Chapter 1
Introduction

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This edited book wishes to re-energise debates on the conceptualisation of diasporas in migration scholarship and in geography. In particular, there is a need to engage with the potential tension between 'roots and routes' (Clifford, 1997) that those in diaspora often face and geographers are in an excellent position to further such debates. We wish to add to such work by focusing on the complex ways in which diasporas create and maintain connections and spaces with each other and their homelands, how they construct and imagine place, and the repercussions in terms of host country/homeland involvement and development. By doing this, we will draw attention to the ways geographers have addressed the juxtaposition between here and there and 'roots and routes' when it comes to analysing how exactly those in diaspora represent themselves and form attachments that span time and space and in which place is actively negotiated.

To do this, the book is divided into three sections. The first is on 'constructing and affecting diasporas'. In this sub-section, we wish to demonstrate how those in diaspora construct diasporic experiences and emotionalities in performative, embodied ways that enable here and there to merge and juxtapose in perhaps surprising, but also meaningful ways. Here, diasporas are dismantled to their core in understanding the mundane, the ordinary and the particular in how those in diaspora experience, perform, consume and construct sociality, be that in food, feelings, art, or communication. Such a socialising and socialisation process is what produces meaning-making through both interaction and consumption of everyday life activities from the simplicity of sustenance to the complexity of creative artistic forms of diasporic life.

The second section on 'dividing and politicising diasporas' explores the reality of being political within diasporic everyday lives and spaces, and how this can create unities, as well as disunities, divisions and connections. In this section, diasporic 'community' is dismantled and interrogated and power inequalities and contestations are revealed. It draws attention to the specific ways those in diaspora represent and negotiate politics and inclusion/exclusion in formal and informal ways. It adds to work on the geographies of diasporic politics (Carter, 2005, 2007; Dickinson and Bailey, 2007; Yeh 2007; Mavroudi, 2008, 2010), which outlines that diasporas are not necessarily transgressive, and are involved in boundary maintenance activities which may be extreme, and narrowly constructed. In doing so, this section stresses how attempts to create diasporic political change can be fraught with tension as voices and opinions struggle to be heard. In turn, this

reminds us that diasporas are not neatly organised political units, united under a single cause but are replete with contradictory positionalities as individuals and groups articulate different ways of being, feeling and acting diasporic.

The final section on diaspora and development continues with the themes of the previous sections, but specifically addresses development. It therefore does so in relation to notions of identity, belonging, politics and the reality of diasporas as contested and divided. However, at the same time, it examines more closely the impacts and repercussions of diasporas and their identities and politics on processes of development, building on work exploring the geographies of diaspora and development (Hugo, 2006; Mercer, Page and Evans, 2008; Larner, 2007; Mohan, 2008; Ho, 2011; Pasura, 2014). It adds to this work by providing empirical case studies on the realities of becoming involved in different types of broadly defined development activities both from afar but also through the process of return. Hence in this section we focus on patterns of dismantling diasporas in their exemplification as divisive and dividing but also how this process may shape developing pathways of diasporas as agents of change and progression.

This book builds on work which has been carried out on the geographies of diasporas and transnationalism (Christou, 2006a; McAuliffe, 2008; King and Christou 2010; King and Christou, 2011) and diasporic identity and belonging (Dwyer, 1999; Yeoh and Huang, 2000; Blunt, 2005; Yeh, 2007; Mavroudi, 2007b), which has highlighted the connections between here and there, the need to examine in detail such connections, and the repercussions on transnational and diasporic spaces. Research has also explored the realities of diasporic return (Christou, 2006a, 2006b, 2006c; Christou and King, 2014), diasporic landscapes (Christou and King, 2010), diasporic emotionalities (Christou, 2011) and diasporic childhood homecomings (King, Christou and Teerling, 2011). Other work has stressed the need for gendering diasporas (Christou and King, 2011; Hopkins, Kwan and Aitchison, 2012). Gendered mobilities involve a dual understanding of both the phenomenon of movement and the social categorizations inscribed in such movements beyond their physicality to the actors involved and the particular masculinities and femininities incorporated. Such mobilities where gender relations are incorporated can also become expressions of emotional geographies of home and belonging (cf. Christou and King, 2011: 284). Gendered geographies of movement, return, home and belonging are a critical arena of analytic engagement as we delve into spatial power geometries of gendered relations and the inherent emotional attachments and negotiations involved (ibid.). As Christou and King emphasise: 'We find that diasporic imaginaries and mobilities, including rootedness and rootlessness, are experienced differently by women and men' (2011: 287). Not only do social practices produce and reproduce norms of masculinity and femininity but the reconfigurations of everyday life as constrained or shaped by migration can further pronounce such categorizations.

