



Indentured
Labour Route

WORLD INDIAN DIASPORA CONFERENCE 2020

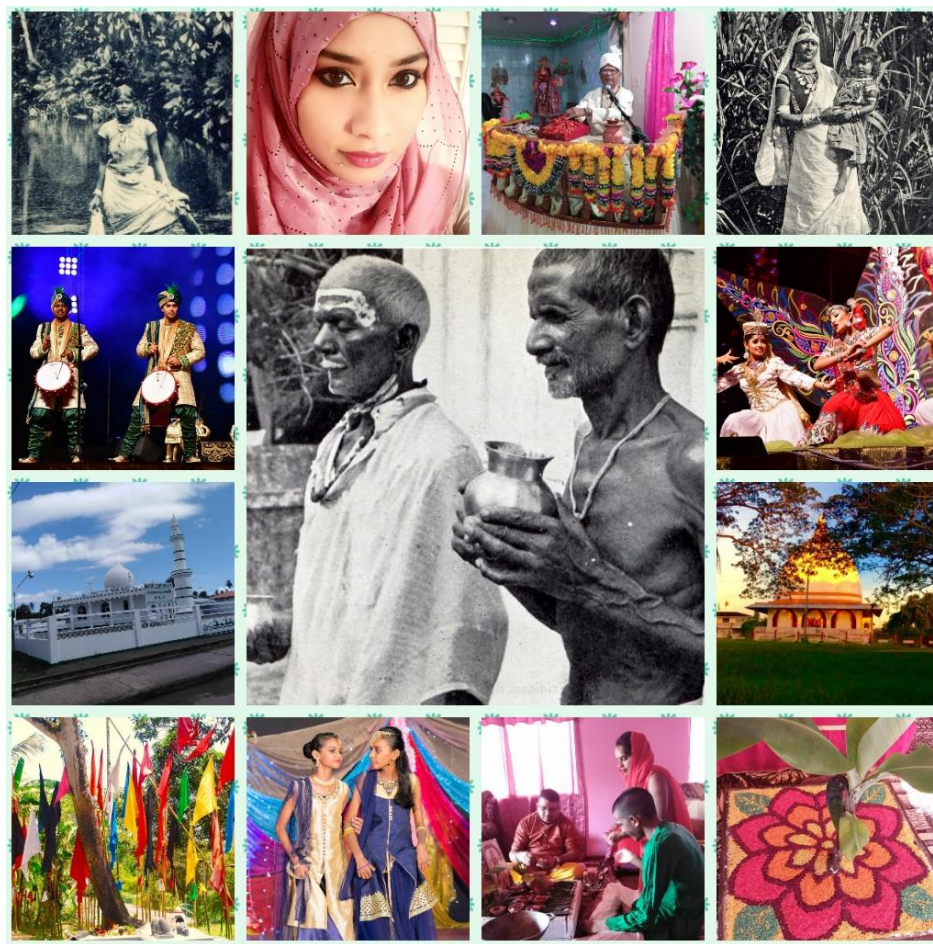
National Council of Indian Culture

in collaboration with
The University of the West Indies
and the
Indentured Labour Route Project

August 22 to 23, 2020

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Conference Programme *“Post-indentureship trends and movement”*



National Council of Indian Culture
28-38 Narsaloo Ramaya Marg, Endeavour, Chaguanas 502128, Trinidad, W.I.
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Introduction

I was standing on the bridge when the clock in the marketplace struck seven. From nowhere, two Muslim men, with feminine faces, approached me. I guessed they were money-minded and wicked men. Yet they were well dressed and looked like gentlemen, so I wished them '*Salam-ala-chum*'....'Are you interested in doing a job? One of them asked. 'What kind of job?' I inquired. 'A government job', one said and then asked me if I had any education. I told them that I had passed middle school. They responded happily and said that I could be a *Sardar*....Such sugary talk swept me off my feet and I forgot everything: my family, my country and myself. (Rahman Khan, Munshi, An Autobiography of an Indian Indentured Labourer (1874-1972), Delhi, Shipra Publications, 2005, 73)

In 1898, the year that the above scene took place, when Munshi Rahman Khan was approached by the arkatias, 1,390 labourers emigrated to Natal and 567 went to Fiji, while 618 crossed the Kala Pani bound for the Dutch colony of Surinam, 1,268 went to Trinidad and 2,380 left for British Guiana. Munshi Rahaman Khan was just one out of 6,223 labourers who emigrated from India to territories in other parts of the world in 1898(Banks, 1898). In fact, in 1907, almost ten years after Munshiji had settled in the colony, the Indian population in British Guiana was 127,000; in Trinidad it was 103,000; in Mauritius it was 264,000, in Natal it was 115,000 while there were 13,000 Indians in Jamaica and 31,000 Indians in Fiji. (CD. 5192)

By 1901, when Munshiji became a Sardar on the Skerpi plantation in Suriname, the roots of an anti-indenture agitation movement had already been planted in India. Activists in India were attempting to discourage individuals from registering for the system in the districts of recruitment, while Indians from the middle classes were protesting against racial discrimination in South Africa. Fifteen years later, when Munshiji had established himself as a landowner and was able to help his sons to purchase land so that they could settle as independent cultivators, the "abolish indenture" movement had been firmly established by Indian nationalists in India. In fact, only two years later, in 1917, Lord Hardinge, the Viceroy of India, announced that "No native of India shall depart by sea out of British India for the purpose of or with the intention of labouring for hire in any country beyond the limits of India, provided that the prohibition imposed by this rule shall not extend to any person or class of persons permitted so to depart by general or special license granted by such authority as the Governor General may appoint on this behalf." (CO 571/5)

A few years later, on January 01, 1920 all contractual obligations of all labourers were terminated and the Indian indentureship system was abolished in Jamaica, Trinidad, British Guiana (Guyana) and Fiji. When indentureship ended those Indian labourers who chose to stay in the countries where they were indentured, were then compelled to find ways to establish themselves in the society as non-contract labourers. To some extent they were forced to adopt these societies as their homes. There were left to find educational opportunities for themselves and to establish political alliances. They engaged in economic competition with other ethnic groups in the society and underwent a process of socio-cultural rejuvenation all in the interest of self-preservation. They made these countries their homes and they contributed in all aspects, to their development. This conference

focuses on the economic, socio-cultural and political contribution and development in post-indentured societies; it examines movements and trends in the post-indentureship period.

Both the NCIC and the UWI St. Augustine has adopted a very active role over the years, in the organisations of conferences, seminars, etc. This conference is organised so as to present opportunities for diasporic researchers and scholars to engage in global dialogue. It is meant to advance the achievement of a progressive Indian diasporic world community through collaboration and dialogue on various issues through the exchange of ideas, concerns, solutions, problems, person-to-person contacts and professional relationships. It provides a forum for constructive international dialogue among diasporic scholars/researchers. It allows scholars and researchers to interact and share major concerns with each other while discussing matters relating to their respective communities. Generally, it encourages inquiry by diasporic scholars, researchers and others into the challenges and practical possibilities for the Indian Diaspora in charting and sharing a common future. It focuses on new research on the post-indentureship/ post-20th century period as well as on contemporary trends.

The conference theme and areas of discussions are certainly not conclusive. The existing historiography on the post-indentureship period is a very rich one and in recent years there have been new themes, topics and perspectives emerging. This conference builds on this existing historiography and covers a range of topics such as:

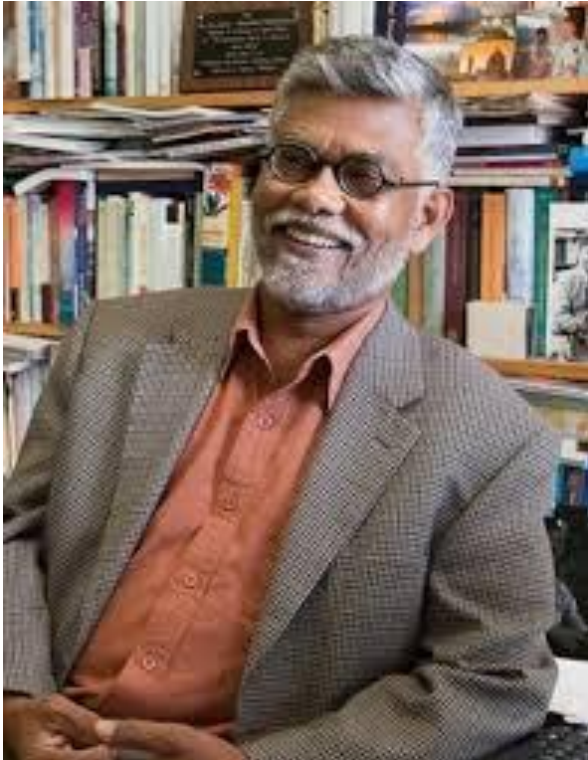
- Historical Perspectives
- The Emergence of multi-ethnic Nations and Societies
- Labour in the Indian Diaspora.
- Gender Issues and Diasporic Youths
- Diasporic Heritage, Culture and Archives
- Technology and Entrepreneurship
- Ecology and the Environment.
- Diasporic Biographies and Publications
- Sports, Performative and Visual Arts
- Politics in the Indian Diaspora.

This conference booklet is prepared as a guide to the presentations as well as it provides information on the presenters. The conference organisers thank everyone for their contribution, their interest in the study of the Indian Diaspora and we look forward to interesting discussions on various aspects of post-indentureship movements and trends. As Prof Brij Lal says, “Indian indenture historiography no longer lies on the outer fringes of modern historical scholarship but is now recognized as a distinct and distinctive part of it. Historians from the Indian indentured diaspora have themselves made crucial contributions to the debate.” This conference is one way of ensuring that the legacy of Indian indentured labourers is kept alive.

Booklet prepared by:
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Feature Speaker

Professor Brij Vilash Lal



Professor Brij Vilash Lal is an Emeritus Professor of The Australian National University and an Honorary Professor of the University of Queensland. He has been widely honoured for his scholarship. He was appointed a Member (AM) of the Order of Australia in the 2015 Queen's Birthdays Honours List, for his significant service to education, the teaching of Pacific history and its preservation, for scholarship and for his tireless work as an author, researcher and commentator. He received the Centenary Medal of the Government of Australia for his contributions to humanities, as well as a Pacific Distinguished Scholar Medal (2005) and Distinguished Achievement Award (2014) from the International Association for the Study of Migration and Indenture. He is also an Officer of the Order of Fiji.

His many publications include 'Girmitiyas: The origins of the Fiji Indians' (1983) and 'Levelling Wind: Remembering Fiji' (2019). His edited volume, 'Girmitiyas: Making of their Memory Keepers' will be published next year.

Brief Synopsis of Feature Address

Indian indenture historiography no longer lies on the outer fringes of modern historical scholarship but is now recognized as a distinct and distinctive part of it. Historians from the Indian indentured diaspora have themselves made crucial contributions to the debate. Perhaps their greatest contribution has been to rescue the history of their forebears from its imperial concerns and contexts, from debates about the conception and execution of policy about labour laws and regulations, to the lived human experience of indenture. They have given the girmitiyas a modicum of humanity and agency. In short, they have laid the foundations of future historical scholarship in the field. Scholars from Trinidad, in particular, have played a very large part in this endeavor. They organised seminars and conferences and wrote path breaking books that opened up new fields of research. In my talk, I would like to focus on the emergence of modern girmitiya historiography and suggest the direction in which we might be heading.

"I have spent the better part of my career spanning nearly 40 years trying to understand the history and politics of Fiji, my native country, and the history and culture of the Indian indentured experience from which I have descended. These two together with my recent frequent excursions into the territory of 'faction' writing, at the intersection of history and memory, constitute the cornerstones of my research and writing career."

Brij V. Lal, *Levelling Wind, Remembering Fiji* (2019)

MESSAGE

Dr. Deokinanan Sharma
President, National Council of Indian Culture (NCIC)



World Indian Diaspora Conference 2020 – Celebration of 100 Years of the Abolition of Indian Indentureship

The National Council of Indian Culture of Trinidad and Tobago (NCIC) in collaboration with the University of the West Indies (UWI) and the UNESCO Indentured Labour Route Project extremely pleased to extend very warm welcome to all to this virtual World Indian Diaspora Conference 2020, which has been organised in celebration of the formal abolition of Indian Indentureship.

In 1917, the Indian Diaspora Council of Trinidad and Tobago in collaboration with the Indian Diaspora Council of New York, the National Council of Indian Culture of Trinidad and Tobago, the Sanatan Dharma Maha Sabha and other religious and cultural organisations of Trinidad and Tobago had successfully organised another World Diaspora Conference to mark the passage of laws to end the system of Indian Indentureship. The then Viceroy of the Imperial Government of India announced that the recruitment and transportation of Indian labourers were prohibited and no more labourers would be transported to the colonies to work as contract workers.

A few years later, on January 01, 1920, after strenuous agitation by Indian leaders of India, the contractual obligations of all indentured labourers were terminated and the system of Indian Indentureship was completely abolished. Our forefathers finally left the estates to which they were assigned to commence building their lives as free individuals; free to chart their lives and that of their families in the way that they desired.

It has been estimated that approximately 20% of those who came to the colonies in the 72 years of indentureship returned to their homeland. Those who remained ,never to return to their homeland did so for various reasons , for example purchasing lands on which they built their homes and family, loss of family connections in India , conditions in the homeland in the 19th and early 20th centuries.

The World Indian Diaspora Conference that we inaugurate today is in celebration of that formal end of Indian indentureship, and applies to all of the colonies where the labourers were indentured. The conference theme is aptly named Post Indentureship Movements and Trends and focuses on the economic, socio-cultural and political contribution and development in post -indentured societies. It

brings together scholars, experts, researchers, from across the Indian Diaspora and creates the opportunity for networking amongst the diaspora.

Despite being away from their homeland for more than 175 years, our forefathers and their progeny have continued to show great emotional attachment to India and their culture. Despite great disadvantages and a hostile environment, they have managed to retain the the culture of their forefathers which are now firmly embedded in the culture of the countries in which they domiciled.

The organisers of the conference are exceedingly pleased with the overwhelming response from those invited to present papers. We have as result a very impressive line up of academics, historians, researchers, and experts in various fields which will make for very interesting and thought provoking presentations.

Interest in the diaspora has been rising and I expect that conferences such as this one will continue to be organised on a regular basis so that future generations interested in learning of their past will find invaluable information from proceedings of these conferences. The information would, significantly, have come from their own forebears.

As we have done for the previous world conference in 2017 where the proceedings have been compiled for publication, and will be available in the near future, we will also be commissioning the publication of the proceedings of this 2020 Conference.

We wish to once again warmly welcome all presenters of papers, and all of those who will be participating in the conference. Out of necessity the conference had to be organised as a virtual one due to the prevailing world pandemic (COVID-19). It has however shown us a way to host such conferences in a perhaps simpler and more cost effective manner, which will allow for many more such conferences and greater networking opportunities amongst the worldwide diaspora.



A group of Indian indentured labourers who had now landed on Nelson Island. From 1865 until 1917, the ships which transported Indian indentured labourers to Trinidad, docked at Nelson Island in order to curb the spread of diseases which may have been transported from India. The Trinidad Immigration Depot was located at Nelson Island. According to the Protector of Immigrants, the depot was said to be ".....quite up to date with 5 barracks capable of housing 1,000 people, good quarters for the Medical Officer in Charge, and accommodation for 6 Compounders, a bungalow of 5 rooms and a gallery for the Protector or Officer-in-Charge, and an excellent hospital for 30 patients. The whole place is lit with acetylene gas, and there is a telephone connected with the mainland."

MESSAGE

Mr. Deeroop Teemal
Chairman, National Council of Indian Culture (NCIC) Heritage
Centre



On behalf of the NCIC Heritage Centre, it is a distinct pleasure to extend a warm welcome and deepest thanks to our keynote speakers, presenters and delegates to World Indian Diaspora Conference 2020. You would of course recall that this conference was originally carded for May 29 – June 1, 2020 in Trinidad & Tobago and had to be postponed due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The decision to host a virtual online conference instead, was taken in May 2020 and we are indeed happy that almost everyone who had responded to the original call for papers decided to be part of this initiative. I am certain that this distinguished gathering of experts will guarantee rich, useful and effective deliberations.

I must extend our appreciation to the UNESCO Indentured Labour Route Project and the Department of History, University of the West Indies, St. Augustine who graciously accepted our invitation to collaborate with us on this project. In addition to celebrating the formal abolition of Indian Indentureship in 1920, this conference also marks the occasion of the 175th, year of the arrival of the *girmityas* to Trinidad & Tobago (which started on May 30th, 1845).

This conference has been organised under the aegis of the NCIC Heritage Centre, a project of the National Council of Indian Culture, Trinidad & Tobago. The NCIC Heritage Centre was officially launched in May 2017 with the aim of archiving, protecting and promoting both the tangible and intangible Indian cultural heritage of Trinidad & Tobago. Some present projects of the Centre include a Heritage Library & Research Centre; Digital Archive; Ramayana Kendra; Distinguished Lecture Series and Literary Evenings. There are plans to develop other projects particularly with regard to the folk traditions of the *girmityas*. Most recently, the Centre was appointed as the coordinator for Trinidad & Tobago and the lesser Caribbean countries for the Global Ramayana Encyclopedia Project.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all members of the Conference Organising Committee headed by Dr. Primnath Gooptar and fully supported by Dr. Deokinanan Sharma, Dr. Radica Mahase, Professor Brinsley Samaroo, Dr. Sherry Ann Singh, Amrica Seepersad-Reemaul, Shawn Ramjit and Mansraj Ramphal. Without their selfless, dedicated and tireless work, this conference would not be possible.

MESSAGE

Dr. Primnath Goptar
Chairman of the WIDC 2020 Conference Organizing Committee



The NCIC Heritage Center, in collaboration with the University of the West Indies and the Indentured Labor Route, in July 2019, appointed a committee to organize the World Indian Diaspora Conference 2020 (WIDC 2020). The team comprised Dr. Primnath Goptar, Senator Deeroop Teemal, Dr. Deokinanan Sharma, Prof. Brinsley Samaroo, Dr. Radica Mahase, Dr. Sherry Ann Singh, Shawn Ramjit, Amrica Seepersad Reemaul and Mansraj Ramphal (who joined later).

The committee worked assiduously over the ensuing months to plan and implement an elaborate conference at the NCIC in May 2020. Part of those plans included a month-long Heritage Festival to commemorate Indian arrival month. By March 2020 everything was on track for a most wonderful conference with more than 14 panels and over 75 presentations from scholars and researchers from throughout the Indian Diaspora. Then Covid-19 Pandemic struck and forced a change in plans for everyone regarding the conference. The conference committee deliberated and took the decision to change the conference from a face-to-face event to a virtual online event carded for August 22-23rd 2020. In the circumstances, the committee felt it was the best option available.

We will certainly miss the camaraderie that comes with the physical conference, the new and renewed relationships that are forged and continued, the sightseeing, the meeting of the wonderful audience members, the enjoyable hospitality of the NCIC, the local cuisine, the question-and-answer sessions that can become so heated at times and of course the sharing of so many thoughts and ideas regarding the Indian Diaspora. As the host of the conference, we will miss your wonderful company and sharing our time and our hospitality with you and we sincerely hope that sometime in the future we would be able to host you in this beautiful country of ours. But Covid 19 is a reality and so we must move on with the virtual zoom conference.

This is our first foray into the zoom virtual conferencing reality and we expect that there will be some teething problems but we do have a very able IT team led by Shawn Ramjit who would resolve our problems in short time, as they develop. We are very grateful to the IT team for developing and providing the zoom platform for this conference. I do hope that presenters will keep to the time limit of 15 minutes each and that our competent conference panel chairs will ensure a smooth presentation of papers and discussion thereof.

Working on this conference has been a pleasure and I have had the satisfying experience of connecting with all our presenters so much so that I feel that I know most of you. I wish all panelists success in their presentations. I thank my very wonderful conference team for the dedication and hard work in helping to make this conference a success. I thank all presenters, conference chairs and everyone else connected with the conference. Finally, I thank the NCIC Heritage Center for the opportunity to have served as chairman of this conference organizing committee. After the conference the NCIC heritage center will appoint a publication committee to review the conference papers and select the best papers for publication. Once again thank you and have a great virtual zoom conference.



