

THE DIASPORA AND CONFLICTS IN SOUTH ASIA

Dissertation submitted

to the Jawaharlal Nehru University

in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the Degree of

MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY

AMRITA SONI



CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL POLITICS, ORGANIZATION AND DISARMAMENT

SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES

JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY

JULY 2000



CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL POLITICS, ORGANIZATION & DISARMAMENT
SCHOOL OF INTERNATIONAL STUDIES
JAWAHARLAL NEHRU UNIVERSITY
NEW DELHI - 110 067

Gram : JAYENU
Phone : 6107676, 6167557
Extn.: 2349
Fax : 91-11-6165886

July 2000

CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the dissertation entitled "**THE DIASPORA AND CONFLICTS IN SOUTH ASIA**" submitted by **AMRITA SONI** in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the award of the degree of **MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY** is her original work and has not been submitted for the award of any degree of this or of any other University.

The dissertation may be placed before the Examiners for evaluation.


(**AMITABH MATTOO**)

CHAIRPERSON

Chairperson
Centre for International Politics
Organization and Disarmament
School of International Studies
Jawaharlal Nehru University
New Delhi - 110 067


(**SUSHIL KUMAR**)

SUPERVISOR

FOR MY NANAJOO

PREFACE

The discipline of International Relations is no longer regarded as merely an analysis of relations between clearly and securely bounded sovereign states. A number of other actors have pervaded the international space making it imperative to widen the scope of the discipline. Thus, the study of peoples (such as ethnic minorities, refugees and diasporas) has assumed an important place in the contemporary International Relations Literature.

The present work focusses upon diasporas as one of the most dynamic actors in the global arena today. Very simply stated, the term diaspora is used to describe any population that has originated in a land other than that in which it resides. Earlier, the diaspora communities were seen as the victims of the worst kind of persecution, having no control over their life and destiny. However, some recent happenings have exploded this myth. Diasporas are now regarded as highly politicised communities, whose activities can have major repercussions for national and international security and foreign policy.

There is a whole range of issues associated with the diaspora that need to be analysed: factors that lead to the establishment of new diasporas, the effect of the diasporic communities on the socio-political fabric of the host society, the reasons for the unprecedented political awakening of the diasporas and so on.

The purpose of the present study is to explore the many dimensions of the relationship of the diaspora with the homeland. In the course of the study, it becomes evident that the issues that excite the passion of the diaspora are often those of the homeland and not the host country, as also that the diaspora tries to influence the affairs

of the homeland in a number of ways. Thus, there exists an organic link between the diaspora and the homeland, such that they share a commitment towards each other's prosperity and security atleast at the level of rhetoric.

The methodology used for the study is analytical. Two cases of conflicts in South Asia have been included in the study in order to illustrate the points made earlier. Ideally, this study should have been backed by extensive field work. However, this has not been possible due to the constraints of time and money. I have relied primarily upon printed matter, both primary and secondary, as the source of data for this study. The internet has also been helpful. The diaspora fiction and movies have helped me develop a holistic perspective of the issue.

The study is divided into five chapters. In the first chapter, an attempt has been made to define diaspora and delineate its scope and relevance for International Relations theory as well as practice, especially in the context of globalization.

In the second chapter, the perceptions of the homeland, as it appears in the diasporic images have been discussed with a special reference to the Indian diaspora.

The multifarious ways in which the diasporas construe the issues of the homeland and try and influence them have been dealt with in the third and the fourth chapters in the context of Tamil and Sikh separatism respectively.

In the concluding chapter are listed some of the salient points that emerged in the course of the study and which I feel require a more elaborate study.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I consider myself to be exceedingly lucky for being surrounded by people who have been so nice and generous to me. Though words are not enough, I take this opportunity to thank them for all they have done for me. I wish to express my gratitude towards my supervisor, Professor Sushil Kumar, whose guidance made this work possible. I am grateful to Professor Ravindra K. Jain for the invaluable counsel and help provided by him. Professor Madhu Bhalla has been a source of inspiration and encouragement, as always. I am indebted to Professor Chandrashekhhar Bhat, Bhaskar and Sahoo of the Hyderabad Central University and Sunder for the help they have provided during the process of data collection. I am really thankful to Gitesh ji for the trouble he has taken with my dissertation. A special note of thanks to Mr. Rajeev and Mr. Narendra for their speedy and efficient typing. With great affection, I thank my friends, Anu, Deepthi, Sujata, Ianosha, Kavitha, Amrita, Moharana, Menaka, Swaha, Vinita, Sona, Uma, Harsha, Shalini, Manish, Harsh, Vikas, Narendra, Vibhanshu, Sandeep and Santosh for being so kind and understanding. The list of acknowledgments will be incomplete, if I do not mention my parents, Ritu, Popo, Jijus, Shivam and Aditya for being there for me, whenever I have needed them.

Amrita Soni
AMRITA SONI

CONTENTS

1.	Introduction	1
2.	The Diasporic Images of the Home State : A Study of the Indian Diaspora	20
3.	The Diaspora, Tamil Separatism as a Factor in India-Sri Lanka Relations	36
4.	The Diaspora and the Sikh Separatist movement	54
5.	Conclusion	64
	Appendix I Table showing the population estimate of overseas Indians	69
	Bibliography	72

CHAPTER – I

INTRODUCTION

“The landscapes of persons who make up the shifting world in which we live: Tourists, immigrants, refugees, exiles, guest-workers and other moving groups and persons constitute an essential feature of the world and appear to affect the policies of and between nations to a hitherto unprecedented degree”¹.

- Arjun Appadurai

Movement across borders by groups and individuals is not a new phenomenon. Since the ancient times, such movements have played an important role in shaping political entities. However, due to the formation of transnational networks and the interconnectedness of all societies, these movements have acquired more significance than ever before.

¹ Heller, Scott: “Worldwide Diaspora of Peoples Poses New Challenges for Scholars”, *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, June 3, 1992, p.A8.

“The ousted President of Haiti appeals to immigrants in New York City to pressurize the American government to condemn his overthrow. Some 60,000 rally on his behalf”².

“The destruction of Babri Masjid in Ayodhya is followed by several incidents of damage to Hindu temples and cultural centres in the United Kingdom”³.

“Following the overthrow of the Fijian Prime Minister, Mahendra Choudhry, the villagers of Bahu Jamalpur (in Haryana), the native place of the overthrown leader, organize a protest march to Rohtak, where an effigy of the coup leader George Speight is burnt”⁴.

These and other such incidents are indicative of the salience of diasporas in national and international affairs today.

DEFINING DIASPORA

The word diaspora comes from the Greek dia, through and speiro, scatter. At one time, the term referred exclusively to the Jewish experience of forced exile from the historic homeland and their dispersal throughout the world. As a

² Ibid, p.A7.

³ Vertovec, Steven “Three Meanings of “Diaspora”, Exemplified Among South Asian Religions”, *Diaspora: A Journal of Transnational Studies*, Volume 6, No.3, Winter 1998. P.5.

⁴ Singh, Shubha: “The Indian Connection”, *Frontline*, June 23, 2000, pp 14-15.

result, it developed a negative connotation and came to be associated with forced displacement⁵

However, over the years, the term has acquired a new usage and is used to denote various groups that were previously described as exile groups, overseas communities and ethnic and racial minorities. The term diaspora is now used for “any population, i.e. “deterritorialized” or “transnational” that is, which has originated in a land other than that in which it currently resides, and whose social, economic and political networks cut across the borders of nation-states, or indeed span the globe.”⁶

Now, we will briefly discuss some of the major characteristics which will help us define diaspora and distinguish it from other groups of dislocated individuals. This is not an easy task as all diasporas do not possess the same characteristics. Due to their unique historical experiences, they differ significantly from each other. As a result, there is a disagreement among scholars as to the range of phenomena that can be described as diasporic. Yet, some common traits can be compiled from the great range of theoretical and descriptive work on diaspora. Some of them are as follows :

⁵ See note 2, p.1.

⁶ See note 3, p.1.

(i) They have dispersed from an original centre to at least two or more countries⁷: Unlike the classical diasporas viz, the Jews, Armenians and the Greeks, the modern diasporas are not necessarily a product of forced dispersion.⁸ For example, the reasons for the Indian emigration to the United States of America in the 1970s and later has more to do with the American pull than the Indian push factor⁹.

(ii) They maintain a “memory, vision on myth about the original homeland”¹⁰: The ‘original homeland’ is a problematic category. It could be used to mean the state from where the individual or the group has migrated, a part thereof or some place outside it. It could also refer to some political entity which cannot be historically or geographically located. The ‘original homeland’ becomes a contested category for certain kinds of diasporas such as the stateless diasporas and twice migrants¹¹.

⁷ Safran, William: “Diasporas in Modern Societies: Myths of Homeland and Return”, *Diaspora*, Volume 1, No.1, Spring 1991, p.83.

⁸ Panossian, Razwik: “Between Ambivalence and Intrusion: Politics and Identity in Armenia – Diaspora Relations”, *Diaspora*, Vol. 7, No.2, 1998, p.151.

⁹ Jain, Ravindra K: *Indian Communities Abroad: Themes and Literature*, Manohar, 1998, p.38.

¹⁰ See note 7, p.83.

¹¹ Brah, Avtar : *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities*, Routledge, London and New York, 1996, pp. 1-3. To the question, “Do you see yourself as African or Indian”?, Avtar Brah replied, “I am a Ugandan of Indian descent”.

(iii) They see the homeland as a place of eternal return.¹² Contrary to the traditional view, the 'myth of return' is no longer considered to be an important defining characteristic of diasporas, especially in the second generation. Many young South Asians, who have been born and brought up in other countries, do not want to return to their parental villages.¹³ Even when there is an opportunity or a compulsion to migrate from the place of settlement, many people prefer to migrate to countries which offer greater economic opportunities, rather than returning to their place of origin. For example, when Idi Amin of Uganda embarked upon his radical Africanization programme, Indians were forced to leave in large numbers. However, many of them preferred to migrate to the Western countries like the United Kingdom and the United States of America, rather than coming back to India¹⁴.

(iv) They establish links with the homeland and their co-ethnics in other parts of the world¹⁵. The feeling of connectedness with the

¹² See note 9, pp. 83-84.

¹³ Gardner, Katy : *Global Migrants, Local Lives : Travel and Transformation in Rural Bangladesh*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1995, p.7.

¹⁴ See note 9, p.13.

¹⁵ See note 7, p.84.

homeland is important because it provides a sense of unity as a nation, no matter how diverse and multilocal the actual communities may be¹⁶.

The links with co-ethnics often results in the foundation of non-state transnational organizations which play a very active role in the global political arena¹⁷. For example, the Armenian organizations linked together in the United States of America, France and the Middle East are considered to be amongst the most sophisticated political lobbyists in the world¹⁸.

(v) They are engaged in the politics related to the homeland : the diasporas are engaged in the politics related to the homeland and communities mobilize around it in varying degrees, on a more or less regular basis. Such concern for 'national issues' and related activities transform ethnic communities into diaspora¹⁹. For instance, the Kashmir Liberation League of Pakistan, which has as its objective, the liberation

¹⁶ See note 8, p.151.

¹⁷ See note 3, p.3.

¹⁸ Levine, Steve : "Revenge of the Armenian Diaspora", *Financial Times*, London, 16 September, 1994.

¹⁹ See note 8, p.151.

of India – held Kashmir has a branch in Rochdale in the United Kingdom and derives its members from amongst the Pakistani diaspora²⁰.

(vi) They believe that they cannot be fully accepted by the host society²¹. Either due to their own unwillingness or the policies of the host society, the diasporas find it difficult to become a part of the host society completely.