This body of work has stressed the important role that geographers can play in interrupting assumptions about the spaces and processes of diaspora and the intricate, material and complex ways in which those in diaspora contest, construct

and perform identity, politics, and place. However, we argue that these themes can also be linked to the geographies of development, and whilst our book contains three distinct sections, we wish to stress that they should be read in relation to one another, and that there are important connections between them; in short, we feel that the triadic diaspora/identity/development lens is both valid and apparent throughout the book. For example, through engagement in development activities, those in diaspora are often being political, performing identity politics; likewise, negotiations of diasporic identity and connection are not necessarily free from nation-building projects, or homeland-oriented development. However, it is through examining diasporic identities, politics and how those in diaspora are involved in development within a single book that the nuanced connections between these seemingly different themes can be teased out.

Development itself is a contested, expansive, holistic process, which we see as part of everyday life, and which may be empowering for those involved in creating positive changes (Rahnema and Bawtree, 1997; McEwan, 2009; Silvey, 2009). There has been a great deal written on migration and development, specifically on remittances (de Haas, 2005), whether migration causes or results from development (Portes, 2009) and on return migration and the different ways skilled and unskilled migrant workers can contribute towards economic and political development and change in their homeland (Saxenian, 2005; Davies, 2012; Brinkerhoff, 2012). Despite the presence of diasporic communities that facilitate the flow of money, knowledge, and ideas, unfavourable conditions in the home country such as violence, lack of career opportunities, deficient infrastructure, and missing state support may prevent the desired development effect of transnational networks (Meyer, 2001; Saxenian, 2005; Portes, 2009).

Diaspora studies have focused on homeland development, and transnational migration studies have emphasised circulations between home and host countries. The interest of the first, the diasporic approach, resides in the ethnic, national, and/or religious ties that those in diaspora share with one another and with the homeland. Particular attention is devoted to the question of how these ties are used to 'help' the homeland through the various intellectual, scientific, and academic skills that those in diaspora are seen to possess (e.g., Yang and Welch 2010). In order to counter brain drain effects, governments have been increasingly utilising what were previously often informal networks, thus encouraging diaspora strategies that facilitate brain gain (i.e. return) or brain circulation as a way of promoting development in both host and home countries (Hugo, 2006; Larner, 2007; Mohan, 2008; Ho, 2011; Gamlen, 2013).

In their paper on the diaspora and development, Page and Mercer (2012) highlight the need to engage with Bourdieu's 'theories of practice' and what they call 'diasporas as communities of practice', diasporic lifestyles, and everyday life. They argue that we need to pay attention to the structural constraints to what is possible: 'if diasporas are agents of change then that agency is an amalgam of their institutions, structures, processes, histories and geographies' (ibid. 15). Thus, for them the geographies of diaspora and development necessitate studying 'everyday