From the period 1845 to 1917, approximately 147,600 Indian labourers immigrated to Trinidad under the indentureship system. Of this group, female labourers comprised 29% or roughly 42,800 women and girls. In 1920 when the Indian indentureship system was officially ended, only about 25 per cent of the total number of female labourers was repatriated to their homeland. The majority remained in the colony and eventually made Trinidad their home. After the Indian indentureship system ended Indian women/ Indo-Trinbagonian women continued their struggles to create a space in the society. The voices of the middle class women began to emerge. There were a small number of women who were educated and were employed as professionals – as teachers, clerks and so on. This small group became visible when they demanded political participation at the level of the legislative council and with their outspokenness against men's attempts to control them.

MESSAGE

*His Excellency Mr Arun Kumar Sahu
High Commissioner of India to Trinidad and Tobago*

**Arun Kumar Sahu
High Commissioner**



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Message

I am delighted that the National Council of India Culture (NCIC) in collaboration with the University of the West Indies and the Indentured Labour Route Project is organizing a virtual World Indian Diaspora Conference 2020. I would have loved this conference to happen in Trinidad and Tobago in the real world. Unfortunately, the Corona virus pandemic has made us all participate in this significant conference in the virtual cyber world.

Since 1838, people of India have migrated to the Caribbean as indentured labourers in search of better life and opportunity. In the process, they have rebuilt their lives and become an integral contributor to the composite culture of these Caribbean nations. Theirs is a tale of human struggle, tenacity and resolve. Over time their descendants have further strengthened their contribution by achieving incredible successes in all walks of life, as politicians, bureaucrats, professionals, entrepreneurs, businesspersons, academics, artists and sportspeople. India is proud of them and their successes. Government of India sees the Indian Diaspora as an essential global bridge. India and the Caribbean countries have traditionally enjoyed close and friendly relations. Our shared history and culture provide an enduring foundation for stronger relations for the mutual benefit of our people.

This year marks the 175th anniversary of the arrival of Indians to Trinidad and Tobago. It is on 30th May 1845 that *Fatel Razak* the first ship from Calcutta carrying 225 indentured labourers had docked in the Gulf of Paria. I especially congratulate all Trinbagonians on this occasion and wish them even more significant successes in their endeavours.

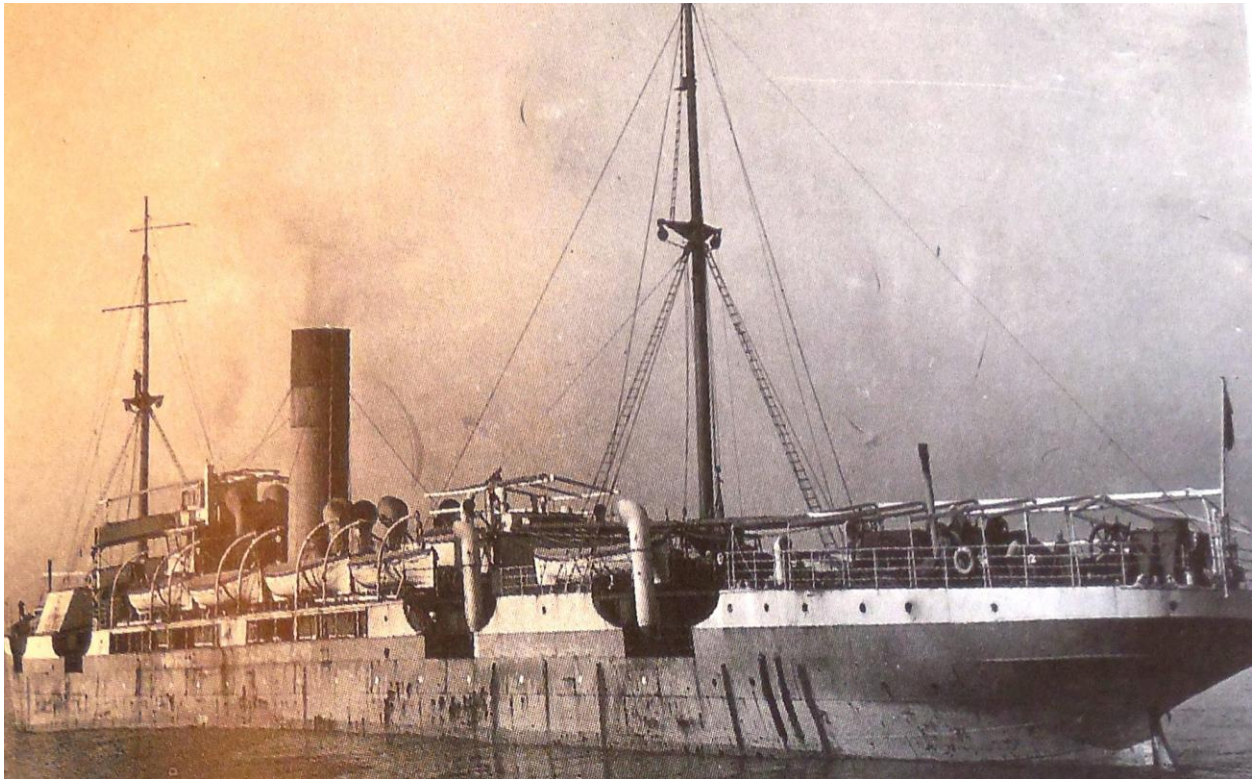
COVID-19 has changed the world. It has made us realize as a global community, how important it is to co-operate and work together for a new beginning and a new future. At this time of crisis, India has taken significant initiatives to stand by our friends for a corona free world. Hon'ble Prime Minister of India Shri Narendra Modi and External Affairs Minister Dr S. Jaishankar have spoken with their counterparts to express our solidarity with the people and governments of the Caribbean.

The virus may have forced us to meet virtually, but it cannot deter us from connecting. In these challenging times, the holding of the World Indian Diaspora conference is entirely appropriate. I am sure, the intellectual churning at this conference will further deepen our understanding and facilitate new ways of connection and communication. I wish the organizers and all participants a productive and successful conference.



(Arun Kumar Sahu)

July 29, 2020



On April 22, 1917, the Ganges docked in Trinidad. There were 274 men, 115 women, 12 boys, 10 girls and 10 infants - a total of 421 persons (7 persons died during the voyage). The arrival of this ship is very important in the history of Trinidad and Tobago, as it was the last ship to bring Indian indentured labourers to this country. It marked the end of a labour scheme which lasted 72 years, and which saw the introduction of approximately 147,600 Indians to Trinidad - an ethnic group that forever changed the political, socio-cultural and economic landscape of Trinidad and Tobago

CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

DATE	ITEM	TIME Local Time (GMT)	
SATURDAY 22 AUGUST 2020	OPENING CEREMONY Deoroop Teemal (Chairman, NCIC Heritage Center) Dr. Deokinanan Sharma (President, NCIC) His Excellency, A.K.Sahu (Indian High Commissioner to T&T) Dr. Sherry Ann Singh (UWI) Indenture Labour Route Project (UNESCO) Dr.Primnath Gooptar Professor Brij Lal (Feature Speaker)	9.00 AM—10.20 AM (14:00-15:20 hrs)	
SATURDAY 22 AUGUST 2020	PANEL PRESENTATIONS FILM NIGHT	10.25 AM—6.35 PM (15:25—23:35 hrs) 6.35 PM (23.35 hrs)	
SUNDAY 23 AUGUST 2020	PANEL PRESENTATIONS	7.55 AM.- (12:55 hrs)	
DAY ONE NAMES	PAPER	AFFILIATION/ COUNTRY	time local time (GMT)
PANEL 1	Historical Perspectives, Diasporic Heritage, Culture and Archives		10.25 am-11.45am (15:25—16:45 hrs)
Chair: Jerome Teelucksingh	Introduction of presenters by chairman	UWI, St. Augustine.	10.25 am-10.30 am (15:25—15:30 hrs)
Kathleen Boodhai	Indo-Trinidadian Heritage-ness in Diaspora.	UK, Northumberland university	10.30 am—10.45 am (15:25—15:45 hrs)
Manish Sinha	Chulhan Singh’s Voyage to Trinidad and After.	INDIA Magadh University, Bodhgaya	10.45am—11.00 am (15:45—16:00 hrs)
Amar Trivedi	India’s ignorance of indentureship history and Indentured Hindus of Indian origin.	Varanasi, India	11.00 am—11.15 am (16.00-16.15 hrs)

Kirk Meighoo	Indian Indenture, East India Company de-industrialization and the Opium Wars.	Trinidad	11.15 am—11.30 am (16.15-16.30 hrs)
Q&A Session			11.30 am —11.45 am (16.30-16.45 hrs)
PANEL 2	Historical Perspectives, Diasporic Heritage, Culture and Archives		11.50 am —1.25 pm (16.50-18.25 hrs)
Chair: Bridget Brereton	Introduction of presenters by chairman	Professor Emeritus UWI, St. Augustine.	11.50 am —11.55 am (16.50-16.55 hrs)
Wanita Ramnath	Landscape and Memory: Baithak Gana as cultural memory	Suriname	11.55 am —12.10 pm (16.55-17.10 hrs)
Halima-Sa’adia Kassim and Perry Polar	Inadvertently written into history II: The Muslims who arrived in Trinidad, 1892-1901.	The University of the West Indies, St. Augustine.	12.10 pm —12.25 pm (17.10—17.25 hrs)
Anjali Singh	The Jahajin Voices: Reclaiming Indenture Narratives from the Caribbean	University, Udaipur Indian	12.25 pm —12.40 pm (17.25—17.40 hrs)
Jafreen Khan	Unconscionable Indenture Contracts.	University of Fiji	11.40 pm —11.55 pm (17.40—17.55 hrs)
Satyendra Peerthum	Daughters of Indenture.	Mauritius	12.55 pm —1.10 pm (17.55—18.10 hrs)
Q&A Session			11.30 am —11.45 am (16.30-16.45 hrs)
PANEL 3	The Emergence of multi-ethnic Nations and Societies		1.30 pm - 2.50 pm (18.30 --19.50hrs)
Chair: Sherry Ann Singh	Introduction of presenters by chair		1.30 PM —1.35 PM (18.30 --18.35hrs)
Vashti Singh	The Response of The Sanatan Dharma Maha Sabha to The Proposal for Compulsory National Service In Trinidad And Tobago(1990).	Trinidad	1.35 pm —1.50 pm (18.35 --18.50hrs)
Shalima Mohammed	East Indian Friendly Societies: History, Impact and Future	Trinidad	1.50 pm —2.05 pm (18.50 –19 .05hrs)
Sadananda Sahoo	Construction of “Home” in the colonial Diaspora Ethnographic study of Little India in Malaysia.	Indira Gandhi National Open University New Delhi, India	2.05 pm —2.20 pm (19.05 --19.20hrs)

Vishnu Bisram	The socio-economic and political state of Indo Guyanese a century after the end of indentureship.	USA/GUYANA	2.20 pm —2.35 pm (19.20 --19.35hrs)
Q&A Session			2.35 pm —2.50 pm (19.35 --19.50hrs)
PANEL 4	Entrepreneurship, Emergence and Consolidation of Identities		2.55 pm-4.30 pm (19.55 --21.30hrs)
Chair: Brinsley Samaroo	Introduction of presenters by chairman	Professor Emeritus, UWI, St. Augustine,	2.55 pm —3.00 pm (19.55 --20.00 hrs)
Jennifer Khan-Janif Nazreen Shaban,	Fiji Hindi; Our Language, Our Identity for Fiji Indians Living in New Zealand.	New Zealand	3.00 pm —3.15 pm (20.00 –20.15 hrs)
Anu M. Mitra	Ideas of self: visual culture in South Asian/Indian communities in the Caribbean.	Union Institute & University, Cincinnati, Ohio	3.15 pm —3.30 pm (20.15 –20.30 hrs)
Pawan Upadhyay	Challenges in searching root & families of Girmits	India	3.30 pm —3.4(5) pm (20.30 –20.45 hrs)
Kumar Mahabir	Walking without legs in the diaspora: Stories of diabetic amputees in Trinidad.	Indo-Caribbean Cultural Centre, Trinidad	3.45 pm —4.00 pm (20.45 –21.00 hrs)
Manpreet Kaur and Kamala Naiker	Changing Identities and Shifting Trends.	The University of Fiji, Fiji	4.00 pm —4.15 pm (21.00 –21.15 hrs)
Heidi McKenzie	Liminal Lives: Documenting the Inheritance of Post-Indentureship	Canada	4.15 pm —4.30 pm (21.150 –21.30 hrs)
Q&A Session			4.30 pm —4.45 pm (21.30 –21.45 hrs)
PANEL 5	Entrepreneurship, Emergence and Consolidation of Identities		4.45 pm - 6.20 pm (21.35 –23.20 hrs)
Chair: Deoroop Teemal	Introduction of presenters by chairman	NCIC	4.35 pm —4.50 pm (21.35 –21.50 hrs)
Satish Rai	Shifting homes and identities in the global village-A personal narrative.	Australia	4.50 pm —5.05 pm (21.50 –22.05 hrs)
Gajendran Ayyathurai	Inclusive or Exclusive Religious Traditions? Brahmin and Non-BrahminTemples, Priests, and Publics of the Indian Diaspora in the Caribbean.	Göttingen University, Germany	5.05 pm —5.20 pm (22.05 –22.20 hrs)
Mansraj Ramphal	Beyond the Indenture Experience: Portuguese and Indians in	University of The West Indies, St.	5.20 pm —5.35 pm (22.20 –22.35 hrs)

	Trinidad and British Guiana.	Augustine, Trinidad.	
Hemraj Ramdath	From indentureship to entrepreneurship- pioneers of entrepreneurship in Trinidad. The spirit of enterprise.	Trinidad/Canada	5.35 pm —5.50 pm (22.35 –22.50 hrs)
Sarita Nandmehar and Rishi Gupta	Political Transition in Nepal and Indian Diaspora: Changing Identity and Narratives	Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India.	5.50 pm —6.05 pm (22.50 –23.05 hrs)
Archana Tewari	Ramayana : The Refuge of Indentured Indians in the Caribbeans	India	6.05 PM —6.20 PM (23.05-- 23.20hrs)
Q&A Session			6.20 pm —6.35 pm (23.20-- 23.35 hrs)
FILM SCREENING			
Chair: Amrica Seepersad Reemaul	Introduction of films	Trinidad	6.35 PM-7.05 PM
Perry Polar and Sharda Patasar	Film: Ganga dhaara: Sacred Spaces	UWI, St. Augustine, Trinidad Trinidad	6.35 pm-7.05 pm (23.35-00.05 hrs)
Jerome Teelucksingh	Film: Brown Lives Matter: Overcoming the horrors of indentureship (Documentary)	UWI, St. Augustine, Trinidad	7.05pm—7.35 pm (00.05—00.35hrs)
DAY TWO PANEL 6	Politics and Labour in the Indian Diaspora		7.55 am —9.15 am (12.55 –14.15 hrs)
Chair: Primnath Goptar	Introduction of presenters by chairman	NCIC	7.55 am —8.00 am (12.55 –13.00 hrs)
Amba Pande	The Girit Diaspora as a Factor in India’s Soft Power Strategy.	SIS, JNU India	8.00 am —8.15 (13.00 –13.15 hrs)
Annapurna Devi Pandey	The Struggles and Challenges of H4 visa Holders in USA: An Ethnographic Study.	University of California, Santa Cruz USA	8.15 am —8.30 am (13.15 –13.30 hrs)
Vassan Ramracha	“LOGIE” SOCIALISM	New York, USA	8.30 am —8.45 am (13.30 –13.45 hrs)
Ujjwal Rabidas	The Diaspora Factor in India’s Caribbean Engagement .	Amity University, India	8.45 am —9.00 am (13.45 –14.00 hrs)
Q&A Session			9.00 am —9.15 am (14.00 –14.15 hrs)

PANEL 7	Politics and Labour in the Indian Diaspora		9.20 am —10.40 pm (14.20 –15.40 hrs)
Chair: Radica Mahase	Introduction of presenters by chairman	COSTAATT, Trinidad	9.20 am —9.25 am (14.20 –14.25 hrs)
Ouma Seebaluck	India’s Outreach to its Diaspora with Particular Reference to Prime Minister Narendra Modi’s First Term of Office (2014 -2019).	Mauritius	9.25 am —9.40 am (14.25 –14.40 hrs)
Brinsley Samaroo	“Side by side, not one behind the other. Women in the labour movement in Trinbago during the 20 th Century”	Professor Emeritus, UWI, St. Augustine, Trinidad	9.40 am —9.55 am (14.40 –14.55 hrs)
Hazel Woolford	Organized labour and the Indian sugar workers, in British Guiana.	Registrar of the Guyana Institute of Historical Research, Guyana	9. 55 am —10.10 am (14.55 –15.10 hrs)
Movindri Reddy	India’s political influence in South Africa.	Occidental College, USA	10.10 am —10.25 am (15.10 –15.25 hrs)
Q&A Session			9.25 am —10.40 am (15.25 –15.40 hrs)
PANEL 8	IDENTITY ISSUES		10.45 am —12.10 pm (15.45 –17.10 hrs)
Chair: Mansraj Ramphal	Introduction of presenters by chairman	UWI, St. Augustine, Trinidad	10.45 am —10.50 am (15.45 –15.50 hrs)
Kalyani K	Role of popular culture in changing patterns of sexuality: A study of Indian Diaspora in Caribbean.	Jawaharlal Nehru University	10.50 am —11.05 am (15.50 –16.05 hrs)
Tara Singh	Pattern and Impact of Indo-Guyanese Migration to the USA	USA/Guyana	11.05 am —11.20 am (16.05 –16.20 hrs)
Ramchandra Joshi and Urvashi Kaushal	Emergence and Consolidation of Identities in the Narratives of Chinnidad. in the literary works of Indo-Trinidadian Canadian writers	India	11.20 am —11.35 am (16.20 –16.35 hrs)
Chan E.S. Choenni	Indians and political exclusion: the case of Fiji, Trinidad, Guyana and Suriname.	Netherlands	11.35 am —11.55 am (16.35 –16.55 hrs)
Q&A Session			11.55 am —12.10 pm (16.55 –17.10 hrs)

PANEL 9	Sports and Visual Art		12.15 pm —1.35 pm (17.55 –18.35 hrs)
Chair: Deokinanan Sharma	I Introduction of presenters by chairman		12.15 pm —12.20 pm (17.15 –17.20 hrs)
Parmanand Mohan/ Shareeda Mohammed	The Impact of Indian Movie Songs on the East Indian Diaspora in Trinidad and Tobago (1960-2019)).	Trinidad	12.20 PM —12.35 PM (17.20 –17.35 hrs)
Jalaludin Khan	The heritage of East Indian Indentured Martial arts traditions and cultural practices in Trinidad.	Trinidad	12.35 PM —12.50 PM (17.35 –17.50 hrs)
Marcus Kissoon	Ramleela: A Space for Empowerment; Sita’s Role.	Trinidad	12.50 PM —1.05 PM (17.50 –18.05 hrs)
Q&A Session			1.20 PM —2.40 PM (18.40 –19.40 hrs)
PANEL 10	Gender Issues		1.20 PM —1.25 PM (18.20 –18.25 hrs)
Chair: Brinsley Samaroo	Introduction of presenters by chairman		1.25 PM —1.40 PM (18.25 –18.40 hrs)
Bina Makhan	Strong daughters of Hindostani Indentured Labourers: A tribute to my Nani Jagdei.	Netherlands	1.40 PM —1.55 PM (18.40 –18.55 hrs)
Shazia Khan	Women and their Mutilated bodies: Voices of female workers in plantation with reference to Gautra Bahadur’s Coolie Woman: The Odyssey of Indenture.	India	1.55 PM —2.10 PM (18.55 –19.10 hrs)
Nisha Ramracha	Hindu Warrior Queens: Decolonizing historical narratives and reshaping the perspective of West Indian women through their history	City University of New York USA	2.10 PM —2.25 PM (19.10 –19.25 hrs)
Chan Choenni	Revival of honourability among Hindostani women in Suriname	Netherlands	2.25 PM —2.40 PM (19.25 –19.40 hrs)
Q&A Session			1.20 PM —2.40 PM (18.40 –19.40 hrs)
PANEL 11	Biographies and Publications		2.40 PM —4.00 PM 19.40-21.00hrs
Chair: V. Vijay Maharaj	Introduction of presenters by chairman	NCIC, Trinidad.	2.40 PM —2.45 PM (19.40 –19.45 hrs)
Primnath Gooptar	Ranjit Kumar’s Hindu Maha Sabha and the Quest for Hindu Unity in Trinidad in the 1940s.	Trinidad.	2.45 PM —3.00 PM (19.45 –20.00 hrs)

