

Interview

Karim H. Karim

To cite this article: Karim H. Karim (2021, January 27) Personal communication [Email interview], Turkish Journal of Diaspora Studies, 1(1), 115-116, DOI: 10.52241/TJDS.2021.0010

To link to this article: <https://doi.org/10.52241/TJDS.2021.0010>



© 2021 Karim H. Karim. Published with license by Migration Research Foundation



Published online: 30 March 2021



Submit your article to this journal [↗](#)

Interview

Karim H. Karim

School of Journalism and Communication, Carleton University, Ottawa, Canada

Q1. The concept of diaspora is used to define almost any community who has a distinct identity tied with an imagined or territorialized nation outside the resident country. Nationalization of the concept of "victim" diaspora seems no longer prevailing but communities beyond the territory of a nation generally fit the picture. Migration or exile is not the only cause to form diasporic communities. To some studies, socially, culturally, religiously, ethnically, linguistically, and/or geopolitically amalgamated communities are also deemed to form diaspora. Having said that, what do you think about the impact of the proliferation of the usage on the conceptualization of diaspora? And/or, how would you conceptualize diaspora?

A1. I agree with the expansion of the application of the term beyond "victim diasporas." The initial concept was applied in ancient Greece more neutrally to geographic dispersals of groups. There is a sociological problem of making the concept too wide, but I am generally in favour of inclusivity.

Q2. States are increasing their efforts all around the world for diaspora engagement; however, they still lack in giving efforts in internationally debated policies. This does not mean that states do not have diaspora policies of their own but we don't see the diasporic issues discussed among states perhaps due to political and socio-cultural sensibility. Is it possible for states to consider debating diaspora internationally beyond assimilation or nationalization policies?

A2. Groups within diasporas may become an oppositional force to ruling governments and establishments in the territorial state. On the other hand, greater exchange of ideas, technology and finances are facilitated between diasporas and homelands.

Q4. In general, diaspora studies are not at their peak values. A small number of scholars dedicate their time to diaspora issues. For those who are eager to study this subject, what are the fundamental approaches to studying the concept of diaspora? Why is it important to study and how do you see where diaspora studies are heading to or need to go?

A4. It is important to study diasporas because they number in the tens of millions and have a tangible economic, social and cultural impact on almost all parts of the world. The dominant ("naturalized") conceptual template to studying society is the territorialized state. Therefore, there is conceptual resistance to studying diasporas, which are seen as anomalous within this framework. Human beings have been migrating across the globe for tens of thousands of years. The study of diaspora needs to embrace this fundamental fact which legitimizes it as an essential part of research on human society.