New diasporic strategies are altering the possibilities for transnational citizenship and redefining belonging through the introduction of emigrant documentary schemes. This article examines the Overseas Citizen of India, a state technology that transformed the emigrant from unwanted other into a desired diasporic subject. Outlining historical spatio-temporal junctures of the legal, policy, and bureaucratic engagements between the Government of India and emigrants reveals a deep emigrant infrastructure erected through three phases: active, reactive and hyperactive (which can be linked but not mapped onto the colonial, post-colonial, and post-liberal Indian state). Seeking a new analytic to de-naturalize the spatial connections between nation, state, territory, citizenship, and people, by tracing government-emigrant engagements, the paper brings into focus how India has actively constructed itself as a homeland with a diaspora. In postulating emigrant infrastructure this paper seeks to advance the understanding of extra-territorial translocal belonging and discussions of transnational citizenship.

I ABOUT THE SPEAKER I

Dr Dhooleka Sarhadi Raj is an urban anthropologist focused on political anthropology, transnational migration, Family and Gender, Memory, and South Asia. Dr. Raj is author of “Where are you from? Middle Class Migrants in the Modern World “ (2003, University of California Press), and is currently writing a book on Emigrant Infrastructure Foreign Policy, Diaspora Strategies and State Sovereignty based on 10 years of research on Overseas Citizens of India. Previously, she was the Associate Chair of South Asian Studies, Yale University. Dr. Raj has held Fellowships at The Radcliffe Institute, Harvard University and The University of Cambridge. She has served on the American Anthropological Association Committee of Ethics and The Ethics Task Force. Dr. Raj holds a doctorate in anthropology from the University of Cambridge. She has conducted fieldwork on Indian migrants (London), partition refugees (Delhi), globalization and the American family (Washington DC), and state responses to bioterrorism (USA). Trained as an anthropologist, she has taught undergraduate and graduate courses at Yale, Harvard and Cambridge. She is keenly interested in visual arts, film and literature.

I DATE I Wednesday, 19 March 2014
I TIME I 3.00pm to 4.30pm
I VENUE I Malay Studies Seminar Room, AS7 #04-13, Kent Ridge Campus, NUS

Please email sassec@nus.edu.sg to register