The diaspora groups establish and maintain boundaries to distinguish themselves from other groups in the host society²². They also establish various kinds of institutional networks and organizations for the same. Very often, they draw upon the culture, ideology and politics of the homeland for the sustenance of these boundaries and organizations. Sometimes, the boundaries are established by the host society itself and are manifested in various kinds of discrimination and racism.

However wide the working list of diasporic features may be, it cannot be expected to cover the entire range of characteristics associated with diasporas. The diasporic discourse will necessarily be modified by the varied experiences

²⁰ Anwar, Muhammad : *The Myth of Return, Pakistanis in Britain*, Meinemann, London, 1979, p.178.

²¹ See note 7, p.84.

²² See note 8, p.151.

of diasporas. Hence, as Needham has pointed out, what is required for the study of diaspora is not a single definition but a polythetic field of enquiry²³.

THE ACTIVITIES OF DIASPORA

Due to their peculiar position, at the intersection of the home and host societies, the diasporas are engaged in politics both at the local and global levels. In the words of James Clifford, “the term diaspora is a signifier not simply of transnationality but also of political struggles to define the local as distinctive community in historical contexts of displacement”²⁴. In brief, the diasporas function at three main levels²⁵.

(i) They are engaged in activities within the host societies : Within the host societies, the diasporas are engaged in two kinds of activities. Firstly, the activism of the diasporas is manifested in anti-racist, minority rights and such other movements²⁶. This is an attempt of the diasporas to define their relations with the host societies socio-cultural, political and economic authorities and institutions. For instance, some Hispanic,

²³ Clifford, James : “Diasporas” in Montserrat, Guibernau and John Rex(eds): *The Ethnicity Reader*, Polity Press, 1997, p.285.

²⁴ See note 23, p.287.

²⁵ Sheffer, Gabriel : “Ethno – National Diasporas and Security”, *Survival*, Vol.36, No.1, Spring 1999, p.67.

²⁶ Jain, Ravindra K.: “Indian Diaspora, Globalisation and Multiculturalism : A Cultural Analysis”, *Contributions to Indian Sociology*, 32, 2, 1998, p.337.

Korean, Chinese and Jewish communities in the United States, North African groups in France and Turks in Germany have established self-defence organizations to deal with threats and attacks launched by the more radical elements of the host society²⁷.

Secondly, the diasporas undertake activities to promote the interests of the homeland and their co-ethnics in other parts of the world. Their activities are facilitated by the formation of communal organizations, which play a very important role in fund-raising, recruitment of new members and creation of a favourable political atmosphere towards homelands and counterparts of the same diaspora through extensive propaganda and lobbying²⁸. For instance, the Pakistani diaspora in the United Kingdom has been able to prevent the British government from including supporters and organizers of terrorism in Kashmir in the bill which sought to declare unlawful the sponsorship and support to terrorist activities inside and outside the British territory²⁹.

(ii) They are engaged in activities within their homelands: Within the homelands, the activities of the diaspora may be in the nature of

²⁷ see note 25, p.68.

²⁸ See note 25, pp.67-69.

²⁹ *The Hindustan Times*, 19 February, 2000.

socio-cultural, economic and political exchanges or it may be related to the furtherance of the interests of their co-ethnics.

In the globalized world of today, it is possible for the diasporas to maintain regular contacts with their homelands. In the economic sphere, this contact is seen in the considerable amount of money transferred to the homeland by the diaspora as donations, remittances, investments, allocation of funds for joint ventures and so on. According to the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund, the remittances to all homelands total to about \$70 billion a year. These remittances and donations provide only a partial picture of the total sums involved, as a large amount of unaccounted money flows between the homeland and diasporas through circuitous routes that cannot be tapped.

The cultural exchanges between the diaspora and the homeland are no less important because they deal with issues central to the identity and integrity of the diasporas³⁰. There are a number of socio-cultural organizations which bring the diaspora and the residents of the homeland on a common platform, for example, Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO) and the Vishwa Hindu Parishad (VHP).

³⁰ See note 25, pp.67-69.

The diaspora is also interested in and tries to influence the political decisions of the homeland. For instance, the approach of the Indian government towards Khalistan is an important issue for the overseas Sikhs³¹. Also, many of the political parties of India have a following among the diaspora and are known to receive donations from them.

Very often, the diasporas do not refer to the legal-political boundary of the home state, when they talk of the home, but to a part thereof or a particular ethno-national group within it. In that case, they are committed to the safety and prosperity of that region and group only. This causes friction with other groups, especially because remittances from abroad add to the prosperity of the former causing severe regional imbalances.

Sometimes, homelands do not have a physical existence. They merely exist in the diasporic imagination. The Palestinians, the Kurds, the Basques, the Irish Republican Army, and before the establishment of their states, the Jews and Armenians are some groups which belong to the category of stateless diasporas. These diasporas engage in violent, subversive and terrorist activities in order to realize the goal of a nation state. In the process, they pose a major security threat not only to the

³¹ Peach Ceri : “Three Phases of south Asian Migration” in Brown, Judith M and Rosemary Foot (eds): *Migration: The Asian Experience*, Macmillan Press, 1999, p.52.

governments of what they regard as their homelands but also to the international community as a whole³².

(iii) They are engaged in activities to promote their interests and those of their co-ethnics in the global arena : The Jewish, the Armenians, the Tamils, and various other groups have established organizations which transcend national boundaries. These organizations are active in home countries, the host countries and the global political arena in general. Their members are spread in various countries and they have at their disposal enormous wealth, arms and ammunition and man power³³. For instance, the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), the Kurdish Workers Party and the Hamas have their headquarters in London, from where they conduct their myriad activities which threaten the security of those regarded as opponents.³⁴ However, efforts by the affected countries, coalition of countries and even by international organizations like the Interpol, to contain these transnational networks have proved futile³⁵.

Thus, the diasporas have assumed a position of significance in the national and international affairs of the contemporary world and globalization

³² See note, 25, p.64.

³³ *ibid*, pp.64-65.

³⁴ Balachandran, P.K. : "Colombo" *The Hindustan Times*, April 13, p.14.

³⁵ See note 25, pp.64-65.

has provided a conducive atmosphere for this development in no mean proportions.

GLOBALIZATION AND THE DIASPORA

Globalisation has catapulted into prominence, various groups and communities whose role in global affairs had hitherto been marginal. Globalisation may be defined as a phenomenon which includes various transnational processes and structures which allow the economy, culture, ideology and politics of nations to interpenetrate³⁶. Globalisation has various aspects, some of which are the following :

(i) International economic integration

(ii) Transnational media networks and extremely efficient transport systems.

(iii) Global consumerism and culture

(iv) Formation of transnational political and socio-cultural organizations.

From the point of view of Diaspora studies, there are two major consequences of these developments.

³⁶ Mittelman, J.H.: "The Dynamics of Globalization" in Mittelman (ed): *Globalization: Critical References*, Riener publishers, London, 1997, p.3.

(i) It has enabled diasporas to maintain familial, economic, political and cultural ties across international borders, in effect making the home and host societies, 'a single arena of action'³⁷.

(ii) It has made it possible for individuals and groups to participate directly in the global processes, that is their actions need not be mediated by the state and other formal associations³⁸.

Now, we will study in some detail, how each of the above mentioned aspects of globalization effect diasporas and their activities.

(i) International Economic Integration : It has provided mobility to capital and labour, enabling individuals to become directly involved in the transnational economic flows. One way in which individuals, households and rural communities become directly involved in global economic flows is through remittances. By strengthening the underground economy, remittances have undermined the preferred modes of transference of capital as well as the intermediary role of the state³⁹.

However, no less important is the transfer of capital to the homestate itself, in the form of donations, investments and allocations for joint ventures.

³⁷ Foner Nancy : "What's New About Transnationalism? New York Immigrants Today and At the Turn of the Century", *Diaspora*, Volume No.3, Winter 1997, p.355.

³⁸ See note 35, pp.1-10.

³⁹ See note 35, p.1.

Thus, the global economic integration has provided diasporas with an opportunity to establish stronger and more meaningful economics ties with the homeland and their co-ethnics in other parts of the world, through formal as well as informal channels.

(i) Transnational media networks and extremely efficient transport systems : This has enabled people in the farflung areas of the world to be in touch with each other. Thus, it has become possible for the diasporas to maintain more frequent and closer contact with their home societies.

Also, the various television channels, VCRs and Internet are being used extensively to create and augment the sense of diasporic awareness through transmission of programmes which disseminate the culture and ideology of the homeland⁴⁰. For instance, the Iranian exiles in Los Angeles produce more than 15 hours of Persian language television programming a week⁴¹.

Thus, diasporas have now been able to participate in the affairs of the homeland and vice versa in a much more effective manner and with greater ease.

(ii) Global consumerism and culture : A typical kind of culture, which can be termed as “global culture” for want of a better word, has abetted people’s desires all over the world, to pursue opportunities that would enable them to

⁴⁰ Appadurai, Arjun and Carol Breckenridge: “On Moving Targets”, *Public Culture* 2, 1989, p.iii.

⁴¹ See note 1, p.A7.

become a part of that kind of a life style. This has caused a movement of people from low income economies to the economically advanced countries of the world, where the realization of such desires is possible. The same people try to bring in and spread this culture among friends and relatives in the homeland, thereby bringing the home and the host societies, or at least a section among them closer to each other.

(i) Transnational political, cultural, social and economic organizations :

Transnational political, economic and socio-cultural organizations formed by the various diasporas are amongst the most important players in the global arena. They set the pace for the transnational flows of political, economic and cultural ideas and information across continents. In this sense, they are what Tololian calls, “the exemplary communities of the transnational movement”⁴².

We have already discussed how some of these organizations engage in various kinds of terrorist activities and jeopardize international security. The repercussions of their violent and subversive activities is felt in far flung areas and their multiple loci prevent them from being rooted out completely even by the efforts of a coalition of states and by international organizations.

⁴² Stratton, Jon : “Dis (placing) the Jews : Historicizing the Idea of Diaspora”, *Diaspora*, Volume 6, No.3 Winter 1997, p.301.

Thus, globalization has resulted in the dispersion of power among more actors than ever before, and these actors are not only determined to stay in the international arena but also become the foremost players in world affairs.

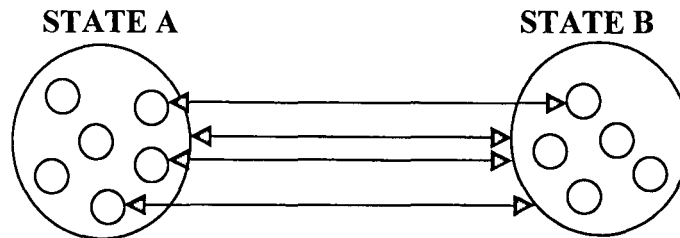
DIASPORA AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

International Relations, academically and practically has been dominated by the question of political control over clearly demarcated territories, possessing internationally recognized borders. The clearest articulation of this view is found in the Realist frameworks. Realism upholds the doctrine of state-centrism, whereby the international reality is understood in terms of interaction between “discrete political units”, or the states. This narrow approach to the study of International Relations has become a well-established basis for the critiques of state-centrism in the discipline, especially because the legal boundaries of States no longer co-inside with the extent or limits of political authority over economy and society⁴³.

