

# INTRODUCTION

## GEOGRAPHIES OF INDIANNESS

IN A “MILLENNIUM SUPPLEMENT,” the August 1999 issue of *National Geographic* featured a set of articles on globalization. On the cover was a photograph of two Indian women: one dressed in a traditional sari, gold jewelry, and flowers and the other, her daughter, clad in a vinyl bodysuit (see fig. 1), with the title “Global Culture.” The same photograph also appeared inside the magazine, with a caption that read, in part, “SOPHISTICATED LADIES. They’re well-off, well educated, widely traveled, fluent in several languages. . . . The global marketplace for goods, information, and style is their corner store.”<sup>1</sup> Though the women were apparently “Indian,” the picture’s significance was described by the magazine’s editors in more global terms: “Goods move. People move. Ideas move. And cultures change.” We are in a new moment, suggests a magazine that has served as a prime vehicle for middlebrow cultural representation, and that moment can be read through a chaotic Indianness.

Lest difference get out of control, readers in the United States have *National Geographic* to help order their perceptions.<sup>2</sup> Remarking on the millennium theme, the editor confessed some anxiety about the growing association between globalization and cultural homogenization, while adding: “But for the moment, at least, it is still arresting to see the juxtaposition of different societies, as men in Shanghai carry around a life-size Michael Jordan cutout or a Los Angeles artisan applies Old World henna designs to a woman’s hand.”<sup>3</sup> And indeed, a kind of ironic, tongue-in-cheek detachment is the mood of the images in *National Geographic* that suggest difference. Hong Kong action star Michelle Yeoh is suspended from a rope in front of the famous Hollywood sign in southern California in an image appearing aside the title “A World Together.” In another photograph, with a caption noting the significant population of Thai peoples in Los Angeles, a large group of fully robed Buddhist monks eats breakfast at a Denny’s restaurant amid seeming nonchalance from other diners.

About a third of the photographs accompanying the *National Geographic* series feature some kind of Indianness. This fact, along with the decision to frame the issue with the image of the Indian mother and daughter, certainly prompts us to consider the central role of Indianness in the broader production of interpenetrating globalism, where nationalities come into direct contact and yet remain highly discrete. An overly polar-



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Figure 1. The National Geographic of India on the move (copyright Joe McNally).

ized sense of the traditional and the modern, unsurprisingly, is signaled by the cover, in images—familiar and shocking—of exotic femininity. Heightened ironies are signaled by the appearance of Coca-Cola signs, tubes of Colgate brand toothpaste, and an inflatable American astronaut amid Mumbai's shack houses, small villages, and a Bangalore shopping mall. Juxtaposition here is a visual strategy that gives America the mark of commercial modernity, and India and other non-European nations cultural (and economic) difference; the penetrations of east by west, as well as of west by east, retain some measure of contrast. Still, the photos hint at the possibility of a national Indianness being reinvented *through* commodity capitalism that can illuminate the governing theme of goods and people moving, cultures changing. Dislocations and reconstructions of India in a global context begin to expand the field of representational possibilities, even beyond the categories of “here” and “there” in which the magazine traffics.

India on the move and Indianness remade are central concerns of this book. While *National Geographic* cannot help but exhibit residual interest in the project of identifying where the nation and its cultures are, *India Abroad* seeks to thoroughly disturb that sensibility by explaining how migrant cultures express global belonging in multiple national spheres.<sup>4</sup> Echoing a major Indian immigrant newspaper in New York, I use the title



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“India Abroad” to evoke a mobile and dynamic nation that takes shape in spaces far removed from a territorial state. India, this book’s “national geographic” is thus not a precise location of homeland, nor a singular motivating impulse, but instead a heterogeneous imaginary that draws energy from historical formations of colonialism and postcolonialism, discourses of diversity, and exercises of bureaucratic power.

Like all nations, India is freighted as much with metaphorical possibility as with geopolitical presence. Secure, now, in the insight that the nation has always been under production, scholars in South Asian studies have been able to develop sophisticated analyses of complex social formations and cultures of resistance.<sup>5</sup> Since work on immigrants has needed to overcome the fixation on lands of settlement as defining its object, and studies of diaspora have taken nation to mean homeland, there has been a great deal of emphasis on how Indian migrants develop relationships with the Indian nation-state.<sup>6</sup> But some of the constructedness, the fictiveness, of nation in cultures of migration can be lost when Indians are too thoroughly linked with their country of origin. Certainly associations between Indians and the Indian state abound, in transnational capital flows, in political movements, and in social relations, but the argument I make here is that the excesses of “India” in the space of Indian diaspora suggest more than long-distance nationalism. I suggest that it is through a broadly symbolic India that Indians can see themselves not only as national subjects of a modern world, but also as citizens of postwar United States and England—nations that themselves are undergoing processes of reconstruction. As India is built abroad in what we might see as the “contact zones”<sup>7</sup> of migrant cultures in unstable first-world spaces, a new set of discourses for citizenship and subjectivity are created. Ultimately a different sensibility of how one can live in a multicultural space is performed not only for Indians, but also for other American and British peoples.

There are 1.7 million people in the United States today who claim Indian descent.<sup>8</sup> While the number itself is significant, even more striking is how recently the migrations that created this heterogeneous population took place: largely after 1965, when the Immigration and Naturalization Act was passed to create less racially discriminatory standards for entry. England’s Indian population is close to 1 million, a huge portion of which is attributable to migrations after the mid-1950s; at 1.9 percent of the population, it represents the largest ethnic minority.<sup>9</sup> The Indian immigrant, in both the United States and England, is a presence in daily life, in urban and suburban residential communities, in business and education, and even in politics. The postwar period, of roughly fifty years, in which Indianness has become locally visible and recognized, has been one of quite dramatic transformations in the world: massive movements of peoples, the unfolding consequences of colonialism and postcolonialism,



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new forms of diversity in all nation-states, and transitions from largely industrial to largely service-based global economies. In and through each shift, a specific form of Indianness comes into focus, and it is this book's task to explore the variety of possibilities therein.

