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Eastern Region

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MONASH University

Call for Papers

3rd International Conference of IASA, Eastern Region

Borders and Beyond: Cultural Transactions between Australia and India

22 January- 25 January 2013, Kolkata

Keynote Speaker:

Professor Bruce Charles Scates (Monash University)

In a transnational, globalised world order, it is important to examine how cartographically distant places/sites may have significant contact zones which may define and interrogate various forms of cultural, social, commercial and political issues.

In the Indian post-independence period (1947--), socio-cultural linkages between the two countries come to be diminished due to the lack of an appropriate foreign policy. Australia's White Australia Policy considerably distanced the Indian Government and generated a sense of distrust. Australia was also largely governed by its Eurocentric foreign policy. After the Second World War, Australia's gradual alignment with the US, especially during the Cold War period, and India's alignment with Russia and China (till the Chinese aggression in 1962) naturally alienated the two countries. But in 1990s, especially in the post-Cold War period there begins a considerable development in the strategic relationship between Australia and India.

In the 90s of the last century, there has been significant re-thinking on Australia's relationship with India. Meg Gurry (*Australia's Neglected Neighbour*, Griffith University, 1996), Mark McGillivray & Gary Smith (*Australia and Asia*, OUP, Melbourne, 1997), and the South



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Asian Studies Group (*National Strategy for the Study of India and Indian Languages* , 1991) were particularly focused on the absence of well-defined cross-cultural and socio-political relationship between the two countries. These critical writings raise contentious questions on the socio-political proximity between India and Australia.

Meanwhile, since the 70s of the last century, there has been a gradual renewal of cross-cultural linkages between the two countries, beginning with a gradual and unabated flow of Indian migrants to Australia. This leads to the formation of various Bengali/Gujrati/Punjabi cultural societies and even Bengali/Hindi language schools in Melbourne and Sydney. The Bengali Association of Victoria (BAV), based in Melbourne, is largely responsible for establishing a meaningful cultural relationship. Gujrati Societies or Punjabi Associations have also been established along similar lines. TRAMJATRA Project (RMIT) interlinking Melbourne-Calcutta tramways may also be regarded as a significant marker of this growing cultural relationship. In Australia, the Australian Government has organized such events as *Utsav Australia* or *Indian Art Exhibitions* (Museum Victoria) from time to time, thereby continuing this trend of cultural exchange. In Kolkata Book Fair, Australia was honoured as the “Guest of Honour Country” (2006) and the “Focus Country” (2007). In recent times, Australian Government’s decision to open Uranium sales to India has brought the two countries closer in defence and security sectors.

This international conference welcomes Australian and Indian scholars from across disciplines to disseminate their ideas on how Australia and India can build a greater understanding of each other in terms of historical, cultural and strategic relationships. This conference will be supported by Monash University and Australia India Council.



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This conference seeks to address the following issues:

<p>HISTORY AND CULTURE</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dialogue of Cultures • Traces of Culture • Re-writing History • War and Memory • Race and Identity • Narratives of History • Sports • Religion 	<p>LITERATURE AND THE ARTS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Colonial/Postcolonial/ Contemporary Writers • Literature and Socio-cultural Activism • Aboriginal Literature • Literature and Films • Arts and Environment • Verbatim Theatre and Community Theatre • Diasporic Literature • Children's Literature
<p>POLITICS, FOREIGN POLICY AND LAW</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nationalism • Environment and Security • Judicial Activism • Criminology • Federalism • Migrant Experiences • Terrorism and Conflict Resolution • International Relations • Gender Issues • Human Rights • Land Rights, Property and Environment • Immigration and Citizenship 	<p>GLOBAL ECONOMY</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liberalisation and Economic Reforms • Economic Paradigms in Bilateral Relations • Trade Union Movement • Tourism
<p>ENVIRONMENT</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Biodiversity and Conservation • Ecotourism • Ecological Sustainability • Climate Change and Culture 	<p>PEDAGOGY AND PRAXIS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching Australian Studies • Indian Students and Australia • Australian Studies: Syllabus Formation • Australian Studies: Research and Methodology



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All conference abstracts should be received by 1 September, 2012. The abstracts will be reviewed by a team of experts from Monash University and the Eastern Region of the Indian Association for the Study of Australia. The decision of the review committee will be emailed to the participants of the conference.

Proposals (250-300 words) should be sent via email, by 1 September, 2012 to debnarayan@gmail.com, iasa2007.er@gmail.com

Proposals can be submitted through the IASA, Eastern Region's website: <http://www.iasaer.com/contactsi-contact-form-form4.html>

We are planning to organize a special session for Postgrads and Early Career Researchers on 22 January, 2013. Postgrads and ECRs are encouraged to send their full papers by 15 September, 2013.