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DR ROISIN BURKE
Somalia – Gender Justice Post-Conflict

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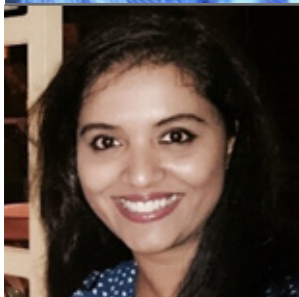
Australia: An Old Space Player with a brand-New Space Agency Dr Namrata Goswami

Dr. Namrata Goswami is an author, strategic analyst, and consultant on counter-insurgency, counter-terrorism, alternate futures, and great power politics. Earlier, she was Senior Fellow at the United States Institute for Peace (USIP) and Research Fellow at the Institute for Defense Studies and Analyses (IDSA). She is the recipient of the Fulbright-Nehru Senior Research Fellowship. Currently, she is working on two book projects, one on the topic of 'Ethnic Narratives', to be published by Oxford University Press, and the other on the topic of 'Great Power Ambitions' to be published by Lexington Press, an imprint of Rowman and Littlefield.



Solidarity for Raising Wages Dr Howard Richards

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The Inconvenience of Making a Movement Last in India Dr Cauvery Ganapathy

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Close Encounters of Another Kind Dr Devaki Jain

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2018 Year of Living Foolishly? Mark Ulyseas

Ulyseas has served time in advertising as copywriter and creative director selling people things they didn't need, a ghost writer for some years, columnist of a newspaper, a freelance journalist and photographer. In 2009 he created *Live Encounters Magazine*, in Bali, Indonesia. March 2016 saw the launch of its sister publication *Live Encounters Poetry & Writing*. He is the author of three books: *RAINY – My friend & Philosopher*, *Seductive Avatars of Maya – Anthology of Dystopian Lives* and *In Gethsemane: Transcripts of a Journey*.



Disability in South Asia: Experience and Knowledge Professor Anita Ghai

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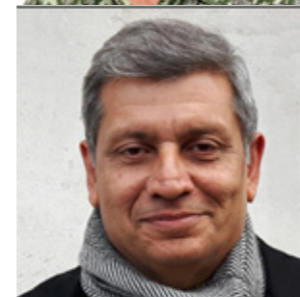
Rethinking Political Thought of Ancient India Professor Ashok Chousalkar

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Bhagat Singh and his revolutionary inheritance Professor S Irfan Habib

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DR RÓISÍN BURKE

SOMALIA, GENDER AND THE RULE OF LAW IN PLURALISTIC LEGAL REALITIES IN STATES TRANSITIONING FROM CONFLICT



The rule of law is often defined as a system of governance which includes robust legal institutions that are accountable and seen as legitimate, and accessible to the people. In Western countries most of us have particular pictures of what a justice system should look like. This often consists of formal legal institutions, court rooms, judges, prosecutors and defence lawyers, albeit with significant differences between civil law and common law countries. Justice and accountability are very much centred on the individual in Western legal cultures. However, this is often not how justice is pictured in many non-Western states. Many countries have what are called plural legal systems. Legal pluralism basically means that a number of 'informal' or quasi-informal regulatory systems exist alongside the formal legal system, and these too vary greatly in form. Religious and customary justices are common in many societies with Somalia being no exception.

Now as we all know, armed conflict often results in collapse of legal institutions and a rise in crime and human rights violations, not least sexual violence. These crimes have lasting effects on society, yet in the aftermath of conflict regulatory mechanisms are often weak or non-existent, particularly formal legal institutions. Somalia in recent decades has often been referred to as a failed state, wherein state institutions had been largely absent, with the exception of Somaliland and Puntland. In these contexts what is often left to regulate societies are informal justice systems, including the customary and religious justice systems. These systems have regulated Somali society for far longer than formal legal systems introduced with colonization. Three systems co-exist in the various regions of today's Somalia, namely a nascent formal legal system (with stronger versions in Somaliland and Puntland); the age old *xeer* or customary justice system; and Shari'a law, which to a large extent is integrated into the former two systems and its primacy is constitutionally embedded. There is little uniformity in the application of laws. To an extent this is tied to the decision-makers and their knowledge base and perspectives on a particular issue.

<https://www.crisisgroup.org/africa/horn-africa/somalia/b125-instruments-pain-iii-conflict-and-famine-somalia>

During times of upheaval throughout Somalia there was continued reliance on the *xeer* system, coupled in the 1990s with a proliferation of Islamic courts. These were to a large extent local attempts to regulate daily life. The *xeer* system in Somalia is heavily relied on. It is an unwritten legal system passed down orally by clans, and it emphasizes the collective, retribution and reconciliation. Decisions within this system are made by senior male clan elders, a process which is public and often held under a tree.



Women have been historically and systematically excluded from Xeer decision-making processes (UN PHOTO/TOBIN JONES)
<http://accord.org.za/conflict-trends/reinvigoration-somali-traditional-justice-inclusive-conflict-resolution-approaches/>

Somalia has a long history of civil war and colonization. Somalis are predominantly Muslims, from the Shafi'i school of Sunni Islam. Somalia's legal and societal structures are underpinned by a hugely complex history, colonisation, culture, and clan dynamics, which vary within the state itself. Somaliland and Somalia were joined in the 1960s, bringing with them many influences of the Italian and British legal systems. This further complicated the rule of law in Somalia with the mix of common and civil law traditions, layered on top of customary and religious laws and their accompanying regulatory systems.

Barre took power in 1969, after orchestrating a military coup. The Barre regime started implementing many Socialist type reforms to the Somali legal system. There were some attempts to try to create unity in the legal systems, but this largely resulted in legal fragmentation and disorder. Barre placed a strong focus also on women's empowerment, education and economic advancement. Additionally the regime attempted to diminish the powers of the Shari'a courts and the customary justice system, including in matters of clan land, water and grazing rights, property and inheritance. An attempt was made to abolish diya payments (which is a form of compensation payable to and by lineage groups for wrongs committed) and dowry payments, which are viewed by Somali society as key aspects of their culture and societal system. Many saw their lands taken from them by the state. Poverty became widespread. Somalia is a pastoralist and agro-pastoralist state wherein much of the population to this day rely heavily on land for subsistence.

Gender justice was a particular point of tension during Barre's rule, with women's rights being associated with identity erosion. The passage of the 1975 Family Law, which included provisions on gender equality in marriage and in relation to inheritance, led to protests. These ultimately resulted in the execution of a number of religious clerics and the subsequent overthrow of the Barre in 1991 by clan militias. There was then an outbreak of inter-clan conflict.

In May 1991 Somaliland declared independence but it is yet to be internationally recognized. Puntland is a semi-autonomous region of Somalia, but it retained links with the Federal Government. Somaliland, and Puntland to a lesser extent, are now experiencing greater levels of stability and more effectual rule of law than other parts of Somalia. The Federal Government of Somalia has only been in place since 2012.

In the aftermath of conflict many international actors, such as the UN, AU, EU, major NGOs, amongst numerous others, frequently invest efforts in rule of law and security sector reform programmes in order to assist countries with a return to stability. While this usually is well-meaning, these programming efforts are often carried out without full cognizance of local cultures, realities and traditions. In terms of legal systems, for instance, these take many years in any given society to evolve and legal transplants from one society to the next have over time often proven ineffectual. This is partly on account of local understandings of justice.

There is increased recognition at least at an international level that women's participation in peace-building, including rule of law reform post-conflict, is key to sustainable peace and security. This is partly on account of a series of Security Council Resolutions on Women Peace and Security that have been passed since the early 2000s. While implementation of these resolutions has been somewhat limited, they are forcing actors in these spheres - state, international organisations and others - to take measures to better mainstream gender considerations into their peace-building programmes, including in the area assisting states with the rebuilding of legal systems. This is where things appear to go wrong, at least traditionally, where focus has been primarily placed on formal legal systems and there has been a failure to engage with broader plural legal contexts. This is hugely problematic in attempts to encourage human rights compliance and gender justice in a plural legal system, such as in Somalia. In doing so, they avoid a large portion of the regulatory structures existing.

During times of upheaval throughout Somalia there was continued reliance on the *xeer* system, coupled in the 1990s with a proliferation of Islamic courts. These were to a large extent local attempts to regulate daily life. The *xeer* system in Somalia is heavily relied on. It is an unwritten legal system passed down orally by clans, and it emphasizes the collective, retribution and reconciliation. Decisions within this system are made by senior male clan elders, a process which is public and often held under a tree. The system has centuries old rules on diya payments and groupings, dowries, and compensation for particular offences. It also includes customs on sister and widow inheritance, which in today's climate would not align with human rights, but traditionally were likely intended to the need to provide some form of social supports where a male family member passed on. There are also customs around water usage and pastoral land.

There are significant rates of sexual violence in Somalia, akin to many conflict-affected states. UN programmes have also actively assisted Somalia, Puntland and Somaliland with the drafting of Sexual Offences Bills. There has also been a focus on the integration of women into the formal legal sector and the training of paralegals. These efforts are commendable, and are having some impact, but there remains serious weaknesses in advancing gender justice in Somalia. Indeed in the area of sexual and gender-based violence efforts to secure prosecutions in the formal legal systems have seen interference by clans and customary authorities, with cases at times transferred out of the formal legal systems altogether and back to the *xeer* or Shari'a courts.



Xeer and Guurti focus on the capacity of elders to solve or mediate conflicts (AU-UN IST PHOTO/STUART PRICE)
<http://accord.org.za/conflict-trends/reinvigoration-somali-traditional-justice-inclusive-conflict-resolution-approaches/>

The *xeer* system is what is frequently used by the Somali people. Strategies, therefore need to be put in place to engage with traditional authorities on gender justice issues, amongst all others. However, we need to get our heads around what constitutes legal systems in the first instance. There are also dangers around encouraging dismantlement of systems that external actors do not necessarily understand and their replacement with a weak formal legal system that promises levels of protection to the vulnerable that it cannot enforce. But we struggle with this as these systems rightly given fears that these systems do not always adequately protect females, or indeed other marginalised persons. These in Somalia include members of weaker clans, minorities and internally displaced persons. It must be borne in mind that these problems also feature in formal legal systems.

In terms of gender justice, there has been a strong focus in UN rule of law programmes, in partnership with government, on sexual and gender-based violence and the established of one-stop centres and referral pathways to assist victims of sexual violence in Somalia. There are significant rates of sexual violence in Somalia, akin to many conflict-affected states. UN programmes have also actively assisted Somalia, Puntland and Somaliland with the drafting of Sexual Offences Bills. There has also been a focus on the integration of women into the formal legal sector and the training of paralegals. These efforts are commendable, and are having some impact, but there remains serious weaknesses in advancing gender justice in Somalia. Indeed in the area of sexual and gender-based violence efforts to secure prosecutions in the formal legal systems have seen interference by clans and customary authorities, with cases at times transferred out of the formal legal systems altogether and back to the *xeer* or Shari'a courts. This is often partly given a refusal by clans to accept the authority of the formal courts. Successful prosecutions are few in this area and women are often subject to backlash, including allegations of defamation where claims relate to government forces. This leaves one to question what one advocates in the absence of an integrated whole. For women and girls, there are many socio-economic risks with going to a formal legal system when it cannot guarantee enforcement of their rights and subsequent protection, particularly in areas of the country where state control is very weak.

In any case, in Somalia the customary and religious justice systems are considered legitimate by Somalis, male and female. The people understand how they operate. Their decisions tend to be respected, albeit this may be eroding in urban areas where population density and movement is increasing. Above all many parts of Somalia are remote from the formal legal system, meaning that the informal legal systems are what are accessible.

Some argue that there is a need to draw on Shari'a to challenge practices and norms that allow for certain violations of women and girls' rights. Inheritance and female genital mutilation (FGM) are two areas where this may be done, and indeed in Somalia in relation to FGM this has had some success.

UNDP has been working with Puntland elders to enhance the capacity of the local customary justice system to provide mediation services and to look at how cases might be divided amongst the various parts of the plural legal system, with possibilities of appeal to the formal legal system, for example. What is evident is that while informal justice systems are often weak in areas in human rights compliance, jurisdictional divisions and links between the various aspects of the plural legal system need to be sought. This would ensure greater certainty, harmony, linkages and human rights compliance between these systems.

In 2006, at the instigation of customary elders, a Somaliland conference was held, with the support of the Danish Refugee Council and the UN, to discuss how to reform aspects of the *xeer* system for better compliance with human rights and Shari'a. Amongst the issues discussed was the protection of marginalised persons, including minorities, widows, and internally displaced persons. The elders passed a Declaration to this effect. This included a commitment to ensuring individual responsibility for rape and murder and acceptance that these are issues best dealt with by the formal legal system. A similar Declaration was subsequently adopted in Puntland in 2009.

What is apparent is that rule of law programming has to engage with customary and religious justice systems on gender justice issues as they are central to society. Failure to engage them will not change the status quo, while bearing in mind that human rights need to be complied with. Without buy-in from the local population and key stakeholders rule of law reforms can have little impact. A starting point in assisting states with legal system reform is to reconceptualise our understanding what constitute legal systems in the first instance to better reflect local realities.



Dr. Namrata Goswami is an author, strategic analyst, and consultant on counter-insurgency, counter-terrorism, alternate futures, and great power politics. Earlier, she was Senior Fellow at the United States Institute for Peace (USIP) and Research Fellow at the Institute for Défense Studies and Analyses (IDSA). She is the recipient of the Fulbright-Nehru Senior Research Fellowship. Currently, she is working on two book projects, one on the topic of 'Ethnic Narratives', to be published by Oxford University Press, and the other on the topic of 'Great Power Ambitions' to be published by Lexington Press, an imprint of Rowman and Littlefield.



DR NAMRATA GOSWAMI

AUSTRALIA: AN OLD SPACE PLAYER WITH A BRAND-NEW SPACE AGENCY BUT NO GREAT FUTURISTIC VISION

On July 1, 2018, Australia got a brand-new space agency; the Australian Space Agency (ASA).¹ With access to a budget of \$41 million over four years, the ASA is focused on ensuring that Australia has a piece of the cake, of the profitable commercial space sector. And why not? Estimates on the resources awaiting humanity in space to be mined are worth trillions of dollars,² and whichever country can crack the technology of gaining cost-effective access and ability to not only explore but mine those resources will benefit most. In 2015, the U.S. established legislation that enables its commercial space sector to explore and own resources from an asteroid.³ Luxembourg is the only country in Europe that has established similar legislation that supports asteroid mining and back those that lay claim to those resources,⁴ within the legal stipulation of the 1967 Outer Space Treaty (OST).⁵ But from what I gather from an analysis of the ASA's mission statement and goals, Australia's focus is not on that futuristic space industrialization but more on the already existing \$329 billion space commerce industry worldwide.⁶ To be fair, ASA's head, Dr. Megan Clark in her message about ASA stated

No other industry can inspire nations quite like space, where human ambition can set its sights on interplanetary missions, colonisation beyond Earth and the opportunity of finding new life. We can dream this big because of the space-based technologies that have connected the world in unprecedented ways, and in the coming decades Australia has the opportunity to become a global leader in pushing Earth's links with space even further.⁷

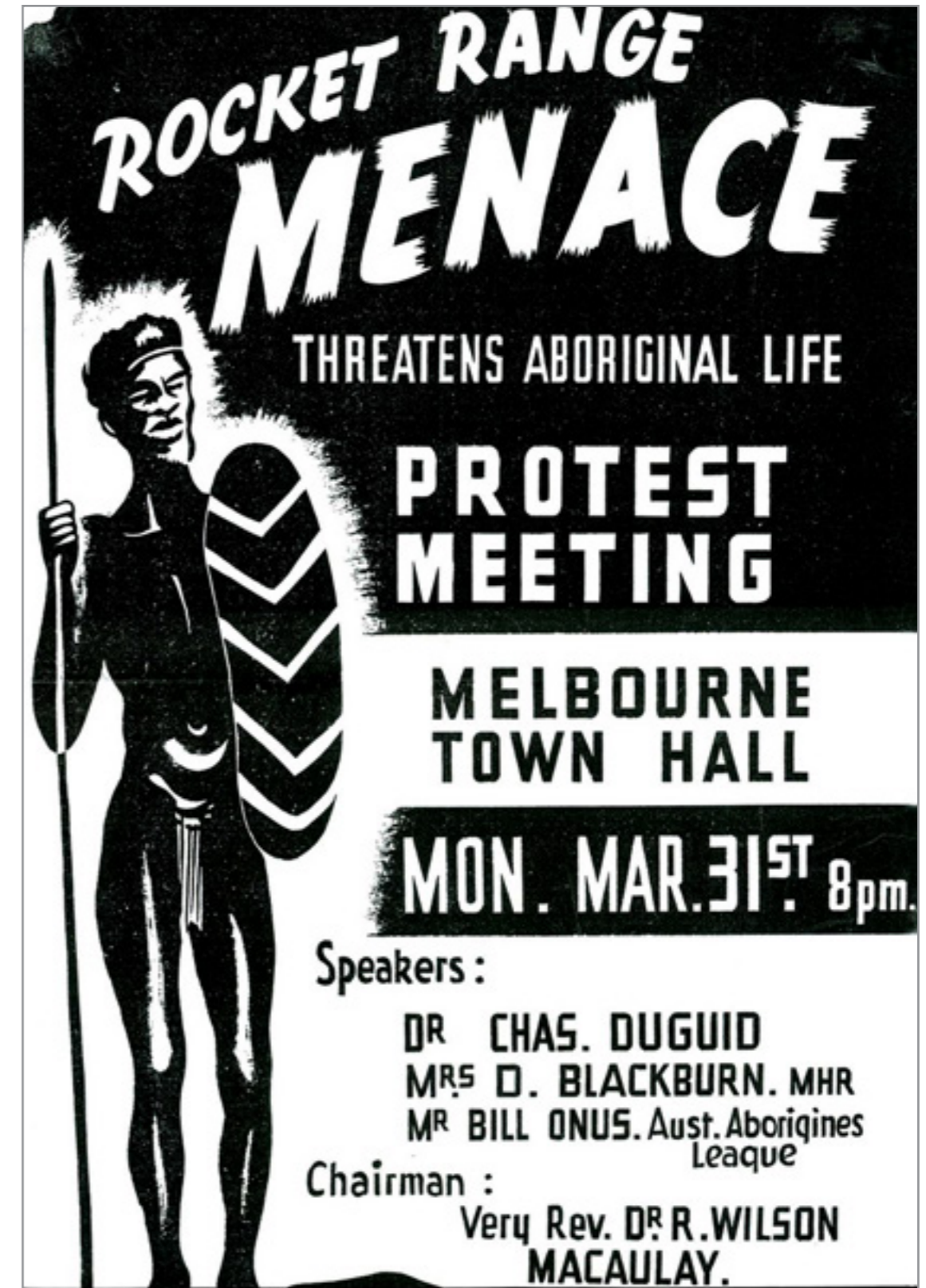
Inspired by minimalist poster here - <https://www.reddit.com/user/Czvni>

Instituted in 1958, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) established several tracking stations in Australia, earning the latter the distinction of hosting the largest number of NASA stations, outside of the U.S.¹⁴ In my visit to Southern Australia in 2009, I was told about these installations in conversations with local aboriginal communities, who viewed these as illegal appropriations of sacred land, without any heed to their land rights.¹⁵

However, while she referred to interplanetary missions, and colonization beyond earth, the mission statement of the ASA reflects none of those as of priority. The ASA's main mission is to lead international space engagement, especially highlighting the importance of space to the national economy, create Space Situation Awareness (SSA), and space debris monitoring, and inspire space entrepreneurs. This focus on space commerce and its link to national development follows the model of countries like China and India where their space programs are directly linked to national development goals. Significantly, given the lucrative nature of the space industry today, Australia wants to take advantage of that by crafting a National Space Policy and by establishing a Space Agency.⁸ The motivation behind the move is also to catch up with neighbors like New Zealand that established its space agency in 2016,⁹ and its space startup Rocket Lab plans to launch rockets soon.¹⁰

To be sure, Australia is not a new entrant to the enterprise of space. It launched its first satellite, WRESAT, into orbit in 1967,¹¹ even before China and India launched theirs in 1970 and 1975 respectively. In mid-1957, Australia was involved in the International Geophysical Year (IGY) which was a global program to assess and understand the Earth's relationship to its space environment. We should remember that *Sputnik I* had not launched yet then; it launched on October 4, 1957 changing humanity's perception of space forever.

The Woomara Rocket range, in South Australia, was viewed as an ideal spot to launch satellites, to include U.S. ambitions to launch the world's first satellite. A joint Anglo-Australian project, the Woomara range was built in 1947, as a facility to study guided missile weapons development, to include testing.¹² The U.K.'s Skylark Sounding Rocket program would become the longest space project in Woomara and it launched Australian, U.S., U.K., and European scientific instruments that enhanced the study of X-Ray, ultra-violet astronomy and so forth.¹³ Australia's geographic position offers it a perfect location advantage to guide and monitor rocket launches, which it continues to do so, till date. Instituted in 1958, the National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA) established several tracking stations in Australia, earning the latter the distinction of hosting the largest number of NASA stations, outside of the U.S.¹⁴ In my visit to Southern Australia in 2009, I was told about these installations in conversations with local aboriginal communities, who viewed these as illegal appropriations of sacred land, without any heed to their land rights.¹⁵



Rocket Range Menace Poster, March 31, 1947.

Source: National Museum Australia, Collaborating for Indigenous Rights,
http://indigenoustrights.net.au/civil_rights/the_warburton_ranges_controversy_1957/earlier_opposition_to_weapons_testing

If you analyze the priorities set by the ASA, they are typical bureaucratic missions focused on old space ideas, that other nations' space agencies have tackled decades ago. In the U.S., military space futuristic thinkers term that the Von Braunian vision of "flags, footprints and technological conquest" backed by a bureaucratic organization that is interested in space-science and setting footprints, but not committed to deep space exploration and settlement, that advocates of the O'Neillian vision articulate.