The "Indian diaspora" discussed here is simultaneously a concept and a set of social formations. In allowing us to consider how migrant peoples negotiate life amid tremendous social, cultural, and political change, by building the "imagined communities" of nations, by creating identities, and by expressing themselves as multiply constituted, diaspora invokes, always with qualification, ways of life—community, culture, and society. The term diaspora also conveys an affective experience in a world of nations, through its proposition of global belonging as a means of self- and group representation. Yet neither globality nor diaspora should be interpreted to mean the absence of location. The Indian diaspora of this book is read very much through its locatedness, in space and time, however shifting the coordinates provided by the many movements of Indians across Asia, the Americas, Africa, and Europe. To narrow the inquiry of this book, I identify the United States and England as primary foci of the Indian diaspora. Importantly, however, other formations of Indianness—say, in the Caribbean or East Africa—do not fall out of sight, but instead become incorporated as secondary and related possibilities. As a conceptual space of negotiation, the Indian diaspora allows us to challenge the dichotomization of the global and the local, to address, in Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's words, "the social machines that create and recreate the identities and differences that are understood as the local."<sup>10</sup> So while the United States and England may be sites for expressions of locality, they are cross-cut, always, by forces from other worlds, only one of which is an imagining of India.

We turn, then, to the Indian diaspora to interpret what is simultaneously global and local. In that move, there is no compulsion to make specific claims to the territory of the Indian nation-state, nor remain exclusively within the social fields of the United States or England. Instead, this book develops a sphere of representation that traverses other boundaries, too, of east and west, and of first and third worlds. Diaspora then provides a different kind of "field" site from those of past anthropological preoccupations. Situated within and across a range of nations, Indian diasporic lives come to embody a set of disconnections between place, culture, and identity.<sup>11</sup> Necessarily, then, in both subject matter and methodology, this book reworks and revises a classic premise of ethnography: that visiting and observing a place yields primary meanings about people, their experiences, and their cultures. While the material in this book suggests that some insights do emerge from traditional understandings of place and community, it also proposes that a whole range of life experi-



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ences, imaginative inclinations, and psychic investments lie outside observed geographical boundaries. Indianness, here, emerges in forms much grander and more dispersed than the neighborhood or workplace, such that there can be no necessary correspondence between its expressions and its locales.<sup>12</sup> The shape of “community” itself, in the architecture of consumption of an entrepreneurial space like Jackson Heights in New York, or the international political interests of peoples in Southall, London, grants those places rather diverse meanings.

When place is recast as the global arena, cultural practices of migration assume interesting new shapes. The news of India and the diaspora found in the U.S.-based *India Abroad* or the British *Asian Times* is a collection of stories that address publics with material interests in the subcontinent, needs for group identity in urban and suburban areas of settlement, and longings for a homeland. An entrepreneurial community’s production of itself as a “Little India” and a British Indian reggae star’s naming of himself as “Apache Indian” suggest that the very language of a national imaginary diversely negotiates spaces of social invention. How, in such thick occasions, can we confidently distinguish the material from the symbolic or, for that matter, experience from fiction? As Indian migrants abundantly produce readings of the condition of their shifting locality, processing their physical and imaginative movement, they develop a set of discourses that can reveal something special about diaspora. The textual materials create the rather unbounded “field” or “archive” of representation. Reading across modes of expression, as well as through physical sites, I suggest, is to get closer to diasporic life.

Analyzing the Indian diaspora formed by migrations enables us to discuss territorial fantasy in new ways. The fact that this study focuses on Indianness outside of India may yield findings different even from those of subcontinental critics of nationalism, who have been keen to demonstrate the historicity of nation-building in terms of British colonial and postcolonial histories and literatures but have for obvious reasons been less interested in countries outside the colonial circuitry, like the United States. Yet the participation of other national-cultural ideologies, such as those of “America,” as well as “England,” in the lives of migrants may shift our understandings of what constitutes India. Within many national identities, the stable meanings of “America” and “England” remain uninterrogated. But by looking at how migrant discourses have created India abroad, we can challenge the assumed centrality of “America” and “England” in the lives of peoples who inhabit the spaces of the United States and Britain. Negotiating the divides between nations and national affiliations, Indian diaspora can illuminate the instability of the places where we all stand.



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### Indian Diasporas and Multicultural Identities of Race, Nation, and Ethnicity

Handmaiden to the processes of globalization, through time, are discourses of multiculturalism. Multiculturalism has also been a necessary ideology for playing out the logic of capitalism. While many debates on the topic emphasize the highly contemporary nature of incorporating a concept of diversity into North American and European national imaginaries, the Indian diaspora encourages us to rethink that conventional wisdom. It may not have been before the 1960s and 1970s that policymakers in England and the United States began to engage in public soul-searching to conceive of their nations and cultures as constituted by difference, but recent Indian arrivals were coolly (or perhaps hotly) familiar with heterogeneity. India was always and already a fragile whole of many cultures, religions, languages, and regional groups, well before Jawaharlal Nehru's popularization of the motto "unity in diversity."<sup>13</sup> And the British empire, one prominent example of globalism, employed ideologies of unhomogenized multiplicity to establish sovereignty over its totality. This colonial discourse constructed "India" as a land of many peoples, with racial typologies to match.

In discussions of confronting difference in the United States and England, particularly through formations of Indian diaspora, it is essential to see the field in which identities are being articulated as one of comparative multiculturalisms, rather than simply national(ist) frameworks for diversity. Though certainly not all models for diverse societies, past or present, are the same, there are important influences that help to shape all frameworks for multiplicity. And the Indian diaspora is a space where possibilities of a heterogeneous Britain, United States, and India meet. Any singular sense of identification will always be undermined by the plural forms that build Indianness, though its appearance as Indian may suggest otherwise.

Central to all those frameworks for pluralistic societies is what Immanuel Wallerstein has called the construction of peoplehood.<sup>14</sup> This process of construction, from the structural-ideological forces with which Wallerstein is preoccupied, as well as from movements that emerge from below, results in fluid and entangled discourses of "race," "nation," and "ethnicity." The tremendously powerful lived and particularized experience of any one of these categories as a form of identity or community can often obscure the integrated nature of the development of all three. Etienne Balibar has approached this difficult problematic with a special clarity, asking: "How are individuals nationalized or, in other words, socialized in the dominant form of national belonging?"<sup>15</sup> In dissolving the distinctions between "real" and "imaginary" communi-



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ties, and “individual” and “collective” identities, Balibar is able to capture how all sorts of identifications are historically produced and felt. His notion of “fictive ethnicity,” for populations “represented in the past or in the future *as if* they formed a natural community . . . an identity of origins, culture and interests which transcends individuals and social conditions,”<sup>16</sup> is particularly evocative as a way to think about the Indianness explored in this book. The fictional nature of that formation lies not so much in its falsity as in its constructedness, what Balibar calls “fabrication.” In the chapters to follow, I closely consider the contours of constructed Indianness in a variety of diasporic modes.

