Unit 1

Conceptual Understanding of Indian Diaspora and Transnational Studies

Contents

Learning Objectives

This unit will help you in:

- understanding the concepts in the study of the Indian diaspora;
- analyse the various perspectives; and
- relate the diasporic situation of Indians to these concepts and analyses.

1.1 Introduction

This unit will introduce you to the several concepts that you will come across in the course of reading the elective course on diaspora. We will introduce you to the topic of Indian diaspora by situating it in the context of the globalisation process. The phenomenon of transnationalism is an offshoot of the global process, which has made connections, real and virtual, more pertinent and speedy. All these have brought old diasporas who were previously somewhat disconnected from their homeland in constant touch with things back home. These connections are real and virtual, such as travelling back and forth, communications through the net, telephone, through interactions of media and other things.

We will start the unit with unravelling of concepts such as transnationalism, globalisation and diaspora. We will then proceed to the main context of this transnational situation by looking at the globalisation process, and then analyse how diaspora as a concept fits in to all these.Following this we will examine some of the theories and perspectives that scholars have used to study the Indian diaspora. Lastly, we will look at the diasporic situation of Indians who see-saw between belonging and longing, of being there and, not there and how this situation and the technological and media mediations add to the diasporic social space.

1.2 Transnationalism, Globalisation and Diaspora

Transnational migration is described as "a pattern of migration in which persons, although they move across international borders and settle and establish social relations in a new state, maintain social connections with the polity from which they originated. They live across international borders in transnational social fields." (Glick Schiller, 1999). As we mentioned earlier, though the communities move out of their homes or polity, the diasporas still maintain connections, and these ongoing connections make them truly

transnational for they cut across boundaries. The transnational character of the diasporas is an outcome of the globalisation process.

Globalization entails global markets, global communications and global networks (see Unit 21 in MSO-03). Globalization, as the term implies, covers societies at all phases of development in a way that the world is far more interconnected than ever, events happening in one part of the globe having repercussions in other parts of the world.

The process of globalization is driven by three major imperatives - the market, the new technology, and transnational networks-that are themselves interconnected. Market forces are in theory based on free and fair competition but protectionist policies in trade, volatility and negative effects of short-term capital flows and biases in international investment agreements permeate and vitiate the field to widen the difference between developed and developing countries.

Let us look at the technological revolution that constitutes the second major dimension of the socio-cultural impact of globalization in India and the diaspora. In both its real (locomotionary) and virtual (telecommunication) senses the diaspora is about travel (Clifford 1997). And it is travel in the various forms - the capacity to physically travel very fast and repeatedly and the capacity to travel virtually which has brought the diaspora as a compelling theme in our day and age. However, technology has played a catalytic role in all this. Especially, information technology (IT) which is leading to a new form of capital accumulation as is clearly evident in the IT industry. Regardless of its origin and amount, capital can be circulated and accumulated on a global scale at an unprecedented speed and therefore with extreme volatility. An urgent task of the study of globalization and migration is to understand the international labour system of the 'new economy.' In this context, unlike in the colonial past, it is capital chasing labour rather than the other way round.

Let us introduce the third major imperative of globalization, namely, transnational networks. According to Tambiah (2000:140) two broad sets of networks may be differentiated for purposes of analysis. 'Vertical' networks are formed within 'host' societies when 'communities' come together, either voluntarily or forcefully, in order to devise conscious strategies to fight discrimination as well as to succeed economically. The second set of networks, i.e., 'lateral' may be subdivided further: (a) between host society and society of origin/homeland, and (b) transnational global networks where diasporas across the world communicate with each other and maintain transnational links especially through media and travel. What is lacking in Tambiah's concept of networks, however, is the dimension of social stratification, which we may analyze in terms of class, culture and mobility in both the old and new diasporas (Jain 2004). To generalize, then, vertical networks are those which are seen across classes—these are inter-class asymmetrical networks— while horizontal and symmetrical networks rest on the intra-class solidarity. These networks happen not in any fixed place, which is geographical. The networks happen both across geographic spaces and in virtual space. In concrete terms a space that is unique to itself.

We have seen that in defining both these processes (transnationalism and globalization) 'diaspora', which has been conceptualized variously, plays a critical role.

Box 1.1: The Concept of Diaspora

Until its 1993 edition, the *New Shorter Oxford English Dictionary* defined the term 'diaspora' as "the dispersion of the Jews among the Gentile nations" and as "all those Jews who live outside the biblical land of Israel". Yet for the first time in its long history, in that edition the dictionary added that the term also refers to "the situation of people living outside their traditional homeland". The term has a Greek origin and refers, allegorically, to the scattering of seeds as they are sowed over a wide area; hence *speiro*= to sow, *dia*= over. It is widely believed that the term first appeared in the Greek translation of the book of Deuteronomy in the Old Testament, with reference to the situation of the Jewish people—" Thou shalt be a diaspora in all the kingdoms of the earth."(Deut. 28, 25). Yet the term had also been used by Thucydides in his *History of the Peloponnesian War*. Sheffer (2003:9) is right in noting that, already at a very early period, the term had been applied to two of the oldest ethno-national diasporas—the Jewish and the Greek—that had been established outside of their homelands as a result of both voluntary and forced migrations.

There has been frequent criticism of the usages 'diaspora', 'diasporic', 'diasporism', etc., on the grounds that the generalization and universalization of culturally specific, viz., Jewish or Greek, processes is illegitimate. More particularly it has been argued that the persecution of diasporas either in the home or in host societies which is a recurrent feature of Jewish diaspora is absent or even reversed in cases of ruling Anglo-Saxon minority settler societies, viz., in Australia or South Africa. Safran's (Safran 1991:83-4) six-point model that lays down the features of the diaspora include:

- dispersal from the original homeland
- retention of collective memory,
- vision or myth of the original homeland;
- partial (never complete) assimilation in host society;
- idealized wish to return to original homeland;
- desireable commitment to restoration of homeland;
- and continuous renewal of linkages with homeland.

The debate on qualifying criterion for diaspora continues with some scholars offering wide, inclusivist definitions that contain "immigrant, expatriate, refugee, guest worker, exile community, overseas community and ethnic community in the semantic domain of diaspora" (Tololian 1991: 4-5)

Others have proposed a minimized working definition for diaspora that includes "dispersal from original homeland to two or more places; movement between the homeland and the new host; and social, cultural or economic exchange between or among the diaspora community" (Van Hear 1998:6).

This last definition covers the criterion of 'circulation' suggested by Markovits(2000), although he would further argue that 'diaspora' in the Indian instance is something of a misnomer, given the extensive, ongoing circulation and exchange that has historically characterized the trajectories of many overseas Indians. Interestingly enough, authors like Hansen (2002) claim the unsuitability of the notion 'diaspora' for South African Indians for precisely the opposite reason. According to him, the nostalgia for Indian roots and any

engagement for what is authentically Indian is belied by the experience of present-day third, fourth generation South African Indians amongst whom the propaganda of being patriotically 'Indian' is being drummed in (rather unsuccessfully) by the erstwhile, BJP-led Indian Government and organizations like the VHP (Vishwa Hindu Parishad) and GOPIO (Global Organization of the People of Indian Origin). This may well be the experience of many other PIOs (People of Indian Origin) as contrasted with the commodified nostalgia of the kind that is visible among the first and second generation non-resident Indians (NRIs) in Europe or North America who belong to more recent waves of migration.

Reflection and Action 1.1

1. Do you have any members of your family living abroad or do you know people who have moved abroad? If you do know of such people, find out from them how the Internet and telecommunication technologies have brought them closer home?
2. How can one explain the popularity of Bollywood cinema among the Indian migrants? In what way is this connected with globalisation?

1.3 Perspectives on Studying Indian Diaspora

It is obvious from the foregoing account that the study of overseas Indian communities is a newly emergent field, which has so far yielded only a few detailed monographs and comparative essays. There has been a search for a theoretical framework to integrate this area of study. And in the following discussion we shall point out some of the important perspectives for the theoretical study of this topic.

The Retentionist Perspective: The first of these frameworks is the one which deals with cultural persistence. This is the *retentionist* view of Indian culture overseas and the studies falling under this category have recorded the ability of the Indians to retain, reconstitute and revitalize many aspects of their culture in an overseas setting. It is believed that the common bond of race, language and fellowship coupled with racial prejudice segregated the Indians first in barracks where they were lodged as indentured labourers and since the late nineteenth century in villages where they settled. Rural isolation, ethnic identity and the sheer tenacity of Indian institutions have been considered as major mechanisms for preserving Indian culture.

One of the best examples of this perspective is Morton Klass's study of East Indians in Trinidad published in 1961. Klass provides an extensive account of the social organization of the villages of Indians in Amity and reports that they were faithfully modeled after a kind of generalized north Indian culture. Villagers had rebuilt a community resembling the socio-cultural system of village India. In this perspective East Indians have successfully transplanted the institution of family in its basic form which they brought from their homeland. The East Indian family in Trinidad is still characterized by the inferior or unequal status of women, parental selection of mates, rarity of divorce, sharing of property and inter-relationships within the caste system.

Studies of cultural persistence fall under the general rubric of acculturation processes. In this view there is a bias which over-emphasizes the retention of cultural customs and traditions and only a superficial treatment of the disappearance of conventional patterns and the reasons for their demise.

There is also a problem about the approach to history and social change in this framework. Society and culture both in India and in the overseas setting have moved from one point to another during the period that the initial emigration of Indians took place. This dimension is not taken care of in the perspective on cultural persistence. In other words, it is a static rather than a dynamic perspective on the acculturation of overseas Indian communities.

The Adaptationist Perspective: The second perspective is purely and simply an *adaptationist* one. Studies falling under this category are chiefly concerned with the question of the adaptation of the social group or an immigrant society in the social environment of the host society. R.K. Jain's (1970) work on South Indian migrants, in a typical Malaysian setting, is a study of the process of adaptation of a people of Indian origin to conditions of life and work in a particular Malayan environment, namely, rubber plantations. The study highlights the interaction between norms of a traditional rural people from southern India and the ideology and procedures of an industrial bureaucracy. Burton Benedict (1961) also subscribes to the adaptationist perspective in his study of the Indians settled in Mauritius. His book begins with a general appreciation of the Mauritian situation, describing the physical, demographic, economic and political setting in which the Indians live. Then it narrows down to the Indian situation, examining the households, land tenure, domestic economy, kinship and marriage, Indian religious beliefs and the village political structure. Benedict tries to show that there is communication and mobility between sections of Mauritian society, tending to unify it and where there are bars to communication, tending to drive the sections apart. Adrian Mayer's (1973) study of the rural Indian society in Fiji is another example of the adaptationist model. He reports on the Indian pattern of settlement, their ritual activities, caste, culture and kinship keeping in view the aspect of adaptation. The adaptationist perspective has been criticized on account of its failure to incorporate the comparative aspect. It is also criticized for not being able to relate in a systematic fashion the microcosm to the macrocosm. As a result these studies tend to be self-contained.

Plural Society Perspective: The next perspective is that of the *plural society*, first advocated by Furnivall (1948) in the context of colonial society of South East Asia. According to him this kind of society possessed three characteristics – cultural, economic and political. Culturally, a plural society consists of incongruous and incompatible cultural sections between which communication is hampered. Economically, the relationships between the cultural sections are those of the market place. Politically, this kind of plural society is held together only by the fact of being dominated by an external colonial power. R.K. Jain has argued (1986) that the concept of plural society in the sense used by Furnivall is applicable only to "settlement societies" and not to civilizations. In fact, M.G. Smith (1965, 1969), who developed this theory in its application to the Caribbean society, restricted it to modern colonial situations and to the era of European industrial expansion and laissez-faire capitalism. Further, it was confined to the study of multi-racial communities. Pluralism was defined in terms of both structure and culture, as connoting simultaneously "a social structure characterized by fundamental discontinuities and cleavages and a cultural complex based on systematic institutional diversity" (Smith, 1969:27). The stability and unity in a society with structural pluralism and differential incorporation was maintained by the dominant group which was a cultural minority.

The theory of plural society generated a number of criticisms in the late fifties and sixties. R.T. Smith (1970) and Leo Kuper (1969) argued against plural societies, as defined in the Furnivall tradition and by M.G. Smith against their definition as societies at all. How does one determine whether one is dealing with a "society" and not simply a mechanical aggregate of social groups? Mere incorporation of individuals and sections of individuals into a single political unit had to be distinguished from the society because the former lacked social relationships. In its simplest form, as R.T. Smith (1970:44) puts it, "The problem can be stated by asking whether the members of the society share any common basis for social worth or whether the society is merely with each other for the power to dominate others." With regard to the Caribbean also, the plural society framework has its limitations. According to R.T. Smith (1970:71), "The Caribbean societies are among the worst examples of plural societies in spite of their diversities of race and consumption levels and of culture." This was mainly because the colonial rule created conditions which knit together the various sections of the society. Regional sub-cultural differences were not very clearly marked and each segment was separated only in the market place and in the sphere of economic competition. Fiji, on the other hand, is relatively closer to the plural society model.

The Ethnicity Approach: Jayawardena (1980:430-50) has tackled the question of diverse forms of culture in Guyana and Fiji through the parameters of ethnicity. This approach accords explanatory primacy to relations of class, status and power and ethnicity is seen as emerging from these factors. Ethnicity was bracketed as 'ethnicity' and its existence was incidental and depended upon a particular combination of political and historical forces. In Guyana the Indian population had lost or abandoned all but the basic principles of traditional Indian culture and were thus forced to fabricate a mythical identity. The Indo-Guyanese thus possessed both an ethnic identity and 'ethnicity'. However, the Indian population in Fiji possessed an ethnic identity but not an 'ethnicity' because its members maintained regular contact with their homeland and regarded their Indian identity as a routine feature of their lives. 'Ethnicity' had manifested itself in Guyana and not Fiji because of historically determined and crucial differences in the fields of class, status and power.

Drummond (1981:694) has criticized Jayawardena's approach mainly on the ground that 'ethnicity' has been accorded a secondary status in the domain of explanatory concepts. He argues that class and ethnicity are aspects of many social settings and therefore on what basis could the former assume priority over the latter? Besides, another limitation of this framework is that it tends to be descriptive rather than analytical.

Drummond (1980:352-74) offers another approach to the study of the transformation of cultures in the context of poly- ethnic emigrant societies. He applies the linguistic/cultural model in an ethnographic study of symbolic processes associated with ethnic categories in Guyana. He presents his case by arguing that just as the coexistence of several languages created Creole languages, so the coexistence of different cultures created Creole cultures. This resulted in a society based on inter-systems or a cultural continuum in which any element from a particular culture shaded into one from another. The continuum enabled actors to combine and recombine the elements into a coherent whole because they knew the entire continuum. They understood the elements and the significance of their variations and transformation.

However, Drummond's cultural continuum model has its own limitations. His suggestion that, "if variation and change are fundamental aspects of cultural systems, then we must consider the possibility that ethnographic studies of small, post-colonial ethnically fragmented societies such as Guyana illustrate the Creole process found in societies everywhere" (1980:370), was not tenable. For one, the Creole language/Creole culture metaphor did not hold in the case of Fiji. The Hindi spoken by the Fiji Indians was not creolised and there was no creole language resorted to by all ethnic groups. If culture was self-explanatory then how did one explain the aspect of creolization in the Caribbean and its virtual absence in Fiji? This could be explained in terms of the precedence of historical interpretations over cultural interpretations. That is, creolization of culture in the Caribbean was the result of a specific form of economic and political domination and not only an assortment of historically different cultures. This pattern of subjection of ethnic groups under the domination of one was absent in Fiji. It is Jayawardena's (1980:449) contention that if Fijian history was characterized by the domination of one group over all the other ethnic groups then a "Creole" language and a "Creole" culture would appear in its society.

The Political Economy Perspective: Approaches based on cultural pluralism and cultural intersystems such as the ones discussed above already alert us to the macro framework in which particular Indian communities overseas have to be seen in a theoretical perspective. We have already mentioned that there are a few among sociologists like John Rex (1982) who suggests that there is a continuity between the nineteenth century emigration of Indians and the twentieth century migrations to the industrially developed countries. Barriers of a racist kind control the movements of labour from underdeveloped countries to metropolitan countries at the present time. In other words, the migrants from underdeveloped countries are not given the same status—though they belong to the same economic class—as the labour force belonging to a different race into the metropolitan countries themselves. Normally, this is a process dictated by the worldwide phenomena of imperialism and colonialism going back in time to the seventeenth century, of which the repercussions are felt even to this day. Arguing along the same lines are the theorists of the development of underdevelopment thesis who take a global view of the phenomena of the migration, settlement, and formation of Indian communities abroad. Foremost among such theorists has been Beckford (1984) who pointed out the determining influence of the economic structure of plantations in the colonial territories of tropical areas in Asia and Latin America. Beckford's thesis of "persistent poverty" in the plantation areas of the world applies with special force to the Indian diaspora of the nineteenth century when indentured labourers were initially recruited to man the labour force on plantations. Hence, there is a continuity of socio-economic and cultural systems in plantations and other areas of Indian immigration in the nineteenth century.

On a still wider scale and arguing in global terms are the theories of Gunder Frank (1967), Wallerstein (1974) and Amin (1976) who argue in terms of a core-periphery model of the global development of capitalism. In these terms, it would seem that certain geo-political constraints of the nineteenth century and even earlier have shaped the unequal regional economic development all over the globe. In this perspective, the Indian dispora would seem to belong to an especially underdeveloped and deprived section of global population. There have been criticisms of this approach (for example Brenner, 1977) as regards the neo-Smithian Marxism which this framework represents. In fact,

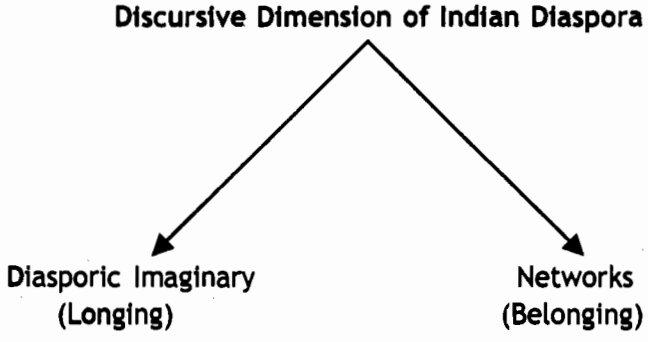
with the globalization of ethnicity as the post-modernist phenomenon of our times, one feels that the opportunity to study overseas Indian communities in a framework which articulates macro - and micro -structures and further takes into account not only the past but the possible future of these communities would pay rich dividends to social science scholarship.

Reflection and Action 1.2

1. The fact that many Indian diaspora look to India when it comes to selecting a bride can be viewed from which perspective?
2. In what way is migration of Indian labour to colonial plantations similar to workers seeking work and migrating out in recent times, and in what way is it different?

1.4 Longing and Belonging: 'The In-between' Space of Diaspora

With increasing migration in this globalised world people everywhere belong to many places, they are everywhere and nowhere in some sense. They may be citizens of their host country but identify with their country of origin. They may live away from the roots and traditions of their home country but connect to it consciously as an ethnic community in the country to where they migrated. Thus they can easily be between belonging and longing and in an 'in between' state. Globalization and transnationalism alert us to issues of deterritorialization and reterritorialization which is related to international migration. The problematique of 'in between' identities of persons imbricated in these processes is crucial: hence people between nation states, between homelands and new societies, between longing and belonging, between 'non-modern' civilizations and post enlightenment 'settlement societies', between dual or multiple citizenship – people are caught in-between these heuristic binaries.



The distinction was first explicitly stated and explained by Vijay Mishra (1995). It is also implicit in Mckeown. (1999). It has been elaborated upon in relation to African, Chinese, Indian & Jewish diasporas. (Jain 2003)

As seen in the Indian case, there is a strong interactive relationship between the diasporic imaginary and global networks. Scholars have chosen to emphasize one or the other though they have all been fully cognizant of the interactive relationship. The question of identity as subjectification in the imaginings of the diasporics is prominent in works such as those of Axel (2001) on the Sikhs and of Sandhya Shukla (2003) and Pnina Werbner (2002) for the U.K. and the U.S.A. in the former and Manchester-based Pakistani Muslims in the latter. The question of identity in relation to the socio-legal aspects of citizenship has been implicit in the works of those interested in networks,

e.g., Tambs-Lyche (1980) on Gujaratis, Markovits (2000) on Sindhis, Xiang Biao (2001) and Voigt-Graf (2004) on Indian I.T. specialists in Australia and the various articles in the newly launched (2001) journal *Global Networks*. Writers of both persuasion have been interested in the transnational dimension of the diaspora, the former in their efforts to delineate a unique 'diaspora space', (see also Avtar Brah 1996) talking of 'deterritorialisation' but also of 'reterritorialisation' and the latter being more centrally concerned with the interface of nation-states with ethnicity. (see, for instance, Sheffer 2003, Baumann 1996, Munasinghe 2001, Vertovec 1992, et.al.)

Box 1.2: Deterritorialisation and Reterritorialisation

The concept of deterritorialisation and reterritorialisation were terms that were used by Giles Deleuze and Felix Guattari in a book called Anti -Oedipus (1972) but it got adopted by other disciplines, especially anthropology. Deterritorialization may mean to take the control and order away from a land or place (territory) that is already established. It is to undo what has been done. For example, when the Spanish conquered the Aztecs, they eliminated many symbols of Aztec beliefs and rituals. Reterritorialization usually follows, as in the example when the Spanish replaced the traditional structures with their own beliefs and rituals. When referring to culture, anthropologists use the term deterritorialized to refer to a weakening of ties between culture and place. This means the removal of cultural subjects and objects from a certain location in space and time. It implies that certain cultural aspects tend to transcend specific territorial boundaries in a world that consists of things fundamentally in motion. Although this refers to culture changing, it does not mean that culture is looked at as an evolving process with no anchors. Also, oftentimes when one culture is changing, it is because another is being reinserted into a different culture. This relates to the idea of a globalization of culture. In this process, culture is simultaneously deterritorialized and reterritorialized in different parts of the world as it moves. As cultures are uprooted from certain territories, they gain a special meaning in the new territory which they are taken into. (source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Deterritorialization)

Scholars dealing with the latter set of questions either take a ground reality view of ethnic mobilization (the trend initiated by Barth 1969) or move frontally to the 'nationalism' and 'nation-state' framework to examine marginalization of ethnic minority (both numerical and political) in relation to the monopoly of power and 'patrimony' by the nation-state. The latter tendency is theorized in the works of Brackette Williams (1989) and Verdery (1994), for example, and analytically deployed by Baumann, for instance (but cf. Baumann's critique by Werbner 2002). Both these kind of studies are part of what has been designated variously as cultural politics, or simply politics of identity. When the analyst's perspective shows a mix of subjectification, transactionalism and the socio-legal status of diasporics (e.g. citizenship issues), the next logical step is to recast one's questions in the 'grand narratives' of multiculturalism and multiracialism with all the overtones of ideology and public policy.

1.5 Conclusions

In this unit, we have tried to unravel the many interpretations that are associated with some of the concepts such as diaspora and transnationalism. We tried to examine these concepts, situations and phenomena against the

backdrop of glonbalisation. Globalisation, as we explained in our unit, is not only about market forces being global, so much so that global markets are not located in one place. A production centre of any Transnational Corporation for instance can be located in one place and its service centers can be in a different place. You must have noticed the mushrooming of BPOs everywhere, which is nothing but part of global market operations. Apart from this, what characterises the globalization process is the connections and networks that are an outcome of technological revolutions such IT (information technologies) and speedy travel. These have propelled denser and speedier connections between home and abroad. Added to this is the simultaneity of media which makes it possible for people to consume and use their imaginations in space, which is not location specific. In a way these very characteristics of globalization are what inform the transnationalism of diasporas. They are now not just people who left home and who are disconnected with their roots but are constantly engaged with home both in an imaginative nostalgic sense but also in real terms, as in actual connections. This perhaps is the significant difference between erstwhile diasporas and the present day transnational communities.

We have tried to present a few perspectives that we think will help in analyzing the diasporic situation of Indians living abroad. As you can see not one of these perspectives can be easily applied to explain the Indian diaspora, for they all have differing contexts and histories. In our subsequent units we will try and look at the Indian diasporas in different parts of the globe, to get a sense of these differing situations by examining some of the studies and the approaches therein.

1.6 Further Reading

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Unit 2

Approaches to the Study of Indian Diaspora

Contents

Learning Objectives

This unit will help you to:

- understand the various ways in which Indian diaspora has been studied;
- analyse specific studies and the perspectives on Indian diaspora;
- look at Indian diaspora in the context of multiculturalism; and
- get an overall framework in which to place some of the studies on Indian diaspora.

2.1 Introduction

In this second unit of our course on Diaspora and Transnational Communities, we will try and see various ways in which scholars have attempted to look at Indian diaspora. Indians have been migrating out of India for centuries but the settlement of Indians abroad started taking place rather concretely only during the colonial period. Thus, migration out of India can be seen in three phases: ancient, colonial time, and contemporary period. Scholars have looked at the Indian diaspora from various points of view– literary, demographic, from the perspectives point of geo-politics and from an anthropological point of view. We will try and analyse very briefly some of the perspectives and approaches through studies undertaken by various scholars.

These studies range from early migration of East Indians who have settled in Trinidad and how they have continued to keep up with their traditions to one where the diaspora is seen in terms of the adaptative strategies they have used. We will also be looking at some of the interactive and situational analysis in our study of urban ethnicities in a place like London. This we hope should give you a fair idea of the range of studies and the various perspectives adapted by scholars to study the Indian diaspora. Following these sections we will be looking at Indian diaspora in the context of multiculturalism, both in relation to their country of origin and the country of destination or their host countries. In this regard we will be examining the ideas of civilisational and settlement societies. In our final section we will attempt to give you a general framework in which you can place some of these perspectives.

2.2 The Study of Indian Diaspora

Indian diaspora can be seen in three sequential phases in global historical terms. Firstly, the ancient and mediaeval Indian monarchs and traders, from the east and west coast of India, who tried to reach out and established contacts with the Middle East, eastern and northern Africa and with Southeast Asia. The expansion during the ancient period has given rise to the historical imaginary entity called 'Greater India' which was a staple of our post-independence history books, something we hastily revised after encounter with the new nationalistic countries of Southeast Asia. The mediaeval period of Indian diaspora was mainly connected with trade; this phase has been very well documented historically but the anthropologist would find more meat and sensitive delineation in novels like *In an Antique Land* by Amitav Ghosh and Salman Rushdie's *The Moor's Last Sigh*. In these fictional works the magic of hybridisation that cast a spell over mediaeval Indian diaspora is brilliantly evoked.

The second period belongs to the nineteenth century emigration of the labouring population to plantation territories of the colonial world. This emigration from India also included traders and white-collar workers to the British, Dutch and French colonies. The scholarly depiction of this phase of the Indian diaspora argues that colonialism is strongly implicated in the process of migration. In fact, some scholars extend the colonial implication to the third phase of Indian diaspora, the emigration from India in the present century to industrially developed countries of the West and to the oil-rich countries. This forms an organic linkage with the colonial diaspora. It seems reasonable to point out this connection now, because in what follows we shall be concerned mainly with putting the contemporary Indian diaspora in a post-colonial context.

Box 2.1: Post-colonialism

Post-colonialism (also known as post-colonial theory) refers to a set of theories in philosophy and literature that grapple with the legacy of colonial rule. As a literary theory or critical approach it deals with literature produced in countries that were once, or are now, colonies of other countries. It may also deal with literature written in or by citizens of colonizing countries that takes colonies or their peoples as its subject matter. Post-colonial theory became part of the critical toolbox in the 1970s, and many practitioners take Edward Said's book Orientalism to be the theory's founding work.

Post-colonialism deals with many issues for societies that have undergone colonialism: the dilemmas of developing a national identity in the wake of colonial rule; the ways in which writers from colonized countries attempt to articulate and even celebrate their cultural identities and reclaim them from the colonizers; the ways knowledge of colonized people has served the interests of colonizers, and how knowledge of subordinate people is produced and used; and the ways in which the literature of the colonial powers is used to justify colonialism through the perpetuation of images of the colonized as inferior. The creation of binary oppositions structure the way we view others. In the case of colonialism, distinctions were made between the oriental and the westerner (one being emotional, the other rational). This opposition was used to justify a destiny to rule on behalf of the colonizer, or 'white man's burden'. (Source:http://en. wikipedia. org/wiki/Post-colonialism)

There are many diverse angles of viewing the Indian diaspora. The one angle which attracts the general public in India itself is concerned with the investment capacity of the NRIs (Non-Resident Indians). In the wake of liberalization and structural changes in the Indian economy ushered in since 1991, it has been pointed out that the overseas Indians compared to the overseas Chinese investments in mainland China are five times behind in their investments in India. Observations such as these have led to the economists' interest in migration, remittances and capital flows (Nayyar, 1994). Also, in the same perspective of viewing NRIs,viz., Indians emigrating and settling in the USA as entrepreneurs, the ethnic identity and feeling of the Indian diasporics have been compared with the similar entrepreneurial gifts of the Chinese, the Japanese and the Jews in the United States. (Kotkin, 1993). In the transnational framework, the economists are viewing the Indian exodus to the affluent countries of the West not as 'brain-drain' but as 'brain-banks'.

The Literary Point of View: An academically influential and forcefully articulated point of view on the Indian diaspora emanates from the writings of literary critics and creative writers, e. g., Salman Rushdie and V. S. Naipaul, belonging to the Indian diaspora. We will cite the views of Tejaswini Niranjana who teaches English literature in the University of Hyderabad, India, because her statement is as representative as any of this genre:

At a time when both in India and in many overseas communities the stakes in defining oneself as 'Indian' are being re-examined, at a time when the terrain of identity has become a crucial location for engaging in cultural politics, it seems increasingly important to analyse the many complex ways in which different groups of people claim 'Indianness' and the different kinds of significance attached to this claim. For this kind of analysis, I would argue, the construction of 'Indian' identities in Trinidad, Guyana, Surinam, Fiji, Mauritius, Tanzania or South Africa(or even, to mention a different kind of context, in the Gulf countries, for example) is as relevant as the NRI identities being shaped in the metropolitan, post-colonial diaspora. An interesting problem that remains by and large untheorised is the one about what slippages occur, and what their significance is, when a notion like 'Indian culture', shaped within the social imaginary in India, is deployed in a context where 'Indians' are not culturally hegemonic (Niranjana, 1994:3-4)

A couple of comments on this kind of angle on the Indian diaspora may be made here. Firstly, though the question of identity is inescapable and recurs in many contexts, it is the discipline of social psychology which can adequately deal with it, and that point of view remains largely outside our present area of discussion. Secondly, not only the Indian diasporics in metropolitan countries but even those of the nineteenth century vintage were part of a larger politico-economic framework that shows a great deal of continuity from the colonial to the post-colonial period. The kind of distinction which Niranjana makes between the NRIs and what have sometimes been called the People of Indian Origin (PIOs) is very thin, since both these diasporic streams are caught up in the same contemporary currents of post-coloniality, globalization and transnationality.

The Demographic Perspective: Demographers have shed light on some of the basic parameters of the Indian diaspora: the numbers involved, fertility rates (Muthiah & Jones, 1983), the role of linguistic and religious variables in the immigrant population, marital trends, etc. There has been considerable

difference of opinion on the quantum of the Indian diaspora globally. An extremely conservative estimate (Clarke et. al. 1991) for the year 1987 puts the figure at about 8. 6 million South Asians living outside Pakistan, India, Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka. On the other hand, the Report of the High Level Committee on the Indian Diaspora (2001) estimated that there were some 19 million people of Indian origin (both PIOs or non Indian passport holders, and NRIs or non-resident Indians with Indian passport). It is noteworthy that the latter estimate, though more than double of the former, did not include other South Asians. Of course one reason for the discrepancy between the earlier and later figures is the considerable emigration, especially in the last decades of the twentieth century, to the U. S. A. and to West Asia. However, it is still very difficult to give an accurate estimate, more so in view of the fact that most estimates do not divulge their sources. The largest population of overseas Indians is in the UK, followed by the USA, Malaysia, Saudi Arabia and South Africa. In countries like Guyana, Surinam, Trinidad & Tobago, Mauritius and Fiji, Indians constitute nearly half of the total population.

Some of the demographic data on migrants in Australia suggest sociologically interesting issues for Asian, as also South Asian, immigration. In 1991 nearly 7 million Australians or 42% of the population was born overseas or had one or both parents born overseas. The Asia-born constituted 4.6% of the total population (British and Irish 7%; European born 6.5%; Middle East born 1.2%). The percentage of Asians in the population as a whole (including local born) had increased to 7.4% by mid-1995. Up to two-thirds of all second-generation migrants were marrying outside their ethnic group so that by the year 2000, 40% of the Australian population are ethnically mixed. These projections certainly include South Asians, though the exact quantum of South Asian ethnics in this melting pot cannot be easily ascertained. However, the general point of interest here is that the so-called 'untranslatability" of Indian culture abroad is a very relative matter, subject to the history and socio-economic background of the migrants and the policies of the host society. Again, building on the demographic profile of the South Asian population, it is interesting to note that Hindi-speakers and Hindus predominate among Fiji Indian migrants to Australia (the so-called 'twice migrants') than among immigrants from India. Another issue that merits investigation is the manner in which the Hindu religious category cuts across the nationality of birth (Malaysian, Sri Lankan, Fijian, Indian). A sub-set of the above: what is the interaction and complex of attitudes among and between Tamilian Hindus from Malaysia, Sri Lanka, India and Fiji? This comes as close as one would wish to being an experimental situation for a comparative study of Tamil nationalism. Similarly, it would be sociologically rewarding to study the implications and consequences of the fact that Anglo-Indians from India and Ceylon Burghers from Sri Lanka were permitted to enter Australia earlier than the bulk of other South Asians. How are they placed – status-wise and in terms of ethnic distance – relative to other Indians and Sri Lankans is a question worth asking.

The Geographical Aspect: From the geographers' viewpoint the distribution of the Indian diaspora can be divided into six zones. : Africa and Mauritius, West and Southeast Asia, the Pacific, the Caribbean, North America, and Europe. One of the earliest comparative surveys by an anthropologist of Indian communities abroad was an article published by the late Chandra Jayawardena in the *Geographical Review* (Jayawardena, 1968:426-449). It is

natural for the international relations specialist and geographers to be getting interested in disporas and ethnic movements and communities across the globe as they influence politics both within nations and across nations as these ethnicities move across territories. The fact that the ethnic conclaves engage among themselves across the territories makes some question the role of nation-states. We will talk about some of these substantive issues in our Book 2.

Anthropological Understanding: Anthropological concerns today typically cut across and challenge the disciplinary boundaries like the ones presented above. The process of ethnicity emerging from nation-building finds its extreme in the present 'transnational' world in which people having national identities, such as Indian, Chinese, etc., migrate elsewhere and 'become' ethnic groups whose home nations remain durably in their self conception and political behaviour. Benedict Anderson calls this the 'ethnicization of existing nationalities' practicing 'long distance nationalism'. Some 'purist' politicians have advocated the applying of what they call the 'cricket test'. The cricket test doesn't hold in many situations as people might start out by waving their national flag but when it comes to being pitted against another ethnicity or race they might feel one with their regional affiliations. So Indians will be waving a Pakistani flag, when the Pakistanis are pitted against a non-Asian team such as the English or the West Indian.

Reflections and Action 2.1

1. Would you say that Indian diaspora is more adaptive than preservationist in their host country. If you do so, explain with substantive reasons.
2. How is the new Indian diaspora which has been migrating out of India since independence different from the earlier migrants who went as plantation workers?

