

# ABSTRACTS

## TRANSNATIONAL MOBILITY IN A BORDER TERRITORY: ASIAN COMMUNITIES IN SPAIN

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Spain, an European Union country, has become a new location for Asian transnationalism, a new territory to explore, an horizon to discover, a border to cross over. The Spanish economy is an attractive sector for Asian investment and business initiatives, that receives projects and initiatives already tested in other places, or new ones, particularly adapted to the local factors. The diasporas that have taken place, can be categorised, in general terms, into three typologies: the commercial diaspora, the elite and “bottom-up transnationalism”; three models of transnationalism which –in Spain– have demonstrated great adaptability and a high level of integration into the social and economic life of the welcoming country. However, at the same time, inevitable processes of economic competition have been unleashed and have sometimes given rise to violent outbreaks of racism and xenophobia. The Asian disembarkation of its diasporas in a boundary territory of Europe such as Spain, together with the accompanying economic and entrepreneurial dynamism, foster both the increase of wealth and the internationalisation of the national economy. Asian transnationalism –in the context of Spain– should be considered as multinodal and not exclusively binational (origin and destination), as the links actively maintained by the actors-agents of transnationalism include different Asian immigrant communities scattered throughout the world, as well as the countrie of origin. Spain is just another location, one step more in the cross-over that Asian transnationalism involves; in short, a boundary territory that is still filled with opportunities to explore.

*Key words: Spain, Asia, international trade, diaspora, entrepreneurs, border, globalisation, migrations*

## ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTIVITY AMONG ASIAN COMMUNITIES IN GREECE

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This article analyses the presence of the population of Asian origin in Greece, a relatively recent phenomenon on which academic studies and available statistics are still fairly scarce. Following an analysis of the available sources, and based on their own research, the authors reach the conclusion that while it is from being the majority case, it is clear that Asian communities are notable for their autonomous professional and entrepreneurial activity in Greece, and furthermore that unlike other communities with a strong

presence in the country (i.e Albanians), Asians seek to differentiate themselves from their welcoming society by emphasising the ethnic nature of their business so as to specifically lend added value to their entrepreneurial practices. This creates new economic structures that have a positive impact on the Greek economy, which is invigorated by an increase in the number of workers, companies and taxpayers, at the same time as it transforms the urban landscape by revitalising (for example) some of Athens' most depressed neighbourhoods. These Asian diasporas, even though they display several common features, also have great differences which determine both their strategies for progressing in the welcoming society and their chances of achieving same. The underlying argument in the analysis is that the presence of the Asian diaspora represents a positive element for the Greek economy, in view of which the government should react by encouraging their integration and maximising their potential.

*Key words: Greece, immigration, Asian diasporas, Asia, ethnic entrepreneurs, migration policy*

### PROCESSES, CONVERGENCES AND VARIATIONS IN BUSINESSWOMEN OF ASIAN ORIGIN IN SPAIN

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This article analyses the different models of businesswomen of Asian origin in Spain. To that end, the author considers both the family variable in the migration project and the individual's own personal project. These variables, in turn, combine with others, such as the businesswomen's position in the family and the stage of the migration project in which they find themselves. As a result, the author defines four profiles: 1) family businesswomen; 2) women who market their own work; 3) daughters of business families; 4) daughters of the diaspora. Furthermore, a transversal element also exists among all the female entrepreneurs: the use of the "ethnic" as a business asset.

*Key words: Asia, Spain, immigration, women, gender, ethnic entrepreneurs, family business*

### INTERCULTURAL MARRIAGES AND FILIPINO WOMEN'S BUSINESSES IN THE NETHERLANDS

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Unlike other immigrant groups, Filipino immigrants do not, generally speaking, show any great inclination towards business; nevertheless, the fact that they frequently form part of bicultural marriages provides us with the opportunity to tackle issues that until now have virtually not been touched on explicitly in studies on immigrants' small businesses. This study focuses particularly on the role of marital relations and the influence

of structures that make up identity (such as gender, marital status and stage of life) on motivations, objectives and activity in relation to the business. Based on personal field work, the author explores this role of Filipino women married to Dutchmen and shows how, in addition to the personal aspirations of immigrants, their integration into a bicultural context has an impact (both direct and indirect) on the rebuilding of their identity, the shaping of their interests and, therefore, on the nature of their activities in the field of business.

