

National symposium

On

Paradigm Shift in Geography

November 28 - 29, 2011

Organized by

Shri A.M.Khwaja Chair

Jamia Millia Islamia,

New Delhi-110025

Concept note:

Geography, no doubt, is a science of spatial synthesis which studies the space in all its dimensions and manifestations.” Geography is concerned to provide accurate, orderly and rational description and interpretation of the variable character of the Earth’s surface”. (Richard Hartshorne). The subject has evolved through centuries, from a descriptive field of study into a well developed scientific discipline. Its origin is traced back to the ancient Greeks, from where it reached to its present form. It has witnessed the paradigm shifts all along its historical development. The Structure of Scientific Discipline defined paradigm as “the entire constellation of beliefs, values, techniques, and so on shared by the members of a given community”. (Kuhn, 1970)

Geography, as a discipline of study, has evolved over time and expanded its horizon with the development of science and technology. The human knowledge about the land and people located at large intervening distances could be comprehended with greater details with the scientific and technological development, which reduced the dependence on the travel accounts of the travelers and traders. The simplistic understanding of the earth as the abode of human beings got transformed with the enhanced knowledge of the spatial variations in both natural and socio-cultural phenomena. It is true that space in its natural state is neutral to territorial identity. While the land had generic identity, the people inhabiting the land provided socio-cultural identities. Geography from being the study of similarities and dissimilarities in phenomena in response to similarities and dissimilarities in other influencing phenomena shifted the emphasis to the study of spatial organization. The development of links provided opportunity to the nodes to consolidate and becoming the hub of activities; economic, social and cultural. The idea that geography is the study of Man-Land relationship gave rise to both environmental determinism as well as Possibilism. The perception of over arching influence of environment on human activities provided a paradigm of nature controlling all the human activities leading to the

Ratzelian concept of determinism. The idea of human influence on environment, on the other hand provided the basis for the concept of Possibilism ascribed to Vidal de la Blache in France. The balance between the two was envisaged by Griffith Taylor by propagating the idea of neo-determinism (Stop and Go determinism) which showed that there are necessities but at the same time freedom is also available. There is no hard shackle but there is no unbridled and unlimited freedom. The shackles were loosened by technology and technology provided a lot of freedom to the human beings.

We are not only concerned with the spatial organization but also with the spatial integration. The technology has reduced the space in terms of time. The present world has become a global village and one has, now, been technologically enabled to see any part of the world sitting in front of his/her computer. The economic interdependence of the countries and the intervention by the market has increased. Market areas are widening and some of the ideas such as distance-decay and the minimization of effort have been losing their relevance. The segmentation of market has become very strong phenomena.

The Fifties witnessed great emphasis on quantitative techniques. The Geographers coined a term, 'Quantitative revolution' to describe this phase of the development in Geography.

The paradigm shifted again from the quantitative approach to humanist and behavioral approach. The idea was that human decision is based on many considerations which can not be counted in numbers. This is the unique nature of the studies in social sciences. It is easier to create controls in physical sciences but such control is difficult to enforce in social sciences. The social science aspect of geography has to depend on the methodology of Social Sciences.

Maps have been the tools of Geographers and they will continue to remain very important tools for studying space. The traditional cartography has give way to computer cartography. The process of making maps has become quicker. Techniques in general have undergone unprecedented change. The Remote Sensing has made the data collection easier and GIS has provided large scope for searching explanation. These tools ca be very effectively used, provided the researcher has clear theoretical understanding of the

phenomena. Unfortunately, there are not many theories in geographical studies. The traditional studies in geography were more of empirical nature. But empiricism also requires some theoretical format to proceed. We know that geography in India has greatly been influenced by the British geographical tradition and the subject in India is relatively young. Geography, in India, as a discipline at the undergraduate level was first introduced in Punjab University, Lahore in 1924. The undergraduate programme in geography was introduced in 1927 in Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh. After independence, there has been very fast expansion of teaching of geography at the UG and PG level and research in the universities and colleges also experienced expansion.