Nivedita Misra	The (His)Story of IBIS: A Reading of Amitav Ghosh's Sea of Poppies, River of Smoke and Flood of Fire.	Trinidad	3.00 PM —3.15 PM (20.00 –20.15 hrs)
Nutan Ragoobir	Bihar and Beyond: the biography of Kunj Behari (1878-1938) - creating his own space	UWI, Trinidad.	3.15 PM —3.30 PM (20.15 –20.30 hrs)
J. Vijay Maharaj	The ABRESS Indian: Repression, Erasure, Suppression and Suspension in Diasporic Indian Auto/Biography.	NCIC, Trinidad.	3.30 PM —3.45 PM (20.30 –20.45 hrs)
Q&A Session			3.45 PM —4.00 PM (20.45 –21.00 hrs)
PANEL 12	Biographies and the Environment		4.00 PM —5.35 PM (21.00 – 22.35 hrs)
Chair: Deeroop Teemal	Introduction of presenters by chairman	NCIC	4.00 PM —4.05 PM (21.00 –21.05 hrs)
Mohan K Gautam	The Role of Diasporic Life Histories and Biographies in Understanding the Settlement Pattern and Identity Formation of Indian Emigrants in Caribbean Countries	Netherlands	4.05 PM —4.20PM (21.05 –21.20 hrs)
Sally Radford	Pioneers to Professors	U K	4.20 PM —4.35 PM (21.20 – 21.35 hrs)
S. S. Somra	Ethnicity Factors and Environment of Global Migration	University of Rajasthan, Jaipur India	4.35 PM —4.50 PM (21.35 –21.50 hrs)
Doolarchan Hanoman	A historical review of the Indian media in Trinidad	Trinidad (ICDN)	4.50 PM —5.05 PM (21.50 –22.05 hrs)
Kirtie Algae	Religion & Healing in Suriname: A case study of foreign Vedic astrologers	Suriname	5.05 PM —5.20 PM (22.05 –22.20 hrs)
Q&A Session			5. 20 PM —5.35 PM (22.20 – 22.35 hrs)
PANEL 13	Linguistics Round table Panel		5.35 pm - 6.35 pm (22.35 - 23.35 hrs)
Chair: Farzana Gounder	Introduction of presenters by chairman		
Visham Bhimull Rajend Mesthrie Moti Lal Marhe Maurits Hassankhan Preetema Jong-A-Lock –Pahladsing	Developing a Universal Roman Orthography for Girmit Varieties of Hindustani	Fiji, Suriname, Trinidad, Netherlands, South Africa	

Jennifer Janif Farzana Gounder Rabin S. Baldewsingh Nazreen Shaban Rajendra Prasad Jeff Seigel Nikhath Shameem			
PANEL 14	Health Panel :Cause and response to inequalities in the indentured labour diaspora: The CARE framework for comparative Analysis		6.35 PM —7.20 PM (23.35 — 00.20hrs)
Chair: Farzana Gounder	Introduction of presenters by chairman		
Farzana Gounder Maurits Hassankhan Satyendra Peerthum Jane Buckingham Neil Sharma Lomarsh Roopnarine	Cause and response to inequalities in the indentured labour diaspora: The CARE framework for comparative Analysis	New Zealand/ Fiji/Suriname// Trinidad	
Resolutions/ Closing Remarks			7. 20pm---7.50 pm (00.20—00.50 hrs)



The majority of the Indian labourers who immigrated to Trinidad under the indentureship scheme worked on the sugar cane plantations. However smaller numbers of labourers were sent to the cocoa, coffee, rubber and coconut estates.

List of Presenters

KATHLEEN BOODHAI

Title: Indo-Trinidadian Heritage-ness in Diaspora (Working Title)

Abstract: In critical heritage studies, heritage is positioned as an active, embodied, cultural process that is negotiated through memory, performance, identity, place and dissonance (Smith 2006, 2012). For over fifty years, Indo-Trinidadians have migrated and settled in Toronto. As diasporic peoples of Indian heritage, they have engaged with ideas about heritage and identity through forms of cultural expressions and everyday practices which have created a space for their experiences in the Canadian cultural mosaic.

This paper positions the religious and spiritual heritage-making practices of Hindu Canadian Indo-Trinidadians through representations of the festival of Diwali and Hindu Heritage Month 2019. It will present the research design process and methodology, part of 5 weeks of field research carried out in Autumn 2019 sponsored by the British Association for Canadian Studies, to investigate Indo-Trinidadian heritage in diaspora and the ways in which it is preserved and maintained. Twenty-five twice-removed and first-generation Canadian Indo-Trinidadian Hindus were interviewed about their engagements with heritage in mandirs, socio-religious and cultural centres in Toronto. The study revealed the unique and particular challenges of Indo-Trinidadians as 'a diaspora within a diaspora' and how this has framed their heritage practices, identities, values and beliefs in the pluralistic context of Canada's multicultural mosaic. The ways in which they actively negotiate and reinvent their heritage, sense of identity and Indianness creates opportunities and challenges, difference and entanglements in terms of identity, transnationality, belonging and citizenship for Toronto as a 'contact zone'.

Biography: Kathleen Boodhai is currently a PhD Researcher in the Faculty of Social Sciences, Arts and Design, Northumbria University investigating a transnational study of Indo-Trinidadian Heritage-ness in the diaspora across Trinidad, Canada and the UK. She has worked in museum access and inclusion cultural heritage exchange, development and public engagement programmes and as a cultural producer in the culture, community, arts and heritage sectors in the UK and Europe. She advocates with and for minoritized and marginalised cultures and communities for Equality, Diversity and Representation. She is a research assistant the project '(Multi)Cultural Heritage: New Perspectives on Public Culture, Identity and Citizenship'. She is a member of the Association of Critical Heritage Studies (ACHS) internationally, including the UK and Canadian Chapters.

MANISH SINHA

Title: Chulhan Singh's Voyage to Trinidad and After.

Abstract: In this paper I propose to document the saga of the voyage of Chulhan Singh from his native village of Seoti in old Gaya District to Trinidad in the year 1904-05. The pursuit of the discovery of his ancestral roots brought Mr. Hemraj Ramdath, Chulhan Singh's great grandson to Gaya. We at University Department of History, Magadh University Bodhgaya are most privileged to be a part of this continuous process of history as a dialogue between the past and present, performing our duty in facilitating Mr. Hemraj's connect with the present members of his long lost family.

Chulhan Singh of village Seoti already married, brought Yasoda his second wife to his village where it seems they were ostracized and stayed on the outskirts of the village. On 11th November they went to Patna and from there to Calcutta. On 27th November 1904, where Chulhan Singh boarded the ship SS Avon along with his pregnant wife Yasoda, as Girmitiyas. On 17th December a boy was born on the ship, who was named Avon for ushering good luck protection on the turbulent high seas. When the ship finally reached Trinidad Chulhan and his family were assigned the Picton Estate and the baby boy was now named Rampersad who fathered ten children, one of whom was the mother of Mr. Hemraj. The voyage continued with the Girmitiyas like Chulhan Singh and his family enriching their new homes and creating their and their Nation's destiny together. The saga of the voyage of Chulhan Singh continues with Mr. Hemraj visiting Gaya in October end along with his uncles. We intend to assist him and all others, desirous to discover their ancestral roots here.

Biography: Manish Sinha is Professor and Head of Department of the Department of History, Magadh University, Bodhgaya, India. He was Associate at Indian Institute of Advanced Studies Shimla twice and a Visiting professor at Central University of South Bihar, Gaya. His areas of research are Modern India, International Relations and Diasporic studies. The focus of his current research is on the discovery and documentation of the ancestral linkages of Indians who went to Trinidad as indentured laborers. Presently he is also engaged in intensive research on the Tibetans Diaspora in exile in India. He is a member of various academic bodies like the Indian History Congress, Indian Institute of Public Administration and the Indian Society of Buddhist Studies. He is also associated with the Indian National Trust for Cultural Heritage (INTACH) as Convener of the Gaya Chapter.

AMAR TRIVEDI

Title: India's ignorance of indentureship history and Indentured Hindus of Indian origin.

Abstract: Whilst the Modern Indian has been led to believe in a western notion of 'progress', particularly since Independence, Indian traditions have consistently been misunderstood, misinterpreted, and regularly vilified. The multi-tier colonial legacy which India has inherited has been increasingly tough to dismantle. We have seen a rise in the global discourse on identity politics, and in recent times and even greater spotlight on The Hindu in politics.

This paper explores how narratives are formed through the influence of politics which continue to have a long-lasting, detrimental effect of colonisation on the Hindu. It explores the differences in experiences of colonialism in the Indian diaspora; the decolonisation of historical narratives through the perspective of political impact on culture and Hindu identity. The neo-colonial impacts and its effects on the Hindu mind, and how it influences their understanding of their traditions and past. Also further explored is how such a narrative can be reclaimed and retold from an authentic point of view. The subconscious colonial construct of India's history and a dominant pro-Western narrative has created a civilisational vacuum, and how the connection/disconnect has affected the diaspora whether in the Caribbean or in the UK. With the rise of India as a global superpower, militarily, economically and culturally, a critical analysis needs to be conducted into the effects of colonialism on the vision of India, and more importantly the Bharatiya civilisation. True diversity and civilisational development is maintained outside of the imposition of colonial narratives, benefitting not only the natives but the global community to embrace this diversity. Since other civilisations choose to claim their narrative in their chosen ways, Indians are also entitled to the same respect.

Biography: Amar Trivedi has a degree in Architecture, and is a London based entrepreneur. He has a great interest in UK and Indian politics, is an avid reader who frequently writes on various platforms about Indian culture and history, philosophy and UK-India relations. He co-authored the Book '*Think Different*' taking an Indic perspective on various contemporary issues, including

liberty, academic hinduphobia, and international relations. He has presented at the Government of India's Pravasi Bharatiya Divas and various conferences on the Indian diaspora and Indentureship conference. He was selected as a 35-under -35 UK-India young leader.

KIRK MEIGHOO

Title: Indian Indenture, East India Company, de-industrialization and the Opium Wars

Abstract: The Gangetic Plain- from where the vast majority of indentures came- for millennia has been at the center of India's empires, mythology, economy, culture, philosophy, politics and military might. It provided the capitals of the Nanda Empire, Maurya Empire, Ashoka's Empire, the Gupta empire, the place where the Buddha received his enlightenment, the land of the Ramayan, the places of the holiest sites in Hinduism, a global industrial center in the millennia of the world economy before the European Industrial revolution, producing a variety of cotton and silk textiles, jute, India Ink, indigo, canvas, woolen, ingots, glassware, mechanical clocks, weapons, particularly blades for Firangi swords, and an array of luxury goods, including diamonds and precious stones. According to economic historian Angus Maddison in *Contours of the world economy, 1-2030 CE* essays in macro economic history, the Indian subcontinent was the world's most productive region, from 1 CE to 1600. It has always been the largest sink of gold in the world, due to international trade, since India has no significant gold mines. This paper will place Indian indentureship in its wider historical context as part of the historically central, long plunder of India by outside forces, and not simply an isolated, peripheral occurrence related to the end of slavery. This gives a different meaning to the presence of the girmitya diaspora in the various countries where they are found

Biography: Kirk Meighoo is a political analyst/ political economist. He is the host of the "Independent Thought & Freedom" and "New Books in Politics" podcasts. He is a member of the Advisory Board of the CARICOM Integrationist and served as Honorary Fellow, Director, and Contributing Editor at the Trinidad and Tobago Institute of the West Indies and the Trinidad and Tobago Review. He is the author of *Politics in a 'Half-Made Society': Trinidad and Tobago 1925-2001* and co-author of *Democracy and Constitution Reform in Trinidad and Tobago* (with Peter Jamadar). He was an Independent Senator and a former lecturer at the University of the West Indies in Trinidad and Jamaica, and was a founder of the University of Trinidad and Tobago.

WANITA RAMNATH

Title: Landscape and Memory: Baithak Gana as cultural memory

Abstract: The fragment above is part of a Baithak gana song, in which the singer Harry Sewbalak (2010) sings the story of migration. With the immigration of the Hindustani contract workers (1873-1916), the Baithak gana, Folkloristic Hindustani music, began to develop in Suriname. Part of the Baithak gana songs is a reflection of the experienced past, evoked emotions and memories of the listener. They also tell the historical story about migration. This genre of Hindustani music produces cultural memories of Motherland India and the landscape of India and Suriname in the song lyrics: cultural memories of migration in different stages, their settlement and rooting in the new landscape and society. The new society became their new homeland.

According to Asmann (2006), the cultural memory can revoke the past as 'ours'. In this case, the descendants of the immigrants belong to this collective group, because they share the same cultural memory and can revoke the past as 'ours'. Halbwachs (1980) defines collective memory as a shared memory that a particular social group has and where the memory of the individual person is strongly related. He argues that the individual memory is different from the collective, because not every personal memory comes to the forefront of the collective memory. The Baithak gana songs

are a good example of cultural memory for this research. The central question is: How is cultural memory of motherland India in the baithak gana of Suriname produced and is there a thematic shift in this genre? In addition, the following questions have been answered in this research: How is the landscape described in the baithak gana lyrics? What themes are being addressed in the various phases of this genre?

Biography: Wanita Ramnath is currently enrolled as a doctoral student in Communication in the USA. She first studied Mathematics, after which she completed four different bachelors programmes in Business and Management. She also completed her MOA and MOB Dutch. She has a Master of Arts in Linguistics from the University of Leiden, Netherlands. She is currently the secretary of the Minister of Health in Suriname and a crime journalist at Starnieuws. She has a great interest in the culture among the Hindustani.

HALIMA-SA'ADIA KASSIM AND PERRY POLAR

Title: Inadvertently written into history: The Muslims who arrived in Trinidad, 1892-1897 (A Preliminary Assessment)

Abstract: The historiography on Caribbean indentured labourers identify that over 147,000 Indians arrived in Trinidad during 1845 and 1917. However, there is limited focus on demographic and social characteristics of these labourers, which has led to inconsistency on population data. This paper extends the earlier work of Kassim and Polar (2017) on filling the gaps specific to Muslims by mining the entries in the available Ship Registers/Emigration Passes for the period 1892-1897 and corroborating it with entries from the General Registers. The existing data on Muslims is analysed to establish trends and patterns regarding demographic characteristics such as sex, age and height. Family relationships as well as births and deaths aboard the ship will be reviewed. Findings based on indicators related to district of origin, estate to which the labourer was indentured, 'twice indentured' labourers and returnees will be discussed. A comparative five-year analysis of the periods, 1886 to 1891 and 1892 to 1897, will be provided. By examining historical demographic data, a deeper understanding of indentured Muslims is gained and it places them more centrally within the indentured labourer narrative. Further research is required to determine if the patterns for Muslims continue between 1898 and 1917.

Biography: Halima-Sa'adia Kassim holds a Ph.D. in History from The University of the West Indies (UWI). She has previously held teaching, research, development, and management positions nationally and regionally. She is currently employed at the University Office of Planning, UWI. Dr. Kassim has published several articles on the Muslim community related to education, religious organisations, gendered identities, cultural retention and negotiation in Trinidad and Tobago and on issues related to higher education administration and gender.

Perry Polar holds a PhD from The University of the West Indies (UWI). He has worked extensively in several areas including agriculture, environment, and the urban sector. In one of his urban sector projects, he was involved in the production of the film "City on the Hill", which examined leveraging built and cultural heritage in East Port of Spain, Trinidad. He is currently engaging in film-making examining the relationship between culture and development.

ANJALI SINGH

Title: The Jahajin Voices: Reclaiming Indenture Narratives from the Caribbean

Abstract: This paper takes a closer look at some of the recent narratives on indenture in the Caribbean and evaluates them in order to highlight the gendered perspective. These narratives underscore the fragmented nature of these experiences for men and women, and necessitate a closer

look at the indenture paradigm in order to interpret the contexts that have given rise to a gendered poetics in the Indian indenture diaspora.

The story of indenture is the story of betrayal, of trauma and of resistance. It is also a narrative of resilience, assimilation and acculturation. Writers of indenture have analysed the experience on either of the two polarities: colonial and postcolonial. Within this schema too, they have largely ignored the voices of the indentured women. Now however, women writers from the third and fourth generation of the indenture diaspora, such as Peggy Mohan and Gaiutra Bahadur, are reclaiming the women's voices in their works. They have raised a challenge to the master narrative that has long carried a dominant male voice, which has stereotyped and marginalised the indentured women.

Peggy Mohan's *Jahajin* starts out as a linguistic project about uncovering the reasons for the vanishing of Bhojpuri language from the indentured peoples' vocabulary. Written by a fourth generation descendant of an indentured person who was sent to Trinidad in the Caribbean, it is a framed narrative which works on four different levels. The feminine voice takes centre stage in the book and the reader is given a glimpse of indenture from the female point of view. *Coolie Woman: the Odyssey of Indenture* is a genealogical search by a fourth generation descendant's literary journey undertaken to uncover the trajectory of her great-grandmother's indenture in British Guyana. It follows a historiographic narration, with Bahadur uncovering many of the silenced female voices in indenture history. She draws from the historical memory and personal narratives of the indentured labourers while analysing the aporias in the colonial documents and national archives.

Biography: Anjali Singh is an Assistant Professor in the Dept. of English, Mohanlal Sukhadia University, Udaipur, Rajasthan, India. Her areas of interest include Indenture Literature, Postcolonial Literature, Women's Writing and Gender and Queer Studies. Her Ph.D. is on "Diaspora Sensibility: Indentured Voices from Fiji and the Caribbean". Apart from teaching, Dr. Singh also has vast experience of the corporate world, owing to her work as Content Developer, managing content related to the field of Nuclear Science, in particular, syllabus content for the International Atomic Energy Association (IAEA); as Assistant Manager, Education with Hindustan Times Media Ltd., and as Assistant, Curriculum Development at The International School of Beijing, China, where she successfully assisted in producing an entire international school curriculum.

JAFREEN KHAN

Title: Unconscionable Indenture Contracts

Abstract: Indenture migration has been called unique and of a special class. The abolition of slavery in 1835 necessitated manpower for growers and the colonial government. While individual motives for signing the indenture contract by the laborers' is not very clear, there were thousands who were recruited on contracts for cheap labour. The main clauses of the indenture contracts concerned length of contract, working days and hours, wages and penal clauses that subject workers/laborers' to criminal jurisdiction in cases of breach of contracts. While contract law is self regulatory, and majority contracts require less intervention, courts are willing to depart from the principles of contractual freedom and one such situation is when the contract is unconscionable. Unconscionable contracts are unenforceable under law because they leave one party without any concrete or meaningful choice since there are differences in bargaining power between parties. This paper explores the Doctrine of Unconscionability in contract law with close study of works of Arthur Leff, Karl Llewellyn, Paul Marrow and other prominent writers in area of indenture system from Suriname, Trinidad and Fiji. The paper also investigates the elements of unconscionable contracts

and aspires to relate those elements to Indenture/Girmit contracts and say that indenture/girmit contracts were unconscionable.

Biography: Jafreen Khan is a lecturer in Law at University of Fiji. She teaches Legal Research Methods and English for Academic Purposes at Foundation Law and Tort Law, Commercial Law and Consumer and Competition Law at Undergraduate level. She has a Masters Degree in Law (LLM), Bachelor of Laws (LLB), Post Diploma in Legislative Drafting, Post Diploma in Legal Practice and Diploma in Education

SATYENDRA PEERTHUM

Title: “Daughters of Indenture”: The Social History & Experiences of the Indian, Malagasy, & Liberated African Female Immigrants in Mauritius During the Age of Indenture (1826-1870)

Abstract: This conference paper explores the experiences of the early female Indian, Malagasy, and African immigrant women who reached Mauritian shores between 1826 and 1861. It focuses on the arrival and the life-stories of Immigrants Josephina, Rimoney, Noorum, Lolytah, Bhoyrubees, Beatrice Soolia, Mariam, and five other immigrant women who, through their hard work, achieved some measure of social and economic mobility on and off the Mauritian sugar estates. As skilled artisans, domestics, small landowners, cultivators, shopkeepers, small business owners, hawkers, and entrepreneurs they tried to carve out a life for themselves and their families in a chauvinistic, racist, and hierarchical Mauritian colonial society. They were married and had children and some were even widows who were able to work the indentured labour system and local economy to their advantage.