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activities' that may be linked to development. In this book, we also define development in a broad manner, stressing how individuals, communities, practices and identities connect here and there, affecting lives, spaces, networks and places, which in turn may impact upon different forms of development, and in particular, on feelings of cultural, social, political and economic change. It emphasises how those in diaspora feel about their lives, their identities, and where/who/what they feel connected to. In doing so we wish to dismantle the privileging of the diaspora/homeland and the routes/roots dichotomy by stressing the relational, performative, elastic and malleable nature of how here and there are linked. Although we are aware of what Brubaker (2005) has called the 'diaspora' diaspora and the need to clarify definitions, we feel strongly that diasporas need to be as inclusive as possible in terms of who counts as part of a diaspora. At the same time however, within such an approach and analysis, we also need to bear in mind that through their very elasticity and flexibility, such connections are dynamic and subject to structures, power relations, blockages and marginalisations, whereby people's ability and propensity to act and feel 'diasporically' linked to another place may be curtailed. This then may beg the question of how we are actually defining and using diaspora within this book, and subsequently how we operationalise both their dismantling and their development.

The expansive degree of movement within, between and beyond borders has not only pre-occupied the public and politicians, governments and policy-makers but has stimulated social science inquiry toward new conceptualisations of migratory phenomena, primarily with three analytical and explanatory frameworks, the mobilities paradigm, the transnational approach and diasporas studies (King and Christou, 2011: 452). The diversity of mobilities, movements and migrations is not solely a semantic take in reconceptualising flows. It goes beyond a simplistic constellation of concepts as definitions are grounded on both the phenomena themselves and the analytic tools we employ to understand them. To derive conceptual clarity is to understand that these movements have direction, purpose, active agents, temporal, spatial, territorial, cultural characteristics and motivations that may not simply fit into an economic or political container as sexual citizenship, lifestyle, and education all lead to their equivalent migrations. The conflation of diaspora and transnationalism is not only erroneous, it is unhelpful and diminishes the paradigmatic contribution of both. To use them interchangeably is to miss their canonical features. As 'master concepts', Faist (2010) indulges us in deconstructing fully their micro and macro differences, a discussion that could not be replicated fully here but one that needs to acknowledge the historical specificity, the translocalities involved and the agentic desires of migrants involved in the phenomena either as diasporic or transnational migrants or both. As King and Christou denote, 'a migrant can be diasporic without being transnational, or transnational without being diasporic, or both, or neither' (2011: 456).

On the one hand, diasporas have been viewed as more closed static entities; on the other, they have been viewed as flexible, creative and transgressive, crossing borders and container concepts of identity and belonging (Ní Laoire,

2003; Mavroudi, 2007a; Blunt, 2007; Knott and McLoughlin, 2010). Whilst there is a need to clarify what is meant by diaspora, this book purposefully takes an expansive and broad view of what constitutes a diaspora, and does not aim to provide classifications or characteristics. It thus seeks to stimulate discussion on how migrants define diaspora, how they feel about being in diaspora, and how they connect to different spaces, places, people and networks. At the same time, it seeks to understand how such migrant experiences shape, mediate and translate the diasporic condition. We aim to articulate the diasporic condition in its varying facets but always situated within the geographies of everyday life, be that on a local or global scale, a translocal, transnational and transcultural context. It is this last point which highlights the important perspective that geographers can provide on diaspora. To adequately engage with the geographies of diaspora one must critically examine the assumptions behind living, feeling and being in diaspora, and the material and emotional connections that exist between places.

Diasporas can be seen as in process (Mavroudi, 2007a), influenced by roots/routes, (im)mobilities, (dis)connections, nationalism and post-nationalism, living in and beyond states. Although we view diasporas as fluid, in-between and 'on the move', we also feel that they are influenced by structures, potentially disempowered by power inequalities, and trapped by poverty; in short they may be both enabled and disabled by being in diaspora. Although we can view diasporas as utopian, as uniquely able to live within and transcend national and identity boundaries, the reality for many of those who live within diaspora may be different, as Said suggests: '[they may] be identified in the diasporic, wandering, unresolved, cosmopolitan consciousness of someone who is both inside and outside his or her community' (cited in Ashcroft, 2009: 18). This juxtaposition between inclusion and exclusion, between here and there, needs further addressing and unpacking, paying attention to how those in diaspora negotiate identities, nations, boundaries, politics, communities, spaces and places in relation to one another and host/homeland contexts without privileging any of these.

