

International Conference on ‘Migrations and Citizenship(s)’ (30 May – 01 June 2016)

Concept Note:

Gruesome reports on migrants—of hundreds drowning as their rickety boats capsized in unforgiving waters, of them being enslaved or detained in squalid camps in Europe and Asia, even of their summary executions on the high seas—have punctuated news headlines with alarming regularity in recent years. What is novel about these reports are not the tragic incidents themselves which have a long history, but their scale as the magnitude of migratory flows across the Mediterranean and the Bay of Bengal have risen exponentially in recent years. The International Organization for Migration, to cite just one figure, estimated that at least 30,400 migrants arrived in Greece till May 12 this year compared to 34,000 in all of 2014.

If the immediate triggers for the rapid increase in migrations across the Mediterranean are obvious—foreign intervention in civil wars from Libya through Syria to Yemen and Iraq, and the continuing instability in Afghanistan—the vast numbers involved raise several questions. These streams of migrants themselves are part of a larger chain of trans-African and trans Asian migrations as people in places further away move closer to the Mediterranean and Indian Ocean shores to better situate them for the passage to Europe or to Southeast Asia and beyond. While the direct results of Western (or Western-backed) interventions are obvious, what are their indirect corollaries—Boris Pasternak’s ‘the fruits of fruits, consequences of consequences’— ranging from the structural adjustment policies that wrecked African economies to the U.S. and European actions that enable Israel to expel Palestinians from their homeland? Which 31 populations are more likely to see migration as a route to a more secure future? How have foreign investments in land (and the consequent expulsion of peoples) and environmental degradation (and consequent loss of patterns of livelihood) fuelled these migrations?

This conference, sponsored by the Indian Institute of Advanced Study and Binghamton University, was designed to explore some of these contemporary issues of migration and citizenship(s) in Africa, Asia, and Europe historically.

An international conference on ‘Migrations and Citizenship(s)’ was organized during 30 May - 01 June 2016 at IIAS in collaboration with Harpur College of Arts and Sciences, Binghamton (SUNY) and Distinguished Chair in Migration and Forced Migration Studies, Calcutta Research Group, Kolkata. Professor Ravi Palat, Department of Sociology, State University of New York, Binghamton, New York and Professor Ranabir Samaddar, Distinguished Chair in Migration and Forced Migration Studies, Calcutta Research Group, Kolkata were the Conveners of the conference. The welcome address was given by Professor Chetan Singh, Director, IIAS. Professor Anne McCall, Dean of Harpur College of Arts and Sciences, Binghamton University gave introductory remarks. Keynote address was given by Professor Ranabir Samaddar, Convener of the conference.

PARTICIPANTS

- Professor Nasir Uddin, Department of Anthropology, University of Chittagong, Chittagong, Bangladesh

- Ms. Bipasha Rosy Lakra, Centre for Political Studies, School of Social Sciences, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi
- Professor Ravi Palat, Department of Sociology, State University of New York, Binghamton, New York
- Professor Ranabir Samaddar, Distinguished Chair in Migration and Forced Migration Studies, Calcutta Research Group, Kolkata
- Ms. Anwesha Sengupta, Research and Programme Associate, Calcutta Research Group, Salt Lake, Kolkata
- Shri Dinesh Kafle, Centre for English Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi
- Professor Anne McCall, Harpur College of Arts and Sciences, Binghamton University • Professor Nirmal Sengupta, National Fellow, IAS
- Professor Roberto Patricio Korzeniewicz, Department of Sociology University of Maryland, USA
- Dr. Nasreen Chowdhory, Department of Political Science, University of Delhi, Delhi
- Dr. Anita Sengupta, Calcutta Research Group, Salt Lake, Kolkata
- Ms. Anuradha Sen Mookerjee, Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Switzerland
- Ms. Smita Tiwary, Indian Council of World Affairs, New Delhi
- Professor József Böröcz, Department of Sociology, Rutgers University, New Brunswick, NJ 08901, USA
- Professor Mahua Sarkar, Department of Sociology, Binghamton University, Binghamton, US
- Ms. Samata Biswas, Bethune College, Kolkata
- Dr. Simon Behrman, School of Law, University of East Anglia, Norwich NR4 7TJ, UK
- Shri Chapparban Sajaudeen, Centre for Comparative Literature, School of Humanities, University of Hyderabad, Hyderabad
- Dr. Nisha Kapoor, Department of Sociology, University of York, Heslington, YO10 5DD
- Dr. Ishita Shruti, D-4, Mother Apartment, Plot - 6, Sector 5, Dwarka, New Delhi