This paper shows that through their efforts as mothers, daughters, and wives they contributed to both the formal and informal economies of Mauritius on the sugar estates, in Port Louis and in the villages. It demonstrates that they were the epitome of immigrant worker agency and their presence played a key role in the emergence of the immigrant family and in the stabilization of the large and complex immigrant community on the island.

Biography: Satyendra Peerthum is a Historian at the Research Unit of the Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund (AGTF) which manages Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site [Landing Place of the Immigrants] in Port Louis, Republic of Mauritius. He is a member of the Secretariat of the International Indenture Labour Route and a part-time lecturer in history at the University of Mauritius and a Mauritian writer. He specializes in the study of indentured labour, slavery, Liberated Africans, maroonage, vagrancy, non-Indian indentured workers, colonial prisons, comparative and quantitative history, sugar estates, wage labour, the Mauritian working class and cultural heritage issues in Mauritius. Currently he is doctoral candidate in Modern History at the Graduate School of Humanities in the University of Cape Town, South Africa.

VASHTI SINGH

Title: The response of the Sanatan Dharma Maha Sabha to the proposal for compulsory national service in Trinidad and Tobago (1990)

Abstract: This paper revisits the entry of Hindus into frontline politics in the mid-twentieth century Trinidad. Through government's recognition of the Sanatan Dharma Maha Sabha (SDMS) as a denominational body, Hindus established schools, a process which intensified Hindu and ethnic identities amidst competing ideologies inherent in the political struggle for construction of national identity and citizenship. Based on an in-depth conceptual understanding of alliance politics in the national interest, this paper critically examines the SDMS response to a proposal by the National Alliance for Reconstruction (NAR) government to introduce compulsory national service in Trinidad and Tobago in 1990 and it further draws reference to the enforcement and undesirable

outcomes of the Guyana National Service Programme from 1974 to 1992 under President Forbes Burnham.

A major focus is the SDMS' perception of the NAR's proposal as that which exemplified exclusion of any understanding of Hindu beliefs, related concerns for the structure and functions of families as a social unit, the upbringing of Hindu youths and young girls, preservation of ethnic group identity and the pivotal role of SDMS mandirs and schools to national service and nation building. The research reveals that government's role in national service acquires political as well as religious, culturalist and moralizing dimensions to identify with cultural values and facilitate harmony, trust and peaceful co-existence among diverse socio-cultural, religious and ethnic groups, and by extension between citizens and the state. The goal is how best to interface differences between religion and politics to positively impact policy making and implementation.

Biography: Vashti Singh was awarded a research scholarship by the Indian Council for Cultural Relations (ICCR), Government of India and graduated with a Ph.D in Sociology of Education from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India in 2006. She has served as an Assistant Professor in the Bachelor of Education Programme (2006-2018) and Chairperson of the Research Ethics Committee at The University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT)(2013-2018). Her research areas focus on interrogations of social institutions, cultural heritage and educational experiences of the Indian diaspora in Trinidad and the interplay of complex historical and contemporary factors influencing the social justice ideals of equality and equity. In 2016-18, she had the opportunity to share comparative perspectives on diaspora studies and social inclusion in education with colleagues at the University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban, South Africa, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India, Banaras Hindu University, India and Anton de Kom University, Suriname.

SHALIMA MOHAMMED

Title: East Indian Friendly Societies: History, Impact and Future

Abstract: With the formal end of Indentureship on January 01, 1920, the Indians resident in Trinidad were challenged to change their perspectives about financial issues. Little has been documented on one of the economic institutions which they adapted to help them survive and prosper - Friendly Societies. The Friendly Society is a type of mutual insurance association to which members subscribe for benefits in the event of sickness, distress, death and other eventualities. Using the Gasparillo East Indian Friendly Society (GEIFS) as a case study, this research explores the history and impact of such mutual aid societies in Trinidad on descendants of the Indentured Indians. Two major questions guide this research: how has the GEIFS changed and is the GEIFS still relevant today?

The research was undertaken using primary source data from semi-structured interviews and secondary sources including archived newspaper records; literature from academic papers, books and magazines; social media such as the organization's Facebook page and multi-media recordings. Results: The Indian descendants of Indentured labourers were unique among all the other ethnic groups in 20th Century Trinidad, through their establishment of East Indian-only Friendly Societies in the villages where they resided. They mobilised ethnic kinship and bolstered social security to improve their impoverished status. The Friendly Society institution was adapted by the Indians to suit their financial purposes. The GEIFS was a male-dominated, economic institution and social network which maintained Indian patriarchal hegemony for the first 69 years of its existence. As the socio-economic status of members progressively improved, membership dwindled. Its revival is tasked to the first female President who was sworn into office in 2018.

Biography: Shalima Mohammed is a Business Psychologist and educator with experience in banking. She holds a Masters of Science Degree in Business Psychology from Franklin University, Ohio, USA, a Bachelor of Science Degree in Psychology from COSTAATT, Trinidad & Tobago)

and a Diploma in Business Management from UTT, Trinidad & Tobago). She is currently employed as a teacher with the Ministry of Education in Trinidad. Her main research interests are the application of emotional intelligence, positive psychology, and religious teachings in the workplace, family and among minority groups.

SADANANDA SAHOO

Title: Construction of “Home” in the colonial Diaspora: Ethnographic study of Little India in Malaysia

Abstract: “Home” is the gravitational force of the diasporic existence. The up-rootednesses of the community in host country often search for a home which is either imaginary or real. Religious activities, rituals, festivals, culinary, dress, ethnic get-together are central to the identity maintenance. “Little India” which are found in most of the countries having Indian diaspora are the new “imaginary home”. This geographically distinct area often fulfils the social, cultural, economic and political needs of the diaspora community. Based on the ethnographic study in Brickfield, Kuala Lumpur during 2016-2019, this paper tried to map out the marker of diaspora existence in the colonial diaspora (Malaysia). The paper finds that the construction of home is a larger project and “little India” has been increasingly catering to the need of the “home” in cultural, social, economic and political area. It provides not only the boundary for the dispersed and diverse community within the host country but also it provides continuous linkages with home country with the exchange of products, artifacts, religious ceremonies and often political participation etc.

Biography: Sadananda Sahoo, a Sociologist, teaches at School of Inter-disciplinary and Trans-disciplinary Studies, IGNOU, New Delhi. Prior to this he worked at the National Institute of Labour Economics Research and Development. He has published widely on diaspora, ethnic studies and international migration. He has co-edited book titled “Global Diasporas: Socio-economic, Cultural and Policy Perspectives”, (Springer 2014). He is also the co-editor of “Migration and Diasporas: An Interdisciplinary Journal”. He is also editor of the GRFDT Research Monograph Series.

VISHNU BISRAM

Title: Role of Indo-Caribbean Diaspora in Combating an Ethnic Dictatorship & Restoring Voting Rights in Guyana

Abstract: This paper examines the role of the Indo-Caribbean diaspora (people of Indian descent from the Caribbean) in the struggle against the Afro ethnic dictatorship of Guyana and for the restoration of voting rights (franchise). Guyana received the adult franchise in 1953 after a long struggle against limited rights to vote, but it was suspended for four years and then restored in full in 1957 until independence in May 1966. An African one-party dictatorship was established during a period of fraudulent elections disenfranchising non-African voters between 1965 thru 1992. During this period, Guyanese at home and abroad waged a relentless struggle against the dictatorship and violation of human rights and for the restoration of the right of the vote. The ballot was restored in October 1992 and free and fair elections were held thru May 2015. However, the country experienced another bout of electoral fraud on March 2, 2020. Indo-Caribbeans rose to the challenge to oppose the fraud. Indo-Caribbeans in the diaspora and international forces resisted and successfully reversed that fraud. This paper narrates, explains, and analyzes the role played by Indians in the diaspora against the dictatorship and electoral fraud in Guyana and the restoration of the ballot.

Biography: Vishnu Bisram completed a BS in Bio-Chemistry at City College in New York at age 17. He was admitted for the MA in International Relations in 1982 and went on to complete MAs in all the Social Sciences and Higher education. He is an educator, pollster, journalist, columnist, and political analyst with some forty years experience. He travels extensively throughout the Indian

diaspora researching and writing. A holder of three doctorates (History, Sociology, Political Science) and near completion of a doctorate in Economics as well as a post-graduate degree and diplomas in Educational Administration), he writes voluminously on varied subjects. Living in New York, he was deeply involved in the international struggle for free and fair election that was finally held in October 1992 and in the battle for the accurate count and declaration of the election results of Aug 2, 2020.

JENNIFER KHAN-JANIF AND NAZREEN SHABAN

Title: Fiji Hindi; Our Language, Our Identity for Fiji Indians Living in New Zealand

Abstract: According to New Zealand census (2018) 26,805 people listed Fiji Hindi as a spoken language. Fiji - Hindi spoken by Fiji Indians in the diaspora and in Fiji was developed during indenture times on the plantations which became the conduit for communication with girmiteers from North and South of India and the overseers. To this day, Fiji-Hindi remains a unique embodiment of our cultural identity and heritage. The 1987 and 2000 coups in Fiji became one of the major push factors for migration for Fijians of Indian descent and their exodus to Australia, United States, Canada, and New Zealand. 16,000 Fijians of Indian descent migrated to New Zealand between the years of 1987 and 2000 (Narayan & Symth, 2003).

The intergenerational resilience of Fiji Indians enabled them to establish community organisations which provides cultural and linguistically responsive support services for the wellbeing of its community members. Language schools which is a major contribution for cultural and language maintenance for the parents and their children who arrived as the 1.5 generation from Fiji and those born in New Zealand have been established in the cities settled by Fiji Indian families. Ongoing dialogues and engagements with the law and policy makers by Fiji Indian Community Leaders enables them to contribute to policy development and programmes factoring in the lived experiences of Fiji Indians and their unique Fij - Hindi language which underpins their cultural identity amongst the South Asian and wider community in New Zealand.

Biography: Jennifer Khan-Janif is a graduate of the University of Auckland, New Zealand with a Bachelor of Arts majoring in Sociology. She has a post graduate Diploma in Arts majoring in Pacific Studies from Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand. She has worked in various public sector roles in New Zealand over the past thirty years with a focus on supporting community development, identity, ethnic affairs and early intervention/prevention programmes on positive parenting and family violence. In a professional and personal capacity, she has attended and presented at international conferences on topics of ethnic minority rights, development, interfaith, human trafficking, indentured and Pacific labour trades, gender violence and women rights. She was honored as a member of the New Zealand Order of Merit for services to refugees and migrant communities in the 2020 New Year's Honours Award.

Nazreen Shaban is a fourth generation Fiji-born Indian who has been in New Zealand since 2003. She has worked in various roles from teaching to being a Senior Advisor for migrants and refugees at Ministry of Education in supporting, educating, and working with diverse communities. Nazreen currently works as a Senior Librarian for Children and Youth at a Special formats Youth Library at Blind Low Vision New Zealand. She graduated from the University of the South Pacific, Fiji with a Bachelor of Arts with double majors in Journalism and Literature Language and has a post graduate Diploma in Secondary Teaching from Auckland College of Education, New Zealand.

ANU M. MITRA

Title: Ideas of self: visual culture in South Asian/Indian communities in the Caribbean

Abstract: Asian/Indian descent; 27 percent of Suriname's population is South Asian/Indian; and 41 percent of Guyana's population also constitutes South Asian/Indian peoples. This group left India and arrived in the New World in three waves of immigration. In the 1840s, when the first wave of immigration took place, South Asian/Indians were invited by the British to become land-owners in the West Indies. However, when they arrived in the West Indies, they were indentured in British-owned plantations. Indians of South Asian descent endured --till the 1920s-- the pain of slavery and bondage along with dislocation, the oppressive hand of the colonizer, and the deracination of identity. Yet, the Indian community in this and other diasporic geographies persisted in their self-determination by stitching together their oral and visual traditions. They held selfhood together by creating stories in pictures and by finding solace through their art-making practices. All art purports to tell the truth about the self by demonstrating how the medium shapes notions of national and individual identity.

My goal is to examine the art that emerged from the Indian migration to the Caribbean in the first wave of immigration and to explore questions of visibility and invisibility, of distance and proximity, of power and powerlessness, of remembering and dis-remembering as it is elucidated in the visual cultural affects of the South Asian/ Indian diaspora in this region. This work is intended to lead to a larger study of the visual culture of South Asian/Indians in the Americas allowing me to discover how notions of self are constructed and deconstructed in the images with which they are surrounded. My study will necessarily contribute to the larger American conversation on selfhood and nationality. Can immigrants have the same significance and role in Western society as their white counterparts? How can selfhood among immigrants be reclaimed? Can this reclamation have redemptive values? If so, what are they and how can they be accessed for the greater good of the democratic process and a just society?

Biography: Anu Mitra is 2019-22 Fulbright Specialist Award and a 2019 Gopman Award for Scholarship. She is the Series editor for Arts, Creativities, and Learning Environments in Global Perspectives, (Brill Publishers, Netherlands). She is a Peer Reviewer at Organizational Aesthetics. She is the author of various articles in peer-reviewed journals and has presented at conferences in the USA, Trinidad and Tobago, UK, etc. She was an attendee of the Speaking Truth Summit hosted by Creative Time, November 14-16, 2019, New York City and Stream Facilitator, Courageous Activism, Tenth International Art of Management and Organizations Conference, Liverpool, England, August 20-23, 2020.

PAWAN UPADHYAY

Title: Challenges in searching root & families of Girmits

Abstract: This paper discusses challenges in searching roots of families of indentured laborers or girmits in India. Searching Indian Diaspora family roots in India is not an easy task. The major problem is that those who left did not have accurate information about their place of belonging. The girmitya or indentured immigration pass has limited information and some of it is not accurate. In addition, many had no agriculture land or any other land on their name at that time to identify their ancestry. Many times, the village written on the immigration pass is not correct. And since that time, villages have been divided and renamed. Also, people in villages have migrated to other villages. Added to the above challenges, the current generation has no knowledge about indentured laborers or their ancestors name. They don't even know that their ancestral relatives migrated to far away colonies. This paper will discuss challenges of finding families of descendants of girmits and offer recommendations on how people can trace their roots.

Biography: Pawan Upadhyay is a Research Assistant with the Center of Indian Diaspora Studies that does research on girmityas in Guyana, Trinidad, Fiji, Suriname and New York. He is a voluntary Contributor to the newly launched International Center for Indian Diaspora Studies in Azamgarh and Lucknow. He has been associated with electronic and print media for over 20 years and he volunteers his time to tracing and searching Girmitya's roots with the help of local societies for the Indian girmitya diaspora. Currently, I am associated with several scholars carrying out diaspora research work in UP, Rajasthan, MP, Andhra Pradesh and Bihar.

KUMAR MAHABIR

Title: Walking without legs in the diaspora: Stories of diabetic amputees in Trinidad

Abstract: Research has found that the prevalence of diabetes is 2-4 times higher for Indians in the Diaspora than that of ethnic groups living in the same countries (CADI Research Foundation, 2012). In Trinidad and Tobago, it is estimated that 500 persons lose their limbs annually due to diabetes-related amputations. These amputations result in high mortality rates, reduced quality of life and increased medical costs for patients, their families and the State. This research will determine if there are significant differences between Indo-Trinidadians and other ethnic groups in diabetes-related upper and lower-limb amputations (ULA and LLA respectively), and document true-life experiences of any shock, trauma and discomfort suffered after surgery.

It examines the medical records of Type 2 diabetes-related amputees of a public and private hospital from September 2018 to September 2019 (including Multivariable Regression Analyses (MRA)). Additionally, interviews were conducted with 15 patients at their homes to elicit their post-surgery, non-medical/health experiences. There were significant ethnic differences among Type 2 diabetes-related amputees. During the one-year period of study, attention was also paid to differences in age, gender, religion, education and geographical location. The data show the necessity for public awareness to better prevent or manage diabetes as well as to increase vigilance and care of the diabetic foot. Some amputees become depressed and miserable and die soon after surgery.

Biography: Kumar Mahabir is a former Assistant Professor at the University of Trinidad and Tobago (UTT). He obtained his Ph.D. in Anthropology from the University of Florida. As a doctoral student, he won a Florida Caribbean Institute Award, an A. Curtis Wilgus Fellowship, and an Organization of American States (OAS) Fellowship. Mahabir received his BA and M.Phil. degrees in Literatures in English from The University of the West Indies (UWI), St Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago. Mahabir is the author of twelve (12) books including two national bestsellers *Caribbean East Indian Recipes* and *Medicinal and Edible Plants used by East Indians of Trinidad and Tobago*. His most recent books are *Indian Caribbean Folklore Spirits* and *The Indian Diaspora in the Caribbean*.

MANPREET KAUR AND DR. KAMALA NAIKER

Title: Changing Identities and Shifting Trends

Abstract: With the arrival of indentured labourers in Fiji some 140 years ago, the shared and collective identity created by the Jihaji-bhai's who travelled thousands of miles from homeland to host nation is manifested in its people. Indisputably, Fiji-Indians have come a long way from their homeland, India to the host nation, Fiji. Today, the present generation of Indians in Fiji has created a new identity in their new home Fiji, and acknowledgment is extended to the homeland, India whose remnants have survived, revived and evolved as a new cultural consciousness, identity and transnational realization and invigoration of Indian-ness. Primarily, the Indian diaspora in Fiji identifies itself through Fiji-Hindi language. However, it also struggles constantly, battling the

burden of a superior, standard Hindi language. The language has become a unifier of Fiji identity and acts as a common language between the Indian settlers and the indigenous iTaukei people. In fact, today Fijian identity is unimaginable without this common vernacular. Thus, Indo-Fijian identity is no longer defined solely by its relationship to the homeland but has a new confidence and communication in its adopted home.

This paper attempts to outline the distinctiveness of Fiji-Indians rich Fiji-Hindi language which has developed organically and also discuss the shifting trends in language itself. The paper further probes to bring to the fore the changing identities, focusing on the present day Indians here in Fiji. It will examine the amalgamation of cultures that have evolved, with deeper understanding of the notion of 'home'. It also attempts to encapsulate the reasons for shifting trends in relation to the fourth generation Indians now in Fiji

Biography: Manpreet Kuar is a Lecturer in English in the Department of Language, Literature and Communications at The University of Fiji, Saweni Campus. She has published papers in peer reviewed journals and presented scholarly papers both locally and internationally. She is the author of an anthology of poems titled *Echoes of my Footprints* (2015). She is currently pursuing her PhD in English from the University of Fiji.

Kamala Naiker is a Senior Lecturer in English and Head of Department for the Department of Language, Literature and Communications at The University of Fiji. She has published papers in peer reviewed journals and presented scholarly papers both regionally and internationally. Dr. Naiker is currently writing her book on Bharati Mukherjee's novels with Fijian perspective.

HEIDI MCKENZIE

Title: Liminal Lives: Documenting the Inheritance of Post-Indentureship

Abstract: I am a ceramic artist living in Toronto, Canada. I work as a sculptor, curator and arts journalist. I hold an MFA in Curatorial Practice and Art Criticism (OCADU, 2014). My father, Joseph McKenzie, (1930-2016) was an Indo-Trinidadian who immigrated to Canada in 1953. He married an American and I was born and grew up in Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada. I would like to present a 15-minute artist talk that addresses my mixed Indo-Caribbean lived experience, and the lived experiences of my ancestors, as well as new works that will literally illuminate the lives of South Asian indentured workers (through the translucency of porcelain and archival photography on clay) for an international ceramic symposia and exhibition in Virginia, March 2020.

The works which I recently displayed at Canada's premiere ceramics museum, The Gardiner Museum, in my solo exhibition, *Family Matters*, included: an abstract self-portrait; an installation of 21 multiple porcelain tetrahedrons with iconic Canadian images on the facets, and images of myself growing up at the corners of Canadianness; a 13-piece larger-than-life set of children's building blocks, on which I have printed archival imagery of my parents' and their ancestors, including the pivotal photograph of my great-great grandmother, Roonia Rachedine, who sailed from Calcutta to Guyana in the mid 1850's; and a literal 'House of Cards' comprised of 26 porcelain 0.02" cards with archival photographs that represent the precariousness of my father's life as an Indo-Trinidadian immigrant, building a life and a home for his family in Canada.

