



**Department of Sociology
Faculty of Social Sciences
South Asian University**

Young Scholars' Conference – 15-17 October 2015

**ON GENDER AND SEXUALITY:
DISCOURSES, DIALOGUES AND PRAXIS
IN CONTEMPORARY SOUTH ASIA**

Call for Papers

In South Asia, the systematic analysis of issues pertaining to gender first emerged in the 1970s and 1980s, and even later with regard to sexuality. Research and practice engaging with questions of gender and sexuality have undergone critical changes in the past few years. From paradigms that were solely organized around binaries, dualisms and *difference*, there is now a discernible shift towards analysis and interpretation with regard to the *diversity* of gendered and sexual identities and practices, seeking to account for fragmented experiences, diverse representations and multiple perceptions of gender and sexuality within the South Asian region.

Simultaneously, rapid socio-economic changes in the region continue to pose new challenges to conceptualizations, theorizations and gendered politics. In contemporary times, South Asia has been witness to many new socio-economic and political dynamics: the emergence of neoliberal ideologies and the global marketplace, militarization and war, religious revivalism, rising violence against women, the feminization of poverty, the emergence of LGBT movements and a simultaneous backlash to queer visibility, all amidst growing mediatisation, including via social media, which perforce give rise to new questions as to what constitute the analytical and critical categories necessary for thinking about gender and sexuality, and the way such categories actually operate in everyday social life.

As part of their annual intellectual calendar, the graduate students of the Department of Sociology at South Asian University present the Young Scholars Conference on a specific theme, which is open to other graduate students, young researchers and teachers. Based on the theme, 'On Gender and Sexuality: Discourses, Dialogues and Praxis in Contemporary South Asia' and the outline above, we invite empirically grounded papers which critically reflect on gender and sexuality in South Asia through any of the following foci:

- Violence, marginalization, state institutions and state policies – experiences of conflict and war;
- War, militarization and religious revivalism;
- The gendered economy, neoliberalism, and economic restructuring;

- Gender and sexuality in everyday life: households, domesticity, private and public spaces;
- Masculinities;
- Queer and LGBT communities, social movements and politics;
- Visual media and cultural representations, new cultures of consumption and the body;
- The virtual experience of gender and sexuality: cyberspace and social networks;
- Resistive praxis, contemporary feminist debates, and social movements.

Through these papers, we hope to start a conversation on whether there is a need to rethink foundational questions and debates about gender and sexuality in South Asia in the contemporary context. How do we understand the articulation of gendered lives and sexualities with contemporary transformations in the social, cultural, economic and political domains? How do these developments manifest themselves in everyday experiences of gender relations, sexual identities and practices in different parts of South Asia, and how are they inflected at the intersections of caste, class, religion and ethnicity? Have new forms of resistance, voices and practices emerged regarding gendered violence, marginalization and labour, and how do state policies and institutions respond to these? Are alternative perspectives emerging from the new and massively increased visibility of issues around gender and sexuality in the public sphere?

Eligibility

Papers are invited from candidates in MA and MPhil/PhD programs in the social sciences and humanities at recognized universities and research organizations in South Asia. We also welcome contributions from individuals who are currently not enrolled in any university provided no more than one year has passed since their graduation from at least an MA programme.

Submission Guidelines

Initially, by **May 10th 2015**, an abstract of no more than 500 words has to be forwarded by email as an attachment to: The Coordinator, On Gender and Sexuality: Discourses, Dialogues and Praxis in Contemporary South Asia, Department of Sociology, Faculty of Social Sciences, South Asian University, Akbar Bhawan, Chanakyapuri, New Delhi 110021, India. Email address: **scholars-conf@soc.sau.ac.in**

Authors of selected abstracts will be informed by email by **May 22nd 2015**, and complete papers have to be submitted for plagiarism review by **September 15th 2015**.

Inquiries

All inquiries should be addressed to the Coordinator - On Gender and Sexuality: Discourses, Dialogues and Praxis in Contemporary South Asia: **scholars-conf@soc.sau.ac.in**