2.3 Studying Indian Diasporic Communities: Some Perspectives

Besides the anthropological interventions in a variety of studies dealing with the Indian diaspora, there now exists a fairly coherent tradition of primarily anthropological studies in this field (Jain, 1993:52-57) We will take up three studies, each for the decades of the 60s, 70s and 80s, to get a sense of different perspectives that have been used to study the Indian diaspora.

Cultural persistence: Study of East Indians in Trinidad

The first study we have in mind is Morton Klass's monograph, 'East Indians in Trinidad: A Study in Cultural Persistence'. This is a community study, emphasising the continuities which existed in the cultural patterns and institutional structure of second-and-third generation population of East Indians in the village Felicity of central Trinidad, with the culture and social structure of eastern India (eastern Uttar Pradesh and western Bihar) from where their ancestors came. The macro-framework for this study (Klass, 1961) is provided not by a detailed look at the formation of the particular community in historical terms but through a sketch of the history of East Indian migration to Trinidad. Institutional areas of East Indian life, such as family and kinship, caste and religion are viewed in terms of cultural persistence. As has been observed in later studies of the Indian diaspora, the approach of the sixties fails to make the nexus between the Indian

community in adaptation with the wider socio-economic and political dynamics of the host society.

Socio-Cultural Adaptation; Tamils in Malaya Rubber Plantations

An approach of the 1970s period may be illustrated with reference to the monograph on the Tamilian rubber estate workers on a plantation we will call 'Pal Melayu' on the west coast of Malaysia—then the Federation of Malaya (Jain, 1970). This is a study of socio-cultural adaptation. The theoretical framework adopted here is of structural-functional paradigm, along with the situational approach, which is used to ananlyse the ongoing social processes. The book sought to study the adaptational social processes on Pal Melayu in terms of an interaction over time between 'work' and 'community' as sub-systems of social relationships in a 'total institution'. The macro-structure was delineated both in terms of the historical formation of the community in question and a notion of the changing plural society of Malaya.

Transnational Analysis: Study of Urban Ethnicity

A good example of the study of the 1980s where a structural-functional closure of the sort attempted in the community studies mentioned above was not possible because of the different range, magnitude and variations in the diasporic population in the monograph, 'London Patidars: A Case Study in Urban Ethnicity' (Tambs-Lyche, 1980). Set firmly in the empirical tradition of Fredrik Barth's transactional analysis, this monograph chooses to adopt a theoretical rather than historical framework. The emphasis throughout is on the choices which London Patidars make within the homogeneous value-set which they, as a caste, adopt in their adaptations to life and opportunities in London. Tambs-Lyche uses the game theory to analyse and delineate the opportunities and choices available and adapted by the enterprising community of Gujarati origin. Though they are encompassed in a homogenous circle of caste values and expectations, he feels they find a niche in the larger British society. The macro-structure too is handled within the framework of a transactional theory; Tambs-Lyche makes the important point that, seen from a local perspective, immigrants form an 'encompassed society' within the wider British society. Seen, however, in terms of their international kin and friendship networks, Britain is the encompassed society. Their assessment of it as an environment to be 'exploited' depends on the range of economic opportunities available to them in different countries. From this point of view the London Patidar study should also be treated as a forerunner of studies of 'twice' or 'thrice' migrants in the Indian diaspora.

A comment may here be added on the approach to ethnicity in Tambs-Lyche's work and beyond. Ethnicity, following the lead of Barth and associates, is very much defined as the social organization of culture difference. Barth has recently written (Barth, 1994) that his concept of culture right from the time of the publication of 'Ethnic Groups and Boundaries' would appear to have been a post-modernist one. In substantiating this claim, it is pointed out that culture has been characterized by him as continuous rather than discontinuous; it is wrought by variation and flux; it is contested rather than being assumed to be homogeneous ; and, finally, though culture was seen mainly as a boundary-making mechanism, its content was not altogether unimportant. Such a statement of the relationship between ethnicity and culture would be a subject of our synthesis in what follows.

2.4 Indian Diaspora and Multicultaralism: Civilizational and Settlement Societies

In this section we will examine the nature of plural or multicultural society, both in the host countries where the Indian diaspora has settled and in terms of the pluralism of Indian soceity, from where they have migrated; understand the difference and similarity between home and abroad, we will examine the idea of civilizations and settlement societies.

The question we pose is a comparative one: In what way are plural Indian societies similar or different in the countries where Indian immigrants have settled? We shall speak of civilizations a little later, with India as our focussed example (cf. Cohn, 1971), but the starting-points in our notion of the settlement societies come from J. S. Furnivall's celebrated discussion of the plural society in Burma and the Dutch East Indies (Furnivall,1948). In his terms, a plural society exists when a country under colonial rule shows the following broad cultural, economic and political characteristics. Culturally it comprises groups which are institutionally disparate and do not share the same basic values and way of life. Economically, these separate social entitites, have interaction mainly in the market-place, in buying-and-selling type of relationships. Politically, these disparate but economically interacting segments are held together by a superordinate authority – the colonial rulers. To paraphrase Furnivall broadly, these plural societies do not have a common social 'will'. The segments may mix (as in the market place) but they do not blend.

We build the concept of settlement societies basically after Furnivall's characterization, but also augmented by the theorists of plantations in the New World who spoke of plantation societies in contrast to rural societies as "settlement institutions"(Thompson, E. T., 1959). Settlement society is a polythetic category in the sense that not all instances of such societies have every characteristic which can be conceived of as belonging to this type. In other words, in actual instances of such societies, there may be some characteristics present in one case but not in another. Among the characteristics of settlement societies are: (1) a short history (basically post-1492) marked by recent massive immigration, (2) presence of native populations, which is variable in number, (3) colonialism or dependent status of one kind or another, (4) a correlation between economic and ethnic relations in such a way that if the economy is buoyant inter-ethnic relations are better and vice versa, (5) the settlement society is also a geo-political entity in the sense that in the New World Mexico and Latin America can be contrasted with the Caribbean, the USA and Canada. The former provide examples of civilizations, and the latter of settlement societies. In the Old World, India, China, much of Europe and parts of Africa can be contrasted with island societies, the former being seats of civilization while the latter are settlement societies.

With regard to our notion of civilizations, we should like to make a clarification at the outset. Since our take-off point in a civilizational theory of Indian diaspora (Jain, forthcoming) is the Indian or Indic civilization, the generalizations attempted here apply, in the first instance, to what Louis Dumont has called the "non-modern civilizations" (Dumont 1975). European civilizations in much of their pre-Renaissance history are part of that conceptualization. For us the proposed dialogue or dialectic between settlement societies and civilizations has primarily a heuristic value.

Empirically, the history of civilizations would be marked by a settlement society configuration and the future of settlement societies would lend itself to a civilizational design. Furthermore as in the case of European and North American or so-called `western' nations, there is the development of a technologically advanced civilization. The present analysis focuses on the symbolic rather than political or technological frontiers of civilizations.

In relation to civilizations which, as we shall presently suggest, may be conceptualized as sustained by an interaction between a great tradition and several little traditions, the settlement societies form a dialectical relationship. According to Professor R. Thornton of the University of Witwatersrand, multi-culturalism in South Africa lends itself historically to a civilizational conceptualisation around a model of three city-states and their hinterland. This is in contrast to the modern European and North American conceptualisations of a network of urban-industrial centres and rural-agricultural areas. From our point of view, Thornton's position is a valid and useful point of departure for examining conquest states such as the collection of three city-states in South Africa. The point of arrival, on the other hand, especially throughout the 19th and 20th centuries (and more particularly in the present day Republic of South Africa) is a conceptualisation of multi-culturalism as a consequence of settlement societies dynamics. The crucial population element in this dynamics is the Indian South African community. Unlike both the Whites and the Blacks who contest indigenous versus settler statuses in South Africa, the Indians have regarded themselves as belonging to South Africa in the sense of citizenship and political status in general and yet not based their claims on any other than the 'settler' status (the small numbers of Indians in the population is, of course, a crucial variable but not the dominating one). The example of multi-culturalism in the U.K. suggests a complex relationship between a civilization (in this instance a long-established centralized state and a cohesive nation-state) and settlement society (the large numbers of Asian and African diasporic elements). Here, firstly, the settlement society is not coterminous with the nation state but is a part thereof. Secondly, the notion of diaspora itself may refer either to a place or a people, depending on the context of the discourse.

The dialectical rather than oppositional relationship between civilizations and settlement societies has a definite historical effect. As the example of late capitalism at the end of the 20th century and the ushering in of the 21st century clearly shows, a feedback such that the dynamics of settlement societies can energize/refurbish civilizations has high probability. The civilizational teleology of development and cultural evolution throughout the twentieth century thought seems to us as having been a mirror-image of the nineteenth century social evolutionism. The dialectical relationship such as advocated here between civilizations and settlement societies has the potential of reversing the hallowed centre-periphery relationship paradigm, in cultural terms, of the world-system theorists.

In this discussion it is not possible to detail the theoretical parameters of settlement societies, but it may be useful to bear in mind that one can postulate a distinction between the elementary structure of such societies and their complex forms. Most of the island societies of nineteenth century Indian diaspora, viz., Mauritius, Fiji, Trinidad & Tobago, etc., belong to the elementary type while societies like the USA., Canada, South Africa and Australia, the kind of societies that have been written about as "New Societies" (Hartz 1964), represent the complex structures.

The point of origin for the Indian diaspora has been the Indian civilization. The civilizational side of the dialectic has so far, in this paper, been assumed and not spelt out. It would seem valid to say that during a process of interaction between the great tradition and several little traditions over the millennia, a civilization like India cannot be said to lack a common will. The self-same religious, architectural, anthropomorphic and social structural patterns and symbols recur in India as a palimpsest, in the sense that an original text is written over several times by a variety of interpretations, (Lannoy, 1971). These may be predominantly 'Hindu' in origin but which effectively cut across religious, communal, ethnic and caste groups. As such, what Cohn (op. cit.) characterises as the study of cultural communication in understanding the Indian civilizations has been much helped by the concepts of Great Tradition and little traditions and of universalization and parochialization (cf. Marriott, 1955; Singer, 1972). The long history of civilization distinguishes it from the short time-span of the settlement societies. Besides the former having a sort of common cultural will, it also enables a synthesis of various disparate cultural elements which is a 'blend' rather than a mere 'mixture'. The symbiosis between Muslim and non-Muslim cultures in India is an evidence of this process. Nevertheless, there are two main criticisms of the particular way in which the process of cultural communication in Indian civilization has been conceptualized by the anthropologists of the Chicago School. Firstly, though lip service is paid to the mutual interaction between the Great Tradition and little traditions, in fact, the former are treated as hegemonic over the latter. The difficulty seems to be that in this civilizational teleology, acculturation which is an asymmetrical and hegemonic process has been emphasised over and above "interculturation" which is perhaps a much more prevalent and powerful process over time (Jain, 1986). A critique of the 'sanskritization' process of cultural change in India reveals that a number of protest movements were simultaneously active, perhaps more active during the last one hundred years of Indian history than the movements of change imitating cultural practices of the higher castes. The second big gap in the culturally asymmetric paradigm of cultural change in India is that the politico-economic factors of change, viz., those involved in building the Indian nation (in the last two hundred years) and the Indian state (in the last fifty years), are completely marginalised. In sum, the prevailing anthropological models of the process of Indian civilization would revert to the paradigm of a cultural persistence type of analysis if employed in the context of diaspora. We believe that the dialectic between civilisation and settlement society, the one complementing the other, and the one feeding back into the other as a process in real time, provides a dynamic frame in the study of Indian diaspora.

Before concluding this section of our presentation, let us note that one salient contrast between studies and frameworks for the studies of settlement societies and for civilizations has been the accent on political economy in the former and culture in the latter. As our earlier remarks would imply, there is need for each perspective to be augmented by the other. In the settlement societies framework, researches by anthropologists like M. G. Smith on pluralism and plural society ideas have sought to blend the Furnivallian politico-economic framework with reflecting pluralism refers to universalistic, uniform, incorporation, the kind of situation which should ideally exist in a country like the USA.

Conversely, sociologists like John Rex (Rex, 1982) assimilate a politico-economic viewpoint in their analyses of race relations in plural societies. Relevant to

the study of the Indian diaspora is Rex's postulation of a continuum between the 19th century and 20th century emigration and settlement of people from India in territories overseas. This follows from Rex's argument that in the modern world migratory movements take place according to the need of different economies for labour and a major movement of this kind is the migration of men and women from post-colonial to metropolitan societies. Where this happens, metropolitan labour movements and metropolitan political parties seek to establish barriers to such movements of a racist kind. In so far as these are effective, what one sees is racial discrimination on a world-wide scale, designed to ensure that the hard-won freedoms of the metropolitan workers shall not be shared, even if this means a permanent division of the world into rich and poor nations. As post-colonial societies get control of their own destinies, and either eliminate racism or direct it against new targets, this division between rich white and poor coloured and black nations may come to be the most important form of racism in the modern world. What is true of the working classes is true also, if to a lesser degree, of white collar workers and professionals of the post-colonial countries migrating to metropolitan nations. The general point, of course, is that there is an organic linkage between immigration and settlement of Indians abroad in the 19th century and those who have migrated to the industrially advanced countries in the present century. And furthermore, this bears the marks of colonialism and racism.

2.5 The Universe of Discourse: A Framework

We have already spelled out, briefly, the distinction between civilizations and settlement societies. We now locate the above distinction in a wider field of forces which is comprised not only of empirical cases that contextualize the Indian diaspora but also the intellectual/analytical currents which flow in this field. This combination of descriptive and analytical perspectives is suggested by the fact that there now exist, in the study of the Indian diaspora, not only anthropologists and sociologists of metropolitan (western) countries, and not even the 'Indianists' so-called of Indian and western vintage, but diasporic scholars themselves who bring to bear- in the changed circumstances of the admissibility of a subjective or agent-oriented viewpoint in the social sciences- an experiential and creatively articulated dimension. Let me present this field of forces, with its magnetic polarities, in the following schematic table:

FIELD OF FORCES

	A	B
Societal Correlate	**Settlement Societies**	**Civilizations**
Historical Conjuncture	Late Capitalism	Early Capitalism
Evolutionary Thrust	Models of Development	Models for Development
Intellectual Current	Post-modernism	Modernism
	Reverse Orientalism	Valorization of Tradition
	Fragmentation Deconstruction	Holism (Gandhian and Marxist Approaches)
	Deterritorialisation	Multiple Territorialisation
Subliminal Currents	New Age Religions	Economic Liberalization and 'Consumption of Modernity'

To explain this table briefly, the polarity between civilizations and settlement societies has already been discussed. That between Late and Early Capitalism is largely self-evident. The distinction between models of and for development can be explained by the fact that while in A there has been satiation with high-tech and there is concern for sustainable development and environmental preservation, in B there is still a shortfall, not only real and material but also perceived and felt, between the technological progress attained and sought to be attained. In that sense, even where a question-mark is raised over the adoption and import of western technology, there is continuing and deep concern with models for development rather than a distant and somewhat dispassionate interest in what kinds of developmental models are available and need to be implemented. In other words, in A the interest in developmental models may not be for urgent implementation but as knowledge-packages. In coming down to the third set of polarities, viz., those referring to intellectual currents, the distinction between the post-modernism of A and continuing modernism of B is noteworthy. It means in effect that while the duo traditional-modern, or the modernity of tradition or the modernization of tradition theses still define the terms of discourse in B, in A on the other hand the idioms of collage and surrealism are adopted at an even flatter and more popular levels than was the case in late modernism (Jameson, 1984). In post-modernity the dead-hand of globalization has replaced the affect-prone particularities. As such, the holistic notion of 'tradition' in either the unconsciously imperialistic redaction continues to haunt B. In A, on the other hand, the critique of Orientalism has not only managed to throw the baby of tradition out with the bathwater of colonialism and imperialism but a kind of 'reverse-Orientalism' has taken its place. In the context of studies of diaspora, let me give one example. In the description and analysis of the formation of settlement societies, there is virtual absence of considering what in the older literature, would be called the pioneering spirit, adventure and entrepreneurial skills of the founding fathers. The besetting sin of these founding fathers was the fact that they happen to have been largely of the Nordic races. Thus, in the literature on plural societies, multiculturalism, and diaspora generally the inadmissibility of notions such as that of "New Societies" (cf. Hartz, 1964) has become patent; it has become a postmodernist blasphemy to dilate on the contribution of the Whites.

Another element of the post-modernist ambience in A is reflected in the carryover from the discourse of deconstruction and fragmentation in the social sciences to diasporic studies. The crisis of representation in ethnography has been projected on to the studies of migration and settlement. These currents stand in contrast to the holisms of B, prominent among these being the Marxist notion of totality (cf. Jay, 1984) and, in the context of Indian civilization, Gandhian views of swaraj (self-government) and self-sufficiency. The deterritorialization thesis enunciated and elaborated by diasporic Indian intellectuals in the USA (Appadurai, 1990, 1991, 1993; Gupta 1992 and Gupta and Ferguson 1992) and in Australia (Mishra 1995), is a particularly acute manifestation of the pains and dilemmas of the diasporic intellectual/academic in settlement societies. They emphasise transnationality, hyphenated identities and diasporic deterritorialization of immigrant populations. The argument is sustained by the examples of displaced peoples and refugees all over the world, and the provenance of global and transnational organizations, such as the Red Cross, Amnesty International, etc., is cited as proof that identities and loyalties of diasporics, including the Indians in the "complex" settlement societies (read USA or even Australia) have become fragmented

and deterritorialized. When anthropologists like the ones cited above take up the theme of identity and begin theorizing on a global scale it becomes necessary to take note and state what the situation appears to be like from the Indian angle. Stated somewhat bluntly, the deterritorialization thesis seems to have unmistakably psychological roots, and the many personal interludes in the writing at least of Arjun Appadurai cited above would seem to bear this out. In this genre of anthropological or literary writing there are symptoms of an intellectual or academic disease where a splintered rather than a split identity of the intellectual/academic is projected on to the nation-state or 'country' of adoption, viz., the USA or Australia. In his article, 'Patriotism and its Future', (1993) Appadurai draws a contrast between 'belonging to' or 'loyalty for' on the one hand, United States of America, and on the other, America. The former (USA) is portrayed as the persecutor (preserver of whiteness and of the contrast between the White Anglo-Saxon Protestant and the others). It has the 'land of the immigrants' ideology and it consciously or unconsciously panders to the image of the 'tribalism' of the non-white groups. The latter (America) is the 'ethnoscape' of real freedom; it is just a node in diaspora and the epitomy of deterritorialization without the fetters. In this scenario the former is all bad and the latter good to utopian perfection.

We do not here wish to contest the subjective preferences of the author/ authors concerned, but let us say that depending on the vantage point of the 'intellectual' concerned, if the USA or Australia based (our Pole A), the glass looks half-empty, and if India or counter-diaspora based (our Pole B), the glass looks half-full. For instance, from the vantage point of an Indian academic, an equally plausible case can be made for multiple territorialization (m. t. for short) rather than d. t. The advantage of an m. t. perspective would be: (a) the economic dimension of immigration and settlement, e. g., the class background and investments in India of the diasporics would be studied,(b) the policies of the host society and the nation-state dimensions of the statuses of the diasporics would become clearer. Thus, for example, in Australia, multiculturalism, immigration quotas, English versus non-English speaking backgrounds and steps being taken to remedy the latter would be in the ken of one's study, and (c) the distinctive politics of the settlement society diasporics, e. g., their ethnic politics, perception of the 'niche' of opportunity, etc., would become clearer.

In my Field of Forces Table, the last set of contrasts between A & B is in terms of subliminal currents. This is an especially useful index because it shows how the elements of each sub-field are present in the other. Thus while tradition and holism are largely unrepresented in A, yet the existence of New Age religions, e. g., the marginalised but necessarily complementary (to economism in general) current of movements like the Hare Krishna play a role in settlement societies. On the other hand, if one took a realistic view of the currents of globalization and economic liberalization which are moving civilizational sites like India, China and Mexico the burgeoning middle classes and consumption of modernity by them (Breckenridge, 1995) belong to the twilight zone between early and late capitalism. Any particular instance of Indian diaspora will then be placed at different points in relation to this field of forces but with an area where the interpenetration between the sub-fields would be present.

2.6 Conclusion

It seems clear that there are dialectical, dialogical and reformist implications of the paradigm for the study of the spread and settlement of India minorities in the post-colonial context. It is apparent that analyses in terms of imperialism and colonialism which created a lot of heat in the 1960s through the 1980s are in dire need of being framed in the context of transnationality and globalisation which equally affects Indian populations in the former colonies and the metropolitan centres.

There is no doubt that in our analyses the historical and spatial aspects of particular diasporas should be taken into account but it is doubtful if a broad distinction between the POIs and NRIs is a useful tool in the cultural analysis of the horizontal or lateral dimensions of the Indian diaspora in a post-colonial context. In a certain sense, the *longue duree* perspective inherent in our heuristic distinction between civilizations and settlement societies subsumes, at an analytical plane, the distinctions between the past, present & the future of Indian diasporas. And yet another kind of relativity gets built into this theoretical perspective resulting from the locationality of the analyst. We have already had occasion to refer to this in respect of deterritorialisation and multiple territorialisation theses. However, this duality should be transcended in terms of the multi positionality view of the Indian diaspora. In writing about diaspora in general, one of the six characteristics mentioned by Safran is that "(the diasporics) continue to relate, personally or vicariously, to the homeland in one way or another, and their ethno-communal consciousness and solidarity are importantly defined by the existence of such a relationship" (Safran, 1991:84). This 'homing instinct' is viewed by different, though complementary, perspectives of the 'imaginary' and the 'imagined' by the diasporic Indians and the Indians respectively. The empiricism of the latter and the emotional/mythic attitude of the former are both grist to the mill of the Indian politics of globalisation. If the Indian Indians try and take a 'realistic view' of the economic opportunities and networks of the diaspora, the diasporic Indians display a dogged attachment to the religious, linguistic, culinary and performative aspects of Indianness. Although there are resistance movements against racist and gender discrimination by the Indian diasporics (of. Brah, 1996 for U.K. : and Niranjana 1994 potentially in Trinidad & Tobago), there is overwhelming evidence of a largely pacifist orientation of 'settler citizenship' among the diasporic Indians the world over.

2.7 Further Reading

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Unit 3

Diasporic Communities of the World

Contents

Learning Objectives

The main objectives of this unit is to give:

- a comparative scenario of the different diasporas of the world;
- present a scenario whereby some generalities can be drawn about diasporas;
- understand specific situations and histories which make up individual diasproas; and
- be able to use some of the concept of diaspora studies to the understanding of different diasporas.

3.1 Introduction

People and communities have been migrating from place to place throughout history. The reasons for migration and movement have been many, from forced exile to seeking a better life through voluntary migration. While the immigrants adapt to the new place, to new circumstances, they also carry with them their culture, their way of life and memories and nostalgia for the old.

As mentioned in earlier, units the term Diaspora with the capital D was reserved for such movement of people especially the Jewish Diaspora. The Jewish community was forced to disperse throughout history for a variety of reasons. This initial reference the to Jewish Diaspora, is now extended to the Jewish community living outside the present state of Israel. The initial association of the term diaspora has now extended to all communities that are scattered through the globe. The term diaspora, without capitalization, thus, refers to the scattering of people, their language and culture from its original locale.

In this unit we will discuss the various diasporic communities and their context to give you an idea of the form and experience of diaspora defined as it is by specific experience and history. While there are many communities that have migrated over the past, some diasporas are known for their geographical spread, number, presence and influence. We are going to present a sampling of three diasporic communities, briefly discussing their specific situations. Since we are going to discuss the experience of Indian diasporas extensively we will not cover it in this unit.

We will start with the Jewish community, then take up the Chinese diaspora, and finally the African diaspora. We will briefly analyse the specific situations of these diasporas that will yield some broad generalizations. The choice of these three diasporas is in no way a comprehensive coverage, for there are numerous diasporas that are well worth an analyses but in order we to get a comprehensive, comparative picture we have chosen these three diasporas as broadly representing certain types of diasporas, to fully grasp the comparative situations of these communities. Let us first understand some basic features of diasporas and some categories through which we would like to analyse in the following section.

3.2 Understanding Diaspora

The reasons for migration of people from their settlement of origin-homeland are many. Sometimes it is forced, sometimes voluntary. Though we can make broad references to the possible reasons for people to migrate, the situations of migration are often very complicated. What may seem voluntary may actually be force of circumstances, like poverty, bad economy at home, in combination with certain pull factors which work to motivate migrants to look for greener pastures. While it is difficult to categorise migrants easily, in *Global Diasporas*, Cohen adopts a historical approach and identifies five different categories of diasporas, based on the forces underlying the original population dispersion: as victim (for example African-American, Jewish and Armenian), imperial (British), labor (Indian), trade (Chinese) and cultural (Caribbean). In some of these cases, such as that of the Chinese or we might take the example of the Senegalese vendors in the streets of Paris, Milan or New York City, there have been considerable population movements on a voluntary basis, not as the result of a defining traumatic event.

You will probably realize that the reasons are far more complicated when we talk about some of the diasporas in this unit. What is evident in our contemporary situation is that whatever be the reasons for migration, the level of mobility among people has increased tremendously . This increase in migration and consequent diasporic community presence in their host country has been attributed to globalisation and the increasing connectivity in the present world, whether through transportation, global communication network and globalisation of economy or media.

While there is increasing migration it is important to note that not all people who migrate can be classified as diasporic communities. Gabriel Sheffer in his book *Diaspora Politics* argues that a crucial point in trying to separate the transient migrant such as tourist asylum seekers, migrant guest worker, who live for a substantial time, from those who are part of a diasporic community. He, therefore, says that the question that needs to be posed is "why their (diasporas) members decide not only to maintain and nurture their ethno-national identities but also to be identified as such and to organize and act within the framework of diaspora organizations and to preserve contacts with their homeland and other communities of their homeland"(Sheffer,2003:17). It is obvious that many multiple -cultural, social and economic-factors explain why, how and to what extent communities with a perceived sense of identity become significant collective forces, both with reference to their homeland and to host countries.

Steven Vertovec (1999) identifies three broad meanings of the term 'diaspora' as it has been increasingly used by many disciplines and by many scholars.

These meanings include: 'diasporas as social forms', 'diaspora as types of consciousness', and 'diaspora as modes of cultural production' . These aspects that Vertovec points out help is in locating the meaning of diaspora and how these communities express these aspects as we can see from some of the examples we have in the following box which have been brought out very succinctly in the magazine *The Economist*.

Box 3.1: The Influencing Diaspora

Why does Macedonia have no embassy in Australia? Why might a mountain in northern Greece soon be disfigured by an image of Alexander the Great 73 metres (nearly 240 feet) high? Who paid for the bloody war between Ethiopia and Eritrea? How did Croatia succeed in winning early international recognition as an independent country?

The short answer to each of these questions is a diaspora—a community of people living outside their country of origin. Macedonia has no embassy in Australia because Greeks think the former Yugoslav republic that calls itself Macedonia has purloined the name from them, and the Greek vote counts for a lot in Australia. So, as a sop to local Greeks outraged by its decision to recognise the upstart Macedonia, the Australian government has not yet allowed Maccdonia to open an embassy in Canberra. The case of the missing embassy is an extreme, but typical, example of how diasporas have long exerted their influence: they have lobbied in their adopted countries for policies favourable to the homeland.

But now something new is taking place: diasporas are increasingly exerting influence on the politics of the countries they have physically, but not emotionally, abandoned. An example of this trend is the case of the monumental Alexander. The Greek diaspora is so proud of Alexander the Great, whose Macedonian kingdom encompassed what are now parts of northern Greece, and so keen to establish him as Greek, that it wants to carve his effigy on a cliff face on Mount Kerdyllion. The Greek authorities in Athens are horrified, but the Alexander the Great Foundation, based in Chicago, is eager to get chipping, and says its members will cover the $45m cost. Grotesque as it may consider the scheme—the monument would be four times the size of the American presidents carved on Mount Rushmore—the Greek government may yield. It is to rich Greek-Americans that it turns when it wants to promote its interests in America.

Similarly, it was to its citizens abroad that Eritrea looked when it decided to wage a pointless border war between 1998 and 2000. Small, poor and just six years old, the country was in no position to fight its much bigger neighbour, Ethiopia. But of Eritrea's 3.8m people, about 333,000 were émigrés and, astonishingly, the government was able to tax their personal income at 2% a year. This helped to finance, and thus to perpetuate, a terrible war.

Croats abroad also did their bit for their country, both before and after independence in 1991. In the early 1990s, not long after European communism had collapsed but before the Yugoslav federation had begun to disintegrate, the cry went up in Croatia for Croats of the diaspora to come home. Some did, returning to fight in the war that broke out in 1991. Other Croats abroad raised money: as much as $30m had been mustered by 1991. Meanwhile, Croat exiles were lobbying hard in Germany, which in turn bounced the European Union into early recognition of the new state. Fiercely nationalist exiles forked out at least $4m for the 1990 election campaign of Franjo Tudjman, Croatia's arch-nationalist president, and in return were awarded

representation in parliament in 1992, by which time the country had won its independence. Twelve out of the 120 seats were allotted to diaspora Croats, who cast their votes in consulates abroad, or in community centres, clubs and churches designated by the authorities in Zagreb. By contrast, only seven seats were set aside for Croatia's ethnic minorities. (Source: *The Economist*, Jan 2nd 2003)

Scholars have pointed out that an important diasporic element is the affinity and nostalgia and longing for home, expressed both literally, culturally and metaphorically. Often enough this need for home and connection to it is considered an important ingredient for considering a community a diaspora. But not all communities are homogenous enough to have a very strong sense of consciousness as *a community* to begin with and yet still have a sense of affiliation, however tenuous to a sense of belonging to geographical space that need not necessarily be a nation. Thus we have the Africans who are too diverse and have differing experiences but who are still treated as diaspora that is worthy of analyses.

Let us now look at some of the diasporic experience to see how we can better understand the various concepts that we have discussed in our unit one, and the various theories and approaches that have been employed by scholars to understand diasporas of the world. As we narrate and analyse some of these diasporas, we strongly encourage you to relate the discussions and concepts from our previous two units to these situations.

3.3 Diasporas of the World

In recent times there has been large movement of people, more than ever in history. Increasing connectivity in the globe has facilitated the movement. The speedy transportation and revolutions in communication technology have made it possible for people to form networks and alliances with kin groups and friends who then help facilitate the migration of people. The socio-economic conditions and oppressive political systems, genocide and war have also added to the increase in migration of people who are looking for a better life outside their homelands.

While this century and the previous ones have witnessed massive migratory trends, it is not however that migration of people is new. People have always moved from one place to another throughout history. Some have painstakingly preserved the culture they carried with them in their host countries, while others have got assimilated to some extent or totally. Thus, for instance, the Jewish diaspora, the Greek diaspora and the Armenian diaspora go back to antiquity, and are the archetypical diaspora who have preserved their distinct identity. There were many other diasporas from ancient times like the Phoenicians, Assyrians Akkadians, Amorites, Phrygians, to name a few. Many of these established elaborate networks that persisted for long and which helped preserve their diasporic identities. But they gradually got assimilated into their host countries in totality or peripherally and they are not heard of in the contemporary world except for an occasional expression from the Assyrians.

Classifying Diasporas

As diasporas are on the increase there has been a need to understand some of these diasporas. Some, like Cohen, have tried to categorise them in terms

of the forces underlying the original dispersion (see previous section). Gabriel Shaffer in his book *Diaspora Politics* identifies diasporas in terms of their basic identity or linkage or non-linakage with the nation state. He further makes a distinction between large groups of people who are united in terms of their religion or affiliation against those who are united in terms of primordial affiliation such as ethnicity and also nation: he calls then ethno-national diasporas. Let see what Shaffer means by these distinctions.

According to him the state linked diasporas are those "that are in host countries but are connected to societies of their own ethnic origin that constitute a majority in their own in established states." By stateless diasporas he means those groups of dispersed people "who have been unable to establish their own independent state" He includes in these categories groups such as the Palestenians, the Kurds, the Basques, the Sikhs, the Tibetans and many other such groups. He also includes such groups that are complex for they did not ever have distinct connection to a specific geographical place; these groups are the Gypsies, the black diaspora in Europe, South America and Latin America and in a sense also the African Americans. Shaffer adds: "These are borderline cases, because it is difficult for the majority of each of these diasporas to unequivocally define where their homeland is. Similarly under the current circumstances, these entities have neither the wish nor the power or resources to achieve the goal of establishing a nation state (Shaffer, 2003:74).

Shaffer makes another distinction in terms of the relative age of these diasporas. "Here distinction must be made among historical (or classical) diasporas, modern (or recent) diasporas and incipient diasporas(i.e., diasporas in the making, groups of migrants who are in the initial stages of forming organized diasporas)

According to Shaffer historical diasporas such as Jews, Greeks, Armenians and Chinese "emerged in antiquity or during the middle ages and now they have become linked to nation-states that were created in much later periods. In the following table Shaffer gives some estimated numbers of various diasporas whose dispersal can be traced back to many centuries ago. Following this table (Table 2.1) we have another table (2.2), which indicates the figures for what Shaffer calls modern diasporas: those diasporas which were established in the 17th century and who have fully fledged state linked, diasporas such as the Italian Polish, Irish etc. The third table (2.3) shows figures and host countries for emerging diasporas or the incipient diasporas, who are diasporas which have been dormant but have revived. They have become organized in their host countries and in their old homelands. Examples include notable segments of Polish, Croatian, Slovenian, Ukrainian and some Scandinavian groups in the U.S.A. and Australia.

It should however be noted that these are estimates only and not actual figures of diasporas. There are many difficulties in profiling different diasporas of the world and in gathering exact figures. To mention a few: the confusion between settlers and sojourners, migrants and diasporans and those who decided to join diasporic organizations by choice. Many times the confusion arises as each nation state has its own criteria for listing a group as such and such. Some have religious criteria, some ethnic and some others linguist. We do want you to get a broad picture of the different diasporas. So we present the following tables and categories that Gabriel Shaffer has come up with.

