



Call for Papers

National Seminar

on

**“Culture, Identity and Diplomacy: Revisiting Concept
of an Inclusive *Bharat Rashtra*”**

November 26 - 27, 2015

Organised by

UGC Center for Southern Asia Studies
School of Social Sciences and International Studies
Pondicherry University, Puducherry - 605014

In-collaboration with
National Social Science Association

Co-sponsored by
ICHR & ICSSR, New Delhi

Venue
Convention cum Cultural Complex
Pondicherry University
Puducherry – 605014

Pondicherry University

Pondicherry, now Puducherry, is a Union Territory with one of the highest levels of quality of life in the country with excellent physical infrastructure and almost a hundred per cent literacy level. The Pondicherry University was established at this beautiful town in 1985 by the Government of India through an Act of Parliament. The University is located in the serene surroundings on Coromandel Coast and 10 km north of Puducherry. The campus is spread over 780 acres of land some of which is rolling down to the sea beach. The University is a member of the Association of Commonwealth Universities and has signed Memorandum of Understanding with several foreign universities / institutes. A recent survey reported by the UGC (University Grants Commission) and the NAAC (National Accreditation and Assessment Council) ranked this university as one of the best in the country.

UGC Centre for Southern Asia Studies

The UGC sanctioned this Center (initially in a programme mode) to the University during the 10th plan in June 2005. The chief objective of this Center is to promote policy-oriented as well as theoretical research and publication in the field of Southern Asia Studies. The Center is also intended to promote cultural understanding in the region and build up library on the subject. The area of teaching and research of this Center is wider than that of South Asian Studies and as the Southern Asian region covers not only SAARC countries, but also a part of West, East and South-East Asia. To be more precise, this region covers the area between the Gulf of Hormuz and the Strait of Malacca.

Theme of the Seminar

It is generally argued that concept of nation and national feeling did not exist in *Bharat* before the advent of the Britishers. National feeling emerged only when the Britishers united *Bharat* through railway, telegraph, and English language on the one hand, and through the suppression and exploitation of the *Bhartiya* people on the other hand. This ultimately culminated into throwing of the British imperialism and emergence of *Bharat* as a nation state in 1947.

While no one can possibly deny an element of truth in the above-mentioned assumption, a careful study of *Bhartiya* nationalism brings out a quite different reality. For, it is wrong to proclaim that the British through their rule unified *Bharat* as a cohesive political entity for the first time. *Bharat* had existed as a separate country for several thousand years, united by its geography and its culture. Politically also very large part of *Bharat* have existed as single empire long before colonization by the British. Technically, British never ruled over whole of *Bharat*. There were around 600 independent states within *Bharat* which were independent kingdoms with which British had entered in to treaties. Besides, there were territories within *Bharat* that were under control of countries like France and Portugal.

The most harmful aspect of damage inflicted by the British colonial masters, however, was the generating of inferiority complex among *Bhartiyas*' about their entire culture and tradition. From the very beginning the British depicted *Bharat* as a fallen country, politically despotic, socially backward, religiously primitive and pagan. It followed that there was very little worth preserving, a premium being placed on a total reconstruction of *Bharat* along 'civilized' European lines. To be reborn, *Bharat* needed to be culturally destroyed first. When the British

established their rule in in this ancient land, they realized that colonization would be incomplete without the colonization of ‘mind’ and of the intellectual and cultural traditions of the people being colonized. At the same time, the British rulers deliberately created divisions on religious, linguistic, regional and caste lines. The propagation of false theory of Aryan invasion was a part of this larger conspiracy to keep *Bhartiya* slave indefinitely.

When *Bharat* got independence in 1947, it was expected that *Bhartiya* educational system would be changed, as done elsewhere in the world, to detoxify *Bhartiya* mind. Unfortunately, this hope was dashed to ground by the rulers of free *Bharat*. They not only allowed the Macaulay line of degenerating *Bhartiya* culture and civilization to continue, but this became more vigorous with the Marxists joining this vicious campaign. Similarly, attempts to deepen social fault lines were given a boost with commencement of electoral democracy. Intellectuals and media began to stress over more on what divides *Bharat* rather than on what unites this ancient civilization either due to state patronage or due to ignorance or both. Instead of understanding and underlining unique aspect of *Bhartiya Rashtra* based on cultural and civilization unity, they began to portray *Bharat* as a multinational entity with one state having the possibility of fragmentation. An American scholar, Selig Harrison, went to the extent of predicting *Bharat*’s disintegration within the very first decade of its independence.