As of today, Australia is perhaps taking the right decision to establish an agency that is not solely aimed at defense assets in space, or simply developing monitoring capacities but looking at space commerce. However, missing from the ASA mission statement are any ambitions on harnessing space-based resources like Space-Based Solar Power (SBSP)¹⁶ as well as asteroid mining. That is surprising given Australia's focus on renewable energy resources specially to tackle issues of climate change as per their Paris Agreement commitments to reduce carbon emissions, the report on which is not flattering.¹⁷ The ASA's mission statement and ambitions appear too traditional and focused on satellite launches and taking advantage of the existing space commercial sector and /or regulate the civilian space sector. That said, I am hoping that Australia publishes a 'white paper on space' that outlines their futuristic space vision and goals, and paths that it would follow to meet those stated goals, including timelines. Consequently, whether Australian space enthusiasts, and space policy makers are truly anticipating that kind of space industrialization is not clear from the statements that I have seen so far. It appears as if the outgoing Malcolm Turnbull government set up ASA,¹⁸ reacting to criticisms that Australia was among the only two Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) countries, the other being Iceland, without a space agency despite its long engagement with the space enterprise.¹⁹

If you analyze the priorities set by the ASA, they are typical bureaucratic missions focused on old space ideas, that other nations' space agencies have tackled decades ago. In the U.S., military space futuristic thinkers term that the Von Braunian vision of "flags, footprints and technological conquest" backed by a bureaucratic organization that is interested in space-science and setting footprints, but not committed to deep space exploration and settlement, that advocates of the O'Neillian vision articulate. A space vision, on the other hand, is "the upper limit of space development's potential... choosing a proper vision for what future space power should achieve and how it can achieve it is far more important because it is what channels all other material support into valuable (or wasteful) action. Therefore, a critical and central component of a successful organization is its vision for the future".²⁰

The stated priorities of the ASA: "Communications technologies, services and ground stations; Space Situational Awareness (SSA) and debris monitoring; Positioning, Navigation and Timing (PNT) infrastructure; Earth Observation (EO) services; Research and development; Remote asset

Significantly, Chinese President Xi Jinping articulates China's 'Space Dream' within the overall 'China Dream', that aims to make China the strongest space faring nation by 2045 to take advantage of space industrialization (in-situ manufacturing, a lunar base and asteroid mining) that is to come in the next 20 years.²³

management; Developing a strategy to position Australia as an international leader in specialised space capabilities", ²¹ are traditional space goals, while the discourse on space is changing rapidly from 'getting somewhere first in space' to establishing ability for permanent presence.

Major space powers like China are setting a different discourse on space, moving on from traditional space goals like satellite launches and space commerce and how that can benefit earth, to investing in space technology and science where the focus is on long term presence in space. China's 'White paper on space' specifies China's space goals as well as links all such activities to national development goals.²² Significantly, Chinese President Xi Jinping articulates China's 'Space Dream' within the overall 'China Dream', that aims to make China the strongest space faring nation by 2045 to take advantage of space industrialization (in-situ manufacturing, a lunar base and asteroid mining) that is to come in the next 20 years.²³ The fact that Xi has appointed himself President for life helps set continuity in policy and funding commitments.²⁴ In its lunar lander and rover mission, *Chang'e 4* that aims to land on far side of the moon by the end of 2018, China will be sending a tin which will contain seeds of potato and Arabidopsis (a plant connected to cabbage and mustard), some silkworm eggs, with an aim to conduct the first biological experiment on the lunar surface. The motivation behind these experiments, according to the mission chief, Liu Hanlong, is to study the process of developing food for space travelers on the lunar surface.²⁵ Liu specified, "Our experiment might help accumulate knowledge for building a lunar base and long-term residence on the Moon."²⁶ In a video released by the China National Space Administration (CNSA) on April 24 this year (China's officially designated Space Day since 2016 in commemoration of its first rocket launch that same day in 1970),²⁷ China offered its vision of a lunar outpost to be manned by SBSP. CNSA reflected on the video that "We believe that the Chinese nation's dream of residing in a 'lunar palace' will soon become a reality."²⁸ In fact, four Chinese students lived in a simulated moon lab, *Yuegong-1*, or *Lunar Palace 1*, at Beihang University, for 370 days in conditions that replicated how it would be like, living on the lunar surface in a similar lab. The chief designer of *Yuegong-1*, Liu Hong stated that this test marked the longest stay by humans in a bioregenerative support system, where "humans, animals, plants and microorganisms co-exist in a closed environment, simulating a lunar base. Oxygen, water and food are recycled within the BLSS, creating an Earth-like environment. The system is 98 percent self-sufficient. It has been stable and effective in providing life support for its passengers."²⁹ China specifies that by 2030, they will achieve their goal of a lunar base.

The ASA could do well to set a space vision for Australia that truly inspires the imagination of Australia’s future generations driven by far reaching ideas that envision space as a frontier of enormous potential to include harvesting resources like SBSP.



This prospect is supported at the highest echelon of decision making with Lt Gen. Zhang Yulin, former deputy chief of the armament development department of the Central Military Commission (CMC), now with the People’s Liberation Army (PLA) Strategic Support Force (SSF), when he stated that “The earth-moon space will be strategically important for the great rejuvenation of the Chinese nation”.³⁰ Yulin specified that:

The future of China’s manned space program, is not a moon landing, which is quite simple, or even the manned Mars program which remains difficult, but continual exploration the earth-moon space with ever developing technology.

Based on past space accomplishments by China on similar deadlines, I estimate that China will meet their stated goal.³¹ China’ space vision is about peering far ahead into the high frontiers, propelled by aspirations of permanent presence and a moon-base, something which private U.S. space companies like *SpaceX, Blue Origin and Planetary Resources* advocate. Taking clues from the Chinese space dream and where the discourse on space power and development is today, to include those within India,³² another major space power, the ASA could do well to set a space vision for Australia that truly inspires the imagination of Australia’s future generations driven by far reaching ideas that envision space as a frontier of enormous potential to include harvesting resources like SBSP.

Foot Notes

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SOLIDARITY FOR RAISING WAGES



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Introduction

As is generally true in the cases of intractable social problems –drugs, militarism, global warming ... etc.-- also in the case of low wages, in order to solve the problem, it is (I allege) necessary to *redefine* the problem. Buckminster Fuller suggested a question I find helpful for redefining the problem of low wages, and hence for solving it: *How can we make the world work for 100% of humanity without ecological damage?*¹ Remembering Ludwig Wittgenstein who said that the purpose of his philosophy was to show the fly the way out of the fly bottle, we can say that If we focus on Fuller's question, and not on more conventional questions like *How can we attract more investment?* The fly is already on its way out of the fly bottle.

Many pioneers already realize that the reliable and sustainable creation of dignified livelihoods requires new thinking and a new economy. They have already concluded that a living wage for everybody who needs one is not going to come to pass through any possible permutation of conventional economic thinking. While conventional economics is to a large extent about understanding or predicting how self-interested investors react to different public policies, solidarity economics is more about making human life and all life less dependent on the decisions of investors. It is also about making investors (whether private, public or third sector) less self-interested and more socially and ecologically responsible. It is about bringing an ethics of solidarity (also known as a care ethic, and by various other names) and the practice of economics together.

Pioneers are already building the caring economy. In the UK, the New Economics Foundation, inspired by E.F. Schumacher, is one of a number of limey think-tanks with its feet on the ground, doing as well as thinking. Its proposals for making workers co-owners of the firms where they are employed are as I write (September 2018) being incorporated into the platform and programme of the Labour Party.²

On a website supported by Catholic Charities (*Caritas*) of Spain almost every week there is a new example of building the new society in the shell of the old.⁶ This week it features a community currency popularly called “*El Zoquito*” recently launched in the city of Jerez de la Frontera.

There are reasons why solidarity economics is needed to supplement the efforts of the moderate left to save the world from the presently dominant amalgam of neo-liberal theory and sheer corruption. One is that the moderate left concentrates on correcting market failure.

Emily Kawano who helped start and for nine years directed a Center for Popular Economics at U. Mass Amherst, recently published a list of seven practical things we can do to build the solidarity economy,³ the first of which is to increase self-provisioning and community production. In Buenos Aires where there is a graduate programme in social economics at the *Universidad Nacional General Sarmiento*, its director, José Luis Coraggio is among those organizing on-the-ground worker-owned enterprises and cooperatives as a form of economic resistance to neo-liberal austerity.⁴ Jean-Louis Laville is among those similarly combining theory and practice in France.⁵ On a website supported by Catholic Charities (*Caritas*) of Spain almost every week there is a new example of building the new society in the shell of the old.⁶ This week it features a community currency popularly called “*El Zoquito*” recently launched in the city of Jerez de la Frontera. In the Executive MBA programme at the Graduate School of Business of the University of Cape Town, students and teachers study “authentic leadership” putting people and planet first, and that means working to rebuild the system from within the system as Saint Francis worked to rebuild the church from within the church.⁷ The list goes on. Solidarity economics is not only a growing body of economic theory ignored by the mainstream academic establishment. It is also a growing social movement ignored by the mainstream media establishment.

The proliferation of such communitarian and socialistic practical initiatives around the world gives me hope that their sum will solve a decisive problem. The decisive problem in question, in the words of Mikhail Kalecki, is that capital has a veto power over public policy. It has a veto power because if investors lose confidence, there will be an economic crisis.⁸ Because of that veto power, to restate the gist of Habermas’s concept of legitimation crisis, society is ungovernable. Deciding what is rational, or what is right, is too often a fruitless exercise, because what is rational and/or right is regularly overruled --if I may state the same point a third way (referring not to Kalecki or Habermas but this time to Robert Boyer, Michel Aglietta and David Harvey)—by the imperatives of a regime of accumulation. As the world is now organized, keeping capital accumulation going, come hell or high water, has become the necessary condition for meeting the physical needs of the people. *Solidarity economics is not about building a more successful regime of accumulation (like a developmental state), but about “graduating” (to use Bucky Fuller’s term) to a world where life no longer physically depends on obeying the systemic imperatives (to use Ellen Wood’s phrase)⁹ of any regime of accumulation. Here I will focus more on this decisive problem, and on the history that locked us into a world where the requirements of accumulation trump reason and caring, than on*

the details of the many solidary alternatives are hopefully step by step solving it. I will also be trying to bring solidarity into the mainstream debate. Even though as far as I know, today the only promising alternative to the veto power of capital identified by Kalecki is solidarity economics, the mainstream debate is between the neoliberals and the moderate left. The far left is out of it.

There are reasons why solidarity economics is needed to supplement the efforts of the moderate left to save the world from the presently dominant amalgam of neoliberal theory and sheer corruption. One is that the moderate left concentrates on correcting market failure. That is not an inspiring idea. Solidarity is. Fighting corruption requires a stronger dose of ethics than the mainstream moderate left prescribes.

A second reason is that the evidence often turns out to favour the neoliberals, or at least to keep them in the running, under the positivist rules of the academic game that still prevail in practice even though positivism is defunct as philosophy of science. Why? I suggest that it is largely because the class of people that includes most funders of neoliberal think-tanks,¹⁰ really does have economic power. Sometimes for that unscientific reason the predictions made at those think-tanks come true. To repeat Mikhail Kalecki’s point, capital really does have veto power over public policy, because any policy it does not like --for good reasons, bad reasons or no reasons-- will cause an economic crisis.¹¹ Whatever the specious reasons may be that the neoliberals give and the left tries to refute, for adopting policies that favour the rich, it remains true that with or without reasons, those of us who have more than we need hold economic power. Like it or not, meeting the physical needs of everybody depends on producing goods and services, while producing goods and services depends (not entirely but too much) on the decisions of the investing classes. Paul Krugman gives an instructive example: In Brazil in 1999 there was no unusual or dangerous federal government deficit. There was no inflation to speak of. There was an economic slowdown, in the face of which standard economics would side with economists on the side of the angels like Krugman and Yanis Varoufakis. It would counsel expansion, not austerity. Nevertheless, the investment community decided that Brazil was a bad risk *because of* the government’s deficit spending. Krugman continues: “But what was the use of arguing? Investors believed that Brazil would have a disastrous crisis unless the deficit was quickly reduced, and they were surely right, because they themselves would generate that crisis.”¹²



Now, if a decisive issue is who is able to get production going so that the babies will be fed, and who can stop it whenever they want to stop it for good reasons or bad reasons or no reasons, then the five examples of solidarity economy I mentioned above –worker participation in the ownership of firms, self-provisioning, community production, community currencies, and authentic leadership—are steps in the right direction. The pioneers of the solidarity economy are actually out there doing something to curb and perhaps eventually replace the economic *pouvoir en place*.

I write this as someone who experienced the economic crisis followed by a military coup in Chile in 1973; and who also observed first-hand the survival strategies of the people when the Argentine economy collapsed in 2001. I believe that those who have had similar experiences will understand me more quickly than those who have not. I also write as a critical realist unconvinced by the mathematical models of both the right and the moderate left.¹³

Writing from a point of view that emphasizes the causal powers of culture and social structure, Joanna Swanger and I have contributed to the literature on the decline of social democracy.¹⁴ Social democracy was touted as the wave of the future in the 1960s. The moderate left is slow to acknowledge that now it is at best a welfare state in a process of orderly retreat. Solidarity economy learns from its defeats. It takes a more ethical and more grassroots approach.

I cannot help but think that if our book on social democracy were read by leaders of the moderate left, they would better understand the causal powers of social structures; and that would help them to understand why the achievements of the social democrats when the moderate left led governments proved to be unsustainable; which in turn would motivate them to see solidarity economics as a logical response, regrouping and rethinking in the light of the downfall of social democracy and the rise of neoliberalism. They would see the shadow side of the ideals of the 18th century. Those were the ideals (in other words the ethics that defined the social structure) that founded economics as a science as well as modern jurisprudence and political philosophy.¹⁵ The South American origins of solidarity economics, and particularly its roots in two kinds of tradition that predate the 18th century ideals –namely the social doctrines of the Roman Catholic church and the indigenous pre-Colombian cultures that functioned and met human needs before the Europeans arrived—should be clues that it might offer modernity something it lacks.¹⁶

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Swanger and I show with case studies of Spain, Sweden, Austria, South Africa, Indonesia, Venezuela and the World Bank that with respect to humanity's principal problems there is no way to "get it right" by doing enough orthodox economic research, and by having enlightened policy-makers apply what that research teaches. The main problems that cry out for solutions when none can be found are not caused by the bogus economic science taught by neoliberals. They are not caused by the failure of policy makers to apply the valid economic science provided by the academics of the moderate left. They are caused by (or, it might be better to say, their solutions are prevented by) the basic structure of the socially and historically constructed system that is the object of study of economic science. The following sections will take a brief but close look at the social and historical construction of that system.

What is that system? I do not think it is helpful to call the dominant system "capitalism" if by "capitalism" is meant a system founded on the wage-relation, and/or a system devoted to accumulation for accumulation's sake. Why not? Because capitalism so understood, *selon moi*, is more a consequence than a cause of the basic structure. Once self-serving simple exchange becomes the Grundnorm defining human relationships, what Alfred Marshall called the "Law of Substitution" (i.e. the law that newer and more potent ways of making money will drive out and replace older and less effective ways to make money) makes it inevitable that over time accumulation will become the law and the prophets. On the other hand, I do think it is helpful to call the system "capitalism" if what is meant by capitalist society is a society whose wealth appears as an immense collection of commodities (Waren in Marx's German, a cognate of the English "wares," i.e. things produced for sale, although Marx himself generally called such a society mercantile but not yet capitalist) I believe that the at-first-glance-relatively-innocent buying and selling (exchange) relation is the true culprit. I am not pessimistic about the prospects for his reform and rehabilitation.

The basic structure implies low wages

At a small factory in Indiana, where in principle the workers earn a minimum wage whose real value (adjusted for inflation) has been declining since 1968, in practice they earn even less because they are called in to work fewer than forty hours a week. True to the logic of liberalism, work is supplied only when there is market demand for it. The supervisor put a sign on the employee bulletin board reading: NORMAL IS NEVER COMING BACK.

Realism also adds a healthy dose of respect for diversity. The only cultures that exist, or at least the only old cultures that exist, are cultures that have cared enough to meet human needs at least well enough to survive. They are not just pipe dreams that will never work. They have worked.



We flower power children of the 1960s were living in a bubble. We thought good wages were normal. In reality, those were abnormal times. They were unusually favourable for labour. As Thomas Piketty has recently shown, the normal tendency of capitalism is toward increasing inequality¹⁷. The falling Gini coefficients and high wages in the rich parts of the world during World War II and during the following thirty glorious years were a blip. The sign should have read: NORMAL IS COMING BACK.

The median monthly wage here in Chile in 2017 was 379,673 Chilean pesos. At a June 2017 exchange rate 379,673 pesos was USD 570.79. Chile and China are perhaps the two countries most cited when celebrating a world trend that has lowered extreme poverty from 70% to 20% in the last century.¹⁸ As the 2017 median wage in Chile illustrates, and as I see every day, a decrease in extreme poverty can leave most people struggling to get by. I shall not multiply evidence to prove that today around the world real wages (i.e. wages adjusted for inflation) are low and in the developed world trending lower. My objective is not to rub in what everyone already knows, although I am tempted to do so because many of us privileged people avert our gazes from low wages because we do not want to see them. But my purpose here is not to document the fact. It is to change it.

Biology teaches us (*pace* Herbert Spencer) that cooperation is adaptive.¹⁹ Cultures perform biological functions –like getting the babies fed, and organizing what Karl Marx called the metabolism of life, the exchange of matter and energy with the environment. As human beings we are capable of making choices, and of transforming social structures.²⁰ I recommend transformation guided by a discourse coalition of numerous cultures --some of them religious and some of them secular—that have in common an ethic of solidarity. A realist ethics (i.e. an ethics (1) supported by the findings of the natural sciences that (2) works with existing cultures as they actually are as the necessary points of departure for constructive change) is needed to backstop caring and solidarity. Caring and solidarity (love) are already appealing ideas with large fan clubs. Nevertheless, they need the backing of scientific research in biology, psychology and other fields to defend themselves against liberalism. Realism adds proof that solidarity works; if it had not worked our ancestors would have died before procreating and we would not be here.

Realism also adds a healthy dose of respect for diversity. The only cultures that exist, or at least the only old cultures that exist, are cultures that have cared enough to meet human needs at least well enough to survive. They are not just pipe dreams that will never work. They have worked.

In getting to know other people's cultures, I am searching for allies to join a discourse coalition. We need a discourse coalition strong enough to transform the civil laws that frame the global economy and in large measure determine its outcomes.²¹ We already enjoy the benefits of a post-World War II discourse coalition that succeeded, on paper at least, in crafting a global consensus on human economic and social rights.²² I have grave doubts while I sympathize with allies of the angels like Yanis Varoufakis, Bernie Sanders, Robert Reich, Joseph Stiglitz, Thomas Piketty, Martha Nussbaum, Kate Pickett and Amartya Sen. I do not believe their proposals will work without a better understanding of the causal powers of social structure.²³ And not just understanding. We need to change the deep structures at what Tom Berry called "the religious level" because, as Berry said, "no other level is deep enough."

Although the policies the friends of the angels advocate would be at once more scientifically valid and more pro-people and pro-nature if they were implemented, they regularly are not implemented because they regularly are torpedoed by the homeostatic (self-defending and self-perpetuating) mechanisms of the system.²⁴ The homeostatic mechanisms are established by the basic structure. They manifest themselves as what I call structural traps. They (the traps) are set in stone by the civil law. The civil law follows liberal ethics.²⁵ Think for example of capital flight, of competition among countries to attract investment by lowering taxes, of corporations shifting production to where wages are lower, of outsourcing of work to so-called independent contractors to evade the labour laws, of transfer pricing, and of not producing when needs are unmet and the inputs are available simply because producing would not be profitable. Think of the conflict when good news for the economy (growth) is bad news for the physical survival of the species. Then take another look at the dilemma of most human beings today: work at low pay or no work. Diverse issues. One fundamental cause: the structure of the system. One fundamental cure: the ethics of solidarity already found in most cultures, and already hard-wired into human DNA, but fundamentally at odds with the liberal ethic entrenched in the structure of the system by jurisprudence, by economic science, by political philosophy, and –emblematically- in the rules enforced by the World Trade Organization. Think of the homeostatic mechanism as entrenched in the social structure by liberal ethics. Liberal ethics is a many-layered legacy bequeathed to us by the social historical process that built modernity. Adam Smith was a modernity- builder *par excellence*. Think of writers advocating solidarity and caring as having something to say that needs to be heard to remake the structures that are killing us.²⁶



If what I describe as “the basic cultural structure,” and associate with “civil law” and “liberal ethics” and “Adam Smith” and with Max Weber’s iron cage of modernity that nations can enter but cannot leave, were to be named with just one word, I would choose Theodor Adorno’s term *Tauschprinzip*, which can be simply translated as “the principle of exchange.” A close runner-up would be Sir Henry Maine’s use of the word “contract.” *Tauschprinzip* has the advantage that its author has outdone Maine in spelling out its far-reaching consequences.²⁷ Somewhat similarly, Charles Taylor has characterized our modern societies as “bargaining societies,” perhaps thinking along the same lines as Adorno’s English translator who rendered *Tauschprinzip* as “the bargaining principle.”²⁸

The idea that the basic structure of the modern world is that of a bargaining society whose principle is exchange is a simple idea. It means that we modern humans live mainly by selling and buying. We need to sell something to get money, because we need money to live. Once we have money we can buy what we want and/or need (with some important exceptions). The price of what we sell is a bargain struck between seller and buyer. The ethical justification of the bargain is that both parties freely agreed to it. When we buy, once again there is an exchange. Once again there is a bargain, also known as a contract or as an agreement. Once again, the outcome is a price – a price at which the buyer is willing to buy and the seller is willing to sell.

The basic structure is not hard to understand. However, it is confusing is that so many writers have described it in so many different ways, and have woven it into so many different theories with so many different political and ethical slants. To mention just two of many examples that could be mentioned, for Friedrich van Hayek the basic structure is the economic, legal and moral framework of an extended social order; i.e. of a society that organizes production and distribution impersonally on a large (and therefore efficient) scale. It is extended, but it is nevertheless decentralized (and therefore intelligent and libertarian).²⁹ Central planning, on the contrary, is necessarily unintelligent and totalitarian, because no central agency, arrogating all power to itself, can match the astute judgments of millions and billions of free individuals each intimately aware of their own situation and each looking out for her or his own interests. But for Karl Marx, the basic structure, or to be more precise the interpretation of the basic structure common to orthodox political economy and to bourgeois common-sense, is the ideology of capitalism. It is a disguise that uses the illusion of free consent to mask the exploitation of labour and the private appropriation of the social product.

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In Roy Bhaskar’s terminology, the basic structure is “existentially intransitive.” As a matter of ontology, it is what it is. It has causal powers. It does things. It continues to be what it is, and to do what it does, while scholars theorize about it and describe it in different ways.