Notions of diaspora as fluid and hybrid stress that those in diaspora transgress borders, and live and feel in-between here and there; that they have moved beyond the constraints of the nation-state and that their lives are lived in movement, constantly negotiating their identities as a result of context, structures and agency. Their identities are not given, primordial or static, but evolving. They are contingent and often contested and fragmented but above all characterised by fluidity. They force us to consider the validity of borders and of nations themselves, as Ashcroft (2009: 17) highlights: 'The borders from which we might be free are therefore not simply the boundaries of the nation but those of nationness, and ultimately of identity itself'.

Although diaspora studies privilege the 'homeland', we wish to lessen this grip and open up the idea of multiple homes and complicate linear perspectives on here and there, sending and receiving contexts. This then also complicates debates around the relationships between diaspora and development and forces us to consider who counts as diaspora (and whether this matters), who acts as part of

a diaspora and what the implications of this are on sending and receiving contexts. Part of this problematising process is also to consider the gender dynamics and power inequalities that exist within and between those in diaspora and who may be included or excluded in processes of identity formation, collective political action, and socio-economic spaces and networks. Through such an approach we wish to analyse not only the emotional and the biographical/personal/performative but also the very grounded and material nature of being and living in/dwelling in diaspora and what this entails for messy daily lives.

Diaspora, as approached in this book, aims to move beyond the nation, whilst acknowledging that people may still be constrained by it. For us perhaps most importantly, the focus on the geographies of diaspora, identity, connection and development means a focus on change, on the politics of hope, possibility, and empowerment which is grounded in everyday life and the juxtaposition of here and there. Additionally, we acknowledge that such geographies of diasporas are translocal, multi-sited and multi-scalar (cf. Brickell and Datta, 2011) with actors as active agents in their experiential potential as 'engaging in different geographical orbits, under different structural conditions, but all forming various social, cultural, political, corporal and agentic connections during mobility and movement' (Brickell and Datta, 2011: 17).

We will now provide a more detailed overview of the three sections of the book. The first section on constructing and affecting diasporas aims to deal more specifically with the emotional and embodied ways in which those in diaspora enact and negotiate change. Through food (Brightwell on Brazilian food spaces in London, UK), theatre (Richardson on African-Caribbean people in Bristol, UK), urban (Finlay on Moroccans in Granada, Spain) and gendered spaces (Binaisa on Ugandans in London, UK), dis/connecting and interacting in 'community' spheres, the authors in this section demonstrate how identities are malleable, and situated in particular contexts, stressing the fluidity of attachments to nation and diaspora and complicating notions of home and belonging. The chapters highlight that diasporic identities can be negotiated in multiple ways, and that people can belong to multiple host and homeland communities.

The second section turns the lens onto the more politicised constructions of national, religious and ethnic identity amongst diasporic groups who are involved in struggles for self-determination and recognition. The chapters in this section therefore pay attention to the ways in which diasporas practice politics and mobilise support, and the ways in which diasporas strive to be united even as they recognise their complexity, disunity and power inequalities (Demir and Baser in relation to the Kurdish diaspora) and new ways to be diasporic and connect (McConnell on the Tibetan 'Lhakar' movement). At the same time, there are identifications which are grounded on 'moral' and 'aesthetic' framings of belonging and unlike those that are polemical, contested and disharmonious, despite conflictual elements there may profoundly exist such compelling cases of co-responsibility and embodied performance of incorporation as exemplified in Jones's study of Tamils from Sri Lanka, India, Malaysia and Singapore who have migrated to the UK. Similarly to

the first section, everyday life is invoked and an important aspect of analysis, but is more explicitly saturated with an emotional politics of space and place.