Needless to add, this projection not only proved to be untrue, but *Bharat* is now marching ahead towards regaining its lost glory and status of *Jagatguru* (teacher of the world), when *Bhartiyas* were inspiring the world through their own exemplary character and conduct. This raises the interesting question as to what is unique about *Bhartiya* civilization and culture, which has ensured its continued existence despite repeated foreign aggressions and invasions, whereas other civilizations contemporary to ancient *Bharat* such as Egypt and Rome, etc., have perished long back.

One of the important factors, which has ensured existence of *Bhartiya* civilization since time immemorial is its cherished culture and tradition of not only tolerating, but celebrating and respecting diversities due to Rigvedic philosophy of, ‘Truth is one, but sages describe it in various ways.’ It is because of this philosophy that *Bharat* welcomed diverse religious sects and ideologies coming from foreign shores. Even Buddha, who criticized the Vedas, was honoured as incarnation of the God. That is why, in the modern era, *Bharat* opposed the idea of two-nation based on exclusive religious identity. Instead, it believed in philosophy of ‘Let everyone be happy and every one free from fear.’

Even a cursory look at ancient *Bhartiya* literature shows that not only the concept of *Rashtra* existed in this land since the Vedic era, but this concept of *Rashtra* was essentially inclusive and liberal. This was manifested in consistent use of the word, ‘We’ (*Vyam*) rather than I (*Aham*). *Yajurveda*, (9A 23), for instance, declares ‘We must carefully lead our nation towards prosperity’. Similarly the Rigved says ‘O God please give us such wisdom which lead us to move together, speak sweet words and work together for all-round advancement of the nation). In other words, the concept of Vedic *Rashtra* was born not

out of wars and clashes but out of culture of accommodation and respecting diversity. Though *Bharath Rashtra* had geographical boundary, it has had also spiritual and moral connotation.

The Marxian analysis thus fails to recognize this unique aspect of *Bhartiya* culture and civilization that has allowed diverse languages, cultures and traditions to not only co-exist, but thrive through their respective orientations. As observed by famous *Bhartiya* Political Scientist, Rajni Kothari, “In the absence of a centralized political authority it was ‘the *Bhartiya* civilizational enterprise’ which ‘over the centuries achieved a remarkable degree of cohesion and held together different sub-systems in a continental-size society’.”

It is in this sense that the concept of *Bharath Rashtra* somewhat differed from contemporary concept of nation, because whereas nation is a socio-political concept, *Rashtra* is a socio-cultural idea. This cultural concept encompassed not only the people living within defined geographical boundary, but spiritually perceiving the whole world as one family while respecting territorial integrity and sovereignty of other countries. Indeed, there is no tradition of pursuing colonialism and imperialism by *Bhartiya* rulers. It is in this context that the *Bhartiya* *Rashtra* is not against international peace but it is complementary to global peace and harmony.

Unfortunately, as stated earlier, this inclusive nature of *Bhartiya* culture that defined our concept of *Rashtra* is completely ignored in contemporary discourses on *Bhart Rashtra*. In the process, superficial differences are highlighted and essential unity of thought and civilizational message of inclusiveness is ignored. This is surprising in view of fact that though modern science has realized the value of interconnection, interrelation and inter dependence for ecological balance, Western ideas like individualism and consumerism have eclipsed *Bhartiya* ideas of social obligations and development of inner being leading to disintegration of families, societies, nations and depletion of natural resources. At the same time, mad competition for accumulating resources and consequent mental tension has harmed individuals as well by adversely affecting their health manifested in constant spread of non-curable diseases such as diabetes and blood pressure. All these growing ills can be addressed only by rejuvenating inclusive concept of *Bharat Rashtra* based on culture of generating and sharing resources with others, respecting diversity and treating others as one likes to be treated for oneself without of course neglecting pursuit of military power for use as a last resort.

The UGC Centre for Southern Asia Studies, therefore, invites scholars, activists, journalists from different walks of life to discuss and debate upon the idea of inclusive *Bhartiya Rashtra* and its implications for diplomacy, social harmony, politics, world peace and ecological balance.