If we keep in focus the simple way of thinking about the basic structure of modernity that I have sketched, it is not hard to see why wages are normally low. And it should not be hard to see that the basic structure needs to change in the ways that pioneers of solidarity economics are changing it to build a world that works for 100% of humanity without ecological damage. It is a biological fact that humans, like other animals, tend to multiply. When there is food, and when disease and violence are somewhat under control, most of the infants who are born will live to be old enough to enter the labour market. Most of them will have to sell their labour power to make a living. To close the sale, they will have to strike a wage bargain with a buyer of labour power. Common sense tells us that qualified buyers, who have money that they can use to buy other people’s time and energy, and who are in a position to make profitable use of it, will be comparatively few. The sellers cannot take themselves out of existence and thus cease to have needs, while the buyers are relatively free to freeze hiring for any reason or no reason. The labour-sellers need money right away, or in any event soon. The buyers, by definition, already have money. They can usually afford to wait in the expectation of making a more favourable (to themselves) wage bargain at a later date or with a different seller. Moreover, even if the labour-buyers are lovers of humanity who ardently desire to pay high wages, often they cannot. Paying wages higher than those their competitors pay would (normally) drive their costs of production higher than the costs of production of their competitors. It would tend to result in pricing their products out of the market.

These staggering structural facts were not lost on the early economists. Hear Adam Smith in 1776:

“...the demand for men, like that for any commodity, necessarily regulates the production of men; quickens it when it advances too slowly and stops it when it advances too fast. It is this demand which regulates and determines the state of propagation in all the different countries of the world....”³²

“Labour, like all other things which are purchased and sold, and which may be increased or diminished in quantity, has its natural and its market price. The natural price of labour is that price which is necessary to enable the labourers, one with another, to subsist and to perpetuate their race, without either increase or diminution.”³³



Thus, Smith implies that lack of market demand for labour stops its production because children die, or are never born, and sometimes adults die, because wages do not suffice to buy sufficient food. A few decades later, in 1817, David Ricardo in his *On the Principles of Political Economy and Taxation* was even clearer in stating the normal result of the normal operation of the Tauschprinzip:

“Labour, like all other things which are purchased and sold, and which may be increased or diminished in quantity, has its natural and its market price. The natural price of labour is that price which is necessary to enable the labourers, one with another, to subsist and to perpetuate their race, without either increase or diminution.”³³

Although much has changed since 1817, it is still reasonable to regard the exchange principle of a bargaining society, often euphemistically called a “free market,” as the *basic structure* of a European economy (the early modern “European world-system” in the terminology of Immanuel Wallerstein) that has now expanded to become today’s global economy. (“The modern world-system”) This is the approach Jürgen Habermas took in *Legitimation Crisis*. Still in the late twentieth century what I call the basic structure and Habermas calls the primary social formation is the *Tauschprinzip* of a bargaining society. Specifically, for Habermas, it is the wage bargain struck by labour with capital. Its enabling context is the legal framework of buying and selling that sets in stone the ethics of individualism and the structural principle that some people own the means of production and some do not. That legal framework is primary. The state, its Constitution, and its governments, are not primary. Habermas writes: “Instead, the modern rational state—whose prototype Max Weber analysed—becomes the complementary arrangement to self-regulative market commerce.”³⁴ The superior power of the market, and the comparative weakness of the state, are established, Habermas tells us, by bourgeois civil law. I will be claiming that Adam Smith built on what Habermas calls bourgeois law, which Smith sometimes called justice and sometimes called civilization, when he made what he and his fellow builders of modernity called the natural system of liberty and justice the ethical foundation of economic science.

It would follow, from what has been said so far, that low wages are the normal consequence of the prevailing *körperliche Organisation* (physical organization)³⁵ of our means of subsistence. High wages, when they exist, must be due to unusual circumstances and/or to deviations from modernity’s basic principle. Sweden in the 1960s, where high wages prevailed; must have been a deviation from

the norm, not the norm. Making decent livelihoods for 100% of humanity normal, must require a different ethic and a different social structure. Different from what? Different from the house that Smith and his allies built in the 18th century (with some spill over before and after). We still live in it. They called it natural. It is easy for us to slide and fall into assuming it is natural. Call the following an antidote to slide and fall.

The Principle that the Producers Own what they Produce is Not Natural

Adam Smith begins the chapter of *The Wealth* called “Of the Wages of Labour” with the sentence: “The produce of labour constitutes the natural recompense or wage of labour.”³⁶

But wait a minute! What has what is or is not “natural” got to do with what is, or with what should be, property rights in general, or in particular with what belongs to the labourer as a “natural” wage? Has Adam Smith not read Berger and Luckmann?³⁷ Has he not read *The Construction of Social Reality*³⁸ or *Constructing the Social World*³⁹ by John Searle? Does he not know that Searle has shown that from a logical point of view property rights are created by constitutive rules that give a social status and a social function to brute facts? And what on earth does he mean by “natural?” For Aristotle, calling something natural and not conventional meant that it was the same everywhere, but thinking of what you produce as yours is not everywhere the custom. If we went to the arctic and asked a hungry eskimo hunter who has killed a seal and is not taking a bite out of it until he carries it back to the igloo to share with his kin, surely, he would deny that its meat belongs only to him; or more likely, he would have no frame of reference for understanding the question. And not because the hunter is stupid. And not because he is altruistic.⁴⁰ He knows what side his bread is buttered on. His life depends on group loyalty. Without the solidarity of his kinship group he would be a dead duck. Similar points could be made about the Japanese peasants Charles Taylor⁴¹ offers as examples of humans who do not live in a bargaining society. And has Adam Smith not learned from Nancy Tanner and David Sloan Wilson and others that humans have become the dominant species because we are cultural animals, and because we are cultural animals we are able to change our behaviour more rapidly than species that adapt to changing circumstances by the slow process of mutation and selection?⁴² And from Jared Diamond about the calamitous consequences of clinging to old institutions fallaciously regarded as “natural” when the physical reality is new?⁴³



I will briefly introduce three claims: 1. That in the Enlightenment nature replaced God as a source of moral authority. 2. That as part of the same revolution in ethics⁴⁵ freedom replaced God as a source of moral authority. 3. That the combination of nature and freedom as “natural liberty” established the ethical bedrock undergirding the juridical bedrock of an economy.

Of course, Adam Smith has a valid excuse for the lacunae in his bibliography. He was born too soon. He could not read books that had not yet been written. But we today have no such excuse. For us, the various uses that Smith makes of the words “nature” and “natural” are part of the intellectual history of the social construction of the basic structure of the modern world bequeathed to us by 18th century Europe.⁴⁴ We study them not because we believe that Smith understood nature and knew what was and was not natural, but because knowing more about how we as a species got into the pickle we are in will help us to get out of it.

The Early Modern Revolution in Ethics

But before taking a closer look at the roles “natural wages,” “natural prices,” “natural liberty” and the like play in Smith’s thinking, it will be helpful to consider more broadly the ideological role of “nature” in Europe in Smith’s time – a time still referred to, somewhat tendentiously, as “The Enlightenment.” I will briefly introduce three claims: 1. That in the Enlightenment nature replaced God as a source of moral authority. 2. That as part of the same revolution in ethics⁴⁵ freedom replaced God as a source of moral authority. 3. That the combination of nature and freedom as “natural liberty” established the ethical bedrock undergirding the juridical bedrock of an economy (following Bhaskar, we could call the ethical bedrock a structural generative mechanism) that tends –subject to countervailing forces that produce exceptions—to keep wages low.

1. My first claim can be illustrated by comparing two approaches to education: *The Spiritual Exercises* of Saint Ignatius Loyola (1548) and *Emile* by Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1862). Ignatius tells us that the purpose of spiritual exercises –which I beg to be allowed to call a form of education-- is to purify the soul and to unite the will with the will of God. He treats the word “spirit” and the word “will” as synonyms. Thus, for Ignatius, as for Plato and Aristotle, as for Augustine and Aquinas, the human will is a problem. The will tends to be disorderly; left to itself it is as likely to do evil as to do good. (Here I would draw a parallel between the philosophers who have emphasized that social cohesion depends on education, and the anthropologist Nancy Tanner’s point that the human body did not evolve as a stand-alone fulfilment of instructions codified in deoxyribonucleic acid. Its organs and tissues evolved as functioning parts of cultures. In the case of *homo sapiens*, the Darwin-machine selected, as D.S. Wilson puts it, not bodies alone but “moral systems” that integrated genetic codes and cultural codes. It selected instincts plus education, not either alone.)⁴⁶

While Gandhi taught that “God” is the richest word in our language, so that a lifetime is not sufficient to learn all its deep meanings, Ignatius taught one of the deep meanings Gandhi might have had in mind. God is the being whose will we are called upon to discern and to follow in order to improve our own wills. If we then compare Ignatius with Rousseau’s text, we find that at every point where Ignatius would write “God” Rousseau writes “nature.” For example, every feature of the education of Sophie, who is destined to marry Emile, is authorized by nature’s requirement that Emile have a suitable helper. Compare *Genesis* 2:18. The message is identical, but the identity of the authority that sends the message has changed from God to Nature. For Rousseau, the answer to the question, “How is Emile to be educated?” is always “naturally.”

Examples could be multiplied. In the 18th century, Nature assumed moral authority. Sometimes as in the United States Declaration of Independence of July 4, 1776, the argument appealed simultaneously to the authority of “the Laws of Nature and of Nature’s God.” Sometimes, as in Adam Smith himself, the 18th century revived the teachings of the ancient stoic philosophers (3d century B.C. to 2d century A.D.) who had identified the natural with the right and the good.

2. In Europe (also then known as Christendom) after the fall of the Roman Empire and before the rise of modernity; and especially during conflicts between emperors and popes, schisms and reformations, and wars of religion; talk of rights and wrongs tended to be God-talk. Michel Foucault has made a case that during those times there was also a major tradition of what he calls politico-historical writing dedicated to explaining (and justifying) the social structure of the day as the outcome of past wars.⁴⁷

Contrary to God-talk and contrary to politico-historical talk, but complementary to nature-talk, the 18th century saw an explosion of freedom-talk.⁴⁸ In 1788, Immanuel Kant began his *Critique of Practical Reason* explaining that the province of practical reason (and therefore of ethics) was coextensive with the province of freedom. He italicized Freiheit. In 1797 in his *Rechtslehre* he deduced the main principles of civil law from one single principle, freedom, calling the principles of law by their traditional Latin names (*suum cuique tribuere, pacta sunt servanda* etc.) The other main moral philosophers of early modernity came to the same or similar conclusions. As John Rawls has expressed the matter, “None of them doubted that property ought to be respected; all of them affirmed the virtues of fidelity to promises and contracts, of truthfulness and beneficence and charity, and much else.

Say says, "...favour the most severe morality and the liberty that every man should have to dispose at will of his person, his talents, and his property, a liberty without which individual happiness and public prosperity are meaningless words. I do not believe that one could find among them a single man of bad faith or a bad citizen."⁵²

The problem for them was not the content of morality but its basis: How we could know it and be moved to act from it."⁴⁹ Liberalism –which taken literally is liberty-ism – arrived. From the 18th century until now⁵⁰ mainstream discourses have maintained, on the whole and with exceptions that vary from one writer to another, that the legitimacy of government is conferred by the consent of the governed, that the legitimacy of economic transactions is conferred by the free agreements of willing buyers and willing sellers, and that in general all human beings (or all adults) are entitled to do whatever they may choose to do subject to only to the limitation that they should not interfere with the like freedom of others.

3. Jean-Baptiste Say, a French follower, and on a few points an amender, of Adam Smith, explains that natural liberty –a doubly potent ideal because it combined the moral authority of two characteristic criteria for distinguishing right from wrong championed by the Enlightenment, Nature and Freedom—was a political ideal before Adam Smith made it the ethical bedrock of a science.⁵¹ He also makes it clear that the security of property rights was not a separate moral principle different from liberty, but indeed the very heart of liberty. The advocates of natural liberty before Smith, known as the *économistes*, Say says, "...favour the most severe morality and the liberty that every man should have to dispose at will of his person, his talents, and his property, a liberty without which individual happiness and public prosperity are meaningless words. I do not believe that one could find among them a single man of bad faith or a bad citizen."⁵²

Wage Increases do not Depend on or Follow from Productivity Increases

I have already mentioned one-way Smith uses the word "natural." Nature is supposed to tell us that the product of the worker who produced that product is his (or her) natural wage.

This same idea expressed by Smith (and also by John Locke and other early moderns) gives a certain rough intuitive credibility to the apparently related idea that the way to raise wages is to raise productivity. If the natural wage of the worker is to keep what the worker produces, or to be paid its value, then it might seem to follow that the more the worker produces the higher the wage.

The more this rough intuitive approach to raising wages is examined, the more it loses credibility.

In a typical case today, a firm needs to cut costs to remain competitive and to satisfy investors. Lowering wages is usually a bad idea for several reasons. The costs of most non-labour inputs are largely determined by factors outside the firm's control. The magic bullet: Raise productivity! But how is this done? Most commonly raising productivity cuts costs because of investments in more up to date, more efficient, and less labour-intensive technology.

First, on a common-sense reading, "The produce of labour [that] constitutes the natural recompense or wage of labour," refers to a physical product. If a worker can produce just one widget a day, it would seem reasonable to think that his wage would go up if he could produce two. Here Smith must mean producing some concrete useful item because he is speaking of what was "natural" in the world he imagines to have existed before there were market societies like ours.

But he later postulates a doctrine that has been standard ever since: an activity making something only counts as "productive" if what is made is "vendible." Household servants do not produce anything. After the laundry is done and the supper is cooked and the dishes are washed, there is nothing remaining for the employer to take to a market and sell.⁵³ Nothing counts as productive unless it makes something an employer can sell at a profit. Today when productivity is defined as output per unit of input, both the input and the output are normally⁵⁴ measured in money terms; the difference between the two is "value added."⁵⁵

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One can then say that "labour productivity" went up because output per worker went up and output per hour worked went up. But this is not likely to be good news for most workers. Except for firms like Hewlett-Packard⁵⁶ that make it a deliberate policy to share productivity gains with employees, the workers who remain after the new technology is installed, may and may not earn more. There was a time when ham-handed public policy snuffed out efforts by strong unions to negotiate wage increases greater than productivity increases. But now, in these days of weak or non-existent unions, most productivity gains do not lead to wage gains. They are captured by the famous "1%".⁵⁷ Now the 1% who ended up becoming richer than they already were because "labour productivity" went up can invoke Smith's account of what is and what is not natural. If the natural wage is constituted by the makers keeping for themselves what they made, then according to nature the 1% are the natural owners of the increased value added. They paid for the new technology. It was really their technology and not anything the workers did that raised productivity.

Raising wages today means socializing the benefits of valuable intellectual property. It means sharing the surpluses. It means transferring the benefits of the productivity of a few firms employing a few workers to create dignified livelihoods (if not precisely highly paid employment) for the majorities who are not employed by those firms.



Meanwhile, the workers made redundant by advanced technologies, including young graduates entering the labour market who wish they could get a high-paying job but can't, are shunted off to low-wage jobs and temporary gigs, many of them in the service sector.⁵⁸

This does not mean that the increased productivity is not there, or that it is impossible to redistribute it to benefit everybody. Indeed, with the new high-tech technologies coming on line (of which those used by Amazon, Google and Facebook are only a foretaste) we are looking at a future where it will be possible to do more with less, and even more possible than it is now to meet the needs of 100% of the people without environmental damage –as far as physical reality and natural science are concerned.⁵⁹

But, turning to the social science side of things, when the economy needs only a few humans, while robots to the work and computers do the thinking, then tying a person's income to a person's productivity will make no sense at all. A large part of what we need to forget to raise wages is the idea that increased productivity in a particular firm or industry naturally leads to higher wages for the workers employed in that particular firm or industry.

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Smith Anticipated Marx

Using the word "natural" in this same way, postulating that nature has established as a social norm the principle that the producers are the owners of their products, Smith anticipated Marx.

Smith writes: "In that original state of things, which precedes both the appropriation of land and the employment of stock, the whole produce of labour belongs to the labourer."⁶⁰ It follows from what Smith says in the passage from which this quote is taken that whenever and wherever the rules of the economic game are those that Smith identifies with "civilization," wherever owners take profits and landlords take rents, workers are paid *less than* the natural wage.

If the natural is just, and the unnatural is unjust, it follows that paying wages lower than the value of what the workers produce is unjust. Smith adds that if the natural state of things had continued, "...the wages of labour would have augmented with all those improvements in its productive powers, to which the division of labour gives occasion."⁶¹ Marx followed Smith and Ricardo in holding that the true exchange value of a thing (what Smith calls its "natural price") is determined by the amount of labour that goes into making it. Treating the work of management as a kind of labour, Marx concluded that labour alone produces exchange value.⁶² The others who take a cut out of the revenue from sales are non-producers. Preferring to base his case on science, not ethics, Marx did not explicitly say that this result was *not just*. He did not shrink from using sarcasm to ridicule people who say it *is just*.⁶³

As Joan Robinson has pointed out, using a labour theory of value to argue for higher wages or for social ownership of the means of production, is ultimately self-defeating.⁶⁴ Getting a better deal for workers, especially today and in a high-tech future, now means and tomorrow will mean first and foremost admitting workers to full membership in the human race. As human beings who were born on this planet, working people like everyone else should share in the benefits (the rents) that come from natural resources (Marx called them Gifts of Nature) and not from anybody's labour. Similarly, everybody, not just a privileged few, should share in the abundance made possible by advanced technologies. By arguing that only labour creates exchange value, and that natural resources and scientific knowledge have nothing to do with it, the 99% shoot themselves in the foot.

Another consequence of following this line of thought anticipated by Smith, developed by Marx, and popularized by advocates of higher wages, hovering in its background, when not in its foreground, is, (I think) typical the prevailing common sense of the moderate left's readers, if not of its authors. The consequence in question is that when working to raise wages saying "We want justice, not charity," is better than saying, "We are building communities of solidarity." Calling for justice, not charity, sounds dignified. It sounds rational. It sounds like a solid commitment that will not go away. "Community" and "solidarity" sound too much like "charity."

While appreciating the force of demanding justice instead of requesting charity, I would add an apology for charity. "Charity" came into English as a translation of *caritas*. *Caritas*, in turn, served in medieval theology as the Latin translation of the Greek *agape*.

As in classical economics generally there are three factors of production – land, labour and capital — so for Smith there are three natural prices: the natural rent of land, the natural wage, and the natural profit. These three naturals together constitute a fourth natural: the natural price of the commodity that land, labour and capital together produce.



I do not believe that even now, now in the 21st century, charity has lost all of her affinities with her grandmother. And as to *agape* herself, I do not read her as a “Platonic idea”⁶⁵ divorced from physical reality, adored only by churchgoers who, having been disappointed in this world, seek consolation in the next. My personal testimony regarding churchgoers is evidence to the contrary. What I find when I attend my church are well-behaved children, drug-free adolescents, stable marriages, dignified senior citizens not abandoned by their families, meaningful ceremonies, beautiful music, poetic prose, and social responsibility. My read of “*agape*” is that she is a great symbol of one of the great religions that has organized more than one successful adaptation of the physical and emotional repertory of *homo sapiens* to its changing physical environment.⁶⁶ Without *agape*, or one of her blood relations who does similar work in other cultures, attempts to raise wages are (I claim) incapable of reliably and sustainably surviving capitalism’s homeostatic defences (like downturns in investor confidence) and structural traps (like unpayable public deficits). When push comes to shove, an ethics founded on early modern liberal myths (like “pure reason” and property rights determined by what nature is supposed to have intended) is less useful for raising wages than a realist ethics founded on lessons learned from the biological and cultural evolution of the species (see the footnote below for an example).⁶⁷

In the following pages, I will consider Adam Smith’s doctrine of “natural price” (which wreaks havoc today in its modified form called “real price”). Then I will recommend that “building communities of solidarity” be added to the conventional wisdom of the allies of the angels. These topics will lend themselves to saying more about homeostasis and structural traps.

The So-called Natural Price of Labour is not Natural Either

Adam Smith has a lot to say –most of which is repeated in one form or another by his contemporary followers—about natural prices.

As in classical economics generally there are three factors of production –land, labour and capital—so for Smith there are three natural prices: the natural rent of land, the natural wage, and the natural profit. These three naturals together constitute a fourth natural: the natural price of the commodity that land, labour and capital together produce.

His opening gambit when he introduces natural prices (distinguishing them from market prices, unlike those among his followers who identify “natural” or “real” prices with market prices) is: “There is in every society or neighbourhood an ordinary or average rate both of wages and profit in every different employment of labour and stock.”⁶⁸ (Smith writes “stock” where we would write “capital.”) Thus the “natural price” (not, as one might have expected, the “market price”) makes its debut as the “ordinary or average price.”

At first glance the existence of a natural price is true by definition, because for any set of integers there is an average. It is easy to compute. Simply make a list of each sale and its price. Then add up all the prices and divide the sum by the number of sales. The quotient will be the average (mean) price. By definition it is the natural price. But that is not Smith’s claim. He is claiming that there is in every society a normal price to which the market price (for Smith the market price is the observed price at which sales in fact take place) regularly returns. The market price fluctuates. Sometimes it is above the natural price. Sometimes below. But the total of fluctuations up is more or less equal to the total of fluctuations down, and in time the price returns to something “there is in every society,” namely the natural price for that commodity. Smith explains: “The natural price is, as it were, the central price, to which the prices of all commodities are continually gravitating. Different accidents may sometimes keep them suspended a good deal above it, and sometimes force them down even somewhat below it. But whatever may be the obstacles which hinder them from settling in this centre of repose and continuance, they are constantly tending towards it.”⁶⁹

This is an empirical claim. It is indeed a universal claim. *Smith’s first formulation of natural price echoes the philosophy of science of his dear friend David Hume, according to whom a scientific law is a constant conjunction of observed facts.* If Smith’s empirical claim is true, it should be possible to cite observed facts as evidence for it, and indeed impossible to cite any evidence against it. Indeed, in the pure forms of such a methodology (as distinct from its modified forms that rely on statistical significance, as in regressions where a linear relationship that would be a pure Humean law is approximated) there should be no counter-examples. But the first five words of Smith’s empirical claim, “There is in every society...” are obviously false. Nothing Smith says about natural prices makes any sense if we do not assume that we are talking about a bargaining society governed by the *Tauschprinzip*.