Biography: Heidi McKenzie completed her Diploma at Sheridan College in 2012 and subsequently her MFA at OCADU in 2014. In 2011, she received the Emerging Artist Award at Toronto Artists Project. In 2012 she exhibited at the Toronto International Art Fair. In 2013, Heidi was funded by the Ontario Arts Council to create in Jingdezhen, China and in Bali, Indonesia. In 2014 Heidi completed a residency at Guldagergaard International Centre for Ceramic Research in Denmark. In

2017 Heidi received OAC funding to work in Sydney Australia, to apprentice with Master Mitsuo Shoji and expand her sculptural vocabulary. She is the recipient of a 2017 and 2019 Craft Ontario Award, Best in Show Ontario Artists Association Biennial Award (2017) and a Canada Council Explore and Create and Toronto Arts Council Grants to Visual Artists (2019). Her work engages issues of identity, belonging, race, memory, and archive. She is an active arts journalist and ceramic arts reviewer.

SATISH RAI

Title: Shifting homes and identities in the global village-A personal narrative

Abstract: In this paper I narrate how I grappled with my sense of identity and home from my childhood in a tiny village in Fiji where I was born and spent first 18 years of life. Things began to change when I migrated to UK at age of 23 for a short period with the intention to return to Fiji. Fiji no longer was my home when I witnessed the first coup in Fiji in 1987 and decided that UK was my home. However, my identity as a Fijian was shattered and the quest to establish took me to India, my *matrabhumi*, in 1994. After three failed attempts, I finally visited the home of my aaji, my paternal grandmother. I was firmly anchored in India after that. But I still grappled with my home, especially when I had to migrate to Australia for personal reasons. Now, after 23 years in Australia I regard Australia as my home as far as living and working here, my *karmabhumi*. I still have issues with my birthplace, my *janambhumi*. I cannot change my *janambhumi*, but Fiji no longer feels like a home for me. However, now secure as far as *matrabhumi* and *karmabhumi* is concerned, I am pleased with my identity and multiple homes. I hope my article will guide a few others to contemplate on and negotiate their identity and sense of multiple homes in the global village we live in.

Biography: Satish Rai has a BA (Hons) degree in Sociology (London), MA degree in Communications and Cultural Studies and Doctor of Creative Arts degree in film production from the University of Western Sydney. He is a film maker, journalist and an academic. He has worked as a lecturer at tertiary institutions in Sydney and Fiji since 2008. He has produced/directed 5 feature films, 6 short feature films, 10 documentaries and 400 TV & online TV programs. In 2019 he produced his dream film and television project *Lord Rama in Exile-an Epic Journey of Survival for the Global Girmityas*. This was filmed in various locations from Ayodhya to Rameswaram. Presently the director of Raivision Academy of Film and the director of Indian Diaspora Council of Australia Inc.

GAJENDRAN AYYATHURAI

Title: Inclusive or Exclusive Religious Traditions? Brahmin and Non-Brahmin Temples, Priests, and Publics of the Indian Diaspora in the Caribbean

Abstract: British Guiana marked the entry of Indian indentured laborers in the Caribbean in 1838. Their recruitment in various parts of India was not based on religious and/or caste affiliations but on their ability to do hard plantation labor across Indian, Atlantic, and Pacific Oceans. In addition, the long voyage around the Cape Town, and via Suez Canal later, had made any vestiges of religion and caste all the more redundant because of the inevitable solidarity and new familial formations among Indians. Nevertheless, religious and caste identities, institutions, and cultural practices have risen in the Indo-Caribbean societies since the late 19th century. This paper aims to unravel the intersectionality of religion, caste, and gender in the Indian diaspora in the Caribbean. Based on the recent field study data in Guyana and Suriname as well as from the secondary sources this paper will critically examine: How do private temples become public in the Caribbean? What is the role of caste and class in the establishment of such temples? Is there a difference in the status, function, and power between brahmin and non-brahmin priests? Why and how English has emerged as a language of greater accessibility than Sanskrit, Hindi, or any other language? What are the different

perceptions about their religious, cultural, and linguistic history within various brahminical religious denominations and between brahminical and nonbrahminical Caribbean traditions?

Biography: Gajendran Ayyathurai has a doctorate in Anthropology from Columbia University, New York. He teaches and researches at the Centre for Modern Indian Studies [CeMIS], Göttingen University, Germany. His manuscript *Deep Resistance* is under review by Columbia University. His recent article entitled “Colonialism, caste, and gender: The emergence of critical caste feminism in modern South India” is under peer review with the *Journal of Women’s Studies*. Presently he is doing field study in Guyana and Suriname and will include Trinidad, Jamaica, and Francophone Caribbean subsequently in his study.

MANSRAJ RAMPHAL

Title: Beyond the indenture experience: Portuguese and Indians in Trinidad and British Guiana

Abstract: The importation of indentured labour from overseas followed the abolition of slavery in the British Empire in 1834. The ex-slaves exited the sugar plantations in large numbers. The planters were in dire straits. There was a loud cry for labour. Starting with British Guiana (Demerara), the British West Indian colonies made arrangements for the importation of labour from overseas. Liberated Africans, West Africans, Portuguese, Chinese and Indians were brought in on indenture contracts to save the estates from ruin. Everywhere, the Portuguese exited the estate as soon as they could and entered into retailing and shop keeping. From small beginnings they would grow in size and strength and make a significant impact on the commercial life of these two colonies during indenture and beyond. The Portuguese arrived with their families.

Portuguese and Indians built a solid structure during the extremely painful, difficult and heartrending days of indenture. This solid base became the launching pad for more rapid strides for those who cared to continue rising in their various chosen occupations. They also moved into hitherto inaccessible jobs including in the civil service and the services industry. This access they gained through higher education. The sky was now the limit for those who wanted a challenge. Portuguese and Indians also added colour and vitality to the already existing multi-cultural setting by bringing their unique cultures with them. Their cuisine also made a significant impact.

Biography: Mansraj Ramphal is presently pursuing the Master of Philosophy in History at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago. He attended the University of the West Indies where he obtained the B.Sc. Government (Honours) in 1975 and the M.Sc. in Government in 1981. In 1988 he obtained an M.A. Industrial Relations, Warwick University, Coventry. He has held several social, community and educational positions including Chairman, Point Fortin College School Board and Director of Vocational Training, Rotary Club of Point Fortin amongst others. Presently he is the Chairman of the San Fernando Social and Educational Committee. Since 2010, he has presented papers at International Diaspora Conferences in St. Vincent, Suriname, Mauritius, Grenada, Belize, Fiji, Portugal and Trinidad and Tobago.

HEMRAJ RAMDATH

Title: From indentureship to entrepreneurship – pioneers of entrepreneurship in Trinidad.

Abstract: During the period 1845-1917, more than 145000 Indians were brought willingly or unwillingly, to Trinidad, predominantly from UP and Bihar. Indians were “selected “since they met all the necessary criteria for replacing the recently emancipated Africans on the sugar plantations. They brought with them, their agricultural experiences, dedication to work and to the land, culture of thriftiness, caste and religion. Many of these indentured workers were able to rise above the difficult and trying working and living condition, and saved from their low meagre wages to invest in land acquisition and small subsistence farming.

This paper traces the birth and development of enterpreneship in Trinidad from the 1860's by Indentured labourers who were able to transcend their "contractual period" and become entrepreneurs. It identifies the many individuals and families who have transitioned from the plantations to which they were indentured or contracted to establishing their own estates/plantations. This includes rice, coffee, cocoa, coconut, coal, as well as the sectorial linkages into every productive sector - agro processing, dairy farming, wholesale and retail trades, real estate, construction, transportation, manufacturing, hotel & hospitality, energy, media and entertainment food and beverages, and professional services. It examines the many factors that have led to their growth and success in a hostile host environment, as well as the challengers faced or failures experienced, in the development of their businesses and brands, in the true spirit of entrepreneurship. It seeks to establish (and possible quantity) the significant economic contributions these companies and individuals have made in wealth acquisition, community outreach, national growth and development as well as to nation building.

Biography: Hemraj Ramdath is a Business Consultant who has spent the past four decades working in executive management in Oil and Gas and the Consumer Goods sectors. He holds a combined honors degree from York University Toronto in Political Science and Economics, with majors in Petroleum economics and an Executive Masters of Business (EMBA 1995) from the Arthur Lok Jack Graduate School of Business, UWI Trinidad, with specialization in global trade. In January 2019, he presented papers at several educational institutions during Pravasi Bharatiya Divas, at the diaspora conference in Magadh University Bodhgaya, Bihar, BHU and DAV postgraduate college in Varanasi. He is a Charter member of the Rotary club of Barbados south, past member of Rotary Club of Port of Spain and a life member of the National Council for Indian Culture.

SARITA NANDMEHAR AND RISHI GUPTA

Title: Political Transition in Nepal and Indian Diaspora: Changing Identity and Narratives

Abstract: India and Nepal share an open border of approximately 1400 km. The two share close socio-cultural ties nourished by the deep rooted people to people relations. With the establishment of their diplomatic ties in 1950, India and Nepal signed a Treaty of Peace and Friendship in the same year. The treaty facilitated a visa and passport free regime and allowed people to cross the border for work, study and settle without requiring any special permission of the host country. In last seventy years, more than half a million Indian diaspora has settled in Nepal without facing any major challenges. However, amidst the changing political sphere in Nepal and the existing sourness in relations has impacted on the livelihood of residing diaspora who are involved in small scale businesses, services, education, etc. Therefore, the present paper attempts to provide a short history of Indian diaspora in Nepal. The paper analyses the impact of political transition in Nepal on the life and work of Indian diaspora. It will critically examine the tussle between political nationalism of the host country and livelihood of the Indian diaspora community. The paper will also attempt to answer, how does diaspora and its identity become a challenge to ultra-nationalistic stance of the host countries?

Biography: **Sarita Nandmehar** is a PhD in South Asian Studies from Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India. Her PhD thesis focused on the indigenous community and modern day slavery in Nepal. She was a Visiting Faculty at the University of Muhammdiya Malang, Malang, Indonesia. She has also taught at the University of Delhi, Delhi, India She has presented papers at several national and international conferences and published papers in books and journals of repute. Her areas of research interests include Society and Culture in Nepal, Slavery, Diaspora, Migration, Refugee, Gender, and International Organizations.

Rishi Gupta is an Indian Council of Social Science (ICSSR) Doctoral Fellow at the Center for South Asian Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. He is a Senior Fellow at the

Kathmandu based Asian Institute of Diplomacy and International Affairs (AIDIA), Nepal. He has been a Visiting Fellow at the Institute of South Asian Studies, Sichuan University, China and a Fellow at the Center for Southern Asian Studies, Pondicherry University, India. He regularly writes for Indian dailies. His areas of research interests include Politics and Security of Nepal, South Asian Politics and Human Rights.

ARCHANA TIWARI

Title: Ramayana: the refuge of indentured Indians in the Caribbean

Abstract: During the British rule in India, many Indians were taken to the European (sugar) colonies of the Caribbean region like Trinidad, Guyana, Surinam etc., under the indentured system. The impoverished Indians who had migrated to the Caribbean colonies were seeking employment. Many of them met the recruiter (arkati) far away from their homes. However, many of them were oblivious of the fact that they were being offered employment in a place that was thousands of miles away from their home and required a journey by sea. Thus, when these Indians reached their destination they were under enormous stress-nostalgic for their homes and Motherland and grief-stricken for having taken a voyage by sea (a contemporary belief forbade crossing the seas). They had to get used to work by tasks and face an alien society where they placed on the lowest rung. Added to these were the problems arising out of the abysmally low number of Indian indentured women.

Still these Indians faced their trials and tribulations with courage and fortitude as they carried their “social baggage,” their religious beliefs, especially their staunch faith in Ramayana. Most of the indentured Indians in the Caribbean region belonged to the Awadhi-speaking and Bhojpuri-speaking belt in North India, where Ramayana ---the story of Rama who was exiled from his kingdom in Ayodhya for fourteen years, forms the very blood and sinews of the Indian masses. The indentured men identified themselves with Lord Rama. They drew strength from the story of Rama, which reassured them and gave them hope for better times. In the present paper the researcher will explore the ways in which Ramayana helped the indentured Indians in the Caribbean region to find refuge and solace, in the most difficult times of their life.

Biography: Archana Tewari is Associate Professor and Head, Department of Western History, University of Lucknow, India. Her PhD thesis was on Indian emigration to Trinidad. Her research paper ‘Indian indentured women in the Caribbean and the role model of Ramayana’s Sita: An unequal metaphor’ was published in 2018. She also contributed a paper titled in ‘Indo- Surinami relations: An overview’ to ‘Conference on Slavery, Indentured labour, Migration, Diaspora and Identity Formation’ in Suriname, June 2018. She presented a paper, “Philanthropic contribution of Indian Diaspora in the last two decades: An offshoot of Indian culture” at the International Conference on Indic Identity of Indian Diaspora: It’s Historical, Philosophical and Contemporary contributions to the World and India.’

AMBA PANDE

Title: The Girit Diaspora as a Factor in India’s Soft Power Strategy

Abstract: Soft Power has increasingly emerged as a significant foreign policy strategy for India and has added greatly to its growing stature internationally. The Indian diaspora is one of the most important instruments of India's soft power strategy. Unfortunately, the Girit or the ‘old diaspora’ remained at the peripheries of the India’s foreign policy priorities for a very long time. It was not considered as of any direct relevance to India in terms of economic or strategic gains. However, under the present regime some critical and out of the box thinking has not only led to the recognition that the Girit diaspora has been instrumental in spreading the Indian culture far and wide but also that it can be a significant asset in India’s quest as a world leader.

In this paper I seek to critically examine India's policy towards the Girit diaspora under different governments along with its prejudices and limitations in this regard. The paper will also discuss India's efforts to bridge its relationship with the Girit diaspora over the years. The paper will further explore the prospects of future engagement that can result in win-win for both India and Girit diaspora.

Biography: Amba Pande is associated with the School of International Studies, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi. She received her PhD from Centre for Southeast Asia and South West Pacific Studies, School of International Studies, JNU. Her research interests include Indian Diaspora, International migration, Transnationalism and Indo-Pacific. She has also been a visiting faculty/scholar at the University of Amsterdam (the Netherlands), University of South Pacific (Fiji), Otago University (New Zealand). Dr Pande is a prolific writer and has many publications to her credit in national and international journals. She has been invited to give independent lectures, present papers, be discussant and Chair several national and international seminars and conferences.

ANNAPURNA DEVI PANDEY

Title: The Struggles and Challenges of H4 visa Holders in USA: An Ethnographic Study.

Abstract: Recent neoconservative controls on migrants in Europe and the US have invoked a concomitant academic interest on forced, voluntary or unwanted migrations the world over. Is there an Ethnographic connect between subversive solidarities and humanitarian concerns visible in such migrations? I will focus on the struggles and challenges of H4 visa holders who come from India as spouses of engineers and other professionals but are not allowed to work in the country and suffer from numerous restrictions imposed by the United States government.

The western world was created from the contributions made by the non-western migrants from Asia, Africa, Caribbean and Latin America. Now when the western world has acquired a level of peace and prosperity, all of a sudden, the non-Western migrants are seen as a threat. With technology boom, the highly specialized professionals are migrating to the USA on a temporary visa called H1 (strictly job related) and their spouses join them on H4, a dependent visa. As H4 visa holders, they are not allowed to work in their host land among other restrictions. They are unwelcome and Western nation states are putting all kinds of restrictions to control immigration, make their life unbearable by imposing gender norms discarded by the USA long time ago. This paper will address the policies of United States for the partner/ spouses of the techies who are coming or have come to the United States on what the state calls H1B visa and H4 visa. Based on ethnographic material – structured questionnaire, extensive interviews and focus groups - I will discuss the challenges and struggles of H4 visa holders and how they are developing support groups under the circumstances and are engaged in coalition building to fight for their rights in the USA.

Biography: Annapurna Devi Pandey is a Lecturer in Cultural Anthropology at the University of California, Santa Cruz. She holds a Ph.D. in Sociology from Jawaharlal Nehru University and was a Post-Doctoral fellow in Social Anthropology at Cambridge, UK. Her current research interests are diaspora studies, South Asian religion and immigrant women's identity making in the Diaspora in California. She is a senior Fulbright U.S.A Scholar (2017- 2018) working in India and a filmmaker (Homeland in the Heart; The Myth of Buddha's Birthplace (with Prof. James Freeman) and Road to Zuni. Her most recent film, Road to Zuni was nominated to nine international film festivals in 2018 and has received several national and international awards. She was President of the Orissa Society of the Americas (2011- 2013).

VASSAN RAMRACHA

Title: “Logie” Socialism

Abstract: This paper endeavors to contribute to the understanding of the evolution of the “*Logie*” culture of the indentured servants who came to the America’s especially in regions such as Trinidad and Tobago, Guyana and Suriname in terms of the development of their cultural and political views leading up to their lifestyle and conditions which eventually beheld socialism. “*Logie*” being defined as the barracks or living quarters of the period. It will also include a brief history of the formation of the political parties, individuals and independence movements of people of both Indo and Afro Caribbean descent which lead to this socialism among the descendants of indentured labourers and the creation of our current “Logie” socialist lifestyle. The paper will feature analysis on the separations of the political parties on ethnic lines of division, how political ideology and climate can play a positive or negative role on the development of a strong ethnic identity or lack thereof, examination of indentured and slave suffrage, the present political situation of the Indo-Caribbean diaspora and how the Indo-Caribbean diaspora can move forward using the tools of the Vedic Indian belief systems of our ancestors and to demand reparations and how to achieve political.

Biography: Vassan Ramracha graduated from the City University of New York with a Bachelor of Arts in Political Science and a Master of Arts in Education and International Relations. He is a regular contributor to various online and printed news media; has presented at Caribbean conferences and featured in local Trinidadian documentaries on Indo-Caribbean politics. He is a politically active member of Indo-Caribbean and Hindu groups within New York City.

UJJWAL RABIDAS

Title: The Diaspora Factor in India’s Caribbean Engagement

Abstract: India has recently hosted the Caribbean Community leaders twice in New York City. The External Affairs Minister late Sushma Swaraj had hosted the CARICOM Foreign Affairs Meet in October 2015, and the Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi hosted the prime ministers of the CARICOM countries in India-CARICOM Leaders’ Meeting in September 2019. In both the meets the discussed issues were multilateral in nature including the issues of UN reform, climate change and others. Those meets primarily appear as geopolitical and diplomatic exercises.

This paper, however, intends to discuss the diasporic angle that is critical to the outcome of the meets. India has acknowledged the ‘old ties’ in these meetings and that itself indicates the importance of the diasporas as far as the target outcome is concerned. The paper would also touch upon the perceived sentiment/s of the ethnic Indians which have been said to be present in the Caribbean as far as the regional structures are concerned because India’s recent diplomatic exercises too with the Caribbean are regionalised.

Biography: Dr. Ujjwal Rabidas is an Assistant Professor at the Amity Institute of Social Sciences, Amity University, Noida, India. Earlier he has worked with Jawaharlal Nehru University (New Delhi), Christ University (Bangalore), University of Delhi (New Delhi) and Indira Gandhi National Open University (New Delhi). He obtained his Ph.D. and Post-Doctoral research on Caribbean Studies and has published researched articles on various Caribbean issues in Asian Journal of Latin American Studies, Revista Asia Americana Latina and Indian Journal of Politics.

OUMA SEEBALUCK

Title: India's Outreach to its Diaspora with Particular Reference to Prime Minister Narendra Modi's First Term of Office (2014 -2019)

Abstract: The paper discusses the efforts Prime Minister, Narendra Modi has put into reaching the Indian Diasporas during his first term of office. The Indian Diaspora actually accounts for more than 25 million members and is spread all around the world. By virtue of their skills and culture, the people of the Indian Diaspora has been able to influence the image of the country of their forefathers abroad, and has added value to their respective host countries. As such this reflects well on India, and the Indian Diaspora has been particularly remarkable in this respect.

In 1999, the Chennai Declaration of the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) clearly stated that India must put much more emphasis on its considerations for the NRI (Non Resident Indians) and the PIO (People of Indian Origin) which are quite significant in numbers and scattered around the globe, and that they remain part of the great Indian family. In 2015, according to the Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs, remittances which amounted to US\$68.91 billion amounting to 4% of India's GDP was being received from the approximately members of the Indian Diaspora scattered around the world and these remittances have helped to boost India's economy. Indian Diasporas are not only important to India for economic reasons, in fact they help on political and national security levels. Most Indian Diasporas look up to India and even in some cases their umbilical cords have remained intact with Mother India.

