

Preface

This set of papers is the result of a discussion at a Conference on Childhoods in Oslo, Norway in July 2005, between Dr Vinod Chandra (University of Lucknow, India) and me. Our respective interests converged when we discovered that we were both protégés of a common progenitor viz. Prof K.N. Sharma - retired Professor of Anthropology, Indian Institute of Technology, Kanpur, and ex-editor of the *Eastern Anthropologist*. These papers are dedicated to him, especially for the guidance and inspiration he has given both of us in our respective careers and study of Indians abroad. Dr Chandra's participation in this project was unfortunately constrained by his relocation from the Indian Institute of Technology, Khoragpur, to the University of Lucknow, where his time was even more limited through the student unrest that took place in the latter part of 2006. Responses for this edition emerged after a joint call for papers was made through the internet and by word of mouth. We agreed that more needed to be written and published, particularly on Indians overseas, because of the increasing demand for their professional labour in both developed and developing countries. The terms upon which their trans-national movements are now based emphasizes the radical changes that have taken place since the earlier days of colonialism when Indians worked in the colonies as indentured labourers either to boost agricultural production or on their own as traders. Each of the papers here represents these shifts in several respects across several countries in the northern and southern hemispheres. A number of others have also inspired me to continue with this project – although it is not possible to mention all by name. I would however like to thank my wife Jayshree Singh, sons Janitra and Jivesh and daughter Lasila for their forbearance and understanding.

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Anand Singh