To drive home the ethical rightness of the natural price, and consequently the unethical wrongness of any other price, Smith claims that when a commodity is sold for its natural price (constituted by the sum of the natural wage, the natural rent and the natural profit) it is sold precisely for what it is worth. This means that it is sold precisely for what it really costs the person who brings it to market.⁷⁹ The person who brings it to market is, of course, normally the employer. If he sells it at its natural price he must have paid his workers the natural wage. It follows that low wages are ethical while high wages are unethical.

Here in Chile, for example, Smith's empirical claim makes no sense in the context of the traditional practices of the Aymara and Mapuche societies. Around the world it makes no sense in the contexts of many of the pre-capitalist "material practices" chronicled by Fernand Braudel.⁷⁰ In the Aymara *Chhalaka* and the Mapuche *Trafkintu* food is exchanged in ceremonies, with prayers to the *Pacha-Mama*, singing, dancing and feasting. Nobody can say that their practices are utopian dreams that will never work in practice. The observed fact is that they have worked in practice for hundreds of years, in cultures that are (unlike modernity) ecologically sustainable.

So why should we live according to a liberal mythology that imagines that nature created bargaining societies everywhere, instead of living according to some other mythology (or, as Michel Foucault naively proposes,⁷¹ try to live without mythology) when we know that a normal consequence of the *körperliche Organisation* of the means of subsistence according to liberal mythology is low wages?

Smith goes on to describe the operation of a causal mechanism that explains the empirical regularity he alleges to exist. *His method here can be called abduction in a sense given to that word by C.S. Peirce, reasoning to the best explanation of the observed facts.*⁷² Here Smith is on firmer ground. The causal (and structural) mechanism he describes is important. It exists and has causal powers, even though it does not determine what prices will be alone, always, or everywhere. The causal mechanism that produces natural prices is supply and demand under conditions of free competition.

Smith explains how it works: A market price *above the natural price* motivates new players to enter the game. Or old players to increase production. Both see that money can be made by increasing supply to meet an existing effective demand that either is not being satisfied at all, or else is being satisfied more than it costs producers to bring goods to market. In Smith's words, there are buyers waiting for them who are "...willing to pay the whole value of the rent, wages, and profit, which must be paid in order to bring it thither."⁷³ The increased supply will bring the price *down* to the natural price. Similarly, when the market price is *below the natural price* a decreased supply will bring the market price *up* to the natural price.

Having described a structural causal mechanism that allegedly produces the universal phenomenon that Smith alleged to exist in the first paragraph of Book I, Chapter VII, Smith immediately refutes himself.

It is not necessary to consult Marxists, Keynesians, economic historians or sociologists to learn why natural wages and other prices Smith calls natural are not natural in any scientifically defensible sense of the word. In the same chapter where he introduces the concept of natural price, Smith himself devotes three pages to listing reasons why the behaviour of business people and the policies of governments make the world as it actually exists very different from the theoretical model he has just constructed. A little later, in Book I Chapter X he writes, "People of the same trade seldom meet together, even for merriment and diversion, but the conversation ends in a conspiracy against the public or some contrivance to raise prices."⁷⁴

Thus, it turns out that the logical status of the science of Adam Smith, and (as I claim elsewhere⁷⁵, the core of orthodox economic science from his time until now⁷⁶) is that its central claims are *counterfactual conditionals* combined with liberal *ethical valuations*. In other words, it is a science of what prices would be if, contrary to fact, certain ideal conditions were satisfied, coupled with the value judgment that those contrary-to-fact prices *ought to be*.

The natural price is not the price that is observed. It is the price that would be observed if there were perfect liberty.⁷⁷ If there were perfect liberty, then wages would be natural, rents would be natural, profits would be natural, and therefore their sum, the selling price of the commodity produced would be natural. (This part is in principle supposed to be an empirical claim of a special [counterfactual conditional] sort; it is supposed to be a claim about what *would actually happen* if liberal ethical principles were consistently followed –although maverick economists have argued that the way orthodox economists have defined the terms makes it impossible to submit the claim to empirical tests.) Smith also uses the expression "natural liberty" as a synonym for "justice" and speaks of a natural system of perfect liberty and justice.⁷⁸

To drive home the ethical rightness of the natural price, and consequently the unethical wrongness of any other price, Smith claims that when a commodity is sold for its natural price (constituted by the sum of the natural wage, the natural rent and the natural profit) it is sold precisely for what it is worth. This means that it is sold precisely for what it really costs the person who brings it to market.⁷⁹ The person who brings it to market is, of course, normally the employer. If he sells it at its natural price he must have paid his workers the natural wage. It follows that low wages are ethical while high wages are unethical.

Since the extreme left is out of the mainstream conversation because of the failures of central planning, while those remaining do not question a basic social structure that makes it impossible to make the world work for 100% of humanity without ecological damage, it is unfortunate that solidarity economics is ignored.



A Counter-Intuitive but Valid Conclusion

My conclusion is that idealism is the only true realism. By idealism I mean rising to a higher ethical level. I mean not following Smith by defining freedom so that by definition it means that each individual is completely self-interested and that property rights are immutable. That is what Smith implicitly does when he *defines* natural wages, natural rent, natural profits, and natural prices as those that *would* be observed if there were perfect liberty. For example, the landlord would charge the tenant as much as he could possibly get when there is perfect liberty.⁸⁰

I mean emphasizing among the many uses of the terms freedom and liberty, the way a similar Greek word is used by Saint Paul in Galatians 5:13. I mean remembering what Martin Luther did with the idea of freedom in his essay on the freedom of the Christian. (I mention Luther with no intention to underestimate, much less exclude, the constructive uses of the same and similar terms found in secular discourses and in non-Christian cultures). Luther writes that a Christian is a perfectly free servant of all.

These words of Alfred Marshall are worth pondering: “We must call to mind the fact that the struggle for existence tends to make those methods of organization prevail, which are best fitted to thrive in their environment, but not necessarily those best fitted to benefit their environment, unless it happens that they are duly rewarded for all the benefits they confer, whether direct or indirect. And in fact this is not so. For as a general rule the law of substitution – which is nothing more than a special and limited application of the law of the survival of the fittest—tends to make one method of organization supplant another when it offers a direct and immediate service at a lower price. The indirect and ultimate services which either will render have, as a general rule, little or no weight in the balance and as a result many businesses languish and die which might in the long run have done good work for society if only they could have been obtained. This is especially true of some forms of cooperative association.”⁸¹ What Marshall does not say, but Karl Polanyi does say,⁸² is that the law of substitution that rewards whomever offers buyers better or the same products at low or lower prices (for example Amazon or Walmart, or, historically, almost any of the great multinational corporations), operates not only in a physical environment but also, and decisively, in a socially constructed institutional environment: the civil law. The bargaining society.

For this reason (because the modern institutional environment is taken for granted) working to raise wages by building a solidarity economy may be counter-intuitive even though it is a feasible path to transformation while more intuitive paths are not. Seeking answers to the right-wing question “How can we get more investment?” may be intuitively appealing because a successful answer is likely to create relatively high-paying jobs in the short run. However, I would suggest that the moderate left, and not just the right, tends to take the institutional framework for granted. In Marshall’s terms, at a fundamental level it neglects seeking the forms of organization best suited to benefit the environment. Since the extreme left is out of the mainstream conversation because of the failures of central planning, while those remaining do not question a basic social structure that makes it impossible to make the world work for 100% of humanity without ecological damage, it is unfortunate that solidarity economics is ignored.

Consider, for example, what Joseph Stiglitz *does say* and *does not say* when he demonstrates that -- contrary to President Trump’s claim that America has been snookered in the international trade negotiations of recent decades-- the American trade negotiators have gotten exactly what they wanted: “What they [i.e. the American trade negotiators hr] asked for was essentially what American corporations wanted. American corporations wanted access to cheap labour, without environmental and labour protections. The corporations also liked the fact that threats to move factories abroad weakened workers’ bargaining power. This enriched their coffers, as wages were driven down. They were pleased that trade agreements helped ensure the property rights of investments made in developing countries, for this made their threats to relocate their plants in these cheap-labour countries more credible.”⁸³ Paraphrasing the longer passage from which this short quote is taken, Stiglitz does say that within living memory the global economy has deliberately been restructured for the purpose of lowering wages.

Stiglitz *does not say*, but Joanna Swanger and I do say, that even before the trade negotiations of recent decades, and even before 1980 when Ronald Reagan, Margaret Thatcher and Helmut Kohl were elected, the basic cultural structure was already steadily undermining social democracy. Minimum wages were already structural traps.⁸⁴ Labour unions were already structural traps. (Let it be clear that even though they are structural traps, labour unions and minimum wages are still stepping in the right direction.

Piketty *does not say* that the establishment of neo-Roman private law *dans le monde entier* while the jurisdictions of nations are divided into 196 separate spaces, made it “natural” and “inevitable” for the wealthy to evade taxes by relocating their assets or themselves or both. He *does* use the term “inevitable” to describe what is inevitable given the basic cultural structure (but not inevitable if we widen the lens and see more possibilities). For example, it is inevitable that unions by raising wages higher than they otherwise would be, increase unemployment.



Building a solidarity economy is a larger step in the same direction because its higher ethical level makes it a moral duty to compensate the losers in today’s unacceptable trade-offs while its Deweyan [Darwinian] pragmatism makes it possible to do so.)

What we mean by “structural trap” is: something that at a common-sense level appears to be a direct and feasible solution to low wages or some other social problem (the bait); when, at a less obvious level, the system is already organized to defeat it, for reasons Roy Bhaskar would call structural conditions of human action.⁸⁵ The obvious, direct, solution perturbs the driver of the system (profit). It (the system) has an important general tendency, which is sometimes mitigated and sometimes exacerbated, to trigger countervailing forces in order to defend the dynamic that moves it (for examples, capital flight, disinvestment, a decline in investor confidence, relocation of production). Since, from a biological point of view, human life has come to be physically dependent on profit-making (witness the shortages of essential goods and services in Venezuela today), to raise wages (and to solve other social problems) reliance on direct and intuitively plausible approaches is not enough. This is where solidarity economics comes in. It is about strengthening other dynamics (i.e. other than the profit motive, other than capital accumulation). Many other dynamics are conveniently named “solidarity.” They include those Luis Razeto⁸⁶ called the “C Factor” because so many of its constituents begin with the letter C – including Community, Communication, Commitment, Caring,⁸⁷ *Comprensión* (understanding), *Corazon* (heart), *Compañerismo* (fellowship).

Thomas Piketty, another ally of the angels, *does admit*, that his proposal for a global wealth tax is a utopian idea. He *does say* that although from an economic point of view a global wealth tax would be an ideal way to reduce inequality, nevertheless as of now the nations of the world are not going to stop competing with each other lowering taxes to attract investment, and start cooperating with each other in tax collection enough to implement a global wealth tax.⁸⁸

Piketty *does not say* that the establishment of neo-Roman private law *dans le monde entier* while the jurisdictions of nations are divided into 196 separate spaces, made it “natural” and “inevitable” for the wealthy to evade taxes by relocating their assets or themselves or both. He *does* use the term “inevitable” to describe what is inevitable given the basic cultural structure (but not inevitable if we widen the lens and see more possibilities). For example, it is inevitable that unions by raising wages higher than they otherwise would be, increase unemployment.

Because, “If labour unions are successful, firms will inevitably use more capital and less labour as well as more skilled labour and less unskilled labour.”⁸⁹ A structural trap.

But suppose we believe that the number of sustainable and reliable solutions to the problem of low wages within the confines of a global bargaining society structured by a Tauschprinzip is zero. Suppose we re-conceive of the now dominant rules of the economic game as one of the hundreds and thousands of basic structures *homo sapiens* has used to accomplish the *körperliche Organisation* of the production of the means of subsistence. Suppose we re-imagine “well-paid employment” and “profitable business” as two, but only two, subsets of the wider category of “dignified livelihoods.”⁹⁰ Suppose that entrepreneurs re-define their vocations as serving society by creating value efficiently, *in order* to make it *possible* to meet the needs of 100% of humanity without ecological damage.⁹¹ Widening the imagination can make what is intuitively impeccable seem like just another flying around in another fly bottle without ever finding a way out.

It is *counter-intuitive* to count the idealists as experts on how to raise wages. They do asset-based community organizing, organic gardening and farming, mindfulness workshops, basketball for at-risk youth, ethical banking, whistleblowing, heterodox economics, cooperative child care, shared housing, hospices, seed banks, credit unions, Habitat for Humanity, Doctors without Borders, crowdfunding, organizing domestic workers, freecycling, open-source software, homeless shelters, shareholder activism, bio-construction, conflict resolution, undercover union organizing, nonviolence training in prisons, going door-to-door for Bernie, solar panels, safe houses for battered women, setting up coops and employee-owned enterprises, urban agriculture, alternative media, alternative schools, alternative medicine, alternative music, art and dance and other offbeat stuff. Many of them work for low wages. Many volunteer for zero wages. Many volunteer for less than zero wages because they also donate.

But just as a Gestalt shift can turn a duck into a rabbit, or a rabbit into a duck, the counter-intuitive becomes intuitive when the solution to the problem of low wages is redefined as the problem of transforming the system. Suppose we agree with Bucky Fuller that to survive humanity must “graduate” to a higher ethical level. Then it is the idealists who are the realists.

Foot Notes

1. This question is suggested by Fuller in (1968, 2010) Operating Manual for Spaceship Earth. Santa Barbara CA: Buckminster Fuller Institute.

2. Where I do not provide references, my claims can usually be verified easily by consulting Google.

3. <https://www.opendemocracy.net/transformation/emily-kawano/seven-ways-to-build-solidarity-economy>

4. See Coraggio's recent blog at www.repensar.cl

5. Jean-Louis Laville (dir.) (2011) Économie solidaire. Paris, Hermès.

6. www.economiasolidaria.org/

7. I write as one of the teachers in the EMBA at UCT, team-teaching a course called Critical Conversations on Ethics, Macroeconomics and Organizing with my co-author of Gavin Anderson and Howard Richards (2015) Unbounded Organizing in Community. Lake Oswego OR, Dignity Press.

8. Mikhail Kalecki (1943, 2010) Political Aspects of Full Employment. <https://mronline.org> › Commentary

9. Ellen Meiksins Wood (2003). Empire of Capital. London, Verso.

10. For an historical account of the links between money, the generation of bogus science, and the rise to power of neoliberalism, see Richard Cockett (1994). Thinking the Unthinkable: Think-Tanks and the Economic Counter-Revolution, 1931-1983. New York, HarperCollins.

11. Joseph Stiglitz (2017). Globalization and its Discontents Revisited. New York Norton. P. 220 and following. Stiglitz might perhaps also be read as believing that crises are inevitable, but that their unnecessary severity is caused by mistaken policies.

12. Paul Krugman (2009). The Return of Depression Economics. New York, Norton. P. 113.

13. Tony Lawson (1997). Economics and Reality. London, Routledge. See also other works by the same author.

14. Howard Richards and Joanna Swanger (2006). The Dilemmas of Social Democracies. Lanham MD: Rowman and Littlefield.

15. Gunnar Myrdal, who was perhaps the leading social democratic thinker in the sixties, stated explicitly at the beginning of Asian Drama (1968, New York, Pantheon) that his ideals were the 18th century ideals.

16. Raúl González (editor) (2018). Ensayos sobre Economía Cooperativa, Autogestionaria, y Solidaria. Santiago, Editorial Forja. Available on Amazon as a Kindle e book.

17. Thomas Piketty (2014). Capital in the Twenty First Century. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

18. François Bourguignon (2015), The Globalization of Inequality. Princeton NJ. Princeton University Press. I do not know what would happen if the 70 to 20 figure were corrected for non-monetary contributions to welfare. My hypothesis would be that people who live on less than two 1985 US dollars a day (a World Bank criterion for extreme poverty) do not exist. The people with so little money who manage to survive run cattle, or do subsistence farming, or dumpster dive, or steal, or are part of mutual support networks, and/or in some other way or ways stay alive thanks to non-monetary resources. Conversely, people who become more urbanized and more dependent on money may statistically rise out of extreme poverty but physically be worse off than they were before.

19. See the works of D.S. Wilson and C.H. Waddington cited and discussed below, those of the Chilean biologists Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela, those of the French historian of biology Charles Canguilhem, John Dewey's pragmatic philosophical development of a Darwinian worldview, and Charles Darwin (1871, 2004). The Descent of Man. London, Penguin.

20. Margaret Archer (2000). Being Human: The Problem of Agency. Cambridge UK, Cambridge University Press. See also other works by the same author and the "transformative models of social action" of Anthony Giddens and Roy Bhaskar.

21. Sir Henry Maine (1861, 1906) Ancient Law. New York, Henry Holt. Karl Renner (1904, 1976) The Institutions of Private Law and their Social Functions. London, Routledge; Max Weber (1922, 1978) Economy and Society. Berkeley, University of California Press, especially the parts about the legal frame of the economy; John Commons (1924) Legal Foundations of Capitalism. New York, Macmillan; Howard Richards (2004) Understanding the Global Economy. Santa Barbara CA, Peace Education Books.

22. Evelin Lindner (2009). Emotion and Conflict: How Human Rights Can Dignify Emotion. Santa Barbara CA, Praeger.

23.. Douglas V. Porpora (1993) Cultural Rules and Material Relations. Sociological Theory Vol. 11, pp. 212-229; and other works on social structure by the same author.

24. See my book review of Sen's The Idea of Justice. Howard Richards (2012) The Idea of Justice. Journal of Peace Education. Volume 9, pp. 326-28; and my book with Joanna Swanger (2006) The Dilemmas of Social Democracies. Lanham MD, Rowman and Littlefield; and the similar analysis of Jürgen Habermas (1975). The Legitimation Crisis. Boston, Beacon Press.

25. Although the interdependence of social structure, law and ethics I have in mind is a broad and deep historical process of social construction, energized and constrained by biological needs, it is perhaps most neatly crystallized in Kant's metaphysics of justice, with its two parts the Tugendlehre (teachings about virtue) and the Rechtslehre (teachings about law). It is not unfair to Kant to say that his ethics has only one principle, namely freedom (also known as autonomy or as liberty), and that he derives the main rules of the civil law from that one principle. Immanuel Kant (1797, 1965) Metaphysical Elements of Justice. Indianapolis, Bobbs Merrill.

26.. Robert Greenleaf (1977). Servant Leadership. New York, Paulist Press; Riane Eisler (2007) The Real Wealth of Nations. San Francisco, Berrett-Koehler; Evelin Lindner (2011) A Dignity Economy. Lake Oswego OR, Dignity Press. Howard Richards and Joanna Swanger (2013). Gandhi and the Future of Economics. Lake Oswego OR, Dignity Press.

27. Theodor Adorno (German original 1966). Negative Dialectics. London, Routledge, 1999.

28. Charles Taylor (1971) Interpretation and the Sciences of Man. Review of Metaphysics. Volume 25, pp. 3-51.

29. Friedrich von Hayek (1991). The Fatal Conceit: The Errors of Socialism. Chicago, University of Chicago Press.

30. Thus, Marx writes in a famous passage at the end of Chapter Six of Volume One of Capital: "This sphere that we are deserting, within whose boundaries the sale and purchase of labour-power goes on, is in fact a very Eden of the innate rights of man. There alone rule Freedom, Equality, Property and Bentham. Freedom, because both buyer and seller of a commodity, say of labour-power, are constrained only by their own free will. They contract as free agents, and the agreement they come to, is but the form in which they give legal expression to their common will. Equality, because each enters into relation with the other, as with a simple owner of commodities, and they exchange equivalent for equivalent. Property, because each disposes only of what is his own. And Bentham, because each looks only to himself. The only force that brings them together and puts them in relation with each other, is the selfishness, the gain and the private interests of each. Each looks to himself only, and no one troubles himself about the rest, and just because they do so, do they all, in accordance with the pre-established harmony of things, or under the auspices of an all-shrewd providence, work together to their mutual advantage, for the common weal and in the interest of all."

31. Roy Bhaskar (1998). The Possibility of Naturalism. London, Routledge. P. 47.

32. An Inquiry into the Nature and Causes of the Wealth of Nations Book I, Chapter VIII. (various editions, some with varying page numbers). Although 1776 was the date of the first edition, the 1789 edition, the last to be revised by Smith himself, is the one usually reprinted.

33. David Ricardo, On the Principles of Political Economy and Taxation. London: Macmillan, 1951. The lines quoted are the opening paragraph of Chapter Five "On Wages." I am not saying the views of Smith, Ricardo, Marx and Thomas Malthus were identical. I am saying that they all found that normally wages are low, and that in this they were correct, given the basic social structure they analysed and the facts they observed. In other texts the same authors qualify their views acknowledging that the cost of production of a worker is not necessarily that of bare subsistence. It also includes a culturally determined minimum that varies from place to place.

34. Jürgen Habermas (German original 1973). Legitimation Crisis. London, Heinemann Educational Books, 1976. P. 21.

35. I have borrowed the phrase from The German Ideology by Marx and Engels. (1867)

36. The Wealth, the first sentence of Book I, Chapter VIII.

37. Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1966). The Social Construction of Reality. New York, Penguin Random House.

38. John Searle (1995). The Social Construction of Reality. Stanford, Stanford University Press.

39. John Searle (2009). Making the Social World. Oxford, Oxford University Press.

40. According to Fiske, a reasonable conclusion from the available evidence is that all humans are genetically capable of adapting to four kinds of social organization: communal sharing, authority ranking, equality matching, and market pricing. Alan Page Fiske (1991) Structures of Social Life: The Four Elementary Forms of Human Relations. New York, Free Press. Others find reciprocity and redistribution ubiquitous. Our own view is that the human capacity to invent new social forms is best regarded as unlimited. In any case, the question whether a more cooperative civilization could replace the present world economy should not be reduced to a question about selfishness vs. altruism.

41. Taylor, op. cit.

42. Nancy Tanner (1985) On Becoming Human. Cambridge UK, Cambridge University Press; C.H. Waddington (1960) The Ethical Animal. London, Allen & Unwin; D.S. Wilson (2002) Darwin's Cathedral. Chicago, University of Chicago Press. "...human moral systems have both a genetically evolved component and an open-ended cultural component..." Wilson, position 2144 of the Kindle Edition.

43. Jared Diamond (2005) Collapse. New York, Viking.

44. Karl Polanyi (first published 1944) chronicles how many features of what he calls our "market society" including the commodification of people, land and money, continued to evolve step by step in the 19th century. The Great Transformation. Boston, Beacon Press, 2001.

45. I adopt the idea that there was a revolution in ethics in the 18th century from Costas Douzinas (2002) The End of Human Rights. Oxford, Hart Publishing.

