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Home and Away: Diasporas, Developments and Displacements in a Globalising World

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Abstract

This paper examines the involvement of Indian diasporic communities in the dynamics of economic development and population displacement within the Indian subcontinent itself. I argue that the category of diaspora can help to critically interrogate and challenge traditional notions of development and displacement and in doing so help to illuminate the complexities of such processes in the light of globalisation and transnationalism. I examine the historical context of diasporas and their involvement in processes

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production and the creation of living spaces with a self-consciously transnational aesthetic.

Keywords:

Citizenship

Economic Development

Ethics

Investment

Migration

Nationalism

Population Displacement

Remittances

Notes

1. While in this paper I have used the term diaspora synonymously with transnationalism, there is an ongoing debate regarding this conflation. Some have argued strongly that such usage is problematic and that the term diaspora should be dependent upon the shared experience of group expulsion and of community-in-exile as in the case of the Jewish or the African slave diaspora (Ong). Others suggest, however, that creating these exclusions are both morally problematic and analytically unhelpful and that diaspora describes experiences of hybridity and culture that are not necessarily predicated on primordial ties to either land or blood (Walsh; Gilroy; Hall). It is in this vein that I have adopted the use of diaspora, as a way of illustrating the contested, shifting and creative relationships between space, place and power.
2. Such statistics may help to explain the steady stream of Gujarati politicians making their way to the USA in recent years, as supplicants to wealthy expatriates, seeking funds for a variety of causes.
3. The second highest motivation is the prospect of higher returns on investment, followed by a stated familiarity with Indian economic conditions.
4. There has been support across the political spectrum and indeed during the 2004 elections...
5. Indeed...

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in the interest shown in the polls by overseas Gujaratis was any indication (Nanda and Bhatt).

Additional information

Notes on contributors

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Pablo Shiladitya Bose is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Geography, University of Vermont. He is a past recipient of the IDRC Canadian Window on International Development Award for his doctoral research on global diasporas and Indian development

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