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Announcing an International Seminar on

## **HINDU TRANS-NATIONALISM: ORGANIZATIONS, IDEOLOGIES, NETWORKS**

20-21 November 2009 • Rice University, Houston, TX (USA)

### **CALL FOR PAPERS**

The focus of this seminar will be on Hindu nationalist organizations and networks that operate transnationally. Hindu nationalism in diaspora can take on organizational forms and approaches very different to those apparent in Indian contexts. Sometimes more vociferous, sometimes more refined, diasporic Hindu nationalism is paradoxically at once pluralist and sectarian, and always in conversation with two sets of local issues: those that are relevant to migrant Indian communities (multiculturalism, racism, immigrant dilemmas, and so on) as well as those that are relevant in India. These dynamics produce new possibilities for the development of Hindu nationalist identity beyond the local(ity), invoking aspirations to project a global profile, for instance to “consolidate, strengthen and make invincible the global Hindu fraternity” and to work for the “total welfare of humanity on the basis of the unique cultural ethos of Bharatvarsha” (VHP, 2006). In what ways do such ideological aspirations produce and manifest a Hindu trans-nationalist consciousness? How are they challenged by alternative forms of globalised Hindu identity? We are seeking papers that examine the organisational dynamics and assess the impact of Hindu trans-nationalism on the development of new forms of public Hindu identity, in diasporic, Indian, and global/transnational contexts.

Our keynote speakers will be Arvind Rajagopal (Associate professor of Media Studies at New York University) and Christophe Jaffrelot (Senior Research Fellow at the Centre national de la recherche scientifique [CNRS]).

The present seminar is the fifth in a two-year network project series exploring the “Public representation of a religion called Hinduism,” funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council in the UK: <http://www.arts.manchester.ac.uk/hinduism/>. Previous seminars have examined modern temple building and public forms of worship, Hindu nationalist organisations in social and political context, ecumenical Hinduism, and modern sampradayas and media hinduism. The overall aim of the project is to examine ways in which Hinduism has asserted and maintained a public presence in a range of contemporary contexts. The network seeks to bring together researchers in several disciplines to build a nuanced, context-sensitive analysis of the representations of Hinduism in a range of public contexts, and in three countries where it has a prominent role: India, the US and the UK.

Please send a 250-word paper proposal to Deepa Reddy ([reddy@uhcl.edu](mailto:reddy@uhcl.edu)) by June 15, 2009. Paper proposers may expect updates on acceptances and a preliminary conference schedule by mid-July.

The network is in a position to offer some financial assistance to potential paper givers in order to enable them to attend this meeting. Please contact John Zavos at [john.zavos@manchester.ac.uk](mailto:john.zavos@manchester.ac.uk) to discuss possibilities.