The Main Historical Diasporas

Diaspora	Number	Main host countries and areas
Armenian	5,500,000	Iran, Turkey, Lebanon, Syria, Germany, France, US, Canada, Australia, Georgia, Russia, Ukraine and central Asian States
Chinese	35,000,000	Burma, Vietnam, Malaysia, Korea, Singapore, Philippines, Indonesia, Taiwan Japan, Thailand, US, Canada, Australia, Peru, South America, and Europe
German	2,500,000	US, Australia, Latin America, Central and Eastern Europe
Greek	4,000,000	Albania, Cyprus, Turkey, US, Australia, Canada, South Africa, Ethiopia, Germany Western Europe, Middle East
Indian	9,000,000	Fiji, Guyana, Jamaica, Kenya, Kuwait, Malaysia, Mauritius, Nepal, Burma, Oman, Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Thailand, South Africa, Singapore, Sri Lanka, Trinidad, Tobago, US, UK, Yemen, United Arab Emirates.
Jewish	8,000,000	US, Canada, South Africa, UK, France, Australia, Former Soviet Union, Latin America eastern Europe

Table 3.1: **Modern Diasporas (Estimated Numbers in Main Host Countries)**

Diaspora	Numbers	Main Host Countries and Areas
African-American	25,000,000	U.S.
Black Atlantic	1,500,000	U.S., Canada, U.K
Hungarian	4,500,000	Czechoslovakia, Romania, U.S., Canada, former Yugoslavia, former Yugoslavia, former Soviet republics
Iranian	3,500,000	Iraq, Lebanon, Syria, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, U.K., Germany, U.S., Canada, Australia, Central America, South America, western Europe
Irish	10,000,000	U.S., U.K.
Italian	8,000,000	Britain, Argentina, Brazil, Germany, U.S., France, Australia, western Europe
Japanese	3,000,000	U.S., Hawaii, Brazil, Peru, Canada
Kurdish	14,000,000	Iraq, Iran, Syria, Turkey, Germany, France, other western European Countries

Lebanese	2,500,000	Egypt, Syria, Persian Gulf States, (Christian) Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, U.S., Australia, Canada, France, western Africa
Polish	4,500,000	U.S., Canada, western Europe former Soviet republics
Turkish	3,500,000	Germany, Bulgaria, Holland, Cyprus, Greece, Denmark, Sweden, Norway, U.S., Austria

Table 3.2: **Incipient Diasporas**
(Estimated Numbers and Main Host Countries)

Diaspora	Numbers	Main Host Countries and Areas
Albanian	1,000,000	Greece, Germany, Denmark, Swen, Norway, Hollan, Italy, U.S., former Yougoslavia
Algerian	1,5000,000	France, Germany, Tunisia, Morocco
Bulgarian	500,000	U.S., various states in western Europe, Former Soviet republics
Colombian	250,000	U.S. Isarael
Croatian	350,000	U.S, Canada, Australia
Cuban	750,000	U.S
Czech	2,500,000	U.S, various western European states Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Libya, U.S., Canada Persian Gulf states, western European states
Egyptian	1,000,000	Iraq, Saudi Arabia, Libya, U.S., Canada, Persian Gulf states
Filipino	2,000,000	U.S. Canada, Persian Gulf states, western European states
Israeli	750,000	U.S., Canada, South Africa, Australia
Haitian	750,000	U.S. Canada, Bahamas
Jamaican	300,000	U.S.
Korean	3,500,000	China, Japan, U.S, Australia, former Soviet republics
Latvian	120,000	U.S., Canada, Australia
Lithuanian	850,000	U.S, Canada, Australia
Malayan	5,000,000	India, Thailand, Singapore
Mexican	20,000,000	U.S., Canada
Moroccan	1,500,000	France, Germany, Holland, Spain, Belgium, Denmark
Pakistani	750,000	United Kingdom, Holland, Denmark, Norway, Persian Gulf states
Portuguese	2,000,000	France Canada, U.S. U.K.
Puerto Rican	600,000	U.S.
Russian	25,000,000	US., Australia, western Europe, former Soviet Republics

Serbian	130,000	U.S., Canada, Australia
Slovak	1,500,000	Hungary, U.S, Canada, former Yugoslavia
Slovenian	200,000	U.S., Canada
Spanish	1,000,000	France, Germany, Switzerland, U.S., U.K., Canada
Syrian	750,000	Argentina, Brazil, U.S.
Tamil	3,200,000	Sri Lanka, U.S., Canada, Australia, western Europe
Ukarainian	1,800,000	Poland, Estonia, U.S., Canada, Australia
Vietnamese	1,000,000	Kampuchea, Japan, U.S., Canada

Reflection and Action 3.1

Do you think the Indian diaspora is highly influential in securing a foothold for themselve in their host country and also in influencing politics back home in India? Write your answer with substantine examples.

3.4 The Jewish Diaspora

The word Diaspora with the capital 'D' was associated with the Jewish community, as we mentioned earlier. "As late as 1975, *Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary* defined the term diaspora as 'the settling of scattered colonies of Jews outside Palestine after the Babylonian exile', as the 'area outside outside Palestine settled by Jews' and as 'the Jews living outside Palestine or modern Israel' until its 1993 edition. The term 'diaspora' being equated with the Jewish community is not very surprising because they are one of the oldest communities to have dispersed, endured and throughout their turbulent history they have held on to the notion of homeland. We will give here a brief survey of Jewish dispersal through history to understand why they are the archetypical diasporic community.

Jewish Dispersal in Ancient Times

Following Shaffer, we will not discuss whether there is historical validity to stories of Jewish diaspora but instead look for a narrative that fits the socio-psychological anchoring, whether through parables or myths, for a Jewish identity and the situation of the diaspora. Shaffer writes that despite the tribal origins of the Jewish population, the Jewish population set about a nation-building process which brought in a solidarity and coalescence of Jewish identity. He writes: In their emerging myth which became significant elements in the collective national memory and later were included in the Bible, the initial conquest and settlement in Ertez Israel were kept closely linked to the nation's founding fathers; Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. The strong attachment to the new homeland was extremely important because that was the locus of both the earliest process of nation building and gradual development of the Jewish monotheistic creed and formal religion. Eventually the national and religious elements became inextricably intertwined and suffused.

Let us keep this as our background and quickly go through a succession of Jewish exiles which make up the diaspora. In pure historical terms one of the earliest exiles is set at the time of the Assyrian invasion of northern

Israel, in 720 BCE. After the Assyrian conquest of the kingdom the elites c Jewish community were expelled to the peripheries of the kingdom. The Babylonian conquest in 586 BCE led to further dispersal and scattering of Jews. Partly because of the need for skilled labour and artisans in the Babylonian empire and partly because of the moderate religious, social and political view of Babylonia, the Jews managed to prosper reasonably. As more and more Jews diversified in terms of occupation and even through settlements they established networks among themselves and networks back home. As result of these, Babylon became the center of Jewish prosperity as well as cultural-religious activity (Cohen, 1997:4).

Around 330 BCE, all of Asia Minor and Major part of the Middle East came under Hellenic rule with Alexander conquering territories. Scholars feel that the Greek occupation brought the dispersed Jews together thorough stronger networks that were established in the Hellenic empire. The Roman Empire conquered Judea and completely destroyed the temples of Jerusalem. And especially after the Jewish revolt between 66-70 BCE, they come down very hard on Judea. When Judea became a Roman province, "the settlement of several Grecian and Roman colonies in Judea indicated the express intention of the Roman government to prevent the political regeneration of the Jewish nation." Nevertheless, forty years later, the Jews put forth efforts to recover their former freedom but failed. With this the Jews no longer had a reason to cling to a soil where the recollection of their past grandeur only helped to render more bitter the spectacle of their present humiliation.

Jewish Diaspora in Medieval and Contemporary Times

The destruction of Judea had a decisive influence on the dispersal of the Jewish community. They soon moved away from the traditional areas into Europe. They were spread far and wide in the entire Roman Empire, into Spain and in France. With the coming of Christianity, Jews faced further persecution that again prompted further dispersal into Northern and Eastern Europe.

In the 9th century A.D. the Roman Empire had managed to draw all its provinces under a common canonical law. Restrictions were imposed on interactions with Jews. The Church ordained rules for believers and for their treatment of non-believers. Intercourse with Jews was almost entirely forbidden to believers, and thereby a chasm was created between the adherents of the two religions, which could not be bridged. This chasm turned the Jews into organizing in ghettos. The Crusades in the middle ages added to the insecurity of the Jews.

In the First Crusade (1096), flourishing communities on the Rhine and the Danube were utterly destroyed; see German Crusade, 1096. In the Second Crusade (1147), the Jews in France suffered especially. Philip Augustus treated them with exceptional severity. In his days the Third Crusade took place (1188); and the preparations for it proved to be momentous for the English Jews. After unspeakable trials, Jews were banished from England in 1290; and 365 years passed before they were allowed to settle again in the British isles. The Jews were also subjected to attacks by the Shepherds Crusades of 125 1 and 1320 (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/JewsintheMiddleAges). Everywhere in the Christian Occident Jews were persecuted. The Jews, who were driven out of England in 1290, out of France in 1394, and out of numerous districts of Germany, Italy, and the Balkan peninsula between 1350

and 1450, were scattered in all directions, and fled preferably to the new Slavic kingdoms, where for the time being other religions were still tolerated. Here they found a sure refuge under benevolent rulers and acquired a certain prosperity, in the enjoyment of which the study of the Talmud was followed with renewed vigor. Together with their faith, they took with them the German language and customs, which they have cultivated in a Slavic environment with unexampled faithfulness up to the present time.

During the Renaissance and Enlightenment period there was more opening up of the Jewish community and greater participation in secular life. There was movement to come out of the ghettos, both literally and metaphorically. The movement is called Haskalah.

Box 3.2: Jewish Enlightenment

Haskalah, the Jewish Enlightenment, was a movement among European Jews in the late I 8th century that advocated adopting enlightenment values, pressing for better integration into European society, and increasing education in secular studies, Hebrew, and Jewish history. Haskalah in this sense marked the beginning of the wider engagement of:

European Jews with the secular world, resulting, ultimately, in the first Jewish political movements and the struggle for Jewish emancipation. Haskalah also resulted in a revival of Jewish secular identity, with an emphasis on Jewish history and Jewish identity. The result was engagement of the Jews in a variety of ways with the countries in which they lived, including the struggle for Jewish emancipation and the birth of new Jewish political movements, and ultimately the development of Zionism in the face of the persecutions of the late 1800s.(source: http : //en.wikipedia.org/wiki/ Haskalah)

The changes caused by the Haskalah movement coincided with rising revolutionary movements throughout Europe. Despite these movements, only France, Britain, and the Netherlands had granted the Jews in their countries equal rights with gentiles after the French Revolution in 1796. Elsewhere in Europe, especially where Jews were most concentrated in Central and Eastern Europe, Jews were not granted equal rights. It was in the revolutionary atmosphere of the mid-l9th century that many movements would take place. While at one level Jews were trying to come out of their Ghetto existence, they were forced to go back to Ghettos during the Nazi occupation of 1939 —45. Nazi Germany was one of the worst in the history of persecution of Jews. The genocide of Jews was state sponsored pogram. It is estimated that about 12 million Jews were exterminated during this time. The ones who survived somehow managed to escape to the U.S.A. or South America, and many to their land of hope, Zion. By 1944 there was a huge Jewish population in Palestine, which was administered as a British province. After the holocaust the Zionist movement was the movement among the diaspora which was responsible for creation of the state of Israel. The Jewish diaspora and those who stayed continued to see the land as their spiritual home and as the Promised Land; there is no evidence of any interruption of the Jewish presence there for the last three millennia. For generations, the universal theme carried mostly religious overtones due to the belief that the Jewish people would return to Zion. The Zionist movement is noteworthy for its pan-Jewish integrating element. The aim of the Zionist movement was: the unity of the Jewish people and the centrality of their ancestral and Biblical

homeland in Israel. The movement believed in the ingathering of the Jewish people in its historic homeland, the Land of Israel, and in the preservation of the identity of the Jewish people through the fostering of Jewish and Hebrew studies and of Jewish spiritual and cultural values. It fought for the protection of Jewish rights everywhere. Zionism, or the idea of a restored national homeland and common identity for the Jews, had already started to take shape by the mid-1800s.

Following World War II, the British announced their intention to withdraw from the British mandate of Palestine. The United Nations General Assembly proposed the partition of Palestine into two states, an Arab state and a Jewish state, with Jerusalem to be under United Nations administration. Most Jews in Palestine accepted the proposal, while most of the Arabs in Palestine rejected it. The Arabs totally rejected the idea of a Jewish state in Palestine (however, they were not under any legal obligation to accept the plan as General Assembly resolutions are not binding).

Violence between Arab and Jewish communities erupted almost immediately. Towards the end of the British mandate, the Jews planned to declare a separate state, a development the Arabs were determined to prevent. On May 14, 1948, the last British forces withdrew from Palestine, and the Jews, led by David Ben-Gurion, declared the creation of the State of Israel, in accordance with the 1947 UN Partition Plan.

The Arab-Israel conflict is an ongoing conflict today. We strongly encourage you to follow up this conflict in detail. We would not like to go into the details at this stage. We would stop here and look at another major diaspora of the world, namely the Chinese diaspora.

Reflection and Action 3.2

In what way does the present Arab-Israeli conflict reflect the long history of Jewish diaspora and their exiled state?

3.5 The Chinese Diaspora

The Chinese diaspora is one of the largest diasporas in the world. In sheer numbers and spread they surpass all other communities who have migrated from their original locale or homeland. There are an estimated 33 million Chinese who have migrated from mainland China, which now includes Hong Kong and Macau, and from Taiwan. Like the Greeks, Jews and Armenians, the Chinese too can be considered diaspora with historical roots going back to the medieval times. Many diasporas as we mentioned have a very strong connection to their homeland and aid in the strengthening of the nation-state. Though the Chinese diaspora is connected to the nation-state of the People's Republic of China their connection to the nation and state is far more indirect than of the Jews with Israel. Let us examine the case of Chinese diaspora in the sections below.

Chinese Diaspora through the Past

The Chinese people have a long history of migration oversees. The most noticeable migration happened during the Ming dynasty. Most of the Oversees Chinese (OC) were Han Chinese.

Box 3.3: Han Chinese

The term "Han Chinese" is used to distinguish the majority from the various minorities in and around China. The name comes from the Han Dynasty which succeeded the short-lived Qin Dynasty that reunited China. It was during the Qin Dynasty and the Han Dynasty that the various tribes of China began to feel that they belonged to the same ethnic group, compared with "barbarians" around them. In addition, the Han Dynasty is considered a high point in Chinese civilization, able to project its power far into Central and Northeast Asia. There are many subgroups within this overarching notion of Han identity however. The Han Chinese are the largest ethnic group in mainland China, 92% of Chinese are Hans. They are also the single largest ethnic group in the world—about 19% of the entire human population of the globe.

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Han_Chinese

During the Ming Dynasty, Heng He, an envoy sent the Chinese to trade oversees through the South China Sea and the Indian Ocean. Many of them never returned. The next wave of migration seems to have happened during the Yuan Dynasty, where the rulers were interested in setting up trade colonies. By the 14th century, there were Chinese settlements in Cambodia, Java, Sumatra, and Singapore. In the 15th century, the Chinese established colonies in Thailand and nearly hundred years after that in the Philippines.

Chinese Dispersion during 17th century was far more widespread than in the previous period. The colonial period saw a demand for labour in the Western world which took Chinese to these countries. The consolidation of colonies in Asia by the French and English saw increase in migration. "Some 6.3 million Chinese were estimated to have left Hong Kong alone between 1868 and 1939, and large numbers also left Xiamen (Amoy) and Shantou (Swatow). It was a movement dominated by men going overseas to work as indentured laborers, the infamous coolie trade, although others traveled more independently to seek their fortunes in the gold fields of Australia and the west coasts of North America and New Zealand. Some five million of the 6.3 million who left through Hong Kong were men. The majority moved to the economies in Southeast Asia that were being opened up by British and French colonial interests"(Skeldon, 2004)
(Source: www.migrationinformation.org).

Many who went abroad went as sojourners-people who went in the hope of making it rich, returning, marrying and settling down. Though many could not return for whatever reason, the fact that these émigrés went as sojourners, helped maintain some contact with the homeland and kindle the longing and nostalgia for home and added to the circular nature of the migration pattern, unlike people who migrated for reasons of settling as did the Europeans to the New World and to Australia. The fact that many could not get assimilated into their host country and the discrimination they faced racially and culturally further honed their sense of diasporic identity. Except for Thailand and the Philippines, where they are fairly integrated, most societies including South Asian countries did not want the Chinese to be part of them. They feared their business acumen; you find those fears even now in countries like Malaysia for instance.

"The marginalization of most Chinese extended to their virtual exclusion from entry into the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand from

the 1880s, because of racist legislation that was not rescinded until after World War II. Migration from China from the late 19th century until the late 1940s was therefore, with some notable periods of interruption, directed primarily towards the then European colonies of Southeast Asia. Male dominance, sojourner mentality, exclusion, and marginality gave this early Chinese migration an "exceptional" character, one that was important for the migrations that were to come later"(ibid).

Migration after World War II

After the formation of the Republic of China, migration was strictly restricted except as students to the Soviet Union or as specialist workers to developing countries in Africa. Most of the migration was internal. A million people migrated to the then British colony of Hong Kong (almost half a million entered Hong Kong between 1977 and 1982, for example). And another million fled to Taiwan.

Most of the migration came from the peripheral Chinese world from Taiwan, Hong Kong, Malaysia and Indonesia. Most of these early migrants were unskilled workers heading to Western Europe especially to Britain. But with America, Australia and New Zealand opening up in the 1960s and 70s there was a different kind of migration, of skilled, educated professionals and their families. The policies in host countries, which went past their earlier racist notion, was one of the chief reasons for the spurt in migration. Also, the Chinese nation, especially after the reforms of 1979, stopped its inward looking policies of earlier decades and made efforts to avail of every opportunity that came it way. Apart from the more permanent settlers they are guest workers and students who travel abroad. Chinese students are among the leading student population in Western countries especially in Canada, the U.S.A. and Japan. "From 215 foreign students from China in Canada in 1980, the number increased to 11,138 in 2001. In the United States in 2002-2003, there were some 64.757 students from China in degree-granting institutions. Students from China have also been going to Japan for a considerable time, accounting for about half of the 64,000 foreign students in that country in 2000".

These diasporic communities were varied in their context and their sense of identity was similarly varied.

Identity: Assimilation and Relationship with Home

Overseas Chinese vary widely as to their degree of assimilation, their interactions with the surrounding communities (see Chinatown), and their relationship with China, In Thailand, overseas Chinese have largely intermarried and assimilated with the native community. In Myanmar, the Chinese rarely intermarry (even amongst different Chinese linguistic groups), but have largely adopted the Burmese culture whilst maintaining Chinese culture affinities. Indonesia, Thailand, and Myanmar are among the countries that do not allow birth names to be registered in Chinese. In Vietnam, ethnic Chinese are required to have Vietnamized spellings of their names. For example, Hu Jintao would become "Ho Cam Dào".

Very often, there is no distinct number of the Chinese population in these countries. On the other hand, in Malaysia and Singapore, overseas Chinese have maintained a distinct communal identity, though the rate and state of being assimilated to the local, in this case a multicultural society, is currently

en par with that of other Chinese communities (see Peranakan). In the Philippines, many younger Overseas Chinese are well assimilated, whereas the older ones tend to be considered as "foreigners". More recent overseas Chinese immigrants have been despised by many Filipinos due to incidents of some selling illegal drugs, as well as being high profile smugglers. Chinese have also brought a cultural influence to some other countries such as Vietnam, where many customs have been adopted by native Vietnamese.

The relationship of the home with the émigrés in mainland China and in Taiwan has been evolving and it is very complex. Earlier part of communist nation building expected Chinese to have one singular loyalty, that is to China. The émigrés were looked at with suspicion as being capitalist infiltrators. After Deng Xiaoping's reforms the Chinese diaspora is courted by the state to help in the economic development process of China. Thus a lot of facilities and special provisions are provided for them.

While the above two varieties of diasproas are linked to the idea of home which was both a promise (for a long time for the Jewish community) and reality, as empires and nation state existed for the Chinese, the African experience is different. Let us briefly look in the African diaspora in our next section.

Reflection and Action 3.3

Do you think the Chinese diaspora is similar to the Indian diaspora and if so, in what way?

3.6 The African Diaspora

The African diaspora or Afro diaspora is the diaspora created by the movements and culture of Africans and their descendants throughout the world, to places such as the Americas (including the United States, Canada, the Caribbean, Central America, and South America), Europe and Asia. The majority of the African diaspora is descended from people taken into slavery, with the largest population living in the United States. In recent years they include a rising number of voluntary emigrants and asylum-seekers as well.

More broadly, the African diaspora comprises the indigenous peoples of Africa and their descendants, wherever they are in the world. Pan-Africanists often also consider other Negroid (or "Africoid") peoples as diasporic "African peoples." These groups include Negritos of the Andamanese islands, Philippines and the Malay Peninsula (Orang Ash), New Guinea, certain peoples of the Indian subcontinent, and the aboriginal peoples of Melanesia and Micronesia.

The African Union has defined the African diaspora as "of people of African origin living outside the continent, irrespective of their citizenship and nationality and who are willing to contribute to the development of the continent and the building of the African Union." Its constitutive act declares that it shall "invite and encourage the full participation of the African diaspora as an important part of our Continent, in the building of the African Union." St Claire Drake (1996) feels that this feeling of Pan Africanism is an important criterion for recognizing it as diaspora. However pertinent questions need to be asked pertaining to identifying the major characteristics of the African diaspora. Do people of the diaspora share an emotional bond? Are they aware of the alienation that may accompany the voluntary or involuntary

leaving of one's homeland? How prevalent is the sense of return to the homeland? Once again, why do some return and others do not? Then there is always the important issue of identity. Moving from one's traditional society and culture to that of a host area conjure up all types of issues related to identity. For example, a West African taken from his home and enslaved in Jamaica for several years is then transported to a household in Britain. Who is this person? Is he African, Jamaican, or English? One cannot properly understand the status, condition, or mindset of this individual without recognizing the origins and journeys around the triangle. To be sure, this person's varied experiences shaped his or her sense of self and worldview. Africa is not a homogenous continent. Therefore, the experiences of peoples of the diaspora should not be homogenized. Linkages and connections within the diaspora may be identified but human experiences are usually different.

3.7 Conclusion

We have tried to look at some of the diasporas of the world in this unit. We have tried to introduce to you the tumultons history of the Jewish Diasopora, one of the oldest diasporas in the world. We have seen how the Jewish Diaspora and the identity stemming from a nation state are so intrinsically tied up. Whereas the Chinese diaspora is a little different, ethnicity ties them together besides the identity of belonging to a nation. In the case of the African diaspora there are many nuanced aspects that hold a very disparate and varied sections of people who have ancestry and perhaps a similar history holding together. In our previous two units we have tried to grapple with some of the concepts and perspectives. These perspectives and the concepts, as you may be aware, are equally applicable to some of the diasporas we have talked about in this unit.

3.8 Further Reading

Brah, Avtar 1996. *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities*, London & New York: Routledge

Cohen, R 1997. *Global Diasporas: An Introduction*, Washington University Press: Washington

Unit 4

Migration and Settlement of Indians Abroad

Contents

Learning Objectives

This unit will help you to:

- understand the basic background to migration of Indians abroad;
- analyse the main socio-economic reasons and historical context of migration; and
- illustrate the different patterns of migration.

4.1 Introduction

Our last three units have discussed some conceptual issues concerning diaspora in general and Indian diaspora in particular. We have also tried to look at some of the diaspora of the world to understand the specific contexts and histories of diaspora across space and time. In this unit we look at the general pattern of migration with reference to the Indian diaspora. We will begin with the historical context of Indian diaspora and then try to understand contemporary trends and patterns.

Indians have been sojourning abroad since ancient times. There is historical evidence of Indian-influenced colonies and kingdoms in Southeast Asia, the most notable of them being the fifteenth century A.D. Sri Vijaya Empire in Indonesia (Wheatley, 1961). Besides Southeast Asia, Indian cultural influence is also known to have existed in Afghanistan, Tibet and parts of China. Indian scholars and entrepreneurs were in contact with their counterparts in Central Asia and the Hellenic world. Early Indian emigration, however, did not result in any significant permanent settlements overseas; and if it did then the migrants must have got assimilated into the populations of their host countries. Ceylon (Sri Lanka) can be considered in this regard as an exceptional case.

In contrast to ancient emigration, modern emigration form India was wholly a British creation. It began in 1834 when slavery was abolished in the British Empire. Labour was needed to work on the sugar plantations in the various British colonies. Without dependable supplies of labour, the survival of plantations would have been extremely difficult. Consequently, the British colonists followed the practice of Latin American and Cuban colonists who were importing Chinese indentured labour from the Portuguese settlement of Macao (Campbell, 1969). Indian labourers had already been found useful in various colonies. As slaves and convicted prisoners they were employed in public works—roads, harbours, offices and jails (Sandhu, 1969:132- 140, Tinker, 1974: 44-46).

In India, as Kingsley Davis (1968:99) has pointed out, "Pressure to emigrate has always been great enough to provide a stream of emigrants much larger than the actual given opportunities". Large-scale Indian emigration, however, did not take place until the establishment of British imperialism in India as well as many other parts of the world. Burma, for example, is a case in point where Indian emigration was numerically insignificant, and only seasonal in nature until the annexation of the Irrawaddy Delta and northern territory by the British East India Company in 1852 (Andrew, 1933). Pearn (1946:5) noted that in 1838 there were only 19 Indians in Rangoon. Similarly, Indian labour emigration to Malaysia, Ceylon, Mauritius and the West Indies and petty bourgeoisie emigration to East Africa had to wait for British colonial settlement in these places. Thus Indian overseas emigration is obviously the result of the workings of British colonialism both in India and abroad, which is highlighted by the fact that the vast majority of Indians migrated only to the British colonies. The only exceptions in this regard were the Reunion Islands and Surinam—French and Dutch Colonies respectively.

4.2 Emigration: Volume and Destination

Until the Second World War Indians emigrated mainly as indentured laborers to Guyana, Trinidad, Surinam (then a Dutch colony), South Africa, Fiji and Mauritius and as kangani or maistry labourers to Burma, Ceylon and Malaysia. The migration of traders also took place, especially to Burma, Malaysia, Kenya, Uganda, Tanzania, South Africa and Fiji. Such migration, however, was proportionately very small and became of some political significance only in 'passage' emigration—the nomenclature being derived from the fact that the emigrants paid their own passage and were free in all respects.

Box 4.1: Indentured Labour System

An indentured labourer is under contract to work (for a specified amount of time) for another person or a company/corporation, often without any monetary pay, but in exchange for accommodation, food, other essentials, training, or passage to a new country. After working for the term of the contract (traditionally four to seven years). He is allowed to be free. During this term of bondage the servant was considered the property of the master. He could be sold or given away by his master and he was not allowed to marry without the master's permission. An indentured servant was normally not allowed to buy or sell goods although, unlike an African slave, he could own personal property. He could also go to a local magistrate if he was treated badly by his master. After the servant's term of bondage was complete he was freed and paid "freedom dues". These payments could take the form of land or sugar, which would give the servant the opportunity to become an independent farmer or a free labourer. There have been multiple occasions where the indentured servitude has been abused. For example, indentured servants need goods or services not available or supplied at a cost within the terms of the indenture and find obtaining such goods or services requires an extension to the period of their indenture. In these circumstances, the system can represent a form of unfree labour.

(**Source:** http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indentured_servant)

It is estimated that between 1834 and 1937 some 30 million Indians migrated to different parts of the world, while during the same period about 24 million of them returned home, resulting in the net emigration of 6 million (see Table 4.1). As the figures in the table show, overseas Indian emigration

was largely 'ephemeral' or transitory in character. During the period 1834-1900, the average annual emigration was about 202,000, whereas for the period 1901-1937, it was about 451,000.

The data in the table also indicates four major periods of fluctuations in the migration patterns. The first, from 1834 to 1915, was the period of steady increase in indentured labour emigration. In the same period the increased net migration since the early 1890s represents the added migration of kangani/ maistry labour to Burma, Ceylon and Malaysia. The second period (1916-20) highlights not only the difficult years of the First World War but also the end of indentured emigration in 1917. In the third period (1921-30), emigration again picked up, mainly responding to the demands for labour on tea, rice and rubber plantations in Ceylon, Burma and Malaysia respectively. The largest number of Indians returned home between depressions. During the depression particularly during 1931-35, more Indians returned home than left. The kangani/ maistry form of emigration was stopped by 1938. By then not only was sufficient labour available in the colonies, Indian public opinion was also opposed to Indians' emigration and their mistreatment abroad. Thereafter only voluntary labour, over whom the government of India had no control, continued to emigrate. But such migration was proportionately very small and was confined to Malaysia, and possibly Ceylon.

Table 4.1: **Estimated Total Migration to and from India: 1834-1937 (000's)**

Year	Emigrants	Returned	Net*
1834-35	62	52	50
1836-40	188	142	46
1841-45	240	167	72
1846-50	247	189	58
1851-55	357	249	108
1856-60	618	431	187
1861-65	793	594	199
1866-70	976	778	197
1871-75	1,235	958	277
1876-80	1,505	1,233	272
1881-85	1,545	1,208	337
1886-90	1,461	1,204	256
1891-95	2,326	1,536	790
1896-1900	1,962	1,268	694
1901-05	1,428	957	471
1906-10	1,864	1,482	382
1911-15	2,483	1,868	615
1916-20	2,087	1,867	220
1921-25	2,762	2,216	547
1926-30	3,298	2,857	441
1931-35	1,940	2,093	-162
1936-37	815	755	599
Total	**30,191**	**23,941**	**6,250**

(Source: Davis,1968: 59).

* Net migration refers to net emigration. The figures do not always correspond to the exact differences between the first two columns because of rounding off.

Following the Second World War Indian migration to the advanced industrialized countries of Europe and North America had also begun to gain momentum. The post-war economic expansion in these countries created heavy demand for skilled labour and professionals. Simultaneously, immigration laws were also relaxed in Canada and the U.S.A. This form of overseas Indian migration of skilled and educated personnel, popularly known as the "brain drain," thus resulted in the formation of sizeable Indian diasporic communities in Canada, the U.K., the U.S.A. and other European countries (Aurora, 1976; Desai, 1963; Saran, 1985; Tinker, 1977). Since the early 1970s Indians have also been sojourning to the oil-rich West Asian countries.

4.3 Colonial Background of Indian Emigration

The historical background against which the Indian overseas emigration was intensified was the penetration of British mercantile capitalism in Asia. In the second half of the nineteenth century, as a result of the communication revolution and the opening of the Suez Canal, the Asian peripheral economies were fully integrated into the world capitalist system with the result that Britain earned a considerable surplus on her trade with Asia in general, and India in particular (Latham, 1978: 175).

The profits from imperial trade were invested by the British in the mines and plantations, in Asia and Africa, which created a further demand for labour throughout the British Empire. While the expanding capitalist economy in the British Empire created a great demand for labour and trading classes, in India a combination of the following factors created socio-economic conditions that led to the Indian exodus overseas.

The Distress of the Small Peasantry

The impact of British colonialism in India arose from the new land policies attuned to capitalist development by the middle of the nineteenth century. In 1765 the revenue administration of Bengal had passed into the hands of the East India Company (Mukherjee, 1958). The Company had fixed the land taxes at ninety per cent of the rental in Bengal and over eighty per cent in North India, rates that were excessively burdensome to the peasantry. The distress of the peasantry was further accentuated by the introduction of the zamindari system whereby landlords who were rent-collectors (for ten years on 2.5% commission) were converted into landlords in perpetuity (vide Permanent Land Settlement Act, 1793). In the Madras Presidency the land tenure system of raitwari was introduced in which raits or individual cultivators were the registered occupants of land and as such were free to mortgage, sell or gift their land subject to registered transaction. In the Madras Presidency the land revenues for the most part of the nineteenth century were even higher compared to Bengal.

Under these land tenure schemes, not only land transfer became easier, disputes over land also encouraged litigation, crime and corruption. Indebtedness forced many cultivators to sell or mortgage their land to the rich peasants or the money-lenders. Consequently, the pauperization of the marginal peasantry increased the number of landless labourers who eventually joined the ranks of overseas migrants. Commenting on the agrarian conditions in the nineteenth century in India, Nehru (1960:204) writes:

> "For at the basis of all this exploitation lay the policy deliberately pursued by the British in India. The destruction of cottage industries

with no effort to replace them by other kinds of industry; the driving of the unemployed artisan to the village and the consequent over-pressure on land; landlordism; the plantation system; heavy taxation on land resulting in exorbitant rent, cruelly collected; the forcing of the peasant to the bania moneylender, from whose iron grip he never escaped; innumerable ejections from the land for inability to pay rent or revenue in time; and, above all, the perpetual terrorism of policemen and tax-gatherers and landlords; which almost destroyed all spirits and soul that he possessed".

Famines

Widespread and frequent famines and local scarcities, throughout the nineteenth century and during 1905-1908 periods, were also a major factor in adding to the misery of rural populations, especially small cultivators, artisans (mainly native weavers), agricultural laboureres and other depressed classes. The frequency of famines increased considerably after 1860. In the last four decades of the nineteenth century, the government's economic policies led to a decline in food production and a rise in food prices. On the other hand, during the same period the export of foodgrains increased resulting in further shortages of foodgrains. According to one economic historian (Bhatia, 1967: vi):

> As for prevention of famine, the Government laid greater emphasis on railways, which served commercial interests of Great Britain, than on canals which were so necessary to increase food production. By legislative measures the government tried to restore the balance between creditor and debtor and between landlord and tenant, but it failed to industrialize the country, which was the ultimate remedy for unemployment and poverty. In the matter of food supplies, the compulsions of imperialism forced the Government to permit unrestricted export of foodgrains even during times of famine and allow their prices to be determined by the market forces of demand and supply.

Table 4.2
Flow of Labour from Different Continents/regions, 1834-1900 and 1901-1937

Regions	1834-1900		1901-1937	
	Average annual	% of total	Average annual	% of total
Asiatic	186,000	92.2	443,700	98.4
African	8,600	4.3	3,200	0.7
American	6,900	3.4	2,600	0.6
Oceanic	200	0.1	1,200	0.3
Total	**201,700**	**100.0**	**450,700**	**100.0**

Source: Prabhu Mohapatra, "Indian Labour Diaspora, 1830-1940", paper presented at a Seminar on International Migration, Remittances and Development held at the V.V. Giri National Labour Institute, Noida, April 7-8, 2005 (mimeographed).

Table 4.3
Out-migration from India and other Countries: A Comparison, 1846-1932

Country of Emigrations	Number (millions)	Per Cent of population in 1900
British Isles	18.2	43.3
Portugal	1.8	33.3
Italy	10.1	31.1
Spain	4.7	25.3
Sweden	1.2	23.5
Austria/ Hungary	5.2	19.8
German	4.9	9.7
Russia	2.3	1.8
India	27.7	9.4
Africa (1500-1760)	4.5	-

- This volume of emigration was by far the largest emigrant flow from any single country in the whole period.
- Much larger than the Slave labour flow from Africa to the Americas between the 16th and the 18th centuries.

(Source: As in table 1)

The Decline of the Handicraft Industry

In the seventeenth century, India was a great manufacturing power mainly because of its handicrafts industry which provided employment to millions of people. The cotton industry was especially thriving, its produce exported to a number of markets in Europe and Asia. As the British cotton industry was unable to compete with its Indian counterpart, the British government charged heavy customs duty on Indian imports into England. In 1720, Indian goods were prohibited entry into England. During the nineteenth century India imported an increasing amount of cotton goods from Britain. According to one estimate, the value of British exports in cotton goods, just over 100, 000 pounds in 1813, rose to 5.2 million pounds in 1850 and 18.5 millions. This had a substantial negative impact on the handicraft industry in India.

Sluggish and Enclavist Industrialization

While the handicrafts industry in nineteenth century India declined, modern industrial development was late, slow, limited and enclavist. Modern industrialization in India which began in the late nineteenth century was "fundamentally concentrated in three isolated enclaves—Bombay City, Calcutta and the West Bengal/ Bihar coal belt—with strictly limited impact on one another and on other regions" (Charlesworth, 1982, pp. 37-8). The Madras Presidency, which in the nineteenth century had already become an important area of labour exodus, had no industrialization even comparable to the scale of Bombay or Calcutta. Moreover, foreign capital which dominated the modern industries was not evenly and broadly invested.

There was also a marked absence of a coordinated government policy regarding industrial development until 1914. Indeed, in the name of laissez faire the

colonial government adopted a "passive state policy.....with respect to industrial development" (Lamb, 1955: 478). Perhaps more harmful to industrial development were the effects of the imperial connection which meant that until the First World War, Indian industry was denied any significant tariff protection. Thus, the overall progress of industrialization during the British Raj remained very slow. As late as 1931, out of a total population of 353 million, only just over 1.5 million workers were employed in modern factories (Buchanan, 1966, p, 136). Under these circumstances, it is obvious that the manufacturing sector of the colonial economy was not capable of absorbing the surplus labour force created in the rural areas.

Other Factors

Excessive dependence on agriculture, seasonal unemployment, mass illiteracy and a caste-bound occupational structure were additional contributory factors in creating a class of proletarians, a fraction of which was compelled to seek sustenance abroad. Under these circumstances, the Indian government was readily persuaded by the imperial and other colonial government to export Indian labourers. It must be pointed out here that 99.6 per cent of the labour moved across waterways to the ports in the British Empire. A small percentage went to French, Dutch and Danish colonies. About 98 per cent of the total Indian migration abroad during the colonial period was of labourers and the rest was of traders and other middle class personnel.