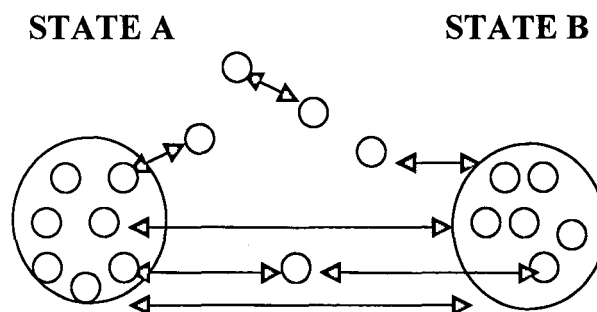
This does not mean that International Relations should write an obituary of the state, for they continue to be important members of the International System. However, there is certainly a need to go beyond the state-centric paradigm. According to Richard Ashley, “When we see human and spatial

⁴³ Youngs, Gillian : *International Relations in a Global Age : A conceptual Challenge*, Polity Press, 1999, pp.1-2.

factors through the state-centered prism, we see a chain of politics that links states to states and within them and via them humans to humans” (figure 1).⁴⁴



The onslaught of the globalizing forces has created the need for some serious rethinking about the state. The state is undergoing a profound transformation, such that it does not always play the role of the mediator in the global social, economic and political processes. The global economic integration and the improvements in transport and communication have enabled individuals and groups to circumvent the state and participate directly in the global processes (figure-2).⁴⁵



⁴⁴ See note 42, p.54.

⁴⁵ See note 42, p.54.

The concepts like sovereignty, territoriality, citizenship and security, which are some of the key categories defining the state have undergone a profound change. According to Saskia Sassen, “Sovereignty has been decentered and territory partly denationalized, while citizenship has been fundamentally transformed.”⁴⁶ For instance, the member states of the European Union provide for dual citizenship. In such a situation, the state cannot lay an exclusive claim over the loyalty of its members.

Similarly, the sovereign power of the states to take autonomous decisions within their recognized territories has been curtailed due to the presence of various transnational social, political and economic organizations. Thus, at the beginning of the twenty-first century, there is a need to redefine the role of the state vis-a-vis other actors on the world stage on the basis of what Susan Strange calls, “the new geography and diffusion of power.”⁴⁷

In this light, the study of the diaspora should be seen as the recognition of the fact that the discipline of International Relations can no longer conceive of concepts like the state, sovereignty and territoriality as absolute categories as also that conventional political maps are not suited to explain the new geography of power.

⁴⁶ Sassen, Saskia: *Losing Control? Sovereignty in an Age of Globalization*, Columbia University Press, 1996, pp.28-29.

⁴⁷ See note 42, p.2.

CHAPTER – II

THE DIASPORIC IMAGES OF THE HOME STATE: A STUDY OF THE INDIAN DIASPORA

“We are like “chiffon saris” – a sort of cross-breed attempting to adjust to the pressures of a new world, while actually being from another older one.”¹ –
Feroza Jussawalla

Home is a much contested concept in the diasporic discourse. The diasporic perception of home is not only highly complex, it is almost always enmeshed with politics. People have variously described home as the place of origin, as the place of eternal return, as the site of every day living and so on. These images of the home are seemingly contradictory, but in reality, they are just answering different questions. Thus, how, when and under what circumstances, the questions of home arise for a particular diaspora, determines its perceptions of home.

¹ Tapping, Craig: “South Asia Writes North America: Prose Fictions and Autobiographies from the Indian Diaspora”, in Lin, Shirley, Geok-lin and Amy Ling (eds.): *Reading the Literatures of Asian America*, Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 1992, p.285.

~~TH 86~~
~~8697~~

In the context of the diaspora, home is generally used in reference to the place of origin, as distinct from the place of settlement. The salience of the home to the diasporic discourse is a much debated issue among scholars. Again, the importance given to the home depends upon the conditions in which the issue of the home surfaces for a particular diaspora.

8697
TH-
According to some scholars, the home nation retains the foremost place in the diasporic imagination. This is especially true in the case of the diasporas whose claims to a home of their own have not been satisfactorily settled. Thus, the question of the homeland is the chief concern of the Palestinians, the Kurds and the Sri Lankan Tamils. As Verdery has put it, "It is not from ethnic identities that national identities develop; rather the latter creates the frame which generates the former."² As a result, even when people migrate, they continue to bear pre-constituted national identities which define their self-conception and political behaviour.

Another group of scholars consider home to be just one and not even the most important parameter for defining diasporas. According to them, the linkages formed by the diaspora may not be articulated through a real or



² Verdery, Katherine: "Ethnicity, Nationalism and State making", in Hans Vermeulen and Cora Govers (eds.) *The Anthropology of Ethnicity*, Het Spinhuis, Amsterdam, 1994, p.47.

imaginary homeland. They concede greater importance to ethnic factors in the formation of such linkages.³

Yet another group of people feel that nowhere is truly home for the diaspora. The diasporas are deterritorialized groups living in a state of permanent exile.⁴ Some scholars critique the deterritorialization thesis as presenting an incomplete view of things. Instead, they put forward, the concept of multiple territorialization. The dislocated individuals and groups do not remain homeless. They relocate themselves and their cultures in multiple new settings, giving rise in the process to varying levels of hybridized and creolized cultures.⁵

Although, the perceptions may vary, a sub-text of home always underlies the concept of diaspora. As Avtar Brah has put it, “Home is a mythic place of desire in the diasporic imagination.”⁶ However, the diasporic imagination may not always be accompanied with a movement for a homeland. Thus, Brah makes

³ Clifford, James: “Diasporas” in Montserrat, Guibernau and John Rex (eds.): *The Ethnicity Reader*, Polity Press, 1997, p.285.

⁴ Gardner, Katy: *Global Migrants, Local Lives: Travel and Transformation in Rural Bangladesh*, Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1995, p.5.

⁵ Jain, Ravindra K.: “Indian Diaspora, Globalisation and Multiculturalism: A Cultural Analysis”, *Contributions to Indian Sociology* (n.s.) 32, 2, 1998, pp.350-55.

⁶ Brah, Avtar: *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities*, Routledge, London and New York, 1996, p.192.

a distinction between the desire for a homeland and the 'homing desire' of the diaspora, which is manifested in a number of ways, such as,

(i) the wish to return to the homeland at an appropriate time.

(ii) The establishment of various kinds of ties with the homeland.

(iii) The recreation of the culture of the homeland in multiple new settings.⁷

Thus, the relationship between the diaspora and the homeland is an important aspect of diaspora study. In this chapter, an attempt is being made to study the Indian diaspora and the many dimensions of its relationship with the homeland.

THE INDIAN DIASPORA

Crossing the black waters (Kala Pani) is traditionally regarded as full of peril to the Hindu soul. This did not deter the Hindu traders from establishing trading posts in Afghanistan and Central Asia or the Hindu dynasties from colonizing parts of South East Asia and Indonesia in the ancient times. During the medieval period, the Indian Gujarati and Muslim merchants set up commercial establishments in East Africa. Thus, contrary to the perception that migration, whether inside or outside India was very rare during the ancient and

⁷ *ibid.*, pp.190-194.

medieval times, there are many evidences which show that Indians have a long tradition of travelling, trading and establishing settlements abroad.⁸

However, the story of the modern Indian diaspora began only in the nineteenth century, when a significant migration of people began under the impact of British colonialism. The Indians migrated to the British and the French colonies of Fiji, Guyana, Trinidad and Tobago, Mauritius and others, where they worked on the plantations as indentured labourers.⁹

A second wave of migration from India occurred in the post second world war period of free market, when men and women from the economically backward regions of the world began to migrate to the economically advanced countries such as the United Kingdom and the United States of America and a little later to the oil rich countries of the Gulf.¹⁰

SOME ASPECTS OF THE INDIAN DIASPORA

The Indian diaspora with its population of about eleven million people represents only a little more than one percent of the total population of India and is numerically much smaller than its Jewish, Chinese, African and other counterparts. However, it is unique in several ways.¹¹

⁸ Jain, Ravindra K.: *Indian Communities Abroad: Themes and Literature*, Manohar 1993, pp.1-

⁹ see note 8, pp.2

¹⁰ *ibid.*

¹¹ Parekh, Bhikhu: "Some Reflections on the Indian Diaspora", BOPIO, 1993, p.1.

(i) The Indian diaspora is much more widespread than any other, covering about seventy countries of the world. In about a quarter of them, they have a significant economic and political presence. In Fiji, Surinam and Guyana, they constitute more than forty percent of the total population.¹² Table I gives the distribution of the Indian population (in percentage terms) in relation to the other constituent groups in some of the countries, where they are present in significant numbers.

TABLE – I

COUNTRIES	INDIAN POPULATION (IN PERCENTAGE TERMS) IN RELATION TO OTHER CONSTITUENT GROUPS
1. MAURITIUS	70
2. GUYANA	50
3. FIJI	48
4. TRINIDAD	41
5. SURINAM	35
6. REUNION	15
7. MALAYSIA	9
8. GUADELOUPE	8
9. SINGAPORE	6
10. SOUTH AFRICA	3
11. UNITED KINGDOM	1.8

¹² see note 11, p.1.

Source: Parekh, B: Some Reflections on the Indian Diaspora, BOPIO, 1993, p.8.

(ii) The Indian diaspora is diverse in terms of religions, regions and castes its members represent, so much so that some scholars consider it problematic to talk in terms of a global Indian diaspora. They refer to Gujarati, Tamil, Telugu, Bengali and other diasporas.

Also, the occupations that the members of the Indian diaspora are engaged in range from farm labour to professions and business. It thus includes people who earn the highest as well as the lowest per capita income in the world.¹³

(iii) The Indians have suffered harassment in most countries where they have settled. They became the targets of attack and were physically tortured in many countries; in some countries, they had to face social, economic and political discrimination; while in a few, they even had to face expulsion.¹⁴

(iv) For a long time, the overseas Indian communities had very little contact with India and with each other. Hence, they followed distinct paths of development and acquired distinct identities.¹⁵

¹³ see note 11, p.1.

¹⁴ *ibid.*

¹⁵ see note 11, pp.1-2.

However, due to a number of factors, the isolation of the overseas Indian communities is now giving way to an unexpected union of the globally extended Indian family.

INDIA AND THE INDIAN DIASPORA

The homeland has always been present in the imagination of the Indian diaspora in one way or the other. It is no surprise then that very often the issues that have excited the passion of the diaspora have been those of the homeland and not the host country.¹⁶ Thus, during the Indo-Pakistan wars, the overseas Indians fought alongside the resident Indians. The diaspora has not simply been affected by the affairs of the home, it has also tried to exert its influence on the internal and external affairs of the homeland. For instance, the Sikh separatist movement received considerable support from certain sections among the Sikh diaspora.¹⁷

Although, social, political, economic and cultural ties between the homeland and the diaspora as also between Indian communities settled in different parts of the world always existed, in the recent years, such ties have received considerable momentum. This has been possible due to several factors.

¹⁶ Peach, Ceri: "Three Phases of South Asian Migration", in Brown, Judith M. and Rosemary Foot (eds.) *Migration: The Asian Experience*, Macmillan Press, 1994, p.52.

¹⁷ *The Khalistan Letter*, March 1999, Vol.4, No.2, file:///D1/Wshre/APO5/21.

(i) Improvements in transport and communication: The improvements in transport and communication have enabled Indians in different parts of the world to maintain extensive social, political, cultural and economic ties with each other. The electronic media like the Television, Video and the Internet are being used extensively to create and augment the sense of diasporic awareness. For instance, the VCRs are being used to telecast in Britain, the episodes of the Ramayan and the Mahabharat made for the television in India.¹⁸

(ii) Improvement in the condition of the Indian diaspora worldwide: There has been a considerable improvement in the condition of the Indian diaspora since the ex-indentured days. The Indians have acquired political and economic significance in a number of countries where they are settled. As far as the western countries are concerned, the stream of migrants has been dominated by relatively affluent and educated, professional elite. These people have done very well for themselves in their chosen host countries. For instance, less than six percent of the Indians in the United States of America are below poverty line. This figure is less compared to any other community in the United States.¹⁹ Thus, today the Indian diaspora has the resources to influence the affairs of the home, both domestic and international.