National belonging may underlie Indianness, but that organizing principle becomes more heterogeneous as it maps onto other forms of identification in diaspora and even becomes a newly constitutive category of other national frameworks, like America or England. Here we return to the scheme of the multicultural. To be part of the place (and myth) of America has increasingly entailed belonging to a minority group that hails from *another* nation, and possessing discrete and ethnic origins.<sup>17</sup> How those origins are cast has a great deal to do with the specificities of the construction of race or ethnicity, and the development of a group with reference to nationalities like American or English. A preliminary question we must ask is whether the very state of diaspora, between and across nations, may trouble or at least make more complex the framework of multiculturalism. Diasporic cultures continually translate a set of differences into something new, yet those differences often appear within discourses of origins or other hierarchical social orderings. And the geopolitical forces of nationalism may constrain the field of social formation and the depth of possible critique.

Looking comparatively at the development of Indian diaspora in England and the United States allows us to consider multiculturalism as a set of specifically national projects that are articulated to broader global conceptions of difference and diversity. Indian migrants to Britain entered into a social landscape in which there were already referents, in the experiences of colonialism, for their “blackness,” “Asianness,” or, more simply, “otherness.” While this kind of *racial* subjectification had a history, it gained a new life in the postcolonial era, in which identificatory categories emerged through conflicts over the space in the British nation-state that migrants could occupy in terms of socioeconomic position, residential arrangements, and political representation. Of course, the England of destination was hardly in any simple terms “white,” as a range of peoples had undergone individual and group transformations in order to uneasily occupy positions there; the presence of Irish, Scottish, Jewish, West Indian, and African peoples compelled continual deliberations on the nature of what made a British citizen and why. Mirroring local instability in



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Britain itself were the effects of Englishmen going abroad and returning home. It is in the midst of all these complicated forces that Indian migrants have lived race. Being “black” or “Asian” has been an uncertain and historically contingent vocation, one formed through needs for solidarity with other peoples who are coming to terms with the issue of belonging, as well as by the force of desires for group autonomy. Violence by the British state and by its self-designated patriots oftentimes prescribed narrower terms in which the process of identity formation could take place.

Ethnicity, too, has been an important language of identity for Indian migrants in England. In efforts to distinguish themselves from Afro-Caribbean migrants, and also to downplay their own racialization, Indians have mobilized ethnicity by adopting “Indian” as a primary self-descriptor. There are other more liberatory and representational effects of this mode of identification, as Stuart Hall has remarked: “The term ethnicity acknowledges the place of history, language and culture in the construction of subjectivity and identity, as well as the fact that all discourse is placed, positioned, situated, and all knowledge is contextual.”<sup>18</sup> Hall has argued that “new ethnicities” can be decoupled from more conservative notions of the British state, like “Englishness,” and, in effect, become crucial (and politically progressive) points of departure for developing important identities for migrant groups and others who are seen as different. Supporting these more oppositional understandings is the rehearsing of political-economic opposition to colonial power through commitments to being “Indian” that are embedded in certain discourses of ethnicity.

In the United States, the frames of racial and ethnic formation are unique and have mediated the creation of Indian diasporic cultures in ways that differ somewhat from the corresponding processes in Britain. The national-historical project of “America,” in which immigration is posited as central to the building of the country, and an ideological formation of race, based on the legacies of African slavery and shifting to accommodate and mark new forms of difference and alterity, together provide the story of ethnicity and shape the social worlds into which Indians enter as immigrants. After coming in large numbers to the United States after 1965, Indian subjects became interpellated by “third-world migration” (and the subset of “Asian American”) as a category that disrupted the black/white binary of race and challenged popular Americanist notions of ethnicity as assimilability.

Through the period of significant migration, Indian Americans have also moved from invisibility to visibility.<sup>19</sup> Categorical representation was important in this shift, and immigrants struggled through the 1970s to be allotted the category “Asian Indian” in the U.S. census. More recently there have been other kinds of indicators of presence, in popular culture, when, for example, a television show like *The Simpsons* has an Indian



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character.<sup>20</sup> And in the year 2000, at the dawn of the new millennium, President Bill Clinton gave as one reason for his trip to South Asia the growing importance of its immigrant communities in the United States. Clinton also rhetorically installed these groups in a sequence of other ascendant ethnics, particularly Irish and Jewish Americans: "I think one of the reasons we've been able to play a meaningful role in Northern Ireland is we have so many Irish Americans here. I think one of the reasons we've been able to play a meaningful role in the Middle East is we have a lot of Jewish Americans and a lot of Arab Americans. I think we forget that among all the some-200 ethnic groups that we have in our country, Indian Americans and Pakistani Americans have been among the most successful in terms of education level and income level. They have worked and succeeded stunningly well in the United States."<sup>21</sup> Clinton's is a rich text that can be mined by Indian Americans seeking teleologies of success and visibility, and also by those who might want to see the expanded possibilities of multiculturalist models for membership, in which nations abroad are always a part of the interests of domestic migrant groups.

Indeed, while race and ethnicity are often understood within national arrangements, they have reference points and related formations within a more diasporic circuitry of capital, ideas, and communities. Indians' connections to each other and to places that traverse the boundaries of countries of settlement are often formulated in languages that straddle conceptual categories of race, ethnicity, and nation. In fact, Indianness itself can become a language of either race or nation, particularly when we consider how it may express a set of identifications that have emerged out of colonialism and anticolonialism. In this vein, I would suggest that third-worldism and nonalignment, too, as programs of both individual nation-states and whole regions, can be interpreted as discourses that racially subjectivize their citizens both at home and abroad. Here again, in the multiplicity of languages and histories that impress upon the formation of the Indian diasporic subject and his or her cultures, is the production of globality in the local and of locality in the global.<sup>22</sup> Considering the Indian diaspora in this fashion may revise the concept of postcolonial,<sup>23</sup> as Indian migrants bring to various contexts concerns born of the dynamics of British imperial rule, or fantasies of escaping these dynamics in the "new lands" of America.

Private longings to be Indian are always tied up with a concern about what that means in public terms. This is why symptoms of visibility, such as Clinton's reference to Indian Americans, or the recent population figures of the U.S. census, or the naming of curry as a national British cuisine, can seem so significant.<sup>24</sup> The contemporary moment, of course, has been worked toward, historically, as some sense of Indianness has been created through a range of integrated national and cosmopolitan possibilities.