Reflection and Action 4.1

Collect from different sources (Internet, friends, books-both fiction and non-fiction and movies) the stories of early labour migration to colonial planations of the British Empire. What do you think were the ways and means by which these indentured labourers survived the harsh environment?

4.4 Five Patterns of Indian Emigration

Historically, five distinctive patterns of Indian emigration can be identified: (1) Indentured labour emigration, (2) kangani/maistry labour emigration, (3) "Free" or "Passage" emigration, (4) "Brain-drain", or voluntary emigration to the metropolitan countries of Europe, North America and Oceania, and (5) Labour emigration to West Asia. Whereas the first three forms of emigration were colonial phenomena, the last two are the results of the inherent contradictions of the post-colonial socio-economic development of India. These patterns are briefly described below.

Indentured Labour Emigration

Indenture was a contract by which the migrant was bound to work for a given employer for a three-to-five-year term, performing the task assigned to him for a specified wage (Kondapi, 1951). At the end of the contract the labourer was free to reindenture or to work elsewhere in the colony. After ten years he was entitled to a subsidized return passage. As already mentioned, the migration of Indian indenture labour began in 1834, and was officially ended in 1920. The chief importing countries of Indian labour were the West Indian colonies, Fiji, South Africa, Mauritius, Malaysia and Ceylon. The total number of government-sponsored emigrants in each case was as follows: Guyana 240,000; Trinidad 144,000; Surinam 324,000; Mauritius 451,000; Fiji 68,000; South Africa 142,000 (Jain, 1982; Nath, 1970; Tinker, 1977).

In the first phase beginning in 1834 the majority of emigrants were recruited in the 'hill coolie' districts of Chota Nagpur division and Bankura, Birbhum and Burdwan districts of the Bengal Presidency. Soon the recruiting areas were pushed westward into the Hindi-speaking zones of Bihar and Eastern U.P. There remained the leading recruiting areas in Northern India (Tinker, 1974). In South India the Tamil- speaking areas of Trichinopoly, Madurai, Ramnad, Salem and Tanjore and the Telugu-speaking areas of Vizagapatnam and Ganjam were the main recruiting districts. In Bombay Presidency, Ahmadnagar district was the main area of recruitment. Of the three Presidencies, Calcutta stood first in volume of recruitment and embarkation and Madras second.

On the basis of an analysis of Calcutta emigration reports, the ratio of Hindus and Muslims appeared to represent the then all India ratio of the two communities, i.e. 86:14 (Saha, 1970: 34). Among Hindus 16 per cent belonged to higher castes, 32 per cent to agricultural intermediate castes and the rest to lower castes and 'untouchables' (Smith, 1959). Typical of the mode of recruitment of indentured labour, the emigrant population was predominantly male and young.

Following the completion of their indenture period some Indians preferred to settle down in these colonies. Others were compelled or lured to do so as in lieu of their guaranteed return passage to India the colonial authorities provided them with some cultivable land. Once settled as peasant proprietors these Indians soon to evolve into distinctive communities.

Kangani/Maistry Labour Emigration

The kangani system of recruitment was used to supply South Indian labour to Malaysia and Sri Lanka and the maistry system to Burma. The word kangani is the anglicized form of the Tamil word kankani meaning overseer or foreman. Under this system, a kangani (himself an Indian immigrant) used to recruit the coolies in India paying them in advance for expenses (Jain, 1970:199). The maistry system was more or less characterised by a gradation of middlemen- employers (the labour contractor, the head maistry, the charge maistry, the gang maistry) and the innumerable illegal deductions. In contradistinction to indentured labourers, coolies under these systems were legally free. There was no contract and no fixed period of service.

Kangani system began early in the first quarter of the nineteenth century and continued until its final abolition in 1938. Maistry system began some time in the third quarter of the nineteenth century. How many Indians migrated under these systems is not definitely known. In all, probably ten million Indian migrants moved back and forth between India and Burma, Ceylon and Malaysia (Sandhu, 1969). The majority of Indian immigrants were Tamil-speaking Hindus, the remainder being Muslims, Christians, and in the case of Malaysia only Sikhs (Arasaratnam, 1970).

Indian emigration to Southeast Asia consisted of such groups of migrants as traders, shopkeepers, entrepreneurs, salesman, clericals, and professionals. In Malaysia, until 1957, this constituted about one-third of the total immigration. A somewhat similar situation existed in Burma, though in the case of Ceylon non-labour Indian immigration was substantially less. South Indian Chettiar Hindus were the leading Indian commercial and business community in Burma and Malaysia (Chakravarti, 1971).

'Passage' Emigration

The third form of Indian migration within the British Empire was 'passage' or 'free' emigration or the emigration of trading castes and classes. Passage emigration was predominant to South Africa as well as to the East African countries of Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda, where Gujaratis and Panjabis immigrated largely during and after the Second World War (Bharati, 1972; Kuper, 1960; Morris, 1968). Indian immigration in East Africa followed the 'opening up' of East Africa by the British and other European powers. The completion of the Ugandan railway offered new economic opportunities in the hinterland as well as along the railway route. Indians, mainly Gujaratis, soon established themselves as *dukanwalas* (shopkeepers). In the towns they monopolized trade and commercial activities. Indians were merchants in native produce, carters and teamsters, small contractors, moneylenders, quarry-masters, dealers in lime, sand, stone and domestic firewood, barbers, saddlers, bootmakers, nurserymen, tailors, etc. (Ghai, 1965). Some of these businessmen were highly successful and quite a few of them rose to prominence.

No reliable data are available regarding the total volume of Indian migration to East Africa. However, different census reports throw some light on the growth of Indian communities in East Africa. Accordingly, there were 40,000 Indians in 1901 and 92,000 in 1931. During the war their number increased considerably and by 1963 there were about 372,000 Indians in the East African countries.

Since the mid-sixties, however, negligible volumes of immigration and growing political uncertainties in East Africa have caused the number of Asian minorities to decline. In 1969 censuses of East African nations, there were less than 300,000 Asians left – 139,000 in Kenya, 74,000 in Uganda and 84,000 in Tanzania. Expulsion of about 70,000 Asians from Uganda in 1972 was a further setback in this regard (Ramchandani, 1976).

Today there are about 105,000 Indians in Kenya, 90,000 in Tanzania and 15,000 in Uganda. A large number of Indians from East Africa had migrated to Britain, Canada and the U.S.A., aptly described as 'twice migrants', and many of them are now well settled in these countries. The remaining Indians in East Africa continue to thrive in business and professions.

"Brain Drain"

The large-scale Indian migration to the advanced industrial societies of Europe and North America began in the late sixties, though the history of Indian emigration goes back to the early years of the twentieth century in North America and nineteenth century in Britain. The characteristic features of this type of migration have been its totally voluntary nature, and the migration of highly educated professionals and skilled or semi-skilled industrial workers.

Box 4.2: Brian Drain

A brain drain or human capital flight is an emigration of trained and talented individuals, due to conflict, lack of opportunity and/or health hazards where they are living. Investment in higher education is lost when the trained individual leaves, usually not to return. Also whatever social capital the individual has been a part of is reduced by their departure. Spokesmen for the Royal Society of London first coined the expression "brain drain" to describe the outflow of scientists and technologists to the United States and Canada in the early 1950s.

(**Source:** http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Brain_drain)

Early Indian migrants who went to settle down in Britain and North America were mainly the Sikhs. The Sikhs still constitute the single largest ethnic group in Britain, Canada and the US, although now more and more non-Sikhs are also migrating. Currently, there are about six million people of Indian origin in Europe, North America and Oceania. In the US the majority of Indians are educated professionals—scientists, engineers, doctors, etc. In Britain and Canada Indian communities are occupationally more diversified and therefore relatively less well off.

Table 4.4
Population Estimates of Indians Abroad, 2005
Major PIO Communities

Country	No. of Indians	Country	No. of Indians
Australia	250,000	Netherlands	250,000
Canada	1.0 million	New Zealand	150,000
Fiji	350,000	Portugal	100,000
France	100,000	Reunion Island	250,000
Hong Kong	50,000	Singapore	310,000
Germany	80,000	South Africa	1.1 million
Guyana	400,000	Spain	100,000
Indonesia	75,000	Sri Lanka	3.5 million
Israel	60,000	Surinam	150,000
Jamaica	62,000	Tanzania	90,000
Kenya	105,000	Thailand	100,000
Malaysia	2.0 million	Trinidad & Tobago	500,000
Mauritius	850,000	UK	2.0 million
Myanmar	2.9 million	USA	2.0 million
Nepal	6.0 million	Yemen	110,000
Major NRI Communities			
Bahrain	170,000	Qatar	160,000
Kuwait	400,000	Saudi Arabia	1.5 million
Oman	450,000	UAE	1.0 million

Source: These are the author's own estimates based on a number of sources including the *High Level Committee Report on the Indian Diaspora* of the Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India, 2001.

Indian communities in all these countries have begun to exert political influence in varying degrees. In the UK, four members of the House of Commons and about a dozen members of the House of Lords are of Indian origin. In Canada, Ujjal Sing Dosanjh rose to become the Premier of British Columbia for a couple of years. Similarly in the U.S. Indians are not only the richest ethnic group, but some of them have also been appointed on several high level administrative posts.

Reflection and Action 4.2

1. Why do you think some of the Indian professional seems to do so well when they go abroad to countries like the U.S.A., the U.K., Canada and Australia?
2. In what way is emigration of highly skilled professionals from India a "brain drain"?

Labour Emigration to West Asia

The fifth and the final emigration pattern consists of the Indian migration to West Asia. This migration pattern differs from the previous ones in that all the migrants are generally 'contract' workers and are not allowed to settle permanently in the countries of their destination. But this was not always the case, as will be clear from the following.

Table 4.5: **Indians in U.S.A.**

Basic Facts		
Total number of Indian Americans		1.9 million
U.S. citizenship		1.07 million
Urban residence		96.7%
Born in the U.S.		27.07%
Medium Household income		$61,322
Medium Household income of U.S. population		$41,994
Top ten cities with Indian-Americans:		
City	**Population**	**Indo-American Population**
New York	21,199,865	453,896
San Francisco	7,039,362	158,396
Chicago	9,157,540	125,208
Los Angeles	16,373,645	121,745
Washington	7,608,070	98,179
Houston	4,669,571	57,158
Philadelphia	6,188,463	57,124
Dallas	5,221,801	53,975
Detroit	5,456,428	49,879
Boston	5,819,100	48,188

(**Source:** 2000 U.S. Census)

India has had trade and cultural relations with the Persian Gulf region since antiquity. However, there is evidence of Indian settlements in the region only since the sixteenth century. Small communities of Indian traders called *baniyans* (a distorted form of the term *Baniyas*) existed in present- day Iraq, Iran, Oman, Yemen and Saudi Arabia in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. When the region came under British influence in the nineteenth century, Indian merchant communities flourished in a number of towns in the Gulf countries. Indians served as bankers, importers and exporters, customs farmers, agents for local merchants, government contractors, pearl-financiers, etc.

Some of the members of traditional Indian trading communities like the Parsis, Gujarati Hindus and Jains, Thattai Sindhi Bhatias, Kutchi Bhatias, Bohra Muslims, Khojas, etc, were involved in these activities and have been continuing to operate even after the independence of the Gulf countries. At the same time, the emergence of the Gulf countries as oil-producing and exporting economies and the consequent demand for labour have further changed the size and complexion of the Indian and other expatriate communities in the region. With the increase in oil prices in the mid-seventies, Indians began to migrate in large numbers to the Gulf countries for a variety of jobs, and the upward trend has continued since then.

The labour market in West Asia being highly transitory, the skill composition as well as the volume of the Indian migrant workforce varies from time to time. Thus, in the early 1970s there were only about 50,000 Indians in the region. Since then, as a result of the booming oil economy and the shortage of indigenous skilled and unskilled manpower, there has been a phenomenal increase in the total volume of Indian migration. Whereas in 1975 there were about 150,000 Indian 'workers' in West Asia, their number increased to over a million in 1985 and about 1.5 million in 1991.

Currently there are about 4.0 million Indian expatriate in the six Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries. Indians constitute about one-third of the total expatriate population and 10 per cent of the total GCC population. The largest number of Indians live in Saudi Arabia (1.5 million), followed by the UAE (1 million), Oman (450,000) and Kuwait (350,000). Keralites constitute the largest group among Indian immigrants in West Asia. The skill composition of the migrants' workforce is dominated by unskilled and semi-skilled workers, followed by administrative staff and skilled workers. There are about 100,000 Indians in Yemen who are permanently settled there. Following the creation of Israel in 1948, over 25,000 Indian Jews had migrated to Israel until 1987. Well settled in their new homeland, Jews of Indian origin today number around 60,000. Currently, the Gulf migrants are the major source of remittances and foreign exchange to India.

4.5 Conclusion

In sum, this brief survey of overseas Indian migration highlights the socio-economic conditions of colonial India in fostering substantial pressures for Indian emigration abroad. Under British colonialism, Indian agriculture continued to stagnate, the handicrafts industry declined, and an already poor country was subjected to excessive economic drain which retarded indigenous capital formation and thereby the growth of any significant industrialization. Against this backdrop a combination of factors like poverty, famines in the second half of the nineteenth century, unemployment and ignorance of the agrarian masses, and trickery on the part of the recruiting agents played its part in stimulating Indian emigration abroad.

It hardly needs to be emphasized that Indian labour and non-labour immigration vitally fulfilled the economic needs of British colonialism. Indian immigrants, however, were welcome only in subservient economic roles – roles which the natives as well as the white colonists could not perform. Whenever Indians tried to compete with whites, as within trading activities or government services, attempts were made to block their progress. It was for this reason that labour immigration was encouraged, while passage immigration was usually resented.

If the socio-economic conditions resulting from British colonialism in India was a factor behind the Indian exodus abroad, this did not change much after India's independence. Western neo-colonialism continued and attempts to build India as a "mirror image" of the West resulted only in the growing economic inequalities on the one hand and the "revolution of rising expectations" on the other. Lopsided development of education which produced surplus skilled manpower (especially engineers, doctors, scientists and managers) against the background of unfulfilled "expectations" led to the "brain drain" type of emigration. At the same time, the West Asian booming oil economy since the mid-1970s encouraged labour emigration of unskilled and semi-skilled workers who were unable to find gainful employment in the stagnating Indian economy.

Thanks to the colonial legacy of Indian emigration, the Indian Diaspora today is spread virtually all over the globe. The distribution of the major overseas Indian communities (along with their current population estimates) is presented in Table 4.2.These Indian diasporic communities are often classified into two categories on the basis of the fact weather the hold Indian passports or not. Those who do are called Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) and those who do not are called People of Indian Origin (PIOs). In all, the total population of Indian Diaspora is presently estimated at about 30.0 million.

Like other diasporas, Indian diasporic communities too maintain ties with their motherland through visits, pilgrimage, marriage, remittances, trade networks, transfer of technology and skill, and political lobbying, etc. In 2005 remittances from the Indian diaspora amounted to over 21 billion US dollars. About 45% of these remittances came from the Indians working in the Persian Gulf countries.

4.7 Further Reading

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Unit 5

Indian Emigration During Colonial Rule

Contents

Learning Objectives

After reading this unit you should be able to:

- understand the historical context of emigration from India;
- place indentured labour in the context of the colonial interest of the British Empire;
- analyse the indentured system of labour; and
- get an overview of emigration of Indian labour during colonial times.

5.1 Introduction

In the previous unit we talked about migration patterns in general, where we gave you a brief background to the context of migration during colonial times. In this unit we will discuss migration during the colonial period in detail.

As mentioned earlier, the migration of Indians during ancient times was sporadic and did not result in Indian settlements abroad, but during the British colonial period there was migration on a large scale, which resulted in Indian diasporic communities wherever the British had their colonies. In this unit, we will discuss the specific historical context of this migration. We will be talking about the indentured labour system, and how this system evolved out of the specific needs of the industrial agricultural pattern during colonial expansionist times. We will also be talking about exploitative nature of this system as well as its social consequences. In trying to understand the nature of migration we will be examining the socio-economic conditions of people who were forced to migrate out of necessity.

5.2 Historical Context of Indian Emigration

In order to understand the characteristic feature of the emigration of Indians during colonial rule, it is essential to know the context in which it was engineered. It may be stated at the outset that this emigration was on a large scale and very different from the earlier ones. At the time the British and other Europeans entered India as traders, India was politically fragmented,

its economy was in a shambles, its science and technology were stagnating and the social and cultural life of its people indicated decay and inward looking. However, it could easily claim a glorious existence in the not too was distant a past. It could boast of excellence in a variety of fields such as agriculture, engineering, architecture, philosophy, literature, dance, drama, music etc. Its people in the past had traveled to south-east Asia, Central Asia, Sri Lanka, China and Japan as scholars, priests, teachers carrying the message of the Buddha of peace and understanding, and to raise the spiritual consciousness of the people. Indians had also gone abroad to countries like Burma, Indonesia, Malaya, Singapore and to many countries in East Africa as traders. In ancient times, the Indians had trade links with the people in the African continent. These trade links were spread from Gujarat in the north to Kanyakumari in the south. But the scenario was quite different in India when the British and other Europeans entered the Indian sub-continent.

There were a number of reasons for this decay. It is not possible to go into them here. Suffice it to say that economic stagnation and political instability were the main factors, which were further accentuated by the entry of European interests in India. There was intense competition among the Europeans to locate resources in different parts of the world to enlarge the scope and production of their home industries. The industrial revolution had set in. During this period, they not only discovered new areas of resources in different parts of the world but also began to colonise them. The intense tussle for power among the European nations in India encouraged local aspirants to seek the support of one or the other European power. In the process they not only weakened themselves but there was virtual chaos. Agricultural production suffered badly resulting in immense problems to the peasants, artisans, small traders as well as merchants. Eventually with deceit and some tactful power game, the British East India Company gained ascendancy and began to control the various parts of the country.

They began to export raw material from India like cotton, spices, indigo to strengthen industries in England. This accelerated growth of the British economy and technology but inflicted untold miseries and hardship on the people of India, particularly peasants. Village industries such as spinning of cotton, weaving of clothes and various village crafts suffered immensely. The economic situation in the countryside being bad became still worse because of the export of foodgrains, mainly rice and wheat, to England. The export of foodgrains to England rose sharply from £ 3.8 million in 1858 and to £ 9.3 million worth in 1901. One of the central factors which significantly stunted the growth of rural economies was the change of the traditional landlord-tenant relationship. This was directly brought about by the so-called permanent land settlement in the Bengal region. By this the British turned the landlords into persons responsible for extracting rent from peasants in their jurisdiction. They fixed amounts of cash as rent regardless of the land's production in the year. This requirement put enormous pressure on peasants. An increasing number of people could not pay rent and therefore had to be evicted. Already in 1973 'notices of eviction were being issued at the rate of 60,000 annually'.

In order to keep the growing cash-and-rent economy alive, lands belonging to families for generations had to be sub-divided and sub-let. This obviously further reduced the economic viability of the plots.

Added to this, if there was a drought or excessive rains agricultural production

suffered and often food supply would become critical. This resulted in famines. There were major famines in 1804, 1837, 1861 and 1908 apart from many minor ones in north India. There were approximately 400,000 famine deaths during 1825-1850, it was five million in 1850-1875 which rose to fifteen million during the following 25 years. Broadly, during the first phase of the British control over India, there was large-scale poverty, unemployment and displacement of the peasantry from their roots prompting them to emigrate. Besides, the oppressive regime of the colonial government particularly after the first war of independence (1857), invoking new legislations which took away the rights of people to land and forests and bringing a new set of rules for administration were equally responsible for increasing the agony of the people.

No doubt, Indians had migrated in the past and they did during the colonial rule too but with the fond hope that will return to their 'home'. Home was where their ancestors, the extended members of the family lived, which were also associated with numerous celebrations of festivals and life-cycle rituals.

Reflection and Action 5.1

What were the specific circumstances, which forced the poor peasantry to migrate as indentured labour?

5.3 Abolition of Slavery

While the 'home' context was trying to push the Indian peasantry to emigrate, there were many factors pulling them to migrate to the tropical colonies of the European powers. This was induced by the imperialist economy, and within that, substantially by a single commodity that is sugar. By the nineteenth century, imperialist governments vied with each other for control over territories which could produce sugar so that the maximum benefit could be derived in European market. In Europe the demand for sugar was rising. For instance, in 1820 in Britain the per capita sugar consumption was 16.8 pounds per annum. It became 34.8 pounds in 1860 and by 1880 it was 61.8 pounds. In order to promote sugar production in their colonies the British government gave several incentives to their planters so that they could compete with the sugar producing colonies of other European countries. For these reasons, cane production has been called 'industrial agriculture'. The indigenous population in these colonies was either too thin and dispersed or traumatized or they were not found fit to serve the interests of 'industrial agriculture'. For this the labour force was imported from the old world, particularly Africa and the institution of slavery was developed with all its cruel and extremely harsh features. In the beginning tropical products were luxury products consumed by the affluent in Europe. Then as the Industrial Revolution advanced in England and Western Europe, and purchasing capacities of the people increased, tropical items such as sugar, tea, coffee, cocoa became items of mass consumption generating enormous revenue which promoted increase in production. As production expanded, in a labour intensive operation it became necessary to find the necessary workforce. The demand for labour exceeded far beyond what slaves could provide. Moreover, on account of the conditions of work, the harshness of those who supervised the work, lack of proper nutrition and living facilities, mortality among the slaves was very high.

5.4 Politics of Humanitarian Consideration

The condition of the slaves pricked the conscience of some people in Europe and they began to demand the abolition of the system of slavery. The issue was sensitive and nobody could openly defend the system of slavery. For the government in power in England, continuation of slavery was a matter of embarrassment but the harsh reality was that tropical colonies were generating much wealth for the nation through slave labour as well as access to many searce resources. It was not only in the interest of planters that slavery should continue but it was also in the interest of the nation. Thus, in spite of vested interest in the continuation of the slavery, the government had to ban the inhuman practice the slave trade in 1802, though slavery was allowed to continue. In other words, open trade that is, sale and purchase of human beings, were banned. Yet, the sinister aspects associated with it continued till 1834 when the system of slavery was abolished by the British government, later by the French in 1848 and the Dutch in 1863. It is obvious that in spite of the pressure exerted by the abolition of slavery, the governments in power were dragging their feet. They were dragging their feet because they were concerned about production through 'industrial agriculture'. Even at that stage a compromise formula was devised to protect the interests of the planters. According to this formula after the legal termination of slavery in 1834, the planters were to continue to command full rights on the labour of ex-slaves for twelve years, in the form of apprenticeship. The anti-slavery lobby felt this arrangement would prolong the reality of slavery. As a result of this pressure, the period of apprenticeship was reduced to seven years and finally all forms of apprenticeship were terminated in 1838. Thus, it took approximately 32 years for the British government to abolish slavery after abolishing the slave trade. Even after abolishing slavery, the condition of the ex-slaves had not significantly changed. They had hardly any alternative but to go back to their ex-masters for work for their survival. They did not even have a place for shelter in the islands unless they worked for their old masters. Today it may sound very strange but the fact was that it was not the slaves but the slave owners who were paid compensation for freeing their slaves. The slaves were left to fend for themselves or go back to their masters and work for them. Whatever be the humanitarian considerations the emancipators may have had, they were also a part of the system which directly derived benefits from the system of slavery. Their agitation, however, showed the softer underbelly of the socio-political system of the day.

Liberation of the slaves accentuated the demand for cheap labour in the colonies. The question was how to get cheap labour. The ex-slaves were not interested to work on the plantations. They had begun to demand higher wages and also better facilities. Encouraging labour to come from other countries like America, Europe, China and a few others did not work well for a variety of reasons such as high cost of recruitment, transport and inability of the workforce to thrive in a tropical climate. Meanwhile the British had consolidated their hold on India. As indicated earlier, the traditional Indian economy was in a shambles. Plenty of workers were available and locally enough work was not available, and there was large-scale poverty.

5.5 Evolution of Indenture Labour Scheme

The abolition of slavery resulted in a great demand for cheap labour from elsewhere. Already more than 25,000 Indians had been supplied to Mauritius

by a private firm in Kolkata. A planter from the West Indies came to know about this and established contact with that firm in Kolkata. The reply of that firm is interesting 'we are not aware that any greater difficulty would present itself in sending men to the West Indies (than to Mauritius), the natives being perfectly ignorant of the place they go to or the length of the voyage they are undertaking'. The letter continues 'The Dhangars are always spoken of as more akin to the monkey than to the man. They have no religion, no education, and in their present state, no wants beyond eating, drinking and sleeping; and to procure which they are willing to labour. Thus, in spite of the slow communication system of that period, arrangements to supply labourers to the planters were made soon. The planters further instructed the Kolkata firm that if the hill-women were prepared to undertake field-work, they might form forty or fifty per cent of the total, but if not, then one female to nine or ten males for cooking and washing is enough'.

The above statements clearly indicate that while the planters were desperate to get cheap labour, the private firms were not less eager to oblige. By sending the human cargo they were easily able to make profits. They had least regard for the human values and wanted to make full use of the ignorance of the poor people of the country.

Box 5.1: The Plight of Indentured Labour

While it is entirely reasonable to expect that a small fraction of the indentured emigrants left 'voluntarily', however one is to construe so absurd a notion considering the extraordinary economic hardships afflicting the vast majority of Indians, and with no other thought than that of escaping the wretchedness of their lives, most others left under duress, as victims of a system of deception and subterfuge. Agents who promised them relief from the misery of their lives and substantial pecuniary gain lured peasants to the city; and indubitably many were kidnapped or otherwise tricked. These "girmityas" (a corruption of the word 'agreement') were initially bound to serve five years, it being understood that the planters would pay for their passage, and at the end of this term the indentured laborers were to receive their freedom. If they wished to do so, they could return to India at the expense of their employer, or they could settle in their new homeland, and gain the rights accorded to free men, or at least such rights as colored people could expect. The Europeans almost never adhered to these agreements. From Calcutta and Madras Indian men, and a much smaller number of women, especially in the first few decades of indentured migration, were herded into "coolie" ships, confined to the lower deck, the women subject to the lustful advances of the European crew. Sometimes condemned to eat, sleep, and sit amidst their own waste, the indentureds were just as often without anything but the most elementary form of medical care. Many did not survive the long and brutal "middle passage"; the bodies of the dead were, quite unceremoniously, thrown overboard.

(**Source:** http://www.sscnet.ucla.edu/southasia/Diaspora/freed.html)

In the beginning the labourers recruited were from the tribal belt of Chota Nagpur. It may be worthwhile to ask as to why in the beginning, the tribals from Chotanagpur were sent. Tinker's estimate is that during he 1840s and 1850s, Dhangars formed a sizeable proportion of those taken overseas under indenture; roughly 'two fifths to one-half of the emigrants were Dhangars'.

5.6 Sources of Cheap Labour

The Chotanagpur region had a number of communities like Munda, Oraon and Santhal. By no stretch of imagination they could be called wild. They had a rich culture of their own and within the larger Indian society they had full autonomy. Hitherto, they had not experienced any penetration of the outside administration. But these populations were held in low esteem by the colonists and their cohorts. In order to quickly move men and material the British were laying down rails and roads, in the process exposing the tribes who hitherto had enjoyed relative peace in their areas of habitation. Not only that they were being progressively driven out of their unquestioned claims over the forest, its produce and land. The colonists began to subdue them and bring them under overall colonial administration. Obviously, the tribes of that region began to resent new forest laws and the new system of administration. There was also penetration of missionary activities in the area which was also being opposed. In the meanwhile pressure for dispatching labour was increasing. It may be surmised that if the labour was sent from the backwaters of Bihar it may not come to general notice and in the process some troublemakers among the tribes could also be dispatched.

However, from the 1850s the proportion of tribes began to dwindle and by the end of the 19th century they were not systematically recruited for the sugar colonies. The reasons may be briefly summarized as below:

1. Mortality rate among them was high, both when they were transported and while in the tropical colonies. In British Guiana almost one fourth of their population perished in the course of five years. The mortality of indentured labourers was a big loss to the planters.
2. The tribals were used to autonomy and freedom. They loved music and dance. In their homeland they worked to enhance the joys of life and were not used to drudgery.
3. Demand for their labour also started coming from eastern India where tea had begun to be cultivated from 1860 onwards. They preferred to go there rather than to far off colonies.
4. The scheme of indenture was becoming successful and therefore the authorities began to throw their net wide for recruitment. They moved into the Indo-Gangetic belt where the peasants with rich experience in agriculture resided.
5. The peasants from these areas transformed the economy of the colonies in later years.

As the first dispatch of labourers to the West Indies proved successful, there was more demand for labour from other planters in the West Indies. Soon the colonial authorities took note of the operations and in 1838 a general scheme of immigration was passed by the then administration.

5.7 Streamlining and Abuse of the System

As the new system of immigration began to operate, the wider public came to know the actual circumstances of the labourers. Agitation against the emigration of labourers got started both in Britain as well as in India. The 1830s was a period of intensive social and political stock-taking in India. A range of issues were being debated in which kidnapping of labourers for taking them to Mauritius was also focused. There were reports that the labourers taken to Mauritius and also to the West Indies were ill treated.

Mortality of labourers during their stay in the depot at Kolkata and in the subsequent voyage was high owing to epidemics and ill-treatment. It was never below 4% during transshipment. Even after enquiry and setting up of a bureaucratic machinery, mortality was high. In 1852 of 313 persons sent 20 died on the way. In 1858 in a ship called Salsette 120 passengers died out of 324. There was no security for labourers. As a result of agitation, a full enquiry into the sending of labourers from India to various colonies was instituted in 1838. In the meanwhile emigration of all labourers to the colonies was suspended. The enquiry was conducted from August 1838 to 1839. The full report of the enquiry was published in March 1839. The enquiry indicated how badly the recruiters, their agents, the people who were in charge of the depots and also the authorities treated the labourers. At every level labourers were exploited and also beaten. At one stage the members of the enquiry committee took the matter before a magistrate. The magistrate advised the committee not to take the matter any further. He observed 'they (labourers) were unworthy of sympathy. They have got their liberty and that is all they are entitled to'.

Box 5.2: The Destinations of Indian Labour Emigration

Indian labor emigration under the indenture system first started in 1834 to Mauritius, Uganda and Nigeria. Later the laborers emigrated to Guyana (1838), New Zealand (1840), Hong Kong (1841), Trinidad and Tobago (1845), Malayd (1845),Martinique and Guadeloupe (1854). Grenada, St.Lucia and St.Vincent (1856), Natal (1860), St. Kitts(1861), Japan and Surinam (1872), Jamaica (1873), Fiji (1879), Burma (1885), Canada (1904) and Thailand (1910). Under the indenture system some 1.5 million persons migrated oversees (Clarke 1990).

Emigration to Sri Lanka, Burma and Malaya presents a marked contrast to migration to the West Indies. All the emigrants to Sri Lanka and Malaya were from the South and headmen known as the 'Kangani' recruited the migrants. The Indians worked on the tea, coffee and rubber plantations. During the period 1852 and 1937 1.5 million Indians went to Ceylon, 2 million to Malaya, and 2.5 million to Burma. After 1920 the Kangani emigration (totaling around 6 million) gradually gave way to individual or unrecruited, free migration due to fall in demand for Indian labor.

Emigration to East Africa, Natal, Mauritius, Burma, Malay and Fiji during the late nineteenth and first half of the twentieth centuries presents a third pattern: the free emigration of traders, skilled artisans, bankers, petty contractors, clerks, professionals and entrepreneurs. Though initially indentured laborers from India were brought to East Africa to build the Mombassa railway, most of the present Indian population of Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania arrived after the railway had been constructed which stimulated opportunities for trade and industry (Bhat, 1998:2-3).

Although emigration of all labourers was prohibited, some smuggling of labourers continued particularly to Mauritius, Ceylon, etc. In the meantime colonial authorities were busy in finding a way so that they were able to recruit labourers for the various colonies and at the same time they were not accused of promoting slavery through the backdoor. Thus a scheme of contract labourers that was popularly called the indentured labour scheme began to take shape. In 1842 the colonial authorities permitted emigration of labourers to Mauritius from Kolkata, Chennai and Mumbai, under certain

conditions such as that the labourers would be under contract for five years. At the end of the five years they would be entitled for free return passage. The first shipload of labourers under this scheme was allowed to proceed in January 1943.

The colonial authorities found the scheme justifiable. In the meanwhile, the planters had tried other sources for cheap labour which were not found successful. All eyes were now fixed on India. By this time, politically the Indian sub-continent had come in the full grip of the colonial authorities. In 1844 the Indian government passed the Act which legalized emigration to Jamaica, Trinidad and other parts of the West Indies.

The various provisions of this act were revised from time to time. The essential feature of the indentured labour scheme was that it was contractual. The assumption was that the labourer of his free will had entered into a contract with his employer for a certain period of time. After the fulfillment of his contract, the labourer was entitled for free passage back home. During the period the labourer had to fulfill his obligation of work but at the same time was entitled for free lodging, wages, medical attention, etc. This contract was signed before a magistrate.

In the eyes of the law it was a contract between two parties, of which one was a poor labourer and the other was his employer in a colony. This whole process was mediated by the colonial authorities. In other words the contract was between two totally unequal partners. Therefore, it is not at all surprising that the contract was just a smokescreen to provide cheap labour from India to the planters spread out in different parts of the colonial world. The colonial power in India was helping the planters to get cheap labour. This scheme proved to be a boon for the planters. Sugar production began to increase significantly. The flow of labourers from India was now assured for a long time, for India had become a colony of the British Empire.

There is no doubt that the scheme of sending labour abroad to work on plantations was started with some hesitation but in course of time a bureaucratic machinery was set up to send labourers to the colonies. According to Tinker, 525,482 Indians emigrated under indenture to French and British sugar plantations. In spite of the fact that there were so many officials looking after the emigration of labour there was much abuse in the system.

First the licensed recruiter had many unlicensed recruiters called *arktias*. These were basically unscrupulous persons. Because of their unethical practices they dared not go to the villages. They trapped their preys at fairs, pilgrim centers, towns and other places of congregation. They were in look out for the people who for some reason had wandered away from their homes. The *arkatia* gave them some sweet talk, some food and allowed some indulgence. Soon they were transferred to the licensed recruiter and the *arkatias* earned their commission. From here on the *arkatias* themselves would not know what had happened to their prey. The licensed recruiter transferred them to a depot where they were briefed, medically examined and their travel papers were made ready. They were kept there till the ship by which they were to travel arrived.

The majority of the emigrants were simple, poor village folk, totally ignorant where they were going, what work they were going to do and who would be their employer. Most of these people were recruited by deception. The

various committees appointed by the government of India found that invariably the recruiters made 'fraudulent statements' to the recruits.

Reflection and Action 5.2

Do you think the indentured labour system was short of slavery? Explain?

5.8 Deconstruction and Reconstruction of Identity

Anybody conversant with the Indian social situation will know that irrespective of caste hierarchy and economic situation, the Indians are very much rooted to their home and environment. There is a network of relationships in which rights, duties and obligations of every individual are built in. These rights and obligations are re-emphasized and renewed during life-cycle rituals and innumerable festivals observed by the Indians generation after generation. As a member of a tribe, caste and village each person has a social position and role to play. The system of caste is highly decentralized. It has a built-in autonomy within a larger system which in fact is one of the main reasons for the system to have survived for such a long time. For a person from a village it is hard to imagine existence outside the caste, tribe or community. In brief a person's culture, economic and religious universe are well defined. Therefore, it is not easy for the Indians to emigrate. If at all, they may like to go for a short period leaving their family in the home village.