¹⁸ Vertovec, Steven: "Three Meanings of "Diaspora", Exemplified Among South Asian Religions", *Diaspora*, Volume 6, No.3, Winter 1997, p.15.

¹⁹ Spaeth, Anthony: "Coming to Amrika", *Time*, March 27, 2000, p.23.

(iii) Change in the government policy: The role that the diaspora can play in the political and economic advancement of the home country is being reassessed in the post-liberalization phase. Hence, the Indian diaspora or at least a section of it has received considerable attention from the government.

According to the Report of the Ministry of External Affairs, 1988-89, "The Overseas Indians are increasingly being recognized as a valuable asset for India as a bridge of understanding between India and the country of their domicile."²⁰ The investment potential of the diaspora is another issue which is being probed.

The present policy of the government is in marked contrast with the earlier policy, when India's relations with the people of Indian origin was considered to be only cultural. For instance, Nehru said, "Overseas Indians should decide whether they would continue to remain Indian nationals or adopt the nationality of the country of their domicile. If they adopted the former, all they could claim abroad was most favoured alien treatment. If they opted for the latter, they should be given all rights of citizenship and India's connection with them will be cultural and not political."²¹

²⁰ Sahadevan, P. : *India and Overseas Indians : The Case of Sri Lanka*, Kalinga Publications, Delhi, p.55.

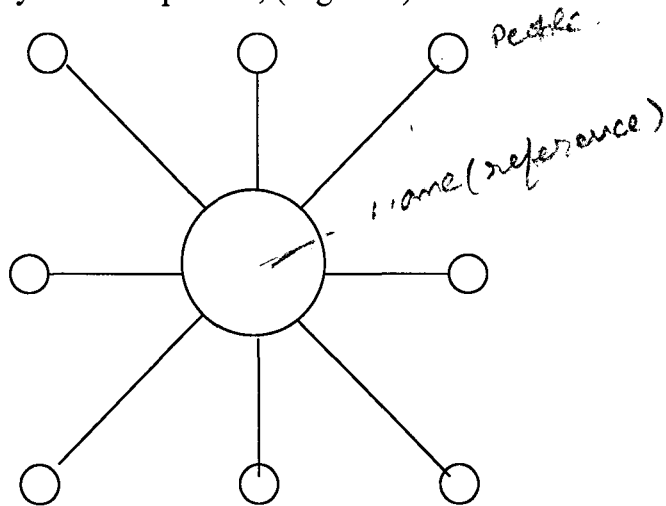
²¹ see note 20, p.60.

(iv) Role of diaspora literature and movies: The plethora of diaspora books, movies and journals indicate that there is a widespread interest in the lives and experiences of the diaspora. They also suggest that the diaspora itself has become keenly aware of its diasporic identity. A number of books and movies have attempted to explore the relationship of the diaspora with the country of its origin.

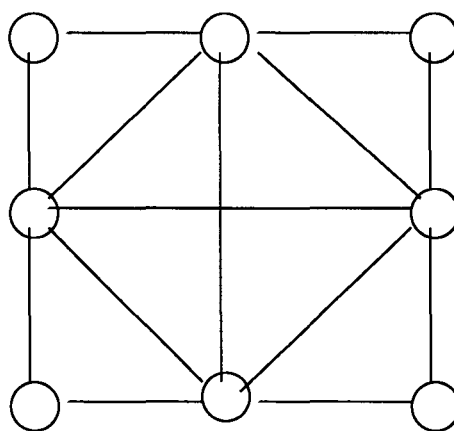
(v) There has been a worldwide political awakening of the dormant diaspora communities and the Indian diaspora is no exception to it. One aspect of this awakening is the formation of a large number of transnational diaspora organizations and the revival of the old ones, for example, GOPIO, BOPIO and the VHP. These organizations are often formed along caste, religious, linguistic and other ethnic categories, for instance, the Telgu Association and the Gujarat Pattidar Association.

The relationship between the diaspora and the homeland exists at various levels, political, social, economic, cultural as well as emotional and symbolic. These relationships can be divided into two major categories:

(i) Home provides the basic point of reference for the interactions of the diaspora with others. It results in the formation of a sun's rays kind of pattern, (Figure 1)



(i) The diaspora forms decentered, lateral links based on ethnic similarities. It results in the formation of a cobweb type of pattern (Figure 2).



Now, we will take some specific instances to illustrate the complex web of relationship that exists between the diaspora and the homeland.

Politically, the diaspora can prove to be a bridge of understanding between the home and the host countries or an irritant in the bilateral relations. It can act as a pressure group within the host society and the international arena to further the interest of the homeland and it can also jeopardize the security of the homeland. Thus, in one way or the other, the diaspora remains concerned with the politics of the homeland.

For instance, the destruction of the Babri Masjid in Ayodhya in December 1992 was preceded by much campaigning throughout the United Kingdom by the more radical Hindu organizations for the removal of the mosque and the creation of the Ram temple at Ayodhya. Following the incident of the destruction of the mosque, there were several incidents of damage to Hindu temples and cultural centres as also several state-sponsored inter-community dialogue forums were wrecked.²²

Another instance that can be cited is that of the support received by various political parties in India from overseas. This is as true of the regional parties as the national parties.

The Kargil conflict also reflected the sentiments of the diaspora towards the home country. It bound together the diverse Indian diaspora who donated

²² Kundu, A.: "The Ayodhya Aftermath: Hindu Versus Muslim Violence in Britain", *Immigrants and Minorities*, 1994, pp.26-47.

huge sums of money to be used for the welfare of the soldiers on the front and their families.

The economic potential of the diaspora has only recently been realized. The adoption of the New Economic Policy by the Indian government in 1991 completely changed the stance of the government and several schemes were introduced to woo the diaspora. For instance, very recently, the *People of Indian Origin* or PIO cards were introduced, which provide a number of benefits to the diaspora. Also, the Non Resident Indian (NRI) economic transactions have been simplified. In spite of this, the contribution of the Indian diaspora to the Indian economy remains meagre when compared to other diasporas like the Chinese and the Jews.

Another kind of economic exchange between the diaspora and the homeland is in the form of remittances. Also, in many foreign countries, the diaspora considers itself and its investments to be insecure and so it uses the money to buy property in the home country.

Although, the contribution of the diaspora to the growth of the national income has not been much, one cannot deny that they have a great potential that needs to be cultivated.

The symbolic ties with the homeland is no less important because it provides a feeling of oneness with the collectivity. Thus, popular images from

the homeland have a tremendous impact on the psyche of the diaspora. One can cite the example of the Bombay blockbusters to illustrate this point.

A more substantive form of socio-cultural exchange is seen between family members and friends in the form of video letters, home video of weddings and other ceremonies etc. Another instance of this exchange is seen in the NRI preference for marriage alliances in the homeland.

Thus, the homeland continues to flare the imagination of the diaspora in more ways than one. As Benedict Anderson has said, “regardless of the actual inequalities and exploitation that may prevail in each, the nation is always conceived as deep, horizontal comradeship. It is a fraternity that makes it possible for so many million people, not so much to kill as willing to die for such limited imaginings.”²³ Thus, the Muslim community in Manchester is divided by nationality, such as Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Arab and so on and each group has its own national-cum denominational mosques.²⁴

²³ Anderson, Benedict: *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, Verso Pub. , London, New York, 1983, p.7.

²⁴ Werbner, Pnina : “Manchester Pakistanis : Division and Unity”, in Clarke, Colin, Ceri Peach and Steven Vertovec (eds.) *South Asian Overseas : Migration and Ethnicity*, Cambridge University Press, 1990, pp.335-339.

In the final analysis, one can say that there is no one way in which the diaspora perceives of the homeland, and its perceptions are coloured by the context in which it finds itself.

CHAPTER – III

THE DIASPORA, TAMIL SEPARATISM AND INDIA- SRI LANKA RELATIONS

“The pearl of the East, the jewel of the Indian Ocean has become a teardrop.”¹

Around the world, nations are being fragmented into ethnic enclaves by processes termed as ‘ethnic conflicts’. The South Asian region is no exception to this global trend. There has been an acute ethnicization of politics in many countries in the region, resulting in separatist movements which question the process of nation building that started at the end of the colonial era.²

Sri Lanka is regarded as one of the most dramatic failures at modern nation-building in South Asia. A favourite colony of Britain, Sri Lanka had a socio-cultural fabric which was a unique mix of tradition and modernity. Its transition to an independent state was a smooth process unlike other countries of

¹ Watson, I.B. and Siri Gamage (ed.): *Conflict and Community in Contemporary Sri Lanka*, “*Pearl of the East*” or the “*Island of Tears*”, Sage, 1999, p.1.

² Chadda, Maya: *Ethnicity, Security and Separatism in India*, Oxford University Press, 1997. pp.49-51.

the region that had to face much violence and trauma. Thus, Sri Lanka won the epithet of Third World's model democracy.³

However, the democratic advance was soon stalled by the frequent clashes between the majority Sinhala community, who constitute 74 percent of the total population and the minority Tamils, who constitute about 18 percent of the total population. There was nothing new about these clashes, as in the pre-independence period also, there were ethnic riots involving the two communities. However, what was crucial now was the role of the state.⁴

The Sri Lankan state played a pivotal role in transforming these ethnic categories into "self-conscious ethnic nationalities". In the words of Urmila Phadnis, "a state which arrogates more and more legislative, executive, judicial and coercive powers to homogenize the population within its domain will unleash countermobilization of ethnic identities."⁵

The Tamil separatist movement is one of the most complex problems being faced by any modern nation state. There are several aspects of the problem

³ Senanayake, D.R.: "Democracy and the Problem of Representation: The making of Bi-Polar Ethnic Identity n Post/Colonial Sri Lanka" in Plaff-Czarnecka, Joanna (et al): *Ethnic Futures: The State and Identity Politics in Asia*, New Delhi, Sage, 1999, p.1.

⁴ see note 3, p.2.

⁵ see note 2, p.51.

that need to be studied. However, keeping in view, the overall framework of the study, we focus our attention on three major issues:

(i) The Tamil Eelam or the separate homeland for the Tamils, especially as it figures in the diasporic imagination.

(ii) India and Tamil separatism in Sri Lanka.

(iii) The transformation of the LTTE into a transnational actor

TAMIL SEPARATISM – THE QUEST FOR A SEPARATE HOMELAND

The quest for a separate Tamil state is a sequel to the Tamil-Sinhala relations in the pre and post-independence periods. From the very early days, the Tamil-Sinhala relations were not very cordial and sometimes they were openly confrontational. However, the demand for a separate homeland for the Tamils was articulated only in 1976 at a convention held in a village near Vaddukodai (a suburb of Jaffna). Here, a resolution, known as Vaddukodai resolution was passed which clearly stated that the Eastern and Northern provinces of Sri Lanka traditionally belonged to the Tamils and the Sinhala majority was using its political power to curtail the rights of the Tamils within their own homeland.⁶

The emergence of a bipolar identity in Sri Lanka is attributable to two major factors:

⁶ de Silva, K.M.: *Regional Powers and Small State Security: India and Sri Lanka*, Vikas Publishing House, 1996, pp.85-87.

(i) The British colonial policies which were aimed at reinforcing the majority-minority divide. For instance, the British began to experiment with ethnic representation from 1900 onwards. Furthermore, they favoured certain ethnic groups over others for employment in certain kinds of profession, for example, the Indian Tamils were favoured in plantations and the Sri Lankan Tamils in the bureaucracy. These policies had adverse implications for inter-ethnic relations.