Biography: Ouma Seebaluck was born in Mauritius when the island was still a British colony. For more than 25 years, she has been an airline executive for Air Mauritius, the national carrier of the country. She has worked and travelled to numerous parts of the world. She holds an MA in diplomatic studies from The Diplomatic Academy of London, Westminster University, UK and a PhD in International Studies from JMI University, New Delhi, India.

BRINSLEY SAMAROO

Title: "Side by side, not one behind the other. Women in the labour movement in Trinbago during the 20th Century"

Abstract: Writing about women's participation in the labour movement is far more difficult than writing about men. In a highly patriarchal Victorian society the men were seen as prime movers and the women as peripheral to the developmental process. However, if one looks closely at the record there is ample evidence of the major role of women in the struggle for better conditions in oil, sugar and urban industries. This paper seeks to highlight that process during the 20th Century by concentrating on a few significant labour uprisings. These include the uprising in the sugar belt in 1934 which led to more serious disturbances in sugar and oil in 1937 and the continuing agitation in the post-Independence era. The state's response was the placebo of frequent commissions of enquiry and the harassment of women through constant arrests and long trials in an atmosphere of racist abuse. However, the women warriors persisted in their struggle for betterment in oil and sugar in south and central Trinidad and at industrial locations in north Trinidad and in Tobago. Through their active participation in agitation they contributed to the creation of trade unionism, laying the foundation for the creation of the nation-state in the post-colonial era. The period of the thirties in particular was one during which the traditional ethnic separation was superseded by class solidarity in what was perhaps Trinbago's finest moment. The 1937 disturbances brought African and Indian West Indians in an unprecedented demonstration of class solidarity which sadly, declined afterwards.

Biography: Brinsley Samaroo is Professor Emeritus at the University of the West Indies, St. Augustine. He has a distinguished career as one of the most outstanding Historians of Indian indentureship, Indian immigration, Indian Diaspora as well as Caribbean History and the history of

Trinidad and Tobago. He is the author of numerous books and articles covering wide range of subjects on History. He is former Member of Parliament and Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries in Trinidad and Tobago and he received one of the nation's highest awards the Chaconia Medal, Gold in 2014.

HAZEL WOOLFORD

Title: Organized labour and the Indian sugar workers, in British Guiana

Abstract: This paper examines the attempts that were made to unionize the Indian Guyanese sugar workers in the first half of the twentieth century. Hubert Nathaniel Critchlow, who was called the Black Crosby was the first trade unionist to represent the Indian sugar workers in British Guiana. From 1919 to 1940, Critchlow loomed large in the field of trade unionism in Guyana, and the Commonwealth Caribbean as he attempted to unite the workers across race and class. The British Guiana Labour Union began as a general union and bargained for all workers irrespective of their ethnic background and throughout its existence it did not deviate from this course

Those Indo-labourers christened him the “Black Crosby” after the European Immigration-Agent General whose mandate was to protect the legal rights of the Indo-Estate-Workers. Through his instrumentality the government has regard for the working class man. Critchlow was influential in the formation of the Manpower Citizens’ Association in 1937. Led by an Indian, Ayube Edun, this union represented the sugar workers. The unionization of the urban working class, and sugar workers morphed into a political consciousness that led to Critchlow and Edun being appointed nominated members of the Legislative Council, in 1943.

Biography: Hazel Woolford earned a B. A. and M. A. in History from the University of Guyana and a Diploma in Library science from the University of London. She is a founding member of the Guyana Institute of Historical Research. She is presently based at the Guyana Institute of Historical Research Registrar. She is the author of *A Guide to the Public Life of Hugh Desmond Hoyt* and editor of *Introductory Reader to Women’s Studies in Guyana*. She is also editor of *Lessons in Guyanese history series: The challenges of the Politics of coalition* as well as other publications.

MOVINDRI REDDY

Title: India’s political influence in South Africa

Abstract: This paper will focus on the influence of India on the politics of post-Apartheid South Africa. With increasing Chinese economic interventions throughout southern Africa, India has concentrated on activating Diaspora connections in the region. The paper will explore the challenges that India experiences in dealing with the small Indian minority, its reliance on religious and cultural inventions, and its dependence on individual Indian entrepreneurs. In recent years, the political influence of the Gupta family on the former president and the ramifications of these relationships on national politics and ethnic relations in the country dominated the political and economic scene. Given the relative isolation of Indians from India under apartheid, these new levels of transnational political engagements have not been smooth nor without controversy.

Biography: Movindri Reddy is a Professor of Diplomacy and World Affairs at Occidental College, USA. She received her Ph.D from Cambridge University and held post-Doctoral fellowships at Yale, Princeton, and the University of Chicago. She is currently working on a book manuscript about contested states in southern Africa. She is the author of *Social Movements and the Indian Diaspora* (2015). Dr. Reddy specializes in nationalism, identity, Social Movements, and revolutions in southern Africa, and countries associated with the South Asian Diaspora.

KALYANI

Title: Role of popular culture in changing patterns of sexuality: A study of Indian Diaspora in Caribbean.

Abstract: Sexuality has always been a subject of hierarchically positioning one's identity by constructing a superior masculinity vis-à-vis a frail, docile and submissive feminine counterpart. Representation of sexuality and gender identity within Indian Diaspora was no exception to it. The identity of 'Jajhaji' women was more of a reworking within the Indian identity and Western Creole identity with which they constantly seem to struggle. However the very fact that women within diasporic culture were wage earners and that they displayed a sense of solidarity or 'sisterhood' by virtue of their fewer number and historical location (since majority of them were deserted women, practicing prostitutes and Brahmin widows), understanding gender within Indian Diaspora stands far more complex than understanding it merely as a 'dialectics of sex'. Poetry sung by these women thus often became a tool to capture their solitude and their struggle to construct their own spaces in a far destined and alienated land. Being an indentured laborer was newer space and experience that they were thrown open to. They did not have any relationship baggage (given the fact that their social composition explained the periphery of society they belonged to). This brought about newer dimensions with which they would associate themselves like motherhood, reworking of myths and even education towards the later half century as modes of their emancipation. Gender identity among Indian Diaspora also needs to be located within the larger discourse of wave of feminism in Caribbean as feminism that emerged within these spaces were unique and quintessentially focused on women's identity and issues for the reason engagement of feminism with Diaspora enabled feminism transcend ethnic or racial lines.

The aim of my paper would be to locate the gender dimension among Indian Diaspora within the moment of history and also to understand its uniqueness in terms of how it influenced the larger discourse of feminism. For this purpose the paper will particularly study popular music genre like Chutney music and the engagement of singers like Durpatee Ramgoonai with such musical forms. The paper will thus try to unfold the layers of solidarity that women have exhibited when it comes to setting up newer identity for themselves, even in spaces like popular music, which this paper tends to explore.

Biography: Kalyani is currently completing her doctoral research in Sociology at the Centre for the Study of Social Systems, School of Social Sciences (CSSS/SSS), Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi, India. Her area of interest is gender studies, popular culture, entrepreneurship and identity politics. She has presented several papers at national and international conference.

TARA SINGH

Title: Pattern and Impact of Indo-Guyanese Migration to the USA

Abstract: The current Guyanese emigration wave to the United States, like that to Canada, is being viewed as "The Third Journey." The First Journey (1838-1920) which was precipitated by the abolition of slavery in 1833, and the corresponding shortage of labor to work on sugar plantations, was based essentially on a system of contract labor (indentureship) that was likened to a form of bondage. The indentureship system was described by Hugh Tinker as a new system of slavery.

The Second Journey of Guyanese emigrants that spanned the period 1930 to 1960 went North, primarily to the United Kingdom (UK) where their British-issued passports allowed easy access into the UK. But that emigration stream was 'voluntary' in nature as opposed to the First Journey which was 'involuntary.' Two forces combined to facilitate the voluntary emigration on the Second Journey: the need for higher education and better economic opportunities. The Third Journey (1960-2019) began with Guyanese emigration to Canada and then to the United States. The emigration flow during this period was also voluntary and motivated mainly by political turmoil (1960-1999)

and later (1990-2019) by acute and persistent economic convulsions. Changes in US and Canadian Immigration rules have facilitated this massive flow of emigrants especially after 1965.

Data for this study are being gathered from various sources: academic, government, field surveys, focused interviews, and newspaper articles. Given the similarity between Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago in terms of culture, family life, religious affiliation, belief systems and a common history, the plan is to draw regular comparisons with Trinidad & Tobago (Trinbago). It is not the author's intention to describe the characteristics of emigrants but rather to identify some basic demographic variables and determine how these impact social and economic trends in their host country, the United States. Many theories, including the traditional "pull-push" and the "nationalist and internationalist" theories of migration are being analyzed for their appropriateness to Guyana.

Biography: Tara Singh completed a doctorate at University of Wales. He completed his post doctoral studies at London School of Economics, School of Oriental Studies and at the University of Wales. He was a Senior Lecturer at the University of Guyana from 1978 to 1985. He has published essays on social, economic and political issues.

RAMCHANDRA JOSHI AND URVASHI KAUSHAL

Title: Emergence and Consolidation of Identities in the Narratives of *Chinnidad* in the literary works of Indo-Trinidadian Canadian writers.

Abstract: History, many a times, conceals more than reveals, but in the case of Indian diaspora, it unfolds even camouflages through narratives of perilous journey and predicament of displacement. The most significant event in the history of Indian diaspora is the transplantation of people from the different parts of India to the colonial plantations. For the Indian indentured labourers, as they were told by the *arkhatis*, (recruiter) Fiji was a place just next to Calcutta and Trinidad was *Chinidad*—a land of sugar, land of opportunities.

In the literary journey of the Indo-Caribbean Canadian literature, Trinidad had played the most significant role. In the literary cannon of Indo-Caribbean Canadian, Trinidad has produced a significant number of literary writers who have adequately created a perfect niche in the transcultural literary world. In Canada, Indo-Caribbean people formed a minuscule group of twice displaced people. Most of these Indo-Caribbean Canadian people have their origin in Trinidad and Tobago. This article focuses on the literary outcomes of Indo-Trinidadian writer in Canada who are regarded as double diaspora. Their diasporic dis(re)placement and (re)location unfolds the problems they faced in re-migration towards Canada. Consequently, the socio-cultural linguistic duality leads to emergence and consolidation of a homogeneous identity in Canada. Their second migration has formed a new language and literature consisting of intermingled socio-cultural manifestations in Canada

Biography: Ramchandra Joshi is an Assistant Professor of English at Dr. A. P. J. Abdul Kalam Govt. College Sivassa, Dadara and Nagar Haveli, U. T. of India since 2012. He has also worked as lecturer for three years at National Institute of Technology (NIT) Surat, Gujarat. Apart from these, He has also worked as guest faculty at various universities in Gujarat. He has a Ph.D. from NIT Surat in the area of Indo-Caribbean Canadian Diaspora Literature. His areas of interest include Indo-Fijian Literature, Literature of Gujarati Diaspora Migrants, Indian English Literature, and Film Criticism.

Urvashi Kaushal is an Assistant Professor of English in the Applied Mathematics and Humanities Department of Sardar Vallabhbhai National Institute of Technology, Surat, Gujarat, India. She teaches English and Communication Skills to Engineering students. Her area of research is Indian English Fiction and Post-Colonial Fiction.

CHAN E. S. CHOENNI

Title: Indians and political exclusion: the case of Fiji, Trinidad, Guyana and Suriname

Abstract: It is remarkable that the integration of the Indian group in Fiji, Trinidad, Guyana and Suriname after The Second World War largely resulted in their political exclusion till the end of the Twentieth century. For example in the year of independence the Indian group was excluded from the political power while they constituted a slight majority of the population in Guyana and Fiji; in Trinidad they were on par with Africans, while in Suriname where they were the largest ethnic group. Prior to the independence of Fiji in 1970 and also after independence the Indian group was in opposition. In 1987 the Indian group became part of a coalition government in Fiji, but by a military coup this government dissolved. The leader of the coup stated that the indigenous Fijians could not be ruled by Indians. The Indian group was excluded from state power for a long period. In Guyana prior to the independence in 1966 and till 1992 and in Trinidad long before independence in 1962 till 1995, the Indian group was mostly in opposition. In Suriname too the Indian group was excluded from political power preceding the independence in 1975 and also afterwards till in 1980 when a military coup resulted to some extent in participating in the political rule.

The interesting question is why the Indian group was politically excluded in these countries in this crucial historical period. We see that the Indian group was underrepresented in relation to their demographic strength in the civil service, the police and the army. Furthermore, Indians played a minor role in the national media, sports, entertainment, arts and culture and the national image of these countries. We state that the Indian group became politically excluded because the size of the Indian group and voting along ethnic lines would, at least democratically, mean that the Indian group could gain the state power and rule the country. But the other dominant group, the Indigenous Fijians, Africans and Creoles considered themselves as the successors of colonial rule and perceived the Indian group as a threat to their interests.

Biography: Chandersen E.S. Choenni was born in 1953 in Paramaribo, Suriname. In 1972 he emigrated to The Netherlands and studied Political Science and Science of Philosophy at the University of Amsterdam. He holds a PhD in Social Sciences from the University of Utrecht. He was an Advisor for the Dutch government in various Ministries and specialized on Integration policy for ethnic minorities. He has published about racism, discrimination, integration policy, *Vedic Dharma*, Surinamers and in particular about Hindostanis in the Indentured Indian Diaspora. He was appointed as professor at the VU University of Amsterdam on the Lalla Rookh Chair in 2010.

PARMANAND MOHAN AND SHAREEDA MOHAMMED

Title: The Impact of Indian Movie Songs on the East Indian Diaspora in Trinidad and Tobago (1960-2019)

Abstract: The introduction of Indian movies to Trinidad in 1935 changed the face of Indian culture in the country (Gooptar, 2013). It gave East Indians a source of new melodious songs that appealed to the masses and became extremely popular in the decades that followed. Indian movie songs were played at almost every cooking nightⁱ, wedding, birthday or other event of East Indian origin. According to Gooptar (2013), no East Indian event of any importance took place without Indian movie songs forming an integral part of the programming. This was so, despite the fact that most East Indians from the 1950s did not understand Hindi or speak the language!

This paper describes a study designed to qualitatively measure the impact of Indian movie songs on the East Indian diaspora in Trinidad from the 1960s to 2019. YouTube videos for two of the most popular songs from each decade were first identified. These videos were then linked into an online questionnaire using Google Forms. Participants were requested to play each video on the

questionnaire and answer various questions related to that video. For example, participants were asked what kind of emotions the songs invoked, and whether they would recommend it to someone else. The questionnaire was sent to members of the East Indian diaspora in Trinidad using social media such as Facebook and WhatsApp. The results of the questionnaire were then analyzed using various statistical tools. Using the historical context given by Gooptar (2013), the paper attempts to explain the differences in responses among the older and younger members of the East Indian diaspora in the face of cultural changes taking place in the country as a whole

Biography: Permanand Mohan is a Senior Lecturer in Computer Science at the Department of Computing and Information Technology at the UWI, St. Augustine Campus for the past 25 years. He was previously a Visiting Professor at the Laboratory for Advanced Research in Intelligent Educational Systems (ARIES) at the University of Saskatchewan in Canada and a Fulbright Visiting Scholar to the School of Information Sciences at the University of Pittsburgh in the USA. He previously served as the Head of the Department of Computing and Information Technology. His research areas includes of artificial intelligence and education; advanced learning technologies; robotics (gesture control) and in using mobile devices for self-management of chronic non-communicable disease such as diabetes.

Shareeda Mohammed is an Instructor at the Department of Computing and Information Technology at the St. Augustine, Trinidad and Tobago Campus of the University of the West Indies where she has been teaching for over five years. Her research interests span the areas of data visualization, e-learning tools and techniques, and computer science education. Her most recent publication, “A Method for Creating Assessment Items for Computer Science” was presented at the 14th International Conference on Computer Science and Education (ICCSE) in Toronto, Canada in August, 2019. This paper highlighted a method for creating assessment items for undergraduate computer science courses.

JALALAUDIN KHAN

Title: The heritage of East Indian Indentured Martial arts traditions and cultural practices in Trinidad.

Abstract: West Indian East Indian Indentureship to Trinidad and Tobago brought elements of martial arts traditions and cultural practices. Three main east Indian martial arts traditions are: traditional Gatka stick-fighting (Lathi khela) practiced during Hosey and East Indian – Stick fighting in Kalinda stick fighting traditions; Wrestling (Penlwani) as an physical exercise and a community sport; and Kalaripayattu (Urumi) which may linked to East Indian “Coolie devils” of Trinidad carnival traditions. This paper seeks to present the occurrence of some of these martial arts traditions practiced in Trinidad within the context of historical perspectives of the emergence of Trinidad and Tobago as a multi-ethnic nation which has a consolidation of identities.

Biography: Jalaludin Khan is a heritage planning and sustainable development professional. He has a M.Sc. UWI Urban and Rural Planning and Development and B.Sc. UWI (Hons) Environmental and Natural Resources Management and International Relations. He has over 20 years of wide multi and inter-disciplinary experience in project and programme management for the public, private, civic society, non-government and international development sector on a number of projects. He has received distinguished national green sector awards from the Environmental Management Authority (EMA) of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago the Green Leaf Environmental Award in 2000 and the regionally Euan P. McFarlane Caribbean Regional Award in 1995 for Distinguish Caribbean & Regional Environmental Leadership Award in Environmental & Conservation Development and for Outstanding Environmental Leadership.

MARCUS KISSOON

Title: Ramleela: A Space for Empowerment; Sita's Role

Abstract: Ramleela is said to have crossed the waters during Indentureship and settle in Trinidad as East Indians came to the region in 1845. The story of the Ramleela situates Ram in a position of hero, leader, protector and his social status is dependent on his wife, Sita. Sita's story that is reproduced, maintains imagery of a supreme model of Indian woman femininity characterised by purity, love, helplessness and silence. Patricia Mohammed over three decades ago noted, "Myths have a tenacious hold on the reproduction of a culture and they provide a fundamental framework for gender identity as they are being beaten into shape by each passing generation" (1998, 393). The role of Sita can shape the ideas of contemporary Indo-Caribbean female gender identity. This study uses secondary data to highlight the imagery and narratives of Sita's performance in the Ramleela and makes recommendations to emancipate and liberate female subordination and oppression, charting new grounds whereby the Ramleela can be a space for Indo-Caribbean female empowerment and reshaping realities of Indo-Caribbean male-female relations.

Biography: Marcus Kissoon holds a Master's degree in Gender and Development Studies from the Institute for Gender and Development Studies, UWI. He is a Research Officer at the Institute for Gender and Development Studies at the University of the West Indies. His core work focuses on gender, child sexual abuse, and HIV as well as other forms of gender-based violence. He is an adjunct lecturer at the UWI. Kissoon is a recipient of a National Youth Award Trinidad and Tobago (2012) and Recipient of the Commonwealth Youth Award for Excellence in Development Work (2015). He has worked on state policies such as the National Youth Policy, National Gender Policy and the Domestic Violence Act. He contributes to civil society organizations such as the Rape Crisis Society of Trinidad and Tobago, The Coalition Against Domestic Violence (CADV), etc.

BINA MAKHAN

Title: Strong daughters of Hindostani Indentured Labourers: A tribute to my Nani Jagdei

Abstract: Oral history and personal accounts have become important sources of history writing in the present times. My paper is a narration, as a granddaughter, about my maternal grandmother (Nani), who was the daughter of indentured labourer couple in Suriname. The Indentured labourers who migrated to Suriname were stringently selected and those who survived the journey and hard work on the plantation were survivors. They passed their skills to their children. And some daughters became very successful in Suriname, for example my maternal grandmother.

My nani, whose name was Jagdei, was born on 1 July 1915 in Suriname. Her father was wanted for his obstructive behaviour as a panchayat leader, and her mother was a widow; hence they decided to emigrate from India to Suriname. When Jagdei was nine years old, she was given away for taking care of the grandparents of my maternal grandfather. Jagdei was very fond of reading the Ramayan and looked after the wellbeing of every member of the household. At the same time, she was the one who ruled the estate and made the calculations of the profits. She practiced the supernatural healing and sang in 'bhaitak gana' groups. Jagdei treated her daughters and daughters-in-law very well, laughed and joked with them, and got a lot of respect in return.