Thus when the labourers were taken away from their villages and put at the depot they were already devastated persons. But once they got into the ship there was a severe blow to them as a social being – they lost their castes or membership to a community and along with that all the associated little traditions. Their experience of the long voyage of the sea, if at all they survived, made them very hardened persons. Imagine an innocent villager who had hardly stepped out of his village remaining on ship for two to three months often facing rough seas and also very harsh treatment from the ship crew. In every voyage there was some mortality but often it could become high. Seeing a compatriot die in distress and, without performing any rites his mortal remains simply tossed out of the ship would have made a serious dent on the psyche of survivors. Those who survived became *Jehazi bhai* (ship brothers) for the rest of their lives.

In spite of so much hardship, on landing the Indians transformed the plantation economy. Production began to increase. The planters therefore were eager to retain the indentured labour beyond the period of contract. In 1851 in Trinidad they offered £10 to those who would stay back in the colony and forfeit their free return passage. Later in 1861 they offered a land grant of 10 acres if they decided to stay back and continue to work in the plantation. Once again they revised it to 5 acres of land plus £ 5 for the labourers and if he stayed along with his wife another £ 5 was given to them. In other words the planters had found the Indian workers very useful for their plantation and therefore were willing to give them incentives. They also helped them to buy land at cheap rates as long as they were willing to work in the plantation as free labourers.

The Indians knew the value of land. They had rich experience of agriculture. The system of land ownership in India had become highly distorted during the colonial rule. So once the land ownership was offered to the emigrant

Indians they seized the opportunity. They began to settle around the areas where they were given land and also continued to work in the plantation. Those places became the nuclei of Indian villages. They began to grow paddy, vegetables and several other products. Thus not only did they transform the economy wherever they lived in the Caribbean but also a community of the Indians was formed. In course of time they became vibrant and established their own identity.

5.9 Conclusion

We have have briefly touched the many aspects of migration during colonial times. The specific historical conditions which led to the impoverishment of the pesantry is something that we are sure you have read as a history student but probably did not realize that there was massive migration of impoverished peasantry and artisans around that time to British colonies and plantations. These are some of the oldest Indian diasporic communities who survived and formed communities and though maintaining their distinctiveness have become part of the culture and landscapes they have migrated to. We will be reading more about such issues as identity, community consciousness, as we proceed along our course towards Book II. As we mentioned in Unit 4 and as well as this unit, the migration during colonial period was essentially of two types—the indentured labour system and the kangani/maistry system. Though subsequently we also find that there were passage émigrés who were essentially business communities who went to mostly East Africa to set up small businesses.

5.10 Further Reading

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Unit 6

Post-Independence Patterns of Migration

Contents

Learning Objectives

This unit will enable you to understand:

- the patterns of overseas migration which emerged in post-independence India;
- the diversity in the migration flows in the contemporary era; and
- the processes and patterns of socio-cultural adaptation of the overseas migrants.

6.1 Introduction

Migration is an integral and regular part of livelihood strategies and production systems. People of the Indian sub-continent have migrated to different countries for various reasons at various periods of its history. Among the immigrants of diverse nationalities, overseas Indians constitute a sizeable segment. Given their significant presence, unique socio-cultural histories and being subject to different economic and political milieu in the host countries, Indian communities abroad have evolved as distinct diasporic communities and have been under academic focus.

Though International migration has existed since the dawn of time, the driving force behind this was the search for sources of food and arable land. As civilization grew this became a search for better economic, social, political, and other factors of prosperity. Throughout history the socio-economic and political epicenters of power and prosperity have shifted from one region to another—from Asia to Africa to Europe and America.

Clearly, two main phases of emigration can be discerned: 'Overseas emigration in the 19th century' and '20th century migration to industrially developed countries' (see R. K. Jain, 1993). It is important to recognize the distinctive nature of the causes, courses and consequences of these two phases of migration, termed as the colonial and post-colonial phases of the Indian diaspora. You have already read about Indian emigration in the colonial phase in the previous unit.

The contemporary period of overseas migration began early this century, but accelerated especially after the Second World War. Despite a dearth of information and academic scholarship on Indian communities migrating to industrially developed countries like Britain, the U.S.A. and Canada, the significance of this form of migration has gained over that of the 19th century immigrants on account of their socio-economic implications.

6.2 Overseas Migration: Trends and Patterns

During the past few decades international migration has taken new strides. What we see now is a trend of global migration where movement of human resources is induced by international demand along with specific regional demand. As national boundaries dissipate and the world economy becomes more integrated by forces of globalization, labor from all skill levels moves to meet demand with relative ease. Unlike migration in colonial times the main types of migration in the contemporary period have been more sequential. We will examine some of the patterns of migration in the following sections.

6.3 Migration in Post-Independence Period

A new and significant phase of emigration began after India became independent in 1947. Broadly, three patterns can be identified in the post-independence emigration: (1) The emigration of Anglo-Indians to Australia and England. (2) The emigration of professionals to the industrially advanced countries like the United States of America, England and Canada. (3) The emigration of skilled and unskilled laborers to West Asia.

The emigration of the Anglo-Indians is one of the least studied facets of the Indian diaspora. Feeling marginalized in the aftermath of India's independence, many of these descendants of intermarriage between Indians and the English left India for England in the first instance. Finding that they were not racially and ethnically acceptable to the English, several of them emigrated to Australia, which has become a second "homeland" to a significant section of Anglo-Indians.

The large-scale and steady emigration of doctors, engineers, scientists and teachers to the industrially advanced countries of the West is essentially a post-independence phenomenon, and particularly so of the late 1960s and the 1970s. It somewhat declined with the adoption of stringent immigration regulation by the recipient countries. This pattern of emigration, often described as "brain drain," is essentially voluntary and mostly individual in nature. With the second and subsequent generations having emerged, and the emigrant population enjoying economic prosperity and socio-cultural rights, this stream of emigration has resulted in vibrant Indian communities abroad.

To be contrasted with the above is the emigration of skilled and unskilled labourers to West Asia in the wake of the "oil boom" there (Gracias 2000, and Nair 1991 and 1994). This emigration is voluntary in nature, but its trends and conditions are determined by labour market vagaries. It is a predominantly male migration, characterized by uninterrupted ties with the families and communities back in India.

Let us look at the immigration patterns of Indians to Britain, the U.S.A. and Canada since independence to understand the contemporary trends and patterns of migration.

Britain

A major influx of Indians to Britain did not take place until the 1950s and early 1960s when an expanding economy called for more labour in Britain. During this period, individual male 'pioneers' came and found work, lived together in shared houses, gradually brought over their family members and eventually re-established their families and accumulated material assets in the new context. Chain migration was the key feature of transplantation of Indian communities to Britain during this period. A comparatively new kind of overseas Indian community arose, that of 'twice migrant' towards the end of the 1960s and the early 1970s. The bulk of these twice migrants were Indians who had lived for decades or generations in East Africa but who were induced or forced to leave in large numbers due to radical Africanisation programmes introduced by the Kenyan and Ugandan governments.

U.S.A.

From 1820 onwards there has been a constant trickle of Indians to the United States. But large scale migration of Indians to the United States of America started only after the repeal of the Immigration and Nationality Act in 1965. Whereas in 1965 only about 600 Asian Indian immigrants to the United States had arrived, close to 10,000 came in 1970.

The reasons for the Asian Indian emigration of the post-1965 era have more to do with the American 'pull' than with the Indian 'push' factor. Indians who migrated to the USA belonged to the class of educated and professional elite such as engineers, scientists and college teachers as well as accountants and businessmen. Their life style and aspirations are similar to the general American population. Whatever distinctive religious and political ideology and values the Asian Indian might otherwise profess as symbols of their ethnic identity, one thing stands out is their full participation in the American materialistic culture. They are driven by the same social and economic imperatives as the white upper- middle class.

The U.S. economy witnessed a massive surge in information and other technology since the 1990's. Local labor forces were not fast enough to catch up with meeting industry needs. The education system also plays an important role in the shaping of the labor force in a country. It is somewhat accepted that U.S. students in general lag behind compared to their Asian counterparts when it comes to mathematical or analytical skills. Asians, or mostly South Asians, are more eager to learn technical skills—hence their proficiencies in those areas. This means highly educated Asian workers possessed educational and technological advantages over local workers and were able to fill the void very quickly. Skilled immigrants face fewer restrictions than the unskilled. Their class resources, corporate sponsorships, and immigration policies to foster growth in certain sectors enable them to move with relative ease. The average annual inflow of Indian immigrants to the U.S.A. increased from 26,184 persons during the 1980s to 38,330 (3.5% of total immigrants) during the 1990s (4.5 per cent of its total immigrants). The numbers are huge mostly due to favorable political and trade conditions between these two countries. With its huge population base and large middle and upper class, India serves as a huge market for U.S. companies like Pepsi, Maytag, Microsoft, and more. These companies effectively employ and transfer Indian employees.

Canada

Indians are the largest component of people of South Asian origin in Canada. They are one of Canada's most rapidly growing ethno-cultural populations. The majority of the Indians in Canada emigrated during the post -1947 period as the Canadian racial immigration barriers were systematically dismantled. Whereas early immigrants had been almost all Sikhs, the people arriving in the 1950s and 1960s came from an increasingly diverse range of ethnic and religious backgrounds. They soon began to establish new communities across the country. The overall Indo-Canadian population increased by more than four times between 1971 and 1981. This led to a rapid rise of Indian communities across the country where none had existed before and to a dramatic increase in the size of the communities that were established earlier. Sikhs remain by far the largest Indian group, numbering around 130,000 or over one half of all Indians in Canada today. Nevertheless many new communities were formed by comparatively new immigrant groups such as Hindi-speaking (25,000) and Punjabi-speaking (6,000) north Indians, Gujaratis (20,000), etc.

As a consequence of the 1969 immigration policy of Canada, the flow of Indian immigrants has been highly selective. About three-fourths of the recent immigrants are educated and highly skilled.

Table 6.1
Shows a comparative table based on higher-skilled occupation

	All Immigrants	Indian	% of Total
Professional and Technical	67286	6202	17.8
Executive, Administrative, and Managerial	26931	1786	5.1
Sales	13024	386	1.1
Administrative Support	21590	747	2.1
Precision Production,	24518	192	0.5
Craft, and Repair Service	50646	846	2.4

(**Source:** Alarco´n)

It is estimated that around 15 million Indians live abroad (World Migration Report, 2000). Every year hundreds of thousands of Indians emigrate. In 1997 alone 416 thousand Indians left the country to join those working abroad (Government of India, 1999). Indian professionals and technical workers migrate in large numbers, more or less permanently, for jobs in the USA, Canada, the United Kingdom and Australia. Australia and New Zealand are the new emerging destinations for Indians, with more than 2000 arrivals every year for permanent settlement in each of these countries (World Migration Report, 2000).

West Asia

Since migration of Indians to the West Asian countries is basically oriented to labour and servicing occupations on a contract basis, most of the socio-economic researches on this expatriate community have addressed themselves to the issues of recruitment, migration and job opportunities in the labour market. Following the oil boom of the mid-1970s, the Middle East has witnessed a massive injection of South Asian workers. Here, the need for

unskilled South Asian labourers has been eclipsed by the requirement for skilled labour but for both groups spatial segregation has been enjoined.

During the past fifteen years, a new form of migration from south Asian countries has gathered momentum, which differs markedly in its economic and social implications from the 19th and early 20th century movement of indentured labourers. This is a new phase of migration based on fixed temporary contracts, attracting labourers from South Asia to work in oil-rich countries of the Middle East. The economic development of Pakistan, Bangladesh and to a lesser extent India has become increasingly dependent on this type of labour export. Migrant workers remittances of foreign exchange in 1983 paid for 20 per cent of all merchandise imports of India. They amounted to more than 25 per cent of India's all merchandise exports. It is well known that by far the most important demand for expatriate labour today originates in the oil-exporting countries of West Asia which, according to the estimates, currently absorb up to two million Indians, 1.5 million Pakistanis and 200,000 Bangladeshis. The year 1973 witnessed the beginning of the rapidly increasing demand for expatriate labour in oil exporting countries of the Gulf region, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Qatar and Libya. These countries adopted a development strategy which concentrated on the building up of physical infrastructure and therefore created a demand for labour, especially in the construction sector, and largely for unskilled manual workers. At the beginning of the 1970s, there were not too many South Asians among the migrant workers in West Asia. They had migrated individually, most of them from India which has a tradition of sending labour to the Middle East since the Second World War. However at this stage workers were available from Arab countries that fulfilled labour demands of their capital-rich neighbors for several years. It was in the middle of the 1970s that scarcity of labour was felt, as a result of which Indians and Pakistani immigrants began to be brought in large numbers. The advantages of the South Asians in the labour market were that they were cheap, disciplined and hard working.

At the termination of this phase of infrastructural projects and the new emphasis on industrialization in the Middle East, the structure of demand for labour changed and the supply had to adapt accordingly. Between 1975 and 1980, one million skilled workers had to be imported to manage and operate this new infrastructure.

At the end of the 1970s growing social unrest among the South Asian immigrants which resulted in hostility and riots, changed the employment prospects of the South Asian immigrant workers. East Asia became the new source of expatriate labour. In view of the increasing competition from the East Asian countries, South Asian immigrants are increasingly playing the role of 'replacement migrants', i.e., as immigrants who come into the country to fill a vacancy created by the departure of a national for employment abroad. This secondary labour migration has occurred specially in Jordan, Oman and the Yemeni Arab Republic (YAR).

Table 6.2
Migrants Stock in Gulf Countries in West Asia, 2002

Country	Population (in million)	Migrants (in million)	% of migrants to total pop.	Immigration Levels	
				View	Policy
BAHRAIN	0.64	0.25	39.8	Satisfactory	No intervention
KUWAIT	1.91	1.11	57.9	Too high	Lower
OMAN	2.54	0.68	26.9	Too high	Lower
QATAR	0.57	0.41	72.4	Satisfactory	Maintain
SAUDI ARABIA	20.35	5.26	25.8	Too high	Lower
UAE	2.61	1.92	73.8	Too high	Lower

(Source: United Nations, 2002)

Reflection and Action 6.1

What kind of migration trends and patterns have emerged in India after Independence? How is it different from the previous trends of migration?

Table 6.3
Countries with Estimated Indians above 100,000, 2001

Country	People of Indian Origin	Indian Citizens	Stateless	Total
Australia	160,000	30,000	0	190,000
Bahrain	0	130,000	0	130,000
Canada	700,000	150,000	1,000	851,000
Fiji	336,579	250	0	336,829
Guyana	395,250	100	0	395,350
Kenya	85,000	15,000	2,500	102,500
Kuwait	1,000	294,000	0	295,000
Mauritius	704,640	11,116	0	715,756
Myanmar	2,500,000	2,000	400,000	2,902,000
Namibia	32	78	0	110
Netherlands	200,000	15,000	2,000	217,000
Qatar	1,000	130,000	0	131,000
Reunion Islands	220,000	55	0	220,055
Saudi Arabia	0	1,500,000	0	1,500,000
Singapore	217,000	90,000	0	307,000
South Africa	0	0	0	1,000,000
Surinam	150,306	150	0	150,456
Trinidad & Tobago	500,000	600	0	500,600
U.A.E	50,000	900,000	0	950,000
Uganda	7,000	5,000	0	12,000
United Kingdom	0	0	0	1,200,000
Ukraine	0	3,400	0	3400
United States of America	0	0	0	1,678,765
Yemen	100,000	900	0	100,900

(Source: Ministry of External Affairs, Government of India. 2001)

6.4 Government Policy

Political elites in the pre-independence period had shown great concern for its 'nationals' abroad. The British imperial system had made the immigration possible and the Indian government had supported that development. Yet political developments in pre-independence India also laid the foundation of a very anti-imperialist, anti-racial course.

India was caught in a dilemma when it came to the expatriate Asians right after independence. The radical shift in policy and emphasis concerning the diaspora took time. India was pushing the settlers to identify with their host country and acknowledged the legal jurisdiction of the foreign states and their settlers, yet they were not India's problems, but that there was a certain interest in their welfare. Added to this was the emotional attachment of the Indians who had their kinsman abroad. This was reflected in the Indian Constitution where Part 11 Article 8 provided that any person being abroad whose parents or grandparents were born in India could be granted Indian citizenship by registration. However it is useful to point out that dual citizenship was not allowed at any point as India believed that one cannot be loyal to two masters. Yet Indians who had taken on new nationality could, if they wished to return to India, revert to Indian citizenship, although this process was not without complications.

It would be useful to distinguish the following categories:
PIO (people of Indian origin): A person is deemed to be of Indian origin if he at any time held an Indian passport or he or either of his parents or any of his grand-parents was an Indian and a permanent resident in undivided India at any time.

NRI (non-resident Indians): These are people who hold an Indian passport and stay abroad for study, employment, business, deputation, etc., indicating an indefinite period of stay outside India.

The Government of India was lukewarm to the issues of overseas Indians until the potential of the New Diaspora, or NRIs who emigrated after independence to the developed world was realized. They came from the middle class elite families, were a highly skilled group of professionals, scientists, doctors and engineers. The NRIs made substantial money and maintained informal ties with their mother country. Throughout its economic development in the 1970s and 1980s India tried to make room for the remittances coming from the gulf, but failed to open up the economy for any serious NRI investment which went beyond the family state border. Liberalization and the new industrial policy in the 1970s sought the involvement of overseas Indians in investing both in terms of capital and technology. NRIs were encouraged to invest in India through certain attractive schemes as much as they were welcomed to launch industrial enterprises along with transfer of technology. There is hardly any evidence of reaching the majority of the People of Indian Origin, the Old Diaspora, till the announcement of the new scheme of PIO Card was announced during early 1999.

Box 6.1: Do you know?

The People of Indian Origin Card was launched by the Ministry of Home Affairs in March 1999 to reinforce the emotional bonds of Indians who have made other countries their homes, but who now have a yearning to renew their ties with the land of their origin.

Persons of Indian origin up to the fourth generation settled anywhere in the world, except for a few specified countries, are eligible to avail themselves of this facility. The foreign spouse of a citizen of India or PIO would also be covered under the scheme. This scheme will entail a host of facilities to PIOs which were generally open to Non-Resident Indians (NRIs).

However, the factor of NRIs being a "hidden" asset did not strike the Indian government until the 1990s. With the opening up of the economy in 1991, in theory many barriers for investment were removed but in practice several obstacles remained and the special incentives set up for NRIs did not prove too useful. Issues of reform, citizenship and representational rights put the government and the NRIs at loggerheads. India's policy of foreign non-involvement slowly changed over the years to allow the expatriate Asians to take a certain part in its economic development, but the barriers remained so high as to keep them at bay quite effectively.

6.5 Types of Migration Flows

With Globalization accentuating the trend in international migration, there is considerable diversity in the types of migration flows. Broadly, such migration can be categorized as authorized or unauthorized and as temporary or long term. Each form of migration has varied impacts on economic and social development at the points of origin and destination.

Permanent High-Skilled Migration: Over recent decades, Australia, New Zealand, Canada and the United States have selectively granted permanent residence to a limited number of high-skilled foreigners who are likely to offer these countries positive economic benefits. Whereas Australia, Canada and New Zealand operate a "points" system to rate the desirability of potential immigrants, the United States primarily relies on nominations of potential immigrants by local companies who wish to hire them. Among source countries, India and China lead the way.

Temporary High-Skilled migration: In many developed countries, programs that grant permanent residence to foreigners who do not have historical or ethnic ties to the destination country are politically difficult. In such cases, governments may seek to fill occupational shortages through the recruitment of high-skilled migrants on a temporary basis. Historically, these flows have been concentrated in education and health-related services. During the 1990s, however, booms in information and communication technology (ICT) led to a shortage of related skills in many high-income countries, resulting in a jump in flows of technology professionals, most from India.

Temporary Low-Skilled Migration: Despite the fast growth of temporary high-skilled migration, these flows are dwarfed by temporary low-skilled migration, in which countries admit migrant workers to provide low-cost services on a strictly temporary basis. Countries typically implement these programs when rapid economic growth has improved the wages and work conditions of the local workforce and left them correspondingly unwilling to work at low-wage jobs. India and Pakistan are major sources of manual laborers and construction workers.

Family migration: Family migration is among the largest official channels of migration and represents a large share of flows from low- and middle-income

countries to high-income countries. This mode of migration enables foreign spouses of citizens, children born abroad and even foreign-born parents and siblings of citizens to gain permanent residency.

Visa-Free migration and Students: Visa-free migration exists (with some exceptions) within the European Union, as well as between New Zealand and Australia. This channel grants citizens the right to work for an unlimited time in any of the countries that are party to the agreement. Finally, students who travel to foreign countries for educational purposes have emerged as a major avenue by which young people from developing countries can, having satisfied a number of conditions, obtain the right to work and permanently reside in developed countries.

In recent years some categories of migration have increased significantly and pose particular challenges. These include the movements of refugees, asylum seekers, trafficked women and children and unauthorized labor migrants. While in many destination countries, there are policies in place to accept foreign workers with professional and technical skills, there are no policies to accept unskilled labour. This has given rise to undocumented migration. In order to meet the demand for foreign workers, both skilled and unskilled, and to augment the workforce for economic development, these countries recently adopted various measures to employ labourers by establishing new channels of entry. Many labour-exporting countries have in place procedures to deploy official contract workers, but owing to the time-consuming, cumbersome and expensive process of deployment, workers tend to avoid the system and leave the country (Hugo, 2002). Hence, the level of undocumented migration is on the rise. Undocumented migrants reportedly face high levels of abuse and exploitation, raising the issue of migrant protection. Migrant workers are seldom aware of their rights because of their lack of familiarity with the country, culture and language (World Health Organization, 2003).

Feminization has emerged as an important feature of international labour migration in South-East Asia. In recent years, there has been a growing tendency for women to migrate overseas for employment in their own right, rather than accompanying a family member. These women in many cases are more poorly educated than men (Skeldon, 2003a). The important factor in the sustainability of female migration is the demand for domestic workers, caregivers and entertainers. As the number of women migrating as domestic workers has increased, so have reports of discrimination, exploitation and abuse of these workers at their destinations. It has been noted that female migrants, especially domestic workers and entertainers, are particularly vulnerable to exploitation because of the nature of their work. Unlike male workers, who are more likely to work in groups in factories, on construction sites or plantations, female migrants often work under isolated conditions, which make it difficult for them to establish information and social support networks.

Reflection and Action 6.2

Talk to the family members of those who have migrated to other countries. Find out their reason for migration, their current status in the destination country, impact on their family and the possibility of return, if any. You may then categorize these into a particular migration type.

6.6 Processes and Patterns of Socio-Cultural Adaptation

Historically the emigrants from India have been a heterogeneous lot. They are varied in terms of their regional, religious, caste, occupational, linguistic and cultural backgrounds. These variables explain the differential evolution of Indian communities abroad in general. Further the plight of Indians as a diasporic community abroad is to a considerable extent determined by ethnic, religious and socio-economic composition of the 'host' country. The economic and political changes taking place there have an impact on the Indians as a diasporic community. In polities where Indians have been numerically significant, their ethnic orientation has been tied to the struggle for political power. Crucial to the evolution of Indians as a diasporic community has been their ability to adapt themselves in an alien setting.

In contrast to the ex-indentured populations, Indian migrants in contemporary times have been able, due to comparative affluence and worldwide improvements in communication, to maintain extensive ties with South Asia. Marriage arrangements, kinship networks, property and religious affiliations keep many migrants well-linked to their places of origin in the sub-continent, especially as a large number are still first generation migrants. The benefits of migration, in the form of remittances, also play a significant role in keeping many overseas South Asians connected to persons in their homeland; in fact, remittances from abroad can even represent critical aspects of the local economy in parts of South Asia.

In contrast to Indian migrants in the USA, those in Britain lived in segregated settlements. This is largely because of the type of employment and opportunities for settlement in Britain during the post-war economic expansion and its recent collapse. Whereas the majority of migrants from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh lived in ghettos, the twice migrants from East Africa, now settled in Britain and elsewhere, have fared better in urban middle class occupations such as shopkeeping. Many of them arrived with experience in this field plus the capital to invest in business. Various immigration acts in Britain particularly in 1962, 1968 and 1971 served in many ways to curtail the rights and status of Indians in seeking to migrate or actually moving to the United Kingdom.

In the U.S.A. the problems of acculturation for the Asian Indians were relatively few and dependence upon others for initial support was usually for a limited time. The need or desire to form ethnic clusters seems to have been minimal. An important reason for the lack of ethnic concentration of ethnic neighborhood development of the Asian Indians in American cities may have to do with the very limited role of Hinduism as a religion. The majority of the Asian Indians are Hindus, but Hinduism has a very different religious organization from Christian denominations, Islam or Sikhism. It remains to a great extent an individual oriented rather than a congregational religion. The widely dispersed Asian Indians are probably among the most affluent ethnic groups in the USA and are largely professionals concentrated in medicine, engineering and the natural sciences. Recent South Asian migrants to Australia and Canada follow a similar occupational pattern, though their place of residence is more markedly clustered in the largest cities than it is in the U.S.A. National infrastructure pertaining to migration and settlement of South Asians has varied from country to country and over the years.

Religion, language and region of origin are closely intertwined amongst South Asian migrants. Out of Britain's, 1,271,000 South Asians, Muslims account for 44% and two-thirds of them are Urdu-speaking Pakistanis. The balance is made up of Bangladeshis and Gujarati or Punjabi Indians in almost equal numbers. Similarly, of the 30% of British South Asians who are Hindu, over two-thirds are Gujaratis, the remainder being composed of an equal number of Punjabis and other Indians such as Sikhs—practically all from Punjab—comprise just over 20% of the British South Asian population. To complicate matters, many of the above are twice migrants with experience in East Africa. The complexity of South Asian immigrants has led Robinson (1986) to define not less than 12 religious ethno-linguistic groups present in the UK. Caste has remained an important source of identification for some groups in the modern South Asian diaspora. Caste affiliations, religious sectarianism and regionalism have usually undermined tendencies towards cultural homogenization. The lack of Asian Indian spatial concentrations and their diversities in the U.S.A. should not convey the impression that ethnic identity is not developing at all. Actually the process of identity formation is proceeding apace at several levels– at some levels 'fusion' and at others 'fission' appears to be dominant. Although some blending of regional traditions within Hinduism has occurred in Britain (Knott 1987), Canada (Wood 1980) and the U.S.A. (Bhardwaj and Rao 1983), exclusive practices and associations have nonetheless developed among overseas Hindu groups (Bowen 1987; Barot 1987).

The nature of ethnic pluralism, the political responses of governments to the existence of plural societies and the place of South Asian communities within them have varied considerably among the receiving countries. In Britain, Canada and the USA. They have tended to be characterized by high status occupations. Most South Asians who initially came to Britain in the 1950s and 1960s were manual labourers, though their occupational distribution now resembles more closely to that of the White British population (Peach et.al 1988). However institutionalized racism, particularly in housing (Brown 1984) has meant that they have been associated with a low position in Britain's class structure and therefore confront great difficulties in achieving other forms of social mobility. The role and status of South Asian women are also greatly affected by this state of affairs, as are the possibilities facing second-generation South Asians who are also confronted with difficult, culturally conflicting lifestyle choices. As regards political participation one finds that while the labourers and the lower class citizens of Indian origin in Britain take part in politics, the middle or elite classes tend to minimize such participation.

Regardless of their activities in the political sphere, contemporary Indian migrants have almost everywhere established community organizations wherever they have settled. Most of these, however, have taken considerable time to evolve and several have gone through phases of expansion, contraction, division and merger, whether instituted for the purposes of religion, community service or labour relations. Through these community organizations important leaders have come to the fore who have become involved in the conflict-ridden ethnic relations. In all major cases of contemporary overseas South Asian settlement in Britain, Canada, Australia and the U.S.A., South Asians have not escaped racial discrimination and abuse. Some of the organizations exercise an influence in the politics of their host country. The Association of Indians in America, which is considered to be broad-based and professionally oriented, worked to obtain a reclassification of Indians as 'Asian Indians' for the 1980 census. Most Indian

ethno-cultural people form informal communities in Canada through links between relatives and friends who share common ethnic, linguistic and religious roots. These include associations to ensure psychological protection against marginality, access to information, etc. Most social and religious organizations are very particular in observing religious festivals. Formal social boundaries between Indians of different backgrounds are generally sharp—each ethno-cultural group forms a somewhat discrete community. The socio-cultural adaptations of the Indians abroad in different diasporic situations have been varied ranging from persistence, assimilation to change and revival.

Box 6.2 Remittances from Abroad

Remittances are the main benefit of external migration, providing scarce foreign exchange and scope for higher levels of savings and investments. Remittances over the past 30 years have financed much of India's balance of trade deficit and have thus reduced the current account deficit. Remittances have had a considerable impact on regional economies. The most striking case is that of Kerala, where remittances made up 21% of state income in the 1990s. This flow appears to have increased wealth: although the average per capita consumption in Kerala was below the national average until 1978-79, by 1999-2000 consumer expenditure in Kerala exceeded the national average by around 41%.

International migration frequently results in the separation of family members, which in turn creates a greater dependence on the nuclear family, weakening wider kinship relationships and consequently widening the roles of nuclear family members, especially women. Families of international migrants are placed in a vulnerable situation, as those "left behind", particularly dependent members, confront social and emotional consequences. The women left behind face many hardships, from loneliness and isolation to financial difficulties. One of the consequences of the prolonged absence of migrants from the family has been marital instability and the consequent break-up of the family unit, leading to a higher incidence of divorce among migrant households (Hugo, 2002). Migration, on the other hand has also resulted in an improvement in the economic and social situation of women within the family and the community. There is evidence that, while male relatives remaining in the village may retain overall control, male labour migration has led to an improvement in the status of the women left behind (ESCAP, 2001). While migrants experience both positive and negative effects, even women migrants in highly vulnerable and exploitative situations often indicate that migration has improved their autonomy in some areas of their lives (Hugo, 2002).

Apart from the culture, lifestyles, migrants bring with them distinct skills or business contacts that can generate changes in technology, productivity and trade patterns that can affect an economy in ways unforeseen without their presence.

Reflection and Action 6.3

How have the diasporic communities adapted themselves in different socio-economic and political settings? Illustrate with examples.

6.7 The Phenomenon of Brain Drain

Migration has given rise to considerable debates on costs and benefits of emigration of certain categories of highly skilled workers through 'brain drain'. "Brain drain" is the phenomenon whereby nations lose skilled labor because there are better paid jobs elsewhere. In recent years, this has affected the poorer countries more, as some rich countries tempt workers away, and workers look to escape bleak situations in their poor home countries. The main flow of brain drain as a change of domicile starts from the underdeveloped countries towards the developed ones, due to social, cultural and psychological factors. There have been several efforts to define the concept of "brain drain", mainly by international organizations.

In a 1969 UNESCO report...." brain drain could be defined as an abnormal form of scientific exchange between countries, characterized by a one- way flow in favor of the most highly developed countries". One of the most comprehensive reports on the main characteristics of brain drain is as follows:

- There are numerous flows of skilled and trained persons from developing to developed countries.
- They are characterized by large flows from a comparatively small number of developed countries and by small flows from a larger number of developing countries.
- In these flows engineers, medical personnel and scientists usually tend to predominate.
- The above flows have grown with increasing rapidity in recent years.
- The higher the level of skill/training, the greater the susceptibility to migration tends to be.
- The flows respond increasingly to the changed economic complexity of world societies and to legislation which reflects the demands of a new era.
- The migratory trends are stimulated both by the character of national educational systems as by lack and inadequate planning for the training of students from developing countries, in developed states as well as the proper utilization of their-skills in their home country.
- Except possibly for South America, there are no signs that the migration of talents is decreasing and there are fairly definite signs that its increase will, under present conditions, continue to accelerate.

When the best of professional manpower leave their home country and settle in a more developed one, it is a political phenomenon, but it only rarely occurs that the motives are exclusively political. It involves a peculiar contradiction; it simultaneously indicates the lack of production and overproduction of professional manpower on the drained country.

It expresses the complexity and the interdependence of different societies; it derives from disproportionate economic, technological and scientific development of the developed and the developing countries. It is characteristic of the brain drain that the more underdeveloped a country is economically, the more it loses by brain drain while only developed countries profit from the process. It occurs through a complicated interplay of direct and indirect economic 'push' and 'pull' factors. It is stimulated by the lack of an educational system as well as the absence of a manpower policy in most of the underdeveloped countries, these deficiencies normally hindering the really efficient use of those qualified as well as those having talent. As

against this, there are higher living standards and better research and working opportunities of the more developed country, which provides thousands of possibilities for developing human potential. In addition to these objective economic factors, brain drain is also stimulated by the actually realized intention of the developed countries to acquire intellectual capital free, and as quick as possible.

The situation, in which many trained and talented individuals seek entrance into a country, is called a brain gain; this may create a brain drain in the nations that the individuals are leaving. A Canadian symposium in 2000 gave circulation to the new term, at a moment when many highly-skilled Canadians were moving to the United States but, simultaneously, many more qualified immigrants were coming to Canada. This is sometimes referred to as a 'brain exchange'. Despite the best of intentions, redirecting migrations is not going to be easy. Whether efforts to do so, by offering selective incentive are desirable must be a matter of debate.

After becoming the third largest country with diaspora population, India, which champions the cause of temporary relocation of skilled professionals at the World Trade Organization, is likely to experience a reverse flow of its migrants like China to increase the investment and trade potential. Much of China's recent success is largely due to its overseas population that ploughed back its savings into mainland China and turned the country into the global manufacturing hub. With many young Indian professionals returning home to a country increasingly seen as a land of opportunity, the brain drain from India is being reversed, according to a recent analysis.

Both in the colonial and post-colonial phases of Indian diaspora, some emigrants returned home for various reasons, termed as reverse migration. While in the normal course the returnees are individuals and families (Nair 1991 and Mohapatra 1995), under extraordinary circumstances reverse migration may assume massive proportions: The return of Indians from Burma (Myanmar) on the eve of the Japanese invasion of that country during World War II and from Kuwait during the Gulf War is a case in point.

Reflection and Action 6.4

The phenomenon of brain drain, according to many, is on the reverse. Find out the possible reasons and the consequent impact of this process on our country.

6.8 Conclusion

Global international migration is increasing exponentially not only in scale but also in the types of mobility and the cultural diversity of groups involved in that movement. Figures undoubtedly underestimate the amount of movement since data collection systems are poor and much mobility which occurs is clandestine. In addition, since much of the movement is circular, the actual numbers of persons who have ever lived in a foreign nation is larger than those currently abroad because of the revolving door pattern of much global migration. Replacement of more or less permanent migration by circulation as the dominant paradigm of global migration is a striking feature. This circulation is now occurring on an unprecedented scale and has been facilitated by developments such as the revolution in transport, which has seen the real costs of international travel plummet and their speed increase.

Accordingly, it is now much more possible for people to work in one nation while keeping their "home" in another country than was ever the case previously. Moreover, the cheapening of international telephone communication and the emergence of the Internet has enabled temporary migrants to maintain intimate and regular contact with their home area. This does not mean permanent settlement is insignificant. Indeed it has increased and often is associated with migrants maintaining strong relationships with their origin countries. However, the new reality is that more people are living and working in one country but still call another country home, many of their family members remain there and they maintain a fundamental commitment to the homeland.

Linked to the increasing degree of circularity in international movement has been the emergence of transnationalism which refers to the multiple ties and interactions linking people or institutions across the boundaries of nation states (Vertovec 1999, 447). While such long distance ties have a long history, new technologies in transport and communication have facilitated greater speed, efficiency and intimacy in such connections and relationships. As Portes, Guarnizo and Landholt (1999) point out, it is the massive contemporary scale and simultaneity of long distance, cross border activities which provide the recently emergent and distinctive and in some case normative social structures and activities which has led to the emergence of transnationalism.

