



Western

Centre for Research on
Migration and Ethnic Relations

**Winter Colloquium
Series 2021**

Tahseen Shams



Tahseen Shams is an Assistant Professor of Sociology and the 2020-21 Biessell-Heyd Research Fellow of the Centre for the Study of the United States at the University of Toronto. She received her PhD from the University of California in 2018. Her research interests are international migration, globalization, race/ethnicity, and nationalism. The question that guides all her research pursuits is how transnational, global forms of inequality intersect with local forms of boundary-work to affect immigrant groups, particularly those coming from Muslim-majority countries to the West. Her work has received several grants and awards, including funding from the National Science Foundation, and an Honorable Mention for Best Article from the Global and Transnational Sociology section of the American Sociological Association. In addition to her book, *Here, There, and Elsewhere: The Making of Immigrant Identities in a Globalized World* (Stanford University Press 2020), she has sole-authored several articles in top-tier journals. Visit her website tahseenshams.org for more information.

Here, There and Elsewhere: The Making of Immigrant Identities in a Globalized World

Challenging the commonly held perception that immigrants' lives are shaped exclusively by their sending and receiving countries, *Here, There and Elsewhere* breaks new ground by showing how immigrants are vectors of globalization who both produce and experience the interconnectedness of societies – not only the societies of origin and destination, but also, the societies in places beyond. Tahseen Shams posits a new concept for thinking about these places that are neither the immigrants' homeland nor hostland – the “elsewhere.” Drawing on rich ethnographic data, interviews, and analysis of the social media activities of South Asian Muslim Americans, Shams uncovers how different dimensions of the immigrants' ethnic and religious identities connect them to different elsewhere in places as far-ranging as the Middle East, Europe, and Africa. Yet not all places in the world are elsewhere. How a faraway foreign land becomes salient to the immigrant's sense of self depends on an interplay of global hierarchies, homeland politics, and hostland dynamics. Referencing today's 24-hour news cycle and the ways that social media connects diverse places and peoples at the touch of a screen, Shams traces how the homeland, hostland, and elsewhere combine to affect the ways in which immigrants and their descendants understand themselves and are understood by others.

**Thursday, February 11, 2021
4:00 pm, Virtual Zoom Event
All Welcome!**

<https://westernuniversity.zoom.us/j/93903976058>