

## 4th Global Conference Diasporas — Exploring Critical Issues

Location: United Kingdom

Monday 4th July — Wednesday 6th July 2011

Mansfield College, Oxford

### Call for Papers

This inter- and multi-disciplinary project seeks to explore the contemporary experience of Diasporas ? communities who conceive of themselves as a national, ethnic, linguistic or other form of cultural and political construction of collective membership living outside of their ?home lands.? In particular, key issues to be addressed include: what are the defining characteristics of Diasporas and what distinguishes one from the other? What role do 'home' and 'host' cultures play in developing relationships between communities in a global environment? How new is the concept of Diasporas; does it capture new global realities or designate old phenomena in a new way?

The project will also assess the larger context of major world transformations, for example, new forms of migration and the massive movements of people across the globe, as well as the impact and contribution of globalisation on tensions, conflicts and the sense of acceptance, rootedness and membership. Looking to encourage innovative trans-disciplinary dialogues, we warmly welcome papers from all disciplines, professions and vocations that struggle to understand what it means for people today to have diasporic experiences and a multiplicity of social, political and cultural memberships.

Papers, workshops, presentations and pre-formed panels are invited on any of the following themes:

#### 1. Defining and Grasping the Concept of Diaspora

- \* What are the criteria, processes and key elements that define a Diaspora?
- \* Identifying the role of culture and politics; home and host; space and time; centre and periphery; numbers and collective imagination; class, opportunities, money and new communication technologies
- \* Are all migratory communities Diasporas? What are the significant differences between being a migrant and a member of a diasporic community?
- \* Has the concept of Diaspora evolved and developed? What have been the latest developments?
- \* What is shared among Diasporas? What is not shared among Diasporas? Who has access to diasporic membership in home and host contexts?

#### 2. Migration, Settlement and Identity

- \* What does it mean, today, to belong to a nation, to an ethnic, religious or linguistic group, to a culture and to settle in a place that one does not call home?
- \* New migratory flows and massive movements from peripheral to central countries and their impact on the formation of Diasporas and the emergence of multiple senses of identity
- \* Communities on the move, uprootedness and identity. How do identities get preserved?
- \* Are Diasporas an indication of the possibility of post-national realities or a different way of affirming the place of the nation in our sense of identity?
- \* How do Diasporas connect to social movements, new rebellion and alternative global politics?

\*What distinguishes the diasporic from the post-national, the transnational or the 'nationless'?

### 3. Culture, Belonging and Collective Imaginations

\* What are the recent changes in geographical movements, space, home-host conceptions?

\* The impact and implication of communication technologies on identity formations and the sense of belonging

\* Globalisation and the claims of Diasporas. What are the implications for traditions, language, literature, arts, cinema, television and other forms of representation and cultural production?

\* New forms of global exclusion. Who can claim belonging to a Diaspora?

\* Sustaining belonging: home, homeland, roots and rootedness, feelings of connectedness or alienation, nostalgia and the need for returning home

\* Identity and belonging as destiny and as choice

\* Distinctions between inter- and intra-national Diasporas. How does the current critical language of Diaspora take into account the displacement of indigenous communities/nations within the superimposed borders (whether contested or recognized) of other nations? How does the language of Diaspora address the loss of 'homeland' that is not a transborder construct 'elsewhere'?

### 4. Institutions and Design

\* What are the institutions that allow, maintain and reproduce Diasporas? What are the structures and forces which work against their formation?

\* Economic disparities, institutional injustices and the making of diasporic realities. Tensions, contradictions and conflicts – political, economic and cultural forms of citizenship and their place in the Diasporas' imagination and organization

\* The cultural and political context of host countries: acceptance vs xenophobia, fear and ignorance vs openness and knowledge

\* Diasporas in the making of social and public policy in host and home countries: remittances and economic dependencies, professions and commodity exchanges, social and cultural interlacing, policies of mutual recognition

\* role of the State and divided loyalties

### 5. Citizenship and Multiculturalism

\*What are the methods by which nations integrate Diasporic and other ethnic groups into the host society on the basis of participation in social, economic, and political life?

\*What impact does multiculturalism have on Diasporic and migrant communities in terms of their own local and ethnic identity in these host countries?

\*With reference to multicultural citizenship in individual countries, what are the mechanisms of influence (and exclusion from such processes of power of certain groups) as this relates to Diasporic communities?

\*What are the successes and challenges of multicultural policies and practices globally as a basis for comparing models of integration?

\*How does multiculturalism influence various types of participation in a host society?

\*How is citizenship connected to social, economic, and political participation?

\*Does multiculturalism encourage a sense of citizenship, loyalty, and commitment to a host country?

\*Is a Diasporic community's sense of belonging within the host country/community stronger in a multicultural society?

\*Are certain Diasporic communities able to access political and rights-based processes more easily than others, and if so, what drivers exist to explain their successes and what barriers exist for other communities?

#### 6. Generational Change, National Consciousness and Identity Formation

\*Has generational change impacted on the concept of diaspora?

\*In what ways has the concept and discourse of diaspora been modified by the national narrative and consciousness of the generational descendants of diasporic groups?

\* How is the concept of diaspora and its related assumptions about ethnicity, homeland and identity formation linked to the policies and practices of hegemonic nation-states? What are the key facets of diaspora that are deployed here?

\* Have new generations of diasporic groups begun to question the use of this concept as a term that defines their identity?

\* Can diaspora be used to define 'national' formations, as opposed to 'transnational', 'non-national' or 'anti-national' configurations?

\* Can diaspora be used to describe the changing nature of social identification, in particular the narrative of national 'rootedness' and identity of new generations among ethnic minority groups?

\*What are the new definitions of homeland, ethnicity and national identity vis-à-vis the generational descendants of diasporic groups?

\*Has diaspora reached the limits of its usefulness as a tool for emancipatory politics?

The Steering Group particularly welcomes the submission of pre-formed panel proposals. Papers will also be considered on any related theme. 300 word abstracts should be submitted by Friday 14th January 2011. If an abstract is accepted for the conference, a full draft paper should be submitted by Friday 27th May 2011. Abstracts should be submitted simultaneously to both Organising Chairs; abstracts may be in Word, WordPerfect, or RTF formats with the following information and in this order:

- a) author(s), b) affiliation, c) email address, d) title of abstract, e) body of abstract
- E-mails should be entitled: DIAS4 Abstract Submission.

Please use plain text (Times Roman 12) and abstain from using footnotes and any special formatting, characters or emphasis (such as bold, italics or underline). We acknowledge receipt and answer to all paper proposals submitted. If you do not receive a reply from us in a week you should assume we did not receive your proposal; it might be lost in cyberspace! We suggest, then, to look for an alternative electronic route or resend.

Organising Chairs

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The conference is part of the 'Diversity and Recognition' series of research projects, which in turn belong to the At the Interface programmes of ID.Net. It aims to bring together people from different areas and interests to share ideas and explore various discussions which are innovative and challenging. All papers accepted for and presented at the conference will be published in an ISBN eBook. Selected papers may be invited to go forward for development into 20–25 page chapters for publication in a themed dialogic ISBN hard copy volume. For further details about the project please visit:

<http://www.inter-disciplinary.net/at-the-interface/diversity-recognition/diasporas/>

For further details about the conference please visit: <http://www.inter-disciplinary.net/at-the-interface/diversity-recognition/diasporas/call-for-papers/>

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