Conceptual themes

- Understanding concept of Nation and *Rashtra*: Western and *Bhartiya* perspectives
- Cultural and Spiritual Foundations of *Bhartiya Rashtra*.
- The Farce of Aryan Invasion Theory
- The Role of Dharm (Human Values and Obligations) in Nation Building
- Vision of Modern *Bhartiya* Thinkers: Mahatma Gandhi, Vivekananda, Sri Aurobindo, Pt Deen Dayal Upadhyaya and Pt Madan Mohan Malviya
- Dharmic Vision of Constitution Makers: Dr. B R Ambedkar and Dr. Rajendra Prasad

- Message of National Symbols: The National Flag, National Emblem, National Flower, etc., and Writings on the walls of Parliament and other National Institutions
- Complementarities between Nationalism and Internationalism: *Bhartiya* Perspective.
- Peace and Security: *Bhartiya* and Western Perspectives
- “Non-Traditional” Security: A Traditional *Bhartiya* View.
- Philosophical Bases of *Bhartiya* Diplomacy.
- Culture of Sharing : An Essential Requirement for Ecological Balance, Social Harmony and Individual Welfare

Note: The above sub-themes are only indicative. Authors may opt other topics also titles relevant to the focal theme of the Seminar.

Paper Submission

Participants willing to present paper are requested to follow the schedule and guidelines given below:

1. Abstract (not exceeding 250 words).
2. Abstract should include the name of the author(s), their affiliation and address (postal and e-mail).
3. One complete paper (soft copy) not exceeding 20 pages should be sent through email on bharatrashtra2015@gmail.com
4. Paper must not be previously published or currently under review for publication elsewhere.

The following style sheet may kindly be used.

1. The paper may be composed in MS-Words format, Times New Roman font with heading in Font Size 14 and the remaining text in the font size 12 with 1.5 spacing.
2. Notes should be numbered consecutively, superscripted in the text and attached to the end of the article.
3. Spelling should follow the British pattern: e.g. ‘colour’, NOT ‘color’.
4. Quotations should be placed in double quotation marks. Long quotes of above 4 (four) lines should be indented in single space.
5. Use italics for title of the books, newspaper, journals and magazines in text and end notes.
6. In the text, number below 100 should be mentioned in words (e.g. twenty eight). Use “per cent”, but in tables the symbol % should be typed.

Citing References

Book

Leo E. Rose and Richard Sission, *War and Succession: India, Pakistan and Creation of Bangladesh* (New Delhi: Sage Publications, 1990), pp. 102-5.

Citing an article from an edited book

Appadorai, "On Understanding Bhartiya Foreign Policy," in K. P. Misra, ed., *Studies in Bhartiya Foreign Policy* (New Delhi: Thompson Press, 1969), pp. 113-17.

Citing an Article from a journal

Nalini Kant Jha, "Implications for India of an Unstable Nepal," *Nepali Journal of Contemporary Studies* (Kathmandu), vol.6, no.1, March, 2006, p.36.

Citing an article from a Newspaper

Shekhar Gupta, "Pakistan's Civilian Deal," *Bhartiya Express* (New Delhi), August 30, 2008.

Registration

Selected participants are required to send filled in registration form along with registration fee, which covers conference kit, lunch, tea and snacks during the Seminar. Cash / Cheque / Demand Draft / in favour of **Director, UGC Center for Southern Asia Studies**, payable at **Pondicherry** should reach the Center on or before November 20, 2015.

Registration Fee

Faculty: **Rs. 1,000/-**
Research Scholars: **Rs. 700/-**

Note: Shared type limited accommodation will be arranged on payment on First Come First Serve basis.

IMPORTANT DEADLINES

1. Abstract Submission : **November 10, 2015.**
2. Full Paper Submission : **November 20, 2015.**

For any inquiry

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REGISTRATION FORM

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Full Name (in capital):.....

University / Institute / College / Organization:.....

Communication Address:.....

Designation:.....

City:.....State / Province:.....Zip/Postal Code:.....

Mobile No:.....Email Id:.....

Registration Fee:

- | | | |
|----------------------|---|--------------------|
| 1. Faculty | : | Rs. 1,000/- |
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