(ii) The post-colonial Sri Lankan state was not only over-centralized, it was also partisan in its approach. The ethnic-relations were defined within a framework in which the majority community monopolized the political and economic power, which it used to its own advantage, even at the cost of other communities.⁷

Sri Lanka became independent in 1948. Unlike India, the establishment of a new political order in Sri Lanka was not preceded by much discussion about the position of the minorities, probably because it did not have to face the trauma of partition.⁸ However, the question did come up, once the new government took charge. Moreover, partly because it was convinced that the economic and political development of the country could best progress under a centralized system of governance and largely due to electoral pressures, the

⁷ see note 3, pp.13-14.

⁸ *ibid.*

Sinhala-majority dominated Sri Lankan government did not make any true attempts to devolve power to other ethnic groups.⁹

Almost immediately, resistance to such policies began to take shape. In 1949 itself, the Federal Party emerged on the political scene. A representative of the Tamil community, its main agenda was to strive for the establishment of a federal system of government.¹⁰ Under pressure from the Indian government and the Tamil pressure groups, the Sri Lankan government made some attempts to alleviate the condition of the minorities. However, their half-hearted attempts failed to achieve anything substantial.

In the meanwhile, the two main political parties in Sri Lanka, the United National Party (UNP) and the Sri Lanka Freedom Party (SLFP) continued to woo the Sinhalese electorate by adopting policies which would promote their interests even at the cost of the minorities. However, the pinnacle of Sinhala chauvinism was the establishment of the Sinhala Maha Sabha by S.W.R.D. Bandaranaike, which opened the way for the emergence of pan-Sinhala-Buddhist nationalism.¹¹

The continuance of the majority offensive led to a gradual hardening of position among the minorities and by late 1970s the Tamil United

⁹ see note 3, pp.116-119.

¹⁰ see note 6, p.78.

¹¹ see note 3, pp.116-117.

Liberation Front (TULF) began to champion the cause of a separate homeland for the Tamils. However, upto the Colombo riots of 1983, the situation had not become irredeemable. In 1983, the killing of thirteen soldiers in Jaffna by the LTTE cadres send the Sinhalese population into a tizzy and they unleashed an indiscriminate carnage against the minority Tamil population. A number of victims of these assaults were people who had shown no sympathy for the Tamil separatist movement. Adding to the woe of the Tamils was the fact that the Sri Lanka government and army remained indifferent and even openly hostile towards the Tamils.¹²

This incident resulted in the resurgence of militant Tamil nationalism and organizations like the LTTE and PLOTE completely submerged the moderate elements in Tamil politics. After 1983, the story of Sri Lanka in general and the Northern provinces in particular has been one of acute misery, destruction of life and property, rape torture and mass displacement. In 1983 itself, 200, 000 Tamils were displaced. By 1995, the number increased to 450, 000.¹³ This gave rise to a distinct Tamil diaspora.

As among the Tamils at home, i.e., Sri Lanka, the question of a homeland began to figure prominently among the Tamil diaspora. The usual tools of ethnic

¹² McDowell, Christopher: *A Tamil Asylum Diaspora*, Berghahn Books, 1996, pp.94-95.

¹³ Gunratna, Rohan: "Internationalization of the Tamil Conflict" in Watson and Gamage (eds.): *Conflict and Community in Contemporary Sri Lanka*, Sage, 1999, pp.112.

mobilization were used very effectively by the Tamil political organizations, especially the LTTE to arouse the political consciousness of the diaspora. Thus, history was mythified, collective memories invoked and experiences of pain and dislocation repeated. In spite of being away from the site of action and their co-ethnics, the diaspora continued to be a part of the collective. As Anthony D. Smith has put it, “Since the time of Ernest Renan, collective memories have always been recognized as a vital element in the construction of the nation and self-understanding of nationalism and when national shared memories attach themselves to specific places and definite territories, a territorialization of memory takes place so that the former become ethnic landscapes and the latter become historic homelands.”¹⁴

The LTTE was aided in its propaganda activities among the diaspora by two factors:

(i) Being deprived of the home, where they were living for centuries and being forced to stay in make-shift camps in other countries, the feeling of being homeless took root in the diasporic psyche. Now, they would be satisfied with nothing less than a home of their own, a separate state of the Tamils.

¹⁴ Smith, Anthony D.: “Culture, Community and Territory, The Politics of Ethnicity and nationalism”.

(ii) A number of their friends and relatives were still in the midst of political chaos in Sri Lanka. The diaspora Tamils were concerned about their well-being and tried to help them in all possible ways. Infact, not being present on the scene themselves, the events of the homeland and the sufferings of their co-ethnics acquired larger than life proportions in the diasporic vision.

However, the diaspora does not have a monolithic view regarding the homeland. There are some people who do not support the Eelam. For instance, the Pungudutheevans (one group of Tamils) do not regard the question of the homeland to be paramount. They seek economic opportunities and support the formation of transnational links in order to further trade.¹⁵ However, this is only a minority view and most people are concerned about the Eelam in some way or the other.

One can cite the case of Gumudipoondi (near Chennai), where a Tamil refugee camp is located. The public mood is overwhelmingly in favour of the Eelam. There are mass prayers for the success of the LTTE, and even while they go about their daily chores, the dreams of the Eelam continues to cast its spell. For instance, a nineteen year old girl Jaya, who has completed high school hopes to go for higher education and become an engineer in order to rebuild Eelam.

¹⁵ see note 12, p.12.

Another youth in the camp says, “we have no dignity here. The camp is like a prison. We cannot put up posters hailing the LTTE. We cannot burst a cracker to celebrate its success. We want to go back and live with dignity in our country (referring to the Eelam).¹⁶

Hence, the issues of the home continue to be a major concern for the diasporas, especially in the case, where the question of the homeland is unsettled.

INDIA AND TAMIL SEPARATISM IN SRI LANKA

A study of Tamil separatism cannot be complete without a reference to India. India has remained associated with the ethnic conflict in Sri Lanka in more than one ways during its various phases. The reasons for India’s interest in the Sri Lankan problem are many.

Firstly, the geographical proximity between the two countries is such that any problem in the island has the potential of spilling over to the subcontinent. Thus, India is a refuge for more than one lakh Sri Lankan Tamils, who are not only a heavy drain on the exchequer but also pose a danger to the stability of the country.

Secondly, as far as their historical antecedents are concerned, the Sri Lankan population is constituted very largely by people who immigrated from

¹⁶ Iyer, Lakshmi: “Heart is Where Homeland Is”, *India Today*, May 29, 2000, p.37.

India at different times in the past. Thus, the Sinhalese, the Sri Lankan Tamils and Indian Tamils have had links with India at some point of time in history. What distinguishes the first two groups from the third is that the former are regarded as Sri Lanka's indigenous population while the latter being relatively recent emigres from India are regarded as aliens and denied citizenship rights. This has remained a major irritant in the bilateral relations between India and Sri Lanka.¹⁷

The outbreak of the ethnic conflict between the Sinhalese and the Tamil population has complicated the matter because now the citizenship problem of the Indian Tamils is seen in the wider context of the victimization of the Tamils as also due to the fact that the differences between the Indian Tamil repatriates and Sri Lankan refugees have become somewhat blurred. Thus, many Indian Tamils from the island, especially those belonging to the second generation consider Sri Lanka to be their home and hope to return to the island when the time is appropriate.¹⁸

Thirdly, ethnicity continues to be an important force in national and international politics today. The fact that people on the two sides of the Palk strait are ethnically related makes the situation more complex. The Indian

¹⁷ Sahadevan, P.: *India and Overseas Indians: The Case of Sri Lanka*, Kalinga Publications, New Delhi, 1995, pp.88-89.

¹⁸ *ibid*, pp.226-227.

Tamils are concerned about the fate of their co-ethnics in Sri Lanka, such that even when the Indian Peace Keeping Force (IPKF) was fighting the LTTE in Jaffna, there was covert support to the latter from certain sections among Indians.¹⁹

Fourthly, India herself witnessed Tamil ethno-nationalism based on caste and language in the 1920s. The evolution of a self-conscious Tamil identity gradually developed into the concept of a Dravid nation which was supposed to would include all areas where Tamils had made their home and constituted the majority, thus including the Southern tip of India. Northern and Eastern provinces of Sri Lanka and some parts of Malaysia.²⁰

Although the separatist platform does not enjoy much support in Tamil Nadu, it has created a sympathetic attitude towards the Tamils of Sri Lanka who are seen as the victims of majority tyranny. According to Maya Chadda, “the close bonds with a powerful fountain of Tamil culture across the Palk Strait in Tamil Nadu has provided strength to Tamil ethno-nationalism in Sri Lanka.”²¹

Fifthly, the LTTE, as the upholder of a separate state for the Tamils has received and continues to receive the aid of various political parties in Tamil Nadu. Thus, in 1995, when Jaffna slipped out of the control of LTTE, the

¹⁹ see note 13, p.117.

²⁰ see note 2, pp.71-73.

²¹ *ibid*, p.75.

Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (DMK) leader M. Karunanidhi led a black shirt procession in Chennai. Recently, while the DMK has adopted a somewhat ambiguous stance towards the Eelam, other parties like the Pattali Makkal Katchi (PMK), Marumalarchi Dravida Munnetra Kazhagam (MDMK) and Tamizhar Deriya Iyakkam (TDI) continue to advocate a proactive Indian role in helping the Tamils. For instance, Vaiko, the MDMK leader has been quoted as saying, “Even if I am destroyed, I will speak in favour of the Tamil Tigers.” The TDI leader, P. Nedumaran has moved the court to lift the ban on organizing meetings in support of LTTE. These leaders have also been trying to persuade the government to lift the ban on the LTTE as also to desist from providing aid to the Sri Lankan army.²²

Sixthly, in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the relations between India and Sri Lanka were strained. Sri Lanka attached great importance to its friendship with the West, Pakistan and China. This shift from the position of non-alignment worried India.

Also, the Indian government wanted to avert any possibility of an agitation for a separate Tamil state. In order to pacify the Indian-Tamil sentiments, it agreed to provide support to the rebels in Sri Lanka. Thus, domestic and geopolitical compulsions induced India to give support to the Sri

²² Iyer, Lakshi: “Eelam Uncase”, *India Today*, May 29, 2000, pp.33-34.

Lankan rebels. The Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) was involved for this purpose. Many thousands of Tamil militants from a number of groups like PLOTE, LTTE and others received guerrilla-warfare training in the camps established and financed by RAW. This was of great help to the Tamil separatist organizations in their formative phase.²³

Thus, historically, geographically, politically and culturally, Sri Lanka is closely linked to India. Moreover, India has used its influence to bring to the negotiating table, the Sri Lankan government and the insurgent groups, many a times. It is clear from the course of events that no satisfactory solution to the ethnic conflicts in Sri Lanka will be complete without taking India into confidence.

THE LTTE AS A TRANSNATIONAL ACTOR

The diaspora supported transnational links have transformed the LTTE into one of the most dangerous insurgent organization in the world. Today, actively or passively, the LTTE receives vast economic, military and other forms of support from overseas. Rohan Gunaratna very aptly describes the LTTE, when he says, “the modern insurgent groups are not merely groups, but

²³ Gunaratna, Rohan: *Indian Intervention in Sri Lanka: The Role of India's Intelligence Agencies*, Gunaratne Offset, Colombo 10, 1993, pp.8-9.

entities having their own investment, lawyers, ships and armies and the capability to tap resources and expertise from a wide variety of sources.”²⁴

The support among the Tamil diaspora has proved to be a major source of strength for the LTTE. It has enabled the LTTE to tide over the worst periods of political and military crises. For instance, when the Indo-Sri Lanka accord of 1987 deprived the LTTE of its invaluable base in India, the support provided by the diaspora (including those on the Indian soil) acted as a life line. The diaspora provided the much needed support to fight the IPKF.²⁵

Similarly, the reverses suffered by the LTTE in 1995-96, when they were pushed out of Jaffna by the Sri Lankan forces, did not keep them down for long. The resources from overseas enabled them to reorganize themselves and by October 1998, they were in a position to make a decisive comeback. Thus, the diaspora support has greatly enhanced the domestic survival and contributed to the resilience of the organization.²⁶

The overseas support also helped the LTTE in another way. It enabled the Tigers to overshadow rival Tamil organizations and claim the status of the sole representative of the Tamils. When the LTTE began its overseas activities, there were various other Tamil insurgent groups like the PLOTE, EPRLF, EROS and

²⁴ see note 13, p.109.