46. Tanner and Wilson op. cit.

47. Michel Foucault (lectures given in 1975-76) Society Must be Defended. New York, Picador, 2009.

48. Costas Douzinas op. cit. pp. 186-191.

49. John Rawls (2000) Lectures on the History of Moral Philosophy. Cambridge, Harvard University Press. Pp. 10-11.

50. A fairly recent example is Milton Friedman (1962) Capitalism and Freedom. Chicago, University of Chicago Press. At the beginning of the book he says that his views on the economic issues he will discuss all flow from the principle of the freedom of the individual. He writes this in spite of having repeatedly expressed elsewhere his agreement with Lionel Robbins' claim that economics is a value-free science.

51. Jean-Baptiste Say (1841). Traité d'économie politique. Sixth and last edition. Paris, Guillaumin. (first edition 1803) This popular treatise was translated into English by Thomas Jefferson. I agree with Say that economics is best thought of as a science founded by Adam Smith. Others prefer to say it began earlier

52. My translation from Say op. cit. in the Discours preliminaire that precedes the beginning of Book I.

53. Smith op. cit. Book II, Chapter III "Of the Accumulation of Capital, or of productive and unproductive labour."

54. But the approach is necessarily different when output is not measured as money value of sales; for example, in measuring the productivity of a police force one might count the number of arrests.

55. Value added today is the sum of labour income and capital income, since the source of both is the difference between input and output. For a more complete account of how productivity is measured today see Christine Greenhalgh and Mark Rogers (2011) Innovation, Intellectual Property, and Economic Growth. Princeton, Princeton University Press. Pp. 70-81.

56. David Packard (1995) The HP Way. New York, Harper Business.

57. See for example Gillian B. White's article Why the Gap Between Worker Pay and Productivity is so Problematic, in The Atlantic Monthly February 25, 2015.

58. Guy Standing (2011) The Precariat. London, Bloomsbury.

59. Peter Diamandis and Steven Kotler (2012). Abundance. New York, Free Press.

60. Op. Cit. Loc. Cit.

61. Id.

62. Marx warns against simplistic interpretations of this claim in his Critique of the Gotha Programme (1875).

63. See footnote 13 above for an example.

64. Joan Robinson (1942, 1966). An Essay on Marxian Economics. London, Palgrave Macmillan.

65. I use "Platonic idea" here as a convenient cliché. As to Plato himself, in the chapters on Plato in my (1995) Letters from Quebec (San Francisco, International Scholars Press) I try to show that Plato was an ecologist at heart.

66. D.S. Wilson, op. cit. (who is personally an atheist) confirms that my personal experience is not unusual with a systematic study of a sample of 25 religions. Of course, religion in its worst manifestations deserves all the condemnations one might find words in one's vocabulary to utter.

67. For an example of realist ethics see John Dewey and James Tufts (1908) Ethics. New York, Henry Holt. Compare the authors' functional (building on Darwin) account of the right to private property with Kant's "transcendental" account. Dewey and Tufts' conclusions regarding wages and other economic issues are similar to those of Catholic social doctrine and those of the protestant World Council of Churches.

68. This is the first sentence of Book I, Chapter VII "Of the natural and market Price of Commodities." It is followed by separate chapters on natural wages, natural profits, and natural rents.

69. Ibid. at p. 63 of the edition I am using, which is the Arlington House undated edition published at New Rochelle, New York, in the Classics of Conservatism series.

70. Fernand Braudel (1992) Civilization and Capitalism, 15th-18th Century, Vol. I: The Structure of Everyday Life. New York, Harper and Row.

71. Howard Richards (2018). Following Foucault: The Trail of the Fox. Stellenbosch, South Africa, African SUN Media. (available on Amazon as a Kindle e – book)

72. Actually, Pierce's concept of abduction evolved in several versions during his lifetime. See Part II of Robert Sharpe (1970) Induction, Abduction, and the Evolution of Science. Trans-actions of the Charles S. Peirce Society, Vol. 6, pp. 17-33. The concept has been further developed by others since.

73. Wealth, same chapter, p. 47 of the Kindle edition.

74. Position 2096 at or near page 96 of the Kindle Edition.

75. See my Economic Theory and Community Development previously cited.

76. More recently orthodox economists do not pretend that perfect markets will ever be realities, but nevertheless evaluate the real world by calculating its deviations from what Smith defined as perfection. See for example Arnold C. Harberger (1964) The Measurement of Waste. The American Economic Review, Vol. 54, pp. 58-76.

77. Wealth Kindle Edition p. 45, p. 52, p.78 and elsewhere.

78. This point can be confirmed easily using the search command of the Kindle Edition.

79. Wealth, p. 46, position 887.

80. Wealth, Book I, Chapter XI

81. Alfred Marshall (1895). Principles of Economics. Third Edition. London, Macmillan. pp. 561-2.

82. Karl Polanyi (1944). The Great Transformation. New York, Farrar and Rinehart.

83. Stiglitz, op. cit. p. xx-xxi.

84. Some positivist researchers hold that the evidence is still inconclusive on the question whether minimum wages decrease employment. They observe, for example, that in New Jersey in 1992 the minimum wage went up and total employment also went up. Critical realists realize that in open systems there are no tendencies so strong that they always override the other factors in play, but nevertheless emphasize the enduring causal powers of structures. Compare David Card and Alan Krueger (1995), Time-Series Minimum Wage Studies: A Meta-Analysis. American Economic Review. Vol. 85 pp. 238-243 with Richards and Swanger (2006) op. cit. Chapter 7.

85 Roy Bhaskar (2008, first published 1979). The Possibility of Naturalism. London, Routledge Chapter Two, Part Three. For Bhaskar (unlike Ludwig von Mises and Immanuel Kant) the structural conditions of human action are historically constructed although relatively enduring (witness legal principles like *sum cuique* that in Europe have not changed much since Justinian's Institutes promulgated in 533) but they are not universal and eternal.

86 Luis Razeto (1993) Los Caminos de la Economía Solidaria. Santiago, Ediciones Vivarum.

87 Consider Riane Eisler's proposals for a caring economy, underpinned by what Carol Gilligan calls a care ethic, defined as "attending to and responding to needs." Riane Eisler (2008). The Real Wealth of Nations: Creating a Caring Economics. San Francisco, Berrett-Koehler.

88. Piketty, op. cit. Chapter 15.

89. Thomas Piketty (2015). The Economics of Inequality. Cambridge MA, Belknap Press of Harvard University Press. p. 89.

90. Evelin Lindner, A Dignity Economy. op.cit.

91. Andrew Carnegie (1900). The Gospel of Wealth and Other Timely Essays. New York, Century.

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DR. CAUVERY GANAPATHY THE INCONVENIENCE OF MAKING A MOVEMENT LAST IN INDIA

Abstract

My country is a curious study in contrasts. I reckon this is the case in most societies where the old and the new struggle to coexist. India's own brand of peculiarity emerges most from the fact that it struggles every day to make sense of a chaotic enmeshing of varied cultures, that are often in direct contravention to each other and, where the very existence of one appears to question the ethos of the other. For this commentary, one thought of juxtaposing the twin - if not more - worlds that India continues to straddle at all times. The purpose being to highlight that while it is well to celebrate every small victory, the simultaneous existence of dogmas may quietly be chipping away at the hem of every success.

I would like earnestly to believe that the zeitgeist of our times is the receptiveness around matters deemed intensely personal, and hitherto unpalatable for public discussion in the country - gender, sexuality, and as an off shoot of that, voices that are now audible beyond the tone-deafness of patriarchy. Yet, when you belong to a country that lives in many centuries and lies wrapped in a million sub-cultures, there must be many a caveat underlying this optimistic belief. There are two in particular that occur to me.



The electoral defeat of the Democrats in the 2016 elections was credited in part, to the sense of alienation that the 'forgotten men and women of the Rust Belt' felt. There exist within India today, pockets of populations that feel the same way. For any movement to succeed, that sub-section of this vast country must also be cultivated and convinced of its inherent value. Movements for gender equality, sexual freedoms and the fundamental right to be allowed to make life choices without being dehumanized would not realize their full potential if they evolve as a near didactic trickle-down from our news channels and our conferences. It is in the villages and mofussils of India that the battle of the mind and of a new social dynamic will truly be won, and that is where we keep forgetting to look.

I would like earnestly to believe that the zeitgeist of our times is the receptiveness around matters deemed intensely personal, and hitherto unpalatable for public discussion in the country - gender, sexuality, and as an off shoot of that, voices that are now audible beyond the tone-deafness of patriarchy. Yet, when you belong to a country that lives in many centuries and lies wrapped in a million sub-cultures, there must be many a caveat underlying this optimistic belief. There are two in particular that occur to me.

First, a possibility that not all of us view these matters similarly. Is unanimity and consensus mandatory for social change, you may ask. Most certainly not. But when impassioned defenses of the old order fast degenerate into reckless attacks wrecked by rogues and the State stays a bystander, it may perhaps be of some value to consider if changes that emerge from the great personal sacrifices of those individuals turning themselves into crucibles by opening up about their very personal stories, may get lost at the altar of civic order in the absence of a more rudimentary effort - that of generating a consensus by way of reaching out to those that are far removed from our own thought processes and socialization. It is the only way to ensure sustainability and perpetuity of the ideas of equality, respect and freedom that are being spoken of today - to convince more people of their intrinsic worth.

India remains a country where the phenomenal stories of personal courage in the wake of the *MeToo* movement continue to co-exist with the gut-wrenching tales of honour killings and the vile diktats of Khap Panchayats, as also a tone-deafness on part of a ruling elite that will speak of '*beti bachao*' as long as the *beti* is a faceless, nameless entity that remains a convenient statistic- a malaise that cuts across the political spectrum in the wasted vibrance of our democracy.

It is necessary to feel outrage today. At the same time, it is incumbent upon us to also consider that while they mean to be, these may not be evolving as entirely inclusive movements.

One must consider the possibility that in the world that exists beyond our Facebook 'friend-list' and Twitter feed, there is an India that is fighting within itself to come to terms with issues that you and I would like to believe ended when Doordarshan stopped being the only channel on our telly; that these movements have a discriminatory aspect to them. That in the small towns of India, there continue to be parents who will hold on tighter to their children and not let them leave for the 'big colleges' and the 'big cities' that are 'corrupting' enough to allow women to come out and say they were molested, to say that they have a sense of sexuality that they will no longer talk in hushed tones about, that allow men to openly say they love another man, that allow a youngster grappling with the multiple identities he feels attached to to come out and say that a gender change operation is the only way he would be able to carry on with his life. These are violently dogmatic repressions to my mind. They are the same in yours too, I would like to believe, being as you are a reader of a free-spirited eclectic e-magazine. However, like the US pollsters of 2016 that were afflicted by a blindspot, we must not forget that there is a world beyond us and our own, and for victories to be lasting and sustainable, that is where this new battle must also be won.

Second, that the movement may get diluted. The possibility that the lessons we take from movements may not be all the right ones. That it may be employed to question good judgements and question valid constructs of meritocracy among others. Every person's pain is absolutely valid where they are concerned, but movements fizzle out when a generalization and flippancy starts creeping into it. There then emerges the possibility that causes may be rendered mere charades in pursuit of other more blasé objectives. There is such a thing as an activism fatigue, and that must always form the backdrop of structuring movements. I believe this is but a miniscule side-story, but it is only pragmatic to take it into consideration as a possible pitfall.

I would not proffer an answer as a corrective to the binary in the country. Primarily because I carry no wealth of experience or erudition that could qualify me to contend that I could address the issue in its entirety. I would, however, offer my two pence as a comment, to two groups of people chiefly - the media and the people of my generation and those younger, who continue to be able to enjoy the agency of freedom to contribute to national life in some form.

For those of us whom circumstance or choice have brought abroad, there is always the option of going and teaching temporarily in the schools of the villages your parents or grandparents hail from. Go just for one month every year. I know I will make that a part of my life in my returns to Coorg. I do think we may change more minds that way than by near rants to a select audience on social media

Just as the media has picked up on the *MeToo* movement or had on scrapping of 377, and has become a force for good with it, perhaps, there are four subjects that it could help propagate through its powerful medium.

First, to not treat primary education in the country as a cumbersome afterthought anymore. It is where our minds first learn to interact with the outside world, after all. It is where our first opinions of ourselves, our worth, and those of others are built. The appalling state of primary education in the country is an abomination that is leeching into the very edifice of the state and society. An incisive piece of work on the subject is the 'Teacher performance in Bihar, India – *Implications for Education*' a study in Human Development sanctioned by the World Bank in 2016 which was a commendable piece of research work carried out by Shabnam Sinha, Rukmini Banerjee and Wilima Wadhwa. It focuses on one state in the country, yes, but is a literal microcosm of the state of primary education in the country as a whole, unfortunately. The programs in place are fairly decent but there is a glaring lack of initiative in drawing talent in the country to teaching. Fighting the good fight is all of our first impulse, but the contingencies of a small salary and making a life of it, dissuade one from pursuing what is the most noble of professions. A movement to demand enhanced salaries and more lucrative working conditions in the primary schools of India appears a most unattractive of causes, but may prove to be a harbinger for another quieter and more gradual social revolution in our country. It is necessary in the same breath to also draw attention to the forgotten cause of adult literacy and reorientations.

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Second, decoupling the idea of marriage from that of success, and to remember to raise your child as your daughter not as a potential alliance. Teach them their mind is their greatest asset. To invest the most in that. Raise a voice against those obnoxious matrimonial advertisements. Surely, we can amount to more than the particular shade of our complexion and most certainly more than our height and physical statistics-suspiciously qualified as vital, mind you. While at it, I do hope a Convent education would in no way certify my virtue more than another woman whose parents

Misogyny and patriarchy hurt the most and prove most effective when women become its gatekeepers. The proverbial Trojan Horse, as it were. They are formidable foes whether in the form of the actress endorsing fairness creams and dancing to songs that make her appear perplexingly gleeful at the prospect of being 'tandoori chicken that can be gulped down by a swig of alcohol', or the mothers and aunts that pass on the pervasive baggage of a fear of being abandoned and derided by 'society', chiefly due to their own unfortunate socialization.

may have chosen to send her to a different school for all the right reasons. Unfortunately, though, these remain as much a part of our social milieu as we straddle the new world today. The conduct of a woman continues to be a reflection of her family, more specifically her mother's attention to her upbringing. None of that extrapolation for the boys, of course, because they apparently just grow out of some suspended cosmological animation.

Third, misogyny and patriarchy hurt the most and prove most effective when women become its gatekeepers. The proverbial Trojan Horse, as it were. They are formidable foes whether in the form of the actress endorsing fairness creams and dancing to songs that make her appear perplexingly gleeful at the prospect of being 'tandoori chicken that can be gulped down by a swig of alcohol', or the mothers and aunts that pass on the pervasive baggage of a fear of being abandoned and derided by 'society', chiefly due to their own unfortunate socialization. Address that simultaneously. Else, only abuse that leaves bruises will be called into account, while the silence will creep up and engulf an entire generation-one more among the very many that have gone before it.

Pick another woman up. Correct her, of course, not by calling her out in public, but in person, in the quiet that will allow her to hear your voice without fear of being judged-it is your best chance. It is not being politically correct, it is being strategically expeditious. Unless, of course, she holds a public office. Then, yell your guts out till she hears you. There are the off-hand snide and protestations about what these movements are doing to the society- let us not ignore it anymore. Ask them why it seems to threaten the social fabric. Ask these questions of your own people, your aunts and your mums, and then tell your sisters and daughters where they got it wrong.

I am today of an age where many of my friends are mothers. My biggest hope is for them. A generation that is acutely aware of what an openness and determination through freedom can cultivate in society, I believe they will raise strong women. There is a perniciousness that glorification brings. It sets the bar uncomfortably high. This idolizing of the female has manifest itself in real terms with questions that are way larger than the individual itself- she is equated with the family's honour and worse, with the community's honour. In so doing, it sets one up for failure. I hope this generation will bring their daughters up to be their own persons and not a reflection of these expectations. That they will bring up women who do not see liberty and respect in moderation and in pockets but as a complete and inalienable right. Who do not see it as a favour or a gift but as a right.

In the rightful execution of India's democracy will lie the fate of its women - the historical others - as also, the new others. And, the fate of the movements. There is one voice in the highest Court of our land today that has consistently shown that it is willing to stand for reason. Reasonableness, however, is a very heavy burden for one or even five persons to carry by themselves. Particularly when the battle to be waged is against that seemingly infallible behemoth of religion that has been made an unfortunate, unwanted and undeserving part of our political life.

Just as it is for the others not belonging to their gender. Women who will stand up for the men in their lives just as they will stand unambiguously against them if those very same men violate another woman.

The hope then is that they will teach their daughters well, and their sons even better. I often wonder how many bridges have to be built before we move to a manner of thinking that is androgynous. I know it is the first thing that occurred to me when I met my partner and decided I would marry him- that he thinks in a gender-neutral manner. A most unromantic of features, I concede, but one I would not part with for anything. I do hope it reflects a trend among the men of our generation and the future. Our struggles would find worthy partners more easily then.

Finally, in the throes of the *MeToo* Movement, what has become amply clear is that while the media provides the platform, the Court and the State still has to allow its machinery to run to ensure that justice prevails and percolates. In order to do that, do remember to elect the right people. Elect people you would likely be proud of. 'You get the leaders you deserve' is no old wives' tale, it is the best reckoning of our civic duties. Elect the right people. Vote not for the party but for the candidate. Remember there is a reason that ballot is secret. Check your political history. There is very little by way of ideology that you have to choose between. Choose the ones with the least charade. Choose the ones that ask you least to be scared of the other. Choose the ones that tell you your problems are of your own making or of circumstances that are not always extraneous to yourself. Choose the ones that do not tell you that the locus standi of your issues lies outside of yourself at best and your 'community' at worst. And, elect those that would keep religion out of my moral compass, my bedroom, and while you are at it, my kitchen too, please.

In the rightful execution of India's democracy will lie the fate of its women- the historical others - as also, the new others. And, the fate of the movements. There is one voice in the highest Court of our land today that has consistently shown that it is willing to stand for reason. Reasonableness, however, is a very heavy burden for one or even five persons to carry by themselves. Particularly when the battle to be waged is against that seemingly infallible behemoth of religion that has been made an unfortunate, unwanted and undeserving part of our political life. Let us try and galvanize a more fundamental and sustainable force to try and win the war.



© Photograph by Mikyoung Cha

David Morgan offers some tentative reflections on the two great political tendencies of our age.

David has been a professional editor and journalist for over thirty years beginning his career on the subs desk of the *Morning Star* newspaper. He is editor of numerous historical publications under the Socialist History Society imprint. David's interests and research include Turkey and the Kurds, literary figures like George Orwell, Edward Upward and William Morris, British anarchism, the 17th century English revolutionary era and the history of psychoanalysis. He has contributed towards many different publications and writes review articles, commentaries, opinion pieces, polemics and poetry.



DAVID MORGAN

POPULISM AND IDENTITY POLITICS

Populism is commonly associated with the political right but this is not the neo-conservative breed which dominated the immediate post-Cold War era and whose rise can be dated from the collapse of Communism to the global financial crisis of 2008. Populism in its modern appearance is very closely linked to the age of austerity and the challenges posed by the breaking down of barriers to human communications and possibilities of mass travel reflected in the rise of the Internet, the emerging superstates such as the European Union with their "open border" policies and the availability of cheap flights which enable different peoples to intermingle and experience other cultures as never before in human history.

Such social trends have accentuated the dissolution of many traditional customs, shaking up relatively stable communities and transforming lifestyles, threatening to dissolve nation states and old patterns of living.

Ironically, while the actual wealth gap in real terms such as in the possession of cash and in material assets between the super-rich elite (known by the sociological term of "high net worth individuals or HNWI) and the great mass of the people has never ceased to widen, the social conditions of the poorer majority internationally have moved closer together as a result of the ability to cross borders in search of work, including the blurring of the distinction between what constitutes illegal and legal migration. The weaponisation of the plight of migrants by actors across the political spectrum has highlighted the profound social divisions within and between nations, but it has especially exposed the chasm between the elites and the masses. The elites, who clamour for open borders, are generally those whose lifestyles are least impacted by the changes; in fact, they derive material benefits by availing themselves of the increased opportunity to access an inexhaustible supply of cheap labour.

In marked contrast, when those living a precarious existence witness the onward march of the migrants across borders, as occurred on the continent of Europe and is currently occurring at the southern border of the United States with the so-called "caravan", such phenomena are perceived by many to pose a direct threat. It is understood that the new arrivals will soon be competing for jobs, housing, school places and hospital beds. Amid these developments and anxieties populism has been able to thrive. The people's grievances and widespread disenchantment with mainstream politicians who have been blamed for mass migration gave rise to a situation ripe for exploitation by the populists of the right, which have achieved some notable political successes in recent elections across Europe, such as in Germany, Sweden, Austria and Italy, and with the elevation of Donald J Trump as president of the United States.

It is definitely deeply deplorable to see the unscrupulous manipulation for political gain of the desperate plight of migrants who only want to improve their chances of a better life. However, it is not so simple to identify who are the culprits in this unworthy endeavour. The right certainly stir up the fears and prejudices of people against illegal migration, citing alleged crimes that are committed in their repeated use of hate fuelled rhetorical tropes, such as blaming migrants for increases in violent crime, murder and rape. This has been evident in America, Europe, Canada and Australia, in fact, everywhere that the so-called "alt-right" has come to some prominence. It must however be admitted that the left too has also not always been averse to exploiting the migration issue for its own political advantage; for example, the Democrats in the United States have drawn much of their political support from migrant communities, succeeding in winning migrant votes in far greater numbers than their rival Republicans. The Democrats clearly have a great stake in opening the doors to more migrants and in granting them voting rights. Such a situation is ripe for political manipulation in that it creates a client relationship between the political party and the communities who in their gratitude are prepared to vote for them.



Protest Models Art Artist Joanna Bond Abersywyth - <https://pixabay.com/en/protest-models-art-artist-2265287/>

Such support cannot be counted on in perpetuity but it can last a generation or two. A comparable situation has persisted in the United Kingdom where the opposition Labour Party has traditionally drawn much of its support from migrant communities in recent years, be they families from the Indian Subcontinent, the Afro-Caribbean nations and latterly from the Moslem communities. This reliance on ethnic communities for political support has not only turned people into voting fodder, it has shaped the political ideology and rhetoric of the party. The contemporary version of socialism espoused by the Labour Party can be defined as “identity politics” in contradistinction to the traditional class-based politics that had characterised the party for decades since the time of its foundation by trade unionists at the end of the 19th century. But the reason for this transformation of the Labour Party should not be solely attributed to simple political opportunism, although that aspect surely plays some part.