Thus the phenomenon of migration is becoming more complex, and its pattern is undergoing change. No longer a one-time move by an individual, it comprises multiple moves, often involving other family members. It remains one of the most challenging issues of contemporary times and there are serious economic and social implications emerging from migration flows. A grounded understanding of migration necessitates a study of the complex determinants and outcomes of the process. A number of important policy issues have not yet been resolved: increased multilateral coordination of migration flows, prevention of human rights abuses, care of refugee populations, facilitation of the temporary movement of natural persons in the services trade, the harnessing of remittance flows for poverty-reducing investments, management of the brain drain, and reduction of brain waste. These priorities compose a large and important policy agenda for better harnessing this important socio-economic process for development purposes in the modern world economy.

6.9 Further Reading

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Unit 7

Indians in the Caribbean

Contents

Learning objectives

After reading this Unit, you will be able to describe:

- phases of Indian emigration in the Caribbean;
- common features of Indian immigration;
- experiences of Indian emigrants;
- emergence of Indian identity; and
- cultural strategies of the Indian diaspora.

7.1 Introduction

The score of islands and mainland from Mexico to Panama are popularly called the Caribbean. The area is marked by some geographical peculiarities. It has coral reef formations set in a sub-tropical condition. The region is prone to earthquakes and hurricanes. It has rich fertile soil, which allows cultivation of a variety of products.

The Caribbean now has many independent nations but their history is relatively young. It is recorded from the time Colombus landed in one of the islands there in 1492 A.D. Briefly it may be stated that Caribbean region first came under the control of Spain. For about a century the control of Spain was unbroken but by the early years of the seventeenth century, Spain pulled back from several areas and began to concentrate more on the vast areas of South America. Later other Europeans namely English, French and Dutch came to the Caribbean in swarms. The earlier Spanish presence was tragic, transient and highly exploitative. They ruthlessly destroyed the indigenous populations but did not develop any systematic production system. They ran authoritarian governing systems. Their dominant interest was in metallic extraction. However when other Europeans got a foothold in the various islands and mainland of the Caribbean they developed a thriving plantation economy based on slave labour.

7.2 Three Important Phases

In order to have a quick grasp of the overview of the entire Caribbean region it would be most convenient to view it in three phases namely post-discovery, post-emancipation and post-independence.

In the post-discovery phase, people belonging to different races and languages inhabited the islands. The Europeans had the dominant position. The economy was based on plantation. The policies for these islands were determined in the metropolitan colonial offices. The significance of the post emancipation period was the liberation of the slaves but the plantation economy continued and so also the old type of governance. For our purpose here the most important aspect of this phase was the entry of Indians in the Caribbean as indentured labour. Before we discuss the presence of the Indians in the Caribbean it may be briefly stated that the post-emancipation period saw the beginning of some trade and commerce by the planters and a nascent emergence of the peasantry. The post-independence phase is marked by the emergence of so many independent countries in which coloured people acquired power including Indians. The process of democratization set in and party politics began to play its role. Old white colonial administration came into the hands of the brown and black educated class of people. It saw a definite movement away from plantation economy towards industrialization and modernization. While European powers declined, the United States of America entered as a major player in the Caribbean region. It developed strategic interests and also interest in oil and natural gas. This was the background, by and large, in which the Indians entered the host countries as indentured labourers. In the initial stages, the Indian emigrants encountered difficult times. However, at later stages, there was transformation from that hopeless situation to a better position where they could establish their identity and social security and emerge as an educated and accomplished community engaged in a variety of modern professions.

Indians play a central role in the political arena in several countries. The presence of Indians is noted in Surinam, Trinidad, Jamaica, Guadeloupe, Martinique, Grenada and St. Lucia in the Caribbean. Though the history of the emergence of the Indians in each place is influenced by the local circumstances particularly by those who were the colonial rulers in the specific country, here we will discuss them in general terms. However, most of the material here has been drawn from the experience in Trinidad.

7.3 Arrival of Indians

Indians were brought to the Caribbean by the colonial administration to safeguard the plantation industry in the wake of abolition of slavery. From the 1830s the East India Company allowed trading in human resources by private agents under a sort of indentured labour scheme. This scheme had to be suspended for a while owing to its widespread abuse. However, Britain came out with the "Colonial Emigration Act, 1837", which was controlled by the East India Company. A set of officers was put in position to oversee the movement of the labourers from India to the various colonies in the Caribbean and elsewhere. In the late 1830s when the emigration of Indians began the situation in India was highly unsettled. There were widespread economic problems. Owing to the Permanent Settlement System, the peasants had already lost their small land holdings. The artisans particularly the weavers lost their occupation owing to the export of cotton. New forest laws had deprived the peasant's access to life-sustaining resources. Epidemics and famines were common features. Ravages of war between the East India Company and the local rulers made the peasantry homeless too. There was continuous persecution by the tax collectors, rent collectors, the zamindars, the moneylenders, and the marauders *(thags)* who would not hesitate to kill for even small gains. The British also started systematic reprisals following the upheaval of 1857.

In the beginning the British were a bit cautious in recruiting Indians as labourers and sending them to overseas colonies for fear of being criticised for bringing slavery in a different form. They began the recruitment from the hinterland of Bihar hoping that the larger society may not notice it. Moreover, the tribes living in that region had less dietary taboos. As a result of the new forest and land regulation some unrest was brewing up even in that area. The British wanted to crush it before it could gather into a storm and recruited labourers from that area and sent the troublemakers overseas.

7.4 Common Features of Immigration

We may briefly highlight some common features of immigration of the Indians in the Caribbean before we discuss the emergence of the Indian identity in that part of the World.

i) Immigration was spread out over 72 years from 1845-1917, which suggests the inflow the Indian population at regular intervals that was significant in terms of social, cultural and political formation of Indians in the Caribbean.

ii) People came from different regions of India including southern India but majority of them were from the Indo-Gangetic belt.

iii) Majority of the people were poor from rural areas and of lower castes. Approximately 15% of them were Muslims.

iv) The sex ratio among the immigrants was highly imbalanced.

v) Majority of the people were young. Those who arrived in the first 30 years had hardly any elders as role models.

vi) Whatever be their social, cultural, economic or religious background, all were recruited as indentured labour on the same terms. This is a very important factor in breaking or shaking the traditional system of social stratification among the Indians.

vii) Away from their homes and villages, the experience of staying together in depots and being together for a long, difficult and hazardous sea journey, not only made them hard but also generated a 'we' feeling among them cutting across the barriers of caste and religion. They also established a life-long bond such as 'jehajibhai'.

viii) For the women recruits, depot stay, voyage and work in the colonies was an experience by itself. Perhaps for the first time they were getting wages in their hands as workers. As a result of these they carved out some space for themselves.

ix) On arrival the Indians were assigned to different estates. In the early years there were a lot of restrictions on their movement. It was only on Sundays they were allowed to move away from their estates, that too after taking permission. All of them suffered a sense of isolation. They were out of their social and cultural network. They were not used to the monotonous nature of work. Their work-supervisors treated them very harshly. A little deviation from work or laziness immediately attracted punishment. Often they were kept in isolation for some petty mistake. The environment was generally hostile.

x) The former slaves did not like the presence of the Indians. For at the time when the slaves were emancipated they had begun to organize themselves. They had begun to demand better facilities of work and higher wages. They were sure that the planters had no alternative and eventually would negotiate with them. That did not happen. Instead

the planters were able to find a good source of cheap labour, which flourished close to 72 years. So whatever bargaining capacity ex-slaves had vis-à-vis planters was lost and their demand for higher wages could be easily suppressed forever. At the same time a permanent cleavage was created between two sets of labour: ex-slaves and Indians.

xi) Indians on their part had no choice but to work to their full capacity, otherwise punishment was waiting for them. They were strangers on the island. From people to environment—everything was alien for them. On account of their hard work, production in the plantation got accelerated. There was more demand for labourers from India. The scheme of indentured labour got full support from the planters as well as from the administration. Socially and culturally the Indians were much different from the local populations. They never mixed with them. They also cherished a desire that one day they would be able to go back to their homes but there were so many hurdles on the way.

Box 7.1: Hurdles for Returning Home

The hurdles for returning to the native homes were:

First the dread of returning back on a long and hazardous sea voyage was a serious deterrent. *Second*, the circumstances under which they had left their homes were neither cheerful nor they were sure they would be accepted back.

Third, those who had gone back had depressing experiences.

Fourth, the planters were keen that the experienced Indian labourers stay back in their plantation.

For this they adopted a twin strategy. One, they put maximum hurdles on the Indians so that they did not return after the completion of their term. Second they began to give allurements so that they decided to stay back in the colonies. They offered them land from 1850 onwards and also some money if they surrendered their right to claim free passage back. Later they also allowed them to buy land. Obviously these were big attractions.

Reflection and Action 7.1

Highlight some of the common features of emigration.

7.5 Experiences of the Emigrants

For Indians no doubt there was immense suffering particularly for those who had arrived earlier. Living in barracks under most unhygienic and cramped conditions was an entirely new experience. They were not only strangers to the total environment but often to each other. Their next-door neighbour could be a person from an entirely different region whose language and culture could be very different. However, there were common threads too. They were all labourers and had to put up with the same hostile and adverse conditions. They worked hard but at the same time led a simple life and believed in saving. Once they were offered land and some bounty in lieu of surrendering their right to claim free passage for going back home people grabbed these and reindentured themselves for a further period of five years. Later they were also given the opportunity to buy land. Majority of them reinvested eighty percent of their savings in buying free plots of land. This was encouraged by the colonial administration for several reasons. First,

this way the planters were assured of the continued services of the experienced hands and allowed them to save some energy, time and money in getting an entirely new set of inexperienced workers trained. Second, the Indians began to make the land productive by growing paddy and numerous other things. Till then the plantation economy had been peculiar in the sense what people grew was for a distant market and what people consumed was imported from distant places. Thus by growing consumable farm products the Indians began to give a new shape to the Caribbean economy. Besides, in terms of economy, it suited ideally both the planters and the colonial government to shift the burden of feeding the population at least partly, on to the ex-plantation workers themselves. Third, many of the Indians who for some reason were not willing to work in the plantation after the expiry of the term and were considered as vagrant were getting productively employed.

7.6 Emergence of Indian Identity

Identity formation is a complex phenomenon depending upon a variety of factors. The Indians who had decided to stay back were trying to carve out a way of life, develop a set of social relationships and institutions among themselves, and also had to participate in the social, political and economic life of the emerging nations - the nations which were located in the Western hemisphere, dominated by the Western thought, values and Christian religion. Modern science and technology too were rapidly evolving and casting their impact on the lives of the people. The early Indian settlers recognised all this, and they also recognised that acquiring modern education was an important means of enhancing their life-chances. They desired and sought education for their children. But the education available at that time had a price tag and that was conversion to Christianity. This added a Christian dimension to the Indian community of the Hindus and the Muslims. Along with the growing demand for education, the Hindu, the Muslim and the Christian missionaries also were active. Some sought reforms, some wanted them to go back to fundamental values of traditional practices of their religion and some wanted them to convert to other faiths. These created agreements and disagreements among the settlers. In other words, identity formation was not one single linear progression. Some scholars thought that in course of time Indians like other populations in the Caribbean would get creolised while others felt that Indians persisted with their traditional values and cultures. Both of these views have their own merit but the fact is that the Indians have projected an identity of their own in a multi-ethnic situation of the countries in which they live, which shows some creolisation, some persistence and some creation.

We may here briefly summarise the factors, which have contributed to the formation of Indian identity.

1. **Ancient Civilization:** The long civilization history of the Indians was very useful. In the Western sense, the immigrants were illiterate but were well educated in their social, cultural, religious and moral tradition. Identity formation was greatly helped by repeated recitations of epic stories like Ramayana, Mahabharata and numerous other stories. These stories contain a wealth of information on social and cultural life as well as on moral values. Some cultural specialists began to interpret these stories and tell people how to conduct their lives as elders, as husbands, wives, brothers, sisters, friends and so on.
2. **Population:** Emergence of Indian identity is correlated to the size of the

population in relation to the total population. Wherever their population was significant Indian identity has emerged strongly like in Trinidad, Surinam, Guadeloupe, and Martinique and to some extent in Jamaica, Grenada and St. Lucia.

3. **Land**: The decision to have land in lieu of their right to claim free passage back to India was very significant. This meant a shift from transient to permanent settler status. For the Indians land was a valuable asset, it provided them subsistence, economic stability and helped them to move up in the social hierarchy. It also helped them to gain their economic independence. The places where they obtained land became nuclei for the formation of Indian villages.

4. **Villages**: The formation of the villages was a turning point in the history of the Indians in Trinidad. These were generally uni-ethnic villages. The process of the Indians settling in the rural areas was further helped by the fact that the Blacks were generally moving away from the land-related activities. For the Indians it was indeed a great change. After having done ten years of degrading industrial labour in cane cultivation, constantly under harsh supervision and living in crowded barracks, they were living in the villages founded by them and as free persons at last. They got the opportunity to reconstruct their way of life by shedding some aspects, reformulating some and creating some new aspects in their cultural baggage. The new environment circumscribed all this.

5. **Events in India**: As the indentured labour kept on coming to the Caribbean for close to seventy two years the Indians kept themselves relatively abreast about the events in their native land. The conditions were chaotic when they left India. The revolt of 1857 against the Britishers was ruthlessly suppressed but the seeds for the Indian independence were sown which later took the shape of a mass movement. A number of highly dedicated and charismatic Indian leaders were emerging on the Indian scene which generated a new awakening in the country and which also gave some sense of confidence and pride to the Indian emigrants. They were becoming familiar with popular Indian slogans such as Inqalab Zindabad (long live revolution) , Gandhi Zindabad (long live Gandhi) and so on. The later emigrants were familiar with the idea of Indian independence. They brought a sense of belief and confidence in their own culture and traditions. They knew that their leaders were fighting to throw off the yoke of colonialism. They had also learnt a new tool of resistance that was 'satyagraha' (fight for truth). In popular terms it meant passive resistance.

6. **Political Action**: In Trinidad between 1880 and 1914 there were at least 18 major strikes on plantation estates by the Indian settlers. The most important outcome of these strikes was that it brought people together on a common platform. Suffering under a common adversary was a powerful binding force among the ethnically diverse Indian population. The Indians formed their own organizations and took up a variety of issues such as protection against certain immigration ordinances, pressing the administration for the employment of Indians in government service, for legal recognition of Hindu and Muslim marriages, recognition of their traditional funeral rites, etc. At about the same time, educated Indians began to articulate their views in newspapers published in the island. Wide circulation of the views contributed to the increasing sense of group solidarity among the Indians. Also these activities conveyed a message to the governments in power that the Indian community existed

and was capable of organising itself in defense of its group interest. They also contributed money for the welfare of the victims of the famine back in India. Who else would have known better about the pains of hunger than the Indian emigrants!

7. **Indian Family:** In the Caribbean, it is popularly believed that the Indian families as compared to that of other ethnic groups were stable and different. The family was one of the institutions most dramatically affected by migration. First, in most cases people had come as individuals, leaving behind all other members of the nuclear and extended families back in their home in India. Second, on migration, the sex ratio among them was highly imbalanced. Third, they did not have elders among them to guide them. In spite of this situation the Indians did not show any inclination to marry outside their community, especially among the Blacks. The Indian family that evolved over the years was basically nuclear but retained a joint family model, in the sense that the members of the extended family generally lived in the same compound or in the neighbourhood. The family was relatively stable. The value of the filial solidarity was retained. Members of the extended family got together for celebration of numerous life-cycle rituals and seasonal festivals. On such occasions they not only helped and supported each other but also get an opportunity to fulfill their mutual obligations. Frequent interaction among themselves brought in a certain degree of solidarity and reinforcement of ties.
8. **Films & music:** The introduction of films and popular music from India from the late 1930s sparked a cultural awakening among the Indians. Later they also developed their own classical, devotional and popular form of music, which reinforced their identity.
9. **Religious activities:** Most Hindu religious traditions involve observance of life-cycle rituals, worship of the many gods and goddesses which they think ensures them a wholesome life, healthy children, good yields from their land, protect them and their crops and cattle from diseases, evil spirits and hazards. Singing devotional songs and recitation of religious texts, particularly Ramayan are other aspects of the Hindu religious practices. The Indians may have gone to the Caribbean from different regions of India with different religious practices but once they have settled there they tried to homogenize those practices. For their social and cultural survival this was an urgent and essential demand. On one hand, the others considered Indians as heathens and they were being persistently persuaded to give up their traditional beliefs and adopt Christian practices and ideology. On the other, the Indians needed to celebrate births, puberty and marriage, and appropriately mourn deaths. They also needed to express their gratitude to the Almighty for their survival. During their hazardous voyages and stay in barracks they had experienced that there was a very thin line between life and death. Invocation of the deities and seeking their blessings could not be postponed. They had to come to some agreement among themselves on these matters and get along with their lives. The missionaries and reformers, who came from India, also helped them in the process of homogenization.

Reflection and Action 7.2

Discuss the factors that contributed to the formation of Indian identity in the Caribbean.

This particular aspect is very well reflected in temple construction and temple architecture in the Caribbean. In the beginning temples were small, made of bamboo. The temples constructed after the 1950s were relatively large and had a raised area where all deities were enshrined, and a dome topped the temples. The deities could be viewed by the audiences sitting on the benches, in the style of churches. The hall was utilized for religious discourses and congregational worship. The Hindu religious environment in and around temple was further strengthened by putting up various symbols like Jhandis (flags of different colour), Om signs, plants such as Pipal, Neem, Tulsi, Bel etc. etc.

10. **Cuisine:** Indian cuisine is a strong identity marker. The Indian food, the way it is processed, cooked and eaten is quite distinctive, particularly the food that is prepared for ceremonial occasions. The Indians, particularly the Hindus observe a variety of food taboos. Vegetarian food is considered to be high ranking. All ceremonial food is vegetarian. Like religious practices Indian cuisine too has been standardized to a great extent. In the process of standardization they have also created some new food items, which have become very popular.

Box 7.2: Cultural strategies

There are many other cultural strategies that Indians adopted to form their identity and preserve it. In a hostile environment, in particular, these strategies are likely to come in all kinds of innocent activities and formal forms. Each of them interconnects people, link ideas and mythologies, generate moods and motivations and transmit messages. A pattern starts emerging. A culture gets constructed and its boundaries get marked. A culture is an on-going phenomenon with some anchorage. So many things happen at the same time. There are compelling economic and political circumstances, which create pressures for some and opportunities for others for cultural expressions. Think of the hopeless, illiterate Indian peasant uprooted from his surroundings, surviving a shattering sea journey and planted in a hostile and unsympathetic environment. Whatever he had in the name of culture was perceived as heathen, degrading and also contested by the fellow next-door neighbour. He was coerced and also enticed to convert himself.

There were other compelling circumstances too, but he resisted, recoiled, withdrew, advanced and changed, and yet he did not become what was expected of him. He adopted the old, created some and constructed a cultural system, which gave him a sense of satisfaction, a feel-good phenomenon. For instance, those who converted to Christianity became the favoured ones. They got education, acquired professional skills and jobs. Their status went up in the larger society. But they were still identified as Indian. Whatever personal agenda they may have had, they became facilitators of the Indian identity. They established bi-directional communication. They played the role of cultural brokers. They became the spokesmen for the Indians. Similarly the temple architecture was changed so that people may walk in to participate in 'Sunday Service' and hear not Bible sermons but Vedic hymns, Ramayana, devotional songs, ringing of bells and blowing of conches. These are but a few examples, which illustrate how the Indians were able to establish their identity.

7.7 Conclusion

It is indeed an enigma that all along the Indians in the Caribbean have been treated as a transient population. This image continues even now. The self-image of the Indians too is of a transient population. This gets amply reflected in the literary writings of the Indian scholars. Whatever be the reasons for this emic and etic imagery, it helped Indians to consolidate their identity as the East Indians, not withstanding the internal fissures, factions and disagreements.

In the political arena, after the First World War the attitude of the Indians and people of African origin changed towards the European population. There was a rising consciousness towards self-rule. Politics is all about striving for political gains and therefore in the process the political leaders exploited all kinds of cleavages. In the plantation societies of the Caribbean, ethnic identity was a ready-made cleavage, which of course was fully exploited by the political leaders. The colonial rulers, as could be expected, pursued the well-known policy of divide and rule. However, in spite of this, the various islands in the Caribbean became independent in course of time but ethnic cleavages have remained a part of political discourse. Independent nations have been formed with some sort of democracy in which adult franchise and regular elections are the common features. Indians participate in these elections, aligning themselves to one or the other parties. By and large, it can be safely stated that wherever Indian presence is there, they have not taken any extreme position either in terms of ethnicity or mobilization on class lines. They tend to take a more centrist position but have remained an exclusive population in social, cultural and religious terms.

The score of islands and mainland from Mexico to Panama is popularly called the Caribbean. It is a vast area inhabited by people belonging to different ethnic groups and languages. In the past the Europeans dominated the region and the economy was based on plantation worked by cheap labour. After the slavery was abolished there was an intensive and desperate search for cheap labour. At that time, India had come under the British colonial domination. They devised the scheme of indentured labour. Indian labours were exported to the various colonies of the Caribbean. In course of time through hard work and perseverance Indians were able to stabilize not only their position but also helped the plantation economy to grow and flourish. Socially and culturally the Indians have been able to establish their identity and in each country of their habitat they play active role in political arena too.

7.8 Further Reading

Misra P.K. 1995. 'Cultural design in identity formation in Trinidad.' *The Eastern Anthropologist*, Vol.48 No.3.

Unit 8

Indian Diaspora in Africa

Contents

Learning objectives

After going through this Unit, you will be able to understand:

- situations of Indian diasporas in various parts of Africa;
- identity issues of Indian diasporas in Africa and their responses; and
- situations of Indians in Mauritius.

8.1 Introduction

There is a 2.25 million strong Indian Diaspora in Africa.[1] The People of Indian Origin (PIO) form a majority in Mauritius. Around one million PIO live in South Africa. A substantial number of PIO are present in East Africa and in the Western Indian Ocean Islands. There are significant numbers of PIO in Central African countries. Except the PIO in East Africa, most of them went as indentured plantation workers during the colonial rule in the same way as they were taken to the Caribbean islands.

In East Africa they were taken to construct railways in the interior forest areas. This region also had a significant number of free passenger Indians who had gone there as traders since colonial times and even before that. A large number of Franco-phone African countries have PIO but they form a small percentage of local population. Their identity suffered the same fate as of those in the Caribbean Franco-phone territories except in those territories, which were snatched by the Britishers from French colonisers. They were juxtaposed here with Africans. In a few places like in Kenya and South Africa they were sandwiched between Black and White populations. Their struggle to preserve their identity, seek their legitimate place in the society is also similar to that in the Caribbean. The government of India under Nehru maintained the same overt and covert policy towards PIO in Africa with the exception of South Africa where it mostly maintained an overt policy of support. The comparative understanding of PIO in the Caribbean and Africa needs an analysis of African PIOs and Indian responses.

1 There are roughly 22,59,300 PIOs in Africa. In some countries- they are significant in number and percentage. They are 220,000 in Reunion (31%), 1 million in South Africa (2.4%), 715000 in Mauritius (68%), 100,000 in Kenya (0.35%), 81,000 in Seychelles (6.1.%) 28,000 in Madagascar, 90,000 in Tanzania (0.28%), 16000 in Zimbabwe (0.1%), 9000 in Botswana (0.66%) around 20,000 in Mozambique (0.13%).

8.2 Indian South Africans

Long before Mahatma Gandhi used his tactics of non-co-operation, civil disobedience, *satyagraha* and peaceful protests in Indian freedom struggles in 1920, he evolved and made maiden use of many of these methods in South Africa in the late nineteenth century. The personal insult heaped on him in South Africa and his strong feeling against racial discrimination against Indians in South Africa became a sentimental issue for the followers of Gandhi in the Indian freedom struggle. The racial discrimination against Indians in South Africa received constant condemnation from Indian leaders and the cause of Indians in South Africa always remained high in Indian foreign policy considerations.

The Asiatic Land Tenure Act also known as Ghetto Act became law in June 1946. It was directed against Indians, confining them to specified areas alone.[2] On 3 September 1946 in the United Nations General Assembly session, the Indian representative Chagla articulated Indian concerns to the United Nation sub committee. He condemned South Africa's "discriminatory treatment of Asiatics in general" as a denial of human rights and the Ghetto Act, both of which impaired friendly relations between India and Africa. The Franco-Mexican resolution - supported by India - calling for treatment of Indians in South Africa to be in conformity with international obligations and Charter of the United Nations - was passed. The Indian approach of special support to Indian settlers in South Africa lasted until the late 1950s. Till then, resolutions of Indian National Congress articulated and strongly supported the Indian settlers' cause in South Africa. They used to express support to South African non-Indian sufferers also but in general terms.[3]

Once India raised the issue of South African Indian settlers exclusively within the U.N. based on the human rights clause, it soon realised that it was not possible to keep the issue confined to Indian settlers alone. Because of the provisions of non-racial treatment, India had to extend support to all groups and communities subjected to racial discrimination in South Africa. Further, the policy of exclusively supporting Indian settlers was in contrast to Nehru's policy of advising Indian settlers in other parts of Africa, where he counselled the paramountcy of the African cause and advised Indian settlers to integrate themselves with African cause and aspirations and not to seek special positions or privileges. Meanwhile the Group Area Act of 1950 had formally institutionalised the Apartheid policy affecting Indians as well as Black Africans.

The above considerations started a shift in Indian approach on South African issue. India started associating with the cause of discrimination of Black and Indians together. The Indian President Dr. Rajendra Prasad in his address to Parliament in 1952 explained the shift of the approach. He said, "The question is no longer merely one of Indians of South Africa; it had already assumed a greater and wider significance. It is question of racial domination and racial intolerance. It is a question of Africans more than that of Indians in South Africa". India mobilised twelve other countries and raised the question of racial conflict in South Africa resulting from apartheid policy and succeeded in the appointment of a U.N. commission to study the racial situation in

2 Ajay Dubey, "Identity Politics of Indian South Africans: Democratisation and governance of South Africa", paper presented at ICSSR-HSRC seminar on *The Dynamics of Social Identity in India and South Africa: Its Implications for Democratisation and Governance* held at Bungler between 20-22nd October 1998.

3 See Indian National Congress Resolutions on Foreign Policy. AICC New Delhi 1946-66.

South Africa. From then onward, the issue of Indians in South Africa was merged with the larger issue of apartheid policy in South Africa, which involved both Indians as well as Black African. Indian policy then worked for the establishment of majority rule in South Africa and merging of the Indian settlers cause with that of Black Africans.

During his interim Prime Ministership in March 1946, Nehru recommended termination of trade agreement and breaking up of diplomatic ties with South Africa. Lord Wavell, the Indian Viceroy did it immediately.[4] This strong step was taken when India was free in foreign relations but not free internally. The stakes involved were high. India at the time of independence needed economic support from all quarters but this decision deprived India of 5% of its trade. Currently, there are more than 1 million PIOs in South Africa. During the post-apartheid period they merged their political future with ANC. Around 20% of ministerial/M.P. positions were given to them by ANC. However PIO did not vote for ANC in the 1994 general elections fearing the massive majority the African base ANC had. As a result they are again facing the displeasure of the government in power. Their representation as M.P.s/ Ministers in ANC government has been reduced. The Historical Disadvantage Community (HDC) categorisation still clubs them with the African and coloured population. But politically and socially, the gap between the majority community and PIO is increasing.[5]

8.3 East African PIO

A good number of PIO had gone to East Africa as traders since ancient times and they were settled across the Eastern Coast of Africa. Kilwa was a very important port, which had a good number of Indian traders. In fact, the Swahili language, which is spoken in East Africa, has a substantial number of words, which are from Gujarati and other Indian languages. The bulk of PIOs who were brought to hinterlands of East Africa were railway construction workers. Most of them were from Punjab. Many were killed by lions and wild animals in the dense forests of East Africa while laying railway lines. The presence of PIO in hinterlands facilitated Gujarati businessmen, retail traders to penetrate in the interior of East African towns. They were called *Dukawallas* and they own most of the corner shops. Since they were brought in by the colonisers and became visibly rich, they were seen as exploiters by the African population.

PIOs in East Africa were a confident community since colonial times. As early as 1920 they asserted their political identity under leaders like Jeevanji and wanted PIOs to be linked to India. The assertion made the colonial government announce the policy of "paramountcy of native" thereby keeping PIO from inheriting any kind of political power sharing under decolonisation plan. This was further used by the British colonial government to increase the gap between Africans and PIOs.

During the decolonisation phase the Indian government under Nehru tried to make amends. Aba Saheb was entrusted to exhort PIO to lead the freedom

4 Indian High Commissioner did not returned to South Africa since 1946 when Ghetto Act was passed But India used to maintain a small office in Durban which was finally closed in 1954 and thereafter all direct link between Indian and South Africa ceased.

5 See Ajay Dubey - "Identity Politics of Indian South Africans (ISAs) : Democratisation and Governance of South Africa" *Indian Journal of African Studies*, vol.XII (2) pp.39-51.

struggle and accept the leadership of the Black Community without any reservation and special demand. In 1967, the government of Kenya started the Kenyanisation of its economy when all non-citizens, largely Indians, were asked to take work and residence permits. It allowed them to trade only in restricted areas and items. Though it was a purely internal policy measure of the Kenyan government, India advised them to surrender their British passports and get local citizenship. Indian diplomats mobilised PIO in favour of this move but not many responded to it. For PIOs accepting the advice to mix with Africans meant giving their daughters in marriage to local Africans. PIOs were not willing to migrate to England because of social insecurity and degeneration of their children in western culture. Going back to India and being trapped in the vicious trap of poverty, filth and unemployment was out of the question.[6] Partly, Indian policies also did not allow them to forget their old links as it appealed to them thrice in two years, for financial help for defence funds to contain China and Pakistan. A large number of visitors from India, religious leaders, fund collectors for charity and politician kept coming and made contact with PIO. All these were strengthening the feelings of mutual dependence. When they were in crisis this time, India did not react in the same way as it used to do.[7] The Indian Parliament discussed the issue at length. Mrs. Indira Gandhi made an intervention during debate to assure the members that government was monitoring the situation.[8]

Indian government had started economic initiatives at the bilateral level to bring Indian settlers in Kenya within the policy framework of India. It proposed to establish Africa-India Development Corporation with Kenyan 'PIO' and Indian capital, its aim being to seek integration of the Indian community in the economic life of Kenya, thus fortifying the foundation of a multiracial society.[9] Though finally it could not materialise, due to reasons other than disinterest of India, but it did show the shift which was coming in Indian policy for PIOs in Africa. Uganda was another country in East Africa where India's policy on Indian settlers demonstrated the shift. When Idi Amin came to power in January 1971 in Uganda, he wanted to put the entire Ugandan economy in the hands of Ugandans of African origin. He said that 80,000 Asians in Uganda were sabotaging the economy and encouraging corruption and therefore there was no room for them in Uganda.[10] All PIOs who were Kenyan citizens or British and Indian passport holders had to leave in 90 days before November 8, 1972. Amin called the expulsion of PIO "as part of the war of liberation". Indian Deputy Minister of External Affairs said in Parliament, "We are in touch with the Ugandan authorities and I can assure the House that we shall do everything we can to protect the interest of Indians there". The Indian President while in Lusaka denounced the expulsion and stated "The happenings in Uganda have cest heavy clouds of doubt and uncertainty over the minds of many people of Indian origin in several countries of Africa.... The pernicious doctrine of racialism may permeate even free Africa." [11]

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6 For a detailed discussion see Anirudha Gupta, "*India and the Asians*" opp. cit. p.130.

7 Nehru used to say that if they are not ready to become citizen and not welcomed there they should come back to India.

8 Indian parliament was told that there were 186,000 people of Indian origin in Kenya. Out of this 130,000 were British citizen, 44,000 Kenyan and only 4,000 were Indian nationals.

9 *AICC Economic Review* (New Delhi) October 1966.

10 Africa Digest Vol. 19, No.57, October 1972, p.96

11 Quoted in A Gupta "Uganda Asian, Britain, India and Commonwealth" African Affairs (1974), p. 322

Though public opinion was aroused in India it refuted strongly and ridiculed Amin's allegation that India was planning to invade Uganda along with Tanzania and Zambia. However, India made it clear that it was going to support any international move, which would persuade Amin for extending the expulsion deadline. India did not take the tougher line because Indian move against a purely racial issue would have been interpreted as Indian interference and design in Africa. Indian support for Afro-Asian solidarity was another constraint. But the main consideration of India in not taking a tougher line on the issue seemed since "there is nothing to be gained by using strong words, if they can not be backed by meaningful action in Uganda, any show of strong sentiment may trigger off an anti-Asian wave."[12] Years later India faced the same constraints when Bavadra government was dismissed in Fiji and anti-PIO moves started there.

The Ugandan crisis made India realise that the leadership and political system of African states vary considerably from country to country and Indian support to Afro-Asian solidarity had to be qualified by long-term national interests. These expulsions brought home another point to India. Despite Indians, consistent support to African decolonisation and Afro-Asian solidarity none of the African countries howsoever friendly to India and opposed to Idi Amin's action, offered to accommodate expelled Indians even in small numbers as a gesture to sympathise with India.[13] As far as India was concerned, it was never its policy to debar entry of PIO if they wanted to resettle in India with their saving and assets. The Government of India made special provisions and gave inducement for Asians to resettle in India with their saving and assets. Despite such offer, almost none opted to return to India. The restrained approach of India, however, succeeded in getting Amin agree to pay compensation for business and properties of Indian passport holders, which was not given to Indians of holding passports of other nationalities.

8.4 PIO in Francophone Africa

There are around one million PIOs in Francophone Africa. The bulk of them are in Mauritius, Reunion, Madagascar and Seychelles. Other countries in Francophone Africa having smaller number of PIOs are Benin, Cameroon, Ivory Coast, Chad, Senegal, Mali, Djibouti and Algeria. Reunion Island, which is a French *Department*, not an independent country, also has a good number of PIO. Most of the PIO of the region except in Mauritius have lost their identity because of the assimilation policy followed by the French colonial master. Under this policy the subject population was to be fully acculturated in mainstream French culture in terms of language, religion, dress, manners etc. The original cultural identity of PIO, Africans or Chinese was lost. Only racial features remained the main distinguishing factor, though one finds a small sprinkling of well-off Gujarati trader population, which maintained some kind of links with India and retained some resemblance of Indian culture. Because of the language barrier and lesser interaction of Indian government and socio-cultural organisations they remained largely out of Indian policy supports or responses.

Madagascar has around 25,000 PIOs. They are mostly Gujaratis who came as traders around 1900. A majority of them run merchant shops. This merchant community maintains its Indianness. They maintain a very low social profile,

12 *The Times of India* (Delhi) 6 October 1972.

13 See Ajay Dubey, Indo- African Relations in the Post Nehru Era (Delhi, Kalinga Publication, 1990)

though in a country of 15 million, this small number of 25000, controls more than 50% of economy. On the other hand Seychelles has a large population, around 307,000 PIOs. It has a large number of indentured PIOs who came from South India. Most of them have been subsumed into French culture. Reunion received some families from French territories in India like Pondicherry who came at the time of Indian independence. This group despite being from French Indian territories had good influence of Indian culture. There are around 220,000 PIO in the island. A large number of them came as slaves or artisans or indentured workers during colonial times. In recent times, one notices a revival of Hindu religion among Tamil communities, which forms the bulk of PIO. A large number of temples and Ashrams are visible and *double practice of religion* i.e., simultaneous observation of Hindu and catholic rites by the same family. There are a number of associations of PIOs who promote Indian dance, music, painting, literature and food etc but language remains major barrier.