²⁵ see note 13, pp.117-120.

²⁶ Chengappa, Raj: “The Return of the Tigers”, *India Today*, May 22, 2000, p.46.

TELO which were very active internationally. For instance, PLOTE was the first organization to purchase a ship and send delegations to other countries. However, it was only the LTTE that lobbied for support among the Tamil diaspora. This proved to be crucial during the 1987 crisis, when following the Indo-Sri Lanka accord, the Indian troops were stationed in Jaffna to fight the Tamil insurgents. The other organizations, not having the resources to take any bold measures joined mainstream politics. Only the LTTE decided to fight the war on the basis of the support given by the diaspora. Henceforth, the LTTE became the most ardent upholder of Tamil nationalism.²⁷

The LTTE overseas activities began in late 1970s. It was helped by a number of political parties like the TULF, EROS and TELO. Such support was essential for the LTTE in its early stages. For instance, a TULF parliamentarian, V.N. Navaratnan introduced many wealthy and influential Tamils living overseas to the LTTE leaders. The EROS helped the LTTE in establishing contact with other insurgent groups like the PLO, while the TLO began to function as the international arm of the LTTE before it finally merged into the organization. However, it was not until 1983 that it was successful in building a mass base among the overseas Tamils. The 1983 Colombo riots gave the LTTE

²⁷ see note 13, pp.119-120.

the much needed headway. It had atleast two major implications for the LTTE overseas activities:

(i) There was an exodus of about two hundred thousand Tamils to different destinations around the world. Thus, there emerged a distinct Tamil diaspora among whom the LTTE began to spread its roots.

(ii) The 1983 riots galvanized the Tamils as a community. The various Tamil insurgent groups revived the past memories of oppression and violence that had forced the Tamils to leave their traditional homeland. Thus, a notion of a 'victim diaspora' emerged.

Thus, organizations like the LTTE which championed the cause of the Tamil Eelam gained tremendous popularity and support among the diaspora. Also, many western countries began to sympathise with the Sri Lankan Tamils and revised their immigration policies vis-à-vis Sri Lanka. The LTTE gained access to some non-governmental organizations which regarded the Sri Lankan state as a gross violator of the genuine rights of the Tamils.²⁸

Between 1983 and 1987, Sri Lanka's international image suffered irretrievably, while the diaspora-supported international network of the LTTE continued to grow rapidly. A large proportion of the funds generated by LTTE comes from overseas. According to one estimate, in 1996, approximately sixty

²⁸ see note 13, pp.110-111.

percent of the LTTE war budget was coming from overseas in 1996. The LTTE has a large number of restaurants, shops selling LTTE videos and newspapers, farms and finance companies and other high profit ventures. Apart from this, the LTTE is engaged in smuggling of gold ingots, drug trafficking and extortions. The investment of money in legitimate business ventures makes it difficult for intelligence agencies to monitor their transactions. All this is possible only through the diaspora-supported networks. The LTTE organizes film shows, food festivals and cultural activities amongst the diaspora and also levies taxes in certain areas. The money so generated is used for the training of LTTE cadres and procurement of sophisticated weapons.²⁹

Apart from fund generation, the diaspora has a useful role in providing sanctuary to the insurgents, carrying out propaganda work and lobbying for support to the Eelam in their respective host countries. Also, the overseas networks have enabled the LTTE to relay information from various centres, so that when the government imposed stringent censorship laws on the press and media, the Tigers were freely sending reports and broadcasts of their military over such sites as www.eelamweb.com and www.tamilnet.com.³⁰

The international network has not only provided the LTTE with a capability to tap resources from various sources, it has also made it impossible

²⁹ see note 13, pp.120-123.

³⁰ see note 26, p.47.

for the Sri Lankan government to control its activities. Thus, while the government can ban the LTTE from functioning within its territory, it cannot monitor its activities in other countries, and by now LTTE has its bases in more than fifty countries around the world. Despite this, the diaspora link has not received much attention either in the academic or the political circles of Sri Lanka and the Sri Lankan diplomats have failed to counter the propaganda activities of the LTTE among the overseas Tamils.

The working of peace with the LTTE is one of the most difficult problems for any government to solve. However, it is clear that the objective can be achieved only through political negotiations and not military intervention. Another thing is that the ability and the willingness of the Sri Lankan government to enter into a negotiated settlement with the Tamil political organizations including the LTTE will influence any relationship between India and Sri Lanka for India cannot easily dismiss the concern of the 60 million Tamils in Tamil Nadu who have some sympathy for their co-ethnics across the strait.

CHAPTER – IV

THE DIASPORA AND THE SIKH SEPARATIST

MOVEMENT

It has been proved beyond doubt that the movement for a separate homeland for the Sikhs has received considerable support from a certain section of the Sikh diaspora. Even now, when the Sikh extremists in India have been completely marginalized by the moderate factions and the common Sikhs are no longer swayed by the promises of Khalistan, a certain group among the Sikh diaspora has kept the issue of Khalistan alive. They continue to pump money into the training of terrorists and undertake campaigns to create a favourable political atmosphere towards their imagined homeland in their respective host countries and various international forums. A view that has been circulating among the Sikh diaspora is that the movement for a separate homeland cannot be built upon the Indian soil for the Sikhs in India were under the absolute control of the Indian state and in no position to lead the Sikh nation to free Khalistan. Thus, it was the bounden duty of the outside Sikhs, who have the advantage of superior education and economic power to provide the leadership to free the Sikh nation from slavery.¹

¹ *The Khalistan Letter*, March 1999, Vol.4, No.2, file: ///D1/Wshre/APO5/21.

The aim of the present study is not to lay down the details about Sikh separatism in India. Its aim is to analyse how truth has been represented or misrepresented by a certain section of the Sikh diaspora in order to build a case for Khalistan. It also focusses upon the various kinds of activities undertaken by them in order to realize the goal of a separate Sikh state. The study proposes to do this through an examination of the literature published by the overseas supporters and organizers of the Khalistan movement.

History is not merely concerned with an objective representation of facts. The writing of history is a political act and it soughts to attain certain set objectives. One of the most important objective on the separatist agenda has been to contrive the history of the Sikhs in such a way as to create a separate and exclusive Sikh identity. Thus, notwithstanding the synthetic elements of the Indian culture, the Hindus, Muslims and Sikhs have been represented as separate nations, whose interests are not only different from each other, but also confrontational.²

The post-independence India has been represented in the Literature as a Brahminical state which betrayed the Sikh nation and colonized them through the use of force. The sacrifices made by the Sikhs during the freedom struggle and the support given by them to India, at the time of partition was forgotten.

² Singh, Pratap: "*The Declaration of Independence of the Sikh Homeland*",
Visit\\Nwri\sr\Peter\x1\DECLAR~1.HTM.

The commitments made by the Indian state to safeguard the interests of the Sikhs vanished into thin air as it embarked upon a programme to systematically destroy Sikh polity, economy, society and religion.³

Once, history degenerates into myth-making, it becomes irrelevant to seek whether such events occurred or not for volumes of data can be generated to support each interpretation. What is important is to understand the fact that in a given situation, a particular representation of truth has the capability of acquiring mythic proportions, thus undermining all other truths.

Another important objective on the separatist agenda has been to arouse the collective consciousness of the Sikhs. The strategies adopted for this purpose are varied.

(i) Organization of festivals : The important festivals of the Sikhs like Vaisakhi and birthdays of various Sikh gurus are celebrated with much gaiety and splendour. Such activities generate a sense of brotherhood within the community as also provide an opportunity to various organizations to preach their doctrine. The events are much publicized beforehand and maximum media coverage is coveted so as to impress upon the people the strength and popularity of their movement.

³ *ibid.*

They also become an occasion for fund raising and reaffirming ties with the homeland.

The Khalsa March of April 10, 1999, organized to celebrate the tricentenary of the Khalsapanth, initiated by Guru Gobind Singh was attended by 40,000 Sikhs from all over America, who came to Washington to participate in a procession from the Lincoln Memorial to the capital. The march received wide coverage in the United States' newspapers and was attended by some important dignitaries sympathetic to the cause of Khalistan. It also became an occasion for propagating the idea of Khalistan.⁴

(ii) Invoking the past experiences of pain and trauma: The past tragedies have been kept alive in the collective memory of the people by repeating the instances of unfair treatment of the Sikhs by the Indian state. Thus, 'Operation Bluestar' which involved the storming of the Golden Temple and resulted in the death of a large number of Sikhs, causing enormous hurt in the minds of all Sikhs is religiously commemorated. A demonstration was held in Lafayette Park in front of the White House in Washington D.C. on the afternoon of June 5, 1999 in order to commemorate the Bluestar tragedy. Here, the memories of the

⁴ *The Khalistan Letter*, March 1999, Vol.4, No.2, file:///D1/Wshre/AP05/21.

brutalities suffered by the Sikhs were evoked and the pledge to seek revenge was renewed.⁵

Such events reinforce the solidarity of the group and galvanize the people to struggle for the demise of the identified enemy.

(iii) Creating a sense of an impending danger to the existence of the community: The facts are presented in such a way as to create a fear psyche among the people. Thus, the nuclear tests conducted by India on May 11, 1998 have been interpreted and publicized as posing a direct threat to the Sikh nation and their homeland. According to a letter issued by the Council of Khalistan, the Sikhs will be the primary victims of any nuclear war that takes place in South Asia.⁶

A collective consciousness has been regarded as a vital element in the construction of a nationalistic self-consciousness.

The third major goal on the separatist agenda is to promote their variant of nationalism and religion as the purest form. Those who do not subscribe to their views are regarded as traitors. Thus, Prakash Singh Badal, Tohra and Giani Puran Singh are regarded as the agents of the Indian state whose aim is to destroy the Sikh religion and dilute the movement for a separate Sikh state.⁷

⁵ *The Khalistan Letter*, May 1999, Vol.4, No.4, file:///D1/Wshre/AP05/2.

⁶ *The Khalistan Letter*, June 1998, Vol.3, No.6, file:///D1/Wshre/AP05/26.

⁷ *The Khalistan Letter*, June 1999, Vol.4, No.5, file:///D1/Wshre/AO05/27.

Very obviously, all these efforts are directed towards realizing the goal of a separate state for the Sikhs. Now, some of the important activities undertaken by a section of the Sikh diaspora, in order to realize the goal of Khalistan will be discussed.

(i) **Propaganda:** Their propaganda activities have two objectives primarily.

Firstly, they intend to malign the reputation of the Indian state and expose its weaknesses and secondly, they seek to publicise their own objectives.

In the literature published by them, the Indian state is represented as a hegemon having no concern for democracy, free speech and human rights. The surveillance and monitoring activities of the Indian intelligence agencies and the counter-insurgency operations of the police and the army are criticized with utmost severity. Various reports on the condition of human rights in India have been collected and published with a view to expose the deplorable condition of human rights in India. They try to propagate the view that the activities of the Indian state are inimical to Sikh interests and that the Sikh culture and community can only flourish in a separate state of their own.

The problems faced by the Indian state are magnified in order to create an impression that India is a failed state. For instance, the dissolution of the government on December 4, 1998, which is a normal feature of any democracy was equated with the disintegration of the Indian state.⁸

Their own activities are publicised with the view to mobilize people, to induct new recruits, win sympathisers and raise funds.