The party was traditionally anchored in the organised working class, but this is now far from the case. This is the root of the party’s problem. Much the same fate has befallen Labour’s sister parties across Western Europe, several of which have virtually disappeared from the political stage altogether in the countries where they were once so dominant such as France; indeed, such a rapid decline in social democracy is equivalent to that suffered by the disintegration of the Communist parties in the latter part of the 20th century.

With the decline in organised labour as a result of major economic structural changes, sometimes regarded as a disintegration of the working class and even heralded as the end of class politics, the Labour Party, which was created to give a voice to working people in Parliament, lacked a clearly defined purpose and direction. The rhetoric of human rights and identity politics has filled a vacuum. This has been a historic transformation, leaving the party slightly rudderless and open to capture by forces with only tenuous connections to the working class. The trade union movement has remained relatively strong but it is not the commanding presence in the party machine that it once was. Politicians from the professions such as law, financial services, policy institutes and higher education have gradually replaced the trade unionists and local government officers who previously dominated those persons who were selected to represent the party in Parliament. This trend was combined with the adoption of official and unofficial quotas for women and ethnic minorities, including the introduction of all-women short lists of candidates in the selection process; once controversial, women-only short lists have long become the norm.



Protest signs - <https://pixabay.com/en/protest-signs-women-s-march-placard-2734408/>

The emergence of Jeremy Corbyn as party leader in the past few years has confused the picture slightly, but even he, although a staunch left-winger, has built much of his political support base around identity politics. In fact, Corbynism is actually an unstable coalition of forces combining what used to be called the new social forces of women's groups, youth, black and ethnic communities, increasingly vociferous "transgender" and gay rights activists, as well as trade unionists and the traditional left. Corbyn's difficulty in holding this alliance together is reflected most obviously in his attitude to Brexit where the party has been compelled to attempt to "look both ways" in order to simultaneously appeal to those who voted to leave and remain in the European Union; many working-class communities where Labour has been traditionally dominant, voted strongly for Brexit. To achieve the electoral success essential to ever be able to implement its reforming social programme, Labour cannot afford to alienate its working-class supporters. The political right has been seeking to exploit the seething discontent and alienation particularly among the "white" working class by taking up controversial issues such as the activities of grooming gangs and their targeting of teenage girls, an issue which Labour has studiously avoided and hardly taken any position on; in fact, in rare cases when a Labour MP has spoken out on this issue, they have faced criticism from the party hierarchy, as occurred with Sarah Champion MP when she spoke out about largely Moslem men who were jailed for grooming girls for sexual exploitation. Similarly, Labour MP Caroline Flint courted controversy and was even accused of racism by a Tory opponent when she argued that employers should do more to train UK workers rather than relying on importing skilled workers from the EU. Flint was a former minister for Europe no less, while Champion was forced to resign as shadow minister for women.

Jeremy Corbyn's success can be attributed to the adoption of a version of populism from the left, which illustrates an important lesson that populism need not always be seen as a right-wing phenomenon. In fact, some leading thinkers of the left such as the late Ernesto Laclau and Chantal Mouffe have argued that populism can become an expression of democratic aspirations and progressive political identities. The field is too critically important to be abandoned to the right especially at a time of acute social, economic and environmental crises. Identity politics is certainly no substitute for old class politics and its ambitious political programme of social and economic reform that is aimed at achieving a fundamental shift in the balance of power and wealth in favour of working people. We need genuine change for all people not favoured social groups or client communities. Identity politics can be profoundly corrupting of the political process and this can pose tremendous dangers with unforeseen consequences.

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DR DEVAKI JAIN

CLOSE ENCOUNTERS OF ANOTHER KIND

Close Encounters of Another Kind is a volume which contains lectures, research papers and policy interventions related not only to gender but also to international politics or the political milieu of the decades 1990- 2015.

The papers in the book provide perspectives from the southern continents, and therefore not only define the features of these continents but also critique the application of analysis drawn from the advance economies.

The volume moves to the perspective of the developing countries on most of the economic elements—poverty, inequality, theories of growth, content of public policy. The core of the counter argument is that the characteristics of the southern continents are such that they need to design their own economic theory or a theory that is drawn from their realities. It is suggested that globally accepted ideas on how to generate economic prosperity, namely GDP growth, have been responsible for the persistence of poverty and inequality. The logic of 'progress', and the idea that progress can only be capital- and profit-led, were deeply affecting the masses. It was these theories of economic growth; ideas on how to build the GDP that were responsible for poverty and inequality.

Challenging all the various given elements in development, whether it was measurement, like the number given by the official data system for female work participation in India, the factors identified as key to economic progress, the invisibilisation of women's economic contribution— the volume moves from local and national to international theatres of policy and program formulation.

Globally pervasive ideas like globalisation and regulation are discussed and interpreted to assimilate the conditions of south countries. Descriptive categories, used to name phenomena in the south countries are also challenged for their accuracy and replaced with the more appropriate terminology.

To illustrate: A time-use study that was conducted by ISST in 1982—the earliest to be undertaken in developing countries—was basically intended to correct the figures for the work participation rate in the national statistics. The methodology used until then for counting workers had flaws. Thus, women's actual economic contributions were not counted. The ISST study was designed such that, through observation, investigators noted what women actually did for 16 hours a day for a week in a selection of households in Rajasthan and West Bengal. This study provided many insights, especially into the fact that when you measure work according to the time spent, you not only capture what are called 'economically valuable' issues, but also the time that women spend serving a household—fetching water, cooking, cleaning and looking after children.

The report emerging out of this field work generated enormous amount of interest and response both by the statistical system and by activists and continues to be considered pioneering i.e. the first step towards accurate measurement of women's work. Other field based studies such as survey of women in forest based activities reveal other kinds of measurement errors.

A study conducted of women's role in forest based activities, revealed that what was considered a minor activity, that is gathering of forest produce like leaves berries and gums, in reality it not only added more value to local GDP, but also gives more employment to women. In this way, it was revealed that the concepts, the vocabulary and the direction of development theory were full of contradictions.

The term 'development' was coined basically for what were called 'underdeveloped' countries, or the former colonies. It was different from economic progress or economic growth. Development was supposed to include more than economic advantage. My journey in understanding, redesigning and arguing with regard to our development policy and programme had depressed me, and had shown me that in the name of development, nothing had changed for my constituency, namely women in poverty house- holds. It seemed like mere rhetoric, with no transformation.

Further, it has often baffled me that there is so much awareness of the hunger and basic lack of food amongst millions of people, and that nevertheless the price of food is forbidding for those at the bottom of the economic ladder. Yet the rhetoric prevails that agriculture is a second-class citizen in the economy. As one of our senior policy makers once put it, agriculture is a 'sunset industry'.

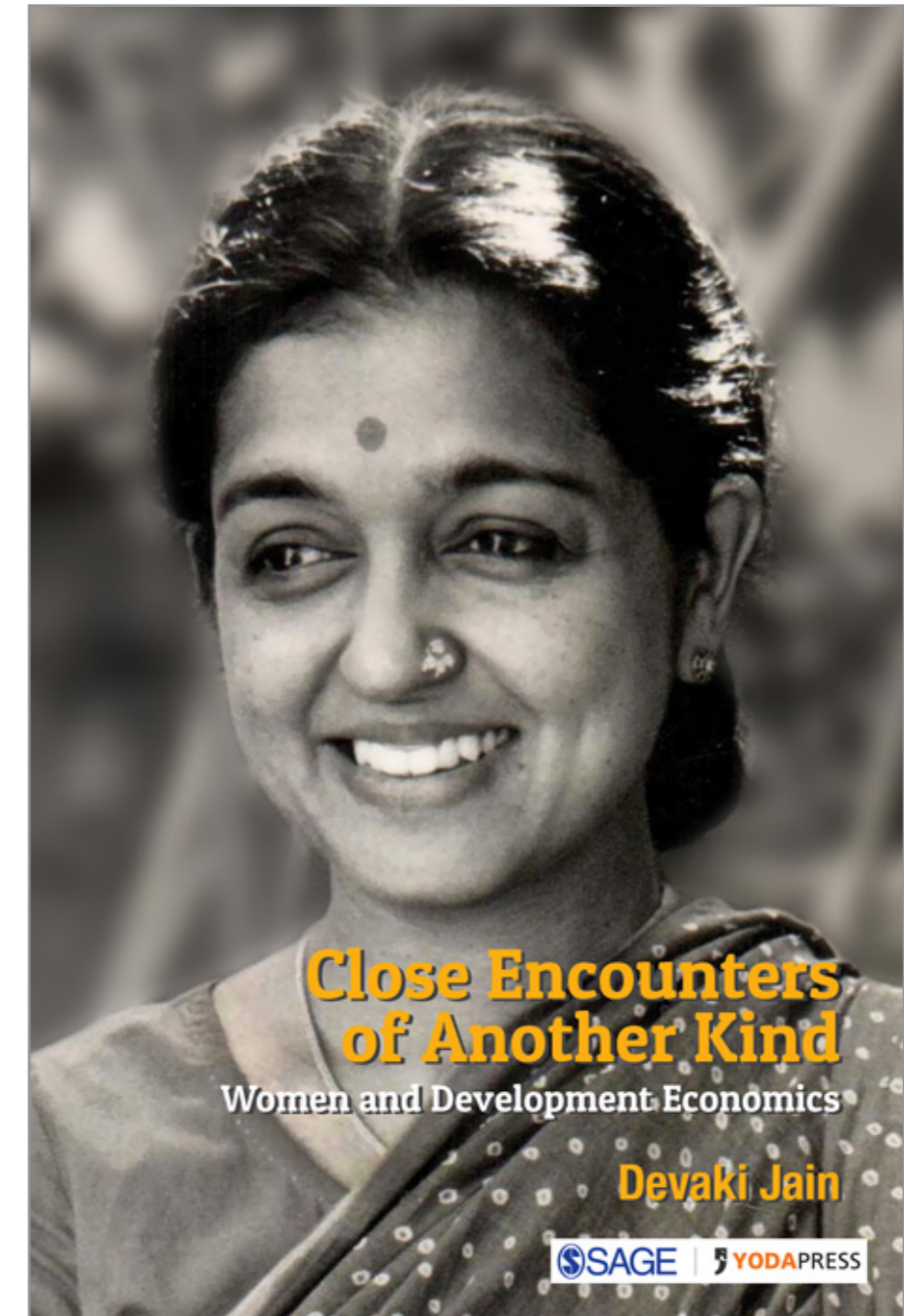
Hence my argument that while research and analysis were revealing that the design and the thrust areas of what was called 'development' were not making any difference, we still continued to run on the same track.

The World Bank, perhaps for the first time, prepared a comprehensive report on Gender and Poverty in India in 1991. The World Bank report was a meticulous piece of work and gave visibility and voice to less prominent areas of concern and advocacy in the women's domain. However, I argued that while the report attempted to give a macro perspective, it remained at the micro level. It pre-empted gender advocacy from influencing macro trends. I argued essentially that the notions of an inside/outside dichotomy, access and the market, highlighted by the report, were insufficient, even inappropriate tools for moving women out of their cruel condition. If we could look not only at women's experience of poverty, but at the ideas with which they were trying to overcome it, we might find a better way out of that terrible experience.

The women's movement was struggling to open the eyes of policy makers and practitioners to gender differences in all areas of life—health, education, well-being, work spaces, the entire gamut of life. But not surprisingly, this knowledge was not the set of ideas that triggered policy was not a part of their consideration in the goal of removing poverty and realising a moral and equitable political economy.

The women's movement was active on the ground, making changes, designing innovative ways in which poverty and inequality could be removed. It seemed necessary for the women's movement to take stock of the ideas and theories behind macro-economic policy and to mobilise their voice and their creativity to change that, i.e. change the reasoning, the theory that informs the policy.

Further, it has often baffled me that there is so much awareness of the hunger and basic lack of food amongst millions of people, and that nevertheless the price of food is forbidding for those at the bottom of the economic ladder. Yet the rhetoric prevails that agriculture is a second-class citizen in the economy. As one of our senior policy makers once put it, agriculture is a 'sunset industry'. This is in contrast to electronics, which is a 'sunrise industry'. Some of these dilemmas or paradoxes are vividly illustrated by the case of India, with its millions of tons of food and millions of hungry people.



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It was necessary for international networks of feminist economists to engage with this new phenomenon, which offered a great opportunity to foreground the gender dimension in the fast-growing countries. This became particularly interesting as China was a clearly socialist economy, whereas India was still acutely a democratic polity where the playing fields were dominated by the private sector apart from the state. What were the gender implications of this difference? It would seem worthwhile not only to examine this but also to use this analysis to critique the current economic growth models.

There is a whole discourse here on how such confusion can emerge, and so using India as an illustration, this paper goes over the complexities of putting on the ground a right to food programme as mandated both by the human rights framework as well as the equitable development framework.

There has been an abiding concern with how to bring forth recognition of what is happening in the economies of the South, as well as the kinds of responses that partners and policy makers in the South countries are putting forward. While a focus on feminism had arrived on the international stage with the creation of the International Association for Feminist Economics, the preoccupation of the majority of feminist economists in such associations was with gender issues generally, with particular reference to the economies of the North.

Dramatic changes in the distribution of global economic power were vividly displayed by the outcome of the 2008 global economic crisis. While the GDP growth rates of most Northern economies were at an abysmal low, India and China blazed forward with growth rates of over 8 per cent, calling attention to the changing global economic order. These economies were named 'emerging economies'. Their arrival on the world economic stage had huge implications for the rest of the world, and especially for women. What the data revealed was dramatic.

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The aim was to bring in the perspective of the developing countries on most of the economic elements- poverty, inequality, theories of growth, content of public policy. The core of the counter argument is that the characteristics of the southern continents are such that they need to design their own economic theory or a theory that is drawn from their realities.

The aim was to bring in the perspective of the developing countries on most of the economic elements- poverty, inequality, theories of growth, content of public policy. The core of the counter argument is that the characteristics of the southern continents are such that they need to design their own economic theory or a theory that is drawn from their realities.

Constantly upturning theories and propositions not only became my practice, but it also seemed the only way to move ahead. The notion that the poor needed to be enabled out of poverty through ideas that were being constructed by the benefactors haunted me. It invariably turned out to be an oppressive arrangement.

It is suggested that globally accepted ideas on how to generate economic prosperity, namely GDP growth, have been responsible for the persistence of poverty and inequality. The logic of 'progress', and the idea that progress can only be capital- and profit-led, were deeply affecting the masses. It was necessary for those concerned with injustice and inequality, in this case women; rebuild economic reasoning drawing from other forms of knowledge.



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Frogs on sale at village market, Laos PDR.



Ulyseas has served time in advertising as copywriter and creative director selling people things they didn't need, a ghost writer for some years, columnist of a newspaper, a freelance journalist and photographer. In 2009 he created *Live Encounters Magazine*, in Bali, Indonesia. It is a not for profit (adfree) free online magazine featuring leading academics, writers, poets, activists of all hues etc. from around the world. March 2016 saw the launch of its sister publication *Live Encounters Poetry*, which was relaunched as *Live Encounters Poetry & Writing* in March 2017. He has edited, designed and produced all of Live Encounters' 140 publications till date (December 2018). Mark's philosophy is that knowledge must be free and shared freely to empower all towards enlightenment. He is the author of three books: *RAINY – My friend & Philosopher*, *Seductive Avatars of Maya – Anthology of Dystopian Lives* and *In Gethsemane: Transcripts of a Journey*. www.amazon.com

MARK ULYSEAS

2018 YEAR OF LIVING FOOLISHLY?

This essay was written and published in 2008. Since then I have updated it every year. Except for a few lines here and there the basic essay has remained in its original form. It is a reminder to us that the inhumanity of humanity has not changed. In fact it appears to be growing in intensity. Sadly the more things change, the more they remain the same.

This year is grinding to a close and then hope will begin for the New Year.

So what will it be?

More wars for religious or commercial purposes? Cultural genocide?
Child abuse?

Human slavery? Beheadings? Seventh Mass Extinction?

New insidious revelations that expose the all-pervasive criminality of governments, international politics and sections of the Media?

And is the UN *still* a coffee shop for the rich and powerful to hang out and where honour still exists among thieves?

All this talk of saving the world is pointless. Everything is done half-heartedly. Let's make a resolution for the New Year to decimate the planet. Destroy all our natural resources, pollute the rivers and farm the seas to extinction. At least we would be doing one thing properly.

What about the sub-continent, India? Do they still abort female fetuses? Burn women who don't bring enough dowry? Is rape intrinsic to the culture? Do they continue to decimate wildlife? Persevere in the destruction of the environment? And do millions still exist on the threshold of life and death? And is the arrogant Indian Middle Class growing to newer levels self-indulgence?

There is so much to choose from. It's like a supermarket out there with all kinds of man-made disasters available on the shelves, one has simply to reach out and grab one. 2018 is ending on a note of negotiated delusions with the *Climate Change Conference* in Katowice, Poland. What happened to the good old days when we used a blanket instead of a heater? All this talk of saving the world is pointless. Everything is done half-heartedly. Let's make a resolution for the New Year to decimate the planet. Destroy all our natural resources, pollute the rivers and farm the seas to extinction. At least we would be doing one thing properly.

On one hand we talk of peace, love and no war. On the other hand we bomb, rape, pillage, annex and subdue nations with money, military power and retarded religiosity.

For instance, let's take a quick look at Afghanistan. The British couldn't control the tribes in the 19th century, the Russians failed miserably and the Americans with their assorted comrades in arms, poor souls, are being killed along with thousands of faceless unarmed Afghan civilians. I suppose life is cheaper by the dozen. Hasn't anyone got a clue as to what the Afghans want?

What about certain parts of the Middle East, areas that have become mass open air abattoirs for the mindless slaughter of innocent people? Do you think they will run out of people considering the number of killings that are taking place? Education there is history – like the death of a six year old killed by a bullet deliberately fired at close range. It stems from the barrel of a gun. The pen is for signing death certificates.

Statistics are essential in war zones. They can always be rearranged to suit one's perceived objectives. The little numbers represent people; mothers, fathers, sisters, brothers, relatives and friends. A neat way to manage these numbers is to write in pencil so that an eraser can be used judiciously. And as the death toll in war ravaged countries rises, a hysterical caucus threatens a host of other countries for deviating from the 'acceptable norms of international behaviour' like illegally invading countries on trumped up charges and bombing innocent folk back to the stone age... while deliberately turning a blind eye to China, a country that continues to violently dismantle the vibrant ancient Uyghurs culture, brainwashing and incarcerating the Uyghurs in *re-education* camps.

Incidentally, *these* very countries vie for commercial and 'military' space in the South China Sea while using China as a manufacturing base and its banks for financing projects. And when they don't get their way, sanctions of all hues are applied in the name of nationalism regardless of the impact on domestic industry and jobs.

Africa, the Dark Continent, what can one say about its peoples and their ancient civilizations that have slowly been corrupted by large corporations and foreign governments meddling in the affairs of the states: Buying and selling governments on mammoth proportions? Oh for the days of the Rwandan blood bath. Everything is quiet now, no excitement and drama except for bloody popular uprisings, theft of natural resources and other inconsequential happenings like the sudden spread of highly infectious diseases and mass kidnapping of school children for forced marriage and conversion...and the continuing practice of female genital mutilation, which appears to be a thriving business across the world where doting parents in western countries take their little girls on 'vacation' cuts while their governments lecture Africans on the scourge of FGM.

What about the sub-continent, India? Do they still abort female fetuses? Burn women who don't bring enough dowry? Is rape intrinsic to the culture? Do they continue to decimate wildlife? Persevere in the destruction of the environment? And do millions still exist on the threshold of life and death? And is the arrogant Indian Middle Class growing to newer levels self-indulgence? And, are the subsistence farmers still committing suicide due to failure of crops and rising debt? And are rationalists still killed for their beliefs? And is protection of the holy cow more important than feeding hundreds of millions of people living below the poverty line? And are politicians continuing to feed off the socio-economic-religious insecurities of its people? And are sections of its media turning into manic oracles?

Forgive me, I missed that little country to the west of India; Pakistan. Poor chaps they've had such a tiresome year with the constant ebb and flow of political violence and religious fundamentalism peppered with suicide bombers that probably the common folk want to migrate to the West... can't really blame them. Their new government is its armed forces' ventriloquist doll. The common folk's only desire is to live in peace to pray, work and procreate. Meanwhile their government has switched debtors from the West to China, which has commercially colonised this country bleeding it by a thousand loans.

I suppose the term 'collateral damage' is more palatable than the word... murder. Like a million dollar missile blasting a school bus with forty children like a meat grinder. There is money to be made in the killings but not much left to urgently help its own people devastated by natural disasters like massive fires and super storms.

And to the east of the Indian sub-continent exists a country that follows the religion of non-violence in word not deed...as millions of people of another religion are chased out of the country, their homes burnt, women raped and men exterminated like vermin.

Now let's see who is left on the black board? Hmm...the indigenous people of the Amazon are still fighting a losing battle with the powers that be to stop the plunder of their home, the rain forest, the green lung of mother earth. South America appears to be lost in translation. We never seem to get a lot of news from there except for soccer, drug lords, plunder of the marine world and the continued exploitation of the poor and defenceless by rapacious governments sponsored by those from the North.

Let's leave all this violence for some tuna, shark fin, whale, and dolphin meat. The Japanese and an assortment of other 'civilised' countries are so considerate to the world at large. For countries that pride themselves on rejecting nuclear weapons they have a rather odd way of showing their respect for the environment. I am referring to the mass killing of whales, dolphins and other sea creatures on an industrial scale. Actually you must admire their concern. Ever considered the fact that they maybe ridding the oceans of monsters that take up so much space and are a serious health hazard to humanity?

I think Japan's neighbour China has the right approach. It has dispensed with the cumbersome concept of human rights and its implementation. In its place totalitarianism with a large dose of plutocracy has been suitably installed. It uses its neighbour, a mini nuclear state, as a stick to threaten countries in the region for better trade deals and easing off of sanctions.

There are many countries that lecture China on its human rights. Wonder who has a perfect track record? The world's last self-proclaimed superpower? A superpower, now led by a petulant imbecile, which continues to interfere in the affairs of other nations ... at times actually sending troops and bombing unarmed civilians, including hospitals and marriage parties along with perceived enemies of the State and supplying state of the art weapons to be used against civilians living a hand to mouth existence? I suppose the term 'collateral damage' is more palatable than the word... murder. Like a million dollar missile blasting a school bus with forty children like a meat grinder. There is money to be made in the killings but not much left to urgently help its own people devastated by natural disasters like massive fires and super storms.