Now the basic question is related to further consolidation and strengthening of the subject of Geography to make it socially more relevant. The stimuli have to come from the practicing geographers who have to show the direction of development of the subject.

The proposed symposium will focus on the following themes:

- Theory, empiricism and policy in Geography
- Geography and changing World Order
- Paradigm shift in Economic Geography/Agriculture and Industry
- Environment and Disaster Management
- The complexities of Rural-Urban Continuum/Problems at the Rural-Urban Fringe
- Paradigm shifts in Social and Cultural Geography
- Changing Methodologies in Geography

Call for Papers

Research papers critically addressing the issues related to the above themes particularly to that of Paradigm shift in Geography are invited. The full papers along with an extended abstract not exceeding 500 words should be sent to the convener (Prof. M. H. Qureshi) of the Symposium at mhqureshi42@gmail.com

Important Dates:

Submission of the Abstract and Registration	September 30, 2011
Submission of the Full Paper	October 31, 2011
Intimation of the acceptance of the paper	November 5, 2011
Symposium dates	November 28-29,2011

Registration Fee

University/College Teachers, Planners, Decision Makers	Rs. 1,000
Research Scholars	Rs. 5,00
Post Graduate Students	Rs. 2,00

The registration will be open till Nov.5th, 2011. No registration will be done thereafter. The registration fee will include registration kit, abstract volume, entry to cultural events and food stalls. Local pick up/ drop from airport/ railway station to the guest house will be available free of charge. It will be preferable to send the registration fee by Bank draft in favour of '**Registrar, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi-110025**, payable at New Delhi. If paid by cheque, it may be issued in the name of the '**Registrar, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi-110025** along with the collection charges.

Registration Form

1. Name...
2. Designation...
3. University/Organization...
4. Address...
5. e mail...
6. Telephone/Contact No...
7. Title of the Paper.

8. Registration Fee Rs.....sent by Demand Draft/ Crossed Cheque to ‘The Registrar, Jamia Millia Islamia,’ Payable at New Delhi

No. of Demand Draft/ Cheque.....Dated Bank.....

9. Arrival: Date Train No. Time of arrival.....Station...

10 Departure: Date Train No. Time of arrival Station

Accommodation:

Accommodation will be arranged in University Guest House and guest houses of other institutions. However, Hotel accommodation may also be arranged on request against payment of the tariff by the participant.

About Jamia Millia Islamia

The Jamia Millia Islamia, now a Central University, established by an act of Parliament, had a tumultuous beginning in the initial stages. The university was established at Aligarh in 1920 by a group of dedicated, nationalists Muslims. Translated in English Jamia (University), Millia (National), Islamia (Islamic), it reads as National Islamic University. Maulana Mohammad Ali Johar along with the early trio comprising Hakeem Ajmal Khan, Dr. M.A. Ansari and Shri Abdul Majeed Khwaja were the early pioneers who established this institution as a part of the freedom movement. Since the whole philosophy of Jamia Millia Islamia was anti- colonialism, anti- imperialism, Mahatma Gandhi also encouraged the development of the institution. The university functioned at Aligarh from 1920 to 1925 when it was shifted to Delhi and the campus was located at Karol Baugh at that time. On 1st March 1935 the foundation of the school building of Jamia was laid at Okhla which at that time was a small village of south Delhi

The Jamia Millia Islamia has a developed campus in Okhla area of South Delhi. Jamia was given the status of a Deemed university 1962 and was accorded the status of a Central University in 1988. Now Jamia is a multi faculty university, comprising the

faculties of Natural Sciences, Humanities and Languages, Social Sciences, Education, Engineering, Architecture and Ekistics, Dentistry, Law. The university also has a number of Centers of teaching and research such as Mass Communication Research Center, Academy of Third World Studies, Center for the Study of Comparative Religion and Civilization, Shri K.R. Narayanan Center for Dalits and Minorities Studies, Sarojni Naidu Center for Women Studies, Center for West Asia Studies, Center for Jawaharlal Nehru Studies, Residential Coaching Academy etc. have been developed in Jamia Millia Islamia.