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Membership in a diaspora, forged through migration, profoundly shapes what it means to be a subject, just as the process of becoming part of any constructed community, religious, national, or familial, does. But the very state of multiplicity, of being “abroad,” and of being a particular kind of national, I would suggest, has specific implications for individual and collective identity. Even if an ambivalence that already existed comes to the fore or is newly articulated, the affective dimension of being Indian is changed by diaspora and by being located in and through multiple processes of racialization, ethnicization, and nationalization. There may be surprising results, say, when the dreams of assimilation into America fuse with Indian anticolonialism. There are various ways to apprehend identity and subjectivity, many of which this book engages in the chapters to follow, but it seems important at the outset to grant to the concept of identity and even its collective expression, “identity politics,” their proper complexity and power. In terms of being able to organize sympathies and solidarities, many forms of identity, in language, race, ethnicity, religion, and nation, do more than reify difference. Indeed, they can negotiate, through consolation and alienation, the multiple structures of lived experience for those who migrate.

### From Immigrant to Diaspora

What Indian diaspora confronts in this moment, what it has always confronted, is a simultaneous nationalism and internationalism. The nonresident Indian, popularly called an NRI, is a diasporic figure who illumines the surprising complementarity of those two spheres of operation. In occupying a category created by the Indian government in the 1970s to repatriate investment from abroad, this migrant is lexically bestowed with a relationship to India and receives benefits that would not normally be available to those living outside the nation-state, such as the right to own property within its borders, as well as the affirmation of political loyalties to what is perceived as an originary place. He gains meaning from his state of being *abroad*, and yet he is interpellated as an Indian national. It is precisely the NRI’s citizenship in and of the world, and all the influences that inhere therein, that have made him both a powerful preoccupation of the Indian nation-state, and also a site of anxiety for those concerned with a purer relationship to homeland.

Physical mobility, psychic life in many spaces at once, and flows of capital—that which appears in exaggerated form in the case of the NRI—is one enactment of that presumptive breakdown between “first” and “third” worlds. While it is true that migrancy, and increasingly transnational cultures and economies, might seem to compress the distance be-



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tween a poor country like India and a wealthy one like the United States, it is worth making explicit the incredibly class-specific rendition of bridging areas of the world with vastly divergent histories. And while the exploration undertaken here shall be of largely middle-class migrations, *difference* and even inequality—of economy, politics, and power—remain central to the social and conceptual constructions that take place. Diaspora in this way becomes a space not to flatten difference, to make everything seem equal, but a site in which to comprehend the negotiations structured by difference. Becoming Indian in the United States or England is a consequence simultaneously of the ease of mobility and the difficulties of being other in a place that still in some basic way is cast as “first world.”

It is through unequal international relations, with economic, cultural, and political manifestations, that migration is now taken to be a given. The older categories of immigration, of making permanent moves to one nation from another, have less and less purchase in a world in which mobility is no longer unidirectional, if it ever was. And the Indian diaspora represents some of those changes, too, particularly when placed within rubrics of academic fields like immigration history or transnational studies. Classic immigrant history paradigms, worked out within the sub-field of U.S. history, have posited that people leave one country for another and in the process relinquish an attachment to the homeland in favor of new identities in a foreign country. This first generation, the story goes, begins the process of integration and eventually assimilation, which successive generations complete as they become nationals with diverse origins. Oscar Handlin’s 1951 book *The Uprooted*<sup>25</sup> may be seen as a perfect encapsulation of this developmentalist narrative. Properly criticized for being overly embedded in nationalist mythologies of “America” and primarily evidenced in the experiences of southern and eastern European immigrants, who could, in a sense, “become white,”<sup>26</sup> this assimilation-based model for immigration has been superseded by more complicated approaches to the study of peoples from Asia, Latin America, Africa, and Europe who have settled in the United States, and who have retained important connections to their countries of origin.<sup>27</sup> Many historians and sociologists have demonstrated how the process of racialization, particularly for post-1965 immigrants from the third world, punctures the teleology of “becoming American,” and challenges the divide between studies of racial minorities and immigrants. Yet this very careful work may still be haunted by the terms in which it operates: namely, that of *immigration*, and, to some extent, “America.” Immigration remains in its most essential meaning a one-way process, from one country into another; the framework of the United States as destination significantly shapes the way that the homeland is constructed, as necessarily a political and/or cultural space with fewer resources. It can be difficult to develop



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in this language a sense of the continuous movements back and forth of many and varied groups of peoples.<sup>28</sup>

These are the claims of recent scholars of transnationalism.<sup>29</sup> Finding limitations in the language of immigration of the kind noted above, anthropologists Nina Glick Schiller, Linda Basch, and Cristina Szanton Blanc defined transnationalism as “the processes by which immigrants forge and sustain multi-stranded social relations that link together their societies of origin and settlement.”<sup>30</sup> Part of their important project seems to be to highlight national formation; they wrote: “by living their lives across borders, transmigrants find themselves confronted with and engaged in the nation building processes of two or more nation-states.”<sup>31</sup>

*India Abroad* exists, partly, in the space that scholars of transnationalism have opened up in their critiques of immigration as a category and in their emphasis on social networks embedded in the logics of multiple national formations. But given this book’s accent on the various levels of cultural signification and translation, it takes issue with distinctions that are often made, between “observable social action” and “subjective intentionality” in the phenomenon of transnationalism.<sup>32</sup> Like many other scholars explicitly concerned with cultural production, I find it very difficult, indeed impossible, to separate the work of the imagination from the everyday cross-border activities of migrants; nor does it seem useful for what I see occurring in the Indian diaspora, to draw single, univocal, or unilinear causality between those associated spheres of activity. On some level, then, this book will necessarily enter into debates on the limits of empiricism by questioning models of the relationship between material worlds and subjectivity.