From genocide to environmental disasters it has been a roller coaster ride through many countries and peoples and cultures and religions. This journey will end only when we truly comprehend the reason as to why we have been put on this planet by a power far greater than we can ever imagine.

Civil liberties are essential for the survival of a nation and so is the health of its people. In some areas of society where common sense has been the victim, Nature has found a way of retaliating by inventing diseases like Ebola, AIDS, Swine Flu and Zika, infecting millions and helping to keep the population in check: Of course, with a little assistance from humankind's scientific community who often test drugs on unsuspecting illiterate folk in the holy name of finding new cures to make a profit. Meanwhile humanity is susceptible to dangerous new strains of super bacteria resistant to antibiotics.

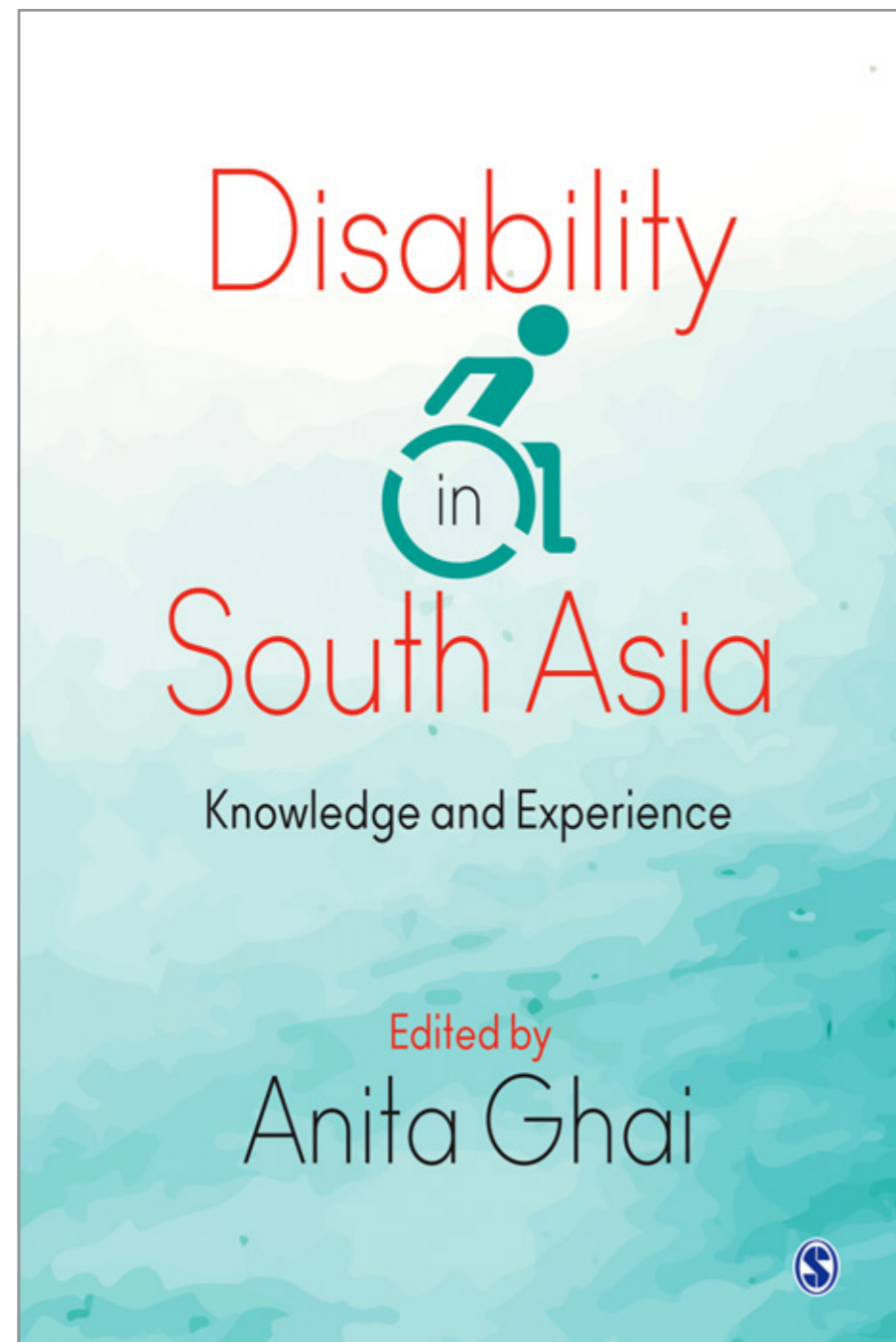
As 2018 downs its shutters the price of a human body has gone up. Human trafficking and organ trafficking around the world, including in the civilised nations, is now second only to drug peddling in revenue. Profiteers forecast a higher income in 2019, thanks to war and growing poverty.

And once again, as we have done in the past, this Christmas and New Year we shall all sit down to sumptuous meals, drink whatever fancies our taste buds, shop till we drop and pamper our overweight children and pets. It's the season of happiness, love and family especially for the homeless, injured and maimed children of wars, missing people in Afghanistan, Syria, Yemen and elsewhere, asylum seekers, political detainees and the fringe folk of the planet. They will surely be very happy and content with what they see, hear, feel and touch this festive season.

From genocide to environmental disasters it has been a roller coaster ride through many countries and peoples and cultures and religions. This journey will end only when we truly comprehend the reason as to why we have been put on this planet by a power far greater than we can ever imagine.

Merry Christmas and a peaceful New Year to you.

Om Shanti Shanti Shanti Om



Anita Ghai joined as a professor in School of Human Studies, Ambedkar University Delhi, in 2015. Before this, Anita has been an associate professor in Department of Psychology in Jesus and Mary College, University of Delhi. Her interest is in disability studies and issues of sexuality, psychology and gender. As a former fellow at the Nehru Memorial Museum Library, Teen Murti Bhavan, Anita has researched on issues of care of disabled women recipients, that is, their daughters and providers of care, that is, the mothers with leanings towards feminist and disability theory. Anita has been the former President of the Indian Association for Women's Studies. She has authored *Re-thinking Disability in India*, Routledge, New Delhi (2015) and *(Dis)Embodied Form: Issues of Disabled Women* (2003), and co-authored *The Mentally Handicapped: Prediction of the Work Performance* with Anima Sen.

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PROFESSOR ANITA GHAI

DISABILITY IN SOUTH ASIA: EXPERIENCE AND KNOWLEDGE

Disability Studies as a formal academic discipline has been making significant strides in western academia since the 1990s with immense interdisciplinary scholarship and the emergence of several full-fledged academic programmes. However, Disability Studies scholarship in India is in a relatively nascent stage. There is an urgent need to initiate interdisciplinary scholarship and programmes in Disability Studies and institutionalise disability as an independent epistemological approach to academic enquiry in a range of disciplines. The School of Human Studies at Ambedkar University (Delhi) is attempting to incorporate a disability perspective in its existing programmes and commence academic programmes in Disability Studies. The present book *Disability in South Asia: Experience and Knowledge* is intended to be an anchor text for these academic efforts.

The main aim of the book is to understand disability as an epistemology across various disciplines. How do we come to know disability? An attempt is made to understand the social, political and cultural construction of disability as opposed the perception of disability as a medical condition or a biological trait. The book attempts to challenge the implications of the historical relegation of the study of disability to the rehabilitation sciences and special education and explore the relevance of disability to various other fields of enquiry. It shall attempt to foreground how the inclusion of a disability perspective within mainstream academia can enrich scholarship and contribute to the understanding of the processes of social marginalization and the construction of difference, which shall be of tremendous relevance to various kinds of social oppression beyond disability. It is intended that chapters included in the book shall reflect the breakdown of multiple boundaries that Disability Studies can potentially initiate: boundaries between academia and advocacy, the personal and the political, the margin and the centre. An attempt shall also be made to capture how Disability Studies can facilitate inter-school collaboration and the benefits of this collaboration.

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The interdisciplinary character of Disability Studies enables it to incorporate the conceptual frame-works and intellectual tools of various disciplines from engineering to law, literature to sociology as well as enrich these disciplines by questioning their fundamental theoretical and methodological orientations.

Hopefully, the book will be a critical work of scholarship in Disability Studies that explores the full complexity of disability in its multi-layered, interactional dynamics.

Key features:

- Includes works by both well-established scholars as well as emerging young scholars in the field of Disability Studies
- Includes works by academicians, activists, people with disabilities and caregivers
- Includes reflective and critical analyses of personal narratives
- A focus on foregrounding disability as an independent epistemology in its own right across various interdisciplinary areas of study
- An exploration of disability across various academic fields of enquiry

The book comprises seven sections:

- Historical Perspectives
- Disability, Body, Sexuality, Care
- Knowing the Self and Writing Life
- Disability in Literature and Culture
- Disability, Family Epistemologies and Resistance to Shame within the Indian Context

The main aim of the book is to understand disability as an epistemology across various disciplines. How do we come to know disability? An attempt is made to understand the social, political and cultural construction of disability as opposed the perception of disability as a medical condition or a biological trait. The book attempts to challenge the implications of the historical relegation of the study of disability to the rehabilitation sciences and special education and explore the relevance of disability to various other fields of enquiry.

Legal Discourses of Disability in India

Part 1: Historical Perspectives

This module examines disability through historical perspectives with a specific focus on shifts in the construction of disability, the emergence of disability as a socio-cultural and political category as opposed to a medical condition and the evolution of institutions for the disabled. While western discourses of disability shall be explored in this module, there shall be a thrust on the history of disability in South Asia. This section shall focus on the history of the disability rights movement in India through the works of Jagdish Chander and Meenu Bhambani. History is also explored through shifts in academic approaches to disability studies, as explored by Fiona Kumari Campbell and Tanmoy Bhattacharya and the evolution of disability as an epistemological concept to question and challenge the injustice principle shall be explored through the works of Deepa Pallaniappan and Valerian Rodriguez.

Part 2: Disability, Body, Sexuality , Care

Disability and identity politics shall be the thrust of the module. There would be an exploration of disability as it intersects with gender and sexuality. Nandini Ghosh explores the concepts of embodiment, femininity and sexuality through the experiences of disabled women who remain marginal to studies of both women and disabled people’s experiences. Postcolonial readings of queer-disability studies are explored by Janet Price and Niluka Gunawardena. Finally, Upali Chakravarty explores the philosophy and practices of the ethics of care in the complex terrain of women’s rights and disabled people’s lives.

Part 3: Knowing the Self and Writing Life

Disability Studies is deeply invested in constructing a phenomenological and substantive understanding of disability. Foregrounding the lived experiences of people with disabilities through a study of personal narratives is another important concern of the book The aim is to develop a nuanced understanding of disability from the marginalised standpoints of people with disabilities.

The edited book has focused on disability studies as epistemology, which would validate the fact that it is not a characteristic that exists in the person, but a construct that finds its meaning in social cultural and political context. The reader will, thus, come across both the experiential terrain as well as theoretical nuances of disability. I hope that this book will resonate not only with be students and scholars of disability studies, but to activists and lay readers concerned with the disability movement.

It is envisioned that a study of these narratives shall give rise to important methodological questions such as ‘Who ought to speak for whom?’, ‘What are the limits of self-representation?’, ‘How does disability complicate subjectivity and agency?’, and others. These questions shall also be addressed in the book Nidhi Goyal and Sameer Chaturvedi explore debates within disability studies through their personal experiences of disability. Asha Singh explores the concept of “atypicality” through the experiences of a child with a disability. Sandeep R. Singh explores the nature of disability life-writing through the writing of Oliver W. Sacks. Hemchandran Karah analyses blind cultures and the role of cosmologies in the works of Ved Mehta.

Part 4: Disability in Literature and Culture

This module aims to explore the perceptions and constructions of disability within South Asian cultures as well as literary representations of disability. Shubhangi Vaidya explores various aspects of disability cultures including D/deaf cultures, neurodiversity movements and other important cultural phenomena in South Asia. Shilpaa Anand explores discourses of corporeality through cultural and historical medicine perspectives and their relevance to disability. Someshwar Sati analyses disability in selected works of Indian English fiction and Santosh Kumar explores the important use of disability as metaphor in the Jataka Katha.

Part 5: Disability, Family Epistemologies and Resistance to Shame within the Indian Context

The family, educational institutions and workplaces shall be analysed as important sites for the oppression as well as the realization of rights of people with disabilities. Shridevi Rao explores the role of the family as a source of resistance to shame for disabled people within the Indian context. Ankur Madan analyses the current state of inclusive education in India and recommends best practices in inclusive education. Suchaita Tenneti explores the need for a structural understanding of disability in addition to a phenomenological one to positively affect teachers’ perspectives of children with disabilities. Arun Kumar and Nivedita Kotyal explore the role of disability in the workplace through media representations and CSR initiatives that develop diversity discourses of disability.

Part 6: Legal Discourses of Disability in India

This section analyses disability as a legal and political construct. The manner in which the concept of disability has evolved in legal discourses in India and the impact of legal reforms on the construction of disability and the formulation of legal discourses pertaining to disability. Amita Dhanda analyses legal provisions for people with disabilities through disability studies perspectives. Rukmini Sen focuses on the construction of kinship in legal discourses on disability in India.

Part 7: Constructing Disability as Human Diversity

This module explores the notion of disability as a dimension of human diversity and debates surrounding this view. The notion of disability as diversity is a major “move” in DS that validates the existence of multiple variations of “the good life” and “the ideal self”. Shanti Auluck uses a liberal framework to reflect on her personal experiences as the parent of a child with a disability and a disability rights activist and to foreground disability as a critical aspect of human diversity. Anita Ghai takes on a more critical perspective on diversity by emphasizing the power relations inherent in the constitution of the concept of disability and it affecting the experiences of disability that problematise diversity discourses in disability studies.

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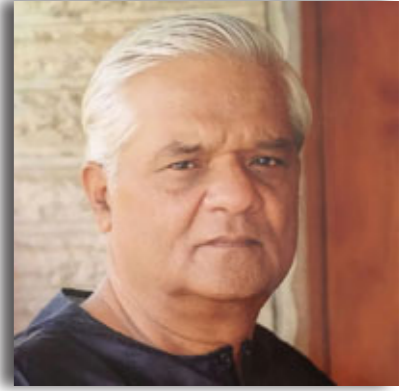
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Ashok S. Chousalkar is a former Professor and Head, Department of Political Science, Shivaji University, Kolhapur, Maharashtra. He is the Editor of the Marathi quarterly journal Samaj Prabodhan Patrika. He is the author of multiple books in English and Marathi. He has received a number of literary awards for his contribution to Marathi language, including Maharashtra Foundation Award in 2000, Yashwantrao Chavan Award by the Government of Maharashtra in 2004, the M. P. Goenka Award of Maharashtra Tatvadnyan Parishad in 2010, the Bhauji Huddar Award of Vidarbha Sanshodhan Mandal Nagpur in 2012, and so on.



PROFESSOR ASHOK S. CHOUSALKAR

RETHINKING POLITICAL THOUGHT OF ANCIENT INDIA

Ancient Indian political thought is one of the important parts of world Political Science which have originated in Sixth century B.C. and the last book on it was written by Malhar Ramrao Chitnis in 1810. The dominant theme of the Hindu thought was influenced by Dhamashatra tradition which held that the purpose of the state was the maintenance of Dharma and protection of Varna order. There was a deep impact of the Hindu metaphysical ideas on it. The study of pre Kautilyan Arthashastra tradition was neglected and later on hegemonically appropriated. In the light of its salient features, we have to rethink nature of Ancient Indian Political thought as there is a considerable departure from the dominant Dharmashashtra tradition. There was long line of prominent Arthashastra teachers before Kautilya's Arthashastra. These teachers wrote their own Arthashastras and Kautilya claimed that his book on the Arthashastra was based upon the Arthashastras written by earlier teachers. Though there were considerable differences among the teachers, there were certain uniformities also.

Following can be considered as the salient features of Arthashastra Tradition:

1. The science of politics is based on the 'Atharvaveda', 'Itihas veda' and it is 'Drushtarth smriti' that means, it is a science based upon the empirical observations. Human experience is the source of Science of politics and not the Vedic dogma.
2. Human efforts are more important than the belief in fate. It is because of human efforts that great cities were established, vast tracks of land were cultivated, mountains were scaled and oceans were crossed hence human endeavour is supreme.
3. It is the responsibility of the king to protect his kingdom from all sorts of calamities. We have to use human reason and intelligence to overcome the dangers. We have to anticipate danger and take adequate measures. There is no permanent friend or foe in politics as friendships change on the basis of self interest. There is no place for morality in interstate relations.

4. Instead of performing costly sacrifices that damage environment and force slaves and workers to work hard which created conditions of anarchy and lawlessness in the kingdom; the minister of the king advised him to give land to cultivators, money and material to traders and jobs to people so that they would get means of livelihood. The advice of the minister was followed by the king and within few years the kingdom became prosperous - thus development and not the religious ceremonies bring about the change in the society.

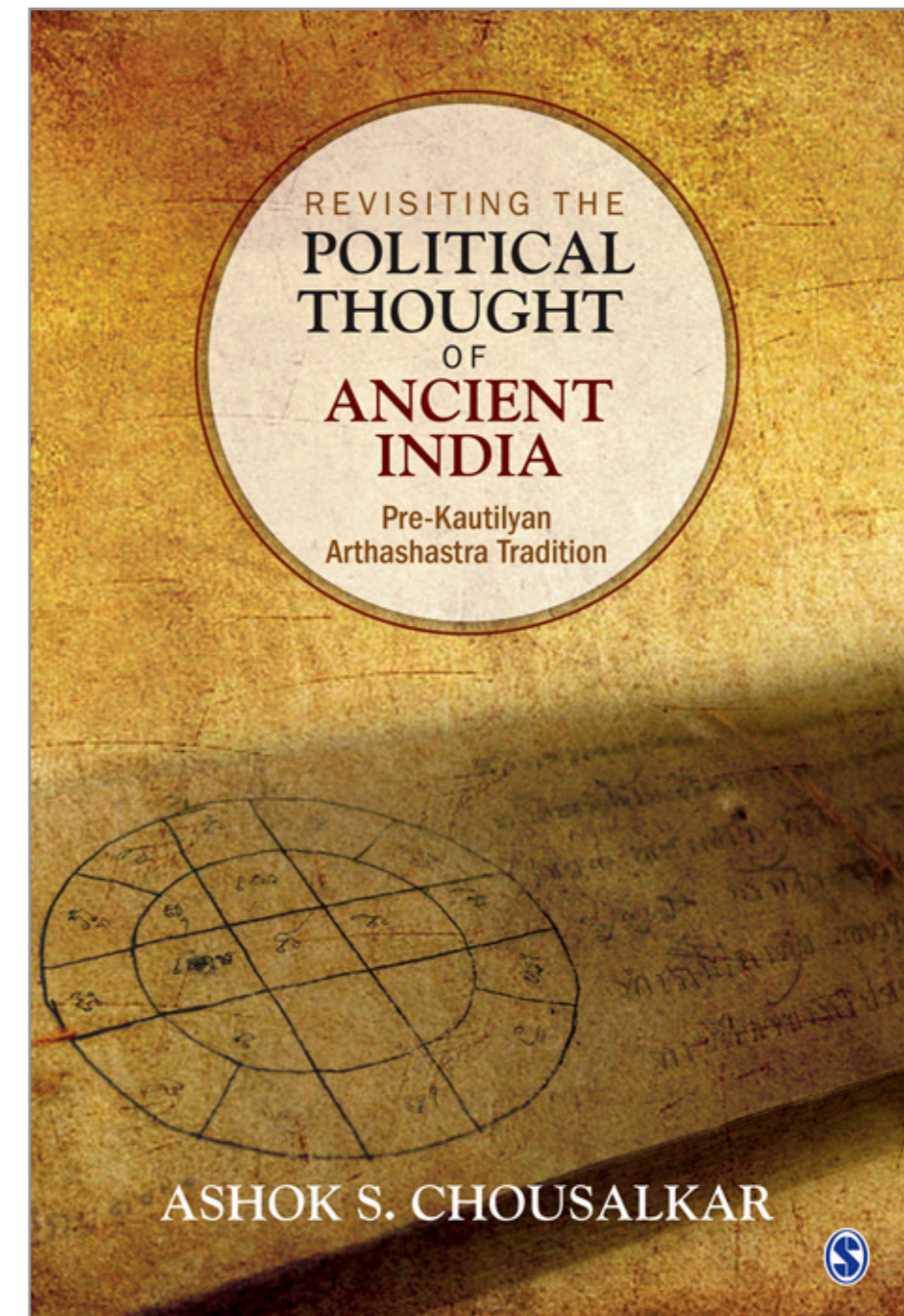
The Arthashastra emerged when there was great intellectual ferment, the old ideas and the dogmas were challenged by new thinkers. Gautam Budhha, Mahavir Vardhaman, Makkhali Gosala and the Lokayata teachers were prominent among them. In India at that time, there were large number of Janapada states and sixteen maha Janapadas. These states offered valuable information about functioning of the state. Some of these states were monarchical and some were republican. Many of them were democratic states. These states proved to be a laboratory for the teachers. They carried out inductive investigation in the phenomenon of state and derived useful conclusions. There were three sets of people who were instrumental in constitution of the Shastra. The first set was that of wandering teachers, the second set was that of royal priests and the third set was that of the ministers of the king. The wandering teachers were free thinkers and their ideas were revolutionary. They used to move around with hundreds of their followers and held discussions on different secular issues in the 'Kutuhil Shalas' which were constructed to facilitate these discussions. Many of these teachers were supporters of Lokayata ideas. The royal priest during the Vedic period were influential because during that period, the Vedic mantras were considered as protectors of king's interest. Royal priests were experts in performance of Yagnyas and magical formulae which are described in the 'Atharvaveda'. Due to his expertise in Vedic mantras, priest was closest advisor to the king. Shukra and Brihaspati - two originators of Arthashastra tradition were the Purohits of the king. Subsequently influence of Vedic dogma decreased and the Purohits had to supplement their old knowledge with actual functioning of the state. They had to adopt secular attitude.

