

**Nordic Summer University Summer Session 2010 in Majvik, Finland,
24 – 31 July 2010**

Study Circle 3

**South Asia in the 21st Century: Explorations in Multidisciplinary
Methodology**

Call for Papers!!

This workshop will have two separate themes:

- 1. South Asian Migration and Diaspora (coordinators Peter B. Andersen and Igor Kotin)*
- 2. Religion and Conflict in South Asia (coordinators Stig Toft Madsen and David Hansen (to be confirmed))*

The first theme is a continuation of the workshop in the summer of 2009. The second theme is the theme originally slated for the summer of 2010. The two themes will be scheduled separately, but the intention is to let the themes enrich each other in the final discussions.

Theme 1. South Asian Migration and Diaspora

Various patterns of migration have created different South Asian diaspora communities in the Africa, the Caribbean, North America and Europe. In Europe, the research environment has mainly focused on the economic integration of migrant groups into the host community's labour market. The aim of this workshop is to investigate how culture, and the organisation of culture, constructs various aspects of migration, integration and diaspora formation.

Under the overall theme "South Asia in the 21st Century: Explorations in Multidisciplinary Methodology", the workshop invites papers covering:

- * The Historical Depth and Geographical Dissemination of South Asian Migration*
- * South Asian Diasporas in the Nordic Countries: Identity, Community*

Organization and Culture

** The Reflections of Migration in Art, Literature and Music*

** Cultural Interaction between Diasporas, Home Communities and Host Communities*

** Migration of Religions, Religions of Migrants: Hinduism, Sikhism, Jainism and South Asian Islam Overseas*

Overseas migration from India is an old phenomenon, but during the last fifty years it has become a global phenomena of great importance. With approximately 1.6 billion inhabitants, the migratory potential of South Asia is huge. Many pull and push factors influence migration, but opportunities for employment, higher income, education, professional careers, security and equality are important pull factors.

South Asian migration has changed significantly through history. The Indian diaspora in the Age of Merchants (11th-18th century) followed the movement of traders and merchants, religious and other specialists, seafarers and slaves. Migration in the Age of Colonial Capital (19th-early 20th century) involved the forced movement of people and the movement of indentured labourers from India to many parts of the British Empire, particularly those with plantation economies. It also saw the beginning of free migration and the continuation of merchant activity in both traditional areas and in territories newly opened by the expansion of the empire. The mid-20th century post-colonial movement of people from South Asia to Western countries and the related re-migration involved business people and professionals to new and, in some cases, formerly prohibited areas such as Australia. Now the diversity of the South Asian diasporas is great: 'twice migrants' from East Africa, refugees from the civil war in Sri Lanka, IT workers from Tamil Nadu, nurses from Kerala, descendants of plantation workers from Bangladesh, Bihar and Bengal, business people from Pakistan and so on.

Contributions may focus on the cultural and social life of the diaspora, the ways in which language and religious values and practices have been adopted and transformed, how some languages became languages of communication and the sacred languages of religion, how popular culture, theatre, cinema, music, dance, fashion and cuisine have evolved, and the

important role of sports, including cricket.

Within each country with a substantial South Asian population, there are a number of local and national organizations that centre around religious affiliation, cultural background, regional languages, regional origin in the subcontinent, or particular cultural spheres, including music, art, dance or sport. The transnational connections, communication technologies, and increased purchasing power have made it easier for them to establish contacts with communities elsewhere. The South Asian diasporas are now a complex confluence of many discrete life worlds, languages and histories. South Asian writers such as V.S. Naipaul, Salman Rushdie, Hanif Kureishi, Rohinton Mistry, Amitav Ghosh, Jumpa Lahiri, and Vikram Seth, as well as Bollywood and Tamil movies have made diaspora life known to a general Western audience and generated global interest in the South Asian diasporas.

Theme 2. Religion and Conflict in South Asia

Religious violence continues to be coupled to political conflicts in South Asia. Such violence challenges not only the writ of government and the capacity of the security sector, but also the values and daily life of people in general. This applies most obviously to Pakistan and Afghanistan, where Islamist religious violence is currently at a peak, but it also applies to India, which is largely at the receiving end of Islamism. In Bangladesh, the current government has taken unprecedented steps to limit the scope for religion in politics. In Sri Lanka, a long-running civil war has been brought to a violent end exposing unexpected intra-religious elite conflicts. In Nepal, religion (read: Hinduism) has lost much of its political clout, while Maoism has gained currency. Here, left extremism seems to have crowded out religious fundamentalism. The rise of Maoism is also felt in India, but here Hindutva revivalism retains a central political position. Thus, in each of the South Asian countries, religious arguments and religiously inspired violence have at times structured political debates and conflicts - while in other instances political conflicts do not wear the cloak of religious.

Granted the frequency, scale and impact of religiously inspired violence in

South Asia, the region invites renewed examination of political violence in a global perspective. On that basis, the workshop will ask: What are the lessons that students of religious and nonreligious conflict may derive from South Asia? Do political conflicts in South Asia follow religious fault lines? To what extent does Islamic extremism define regional political relations? How do religious and nonreligious civil conflicts influence relations between the South Asian region, the Middle East, and the West?

The session will also take stock of the capacity of religious movements to moderate virulent expressions of faith. Within Islam, Sufism has often been seen as a moderating factor with its rich blend of Hindu, Buddhist and Zoroastrian culture. In Pakistan and India, religious leaders have issued fatwas condemning the theories of jihad promoted by Salafis, Talibanis and others. The question is how such counter-movements fare in today's South Asia.

Finally, the workshop invites contributions on the role of the media in reporting religious and nonreligious conflicts in South Asia. Where does conflict journalism stand today?

General information:

Language: The presentation at the NSU summer session may be in the Nordic languages or in English. This workshop will be conducted in English to encourage non-Nordic participation.

Fee: The fee covers boarding and lodging. Travel costs to the conference site will be supported for participants from the Nordic countries as announced on the NSU homepage; see <http://www.nsuweb.net/wb/>. NSU will not subsidize the travel costs of non-Nordic participants, but the coordinators of this workshop will try to subsidize a few non-Nordic participants. More information about this later.

Registration:

The registration procedure will be announced by NSU around Easter, but please contact us as soon as possible and send us a preliminary title and abstract (200-250 characters) of your paper by April 15, 2010. Please include your name, title, affiliation, phone number, email address, and postal address.

For theme 1 please email title and abstract, etc. to Peter B. Andersen, Associate Professor, University of Copenhagen, peterba@hum.ku.dk, +45-35 32 91 90/+45-35 42 81 53 with a copy to Katrine Herold, Project Coordinator, NIAS-Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, Leifsgade 33, DK-2300 Copenhagen S, Katrine.Herold@nias.ku.dk, +45-35 32 95 04.

For theme 2 please mail title and abstract, etc. to Stig Toft Madsen, Fil. Dr., stm@ruc.dk with a copy to Katrine Herold, Project Coordinator, NIAS-Nordic Institute of Asian Studies, Leifsgade 33, DK-2300 Copenhagen S, Katrine.Herold@nias.ku.dk, +45-35 32 95 04.

Looking forward to see you in Finland!

Peter Birkelund Andersen and Stig Toft Madsen
March 19, 2010