(ii) **Fund-raising:** This is a very important activity because funds are needed to carry out all other activities. The main sources of fund collection are individual donations, collective donations from local Gurudwaras, sale of stickers and posters etc. Almost every issue of the “Khalistan Letter” carries a request for donation from the subscribers and sympathisers. The public gatherings also become an occasion for fund generation.

(iii) **Lobbying:** They try to cultivate sympathisers among the political elite of the host country. Thus, Congressmen like Dan Burton and Edolphus Towns put forward the case of Khalistan in the United States Senate and at the same time censure the policies of the Indian state. For instance, the resolution introduced in the Senate by the Congressman

⁸ *The Khalistan Letter*, January 1998, Vol.3, No.1, <file:///D1/Wshre/AP05/1>.

Dan Burton on August 2, 1999 proposed a cut in aid to India because of its violations of human rights and opposition to self-determination.⁹

They also take their case to various international forums like the United Nations and the Amnesty International. Here, also their aim is to damage India's reputation.

(iv) **Counter-campaigning:** There is a vast majority of the Sikh diaspora who do not support the cause of Khalistan. They consider themselves to be a part of the Indian nation and not separate from it. The activities organized by this group are countered by the separatists, who claim that the former are not the true representatives of the Sikh nation. Thus, pro-India Amarjit Singh and the Chardhi Kala newspaper were boycotted and blamed of creating confusion among the Sikhs.¹⁰ They separatists also undertake campaigns to counter the work done by the Indian diplomats.

(v) **Establishment of committees:** They establish their own committees to carry out research and present their version of the truth.

(vi) **Publication of literature:** This is one of the most important activities that they engage in. They not only have magazines and newspapers that spread their views and ideas but also have several

⁹ *The Khalistan Letter*, August 1999, Vol.4, No.7, file:///D1/Wshre/AP05/31.

¹⁰ *The Khalistan Letter*, July 1999, Vol.4, No.6, file:///D1/Wshre/AP05/31.

websites of their own, for example, Khalistan@digizen.net. According to their reportage one of their websites received 14.6 million hits in the first three months of its being launched¹¹.

(vii) **Terrorism:** They are involved in organizing terrorist activities on the Indian soil. A large part of the funds collected by them is diverted into the training of terrorist groups and procurement of arms and ammunition. They have also established contacts with other terrorist organizations like those involved in Kashmir. They applaud the activities of the Kashmiri and the Naga militants and support their struggle for a separate state¹².

They also applaud the acts of violence committed by the Sikh extremists. Thus, Delawar Singh, who was involved in the murder of the Punjab Chief Minister Beant Singh was hailed as a living martyr¹³.

(viii) **Fight for the control of various important Sikh organizations:** They fight for the control of important Sikh organizations like the International Sikh Organization and the World Sikh Council and also to get their people appointed to important offices. Thus, the appointment of Darshan Singh Dhaliwal, who is not a supporter of a separate Sikh state,

¹¹ *The Khalistan Letter*, June 1999, Vol.4, No.5, file:///D1/Wshre/AP05/27.

¹² *The Khalistan Letter*, July 1999, Vol.4, No.6, file:///D1/Wshre /AP05/29.

¹³ *The Khalistan Letter*, April 1998, Vol.3, No.4, file:///D1/Wshre/AP05/22.

to lead the tricentenary celebration of the Khalsa Panth was viewed with extreme displeasure by the separatists¹⁴.

(ix) Involvement in Indian politics : They try to exert their influence on the Indian polity, especially Punjab. Thus, for instance, they carry out campaigns urging the electorate to boycott the elections in Punjab or to vote for a particular candidate¹⁵. They also keep a close watch on the election results and other important political decisions taken by the country.

The case of the Sikh diaspora is a classic example of how the diaspora tries to exert its influence upon the politics of the homeland. It is also evident that the issue of the homeland, whether real or imaginary profoundly affects the psyche of the diaspora. Finally, people's perceptions of the homeland are very complex and enmeshed with politics. Thus, while a certain section of the Sikh diaspora vociferously espouses the cause of Khalistan, there are various other groups among the Sikhs who are not concerned about it at all.

¹⁴ *The Khalistan Letter*, April 1998, Vol.3, No.4, file:///D1/Wshre/AP05/22.

¹⁵ *The Khalistan Letter*, February 1998, Vol.3, No.2, file:///D1/Wshre/AP05/18.

CHAPTER – V

CONCLUSION

The main thrust of the present study has been to explore the relationship between the diaspora and the homeland. It appears to be a well-established fact that the homeland continues to inspire the imagination of the diasporas in multifarious ways, even while they settle and adapt themselves to the new settings. However, there is no definite way in which this relationship is structured.

The relations between the diaspora and the homeland is dependent upon a number of factors, such as:

- (i) the circumstances which have caused the migration of the population from the homeland to the other countries, i.e., whether they are indentured or otherwise bound by contract, free passage (for purposes of education, employment and business) or political refugees.
- (ii) the extent of ties with the homeland, i.e. whether there exists marriage and kinship networks, property and economic ties and political involvement and organizational affiliation in the homeland.
- (iii) the kind of treatment received in the host country, i.e. whether it has the infrastructure and the will to accomodate the immigrants.

(iv) the kind of resources that they possess, i.e. whether they are in a position to exert some degree of economic and political influence or are completely at the mercy of the host society.

(v) the composition of the migrant population, i.e., whether it is a homogeneous or a heterogeneous group. The former is more conducive to community development.

Depending upon the context in which it unfolds, the diaspora-homeland relationship is articulated in different ways. Some diasporas hold the myth of return to the homeland, while others try to relocate the culture of the homeland in the host societies. The question of the homeland becomes especially important, when it is an unsettled issue as in the case of Khalistan and the Eelam.

Such stateless diasporas engage in various kinds violent subversive and terrorist activities to realize the goal of a separate state of their own in the territory that they perceive to be their traditional homeland. In this context, it is also useful to explore the diaspora-supported transnational links that transform the insurgent organizations like the LTTE, PLO and Hamas into transnational actors. Their multiple loci give these organizations an amazing resilience, so that it becomes simply impossible for a single state and sometimes even a coalition of states to monitor and control their activities.

The establishment of political, social, cultural and economic ties is another way in which the diaspora articulates its relationship with the homeland. These relations may be substantive or simply symbolic and rhetorical. In many instances, these relationships are established along ethnic lines. The intertwining of the ethnic and diasporic identity is a very interesting aspect of diasporas. The diasporas then act as ethnic communities in the context of the host society, the international arena and even its interactions with the home society. Their main aim is to further the interests of their “own people” and the most intense form of it is manifested in the struggle for separate states.

The homeland, although an important category is problematic because there is no one way in which it is conceptualized. For instance, in the case of the Sikh diaspora, a marginal section identifies with Khalistan as their homeland. There are others with their roots in India and Pakistan and consider these countries as their homeland. Similarly, in the case of the Indian Tamils of Sri Lanka, one can discern three distinct perceptions of the homeland. One group considers India to be their homeland, a second group considers Sri Lanka to be their homeland, while a third group identifies with the Eelam.

Although, the homeland assumes an important dimension in the diasporic psyche, its study is fraught with problems., Firstly, it is a problematic category lacking a precise definition and secondly, the ways in which the relationship between the diaspora and the homeland is structured is varied.

A major aspect of diaspora study which has been completely ignored in this study is the impact of the diasporic communities on the host societies. The host society has to make a number of adjustments to incorporate these groups. These adjustments include changes in emigration and immigration laws, promulgation of laws governing race relations, making available civic amenities to the settlers and so on. There is also a need to change the mindset of the host society, its government, media and population, so as to prevent the oppression of the migrants. When the host society or a certain group within it is not ready to make adjustments, political strifes occur, leading to destabilization.

The continuance of its association with the homeland is often given as an explanation for the backlash of the host society against the diaspora. The situation really worsens during the times of crises such as economic recession or political instability. During such times, diasporas are one of the first groups to be persecuted. Such a strategy can at best provide a temporary vent to the frustration of certain sections of the host society. Since, it is both impossible to expel and assimilate them, the best way to deal with the diasporas is to accommodate them into the fabric of the host society.

The most important aspect of the diasporas is their ability to establish trans-national networks, which gives them a life of their own. They have emerged as independent actors on the world stage and as one of the most dynamic agents of globalization. This theme needs to be probed further.

At the theoretical level also, a number of questions arise. A very important issue is that whether the old theories of International Relations can be used to explain the new phenomena that are occurring in the international arena. It appears that even in their modified form, the older theories are not adequate to explain the new charges. Also, there is a need to redefine certain key concepts of International Relations theory in the context of the new global order. For instance, the absolutist conception of the concepts like sovereignty, territoriality and so on, are being questioned by actors like the diasporas.

Their dynamism and versatility make the diaspora a very interesting subject for research. Not only the students and scholars of International Relations but experts from other disciplines such as Anthropology, Sociology, Literature, Demography and Psychology have also shown interest in this area of study. In the final analysis, one can say that the diaspora has emerged as one of the most important actors on the international scene and they somewhat embody the Kantian vision of the “world citizen” advocating “man’s common ownership of the earth.”

APPENDIX I

POPULATION ESTIMATE OF THE OVERSEAS INDIANS

Afghanistan	-	45,000
Australia	-	92,200
Burma	-	330,000
Canada	-	200,000
Germany	-	2,000
Fiji	-	363,951
French Guyana	-	11,045
Grenada	-	4,000
Guyana	-	390,580
Hong Kong	-	6,000
Indonesia	-	7,000
Iran	-	1,000
Iraq	-	12,000
Jamaica	-	60,000
Kenya	-	70,000
Lesotho	-	1,100
Madagascar	-	16,500
Malawi	-	4,800
Malaysia	-	1446,166

Mauritius	-	734, 146
Mozambique	-	20, 850
Nepal	-	2500, 000
Netherlands	-	102,100
New Zealand	-	15, 000
Portugal	-	7, 200
Saudi Arabia	-	2, 500
Singapore	-	169, 100
South Africa	-	995, 087
Sri Lanka	-	1027, 271
St. Lucia	-	4, 873
St. Vincent	-	6, 000
Surinam	-	143, 795
Sweden	-	1, 900
Tanzania	-	50, 100
Thailand	-	11, 000
Trinidad and Tobago	-	500, 335
Uganda	-	1, 050
United Arab Emirates	-	3, 000
United Kingdom	-	789, 000
U.S.A.	-	360, 000

Yemen (PDR)	-	103, 230
Zambia	-	10, 000
Zimbabwe	-	15, 000
Other countries (total)	-	5, 220

Source: [Sahadevan, P. : India and Overseas Indians : The case of Sri Lanka, Vikas Publishing House, New Delhi, 1996, p.285.]