The third section seeks to explore how diasporas connect in more material ways with their homelands and in the process, the ambivalences and difficulties this can create. The focus is on diasporic perspective, shedding light on diaspora strategies, why/how those in diaspora may choose to get involved in the affairs of their homeland(s), return and the strategies they and their governments may employ (Koh on the potential for non-*Bumiputera* Malaysians to return and Lee on the realities of return of Korean New Zealanders). It complicates simplistic assumptions about who counts as diaspora, diasporic unity, and the myriad and specific ways in which people coalesce around issues. In particular, like the rest of the book, it continues to dismantle and question the linkages between ethno-nationalism, development and diaspora. It illustrates that people in diaspora join forces for a variety of reasons and causes, such as malaria (Page and Tanyi on the African Diaspora Action Against Malaria), that there are barriers to such participation (Fischer on Afghans in Germany) and that governments must not assume the loyalties of those they think should be categorized as diasporic (Mavroudi on Greeks in Australia).

One of the key contributions of this book is the unpacking of who counts as diasporic, what diasporic identity should resemble, and the ways in which those who feel part of a diaspora act in relation to others in and 'out' of diaspora, and different diasporic and non-diasporic spaces – we cannot take these feelings and actions for granted. What then does this mean for definitions of diaspora, diasporic identity and for the relationships between diaspora and development?

We feel that this means that there can be no easy assumptions about the answers to these questions. With a focus on the politics of the everyday, attachments and belonging across time and space, and encompassing myriad, and often juxtaposed places, are blurred. The process of being and doing in diaspora is a constant grating of here, there, of self and other, a constructing and dismantling of binaries, essentialisms and categories. It is through the mundane, the banal, and the extraordinary or specific that development as a process occurs within and across borders.

If governments or policy makers seek to promote development through emigrants and diasporas, they need to therefore pay attention to the everyday lives, feelings, acts, inequalities, exclusions and power relations that unite and divide their emigrant citizens and non-citizens, and the policies that explicitly and inadvertently promote and hinder connections between different places and people at different scales. Instead of narrowly defining who counts as part of 'their' diaspora, they need to understand the lives, identities and connections that all those who have left, returned, who come and go, and who are linked to them in meaningful ways. Notions such as the 'affinity diaspora' (Ancien, Boyle and Kitchin, 2009) and 'elective diaspora' (Jöns, Mavroudi and Heffernan,

forthcoming) capture this need for a broad and flexible understanding of who constitutes a diaspora.[1]

Finally, for development to occur, arguably a key commitment on the part of governments, policy makers, migrants and non-migrants should be to ensure that the relationships between migration and development are enabling, empowering and grounded in everyday life. Rather than creating arbitrary boundaries around nation-hood and belonging and barriers to mobility and connection, governments need to celebrate connectedness and in-betweenness. Diaspora as a concept is a constant reminder that diversity is not merely about the tolerance of difference, but about acceptance of the reality of 'super-diversity' (Vertovec, 2007), and the fluidity of categories, even as we recognise and combat the ever-present continuation of negative markers and extremist constructions of difference within and beyond diasporas. It is in this direction that we seek to *dismantle diasporas* in order to disassemble nodes of connectivity, to disaggregate matrices of development and to reconceptualise frameworks of identity for a geographically grounded re-thinking of their contemporary practices and contributions to the study of mobilities and populations.

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1   Ancien, Boyle and Kitchin (2009) argue that governments need to be aware of 'affinity diasporas' who comprise people who are affiliated and attached to a country, but who may also be citizens of another country; for example, immigrants to Australia may form part of its affinity diaspora even though they may also feel part of their original home country's diaspora. The notion of an 'elective diaspora' stresses that governments need to look beyond what they perceive to be their ethno-national diaspora to other groups of people who may be emotionally attached to the country even if they have no ethno-national linkages to it.

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