



University of Mumbai
Diasporic Constructions of Home & Belonging Indian Diaspora Centre (CoHaB IDC)
Indo-Canadian Studies Centre (ICSC)
and
Centre for Advanced Studies in India (CASII)

International Conference
18-20 November 2016

The Past, Present and Post 'Diaspora': New Directions in Diaspora Studies

Concept Note

The formation of a diaspora could be articulated as the quintessential journey into becoming; a process marked by incessant regroupings, recreations, and reiteration- Okwui Enwezor

Since the past two decades, many researchers have made scholarly interventions with respect to defining 'diaspora'. An overused, overtheorized yet an uncontested term, scholars have now begun to not only use it as a collective noun but also an adjective, a verb and an adverb: 'diasporic', 'diasporization', 'post-diaspora'. At this conference, we ask, what lies next? The basic focus of this two-day conference is to examine, within an interdisciplinary and an alternative framework, both the historical phenomena of 'diaspora' and contemporary alternative approaches to diaspora studies.

This conference will be jointly organized by the Indo-Canadian Studies Centre (ICSC), the Diasporic Constructions of Home & Belonging Indian Diaspora Centre (CoHaB IDC) and the Centre for Advanced Studies in India (CASII). The conference seeks to explore how the use of the concept of diaspora has become dispersed through different semantic, conceptual and disciplinary spaces and the Diaspora term itself has become 'Diaspora'¹ We aim to do this by not only giving an opportunity to our speakers to read out their papers on diaspora studies but also to think beyond and present their ideas differently. The conference seeks to address the following questions:

What constitutes the discourse of diaspora and diasporic culture? What is the current state of diaspora studies and what are its trajectories of evolution? What's next and are we thinking post-diaspora/post diaspora? How does the language of various disciplines like economics, mathematics, sociology, history and so on travel and

¹ Anna Harutyunyan, Challenging the Theory of Diaspora from the Field, in: Working Papers des Sonderforschungsbereiches 640 1/2012, <http://edoc.hu-berlin.de/series/sfb-640-papers/2012-1/PDF/1.pdf>

intermingle to define and expand the contours of the notion of “diaspora”? How does the language of literature in the form of novels, poetry, short stories, plays, films, other forms of visual arts, social and mass media shape or define diasporic cultures? Who is representing them and how? What is the role of literary devices like allegory, fantasy, wit, satire, etc in representing particular diasporic trajectories and what is the result of such representations?

Eventually, this conference aims to be a part of a new emerging inclusive interdisciplinary research and promote a dialogue to encourage development in diaspora studies. Participants are encouraged to think of how their research on diaspora can be applied in multi-/inter-/cross-disciplinary, collaborative ways. To that end, proposals for presentations, papers, posters, performances, workshops, and parallel panel sessions are invited on any aspect of diaspora studies which may include but are not limited to the following themes:

- Concept of “diaspora” as discussed in recent scholarly articles, novels, films, short stories, poetry, travelogue, popular soap operas, documentaries
- Role and result of literary and visual medium in representing diasporic experiences
- Impact of the concept of diaspora on other academic fields
- The consequences of particular literary and political strategies (for instance, wit, satire, fantasy, etc) in representing diasporic trajectories.
- Cross/Inter/Multi- Disciplinary travels in diasporic literature, films and theory.

We are also considering having a fun speed-geeking talk for 2-minutes where audience/participants of the conference can present their latest ideas related to their project on diaspora studies to key-note speakers and be open to feedback! In addition, we are open to individual or groups of researchers wanting to perform a play or read out their own poetry or short stories related to diaspora studies.

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