*Key words:* The Netherlands, Phillipines, immigration, diaspora, women entrepreneurs, ethnic business-women

## INDIAN BUSINESSMEN IN FRANCE: AN INITIAL EXAMINATION OF THEIR ACTIVITIES IN A RAPIDLY-EVOLVING CONTEXT

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The aim of this article is to understand the implications of the recent economic and political evolution of Indian immigration in Europe, and specifically in France, their businesses and entrepreneurial groups, as well as their links with the countries of origin/welcoming countries and their transnational networks, using an historical and geoanthropological approach. The analysis also covers the essential links that the transnational entrepreneurs establish between France/Europe and the rest of the world, particularly with the emerging cities of Asia, the Middle East and, possibly, certain parts of Africa, such as South Africa, the Mascarene Islands and East Africa. To that end, the author begins by contextualising Indian business projects in France, before going on to examine the current situation of ethnic shops, the transnational companies of traditional trading communities and, to some extent, their Institute of Information Technology networks. The author also carries out a study of the "Mittal Case" as a new paradigm of research within the changing world economy, as the traditional North-South separation is undermined and the complexities of fields in research on trading and business groups is renewed. Finally, the author situates these debates within the growing world knowledge of the communities of Indian immigrants in France and their small ethnic businessmen and traders.

*Key words:* France, Indian diaspora, ethnic entrepreneurs, migration, new paradigms, information technologies, transnational networks

## INDIAN COMMUNITIES IN LISBON: CREATIVITY APPLIED TO BUSINESS AND SOCIAL STRATEGIES?

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Rather than interpreting the initial motivation behind the emergence of the business initiatives of Indian citizens resident in Lisbon, or identifying their sectors of activity, this work attempts to verify in what way

their activities bring innovative elements into the city. To that end, the author considers three domains: 1) the invigoration and animation of degraded areas in economic terms, as well as the creation of a new spatial symbology; 2) the supply of new products and services associated with the implementation of new market practices, and 3) the opening-up of new long-distance trading links interpreted as a component of the secondary internationalisation of the city. The entrepreneurial activities of these citizens help, furthermore (albeit indirectly), to introduce new cultural practices and also to revise certain mechanisms for regulating economic activities, in terms of timetables, urban planning and commercial regulation, and others. In response to the question of what Indian immigrants are contributing to Lisbon's urban dynamics, and in relation to the introduction of social changes, the author attempts to interpret the initiatives using the criterion of whether or not they represent creative social strategies. After an exhaustive analysis, the author concludes that, in fact, most of the commercial initiatives of immigrants with this origin incorporate innovative and creative features, and have clear, diverse impacts on the dynamic of the transformation of certain spaces in the metropolitan area of Lisbon; having said that, it would not seem justifiable to claim that they constitute, in themselves, Creative Social Strategies, in the fullest sense.

*Key words: Lisbon, immigration, Hindus, Indians, businessmen, ethnic economy, Creative Social Strategies, innovation*

### THE CASE OF THE SINDHI TRADERS IN THE CANARY ISLANDS: TRANSNATIONAL RELATIONS AND ECONOMIC ACTIVITY

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This article describes and analyses the presence and trading activities of the Sindhi community in the Canary Islands. This group is one of the oldest Asian diasporas in Spain, and is characterised by its hectic trading activity and, particularly, by the fact that it maintains a network of transnational contacts that shows that the community is established in over 100 countries. The starting point of the analysis is the historical, geographic and cultural context that favoured the exodus and arrival of this community to these islands. As other authors have mentioned in studies on transnationalism, and as these authors highlight very clearly with the group examined in this article, relations with members of the same community residing in other countries become forms of capital that provide information and communication on business opportunities and strategies in local enclaves, such as the loaning of capital and training opportunities in commercial activities and specific newly-created businesses that are adapted to certain geographic areas. The Sindhis are a community that, while it has remained faithful to its traditions and is relatively secretive, since the 1950s and with the rise of tourism, it has diversified in its areas of business and its establishment in the territory.

*Key words: Canary Islands, Sindhis, trade, Pakistan, diaspora, ethnic entrepreneurs, transnational networks, gende*