Challenging the established patriarchal norms, Jagdei allowed her daughters to go to school and sent four of five of her daughters to The Netherlands. These daughters saw the harsh lives that the wives of Hindostani men had in Suriname and chose Dutch husbands instead refusing to return to Suriname. Jagdei did not discriminate girls against boys. She often travelled alone and managed to find her way even when she did not speak Dutch or any other foreign language. Jagdei passed away at the age of 76 years old in The Netherlands. This paper is an ode to the illustrious life and successes of Jagdei.

Biography: Binarai Makhan is currently an Urban Planner working as a Civil Servant at the Provincial Government of North-Holland. She was born in Suriname and emigrated to The Netherlands and studied at the University of Amsterdam. She has a Bachelor degree in Political Science and a Master degree in Urban and Regional Planning. She is a former Economics teacher college level. She did research on prevention of abortion and on poverty among young Surinamese women, in particular Hindostani women.

SHAZIA KHAN

Title: Women and their Mutilated bodies: Voices of female workers in plantation with reference to Gaitra Bahadur's Coolie Woman: The Odyssey of Indenture

Abstract: With the abolition of slavery in 1838 came a storm of distress, and this intensified concern for labour, was referred as West Indian labour question. Evolution of wage labour, self-reliance, efforts to limit African ex-slaves and an aggregate distress for the rise of Afro-peasantry against the British plantation, fluctuation in the income flowing from the sugar industry and importation of cheap labour from China and India as a substitute to African slaves were few key characteristics with which this period was marked with barbarism was at its peak as African ex-slaves withdrew themselves from the plantation and initiated their own set up. But there was a distress among the East Indian labourers or coolies as it became necessary to bound them to the plantation. In this innovative labour management, Indian women were assessed as problem, as for planters they seem to be a liabilities. Another thought followed by this was that women possess a substandard capacity for the work that is required on plantation labour. This stereotypical mentality was the reason for women being assigned for low wages.

As time passed and the scarcity of labourers increased, women's sexuality became the main issue of concern for the plantation authority and officials. It was to stabilize the downfall of plantation income and also to generate a league of labour from one contract. Yet there were confinement and limitations for women to a particular set of social relationships. Disparity in wages based on gender pushed indentured women in debts of traders and local grocers, and worst was that their ration money was deducted from their already less wage. This problem of low wages and more work made Indian women all the more dependent on Indian men both in terms of economic and social terms. If coolies were considered as outcast then coolie women were considered as underdog. The question of respectability for women was out of context during indenture. The period of 1865 to 1870 witnessed a wide number of wife murders among coolies. Women were murdered ruthlessly and violently at the hands of their own husband, lover or any other men who had one sided interest in any women. Moreover, they were casted as whore and morally defected.

As far as culture is concerned whenever there is a cultural change women are expected to keep up the cultural values and morals high, no matter whether the outside community accept it or not. It is very unfortunate to witness that Indian femininity holds a very doomed position in the colonial society. This paper majorly focuses on the unheard voices of coolie woman in plantation those who travelled seven sea in search of job and financial assistance, but how the whole reality turned upside down and situation became more adverse and intolerable in host land. Moreover, this paper discusses the categorisation and disfigurement of their Identity and body, as it explores and accounts each and every incidence from domestic violence to misogyny to slaughtering of women. The main focus of this paper will be on the lives of women migrants and their suffering that have been multifaceted during colonial indenture with reference to Gaitra Bahadur's Coolie Woman: The Odyssey of Indenture.

Biography: Shazia Khan currently works as a Doctoral candidate at Centre for the study of Indian Diaspora, School of Social Sciences, University of Hyderabad. She completed her Masters in Philosophy at the same institution. She obtained her Bachelors in English (B.A Hons) and Masters

in English (M.A) from The English and Foreign Languages University, Lucknow. With 5 years of research experience, she has participated and presented research papers in many national and international seminars and conference. Her current research focuses on development and evolution of Indian music in the Caribbean, all from the perspective of diasporic studies.

NISHA RAMRACHA

Title: Hindu Warrior Queens: Decolonising historical narratives and reshaping the perspective of West Indian women through their history.

Abstract: The global Indian diaspora rarely pays attention to the importance of history and archaeology. Throughout the past decades of the post-independence era, India's history has been written and controlled by academics with a colonial anti-Hindu agenda using very narrow perspectives concerning the native belief systems. History has been used as a tool for suppression and control. One of the areas of history of the Indian subcontinent that has been hidden is the history of India's Hindu warrior queens. These women controlled matriarchal kingdoms, raised armies, had elite female infantry units, fought on the battlefields with the Mughals, Portuguese, British and many others, and won. Hindu warrior queens began to fight the colonisers long before any of its kings and long before any other male revolutionaries. In fact, it can be argued it was Hindu warrior queens who began to fight for India's independence preceding their male counterparts. The environment created by an ancient pagan religion like Hinduism paved the way for such women to be nurtured within its society surprising many an invader. In the West Indies we have subconsciously adopted much of this dominant constructed colonial perspective on India without critically analysing it.

In the post-indentureship period West Indian women of the Indian diaspora, especially the Hindus, have been portrayed mostly as members of an uneducated, illiterate and abused section of a patriarchal society who are subservient to their men, and who can only be uplifted by western feminist ideals. However, a thorough understanding of their own history can bring tremendous confidence in their identity and empower them as Hindu women on a Hindu foundation, given a proper understanding of powerful female characters who can reshape their confidence and be a powerful antidote to colonial intentions. This paper shall address the multiplicity of functions such studies will bring to the Indian diaspora women such as development of a positive identity, fortitude, resoluteness, and a constructive perception of ourselves through history. It shall also address the crucial role of Hinduism in shaping such fierce women and give examples of a few Hindu warrior queens and their contributions.

Biography: Nisha Ramracha is a classical archaeologist from New York City (originally from Trinidad and Tobago). She has an A.S. in Science, a B.A. in Classical Archaeology/Religion with minors in Latin, Greek and German. She has an M.A. in Archaeology of the Classical/Late Antiquity/Islamic Worlds from New York University. She was a fellow at the American Numismatics Society. She has presented at conferences in the USA, Suriname and Trinidad and Tobago. She previously excavated in the archaeological digs of Getae, Roman and Byzantine Forts/Settlements in Romania and a member of the prestigious Greek and Latin Honor Society Eta Sigma Phi and Phi Beta Kappa.

CHAN CHOENNI

Title: Revival of honourability among Hindostani women in Suriname

Abstract: Between 1873 and 1916 more than 34,000 Indentured Indian labourers arrived in Suriname. Less than one third were females; that was in accordance with the required ratio of 40 women to 100 men (28, 6%) leaving India. Also some 3,000 Indians from neighbouring Caribbean Colonies settled in Suriname; most were men. Among the 12,000 Hindostani who returned to India were relatively more men than women. Few Hindostani men then married or had sexual relations with women of other ethnic groups. Despite the shortage of Indian women the Indian population, labelled as Hindostanis in Suriname, increased rapidly. Not only compared to the Indian groups in other Colonies but also compared to other ethnic groups in Suriname. Because the absolute numbers of Hindostanis were small intermarriage between the various castes but also between Hindus and Muslims was normal. Moreover, older men married young women; the parents of these young women were financially compensated. Almost all widows and so-called 'destitute' women who emigrated to Suriname had (new) relationships and bore children; some even had multiple partners.

However, many Indentured Hindostani women were threefold overloaded. They worked on the land or had jobs to earn money, they took care of their spouse and children and also did the housework. The shortage of Hindostani women resulted in a better bargaining position vis-a-vis the Hindostani men. Many became mater familias (matriarchs). Honourability ('izzat') was not important for them, but interestingly they promoted honourability of their (grand) daughters and they were stringent on their behaviour in public. While at the same time these matriarchs interacted with other men; many drank alcohol and smoked (some even the drug ganja) and danced; some played music, i.e. not behaving 'izzatdar' (honourable). The revival of honourability started in 1930s in Suriname along with foundation of national religious organisations and a more balanced men-women rate. Is the trend of revival of honourability also detectable in other Indentured Indian Diaspora countries or is this unique to Suriname?

Biography: Chandersen E.S. Choenni was born in 1953 in Paramaribo, Suriname. In 1972 he emigrated to The Netherlands and studied Political Science and Science of Philosophy at the University of Amsterdam. He holds a PhD in Social Sciences from the University of Utrecht. He was an Advisor for the Dutch government in various Ministries and specialized on Integration policy for ethnic minorities. He has published about racism, discrimination, integration policy, *Vedic Dharma*, Surinamers and in particular about Hindostanis in the Indentured Indian Diaspora. He was appointed as professor at the VU University of Amsterdam on the Lalla Rookh Chair in 2010.

PRIMNATH GOOPTAR

Title: Ranjit Kumar's Hindu Maha Sabha and the Quest for Hindu Unity in Trinidad in the 1940s.

Abstract: Ranjit Kumar came to Trinidad with the first Indian movie in 1935. He was a cultured and sincere immigrant who, by the 1939, became so involved with the betterment of the people of Trinidad & Tobago that he became one of them. He was a learned but practical person who was capable of expounding his learning to others, applying his knowledge to the development of a solution and demonstrating the feasibility of his suggestion. His vision was years ahead of his time.

This paper traces the work of Ranjit Kumar during the period 1939-41 when he sought to bring unity among the warring factions in the Hindu community by forming the Hindu Maha Sabha (of Trinidad) and linking it to the parent organization of the same name in India. It is set against the colonial backdrop of Britain as rulers of India and Trinidad and Tobago and tells the story of a man struggling to bring unity among the Hindus in the country. In the early 1930's two Hindu Sanatanist Organizations applied to the colonial government for recognition as Education boards of

management for Sanatanist Hindu schools in Trinidad. The colonial government refused the request and indicated it could only grant school building management status to one organization. Under the circumstances the organizations were requested to work out some sort of accommodation. Neither of the organizations was willing to compromise and rank disunity became the order of the day among the Sanatanist Hindus.

Biography: Primmnath Gooptar is a writer, biographer, social worker, cultural promoter, former school principal, Hindi film scholar and lecturer in Indian Cinema, UWI. He has presented several papers on the Indian indentureship experience at several conferences in countries such as Trinidad, Guyana, Suriname, Mauritius, St. Vincent and India. He has also chaired several local and International Conferences on the subject matter

NIVEDITA MISRA

Title: The (His)Story of IBIS: A Reading of Amitav Ghosh's Sea of Poppies, River of Smoke and Flood of Fire.

Abstract: Colonial and postcolonial theory has given very little space to the economics that governed the colonial enterprise. Intermittently, people have written on the economic aspects that gave rise to enslavement of the Africans and the Indians among many other Asian and European populations being indentured to the Caribbean and elsewhere. It was primarily economic concerns that led to the abolition of slavery and the ending of indenture practices. Two aspects that have found little expression in fiction are: "free trade" laws that overtly favoured a single colonial power, and the "balance of payments" argument, with its attendant case for reparations. In this paper, I would be reading the Ibis trilogy written by the Indian author, Amitav Ghosh, namely, Sea of Poppies, River of Smoke, and Flood of Fire. The paper will trace the journey of the fictional IBIS ship across the oceans as its ownership changes hands as does its loads. Rather than following the journey of the main protagonists, I map the journey of the ship across the ports in America, Africa, India and China, keeping in mind the economic histories of the places visited.

Biography: Nivedita Misra, graduated with her doctoral degree from the Department of Literary, Cultural and Communication Studies, The University of the West Indies, Trinidad and Tobago. She served previously as Assistant Professor, Satyawati College (E), University of Delhi, Delhi, India, having completed her B.A. (Hons) English, M. A. (English) and M. Phil (English) from the University of Delhi, India. She has published in various anthologies and peer-reviewed journals such as Journeys, South Asian Review, Transnational Literatures and Postcolonial Text.

NUTAN RAGOOBIR

Title: Bihar and Beyond: the biography of Kunj Behari (1878-1938) - creating his own space.

Abstract: For over three-quarters of a century (1845-1917), the British government transported an estimated 147,000 Indian indentured labourers from the subcontinent of India to the shores of Trinidad and Tobago. My great-grandfather Kunj Behari was one of the 540 passengers aboard the 'Grecian' that left the shores of Garden Reach in Calcutta in July 1866, to arrive on Nelson Island in Trinidad after a rigorous journey of three months. Kunj Behari was placed on Garden Estate where he served for a period of five years. Life on the estate was no bed of roses and even though the labourers were promised housing, rations and medical supplies in their package, the quality was indeed questionable. Often oppressed and dejected, yet Kunj Behari faced every challenge head on.

In the year 1901 and at the age of 23, Kunj Behari once again took a bold decision that charted the course of destiny when he refused to re-indenture himself on the established sugar cane estates and

venture deep into the forests of East Trinidad, purchasing a plot of land after saving his salary of about one hundred days. His will and determination was unmatched and so little by little, the barely literate Behari single-handedly cultivated his plot of land, eventually leading to him purchasing most of the surrounding land. Kunj Behari therefore, established an entire village in East Trinidad-Howsen Village, Coryal, creating his own space. Each of his eight sons were gifted their separate plots upon which they built their lives and established his legacy. Today his lineage has moved beyond Bihar with his descendants settling not only in Trinidad and Tobago but also in North America, England, Canada and Australia. Kunj Behari's descendants have also gone beyond agriculture, excelling in the fields of teaching, medicine, engineering, law and business, realising his dream of upward mobility.

Biography: Nutan Ragoobir is a senior insurance professional and was a recipient of a National Scholarship in the field of Mathematics by the Government of the Republic of Trinidad and Tobago in 2010. This led to Ragoobir pursuing her undergraduate studies in the field of Actuarial Science and Mathematics at the City University, London in England. Her work in the insurance industry has led to her being awarded the Associate in General Insurance designation by The Institutes. She has a Master's Degree in Hinduism from the Hindu University of America. In 2018, Ragoobir represented Trinidad and Tobago at the 47th Know India Programme and her first book entitled, 'Bihar and Beyond', exploring the lives of several indentured labourers will soon be published.

J. VIJAY MAHARAJ

Title: The ABRESS Indian: Repression, Erasure, Suppression and Suspension in Diasporic Indian Auto/Biography.

Abstract: This study examines a selection of seminal texts by an outstanding diasporic Indian to demonstrate that the work that they perform is by and large comprised of processes of repressing, erasing, suppressing, or suspending various aspects of the self in order to arrive at a coherent sense of personhood. The main writer considered is V. S. Naipaul, but through a comparatist approach the study also touches on these processes in the work of Mahatma Gandhi, R. K. Narayan, Mulk Raj Anand, Rohinton Mistry and others.

Biography: J. Vijay Maharaj is a lecturer in the Department of Literary, Cultural and Communication Studies at the University of the West Indies St Augustine. In the course of filling this role over the past two decades plus, she has developed deep expertise in one field – literacy, which includes the sub-categories of cultural and technological literacy but more importantly encompasses the traditional literacies of reading, writing, speaking and listening. Her publications and presentations try to exemplify the significance of this.

MOHAN K. GAUTAM

Title: The Role of Diasporic Life Histories and Biographies in Understanding the Settlement Pattern and Identity Formation of Indian Emigrants in Caribbean Countries

Abstract: The Indian Indenture route to the Caribbean countries was not without problems. After Mauritius the second country was British Guyana (1938). Most of the emigrants were illiterate. The Arkatis (recruiter) had orders from the British Government to recruit the industrious labourers and not the high caste literate people. The idea was that the learned people would not work hard in the plantations. The present historical documents related to the process of emigration and settlement in the countries were written from the colonial points of view. The emigrants' experiences were not discussed. Colonial administrative governments and the plantocracy used to help and promote each other. The duties of emigrants were to work hard and to accept the orders happily.

However, there were a few learned emigrants who changed their names and worked in the plantations. Some of them maintained their daily diaries and wrote the conditions of the indenture labourers without hesitation. It was easy for them because their written language was not known to the plantation administrative staff. The literate emigrants were not many. Either they wrote personally or told their their experiences to the next generation. In Suriname Munshi Rahman was one of the emigrants who maintained his diaries. Later in 1940s he renamed them as his autobiography. In Fiji Totaram Sanadya wrote his experiences of 21 years. In South Africa Bhawani Dayal Sanyasi wrote his autobiography. In Cuba an Indian emigrant Jagdish from Delhi told his experiences which were recorded by his friends. It was the scientific idea to learn the immigrants history through their life histories. Boas (1907), Malinowski (1932), Radcliffe-Brown (1933), and other scholars of Chicago school emphasised on the narratives of the life histories. Similarly Thomas and Zannieck (1927) published 4 volumes on the life histories of Polish immigrants to United States of America. The narratives of life histories have to seen under the subaltern study. Such a history will illuminate the indenture labour route and give better image of the emigrants

Biography: Mohan Guatam is currently Honorary President & Chancellor of the European University of West & East. He is the Director of the PIO Institute (EUWC) and the International Status Chairman of the International Scientific Commission on Museums and Cultural Heritage (COMACH) of the International Union of Anthropological and Enthnological Sciences(IUAES. He is the President of the International Overseas South Asian Association (IOSAA) and the International Forum on Hindu Studies (NHI). He had received many national and international recognition. His areas of specialization include Social, Cultural and Structural Anthropology, Sociology of Asia, Indology, South Asian Literature, and New India-Aryan Languages and Literature, amongst others.

SALLY RADFORD

Title: Pioneers to Professors

Abstract: This presentation looks at ten examples of female intellectual superiority among the diaspora that crossed two oceans from India to the West Indies, role models for the next generation to rise above their humble origins. From Astronomy to Zoology, women of the Indian diaspora have broken barriers and risen to the top of their professions. This paper looks at women such as Dr Joanne Sewlal, Dr Shirin Haque, Professor Neela Badrie, Dr Judith Gobin, Dr Rohanie Maharaj, Dr Michelle Mycoo, Dr Joan Lutchman, Anita Gajadhar Mala Baliraj Dass and Sharda Mohan Soomai.

Biography: Sally Rampersad Radford obtained her PhD from London University and her research topic was the marine geology around Tobago. She was a Texaco scholar at the University of the West Indies, Mona Campus where she was awarded the Bachelor of Science in Geology. She is an Academic and Professional Fellow of The Caribbean Academy of Sciences, Member of GSTT, AAPG and co-founder of UWI Petroleum Geoscience degree. She was a lecturer at the London University, Kingston University London and UK Open University. She is a past editor of the World Petroleum Congress. She has over twenty original publications, reviews, collaboration and presentations. She is affiliated with the Indian Women Group Trinidad, UK Women's India Association, UK Women's Council and UWI DCFA Indian Ensemble.

S. S. SOMRA

Title: Indian Diaspora: Ethnicity Factors and Environment of Global Migration

Abstract: Diasporas can play an important role in the economic development of their countries of origin. Beyond their well-known role as senders of remittances, Diasporas can also promote trade and foreign direct investment, create businesses and spur entrepreneurship, and transfer new knowledge and skills. Migration is a global phenomenon caused not only by economic factors, but also by social, political, cultural, environmental, health, education and transportation factors. The global flow of labour and the consequent presence of numerous Diasporas is a notable feature of contemporary politics and economics. It commonly takes place because of the push factor of less opportunity in the socio-economic situation and also because of pull factors that exist in more developed areas. In this study, push and pull factors of migration are studied and inferences are made based on sample migrants. Subjects also were dissatisfied with public transportation of their previous location and a lack of safety in previous places. The significant factor is better environment, which includes moving because of dislike of cultural or recreational facilities and the behaviour of a neighbour.

Indians have a long history of migration to many parts of world. During the mid-sixteenth century people from Punjab, Rajasthan, Gujarat and cities of Delhi, Allahabad and Bombay migrated to Central Asia, the Caucasus and Russia. During the British rule in India many Indians made short trips to England and European countries. When India got her Independence Indians migrated to European countries mostly either for higher education or learning industrial know-how. They did not stay permanently. Those who stayed always kept regular contacts with their families in India. After World War II the European countries developed into a multi-lingual, multi-cultural and multi-religious society. Indians also became a part of the European canvas. The issue of ethnicity and identity formation in Europe is evaluated and some proposals are put forward for the way in which India and the Indian Diaspora can work together. The climate change will shape the future of global migration are continuously being made in academia as well as popular and policy circles.

This paper highlights some of the conceptual and methodological flaws that recur in many of terminology is often confused, with concepts such as environment and climate, change and variability being conflated. In this context, mobility can be a successful coping mechanism, potentially reducing environmental stress. The paper criticizes the use of static push-pull frameworks which suggest that migrants are being ‘pushed out’ of marginal and degraded environments, neglecting the intertwined environmental, political, economic and cultural factors. In conclusion, the paper calls for more open research that explores the complex inter-relationship between environmental factors and mobility rather than starting from the assumption of a simplistic causal relationship.