BIBLIOGRAPHY

BOOKS

Allen, Sheila, *New Minorities, Old Conflicts: Asians and West Indian Migrants in Britain* (New York, Random House, 1970)

Anderson, Benedict, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London and New York, Verso Pub. 1983)

Anwar, Muhammad, *The Myth of Return, Pakistanis in Britain* (London, Meinemann, 1979)

Ballard, Roger, ed., *Desh Pardesh: The South Asian Presence in Britain* (Delhi, B.R.Publishing Corporation, 1996)

Bissoondoyal, V., ed., *Indians Overseas: The Mauritian Experience*, (Moka, Mauritius, Mahatma Gandhi Institute, 1984)

Brah, Avtar, *Cartographies of Diaspora: Contesting Identities* (London and New York, Routledge, 1996)

Brass, Paul R., *Ethnicity and Nationalism* (New Delhi, Sage Publication, 1991)

Brown, Judith M. And Rosemary Foot, eds., *Migration: The Asian Experience* (London, Macmillan Press, 1999)

Burchill, Scott and Andrew Linklater, *Theories of International Relations* (London, Macmillan Press, 1996)

- Chadda, Maya, *Ethnicity, Security and Separatism in India* (New Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1997)
- Clarke, Colin, Ceri Peach and Steven Vertovec, eds., *South Asians Overseas : Migration and Ethnicity*, (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1990)
- Cohen, Robin ed., *The Cambridge Survey of World Migration* (Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1995)
- de Silva, K.M., *Regional Powers and Small State Security : India and Sri Lanka* (New Delhi, Vikas Publishing House, 1996)
- Fox, R.G., ed., *Recapturing Anthropology* (Santa Fe: School of American Research Press, 1991)
- Gardner, Katy, *Global Migrants, Local Lives : Travel and Transformation in Rural Bangladesh* (Oxford, Clarendon Press, 1995)
- Gunaratna, Rohan, *Indian Intervention in Sri Lanka : The Role of India's Intelligence Agencies* (Colombo, Gunaratne Offset, 1993)
- Gupta, Aniruddha, Ed., *Indians Abroad: Asia and Africa* (New Delhi, Orient Longman, 1971)
- Helweg, A.W. and U.M.Helweg, *An Immigrant Success Story, East Indians in America* (Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 1990)
- Hoffman, John, *Beyond the State: An Introductory Critique* (Cambridge, Polity Press, 1995)

- Jain, Ravindra K., *Indian Communities Abroad: Themes and Literature* (New Delhi, Manohar, 1993)
- Kapur, A. Rajiv, *Sikh Separatism – The Politics of Faith* (New Delhi, Vikas Publishing House, 1989)
- Kumar Sushil, ed., *New Globalism and the State* (New Delhi, Research Press, 1999)
- Lin, Shirley, Geok-Lin and Amy Ling eds., *Reading the Literatures of Asia America* (Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 1992)
- Linklater, Andrew and John Macmillan, eds., *Boundaries in Question: New Directions in International Relations* (London, Printer Publishers, 1993)
- Malik, K.N., *India and the United Kingdom: Change and Continuity in the 1980s*, (New Delhi, Sage Publication, 1997)
- McDowell, Christopher, *A Tamil Asylum Diaspora: Sri Lankan Migration, Settlement and Politics in Switzerland* (Providence, Oxford, Berghahn Books, 1996)
- Mittleman, J.H., ed., *Globalization: Critical References* (London, Rienr Publishers, 1997)
- Montserrat, Guibernau and John Rex, eds., *The Ethnicity Reader* (Cambridge, Polity Press, 1997)

- Motwani, Jagat K., Mahim Gosine and Jyoti Barot Motwani, eds., *Global Indian Diaspora : Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow* (New York, Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO), 1993)
- Nayyar, Deepak, *Migration, Remittances and Capital Flows* (Delhi, Oxford University Press, 1994)
- Plaff-Czarnecka (et. al.), *Ethnic Frontiers” The State and Identity Politics in Asia* (New Delhi, Sage, 1999)
- Rao, M.S.A., *Studies in Migration* (New Delhi, Manohar, 1986)
- Sahadevan, P, *India and Overseas Indians: The Case of Sri Lanka* (Delhi, Kalinga Publications, 1995)
- Sassen, Saskia, *Losing Control? Sovereignty in an Age of Globalization* (London, Columns University Press, 1996)
- Simon, Julian L., *The Economic Consequences of Migration* (Cambridge, Massachusetts, Basil Blackwell, 1989)
- Singh, Dalip, *Dynamics of Punjab Politics* (New Delhi, Macmillan India, 1981)
- Singh, I.J. Bahadur, ed., *The Other India: The Overseas Indians and their Relationship with India* (New Delhi, Arnold, Heinemann, 1979)
- Sivarajah, Ambalavanar, *Politics of Tamil Nationalism in Sri Lanka* (New Delhi, South Asian Publishers, 1996)
- Smith, Anthony D., *Nations and Nationalism in a Global Era* (Cambridge, Polity Press, 1995)

Solomons, John, ed., *Race and Racism in Britain* (New York, St. Martin's Press Inc., 1993)

Tinker, Hugh, *The Banyan Tree : Overseas Emigrants from India, Pakistan and Bangladesh* (Oxford, Oxford University Press, 1977)

Vermeulean, Hans and Cora Govers, eds., *The Anthropology of Ethnicity: Beyond 'Ethnic Groups'* (Amsterdam, Het Spinhuis, 1994)

Vertovec, Steven and Ceri Peach, eds., *Islam in Europe: The Politics of Religion and Community* (New York, St. Martin's Press Inc., 1997)

Walker, R.B.J. and Saul H. Mendlovitz, eds., *Contending Sovereignties : Redefining Political Community* (London, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1990)

Watson, I.B. and Siri Ganage (eds.): *Conflict and Community in Contemporary Sri Lanka: "Pearl of the East" or the "Island of Tears"* (New Delhi, Sage, 1999)

Youngs, Gillian, *International Relations in a global Age: A Conceptual Challenge* (Cambridge, Polity Press, 1999)

ARTICLES

Appadorai, Arjun and Carol Breckenridge, "On Moving Targets", *Public Culture* (2), 1989

Armstrong, John A., "Mobilized and Proletarians Diasporas", *American Political Science Review*, (70), 1976.

- Bell, Vikki, "Historical Memory, Global Movements and Violence : Paul Gilroy and Arjun Appadurai in Conversation", *Theory, Culture and Society*, Vol.16(2), 2000
- Bell, Vikki, "Performativity and Belonging : An Introduction", *Theory, Culture and Society*, Vol.16 (2), 2000
- Burlet, S. And H. Reid, "Co-operation and Conflict : South Asian Diaspora after Ayodhya", *New Community* (21), 1995
- Chatterjee, Partha, "Beyond the Nation? or Within", *Economic and Political Weekly*, 32, (1-2), 1997
- Chengappa, Raj, "Return of the Tigers", *India Today*, May 22, 2000 Sheffer, Gabriel, "Ethno-National Diasporas and Security", *Survival*, Vol.36, No.1, Spring 1999 Jain, Ravindra K., "Indian Diaspora, Globalization and Multiculturalism : A Cultural Analysis", *Contributions to Indian Sociology*, 32, 2, 1998
- Cohen, Robin, "Diasporas and the Nation-State : From Victims to Challengers", *International Affairs* (172), 1996
- Dutt, Srikant, "India and the Overseas Indians", *India Quarterly*, 36 (3-4), 1980
- Foner, Nancy, "What's New About Trans-nationalism? New York Immigrants Today and At the Turn of the Century", *Diaspora*, Vol.6, No.3, Winter 1997

- Gill, Sucha Singh and K.C. Singhal, "The Punjab Problem: Its Historical Roots",
Economic and Political Weekly, Vol.11, No.14, April 1984.
- Haraksingh, Kusha R., "After the Crossing : Structure, Processes and Indian
Culture in Trinidad", *Immigrants and Minorities* (7), 1988.
- Iyer, Lakshmi, "Eelam Unease", *India Today*, May 29, 2000
- Jain, Madhu, "The East in West", *India Today*, January 24, 2000.
- Jain, P.C., "Emigration and Settlement of Indians Abroad", *Sociological
Bulletin*, 38 (1), 1989
- Jain, Ravindra K., "Overseas Indians in Malaysia and the Caribbean:
Comparative Notes", *Immigrants and Minorities* (7), 1988.
- Jayawardena, C., "Migration and Social Change : A Survey of Indian
Communities Overseas", *Geographical Review* (58), 1968
- Jeyaraj, D.B.S., "LTTE Offensive", *Frontline*, December 10, 1999
- Karunatilake, Waruna, "The Last War Unto Peace", *Outlook*, June 5, 2000
- Krishna, Sankaran, "Producing Sri Lanka : J.R. Jayawardane and Postcolonial
Identity", *Alternatives*, (21), 1996
- Kundu, A., "The Ayodhya Aftermath : Hindu Versus Muslim Violence in
Britain", *Immigrants and Minorities* (13), 1994
- Levine, Steve, "Revenge of the Armenian Diaspora", *Financial Times*, London,
September 16, 1994

- Mansigh, Surjit, "How Relevant Is the State in International Politics Today?",
Man and Development, September, 1996
- Mckeown, Adam, "Conceptualizing Chinese Diasporas, 1842-1979", *Journal of Asian Studies*, Vol.58, No.2, May 1999.
- Mudgal, Vipul, "Roots of Violence in Indian Punjab", *Aakrosh*, Vol.2, No.3, April 1999
- Parekh, Bhikhu, "Some Reflections on the Indian Diaspora", British Organization of People of Indian Origin (BOPIO), 1993
- Rai, S.Amit, "India Online: Electronic Bulletin Boards and the Construction of a Diasporic Hindu Identity", *Diaspora*, Vol.4, 1995
- Rayaprol, Aparna, "Conceptualizing Women in the Indians Diaspora", Paper presented at the Workshop on "The Study of Indian Diaspora: Conceptual and Methodological Issues", Centre for the Study of Indian Diaspora, University of Hyderabad, September 12-13, 1997
- Razwik, Panossian, "Between Ambivalence and Intrusion : Politics and Identity in Armenia-Diaspora Relations", *Diaspora*, Vol.7, No.2, 1998
- Safran, William, "Diasporas in Modern societies : Myths of Homeland and Return", *Diaspora*, Vol.1, No.1, Spring 1991
- Sambandan, V.S., "A Nation on the Brink", *Frontline*, June 9, 2000
- Sassen, Saskia, "Excavating Power : In Search of Frontier Zones and New Actors", *Theory, Culture and Society*, Vol17(1), 2000

- Scott, Heller, "Worldwide Diaspora of Peoples Poses New Challenges for Scholars", *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, June 3, 1998
- Sharma, S.L., ed., "*Special No. on Indians Abroad*", *Sociological Bulletin*, 38 (1), 1989
- Spaeth, Anthony, "Coming to Amrika", *Time*, March 27, 2000
- Stratton, Jon, "Dis (placing) the Jews : Historicizing the Idea of Diaspora", *Diaspora*, Vol.6, No.3, Winter 1997
- Tololian, Khachig, "The Nation-State and Its Others: In Lieu of a Preface," *Diaspora*, Vol.1, 1991.
- Tololian, Khachig, "Rethinking Diasporas" Stateless Power in the Transnational Movement", *Diaspora*, Vol.5, 1996.
- Uberoi, Patricia, "The Diaspora Comes Home: Disciplining Desire in DDLJ", *Contributions to Indian Sociology*, 32, 2, 1998.
- Vertovec, Steven, "Three Meanings of "Diaspora" Exemplified among South Asian Religions", *Diaspora : A Journal of Transnational Studies*, Vol.6, No.3, Winter 1998
- Weiner, Myron and Rainer Munz, "Migrants, Refugees and Foreign Policy : Prevention and Intervention Strategies", *Third World Quarterly*, Vol.18, No.1, 1997

ELECTRONIC SOURCES

Congressional Record, <///Nwrilsrv\Peter\Z3\INDIAN~2.HTM>, Thursday, March 19, 1997, Thursday, April 23, 1998.

Global Organization of People of Indian Origin (GOPIO), visit gopio@t-three.com.

Singh, Pratap, “The Declaration of Independence of the Sikh Homeland”,
<\\Nwrilsrv\Peter\x1\DECLR~1.HTM>.

Singh, T. Sher, “India Needs a Reminder About Free Speech, *Toronto Star*,
November 10, 1998, file: <///D%7C/Wshre/GO2/Star1tshersingh>.

The Khalistan Letter, Online edition, file: <///D1/Wshre/APO5>, January 1998-
August 1999.