In the postwar world, assimilation is not necessarily on the mind of all Indians in the United States or Britain. Nor is an undifferentiated nationality always the standard for other American or British subjects. Beginning in the 1970s, an all-inclusive mass culture, even for Americans who might not identify themselves as ethnic, began to wane, due in no small part to enormous population changes as well as to shifts in capitalist production. People increasingly consumed difference, and it was becoming untenable that being “American” or even “British” meant identifying with a homogeneous majority group. In that context, an India open to the world could become a different sort of ideal of the postwar era, too. Even earlier, in 1950, Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru articulated a developmentalist vision of multiple nations and cultures: “One can see each nation and each separate civilization developing its own culture that had its roots in generations hundreds and thousands of years ago. . . . That conception is affected by other conceptions and one sees action and interaction between these varying conceptions. There is, I suppose, no culture in the world which is absolutely pristine, pure and unaffected by



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any other culture.”<sup>33</sup> Within global nations migration and diaspora must necessarily take on alternative meanings. If migration describes movements of peoples and ideas that have constituted subjects in the eyes of the law, and those subjects that are still situated with reference to particular nations, then diaspora conjures forth a form of belonging that is global. In the postwar world, particular forms of migration—postcolonial and national—have produced many diasporas. Those diasporas are coeval with multicultures; sometimes they are compatible and sometimes they are contradictory, and it is one task of this book to carefully explore those possibilities.

Diaspora is where constructed nationalisms come into contact. While there is no singly more evocative term for this process than Benedict Anderson’s “imagined communities,” it is also Partha Chatterjee’s critiques of Anderson’s fixation on nationalism as a political movement, and its proposition of the derivative nature of anticolonial nationalisms of the third world, that have been essential to rethinking nationalist cultures of India.<sup>34</sup> Building on the very important work of these two theorists, I would suggest further that diaspora may give a new cast to discussions of nationalism. In the state of diaspora, we can see the languages of anticolonialism, capitalism, and postcolonialism blend into a real feeling for nations, one that does not only reproduce the state or have it as an endpoint. Like Chatterjee, I want to suggest that the nations of diaspora are heterogeneous, composed of many and often contradictory fragments. Though there is support in some Indian diasporas for the fundamentalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), there are other important ways to be national abroad, with a variety of political implications. And while my focus here will be a diasporic Indianness that is inevitably linked with some idea of nation, there are moments of that construction where nationalism is not the primary consequence of complex forms of identification. I do not want to reduce diaspora to long-distance nationalism.<sup>35</sup> Because, as I hope this book makes eminently clear, diaspora is not only about homeland or nation-state formation; it also signifies a more densely constituted sense of place and identity.

Created out of a sentiment of progress and modernity, the Indian diaspora of this book particularly courts a quasi-postmodern multiplicity, of nations, communities, and expressive modes. In this way, perhaps, it might be distinguishable from Jewish or black diasporas, which are very much premised on a rehearsal of originary forms of suffering and persecution that have created dispersals, and that construct a compensatory nation. Many have argued for reserving the term diaspora itself for the sense of forced dispersion that is recalled in modern notions of Jewishness or blackness, or for groups like Armenians.<sup>36</sup> My own answer to these dilemmas is that, first, the very question of compulsion in scattering is difficult



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to ascertain, particularly as many migrants have seen few economic possibilities—possibilities that would constitute a form of survival—in underdeveloped economies like that of India, or those in Latin America or Africa. Second, diaspora, like any other generalized theoretical category, only gains meaning from its cultural and historical specificity, that specificity which necessarily produces contrasts among, say, Jewish, Chinese, or Indian cases. And third, diaspora should be seen not as reflecting a singular state of being, or as having a reference to one nation or historical experience, but instead as constructing a space to negotiate many identifications.

This book's discussions produce a diaspora that is lateral but differentiated. This is to follow from James Clifford's position on the breadth of the concept, in which "decentered, lateral connections may be as important as those formed around a teleology of origin/return. And a shared ongoing history of displacement, suffering, adaptation or resistance may be as important as the projection of a single origin."<sup>37</sup> Principles of coherence and division are always present in the construction of an object as wide-reaching as "Indian diaspora," which seeks to conceptually encompass Indian cultures abroad from the 1950s to the present day, across three nations. As Avtar Brah has quite precisely distinguished: "The *concept* of diaspora concerns the historically variable forms of *relationality* within and between diasporic formations." She notes further that "diaspora specifies a matrix of economic, political and cultural inter-relationships which construct the commonality between the various components of a dispersed group [and] delineates a field of identifications where 'imagined communities' are forged within and out of a confluence of narratives."<sup>38</sup> What our exploration of diaspora shall contribute to Clifford's and Brah's formulations is the tremendous impulse to multiple nationality that Indianness abroad has made visible. And nationality, too, takes many forms, as New York and London offer particular possibilities for diasporic culture, the general contours of which are outlined in the chapters to follow. The tension between those specific, and deeply located, occasions, and the more general meanings for a formation, is the very tension of diaspora.

### The Special Relationship of India and Her Diaspora

Amitav Ghosh has written of an "epic relationship" between India and her diaspora.<sup>39</sup> I read in this term and in much of his work an emphasis on the tremendously historical and imaginative nature of diasporic belonging. When, for instance, Ghosh travels to Egypt as an anthropologist-historian to track down the details of the life of a twelfth-century Indian slave in the book *In an Antique Land*,<sup>40</sup> he is surprised to find himself



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received as “the Indian doctor,” who comes to stand in for all the contradictory cultural and political attributes of a national (and Hindu-inflected) Indianness: cremation, sacralization of cows, progress, and modernity. An intellectual journey into the tremendously hybrid and mobile cultures of the period and context in which the Indian slave and his Tunisian-Jewish merchant patron lived proceeds alongside Ghosh’s own more modern (early 1980s) experiences of traveling in a world where nations and their borders are very important. The historical identifications among modern nations, too, are embedded in contemporary affective dimensions of social relationships. An Egyptian villager is conscious of that background, as Ghosh recalls his introduction: “It was their duty to welcome me into their midst and make me feel at home because of the long traditions of friendship between India and Egypt.”<sup>41</sup> Here and throughout the narrative Ghosh intimates that Indian subjects are made by India, both by being read as Indian and experiencing the world through that sensibility of nation, in the past and in the present. Yet nation cannot be confined to its purported origins; he has, after all, gone to Egypt to unearth the story of an Indian slave. All sorts of crossings take place to trouble easy correspondences between subject, nation, and territory.