## PAKISTANIS IN ITALY: THE DISENCHANTMENTS OF “LIVING TRANSNATIONALLY”

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This article begins with a constructive critique of theories on immigration and highlights the problems implicit in the suppositions of the social network/capital theory and in research on ethnic economies and “transnationalism”. From these theories, the author adopts the postulates that he considers to be most useful for applying to the analysis of the Pakistani diaspora in Italy, demystifying the old theories and calling for greater focus on the economic policy of the networks of emigrants that actually exist. He believes that diasporas act as organisms that are linked in space and time, and which progressively mutate. He goes on to observe how the relatively weak links that today’s emigrants maintain with their country of origin contrast with the undoubtedly stronger links that previous generations of Pakistani emigrants maintained in the United Kingdom; thus he suggests that we should break the reductionist chain of association that automatically attributes greater levels of transnationalism to the new emigration. In this respect, Nobil Ahmad notes that political and economic factors are sometimes more important than technology when it comes to shaping the intensity of the connections sustained between the issuing and welcoming societies in the migration process. Pakistanis in Italy have spent most of their energy working or standing up for their political rights in Europe rather than travelling or sending money home. Likewise, he notes that it is not always true that social networks necessarily carry out the function of mediation of emigration and reducing its costs; on the contrary, in the Mediterranean, the prominence of agents in emigration networks suggests that we should be sensitive to the importance of mercantilised networks and to the commercial transactions between emigrants and autochthonous citizens. Finally, he calls attention to the individual experience of immigrants who have thrived businesswise, and whose experiences are determined by power relations, as well as by their position in the network or by the conditions surrounding their arrival in Italy, possibly from another European country and, perhaps, after becoming heavily indebted in order to pay for their journey. Following the waves of regularisations in Italy, most Pakistanis living there are facing a difficult environment.

*Key words: Italy, Pakistanis, diaspora, ethnic entrepreneurs, immigration, transnationalism, networks*

## PECUNIA EX MACHINA: PAKISTANI ENTREPRENEURS IN THE CITY OF BARCELONA

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The Pakistani migratory project is profoundly driven by economic objectives that are clearly apparent in their hard-working attitudes, their typically modest expenditure and consumption, the high rate of ethnic entrepreneurship and their remarkable commercial success. Nevertheless, the manifest economic inclination of the group involves a high social cost. This article analyses the economic and socio-cultural key issues

that underlie the economic behavior of Pakistanis, as well as the social cost of the migratory enterprise. Furthermore, the paper describes the socio-cultural traits of the Pakistani community and, through a description of Pakistani settlement, it focuses on other important processes that concern the configuration of the city, such as gentrification, centrifugation and reproduction.

*Key words: ethnic entrepreneur, migration, Pakistanis, social and cultural traits, economic cost, economic anthropology*

## CHINESE BUSINESSMEN AND “LEADERS” IN MADRID: POLITICAL AND ECONOMIC PRACTICES

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This article analyses the emergence of “leaders” of the Chinese community in Madrid, based on a study of a conflict that was brief but significant; specifically, the social protests carried out by shopkeepers and workers in the central district of Lavapiés in 2005 and 2006, and who were protesting against a controversial municipal regulations on trade. What is interesting about this study is the way that it analyses – through this experience of the mobilisation and representation of their community – the way in which these “leaders” were constituted as political entities, with links to the main relevant social actors (associationist movements, political parties and economic groups in Madrid) and how they co-opted a certain ability to represent the collective by incorporating such complex, symbolic elements as “being Chinese”, social class, affiliation to local parties and discourses on belonging to the welcoming country. The analysis shows, furthermore, that the various expressions of ethnicity do not represent a fixed, inert reality, but rather a dynamic process which, in addition to the actual paths of the main characters, takes shape based on the context in which it is immersed.

*Key words: Madrid, immigration, China, diaspora, entrepreneurs, community leaders*

## CHINESE ENTREPRENEURIAL ACTIVITY IN PORTUGAL: TRADITIONAL ETHNIC STRATEGIES?

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In Portugal in recent decades, just like in other welcoming countries, immigrants have reached levels of entrepreneurial activity that are higher than those of autochthonous citizens. However, a deeper analysis of the official data shows that not all immigrant groups have the same tendency to become entrepreneurs. In this respect, the Chinese stand out as being the group with the highest ratio of entrepreneurial activity in Portugal, despite the fact that their migration is a relatively recent phenomenon. What factors can explain the Chinese community’s disproportionate rate of entrepreneurial initiative? Do they possess any

particular resources that make them more enterprising than the autochthonous population, or than other groups of immigrants? Does the context of Portugal hamper certain opportunities or in some way limit their economic integration into the job market? Do we find similar business strategies among other Chinese entrepreneurs residing in welcoming societies apart from that of Portugal? Why did Chinese business initiative grow at such an exceptional rate in Portugal in the late 1990s? By seeking answers to these questions, this article attempts to examine Chinese business strategies in Portugal, as well as their exceptional success rate in comparison with other entrepreneurial immigrants. To that end, the author has analysed the data gathered in a survey carried out on 309 Chinese entrepreneurs resident in Portugal (see Oliveira, 2005).

*Key words: Portugal, immigration, Asia, China, diaspora, ethnic entrepreneurs, family business*