentary makes it evident that most of the displaced women are sick, suffer from Diarrhoea, or/and underweight. The mobility of displaced pregnant women becomes the most hazardous for their own health and for bearing children. Similarly, the children in the refugee camps deprives from the very fundamental rights of right to life and right to education, since they do not receive the required vaccination and school education. In the documentary, Tanya Chapuisat, the representative of UNICEF in Lebanon, provides information about the condition of children in one of the most populated refugee camps of the world known as ‘Ein Al-Hilweh’. She states the potential threats for the well-being of children living in the camp, “If children grow up without any hope, without any prospect of future, without any sense of their being able to make something out of their lives, then, they will become very vulnerable to all sorts of exploitation including radicalisation.”

Ai Wei-Wei ends the documentary with a sound bite of a Syrian astronaut and refugee Mohammad Faris, which aims to provide a long-term solution to eradicate all types of forcible human mobility across

the globe. Mohammad Faris comments, “When I was an astronaut, I saw from space how each human being on earth is a universe. All human beings live in one nation as brother. Syrians, Indians, Chinese, and Americans all live together on this beautiful planet. All live together and all of them must share. Protecting the planet can only happen with solidarity without any manipulation, without injustice, without killing, and without suppression.”

Harjinder Singh has completed M.A. in Economics from the Department of Economics, Punjabi University, Patiala, Punjab. He is currently pursuing his Ph.D. in Social Sciences, focusing on International Migration with a multidisciplinary approach. He has been awarded Junior Research Fellowship from University Grants Commission. His areas of interest include – Political Economy of Development, Migration and Development Studies, Globalization and Local Transformations, Agrarian Studies of the Third World, and Economic Theories. He is also fond of reading poetry and historical studies.

Twitter: [@harjinderecon](https://twitter.com/harjinderecon)

Subscribe to our YouTube channel



Diaspora Transnationalism



Visit www.grfdt.com for more information.