The Indian nation has been the work of history. British colonialism could only draw the boundaries of its field of operation by creating presumed coherences, of making India a distinct place to be ruled. And consequently, the powerful memory of British colonialism, and its role in the relationships between peoples and countries, has cleaved together many formations of Indian diaspora. While in the pre-independence years, the experience of being colonized functioned as a kind of trauma<sup>42</sup> to construct Indian social and political space more directly, in later years we can see how British political rule has been transmuted into, on the one hand, a residual economic force for migrants, and, on the other, a cultural memory to undergird constructions of community. The recovery of British industry following the Second World War brought Indian immigrants to London, to a place they recognized on a range of levels; postwar fiction abounds with immigrant characters who profess recognition of the physical and social space of England well before their arrival on the country’s shores.<sup>43</sup> As Britain implemented more restrictive entry requirements, and the United States passed the Immigration and Naturalization Act (1965) to facilitate the immigration of many more third-world migrants, Indians looked to the United States as an opportunity for class mobility and as an alternative to submersion in Britain’s post-imperial economy. The intense third-worldist and, more recently, economic nationalisms of India that underwrote movement in the past and in the future exist in relation to “the West” and to Britain, particularly, as representative of first-world forces originating in imperial systems.



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To call the Indian diasporas of the post-1947 period “postcolonial,” then, signifies a great deal more than chronology. It suggests that these migrant formations emerge from links through time and connections across the span of a former empire. The processing of colonialism and its aftermath occurs on a variety of levels throughout Indian diasporas, in economies, politics, and culture. Underscoring relationships to British rule frames the cultures of Indians abroad historically and also embeds them in a global framework. Postcolonialism, in this case, is a form of transnationalism that emphasizes the complex multinational narratives of the past that produce group identities, and perhaps makes India appear in less stable form. British colonialism is one historical plot, among many, that has organized the constructions of India and the Indian diaspora, and foregrounding that is to create a very particular narrative of formation, of what I will call modern Indianness.<sup>44</sup> This subjectivity results when diaspora is linked to an impermanent India, in past, present, and future, dated in some sense to postcolonialism and its effects, that older notion of empire, and as well to the newer sort of transnational sovereignty that Hardt and Negri speak of in their more contemporary concept of empire.<sup>45</sup> And yet one might imagine that the Indianness of the twelfth-century slave that Amitav Ghosh set out to find in modern Egypt could of course be related to its more contemporary renditions.

Just as constitutive of Indian diaspora’s meaning for our exploration are other nations, the United States and England. Herein we might not only unmoor nationality, but also interrogate the locatability of the nation. This book poses the question of whether the temporal and spatial juxtapositions that construct the Indian diaspora might enable us to rethink origin. India is not fixed, it is in formation, just as other nations are, and when some of those processes of formation occur in the space of diaspora, directional coordinates become ever less clear. This year the largest newspaper of the Indian diaspora, *India Abroad*, operating since its 1970 inception in New York, was bought out by Rediff.com, a company based in Bombay that began to oversee the production of news for Indians abroad. For this occasion, and many more of Indian migrant cultures, where the processes of becoming national are multidirectional, we can no longer locate the source or the product of Indianness. Questioning origin thus necessitates a rethinking of time and space of Indianness. Where does India come from, and when did it begin, are queries that are overcome by a quality of nationality that is constantly in formation, and one that recalls the past in its expressions, lives in the present time, and makes claims on the future. In the case of the newspaper, “India, abroad” is made in Bombay and transmitted to other nations where India, too, lives. Utterly central to the NRI’s understanding of himself and the world,



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in another and related example, is the Indian nation-state's development, in a continuing dialogue with the effects of British colonialism.

India and Indianness, then, have no limits, particularly if we imagine those two possibilities as taking shape through postwar diaspora.<sup>46</sup> Even as boundaries seem to be policed, most notably around religion, region, language, and caste, the public discourse for the Indian nation is one of porousness and inclusivity. This in fact is the constitutive contradiction of all formations of Indianness. At once Indianness seems not to respect geographic boundaries of the nation-state, taking shape in North America, the Caribbean, Britain, or Africa with amazing force and not existing fully within a singular temporality of the colonial or postcolonial, while nonetheless being constituted through an imaginary that seems to have an obviously national referent, of India. We can read this dilemma as shaped by its specific historical juncture, in which not only is India actively and wildly multicultural, but so too are all nations. What nation is not in the midst of developing a discourse of diversity, even as that diversity may be violently and possibly fatally contested? One can project a great many possibilities, without coherence, onto national spaces like "India." This ability for projection, I would argue, and not any necessary connection between the nation and her peoples, is why India's relationship with an Indian diaspora is so special. It is also why India, even in its hybridity, can become a ready sign for globalism, as was the case for the *National Geographic* issue on global culture. What is important to underscore here is that diaspora does not exist in the borderlands of the nation, but within and through central spaces of several nations.

### What It Means to Be Indian

Recently the Indian government decided to distribute "People of Indian Origin" cards to enable Indians abroad to travel to India and own property there without visas and thus without formal citizenship.<sup>47</sup> Here the state imagined an abiding sense of identification with a place outside that which was literally inhabited. But it was reminded that people often intercede in and disrupt the seamless narratives that are devised. The uncertainty with which such a proposal has been received by Indians in the Caribbean who favor the principle but suggest that the \$1000 price tag is unrealistic for populations that are not nearly as well-off as their counterparts in the United States and United Kingdom provides a check not only on the assumptions of the Indian state about emigrant wealth and success, but also on the presumed ease that accompanies ideas of crossing national space. Diaspora, as hybrid cultures, or as a kind of third space between "home" and "new" lands, discloses ambivalence alongside de-



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sire, the depth of which can only be understood through the porous and differently weighted histories of nations.<sup>48</sup>

This book focuses on the Indian diaspora, rather than the South Asian diaspora, as its subject of inquiry. There are a number of reasons for this choice. Most prominently, any category will enact exclusions, and reaching too widely across very distinct national processes would very simply produce more of them. As it is, Indianness submerges regional and religious identities, like being Sikh or being Muslim, that have their own autonomous diasporas. The second concern has to do with the historical juncture of the postcolonial and postwar periods, in which the nation-state of India has been formulated distinctly from other national projects, like Pakistan, Sri Lanka, or Bangladesh. Because I am interested in certain dominant postcolonial processes of nation-making, I concentrate on India as the broader discourse for diaspora. Recent and numerous works on the topic have made other choices, to good effect.<sup>49</sup> It also needs to be stated at the outset that the languages of India and Indianness, despite their apparent heterogeneity, often take a Hindu rather than a Muslim orientation. And because of this character of development of postcolonial nationalisms of the subcontinent, it is true that a pan-Islamic diaspora has engaged Muslims from India far more readily than diasporic Indianness, both differently and similarly perhaps from nationality in the context of the Indian nation-state.<sup>50</sup>