8.5 Indians in Mauritius

Mauritius is also a Francophone country. It is the only country in the world where PIOs are in a majority (68% of population). It had PIO led government since its independence. If India is the mother country of PIO, Mauritius is treated as its capital. It was earlier a French territory but in 19th century it was captured by the British. Under the Treaty of Capitulation, Britain was to maintain French custom and law even during British colonial rule. A large number of indentured workers from India went to Mauritius since 1834 to replace the African slave labour in sugarcane field. There were Indian merchants as well who went in the 19th century and maintained their links with India. Today there are around 700,000 PIO in a population of 1.2 million. Despite being under French culture for more than one and half century, they maintained the major traits of Indian culture and still retain a strong sense of Indian cultural identity. Though the Bhojpuri language, dress, cuisine is getting diluted very fast in the younger generation, Mauritius remain one of the few countries where Indianness and its manifestations are celebrated with pride and confidence. Though PIOs are not a monolithic lot, they are divided on linguistic (Bhojpuri and Non-Bhojpuri) religious (Hindu-Muslims) and caste lines they have been able to retain political control since 1948 when adult suffrage was introduced.[14]

Mauritius was the first country where Nehru, under his interim Prime Ministership, appointed the first ever High Commissioner in 1946. Mahatma Gandhi had visited Mauritius in 1902 while coming back from South Africa to India. He met PIO community leaders and advised them to educate their children and to take active part in politics. He had deputed Manilal Doctor to organise and politically prepare the PIOs. After independence of Mauritius, successive Indian governments, maintained very close relations with Mauritius. It received huge financial and HRD support from India. India also kept a close watch on the democratic set up of Mauritius because in the past attempts had been made to usurp the political power from the PIOs by non- democratic means.

8.6 PIOs in Central Africa

In this part of Africa, Indians are very small in number and unlike the PIOs

14 For details on political aspects of PIO in Mauritius see, Ajay Dubey, *Government and Politics in Mauritius* (Delhi, Kalinga, 1996)

in East Africa, they did not strive for a special position in these countries. They were exhorted from very beginning by Apa B Pant and his successor Indian High Commissioner Nirmaljit Singh to fight along with black African nationalist. In Zimbabwe the fight against the White ruler, Indian settlers fought along with Africans in demolishing the racist regime. Their relation with Africans was one of trust. There had been inter African riots but hardly any Indian settlers were ever the target or issue. However, the same is not true in case of Zambia. Military and police under Kaunda administration time and again intimidated the Indian business community.

Mozambique has over 20,000 PIOs. The Portuguese rulers took Catholic PIOs from Goa as petty officials, soldiers, and ecclesiastics. Many Hindus from Goa had also gone as traders. They were persecuted by the colonial Portuguese government. When India liberated its territories like Goa from Portuguese rule, many PIOs in Mozambique were imprisoned for six months and their bank accounts were frozen. Despite their marginalisation, they have maintained their distinct culture, dress and traditions. They celebrate Indian festivals with great pomp and show.

8.7 Identity Issues of the PIOs in Africa: Indian Responses

Both domestic and international changes have altered the priority and agenda of India's policy towards PIOs in Africa. The major concern of India during colonial rule in Africa was to see to it that the colonial government gave equal privileges to PIOs compared to European settlers. It advised PIOs to join black Africans in the freedom struggle and to become one with them without seeking special privileges or status. With the abolition of colonialism, both internal and external, such imperatives do not exist. Second, in the post colonial phase of Africa, India by its experience, realised that expectation of 'dual loyalty' and inclusion of PIO in policy framework neither wins them over for Indian investment or other economic needs nor does it please African governments who have to deal firmly with PIOs according to domestic imperatives and pressures. Even the PIOs after their experience in Zanzibar, Uganda, Zambia and other countries have realised that Indian support for their protection is going to be limited because India's own capacity to intervene is limited. Even during their crisis, the PIOs themselves did not respond to the Indian offer to come and invest in India and get Indian citizenship. Thirdly, PIOs have historically and politically become a part of African states and the issue of PIO has receded as a major concern. Therefore, it is not surprising that in aggressive diplomatic and economic initiatives of Indian government during the 1970s and 80s the issue of PIO hardly got an important place. Perhaps India learnt through its East African experience that it is unrealistic and counter-productive to expect extra care for South African Indian settlers from South African government as a reciprocal gesture for the Indian contribution to struggle against apartheid. The real test of this policy will come when Indian settlers may have to share the burden of economic and social restructuring programmes in South Africa. Such pressures and demands from black groups have already started surfacing openly. However, because of the long isolation of South Africa from India they will not have, unlike East African Indian a 'dependency' attitude towards India. Therefore, India does not have to respond to a non-existent expectation of PIO. But this does not mean that PIOs have no place in Indian policy.

There is a major transformation in India's Africa policy on issues of People

of Indian Origin in Africa (PIO). In the last fifty years, Indian policies showed a remarkable change though there is continuity as well. The advancement of PIO cause no more seems to be a concern of Indian Government, until the formation of BJP government in 1998. Indian settlers who represented 'mini India' or were 'ambassadors of India' promoting goodwill for India in Africa, turned for India a non-issue or a sensitive issue if not a liability. South African Indians, for whom Mahatma Gandhi struggled in South Africa, whose cause India took to the UN even before becoming independent and sacrificed its substantial trade relations with South Africa was a very special issue for India. For this, even Nehru made deviations from his strongly held policy on Indian settler's abroad but now it became a better-to-avoid issue between Indo-South African interactions. At the same time, cultural identification of PIO, the informal interaction of Indian visitors, holy men, fund collectors and religious activists from Swayam Sewak Sangh still goes on intensely. In other words, India's policy on issue of PIO in Africa has demonstrated both changes and continuities. The following sections would attempt to analyse and highlight the experience of interaction between Indian policies and PIO issues in Africa during the fifty years after Indian independence.

Discriminatory treatment in racially structured society of South Africa had drawn Mahatma Gandhi into active politics when he had gone to South Africa in late 19th century. Later Indian nationalists of all shades had demanded improvement in working and living conditions of Indians settled abroad. Indian settlers protest began to be articulated in East Africa also. The East African Indian National Congress, based on the model of Indian National Congress was founded in 1914. A.M. Jeevanjee had started voicing the grievances of Indian settlers in East Africa. He had gone to the extent of advocating "the annexation of African territory (Tangyanika) to the Indian Empire" arguing that it had been an Asiatic kingdom in ancient times."[15] Indians in Africa formed the middle section in its three-tier society, whites at top and blacks at the bottom. However, their presence was more apparent to Africans as they came directly in contact with them through their retail shops and business. At the same time, they were aggressive in the commercial sector. Elspeth Huxley once observed, "In all countries the backbone of the country is the small man, the White colonialist with small means, but there is no place for him in the country when once the Asiatic is there.... It means if open competition is allowed, the small White colonialist must go to the wall."[16]

Jawaharlal Nehru had long ago visualised the clash of interests of Indians and Africans. Though he was more involved with Indians who had migrated to Burma, Malaya and Sri Lanka,[17] it was he who was responsible for evolving Indian's policy towards Indians settled abroad including in Africa. In 1927, when he was appointed secretary of the All India Congress Committee (AICC), an organisation of the Indian National Congress (INC), he prepared a paper 'A Foreign Policy of India' for AICC. In this paper for the first time he categorically outlined the policy of INC regarding Indian settlers in other colonial countries, the role India wanted them to play in their country of adoption and the kind of support they could expect from India. He asked in the paper, "What is the position of Indians of foreign countries to-day?" He said that the Indian overseas went as "a hireling of an exploiter", i.e.,

15 AM Jeevanjee, An Appeal on behalf of Indians in East Africa (Bombay 1912)
16 *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru*, Vol. 2, (Delhi, 1992) pp. 353-62.
17 The cause of Indians settled in Africa and other places was taken up by Sapru, Shastri, Kunjuru, Maharaj Singh and others.

British government and he wanted this position to be changed. He suggested at another place, that, "an Indian who goes to other countries must co-operate with people of that country and win for himself a position by friendship and service... The Indians should co-operate with Africans and help them, as far as possible and not claim a special position for themselves."[18]

However, this was not the consensus view of INC. Another stream of Congress comprising of C.F. Andrew, Srinivas Shastri and HN Kunzru, M.M. Malaviya, B.G. Gokhale were mainly concerned with discrimination of Indians in Africa and other places and wanted for them parity with White settlers. Many of these leaders visited worker recruitment centres and talked to the recruits about their problems.

The agitation of Mahatma Gandhi in South Africa was also confined to the betterment of the Indian settlers' cause. In the succeeding years, the issue of discrimination of Indians in South Africa became a sentimental issue for Indian nationalists, as Mahatma Gandhi was very closely associated with it. Nehru represented the left wing of the Congress. He differed with the conservative wing whose demand was confined only for betterment of Indian overseas. Nehru believed in co-operation between Indians and Africans, however until the late 1940s, his sympathy and worry were also confined only for Indians in South Africa. This contrasted with his general policy of Indian support to combined struggle of Indian settlers and Africans in which African cause was paramount. Nehru's special support to Indian settlers in South Africa was very obvious. In a message to INC of South Africa, Nehru wrote in 1939, "India is weak today and can not do much for her children abroad but she does not forget them and every insult to them is a humiliation and sorrow for her. And a day will come when her long arm will shelter and protect them and *her strength will compel justice for them.*"[19] Those days still appear distant! It is this duality between Nehru's policy and the presence of two wings (conservative and left) in Congress, which help us to understand the change and continuities in Indian support to Indian settlers in Africa. However, by the early 1950's it was Nehru's policy towards East African Indians that ultimately prevailed even in South Africa and other countries.

The Congress had set up an overseas department in 1929 and a slender contact was established with local Congress organisations in South and East Africa. Nehru took over foreign relations when an interim nationalist government was formed under him on 2 September 1946. He took the issue of Indian discrimination in South Africa beyond the Commonwealth to the United Nations. After independence, Nehru expressed his views on the position of Indians in Africa and other places in free India. Speaking in the Constituent Assembly on 8th March 1948 he said, "Now these Indians abroad what are they? Are they Indian citizens - are they going to be citizens of India or not? If they are not, then our interest in them becomes cultural, humanitarian and not political... Either they get the franchise of the nationals of the other country or treat them as Indian minus franchise and ask for them the most favourable treatment given to an alien". He advised Indian immigrants, "If you can not be, and if you are not friendly to the people of that country, come back to India and do not spoil the fair name of India."[20]

18 See, *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru* (New Delhi, 1972), pp.353-68.
19 *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru* (Orient Longman, Delhi, 1976), p.618.
20 *Selected Works of Jawaharlal Nehru* (New Delhi, Orient Longman, 1976) Vol. 9, p.618.

Nehru made it clear in 1950, "In many parts of Africa-East, West, South - there are considerable number of Indians, mostly business people. Our definite instructions to them and to our agent in Africa are that they must always put the interest of indigenous populations first. We want to have no vested interests at the expense of the population of those countries."[21] He emphasised the same view repeatedly. He said about Indians abroad, "if they adopt the nationality of that country we have no concern with them. Sentimental concern there is, but politically they cease to be Indian nationals.[22] Nehru asserted in 1953, "About Africa and Indians there, I may tell you, the policy we have pursued for many years.... We have told them very definitely and precisely that we as government do not encourage or support them in anything they might want and which goes against the interests of the Africans. We have made that perfectly clear."[23] Nehru was very clear any overt move by Indian government for PIO would do more harm than good to them. He was not against people-to-people contacts or non-governmental association. Nevertheless, Nehru also talked about double loyalty of Indians overseas. During the Indo-Chinese war India welcomed contributions from Asians of East Africa to help boost its defence efforts. When questioned on this Nehru told a foreign journalist that - "Indians overseas have dual loyalty, one to their country of adoption and other to their country of origin."[24] Further India deplored it as an act of disloyalty when it found that Asians were selling and promoting Chinese made goods at the cost of Indian goods.

Nehru stood for primacy of Africans if their interest was to clash with Indian settlers'. However, when the Asian Relation Conference was organised, two South African Indian leaders - Y.M. Dadoo and GM Naicker were invited but there were no black participants from South Africa. Even during Nehru's prime-ministership when the question of racism in South Africa was taken up in U.N., it was only the case of Indians discrimination in South Africa that was India's concern, though soon India had to change its policy to include black Africans also. This caused great misgiving among Africans.[25] Between 1960-66 the gulf between India and Indian settlers abroad widened as India came to believe that Indians were more of an obstacle than an asset in its diplomatic relations with Africa. In the urgency after Chinese attack, it seemed a matter of smaller consequence if PIOs were to face some degree of discrimination.

When Nehru formulated India's position on Indians overseas, most of the countries in Africa were under colonial rule and most of the Indians in Africa were in British colonies. Before independence the Indian concern about the treatment of Indian settlers abroad was with the intention of making British rulers of our country responsible for the welfare of overseas Indians and securing for them fair treatment and justice in relation to White settlers. The assumption that such responsibility continued was occasionally expressed in parliament and press. Immediately after India's independence, Government of India was not in a position to insist on full justice to India settlers in

21 H.S.Chhabra *India & Africa* (New Delhi), p.15.

22 *India's Foreign Policy 1946-61*, p. 130 (Nehru's reply to debate on foreign policy in Lok Sabha, 2 September 1957).

23 H.S.Chhabra *India & Africa* (New Delhi), p.15.

24 See Anirudha Gupta, "India and Asians in East Africa" in Michael Twaddle, ed. *Expulsions of Minority: Essay on Ugandan Asians* (Univ. of London, 1975),.134.

25 See, Ajay Dubey, "Nehru and Indian role in African liberation struggles (1947-64)", *Africa: Journal of African Studies Society of India.* July 1989, P. 27.

Africa. Moreover, the leaders of white settlers in Kenya and South Africa had seen Indian independence as a threat to British rule in Africa. They called Nehru as a Hindu communist who wanted to replace European rule by Indians.[26] Their propaganda about India's sinister design on African colonies where Indians were in substantial number, and the image of Indian settlers in Africa as an exclusive community whose only interest in Africa was economic exploitation, made Indian leaders very sensitive on question of Indians overseas. Nehru had other priorities like mobilisation of Afro Asian countries to keep them away from cold war rivalries.[27] For such mobilisation, the issue of PIO was not to be emphasised in Africa.

Nehru's policy of exhorting Indians to identify themselves with Africans in East Africa was not based only on his ideological commitment. In Kenya, the presence of Indian settlers was larger than the European community and Kenyan Europeans wanted to keep Kenya as Whiteman's country. A strong anti-Indian campaign was pursued by whites in Africa and several riots broke out in Kenya, Uganda, and South Africa involving Indians and Africans during 1944-49.[28] If African's struggle was to be weakened and divided there was the likelihood that white Kenyan settlers could have extended the South African model in East Africa. Therefore, it was necessary that Indian settlers joined hands with blacks in opposing white settlers, even sacrificing their short-term gains.

The fears of British settlers in Africa and the close watch of British government on free India's relations with Indian settlers in Africa became clear in the appointment of Apa B. Pant as Indian High Commissioner to East Africa. The British government received a cable from Sir Philip Mitchell of Kenya that he had been informed by a retired ICS officer, now resident in Kenya, that Pant was "far from being desirable... and is most likely to cause trouble if he comes to East Africa. Indeed I am told that it is not beyond the realm of possibility that he is being sent here for that purpose"[29]. However, Pant was given clear instructions by Nehru to exhort East African Indians to identify themselves with the Black African cause and not to seek special privileges. Pant's appointment was not welcomed by the British government or colonial governments in East Africa. It was obvious from the very beginning that his pronouncements would be closely watched and scrutinised.

It was to remove these sort of fears that Nehru said in the Constituent Assembly on 9th August 1948, "The Indian Commissioner will not be entitled to discharge consular function in respect of Indians who may not be considered to be (Indian) national, that is permanent resident in those territories or to act as spokesman of such Indians". When the Mau Mau rebellion (1952-53) broke out in Kenya very few Indian settlers in Kenya sided with the Britishers. So they were accused of being with the rebels.

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26 Group Captain IR Brigg, the conservative White settler leader in Kenya asserted about India that they want to squeeze us out and make it an Indian colony *(The Times*, London, 4 August 1954). Again South African High Commis-sioner in London had stated in 1954 "If Nehru could weaken European influence in Africa, then it will mean Africa for Indians." V. Mc Kay *Africa in World Politics* (New York, 1963), p.170.

27 See, Ajay Dubey, "Nehru and Africa in Afro-Asian Solidarity", *Ind-Africana* (Delhi University), vol.2, no.2, pp.38-46.

28 Sadiqu Ali, Shanti, *India and Africa*, pp.32-33 and pp. 51-52.

29 Tinker has given a documented account as how Pant appointment had to face hurdles and delays, for his alleged subversive intentions. Hugh Tinker, *The Banyan Tree: Overseas Empire from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh* (London, 1977), p.318.

"There were few Europeans in Kenya who do not insist that New Delhi through its official and non-official representatives in Africa has encouraged and added the rebellion of Mau-Mau."[30] Apa B Pant was charged in British Parliament for fomenting the Mau-Mau trouble.[31] Unlike what it did in South Africa, India took a softer stand and recalled Pant under pressure.

During the late 1950s, Indians of East Africa were considered as hurdles in consolidating Indo-African relations. 'But after Indo-Chinese war of 1962 when Indian isolation was exposed in Africa, Mrs. Indira Gandhi in her capacity as official delegate toured African countries in 1964. She continued to emphasise that Indians settled in Africa must identify themselves completely with the African people and make their fullest contribution to the societies in which they lived. However, as seen by her tour programme in Africa, besides her official engagements, she made it a point not to miss Indian settlers, leaders and members of the community though in certain small locations their numbers did not exceed even fifty.[32] She also called Indian settlers "Ambassadors of India" in Africa. It shows a subtle departure from Nehru policy, as Indian settlers became now a useful instrument for generating goodwill for India. Their position as ambassadors of India implied that they were no more excluded from policy considerations of India. These shifts became more noticeable in many areas when Mrs. Gandhi became the Prime Minister of India. By the second half of the 1960s there was increasing realisation that Indians in Africa whatever passport they may hold should not be put outside India's Africa policy. This also suited the Indian move of economic diplomacy in Africa and other developing countries as Indian settlers in East Africa had requisite capital and will to share it with Indian economic initiatives in African countries.

Since the early 1990s, there is again a proactive interest of the Indian government towards Indians overseas. This started with appreciation of foreign remittance from NRIs in Gulf region and from North Africa. This provided a meaningful addition to India's foreign reserve requirements. Further when liberalisation started in the early 1990s, the Government of India tried to rope in first NRIs and then Indian settlers abroad to attract foreign direct investment. It organised meetings for NRIs and promised many incentives to attract their investment. PIOs were an equally relevant overseas segment to rope in the India's new drive for globalisation. But the Congress government's move of India was cautious and slow towards this segment. Because of its historical position, it was over-cautious in including PIOs under overt policy framework. When the Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP) came to power, Indian policy changed very fast for this segment. Historically the Rastriya Swayam Sewak Sangh (RSS), a support base for BJP, had maintained very close people-to-people contact through its branches among Hindu overseas settlers. In contrast to Nehru's policy of active dissociation of PIOs from Indian foreign policy objectives, the BJP stood for active and overt association of PIOs for foreign policy objectives of India. It helped to organise the first ever

30 Michael Blundell, *New York Times*, 19 July 1953.

31 Lord Alport raised the question concerning "the contribu-tion made to prevailing conditions of transition and unrest in Kenya during Mau-Mau rebellion by the staff of Indian High Commission office". Alport demanded that government of India should be asked to withdraw its staff from Kenya. *Britain: House of Commons Debates*, Vol.518, and 29 July 1953.

32 See Ajit S.Gopal, "The Indian Journalist who covered her entire safari", *World Focus* (No.53, October 1984), p.15.

conference of Parliamentarians of Indian Origin in New Delhi.[33] It issued the PIO card, which provided very substantial advantages to PIOs, compared to other foreign nationals.[34] On the side of PIOs also things changed which enabled them to look towards India from a different footing. By the mid 1990s, except in South Africa, PIOs got a long enough time to prove their loyalty to the country of their adoption. They emerged from isolation at home and emerged as a confident identity group. By the 1990s they see no contradiction, after proving their loyalty to their countries, between their citizenship and getting a favourable commercial deal from their countries of origin. After all it is not peculiar to the Indian Diaspora. Many countries have successfully used the presence of different Diaspora community to mobilise economic and diplomatic support for the country.[35] In fact by the 1990s, diasporas - Black, Jewish, European, Chinese or Indian are not a centrifugal, sectarian force which needs to be contained or crushed. Rather it has emerged as secular, acceptable identity force at international level. In such a changed scenario the proactive interest of India in the 1990s does not have any element of imperialist design or racist preference as was likely to be construed during Nehru period.

8.8 Conclusion

The Indian Diaspora in Africa has a prominent place in the global Indian diaspora with a population of over 2 millions. They are found mainly in South Africa, East Africa, Central Africa, Western Indian Ocean Islands, and Mauritius. With the exception of the people of Indian Origin in East Africa, most of the Indian diaspora in the continent were indentured plantation workers, which happened during British colonial rule. There are varied experiences of the Indian diaspora in these regions. However, there was a general trend in terms of the kind of transition the Indian diasporas had to undergo. Initially they encountered difficult moments in their struggle for establishing their social position and preserve identity in the host countries. Gradually, due to various factors, significant transformations were brought about in the last fifty years.

8.9 Further Reading

Dubey, Ajay. 2000. "India and experience of Indian Diaspora in Africa." *African Quarterly*.

Tinker, Hugh. 1977. *The Banyan Tree: Overseas Empire from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh*. London: Oxford University Press.

33 This conference was organised by Indian Council of International Co-operation, New Delhi.

34 By paying a one time fee of US$ one thousand, they can get Multiple entry visas for 20 years. PIO cardholders will have almost all commercial rights as Indian citizens except in case of purchase of agricultural property.

35 Mauritius used the presence of Indians, Europeans, Africans and Chinese for economic and diplomatic gain.

Unit 9

Indian Diaspora in South and Southeast Asia

Contents

Learning Objectives

After going through the Unit, you will be able to:

- comprehend the nuances of Indian diaspora in South and Southeast Asia;
- classify various types of Indian diaspora;
- discuss the emergence of Indian identity; and
- explain the evolving perspective of Indian diaspora.

9.1 Introduction

The Encyclopedia of Social Sciences defines that "diaspora is a Greek term for a nation separated from its own state or territory and dispersed among other nations but preserving its national culture". In the idea of dispersal and fragmentation and in much of the presumed relationship between the diasporic community and the country (motherland), which they left, the possibility of return remains. This may be true in the context of Jews but the possibility of return is a complex issue in the context of Indian diaspora in South and Southeast Asia.

Indian diaspora is spread in different parts of the world and its number is around 20 million. It is the third largest in the world after the British and the Chinese diaspora. Such persons are prosperous in the US, Mauritius, Singapore and Thailand but struggling very hard in Myanmar, Fiji, Malaysia and Sri Lanka.

Indian diaspora became important for India when the policy of command economy was replaced by market economy. India became sensitive about the challenges of the new world order and evolved the policy of "Look East" to promote strategic and economic ties with Asia-Pacific. In that endeavour, it was found that Indian diaspora had immense potential to support Indian contacts with East Asian neighbours. As the Chinese diaspora greatly contributed to the development of new economic zones in China, so it can be similarly expected from the Indian diaspora if the necessary infrastructure

is evolved. Indian diaspora in the ASEAN region (a region of the "Association of South East Asian Nations") is resourceful and capable of facilitating India's connections with the countries of their adoption.

9.2 Understanding Indian Diaspora

Indians have gone overseas as travellers, labourers and businessmen in the past, but in the wake of partition of the country in 1947, millions went from one part of the subcontinent to another. There was exodus of Indian Muslims to Pakistan, where they are known a Mohajirs. Despite having a common religion, their integration with the native population remains a distant dream. There was exodus of Hindus from Pakistan to India and they also faced problems in adjusting with the new environment. India, which emerged as a secular state and stood against the "Two-Nation Theory" provided religious freedom to all its citizens and tried to rehabilitate displaced persons without discriminating against their ethnicity and religious affiliations. All those who migrated from India to settle elsewhere were projected as its diaspora.

Hindus who migrated from Pakistan to India and Muslims who migrated from India to Pakistan are nostalgic about their ethnicity and place of origin. Both of them are in the category of diaspora and it is a sensitive matter to project them whether they are Pakistani diaspora or Indian.

Dilemmas about Diaspora

There are outstanding issues and dilemmas about the diasporic community in the South Asian context. For instance, East Bengal became Pakistan after independence, and it emerged, as a new nation of Bangladesh in 1971.The people of Bangladesh are known as Bangladeshis but Bengalis in general parlance. They have migrated to Assam and other parts of India in recent years. It is debatable to project them Indian diaspora, but Bengalis are an essential part of Indian civilization. There has been exodus of Kashmiri Pandits from the Kashmir valley. They have been dispossessed of their properties and they are struggling for their shelter. Can they be projected as a diasporic community even if they inhabit the same country?

There are groups of Punjabis, Sikhs and Gujaratis who have migrated in different directions of the world more than once. Fijians of Indian origin have migrated to Australia and New Zealand after Lt. Col. Sitiveni Rabuka staged a coup d'etat in 1987. Sindh is an important part of Pakistan and Sindhis are proud of claiming their Indianess outside. A large Indian diaspora in the region an emigrated from one country to another and they have forgotten their native language also. The section of Indian diaspora, which is "twice migrant" have lost touch with India. For the host country, they may be projected as Indians, but they are fragmented and have very little to share especially with those groups, who are "twice migrant" from two or three countries respectively.

They do not speak the same language, or visit the same temple and hardly intermarry. As a supporter of "Unity in diversity", India may project them as Indian diaspora, but it is difficult to categorise them as an India-centric homogenous group.

Diaspora Affluence

The Indian diaspora is affluent not only in the US, Mauritius and the Caribbean,

but they are also influential in Singapore, Thailand and the Philippines. There are two types of diaspora in the ASEAN region of which one is affluent and another is striving to be affluent. They need interaction with the motherland for business, trade and religious purposes. It is also felt that if India has to play a constructive role at the international level, the feedback of the diasporic community and their support is solicited. Indian diaspora is playing an important role in the ASEAN economy and they are trusted by the local leaders. It was the Indian diaspora with whose mediation various indigenous groups in Southeast Asian region were supporting the Indian National Army (INA) of Netaji Subhas Chandra Bose. They had kept affiliation with Indian National Congress and supported the anti-colonial struggle. However when India became independent and pursued a non-alignment policy, it was not within their framework to support the diasporic community more openly. Its socialistic drives and nationalization policies deterred the investors, but the situation started changing in the post-liberalisation era. The influence of the diaspora on Indian decision-making could not be ignored and overseas Indians were ready to reciprocate. The Indian diaspora are applauded for developments in India for science, technology, human resources, and for extending support to bring together business network to forge closer linkages with the country of their adoption.

Diaspora Policy in the past

India had been very circumspect regarding its policies towards its diaspora in South and Southeast Asia. From Prime Minister, Jawaharlal Nehru to Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, the advice to Indian diaspora was to integrate in the mainstream of national life of the countries of their adoption. It could not exercise its diplomatic influence to deter democratic Burma under U Nu from its anti-Indian crusades. The Citizenship Act (1948) was tailor-made to deprive Indians of Burmese citizenship. Naturally when General Ne win usurped power in 1962 and nationalized the properties of Indians, India was unable to restrain military rulers. There was turmoil and unrest in Bangladesh and Pakistan, but the Indian government viewed these developments as too sensitive to express its opinion. The political developments in Burma had wide-ranging repercussions. Indians, who were affluent in business and trade, were evicted and subsequently Burma turned from a rich to a poor country of Southeast Asia.

If Burma was compelled to embrace friendship with the Chinese, it was because of its poor economic situation. The Chinese have filled up the vacuum created after the eviction of Indians and today they are powerful element in the politics and economy of Burma.

India has overlooked the plight of the Indian diaspora in its neighbourhood in the post-independence era. As India's unity was challenged on regional, linguistic and religious considerations it was engaged in putting its own house in order. It believed that if it supports the integrative drives of its neighbours, others would also reciprocate the gesture. It was one of the reasons that India decided to support Singalese in Sri Lanka against militant Tamils in 1987. India dispatched its troops to fight against Tamils (LTTE). These steps proved counterproductive. It neither subdued the Tamils nor did it create any good will for India in the neighbourhood. Pakistan's crusade for Kashmir was intensified and external agents of destabilization became active against India.

India's "inaction" in Burma (1948-1962) and its "Pro-active" role in Sri Lanka (1987-88) vis-à-vis its diaspora lacked vision and rationality. India was criticized for it inaction in Burma and its was condemned for its action in Sri Lanka. These events gave wrong signals and complicated the process of conflict resolution.

India began to attach importance to its diasporic community with sensivity and care in the era of liberalization. When India opened its markets and the economic situation and global competition became matters of concern, it became necessary to review its perspectives and policies in the light of new developments. India needed infrastructure and in that endeavour "Foreign Direct Investment" (FDI) was required. It was only thereafter that the importance of overseas Indians was emphasised and high-powered committee under L.M. Singhvi was established to understand the problems and perspectives of Indian diaspora.

India overhauled its economic policies to create an attractive economic environment. It offered tax holidays and removal of tariff barriers. It assured its support for free trade and promote economic integration with Asia-Pacific. Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee offered special incentives to the Indian diaspora and assured them he would create special economic zones for their project of dual citizenship facility and full solidarity. He gave the idea of celebrating Pravasi Bharatiya Diwas every year, which has proved useful in establishing rapport and understanding with the diasporic community.

The changes in the economic policies and friendly gestures for the diaspora were widely appreciated. India, which was welcomed as the dialogue partner of ASEAN, and partnership with ARF ("ASEAN Regional Forum") was happy to cultivate its diaspora. It was believed that with the assistance and support of NRIs in the ASEAN region, the objectives of Mekong-Ganga project and BIMST-EC ("Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Myanmar, Nepal, Srilanka, Thailand Economic Co-operation") would be achievable. In all those endeavours and to assure fruitful partnership, the feedback and support of diaspora are crucial.

9.3 Categorising Indian Diaspora

Indian diaspora is of different types. In order to understand it, we need to understand various categories of Indian diaspora. They are known as Non-Resident Indians (NRIs). Persons of Indian Origin (PIO), Persons Resident in India (PRI) and Overseas Indians and each term has a different legal connotation.

NRIs & PIOs

According to the Foreign Exchange Management Act (FEMA) 1999, which came into effect from 1 June 2000, an NRI is an Indian Passport holder who stays outside India on employment, business or vocation or for any other purpose for more than 182 days in a financial year. The 182 days need not be continuous. On the other hand, a PIO is a person, who while not being a citizen of Pakistan or Bangladesh, shall be deemed to be of Indian origin if he or either of his parents or any of his grand parents was a citizen of India by virtue of the Indian Constitution or Citizenship Act of 1955. Foreign wives of Indian citizens are treated as PIO, though they don't have Indian parentage. Indians who emigrated as indentured labourers during the British colonial period also come under this category. The concentration of PIOs is high in countries like Malaysia. An NRI will become a PIO if he acquires the citizenship of another country. Because there was no provision for dual

citizenship under the Indian Constitution before 2004, they were unable to get Indian citizenship. But now the situation has changed and the facility of dual citizenship can be attained.

PRI & overseas Indians

The next category is the PRI. Persons Resident in India are those Indian citizens who go to foreign countries for higher studies, educational training, medical treatment or my other purpose indicating their intention of not staying outside the country for an uncertain period. Indian students abroad who take up jobs on completion of their education abroad would attain the PRI status from the day of joining the employment.

The concept of Overseas Indians emerged during the 20th century when the plight of the Indian emigrants overseas kindled a strong political protest in India against the British Indian government's attitude towards them because India was then a part of the British empire and all in India and overseas were said to be the British subjects.

Generally speaking, the term PIO and NRI have been used interchangeably by the Government of India (GoI) in Parliamentary debates and other official literature as well as by the Indian Press. There are different categories of migrant Indians; this includes emigrants under the British colonial system including indentured labourers and free passage migrants to Southeast Asia and the Caribbean countries. Free passage/commercial emigrants are those who left India after independence for higher education and better jobs in the U.K., the U.S. and Australia and the labour migrants in the Gulf countries to this day.

9.4 The Problem about Indian Diaspora

The problem of the Government of India is that it tries to group the Indian diaspora under one definition. This is the principal reason why the debate on dual nationality has stagnated. If a PIO has the inherent right to apply for Indian citizenship and is allowed to maintain his or her other nationality, it would also by default allow Pakistanis or Bangladeshis to seek Indian citizenship.

From time immemorial, Indians have migrated from India to different parts of the world. Indian diaspora comprises persons who migrated both involuntarily and voluntarily, namely, the PIOs, NRIs and the stateless persons of Indian origin. The present government's classification of the Overseas Indian communities into Indian citizens, PIOs and stateless persons can be collectively referred to as the Indian diaspora. Therefore, a multi-layered, broad and all encompassing definition is required. An accurate definition or acronym for the Indian diaspora is difficult to come by.

In the Southeast Asian region, the Overseas Indians invited their families to their countries of settlement and started family-owned shops. They built railroads and involved in development of port facilities. PIO constituted a significant number in Burma where they were involved in money lending and bureaucracy. They also worked as watchmen, prison officers, school teachers, etc.

In South Asia, Sri Lanka accounts for a large number of PIO. Here, they are called Indian Tamils. In Nepal, the skilled and unskilled labourers are called *Madhesias*. In West Asia, Kuwait has a large number of Indian emigrants, who

are involved in skilled and unskilled labour. They also work as drivers, nurses, and housemaid. Bachelors alone can stay on temporary contracts. They cannot bring their family. They are not allowed to settle permanently.

9.5 Indian Diaspora in South Asia

India encompasses a vast territory inhabiting a large number of ethnic groups. The Punjabis, Nepalese, Gujaratis, Sindhis, Biharis and Marwaris are spread into different parts of South Asia. Their ethnicity and primordial loyalties are not monolithic, but they are Indians in temperament and outlook. The British colonial masters had facilitated the movement of Indian diaspora through indentured labour system, Kangani or Maistry system and finally when they transferred sovereignty to the natives, various nationalities took their shape in different countries. India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, Bhutan, Nepal and Maldives emerged as separate independent nations. The regions of Bengal and Punjab, the main Centre of India's nationalist movement is divided and is the constituent units of Pakistan, India and Bangladesh. Though all the nations have tried to establish separate identities, it is difficult to bifurcate their culture from Indian civilization, if they are outside the sub-continent, they are an essential component of Indian diaspora. Although it is debatable but people of the subcontinent have similarities and the people of South Asia, outside the territory of India, may be called diasporic.

Burma had been a part of British India from 1824 to 1937 and ruled from Calcutta and New Delhi respectively. The Britishers encouraged Indian farmers and labourers to go to Burma for farming and trade. Indians found this venture profitable. There was large-scale emigration of Indians to Burma. Subsequently they ultimately preferred to settle down in that country. But when Burma became independent Indians were projected as foreigners and their properties and businesses were nationalized. Similarly Sri Lanka had been governed from Madras during the colonial period till 1802. There were frequent movement of the people from Madras to Colombo and a large section of Tamils stayed back in that country. Sri Lanka discriminated them from Sinhalese and projected them as illegal immigrants. Similarly a large number of population in the Tarai region of Nepal are considered alien. Indians treat Himalayan mountain ranges as sacred and sacrosanct on religious grounds and have been visiting Nepal from time immemorial. The socio-economic interaction with Nepal is so deep-rooted and overwhelming that isolation of Indians from Newaris or Gurkhas and vice versa is impossible. Moreover the Janakpur and Birat Nagar regions are inhabited by Madhesiyas and they play an important role in the national life of the country.