Biography: S. S. Somra is the Head, Department of Economics, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur. His teaching and research interests include Development Economics, Indian Economics, Econometrics and Mathematical Economics. He is life member of Indian Economic Association (IEA), The Indian Econometric Society (TIES) and the Rajasthan Economic Association (REA) amongst others. He is the Convener of Board of Studies in Rajasthan University. In March, 2020 he received the G. D. Birla award from the UCO Bank. Dr. Somra has won the first prize from World Bank (2006) in the series of James D. Wolfensohn essay competition promoting peer group dialogue in South Asia.

DOOLARCHAN HANOMANSINGH

Title: A historical review of the Indian media in Trinidad

Abstract: In recent years there has been a rise in the ownership and operation of media houses by Indians. This phenomenon is compounded with the rise of social media and radio talk shows where Indians articulate their views on issues of the day. Through these media Indians are becoming more determined and embolden to stand up for their rights.

The first Indian newspaper was the Indian Ko-hi-nor Gazette. Started in 1897, this paper lasted only seven months. The same can be said for others that came after. The lack of cooperation was a major reason why newspapers failed. However, two papers that lasted for more than two decades-The Indian and the Indian Opinion- had committed editors and several competent individuals cooperating and working together. The editorial committees of these newspapers were not afraid to confront social issues affecting the Indian community. In the eyes of the readership, they were echoing the sentiments of the community fearlessly.

Between the mid-1970s and until the 1990s several magazines and pamphlets were published to commemorate religious festivals and articulate social and cultural activities. Among these were Mukdar, Indian Review, Indian Revival and Reform Association, Tribune, Sandesh, Patriot and Jagriti among others. These media did not survive for several reasons including shortage of finance and few committed individuals willing to work cooperatively. ICDN, Indo-Caribbean Diaspora News recently celebrated its third anniversary. Its birth and survival was not without it many challenges. It has several fathers looking after it without any single one willing to claim paternity.

Biography: Doolarchan Hanomansingh, B. A. (Hons) has authored several biographies including Doon Pandit, Abracadabra and Profiles of Nation Builders. He, along with others started ICDN.TODAY, an online paper and ICDN ZOOM, aired every Sunday evening. He has worked with Hindu Jawaan Sangh, Maha Sabha Youth Arm, Hindu Seva Sangh, Williamsville Festivals Committee and the Sundar Popo Monument Committee.

KIRTIE ALGOE

Title: Religion & Healing in Suriname: A case study of foreign Vedic astrologers

Abstract: The religious landscape in Suriname is remarkable with its high religious diversity ranking. It takes the first place in the Caribbean – Latin American region and the fourth in the world (Pew Research, 2014). The large religious diversity creates a great ‘market’ for religious benefits including healing practices. Some of these practices are familiar to local people, but others are not. In the past few years Suriname has experienced a large growth of media ads about Vedic astrologers from India. The Vedic astrology, part of Hinduism, includes encrypted knowledge about humanity which can be decoded and used by an astrologer for one’s welfare and wellbeing. The Indian Vedic astrologers are promoted as magicians who heal all types of problems with 100% guarantee. However, little is discussed at public and scholarly platforms about their contribution to the society and relationship with the existing ‘religious market’.

The paper seeks to share Surinamese experiences with religious healing practices in particular with Indian Vedic astrologers. To do so, the concept of religiosity and the interaction between religion and medicine academic disciplines are used. It is a first attempt to address the background, working conditions, networks, strategies, and (policy) implications of Indian astrologers in Suriname for in particular the Hindu community. Data are collected using interviews, personal observations, and analyses of testimonials of clients. Preliminary data analyses show that people, both Hindus and

non-Hindus, consult Indian Vedic astrologers. The experiences vary. Some have received help from the ‘luck vendors’, while others have been manipulated.

Biography: Kirtie Algae holds a Bachelor’s degree in Sociology (2007) and a Master’s degree in Development and Policy (2011) at the Anton de Kom University of Suriname. She finished her dissertation on interreligious relations in Suriname and Guyana in 2017. Her main publications are on religious diversity. At present she is elaborating on qualitative methodology and philosophy of science, and sports. She works at the Institute for Graduate Studies and Research, Anton de Kom University of Suriname Algae combines her academic career with sports; she is a board member of the Suriname Olympic Committee. She has launched campaigns on gender and sport and safeguarding athletes.

LINGUISTICS ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

Topic: Developing a Universal Roman Orthography for Girit Varieties of Hindustani

Abstract: Upon completion of their indenture, the Giritiyas had the choice to either travel back to India or to settle in the diasporas. A sizeable proportion of the Giritiyas chose to start a new life in the diasporas, marking the beginnings of the Indian Girit Diasporic communities today. For the Giritiyas, indenture meant cultural and linguistic accommodation to the new environment. The languages spoken within the Girit diaspora are a testimony to the shared global Girit heritage. It is within this context that this Roundtable for the Universal Roman Codification of Girit Hindustani is proposed, as a recognition of the historical significance of the global movement of people through indenture.

This proposal acknowledges prior efforts at the development of a Romanized orthography for individual varieties of Girit Hindi. In Suriname, Jnan Adhin, Motilal Marhé, Theo Damsteegt, and Jit Narain have played significant roles in the promotion of a Roman code for Sarnami Hindustani phonology and the documentation of Sarnami Hindustani grammar. In addition, linguists, such as Raymond Pillai (1975) and Jeff Siegel (1987), have proposed phonetic scripts for Fiji Hindi, and Rajend Mesthrie (1992) has used a similar script in describing Bhojpuri Hindi in South Africa. The lack of consensus on a Roman orthography has also seen writers in the diasporas, such as Fiji increasingly creating their own variants of the Roman script, indicating an increased desire among the general public for both reading Fiji Hindi, and reading Fiji Hindi in the Roman orthography. It is hoped that this roundtable discussion would clarify motivations for this project and their aims in the different territories; lead to the development of an inventory of current practice in writing Girit Hindustani and assess the options available in Roman script.

Biography: Visham Bhimull is an independent research on the Caribbean Hindustani language, specifically Trinidad Bhojpuri. He is an official Hindi/Urdu interpreter and translator. He is a medical doctor and cultural activist.

Rajend Mesthrie is Professor of Linguistics at the University of Cape Town where he teaches Sociolinguistics, including language contact and variation. He was head of the Linguistics Section (1998 – 2009), and currently holds an NRF research chair in migration, language, and social change. He was President of the Linguistics Society of Southern Africa (2002-9) and of the International Congress of Linguists (2013-18). He is a past co-editor of *English Today* (2008-2012). Amongst his book publications are *Language in Indenture: a Sociolinguistic history of Bhojpuri-Hindi in South Africa* (Routledge 1992, reprint 2019); *Introducing Sociolinguistics* (with Swann, Deumert & Leap, 2009), *Language in South Africa* (ed., 2002) and *A Dictionary of South African Indian English* (2010).

Moti Marhé studied Dutch linguistics and literature, Hindi and Sanskrit at Leiden University. As a graduation assignment, he researched his native Sarnami language and described the first Sarnami grammar, Sarnami Byakaran, in Dutch language. He followed his guru Dr. Jan Adhin in realizing the current official Sarnami Roman orthography in Suriname. He is the founder of the Sarnami Emancipation Movement that he started in 1971 in Leiden. Since then he has been working as a Sarnami activist in order to make its speakers love and become aware of the beauty of their mother tongue and the related folk cultures and history.

Maurits S. Hassankhan is former Head of the History Department of the Anton de Kom University of Suriname (AdeKUS). He is the current Vice President of the Indentured Labour Route Project. His research interests are in the field of indentured labour, migration, diaspora and ethnic relations. He has published on above mentioned topics and on Indian Muslims in the Indian diaspora. He is co-author of databases of Indian, Chinese and Indonesian indentured labourers in Suriname. He has been the coordinator of the Surinamese part of the international *Bidesia project*. For his work in the field of history he received an honorary doctorate from the AdeKUS.

Preetema Jong-A-Lock Pahladsingh is a Surinamese linguist specialising in the Sarnámi language. Dr Pahladsingh is currently a University teacher and the Director of Confucius Institute at Anton de Kom University of Suriname. Dr Pahladsingh's current research is on the regional differences in the Sarnámi language. Two projects are: the difference between Sarnámi in Paramaribo and that in Nickerie. The differences in the Sarnámi language between Sarnámi in Paramaribo and that in Commewijne and between Sarnámi in Commewijne and that in Nickerie.

Jennifer Khan-Janif is a Sociologist and Community Development Practitioner who is originally from Fiji and is based in New Zealand. Her area of interest includes ethnic minority rights, community development, gender violence and women rights. She is particularly interested in the link between the wellbeing of communities and the social, cultural and economic factors underpinning them.

Farzana Gounder is a linguist and Deputy Head of School (Research) at IPU New Zealand Tertiary Institute. Dr Gounder's research interests draw on her indenture heritage and she has extensively examined life stories of indenture and their role in collective memory formation. In her book *Indentured Identities: Resistance and Accommodation in Plantation-Era Fiji* (2011), Dr Gounder used a Fiji Hindi Roman script to transcribe indentured labourers' life stories. She is also the co-editor of the forthcoming volumes *Women, Gender and the Legacy of Slavery and Indenture* and *Social Aspects of Health, Medicine and Diseases*.

Rabin S. Baldewsingh is former Deputy-Mayor of the City of The Hague, the International City of Peace and Justice in The Netherlands. He has been a member of the Dutch Labour Party since 1986 and served as a member of The Hague Municipal Council from 1998-2006. He is strongly in favour of an inclusive society by building bridges towards all ethnic communities, and focussing on their strength and capacities rather than focussing on the colour of the skin. He is also known as a writer and poet and has written several books. His dictionary of the Sarnámi Bhojpuri language will be published soon. In 2014, he was awarded the Parwasi Bhartiya Samman (PBD Awardee) by the Indian government for his achievements for the Indian diaspora in The Netherlands, the first Surinamese Indian in The Netherlands to be bestowed with this prestigious award.

Nazreen Shaban is a fourth generation Fiji-born Indian who has been in New Zealand since 2003. She has worked in various roles from teaching to being a Senior Advisor for migrants and refugees at Ministry of Education in supporting, educating, and working with diverse communities. Nazreen currently works as a Senior Librarian for Children and Youth at a Special formats Youth Library at Blind Low Vision New Zealand. She graduated from the University of the South Pacific, Fiji with a

Bachelor of Arts with double majors in Journalism and Literature Language and has a post graduate Diploma in Secondary Teaching from Auckland College of Education, New Zealand.

Rajendra Prasad teaches Linguistics at University of the South Pacific. Currently he is doing his PhD in Linguistics which is documenting the verb construction of Fiji Baat. He has presented papers on girmit and language in Mauritius and two girmit conferences in Fiji. Recently his two papers on language issues in Fiji relating to Fiji Baat have been accepted by two academic journals for publication. He has also contributed 2 book chapters on language teaching. In addition, Rajen takes keen interest in Ramayan recitals and public speaking.

Jeff Siegel is Emeritus Professor in Linguistics at the University of New England in Australia. His main area of research has been on language contact, concentrating on the origins of pidgins, creoles and new dialects (such as Fiji Hindi), and on the use of these varieties in formal education. Recently, he has changed his focus to language documentation, working on Nama, a Papuan language of southern New Guinea.

Nikhat Shameem has a PhD in Applied Linguistics from Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand and an MBA from the University of Cumbria. She produced and directed the first Fiji Hindi play *Adhura Sapna* (1993) in Wellington, New Zealand. She has published in Sport, Landfall, Mana, Pub Poets, and Just Another Art Movement among other collected works. She is a strong advocate of Fiji Hindi, her heritage language, and has published a number of articles on its status, future, preservation and development of a standardized orthography. She believes there is a continued and urgent need for research based interventions to maintain, standardize and promote the language for the continued enjoyment of our future generations.

HEALTH ROUND TABLE DISCUSSION

Title: Cause and response to inequalities in the indentured labour diaspora: The CARE framework for comparative Analysis

Abstract: Adverse health conditions were significant factors behind Indian migration in the nineteenth and early-twentieth centuries. A combination of social, environmental, and economic factors, led to poor harvest, loss of income and famine. These, in turn, led to poor health outcomes for the villagers. The push of such adverse conditions led to individuals migrating from their home villages to bigger towns and cities in pursuit of work. There, they met arkhatis and other recruiters, who offered contracts to work in countries such as Assam, Burma, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, the Caribbean, South Africa and Fiji. For many individuals who agreed to be indentured, the contracts appeared to offer an improvement in their living and working conditions, and subsequent health outcomes. The contracts stated free housing, drinking water, free medical treatment and ration for the first three to six months. In addition, the wages for a full day's work seemed very attractive. The contracts also stated that the labourers could either return to India upon completion of their contracts or to settle in the overseas colonies as permanent citizens. upon completion of their indenture, some returned to India, but the vast majority settled in the colonies, producing the girmit diasporas of today.

This discussion examines continuities and discontinuities in the health outcomes of the Indian diaspora from indenture into post-indentured societies. It looks at health outcomes in India versus the plantations. It compares the social and economic structures on the colonial plantations with the social and economic structures in India and the resultant health outcomes on the plantations and in India. It discusses the indenture versus post-indenture –health outcomes on plantations versus post-indentured settlement.

Biography: **Farzana Gounder** is a linguist and Deputy Head of School (Research) at IPU New Zealand Tertiary Institute. Dr Gounder's research interests draw on her indenture heritage and she has extensively examined oral narratives of indenture and their role in collective memory formation. Her current research lies at the intersection of indenture studies and the sociology of health. She is the author of *Indentured Identities: Resistance and Accommodation in Plantation-Era Fiji* (2011), and co-editor of the forthcoming volumes *Women, Gender and the Legacy of Slavery and Indenture* and *Social Aspects of Health, Medicine and Diseases*.

Maurits S. Hassankhan is a former Head of the History Department of the Anton de Kom University of Suriname (AdeKUS). He is the current Vice President of the Indentured Labour Route Project. His research interests are in the field of indentured labour, migration, diaspora and ethnic relations. He has published on above mentioned topics and on Indian Muslims in the Indian diaspora. He is co-author of databases of Indian, Chinese and Indonesian indentured labourers in Suriname. He has been the coordinator of the Surinamese part of the international *Bidesia project*. For his work in the field of history, he received an honorary doctorate from the AdeKUS.

Satyendra Peerthum is a Historian at the Research Unit of the Aapravasi Ghat Trust Fund (AGTF) which manages the Aapravasi Ghat World Heritage Site in Port Louis, Republic of Mauritius. He is responsible of the Documentation Unit of AGTF and is a member of the Secretariat for the Indenture Labour Route project. He is also member of the La Reunion Scientific Committee on Indentured Labour and the University of Nantes Research Group on Indenture and the Indian Ocean World. He is also a part-time lecturer in history at the University of Mauritius and a Mauritian writer. Over the past twenty years, he has specialized in the study of indentured labour, slavery, Liberated Africans, maroonage, vagrancy, non-Indian indentured workers, colonial prisons, comparative and quantitative history, sugar estates, wage labour, the Mauritian working class and cultural heritage issues in Mauritius.

Jane Buckingham is Associate Professor of History at the University of Canterbury, Christchurch, New Zealand and has published on histories of disability, health, law and disease in India and the Pacific. Her research interests include the history of medicine, health, civil and criminal law, histories of disability; history of mission, especially medical mission; history of welfare, charity, and philanthropy and histories of indentured labour and migration. She is a co-editor of the forthcoming volume *Social Aspects of health, Medicine and Disease in the Colonial and Post-Colonial Era* published with Manohar, New Delhi.

Neil Sharma has 43 years of Clinical and Health Management experience. He is a practising specialist in Obstetrics and Gynaecology, and Family Medicine / General Practice. His research interests include Healthcare and Management. He is a medical writer and correspondent having served as inaugural Editor of the Fiji General Practitioners spanning 15 years. He is currently a health columnist for Fiji Plus, an intermittent opinion columnist for Fiji Times, and producer and anchor on FBC Wellness issues: 13-part series in Season One-2017-18. He served as Health Minister of Fiji (2009 to 2014). He is currently undertaking Diplomacy and International Relations PG studies at University of the South Pacific, Suva, Fiji.

Lomarsh Roopnarine, from Guyana, is Professor of Caribbean and Global Studies at Jackson State University in the U.S. Dr. Roopnarine has been researching and writing on the Indo-Caribbean experience for about three decades. He has published three books and over three dozen articles on the aforesaid theme in peer-reviewed publication presses across the globe. Dr. Roopnarine's recent book *Indian Caribbean: Migration and identity in the Diaspora* is the 2018 recipient of The Caribbean Studies Association (CSA) Gordon K. & Sybil Lewis Book Award.

FILM SCREENING

Film: “Ganga Dhaara: Sacred Spaces”

Producers: Perry Polar and Sharda Patassar

Abstract: "Ganga Dhaara: Sacred Spaces" was inspired by Ganga Dussehra, a Hindu festival which commemorates the descent of the Ganges River from Heaven to Earth. A one-day pilgrimage of Hindus to the Marianne River along the north coast of Trinidad is venerated as a “local manifestation of the Ganges in India” thus, making a place for Ganga (the river goddess) in a subaltern Trinidad. The commemoration of this river festival was introduced by Ravindranath Maraj also known as Raviji and others in 1993.

This film portrays in part the growing patriotism and social and environmental consciousness of Raviji as a political-actor who founded the Ganga Dhaara festival. The viewer is taken on the journey through aspects of the festival rituals and rites or associated activities with the story being told by way of a primary narrator. Issues of inheritance and continuity and religious and cultural retention in the context of modernisation is featured. The importance of ‘space’ and how space is constituted, shared, used and made sacred is explored. Attendees at the pilgrimage draw attention to how deeper philosophical and cosmological beliefs echo in other religious systems. In that regard, similarities in viewpoints with the Trinidad Orisha, a syncretic religion of Caribbean Origin originally from West Africa, are also explored.

While the film concerns itself with at the outset with the cultural production of a religious/spiritual identity(ies) through the lens of a Hindu festival, it also examines how experiences in a particular space can create positive behavior in other spaces when ideas and behavior intersect. Through religious/spiritual and festival performativity by which social action can influence social change, the film ask us to reflect on what can we learn from sacred spaces that can help us care for public and private spaces in the secular world?

Biography: Perry Polar holds a PhD from The University of the West Indies (UWI). He has worked extensively in several areas including agriculture, environment, and the urban sector. In one of his urban sector projects, he was involved in the production of the film ‘City on the Hill’ which examined leveraging built and cultural heritage in East Port of Spain, Trinidad. He is currently engaging in film-making examining the relationship between culture and development.

Sharda Patasar is a freelance musician and researcher and writes a weekly column on arts and culture for the Trinidad and Tobago Newsday. Her main academic interests are folk music cultures, religion and religious iconography. As a musician, she has given concerts at home and abroad. She has also worked on soundtracks for two local films, *Coolie Pink and Green* (2009) as musical director. Her most recent work is a joint production with GISL Channel 4, where she served as Producer along with photographer Nyla Singh, and Music Director for the documentary “Voices of a Century” (2017), brief oral histories of six East Indian centenarians.

Film: Brown Lives Matter: Overcoming the horrors of indentureship

Producer: Jerome Teelucksingh

Abstract: This documentary will examine the challenges faced by the indentured labourers. There will be an overview of the recruitment process, trip across the kala pani and the adjustment process in the Caribbean. Some of the colonies to be highlighted will include British Guiana, Trinidad, Jamaica and Grenada will be featured. The documentary is approximately 30 minutes and will include photographs, brief interviews and music.

Biography: Jerome Teelucksingh is a lecturer in the Department of History at the University of the West Indies. His recent academic publications include *Beyond the Legacy of the Missionaries and East Indians* (2019) and *Labour and the Decolonization Struggle in Trinidad and Tobago* (2015). He has published chapters and journal articles on Indo-Caribbean migrants in North America and England. In 2013, he produced a documentary entitled "Changing Culture: Views of Ramleela in Trinidad". He has presented papers at academic conferences on Indo-Trinidadian personalities such as Adrian Cola Rienzi and Dr. Rudranath Capildeo and assisted in the compilation of the 'Hall of Pioneers' brochure for the National Council of Indian Culture.

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