In closely gazing simultaneously at the United States and England, this book is necessarily interested in comparison and conjuncture. As symbols of the “first world” and as formerly colonial powers, England and the United States, each in its own way and together, elaborate how a global system has been shaped by power struggles between nations and by differential access to resources for members of national citizenries. While migration in the postwar era has shaken the ease with which exclusivist ideas of British and U.S. nationality are transmitted globally, it has also provided justification for rearticulations of “Englishness” and “what it means to be American” that undergird xenophobic, anti-immigrant trends in both countries. Movements to break down the borders of nationalist ideology, as evidenced in the proliferation of racial and ethnic identities and the continual movements of Indian migrants, face formidable but interesting obstacles in the two hyper-national spaces of Britain and the United States. To add to Benedict Anderson’s point in his recent work that nations are best understood comparatively,<sup>51</sup> I would suggest that there is a special insight to be gained when they are experienced in multiple fashion, in the synchronous time of which he has written. The Indian diaspora, I suggest, is an exemplary space in which to contemplate the comparison and multiplication of nations. This book, then, does more than provide a dual case study, comparing migrant cultures in the United



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States and England. It also suggests that India and Indianness can be seen more vividly, more clearly, when we place those topics in comparative nations, across time and space. The very heterogeneity that emerges through that interpretive process is what is constitutive of India. Comparisons, then, are not just the obvious ones, between the United States and England, but also between and among India and the United States, India and England, and are cross-cut by class and race.<sup>52</sup> These comparisons give us a sense of cosmopolitanism even as they illuminate nationality.

A major argument of *India Abroad* can be found in its structure. If no one modality can explain how nation and nationality get constructed abroad, no one genre can fully express diasporic life. The chapters, then, are an unfolding, through various kinds of sites, of the content and form of Indianness abroad, that Indianness that I suggest remakes India.<sup>53</sup> Nationality and the nation may have autonomous trajectories, but their overlap, in which the state of the nation is simultaneously that of the identificatory self and the group, has a special draw on the diasporic imagination explored here, through the cultures of migrants in the United States and England. However, the very lack of distinction between India and Indianness, and its presumption of homogeneity, can be very difficult to sustain, and in fact is consistently challenged. This tension forms part of the background of diverse understandings of a site of diasporic culture.

In each *site* of the diaspora, “being Indian” has acquired a particular set of meanings. These sites—history, place, literature, news, and generation—all present unique frames for densely constituting Indian subjectivity. These sites have (crossable) boundaries of time and space, and they exist very much in relation to one another, so that history may be the means by which place is practiced, and fictions of the self enable a generation to see itself as “new.” Resulting from this arrangement is a kind of geography of Indianness, mapped through multiple and de-essentialized vectors of identity formation.

The first chapter, “Histories and Nations,” interprets a multilayered set of historical narratives of India and Indian migration to the United States and England as a way to think about the development of postwar Indianness, in terms both of its representation in a wider public sphere and the powerful impulse toward nationality. The desire for unity and the experiences of multiplicity that are illuminated in these stories underscore how an imagined India becomes highly invested with emotional value, and also remains contested. Chapter 2, “Little Indias, Places for Indian Diasporas,” takes as its subject two instances of “Indian community,” Southall, London, and Jackson Heights, New York, to explore how Indianness has come to be associated with diverse castings of place, through the parameters of race and class. One argument here is that the porousness of these nations within nations—“Little Indias”—symptomize the



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difficulties in holding diaspora to a constancy of origin or content. The third chapter, “Affiliations and Ascendancy of Diasporic Literature,” inquires into diverse representational fictions, in the space of the novel, the autobiography, and the letter, as modes for rethinking the vexed nature of belonging, to India, to America, and to England. Specific texts here are read as bringing into sharper focus temporal and spatial forms of diaspora. Chapter 4, “India in Print, India Abroad,” explores various instances of migrant print culture in the United States and Britain that have created a heterogeneous public sphere for imagining India and negotiating the confluence of spatial identifications. The fifth chapter, “Generations of Indian Diaspora,” considers alternative logics of diaspora, in music, cinema, and youth political associations, and takes “generation” as a form of processing cultural change.

In each chapter’s rendering of diasporic culture, the ways that people describe their lives, the communities they create, and the work that represents their experiences are situated within a plethora of imagined places: at home, nearer to places of settlement, and abroad, linked in a sustained way to others in the diaspora and, most of all, to India. Movements between specific instances and the broader and more general formation mirror what I contend is basic to Indian migrancy: the persistent motion between community life in the city of settlement and an idea of homeland, and between identifications with national (American, English, Indian) institutions and cosmopolitan formations. Strategies of identification that may on the surface seem contradictory flow into one another, sometimes astonishingly, without the archetypal conflict that underwrites the problematic of “immigrant identity.” Indian immigrants vote Democratic or Republican as U.S. citizens and concurrently invest in India, because they intend to return to the homeland for their retirement. This is to say that for Indians in the diaspora, as well as other “native” and migrant citizens, the local and the global become highly compressed within a lifetime. So it is that the cultures described in this book are both particular of a place and time, New York City of the 1980s, for example, and also general in, say, the community of nonresident Indians that is appealed to as a transnational formation.

The relational aspects of a range of texts and experiences, which include historical narratives, cultural organizations, autobiography and fiction, musical performance and films, are of paramount importance in this critical ethnography. My method emerges from a space that Arjun Appadurai has opened up to rethink questions of research within anthropology. He notes: “Where lives are being imagined partly in and through realisms that must be in one way or another official or large-scale in their inspiration, then the ethnographer needs to find new ways to represent the links between the imagination and social life. . . . Ethnography must redefine



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itself as that practice of representation that illuminates the power of large-scale, imagined life possibilities over specific life trajectories.”<sup>54</sup> In my own attempt to find and read Indianness, what Appadurai might call the “ethnoscape” of this project, I spent several months in both London and New York, speaking to a wide variety of people, participating in cultural events, and assembling historical sources and other written texts. My position therein was ambivalent—connected to certain qualities of Indianness, diverging from others—much as an ethnographer’s or critic’s relationship to her topic is always mediated by some set of identifications. The mark of subjectivity can be everywhere felt in a project that has some claims to the contemporary. And even the act of placing different kinds of materials, the proliferation of stories, into a dialogue has resulted in its own discourse, the writing of this book.