Indian diaspora in South Asia have been influenced by the Indian way of life and they are sensitive about their culture, religion and ethnic genealogy. Their marriages with other groups, especially of tribal descent, are abhorred. Indians endeavour to maintain their separate ethnic identity and therefore their patriotism towards the country of their adoption are questioned. Moreover, it has been a common trend in South Asia to criticize India at various forums to project their own separate identity. Indian diaspora in South Asia has suffered because of irrationality in nation building and integrationist drives pursued by the governments in Bangladesh, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka. In all those countries, a particular ethnic or religious group, which wants to establish their preponderance in the political system,

comes out with parochial ideas of discrimination, on religious, caste and ethnic considerations. The Sinhalese versus the Tamils, Hindus verses Muslims and Newaris versus Madhesias etc. are the endeavour of assertions of one community over another.

India has tried to convey that its diaspora should forge harmonious relations with natives of the country of their adoption, without demanding any special rights and privileges. It wanted that the Indian diaspora should evolve a practical approach to be integrated in the mainstream of national life. It never spoke about any guarantees of support if its diaspora was discriminated at the political and economic levels in the countries of their adoption. In fact, it remained silent when Indians faced discrimination vis-à-vis the natives in Burma, Malaysia and Fiji. This was in sharp contrast to the Chinese attitudes, which support their diaspora more openly. When Vietnam discriminated against and persecuted Hoas (ethnic Chinese in Vietnam), China displayed its disapproval by dispatching its troops, to teach a lesson to Vietnam. India has merely used its moral and diplomatic influence to support its diaspora, which is insufficient and too little to make any significant impact to address the problems of the diaspora.

The attitude of Indian government is changing in the post-cold war era. Indian diaspora is viewed as an important asset in enhancing its economic interests. A new policy towards Indian diaspora takes into account their economic contribution to India. According to the Economic Survey 2000-2001 and Reserve Bank of India's Annual Report 2000-2001, the NRI deposit during April-September 2000 in India was 1,362 million US dollars.

9.6 Indian Diaspora in Southeast Asia

Southeast Asia, known as 'Subarnabhumi' ('golden hand' or 'land of gold') in the ancient past was frequently visited by Indians for business, trade and missionary activities. Indian culture is prevalent in art and architecture, language and literature, religion, customs and traditions of most of the countries. The famous temples of Angkor Wat (Kampuchea), Borobudur (Indonesia), Emerald Buddha (Thailand) etc. prove our connections and the epic of Ramayana and Mahabharata in different versions in the region indicates our cultural influence and interaction from that region from time immemorial. Streams of Indians have been going to that area but some of those who went under indentured labour system or Kangani system, stayed back. These people played crucial role in the production of sugar, tea, coffee, cocoa, rice, tobacco and rubber. Since Southeast Asia is located at the doorstep and labourers were getting different types of incentives by the colonial rulers, Indians were very enthusiastic to go there for their bread and butter. During 1852 to 1937, about 2 million Indians went to Malaya and nearly 2.5 million went to Burma. Besides Malaya and Burma, thousands of Indians went to Siam, Sumatra, Java and the Phillippines especially after the economic depression of 1929. A number of people from Uttar Pradesh, Punjab, Gujarat, Madras and Bombay transmigrated. The Marwaris from Rajputana, Chettiyars from Madras, the Punjabis from Gujranwala went towards Rangoon, Bangkok and Singapore respectively and they played important roles in the economic spheres of those countries. Although they faced stiff competition from the Chinese business circles the hurdles did not deter them. The bulk of Indian diaspora are located in Malaysia, Singapore and Thailand as their contribution in the national economy have been regarded positive by their political masters.

There are three types of Indian diaspora in Southeast Asia, namely NRIs, PIOs and state-less Indians. The largest number of NRIs are in Singapore (90 thousand), followed by Malaysia (15 thousand) Thailand (15 thousand), Brunei (7 thousand), Myanmar (2 thousand), the Philippines (2 thousand), Indonesia (500), Vietnam (320) Cambodia (150) and Laos (107). The number of PIOs is largest in Myanmar (25,00,000) followed by Malaysia (16,00,000) Singapore (2,17,000). Thailand (70,000) and Indonesia (50,000). The number of stateless Indians is largest in Myanmar (4,00,000) and Malaysia (50,000). The citizenship laws in Myanmar and Malaysia are difficult especially for Indians. The knowledge of language, customs, traditions and residential criteria are difficult to be fulfilled and there are ethnic lobbies to work against them.

As far as Indo-China is concerned, the number of Indian diaspora is small. Although India was very close to all the three countries, Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia during the cold war years, yet Indians did not prefer to stay there for long. The total number of NRIs and PIOs in Vietnam are 320, followed by Laos 115 and in Cambodia 300. In fact, that area was a battleground between communist and anti-communist forces. All the three had been supporting nationalization campaigns for decades and business opportunities were limited.

Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia and Indonesia on the other hand, offered business opportunities. Indians found it profitable to go there for trade, investments, and jobs. In Brunei, the number of Indian doctors, engineers and teachers is around 3000 and they are famous for their hard work and professionalism. On the other hand, Indians have been associated with textile industries in Indonesia. The bulk of investors in textile business is Sindhis whereas the Sikhs are engaged in the sports goods business. The contribution of Indians in IT, medical, accounting and law are appreciated and incentives are offered to take their services. Such professionals are also in demand in Malaysia, but a majority of the diaspora are engaged in rubber and palm plantations. Their economic situation and literacy rates are low compared to Indian diaspora in other parts of Southeast Asia.

The position of the Indian diaspora in the Philippines is encouraging. The Sindhi community is engaged in trade and manufacturing whereas Punjabis are dealing in money lending. Manila has been treated as an important conduit to immigrate to the United States and services of Indian professionals are appreciated. However, Singapore is the most favoured destination of the Indian diaspora despite Singapore's prohibitive immigration laws. Tamils, Malayalis, Sindhis, Gujaratis and Punjabis are the major components of the Indian diaspora and they are involved not only in business and trade but also in civil services, the judicial system and educational institutions. Besides traditional business, Indians are contributing in the advancement of knowledge in IT, medical sciences and pharmaceutical research. Their role in transforming Singapore, as the economic hub has been recognised and their professional inputs are widely appreciated.

Indian diaspora in Thailand is respected for its knowledge and skills. The largest number of Indian diaspora in Thailand is Sikhs followed by Sindhis, Punjabis, Tamils and Purabias. They have been traditionally engaged in textile business. Some of them are also dealing in real estates and jewellery sectors. On the other hand, the services of Indian professionals, IT experts and skilled personnel are in great demand in international financial institutions and MNCs based in Bangkok. Indian diaspora feel at home in that country and some of them have assumed Thai names and a Thai way of life. Inter-

marriage between Indian and Thai nationals, which was not allowed in the past, is permitted now. The level of socio-economic interaction with the natives is ideal.

9.7 Evolving Perspective

Indian diaspora has a mature perspective to co-exist in the countries of their adoption. If they had a weakness to look towards India in the past, it was because most of them had emigrated with the support of the Britishers and Britain was the common colonial master. The Congress Party was a nationalist party to act as a safety valve to articulate the grievances of the people and the diasporic community wanted to express their grievances through that party. The Congress party under Mahatma Gandhi had effectively argued the case of the Indian diaspora in South Africa, Fiji and Burma during the colonial era. Indian diaspora was indebted to Mahatma Gandhi for what he had done against apartheid in South Africa and indentured labour system in Fiji. It was for this reason that they were politically affiliated with developments in India. But when the Britishers transferred sovereignty to India and other countries in the region, the situation started changing. Although, it took some time, gradually they de-linked their political affiliation with the parties in the motherland.

When India became independent, it could not fulfill the expectations of Indians in Burma, Malaysia and Fiji. India advised its diaspora to adjust and co-exist with the natives and evolve indigenous solution to resolve their problems. It was made clear to the diaspora that Indian government will not mediate and if they have to survive in the countries of their adoption, they have to seek political and economic affiliation with the natives. This proved painful in some cases, but it also helped integrationist drives. Indian diaspora in the ASEAN region are thus changed their perspective and evolved professional values, to play a useful role in the culture and economic life of the countries of their adoption.

The post-independence era has witnessed the struggle for national identity and ethnic assertion. The nation building activity, which began with the dawn of freedom, is continuing. India with a plural society supported "Unity in diversity" and tolerated ethnic, religious and linguistic diversities. Its own problems were gigantic in proportion and its advice was not solicited in the politics of the region.

After 1947 Prime Minister Nehru suggested that the overseas Indians should identify themselves with the aspiration of the local population. The assumption was that such a course would facilitate the building of bonds between the overseas Indians and native population and contribute to healthy relations between the two. India's policy since 1947 has been determined by this very assumption.

Presently the world is changing rapidly in view of globalisation. The countries of Asia-pacific have to evolve a common strategy and the diasporic community can act as a facilitator in that process. Indian diaspora in the ASEAN region is inadvertently endowed to play the diplomatic role of a facilitator so that the countries of Asia-Pacific comes closer to face the challenges of the new world order and contribute to the emergence of an "Asia Century" in the near future.

Box 9.1: Important Lessons

- The number of Indian diaspora in the ASEAN region are estimated about 2 million, but their figures for South Asia are difficult to be mentioned. Most of the new nations in South Asia are trying to carve out a separate identity for themselves, which may prove different from India.
- Indian diaspora is fragmented along caste, religion, region and ethnic lines. A Sikh in the ASEAN region or a Muslim or a Sindhi or Gujarati have their own separate cultural and political affiliations.
- Most of the Indian diasporic community is inhabited in the capital cities of ASEAN. Bangkok, Singapore, Manila, KLM Bandar Seri Begawan and Jakarta have been their favoured destination and they are connected with business and commerce.
- Indian diaspora have played important role in the ASEAN boom. Their contribution in IT sectors, construction business, textile industries and human resource developments are appreciated.
- The diasporic community has supported the transformation of India from command economy to market economy. It is in the economic area that they are willing to cooperate and coordinate contacts between India and the countries of their adoption.
- ASEAN region have proximity with India. We share common maritime borders with Indonesia, Thailand and Myanmar. We also share common land frontiers of 1600 kilometres with Myanmar. We are willing to establish growth areas on the common frontiers and develop Andamans as an important trading Centre. Indian diaspora can provide important input in those directions if the proposals are mutually beneficial.

9.8 Conclusion

In short, most of the Indian diaspora in the ASEAN region are skilled people, who are gradually integrating with the mainstream of national life. They are no longer disliked even in Myanmar and Malaysia now. Their role in the economic life of the countries of their adoption are substantial and they have proved themselves relevant for the countries in the region.

Indians remain a heterogeneous group with their loyalty and allegiance towards their own ethnic community, religious institutions, customs and traditions in conjunction with the customs and traditions of the countries of their adoption. They are no longer India-centric. Sikhs or Muslims or Buddhists identify themselves with their respective religions. On the other hand, Sindhi, Tamil, Bengali or Bhojpuri communities differ in their life style, culture and rituals. They have affiliation with their ethnic groups and they have proved themselves assimilative, permissive and accommodative in recent years.

9.9 Further Reading

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Unit 10

Indian Diaspora in Europe

Contents

Learning objectives

After reading this Unit, you will be able to describe:

- the distribution of Indian diasporas in Europe;
- background of Indian diasporas in Europe; and the
- profile of the Indian Diaspora in the UK.

10.1 Introduction

The Indian Diaspora is the third largest Diaspora in the world following the British and the Chinese. The over 20 million Indian diasporic population is spread over all the continents. In Europe, the strength of the Indian Diaspora is very large with a staggering share of about 5-8 % of the total population of Europe. In fact, the Indian Diaspora is spread over a large section of Europe, particularly in West Europe. The United Kingdom (UK) is said to have the single largest Indian Diaspora in Europe.

There are two main characteristic features of the Indian Diaspora in Europe: *one*, the emigration took place primarily in the second half of the 20th century; *two*, the emigration is based mainly on professional and skilled labour in various fields and sectors.

Europe comprises forty-five countries. It has the largest economy in the world. In the recent past, with the emergence of a unified political entity called *European Union* (EU) in November 1, 1993, a majority of the erstwhile countries of Europe have become members of the Union. At present, the EU has twenty-five member states.[1] The Indian Diaspora in Europe is mainly found in the countries of the EU. Therefore, much of the discussions on the profile of Indian Diaspora in Europe need to focus on some of the countries of the EU.

10.2 Distribution of Indian Diaspora in Europe

The Indian diaspora is distributed in various countries of Europe. The presence of Indian diasporics (both PIOs and NRIs) in Europe varies from country to country. There are countries with large Indian diaspora presence while in many other countries the presence is relatively low. The figures in Table 10.1

1 The names of the European Union member states are: Austria, Belgium, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, UK (as of May 2006).

would give us some idea about the general picture of the demographic strengths of 'People of Indian Origin' (PIOs) and 'Non-Resident Indians' (NRIs) in Europe. In terms of demographic strengths of the presence of Indian diasporics we can loosely club the host countries into the following three categories for analytical purposes. In the first category, we have countries where there is a large presence of Indian population, such as, the UK, Netherlands, Italy, Portugal and France.[2] The Indian diasporics in the UK is exceptionally high with a population of about 1.2 million. The Netherlands rank second with a good strength of over 2 lakh Indian population. The remaining three countries vary from around 65,000 to 71,500.[3] The Indian emigrants in these countries primarily consist of businessmen, jewelry dealers, craftsmen, doctors, engineers, computer programmers and academicians.

Table 10.1: Indian Diaspora in Europe

No.	Country	Population (million)	PIOs	NRIs	Stateless	% of Population
1.	Armenia	3.7		200		0.005
2.	Austria	8.1	3005	8940		0.154
3.	Belgium	10.2		7000		0.069
4.	Bulgaria	8.2		20		0.003
5.	Cyprus	0.7		300		0.460
6.	Denmark	5.3	900	1252		0.040
7.	Finland	5.2	410	750	10	0.220
8.	France	58.8	55000	10000		0.110
9.	Germany	82.0	10000	25000		0.042
10.	Greece	10.3		7000		0.050
11.	Ireland	3.7	600	1000		0.027
12.	Italy	57.4	36000	35500		0.063
13.	Netherlands	15.9	200000	15000		1.350
14.	Norway	4.4		5630		0.127
15.	Poland	38.6	75	750		0.002
16.	Portugal	10.0	65000	5000		0.700
17.	Russia	145.6	44	16000		0.010
18.	Slovakia	5.4		100		0.001
19.	Spain	40.0	16000	13000		0.040
20.	Sweden	8.9	9000	2000		0.012
21.	Switzerland	7.2	8400	4800	300	0.117
22.	Ukraine	49.0		3400		0.069
23.	U.K	56.9 (Total PIOs + NRIs = 1,200,000 approximately)*				2.109

* Exact figures of NRIs and PIOs not available. Total number of Indians is currently estimated to be 1.2m.

(**Source:** See MEAs, 2001)

In the second category, there are countries with a medium range Indian population ranging from 1000 (in Finland) to 35,000 (in Germany). They are: Germany, Spain, Russia, Switzerland, Sweden, Austria, Belgium, Greece, Norway, Ukraine, Denmark, Ireland and Finland. In these countries, the Indian emigrants mainly comprise industrialists in the sectors of fashion designing,

2 The countries are listed in descending order of population strengths.
3 The figures used for this analysis are taken from the reports of the MEAs, 2001.

garment making and textile designing, computer professionals, doctors, engineers, academicians, semi-skilled and unskilled labourers.

In the third category, there are European countries with a minimum Indian population. They are Poland, Cyprus, Armenia, Slovakia and Bulgaria.[4] The strengths of Indian presence in these countries range from 20 to 825. These Indian emigrants primarily comprise businessmen, doctors and engineers. There are also illegal Indian emigrants in these countries in semi-skilled and unskilled labour sector.

Most of the Indian populations in Europe, especially in the countries of the first two categories mentioned above, largely live in or near the urban centers, primarily the capital cities or the regional headquarters. They have a good concentration in the capital cities. For instance, London has a concentration of 41 %, Paris (85%), Brussels (45%), Berlin (43%) and Amsterdam (49%). The other regional headquarters and industrial towns have lesser concentrations, such as, Manchester with 19%, Cardiff (16.1%), Edinburgh (16.9%), Dresden (11%), Dusseldorf (10.1%),[5] Antwerp (41%), Lyons (9%), and Grenobles (8%) [6] to cite a few examples.

In these countries, most of the Indian population is employed in the services sector. The gap between employment and unemployment is quite high. Generally, the gap between the male and female employment situation is immense. In countries like Germany, France and Netherlands, the immigration laws wherein the spouse visa restricts employment of the concerned persons, result in a gender imbalanced employment condition. In the United Kingdom and Belgium the lack of available alternative child and elderly care creates a constraint in the female employment rates.[7]

In the realm of religion, there is also diversity in the concentration of Indian diaspora in different countries of Europe. Nevertheless, there is a general trend where the Hindus are in majority in most of the countries. However, there is a sizeable proportion of Indian Muslims and Sikhs in the Netherlands and the UK. Besides the Hindus, Muslims and the Sikhs there is also the presence of other religious groups such as Christians.

10.3 Background of Indian Diaspora in Europe

The history of Indian diaspora in Europe can be discussed under two eras. The first era consists of the period from ancient times till World War II, while the second era would deal with the post-World War II situation. The two eras may be considered respectively as '*old diaspora*' (or pre-modern diaspora) and '*new diaspora*' (or modern diaspora).

Indian emigration in pre-World War II

The Indian connection with Europe could be dated back to the 10th century B.C. There were evidences of trade and commerce being carried out between the peoples of the Indian sub-continent and Europe. The Indus River and the Gulf of Persia were said to be important points of passage of ships. The Old Testament Bible also mentions the import of spices, ivory, and peacocks

4 There could be some other countries Europe with minimum Indian Population, but they could not be mentioned here due to unavailability of data.
5 Census of Germany, 2001.
6 Census of France 2001 (See www.insee.org).
7 See Census of UK 2001- "Men and Women, Equal Opportunities Office."

from India. The queen of Sheba is said to have procured spices from India and gifted to the King Solomon. Several Indian rulers sent emissaries to Rome and trade flourished between the two kingdoms more than two thousand years ago. Indian literature and science had also influenced the Western societies. For instance, the Greeks learnt from Indian science, especially the medical sciences and arithmetic. Europeans learnt of the concept of Zero invented by Indian mathematicians. The Panchatantra was translated in the 6th Century A.D. from Sanskrit to Latin, Spanish, Italian and other European languages. Indian philosophy was greatly admired by German philosophers and writers including Kant, Hegel, Goethe, and more recently the humanist Herman Hesse, who recognised that India was a major civilisation. There were Indologists of great repute such as Max Mueller. [8]

The connection of Indian diaspora in Europe is also found in the lists and histories of traders of pearl, gold, diamond and semi precious stones, muslin cloth, supplying the royal houses of France, UK, Netherlands, Portugal, Germany and Belgium along with the various nobles who patronized them. Amongst those who immigrated to these nations, and especially UK and France were 'students, seafarers, cricketers, and housemaids'.[9] Also present in the diasporic community of that time were the exiled princes of India, the most noted of whom was Dileep Singh, a Sikh prince who had an estate in East Anglia. In France, the first contact was with Prince Dwarka Nath Tagore, who had been invited to Louis Phillip's court.[10] Here contact was established between Prince Tagore and Eugene Burnouf, one of the noted French Indianists who was the teacher of the famed German Indianist Max Mueller. Dwarka Nath Tagore, Rabindra Nath Tagore's father had also given a vocal recital and Teophile Gautier, a French writer of the nineteenth century had also noted that Indian dance performances were held in Paris in 1836. It is also said that Prince Tagore had visited England, Germany and Belgium on his visit to the European continent.

By the 19th century onwards, the colonialists in India- British, French, Dutch and Portuguese brought about migration of Indians in a significant way, mostly as indentured labour (a kind of slavery),[11] including traders, teachers, clerks, etc. to the European colonies. The emigration of indentured labourers to European colonies was to primarily fill up the vacuum of the liberated African slaves in plantations after the ban on the practice of slavery. Amongst the traders, people settled in Europe (Paris) was also one Ratanji Dadabhoy Tata, whose second son was J. R. D. Tata, one of India's famous industrialists'. Due to sustained cultural exchanges between India and the European nations, particularly, the UK, France and Belgium, and the founding of institutions for Indian studies in some of these countries, some Indian artists were attracted to make frequent visits to these countries. In the process, some of these artists opted to settle in the host countries. As a case in point, Amrita Sher Gill, an eminent artist and the first Asian to receive international consecration attributed by the *Grand Salon* for one of her paintings, *Conversation*, Uday Shankar and Alauddin Khan was one of the settlers in Europe.

8 Refer Narayan, 1999; MEAs, 2001; Abraham, 1993.
9 See Tatla, 2003.
10 Berthet, 2003.
11 Indentured labourers are like slaves who have been engaged in work (mainly plantation) under captivity in the European colonies. The contract period generally varies from 3 to 5 years. It is said that the first indenture labour system began sometime in 1830s in Mauritius, Uganda and Nigeria. Cf. Bhat et al, 2002.

In another significant situation, the indentured Indian labourers among others, in various European colonies went through a second emigration process due to a political 'power-shift' brought about in the host countries in favour of the native peoples. Following the emergence of aggressive nationalistic regimes in several countries in Africa, the Asia-Pacific and Latin America after they achieved independence, a significant proportion of these Indian communities migrated to the colonial centres. Thus Surinamese Indians went to the Netherlands; Indians from Madagascar, Mauritius and Indo-China went to France; Indians from Mozambique and Angola went to Portugal and Indians from East Africa went to the UK. The immigration of Indians to these countries during the colonial days was also facilitated by business and family ties and through exposure to metropolitan centers while receiving their education.[12]

Indian emigration in post-World War II

The second wave of Indian migration to European countries began after World War II. This wave is also known as the 'new diaspora'. Indian migration began during this period largely in response to demand for cheap labour and professionals for the post World War II economic reconstruction in West Europe. The high rate of Indian emigration to Europe during the 1960s and 1970s was also mainly because of the relaxation of immigration laws of the welcoming countries for both skilled and unskilled labour. The Indian emigrants during the period consist of mainly the educated and professional talents from urban middle class families. It was a kind of 'brain drain' situation even though the unskilled labour were also still part of the labour system.

The UK, France, Netherlands, Belgium, Portugal and Germany were some of the main destinations of the Indian diaspora in Europe. In the United Kingdom, the settlers were workers primarily in the industrial sector and small retail traders, personified in the small street corner grocery shops. Shops owned by Indians are estimated at 20,000 out of total 46, 000, constituting about 70% of the corner shops.[13] Many were construction labourers and transportation workers. Amongst the skilled professionals, the most prominent were the doctors, who today have become the most visible face of the National Health Service in the UK, accounting for about 16% to 20% of the total medical work force.

Portugal has a relatively large Indian community owing to its colonial connections with India. The bulk of the Indian emigrants in Portugal (PIOs) hail mostly from Mozambique, whose ancestors were once part of the Portuguese colonial administration from Goa. Gujarati traders followed them from Daman and Diu. The Indian emigrants were mainly engaged as junior administrators, teachers and doctors. The Goan emigrants in Portugal were soon assimilated into the Portuguese society due to their Catholic background and knowledge of Portuguese language and their culture.

France has also a large population of Indian emigrants. The Indian emigrants were primarily traders and skilled professionals, such as scientists, doctors and engineers. Traditionally, France has been regarded as a seat of arts and aesthetics and this has been maintained as training in art, sculpture, literature and design, and draw some of the brightest from the Indian shores. However, the bulk of immigrants in France too were skilled and unskilled workers from India. People of India who were former residents of the French colonies in

12 Refer MEAs, 2001.
13 Tatler, Op cit.

India and Africa also migrated to France, contributing to the growth of the Indian diaspora community.

The Netherlands witnessed the migration of a major portion of the Indian Surinamese who had been taken to Suriname as indentured labour. They formed the main body of the diasporic community in the Netherlands. Later on, skilled professionals, especially in the field of remote sensing technology, software and IT professionals, doctors and social scientists have migrated to Netherlands. The Surinamese Hindu diaspora *(the Hindustanis)* have well been integrated in the civilian life of the Dutch people. Similarly, the Indian Surinamese Muslim community residing in Netherlands has a different development trajectory, as they were not included in the Hindu religious fold.[14]

Belgium, once a major seat of Indic studies has given way to commerce related activities within the Indian diaspora residing there. The Indian diasporic community in Belgium is miniscule, and yet they control the majority of the diamond trade in the country. They are the major dealers in cutting and polishing of stones. They also control the wholesale trade in uncut diamonds. Today, they have overtaken the Jewish community of Antwerp in the control of diamond trade.

The Indian diaporic community in Germany is composed primarily of technocrats, scientists, research scholars, medical personnel and businessmen. The new entrants here are the software and the IT professionals, for whom Germany has relaxed the 'work permit' laws, though it has not granted full citizenship. Germany is one of the European countries where immigration laws are strict and so very few people could avail permanent resident statuses.

The third emigration wave took place in the 1980s. This wave largely excluded the unskilled and semi-skilled labourers from India and other Asian countries from entering the European countries. This was mainly due to the re-imposition of emigration restrictions after the alarming rate of Asian immigration into Europe. They would permit only restricted professionals to emigrate such as doctors, engineers, scientists, nurses, and teachers.

The fourth wave of Indian emigration began in the 1990s. Although, the bulk of the Indian brains were channeled to the United States, the European countries also have their own share of the Indian brains. Most of these Indian emigrants were trained in premiere educational institutions such as the Indian Institute of Technology (IITs), Indian Institute of Management (IIMs) and Universities. In computer professionals and its sector, people have become numerous in the Information Technology sector workforce in Britain. In the recent times, there has been considerable presence of the Indian diasporic community in the merchant banking and accountancy sectors as well. One of the characteristic features of the new emigrants is that they are very mobile and maintain close socio-economic ties with India. It should be mentioned, however, that in recent years illegal migrants from India and refugee settlers from strife-torn colonies like Sri Lanka have also entered and settled in European countries. For obvious reasons, it is not possible to estimate their actual numbers.

Reflection and Action 10.1

Describe the historical process of Indian emigration to Europe.

14 Burg and Cortisan, 2004.

10.4 Indian Diaspora in the UK: A Case Study

The United Kingdom (UK) is one of the largest host countries of Indian diaspora. Amongst the European countries, the UK ranks first in terms of the presence of Indian diaspora. The colonial connection between India and Britain for over two centuries has largely contributed to the presence of large Indian diaspora in the UK since two centuries. It is not exactly known as to when the first Indian emigrant settled in the UK. However, the Parsis and Bengalis are considered to be the first Indian settlers in the UK from the 18th century.

The first Indian emigrants were qualified lawyers, doctors and professionals. They were followed by a series of Indian emigrants particularly after World War I and World War II. But the bulk of Indian emigration into the UK took place after the World War II. In the 1950s, there were many Indians, mainly Punjabis of Indian origin who migrated to the UK as workers for reconstruction purposes post World War II. The second major wave was in the 1960s and 1970s when people of Indian origin (PIOs) mainly of Gujarati origin were forced to migrate to the UK from former British colonies of East Africa including Uganda.[15] They were mainly skilled in trade and commerce. Indian migrations to the UK still continued in the 1980s and 1990s. But the bulk of these Indian emigrants are well-trained managers, teachers and computer professionals. In the following section we shall discuss the various profiles of Indian diaspora in the UK.

Socio-Demographic profile

The UK has the largest Indian population in Europe. In fact, the Indian Diaspora forms the single largest minority group in the UK amounting to almost 1.8 % of the total population and another. 2 % -.3 % of British citizens of Indian origin could be added to the population. Hence, the total Indian population can be estimated at about 2.1 % of the total population of the UK. This figure constitutes about two-thirds of the total Indian emigrants in Europe.

The largest Indian emigrants hail from Punjab constituting about 45% of the total Indian population in the UK. The Sikhs alone have strength of about 300,000 people. Besides the Punjabis, the Gujaratis comprising Hindus, Muslims, Ismailis and Bohras have sizeable population. There are also other Indian populations with significant numbers in some selected pockets hailing from West Bengal, Bihar, Uttar Pradesh, etc.[16]

The Indian diasporics are settled mostly around the inner city clusters and around the fringes of the industrial towns. Over 40% of them live in inner and outer London.[17] The Indian emigrants in the UK like some other recent emigrants from other countries, have a relatively larger proportion of young population as compared to the general population of the host country. The Indian population in the UK forms a higher than average percentage of pupils and young people pursuing education. The enrolment of Indians in educational institutions is quite high compared to the poor enrolment of the whites (English) students especially in the age group 16-24. The performances of the Indian boys and girls are also relatively better than most of the other emigrants. Among the Indians, girls do better than boys in some

15 Cf. MEAs, 2001.
16 Op cit.
17 Op cit.

subjects like English but are much closer in subjects like Mathematics and Science.[18] However, gender differences in enrolment ratio (in favour of males) in educational institutions (in the level of GCSE,[19] Graduates, etc.) are highest in the Indian groups.

Education statistics for England in 2003 indicated that in the Indian community, girls did better than boys in English across Key Stages 1-3, but that results were much closer in Mathematics and Science. At age 14 the difference in the percentages of girls and boys achieving the expected level for English was in the range 12-15 percentage points for most groups.

Socio-cultural profile

The Indian diaspora in the UK is a very vibrant and dynamic minority group. The enormous diversity in India is also reflected in the Indian diaspora in the UK. The Indian migrants carry with them their religious, ethnic and regional origins. This is also true in the case of floating various socio-cultural organisations numbering about 1000.

There are various religion-based organisations among the religious groups of the Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists, Christians and Parsis. Some of the important ones are Hindu Cultural Society, Indian Muslim Federation, Arya Samaj, Sikh Forum, Ambedkar & Buddhist Organisation, Zoroastrian Organisation, Indian Christian Association, etc. Along with these organisation. There are also several religious places of worship such as gurudwaras, temples and mosques.

Then there are various organisations based on regional and/ethnic affiliations. Some of the better-known organisations are Confederation of Gujarati Organisations, Andhra Association, Bengali Association, Goan Association, British Malayali Association, Maharashtra Mandal, and Punjab Unity Forum. These associations are mostly registered as trusts or charities. They raise generous contributions for relief and rehabilitation of victims during national crises and calamities in India. Various cultural and religious functions and festivities are also organised by different organisations including informal exchange programmes between institutions in India and the UK.

In the recent years, there are new initiatives of setting up socio-cultural centres in the UK such as Nehru Centre, which was established in 1992 in London. The centre is being used as part of the High Commission of India. Bharatiya Vidya Bhavan is also one of these centres. [20]

Socio-economic profile

The Indians are one of the most prosperous emigrant groups in the UK. It has a per capita income of 15,860 pounds per year. In fact, the per capita income of the Indian emigrants is higher than the national average. The Indian community is engaged in various key sectors of commercial and industrial spheres. In the retail sector, they account for about 40%. Besides, there is a significant number of professionals, such as doctors, engineers, computer and IT professionals, academics and so on. Along with these, there are also many important Indian commercial organisations in the UK such as, Indian

18 See Education Statistics for England, 2003; Department for Education and Skills, 2004; Census of Great Britain, 2001; ONS (2004) Labour Force Survey Spring 2004.

19 The GCSE stands for General Certificate of Secondary Education. It is usually taken after two years of study in Years 10 and 11. It is graded A* to G.

20 Refer MEAs, 2001.

Development Group (UK) Ltd., Indian Development Fund, Confederation of Indian Organizations, and Indian Forum for Business, etc.

The statistics of the labour market (Table 10.2) also show a good overall picture of the Indian diaspora in the UK. The statistics is based on the Census Report of 2001.[21] The observation of the labour market[22] statistics may be summarised as follow.

Table 10.2
Employment by ethnic group 2001 (Age cohort 16-74)

	In Employment		*Employment rate**	*Unemployment rate**
	% Full-time	% Part-time		
Men				
Indian	91	9	65	6.5
All ethnic minorities†	87	13	56	11.9
All aged 16-74	60	40	54	4.4
Women				
Indian	71	29	50	6.6
All ethnic minorities†	71	29	42	9.6
All aged 16-74	60	40	54	4.4

Source: ONS (2004), Census 2001
†All the non-white groups, including those not listed separately. There were 3.2 million people from ethnic minorities in Britain in 2001.
* Excluding full-time students.

i) In general, Indian women have higher unemployment rates than men. This disparity between women and men can be attributed to the fact that (a) women look after the home and/or family; (b) Figures for Indian men are generally low; (c) Women start families at the early age.

ii) In the part time sector, Indian working women (29%) are much more likely to occur than men (8-9%).

iii) Indian working men are much more likely to be self-employed than their female counterparts.

iv) Indians in general are spread across almost all segments of industries. However, the non-resident Indians (NRIs) dominate in the Interactive and Communication technologies sector.

v) At the employment level of managers and senior officials, there are more Indian men than women.

vi) In professional occupations such as, doctors, researchers, educationists, economists and engineers there are more Indian men than women.

vii) The high and middle class percentages of Indian population and U.K. cannot be worked out simply on employment figures. It is noteworthy that the percentage of dependants among Indian immigrants is much higher than that of employed persons.

21 See ONS (2004) Census 2001.

22 Labour market statistics from the 2001 Census are based on the 16-74 age group instead of adults of working age or under 65 years. So employment rates are slightly lower than usually reported. Full-time is defined as 31 or more hours per week and part-time up to 30 hours per week in main job.

Political profile

The Indian diaspora in the UK have also made a breakthrough in the political field. The political participation of Indians in the polity of the UK is vibrant and dynamic. There are Indian politicians who have made it even to the top positions of the UK polity. In the British Parliament, there are four Indian elected members and 11 members in the House of Lords.

The Indians have also a significant presence in the affairs of political parties, particularly in the three major political parties, namely, the Liberal Democrat Party, the Labour Party, and the Conservative Party. The first two parties have even formed a platform known as "Friends of India Parliamentary Groups". In a significant development, Lord Dholakia has also been the Chairman of the Liberal Democrat Party. Even in the European Parliament, three Indian members have represented the UK.

At the lower level, there are about 300 Councillors of Indian Origin in the UK. They also have an association called "British-Indian Councillors' Association" (BICA). Besides, there are a few Indian mayors of the Councils. The Indian parliamentarians in the UK also have an association called- "British-Indian Parliamentary Association" (also known as "Curry Club") to discuss matters towards promotion of India's interests and concerns.

Reflection and Action 10.2

Discuss the profile of the Indian diaspora in the United Kingdom.

10.5 Conclusion

The Indian diaspora has a large presence in Europe, the largest economy in the world. It is spread all over Europe with higher concentrations in West Europe, which is largely co-terminous with the European Union (EU). It accounts for about 5-8% of the total population of Europe. The United Kingdom (UK) is the single largest country with about two-third of the whole Indian diaspora in Europe. There are also other countries with significant presence of Indian diaspora, such as, Netherlands, Italy, Portugal, France, Germany, etc. The Indian emigration to Europe took place mainly in the second half of the 20th century. They are considered to be the second wave of Indian migration, which is also known as "new diaspora". The new Indian diasporics mainly consist of the educated and skilled professionals. They have a good participation in various walks of life in Europe, be it, socio-cultural, socio-economic or political realm.

10.6 Further Reading

Dubey, A. K. (ed.). 2001. *Indian Diaspora: Identity and Globalisation*. New Delhi: Concept Publishers.

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