While I certainly do not intend my interdisciplinary method here to be authoritative, I do believe that it sheds a particular kind of light on the conditions of the production of diaspora, a concept and set of formations that have imagination at their core. Here I hope to do more than simply juxtapose history, literature, and anthropology, and instead inquire into the importance of textuality in varied productions of culture. What might it mean for us to understand diasporic modes of belonging, ways of becoming Indian, even experiences of physical movement, as created through a relationship to a story of the nation that is to be made a spectacle of in a cultural festival, for example? Beginning to answer this question might yield more intriguing ways to think about moving among different disciplines and their associated methodologies. In creating a deliberation of postwar Indian migration through the use of categories that do not often share conceptual terrain, such as “postcolonial,” “diasporic,” “transnational,” “migrant,” and even “American,” I ask readers to think differently about the models for subjectivity themselves, and to take them out of their confined spaces of literary criticism, the social sciences, history, and ethnic studies.

An important category of studies of migration has been the post-1965 period, precisely because of the profound transformations in the types of immigrants who arrived in the United States after the Immigration and Naturalization Act. But while the year 1965 signifies something special for the context of the United States, it does not have the same purchase on the experiences of the British populace or other societies that experienced large influxes of peoples in the postwar years. Too historically specific a period, and too Americanist in its focus, “post-65” may not be the most helpful organizing principle for world migrations like those from India. And so this book invites the interrogation of what would happen if we were to look at other dates, in nonfoundational fashion. What about taking Indian independence in 1947 as one reference point in the making



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of migrant subjectivity? Reframing the trajectory in this and other ways may envelop from the outset memories of colonialism and the realities and possibilities of postcolonialism as structuring migrant culture.

What evolves, too, most especially from where I stand as a U.S.-based scholar, is a discussion of how America is transformed when globalization is really taken seriously.<sup>55</sup> Bringing other histories, of India, of Britain, to bear on the study of U.S. communities invariably breaks down national borders in unexpected ways, in terms of geography, affiliation and allegiance, and cultural possibilities. Thus I believe that the consequences of my arguments about Indian diasporic cultures, through ethnographic analysis that is as much about reading as it is about observing, can contribute to transforming the field of American studies.<sup>56</sup> Perhaps in that move, we can challenge the presumptive cultural power of American empire, too. That this book's exploration of the Indian diaspora might also serve as another model for globalizing cultures should not be seen as incongruous with its local interventions, particularly in the United States, but also in Britain.<sup>57</sup>

The Indian diaspora ultimately challenges immigration as a category, much as many other Asian and third-world migrants have, by rearranging the coordinates of departure and return. Aihwa Ong has wonderfully described the process by which Chinese abroad have maintained a range of affiliations as "flexible citizenship," or "the cultural logics of capitalist accumulation, travel and displacement that induce subjects to respond fluidly and opportunistically to changing political-economic conditions."<sup>58</sup> Yet while it is possible to make the argument that a number of postwar immigrant groups in the United States and England share such characteristics, it is also important to retain the specificity of the Indian example, to attend to the ways that Indian nationalism is distinct from other Asian diasporic nationalisms, due to the conditions of the development of the Indian nation-state. While this is largely to avoid the generalizing tendencies of the categories of "Asian" or even "third world" migrants, the project to draw out particularity is one that gives rise to making transnationalism, like its constituent part of nationalism, more historically contingent.<sup>59</sup> Recalling the amazing persistence of Indian cultures in so many places in the world may also help to grant diasporic subjects themselves some agency within global forces.

And so the diasporic subjectivity of Indianness also interrogates the boundaries of two academic spaces that have remained somewhat autonomous from one another: area studies and ethnic studies. Indian migrant subjects increasingly inspire questioning about what is "Asian" in the identity category "Asian American."<sup>60</sup> Clearly, Indianness engenders topics of colonialism and postcolonialism, and alternative possibilities for



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racialization, within an interdisciplinary field like Asian American studies; and linking formations of Indian community across the United States, England, and India suggests the very flexibility of identity categories that Asian American studies has been founded upon. So too does the field of South Asian studies require some retooling when India and Indianness are formulated not in the subcontinental area that has been designated by U.S. government and funding agencies, but *abroad*, even in those groups' backyards, in North America. Different interpretive options emerge when "South Asia" or "Asian American" are newly constituted and dislocated, and perhaps too when they are put into some kind of dialogue.

Paul Gilroy has described black diasporic cultures as a "changing same," in which the expression of blackness occurs not only with conscious regard to what has come before, but also through the irruptions of the modern world that impel the creation of something new.<sup>61</sup> I find this to be a very useful way of framing an approach to the Indian diaspora, as reproducing itself through intensified investments in Indianness, and as simultaneously challenging the discourses of the postcolonial and the ethnic, in its ability to continually transform itself. If the tenacity of Indianness around the world helps to mitigate the paranoia about the homogenization of culture in a transnational era, it may also conceal the shifts and variations that occur when cultures move, in which the idea of change itself may need revision so as not to always be about time or nation.

The global India of *National Geographic* is not unrelated to an India of years past: somewhat exotic, hybrid, and faraway. Yet present time and space give the representativeness of this new India a rather different edge, related as it must be to the Indianness that increasingly lives in the west. While the magazine may seek to gaze forward and backward without an overly elaborated sense of time and space, this book is very much invested in the temporal-spatial coordinates of the national geographic of diaspora. Though to many India may appear to be consigned to the subcontinent, migrants continue to construct that nation in places where they have come to rest, all over the United States, England, the Caribbean, Africa, and elsewhere. And their own senses of how they are a part of that nation are multiply shaped, by other nations and peoples with whom they have deep affinity and from which they might experience alienation. If India exists in various forms, and has multifarious origins, its diaspora can provide many points of access into global belonging, too, a global belonging that a range of national subjects might desire, when, for example, contemporary American culture celebrates a film or a fashion that is especially marked by being "Indian." In this sense, India via its diaspora is as much a part of a first-world sensibility as it is from the subcontinent. The



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achievement of diaspora here, then, is also the achievement of globalization, in which Indianness is neither a dominant nor a subsidiary formation. Diaspora captures the many and contradictory relationships that are a sign of the future, though they continue to draw on the past. The difficulties and pleasures and, yes, necessities of that form of belonging underlie the concerns of this book.