The ministers of the kings were experts in managing affairs of the state. They had firsthand experience of running state. They had a sharp intelligence and they could develop different policy alternatives at the time of difficult political situation. Ghotmukha, Vatsakara, Yogandharayan, Katyayan and Dirghacharayan were the prominent ministers. In the Ramayana, there is a mention of minister Jabala who was a Lokayata teacher. According to Kautilya, there were two types of teachers. The teachers who have practical knowledge and the teachers who have theoretical knowledge. The wandering teachers were experts in theoretical knowledge. Ideologically most of these teachers were influenced by Lokayata philosophy.

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According to Kautilya, the king should study philosophies of Sankhya, Yog and Lokayata. It is also called 'Charvaka Philosophy'. Following are some of the salient features of this philosophy:

1. Direct evidence of senses is the only true source of knowledge and inference can be used to supplement it.
2. Soul is not immortal as soul and body decay because of old age, diseases, exertion and death. The real happiness is found in this world only and we should work hard to make world a better place.
3. There is no consciousness of life outside the human body. Consciousness is created out of combination and synthesis of four basic elements such as earth, water, light and air. The entire fig tree hidden in a micro form of the small seed which assumed huge form at the right time. It is 'Swabhava' of the seed to grow as a huge Banyan tree.
4. One should not perform religious sacrifices which are fabricated to self-serve the interest of self-ish priests. Instead, we should perform our duties properly in well-ordered state, create and enjoy wealth, develop the sources of livelihood such as agriculture, trade and cattle breeding. Lokayata believed that sciences of economics and politics are important and Artha and Kamapurusharthas should be pursued with the help of these two sciences.



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5. Lokayata teachers were supporters of equality. They said all men are equal, there is no purity or superiority of caste, social equality is the supreme philosophy. There was no milk in the veins of Brahmins and blood only in Shudra. The dignity of women should be maintained and everybody must strive to make world better place to live in.

These ideas of Lokayata philosophy influenced Arthashastra teachers. They borrowed their methodology from Lokayata philosophy. Both of them considered development of varta (means of livelihood) as a necessary precondition for prosperity of the kingdom. Arthashastra was a social science therefore they relied upon history as a main source which was not approved by Lokayata teachers. In the later phase of development, some Arthashastra teachers made compromises as far as varna system was concerned.

The Arthashastra teachers wrote books in prose and verses. Prominent among them were Manu, Brihaspati, Shukra, Parashaha, Bharadwaj, Kaunapadant, Bahudantin. But unfortunately, all of these books are now lost forever. Manu's ideas are quoted in Arthashastra, Mahabharata and Ramayana. He is closer to Dharmashastra tradition. Brihaspati and Shukra who believed in rationalism were closer to Lokayata philosophy and Bharadwaj was the most radical and the most immoral teacher who advocated extreme ideas to destroy the enemy. He said that king should be far sighted like 'Hiran', brave like lion, attack enemy like tiger and enter the enemy territory like a snake with ease and without anxiety.

One of the important aspects of the Arthashastra teaching is the concepts of Vijnyanbala and Apaddharma. According to them, Vijnyanbala is strength of intelligence derived from variety of human experiences. It is honey gleaned from different sources. When king is in distress, he should use his intelligence to overcome the danger. The decision should be based upon sheer intelligence and not on brut majority or prosperity. Current understanding of the reality doesn't require direct proof. There are three types of intelligence. First is Anagat Vidhata buddhi, second is Pratyutpanna buddhi and third is Dirghasutra buddhi. At the time of emergency, the first two survive the situation. The third gets destroyed. Anagat budhhi means intelligence that constantly studied the time and place factors perceived the approaching dangers in advance.

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The Pratyutpanna buddhi was intelligence that was ready to respond to any eventuality because it had the capacity to immediately perceive danger and devise methods to resist it. Dirghasutra intelligence took time to decide and hence was overwhelmed by dangers and consequently suffered. Bharadwaj often used these terms to explain the situation. The Apaddharma means the duties that are to be performed at the time of emergency. According to Mahabharata the duties of the king during the emergency are not based on principles of morality. The king had to use the Vijnyanbala to overcome the situation. We have a number of animal fables in the Mahabharata that explain the duties of the king during Apaddharma. We can say that this is extreme form of Indian rationalism.

Rethinking political thought of ancient India clearly shows that it was based on empiricism, rationalism and realism. It asserted supremacy of politics and provided positive alternative of development, Vedic rituals and resisted the philosophies of asceticism and fatalism. Even today, its ideas are relevant.



Professor S Irfan Habib is an Indian historian of science, a widely published author, and a public intellectual. He was the Abul Kalam Azad Chair at the National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA), New Delhi. Before joining NIEPA, he was a scientist at the National Institute of Science, Technology and Development Studies (NISTADS), New Delhi.

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PROFESSOR S IRFAN HABIB

BHAGAT SINGH AND HIS REVOLUTIONARY INHERITANCE

Bhagat Singh has always evoked unbounded approbation and respect across India. He is, if I am not exaggerating, one of the most widely respected nationalist icons after Mahatma Gandhi. Most of us rightly valorise him for his martyrdom but in the midst of this euphoric celebration of the man we forget about his intellectual legacy. He not only sacrificed his life, like many did before him and also after him, but he also had a vision of independent India.

The past few decades have seen appropriation of Bhagat Singh's nationalist image by diverse groups from extreme right to the extreme left and of course by a huge section of common Indians as well. We need to know that Bhagat Singh was not just a patriot, with a passionate commitment to his nation, he was a visionary, with a pluralist and egalitarian perception of independent India.

This new volume titled *Inquilab* is committed to emphasize this particular aspect of Bhagat Singh's persona, which I suspect is consciously and conveniently ignored by those who love to venerate him merely as a raw nationalist. Bhagat Singh left behind a rich intellectual legacy despite the fact that he hardly had time to read and write. He began writing at a very young age and was a voracious reader who always carried few books in his pockets. Many of his writings are available in Hindi and also few in English but a comprehensive collection for English readers was not around.

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This volume will show that Bhagat Singh did not merely yearn for an independent India but an India that will be egalitarian and secular. This was reflected in his revolutionary activities as well as in his commitment as a sensitive journalist. This collection of his writings will be a window, where the reader will be able to peep into the most important yet neglected aspect of Bhagat Singh's nationalist and revolutionary legacy.

Unlike many of the young generation today, he was not in a hurry to write without reading enough on the subject. As I pointed out earlier, Bhagat Singh was a voracious reader, who devoured anything new which was published on poverty, religion, society and global struggle against imperialisms. He seriously debated and discussed what he read and also wrote extensively on issues of caste, communalism and conditions of the working class and peasantry.

The profundity of his ideas on some of the above mentioned issues is visible in his regular columns in Kirti, Pratap and other papers. On an issue like religion and our freedom struggle, he had very clear ideas. In one of the articles on this subject he spoke about Tolstoy's division of religion into three parts: essentials of religion, philosophy of religion and rituals of religion. He concluded that if religion means blind faith by mixing rituals with philosophy than it should be blown away immediately but if we can combine essentials with some philosophy than religion may be a meaningful idea.

He felt that ritualism of religions had divided us into touchables and untouchables and these narrow and divisive religions can't bring about actual unity among people. For us freedom should not mean mere end of British colonialism, our complete freedom implies living together happily without caste and religious barriers. Bhagat Singh need to be invoked even today to bring about changes he yearned for.

Expressing his anguish in another article, he held some of the political leaders and the press responsible for inciting communalism. He believed that "there were a few sincere leaders, but their voice is easily swept away by the rising wave of communalism. In terms of political leadership, India had gone totally bankrupt". It is not something unusual that we find huge problems with the ethics and functioning of journalism as a profession, Bhagat Singh did not speak very kindly about it even in the 1920s.

In a country where majority of the ideologues of nationalism, as reflected in its current usage as well, used one religion or the other to buttress their idea of nationalism, Bhagat Singh as an iconic nationalist showed that religion was not necessarily an imperative for nationalism or for being a nationalist. Bhagat Singh, as he explains in the essay, began as a believer, who regularly chanted Gayatri Mantra, but gradually realized the futility of religion. And he did that quite early in his life as he proclaims that "My atheism is not of so recent origin. I had stopped believing in God when I was an obscure young man".

He felt that journalism is no more a noble profession as it used to be, when he wrote that "the real duty of the newspapers is to educate, to cleanse the minds of people, to save them from narrow sectarian divisiveness, and to eradicate communal feelings to promote the idea of common nationalism. Instead, their main objective seems to be spreading ignorance, preaching and propagating sectarianism and chauvinism, communalizing people's minds leading to the destruction of our composite culture and shared heritage".

Even his commitment to Inquilab/Revolution was not merely for a political revolution but aimed at a social and economic revolution. He saw an India where the 98 percent would rule instead of elite 2 percent. His azaadi was not limited to the expelling of the British; instead he desired azaadi from poverty, azaadi from untouchability, azaadi from communal strife and azaadi from any other discrimination and exploitation. Just twenty days before his martyrdom on 3 March 1931 Singh sent out an explicit message to the youth saying:

"...the struggle in India would continue so long as a handful of exploiters go on exploiting the labour of the common people for their own ends. It matters little whether these exploiters are purely British capitalists, or British and Indians in alliance, or even purely Indians."

Bhagat Singh's intellectual evolution matures while he was in prison. He read extensively anything from history, philosophy, and economics to literature which is reflected in the Prison diary he left behind. He also wrote a classic essay called "Why I am an Atheist", in the prison, which was surreptitiously sent out and published in *The People* on September 27 1930. This essay was not only about his engagement with the idea of God but also underlined his vision of India.

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Bhagat Singh, in this article, also questions those who found any criticism of leaders like Mahatma Gandhi as blasphemous. He saw hero worship as regressive politics and never perceived any leader as infallible. Our “nationalists” today need to take clue from this illustrious nationalist whom they rightly idolize. He goes on to say that “Criticism and independent thinking are the two indispensable qualities of a revolutionary.... Whether you are convinced or not you must say, “Yes, that’s true”.

Thus most of his quintessential revolutionary nationalism was not underpinned by any religious faith. Another crucial indicator for the present times in this essay is Bhagat Singh’s commitment to rationalism and critical thinking. He was not for a blind flag waiving nationalism, which many of our jingoists need to remember when they revel in his name. His nationalism was embedded in the idea of progress where there is scope for criticism, disbelieve and capacity to question everything of the old faith. He was uncompromising on this when he said that “mere faith and blind faith is dangerous: it dulls the brain and makes a man reactionary.

A man who claims to be a realist has to challenge the whole of the ancient faith. If it does not stand the onslaught of reason it crumbles down.” That clearly means that silencing rationalists can’t be nationalism. Nor defending obnoxious religious practices be nationalism. This essay was not just a harangue against God, it also unconsciously laid down the framework for the youth as well as the idea of progressive nationalism.

Bhagat Singh, in this article, also questions those who found any criticism of leaders like Mahatma Gandhi as blasphemous. He saw hero worship as regressive politics and never perceived any leader as infallible. Our “nationalists” today need to take clue from this illustrious nationalist whom they rightly idolize. He goes on to say that “Criticism and independent thinking are the two indispensable qualities of a revolutionary.... Whether you are convinced or not you must say, “Yes, that’s true”.

This mentality does not lead towards progress. It is rather too obviously, reactionary.” Thus nationalism cannot be an uncritical exaltation of either religion, culture, leader or anything else in the name of nation and nationalism.

This collection, which has been aptly titled *Inquilab: Bhagat Singh on Religion and Revolution* should go a long way to establish him further as an intellectual and a young visionary. Many of his ideas are relevant even today, which means how precious little we have been able to do all these years to eradicate the evils of caste, communalism and poverty.

We should remember Bhagat Singh with pride and reflect on the alternative framework of governance he had in mind where social and economic justice -- and not terrorism or violence – would be supreme. His commitment to socialism may not appear very attractive in the changing era of globalization, yet his concern for the socio-economically deprived sections still commands attention. Moreover, his passionate desire to rise above narrow caste and religious considerations was never as crucial as it is today.

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PROFESSOR SANJEEV JAIN AND DR ALOK SARIN

THE PSYCHOLOGICAL IMPACT OF THE PARTITION OF INDIA

The book weaves together issues that link psychiatry as a profession, individual and group psychology, and the wider issues of social distress and dysfunction, as influenced by, and reflected in mid-20th century south Asia. It thus begins with the actual events such as the partitioning of mental hospitals, its impact on clinical services in northern India as well as health-care planning for the sub-continent. The ensuing chapters focus on the psychological processes that were identified in the creation of the 'other', as a prelude to the actual vivisection, and wider implications of social psychology and politics. The third theme looks at partition through the broader canvas of public consciousness, as reflected in literature, issues related to gender and women's bodies and souls, and the pernicious relation between affect and violence on civic society and the political process.

The book is edited by two well-known psychiatrists Sanjeev Jain and Alok Sarin, whose families have personally been through the throes of partition. The contributors to the essays in the book come from diverse backgrounds in psychiatry (Jain, Sarin, Kala, Murthy), human rights (Basu), literature /linguistics/sociology (Kamra, Kidwai, Nandrajoj, Saint, Sharma, and Sabharwal).

It begins with a small snippet in the daily clippings collected by Lord Mountbatten which emphasized that the mental hospitals would not be divided after Partition. Thus, the discovery of the Mental Hospital reports of both the British Empire and Post Independent India suggesting that the 'chilling fictional metaphor for madness' that engulfed society in 1947, and so vividly discussed in Toba Tek Singh, and most often perceived as satire, was actually based on a historical fact. Patients, who are now seen as objects to be divided, are transferred across newly created borders, and their personhood, their experiences, their sorrows, and for the survivors, their resilience and subsequent survival are all stories that must be told, heard and learnt from. The professional silence around this seems both anachronistic and intriguing.

The psychological trauma of partition, unlike that of the holocaust, never got similar academic attention in the West, and the intelligentsia in India were too small, and perhaps too scattered, to really comprehend and comment on the events. Routine medical services also bore the brunt of partition. Mental hospitals and jails were also partitioned over several years, along with the medical services. The proposed National Health services were abandoned, the Indian Medical Service disbanded, and universal health care became an ever receding chimera. Insensitivity to the needs of persons with mental illness, apparent then, continues in the present day. In a sense, if the emerging countries could not ensure the safety and dignity of the most marginalized, on grounds of religious identity, then the professing of a modern secular state (which both nations did) rings very hollow indeed.

The events of the Partitions were often described a metaphor of madness. But the process of this incompatible 'other', first tested out in Nazi Germany by the extermination of all those in mental hospitals, and subsequently applied to ethnic groups, was gradually reflected in political writings in India (Vakeel called the talk of Partition as the 'Political Insanity of India' and while Prof Beni Prasad at Allahabad University regretted at the destruction of a shared cultural space; while others emphasized the gulf between the communities and even went so far as to call them different species!). The processes to create this chasm and then justify the division, is repeated in Yugoslavia, Congo and various parts of the world, where the tyranny of small differences overrides the shared universal humanism. This is a process in which many mental health professionals have sometimes been seen to be complicit (as Raskovic and Karadjic in the Balkans were), and as Basu points out; also pointing out efforts by the State to co-opt the mental health services for use in brain mapping and interrogations.

The failure to come to terms with events with hundreds of thousands dead and millions displaced and dehumanized; and a multitude of victims but no identified perpetrators, thus resulted in an ambiguous and amorphous psychological response. No line was drawn, unlike post-Holocaust, when it was decided that it should (would) never happen again.

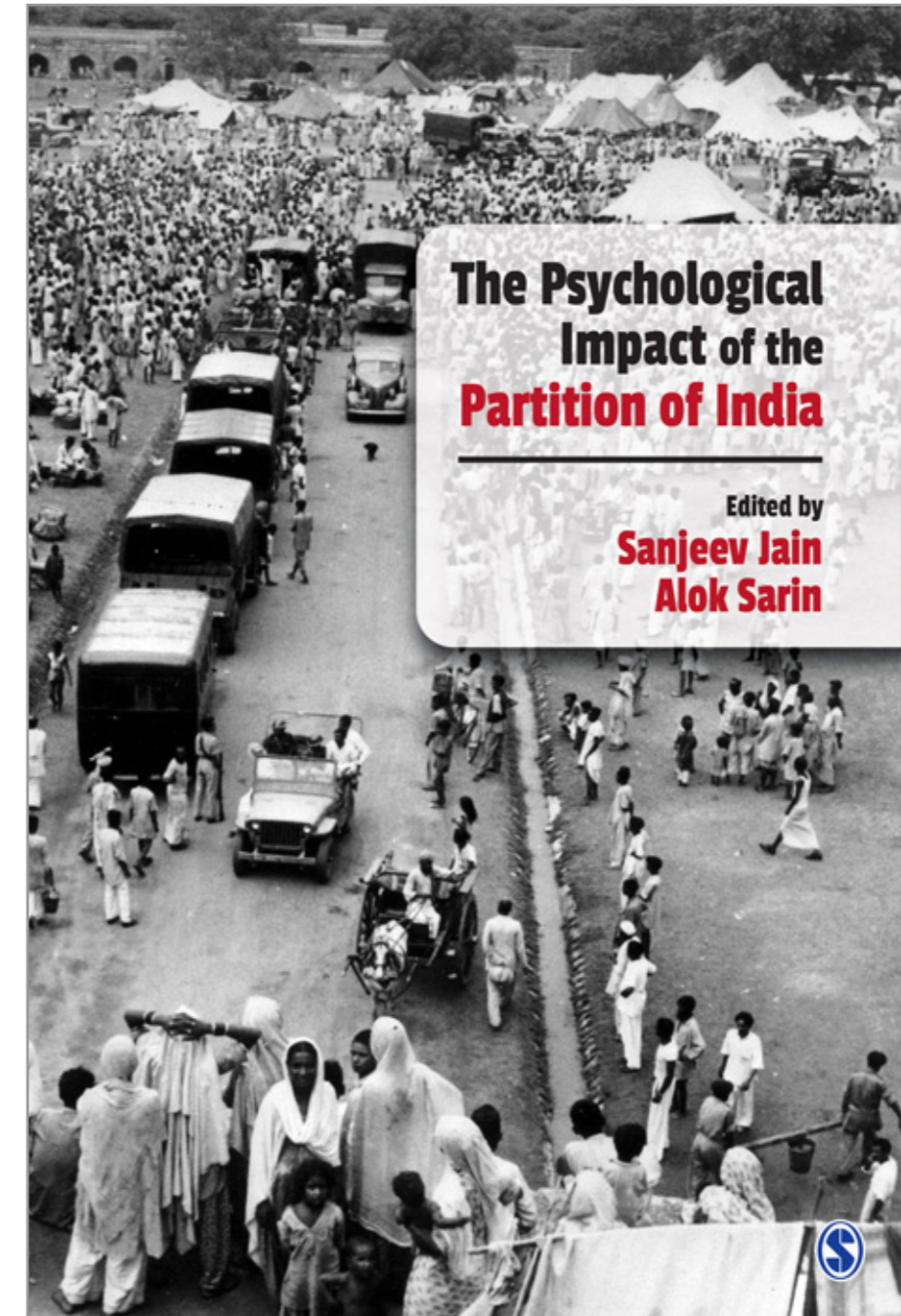
The books then shifts to the wider manifestations of public memory and awareness, and Saint and Nandrajog provide a birds' eye view of how the metaphor of madness (now seen as 'tired') was used in the Punjabi, Urdu and English writings of the period. Even in these, the image of the madman/madwoman, being swept along as flotsam in the craziness going on, is still a chilling reminder of what happens to the marginalized at times of upheaval.

The portrayal of Mahatma Gandhi in the media, and his own speeches provide a backdrop to the extent of psychological distress. He reflects repeatedly on the personal anguish and torment, and his interactions with the Friends Ambulance, and other leaders portray an immense sadness. He repeatedly refers to the killing of doctors, and the fact that the family of Hakim Ajmal Khan had had to leave Delhi, and refers to the events as a kind of 'national suicide'.

The 'rescue and repatriation' of abducted women, and the description of the work of Mridula Sarabhai and Anis Kidwai, through the ideologies prevalent at that time, and their unconcern with the individuals perceptions', as also the responses of the society around them, gives an insight into the entrenched patriarchy evident then. These issues cast their shadow even now, with allegations of 'love jihad', and women's' bodies and souls still seen a legitimate battleground for ethnic identity.

The retributive violence, the use of anger and hatred as an instrument of political manipulation, has influenced the very nature of social discourse, as Kamra points out. The metaphor of disease is now increasingly used in realpolitik (sanitary cordons around hospitals, the cancer of 'extremism'), a reflection of the colonial perspective which established a distance between the rulers and the ruled. This incorporation of the colonial attitude, and even its turning inwards, thus resulted in a "fracturing this very history of built community".

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The practice of psychiatry in India, in its fervour to emerge as a scientific, empirical and universal science, has, in the process, become sterile and devoid of the richness of human experience. Human experience is both universal and at the same time, highly personalized. The importance of understanding individuals in their personal, social and larger-world contexts in this helping profession has given way to looking for simplistic biological explanations for underlying condition, and an enthusiasm to fix the human condition with a 'pill for every ill'. This, in some ways, is a sequestration or partitioning of professional minds.

Condemned to repeat partitions over and over again, the division into thinner slices of humanity, on grounds of origins, language, caste, religion thus continues apace. After all, this cutting up of society into bite sized pieces, as in the divide-et-empera of the colonial period, affirms that the people are food for the table, while the rulers feast at the table.

The secularization of the mind, and the madman as a symbol of social disorder was formulated over the last few centuries. As has often been noted, psychiatry has a long past, but a short history. This historical process, by implication, places the theories and formulations of psychiatric illness, within the shared process of reform and renaissance, and common-sense philosophies. These models have now been shared by almost all societies. Within India, the mental hospital, and the mad-man quickly became a familiar cultural metaphor, from going Doolaly (in English/ Anglo-Indian slang) to sending someone to Agra, Bareilly or Ranchi paagal-khana (mad-house) or on board the Number 4 bus (which served the mental hospital in Bangalore), when referring to someone whose opinions and behaviours were beyond the pale! Politicians still resort to score debating points in the legislative bodies by calling their opponents mad or worthy of admission to one of these Asylums. The public reports, and comments in the press (vernacular and English) had accounts of recovered mentally ill. The large number of admissions and discharges from the various Asylums implied that the experience of madness had become commonplace, as well some understanding about contemporary ideas about the causes, and treatments had percolated through society. 'Madness' could now be used easily as a metaphor, both in its tragic and pejorative connotations. By calling the violence and brutality as 'madness', one could then ignore its treatment (and resolution), much as madmen had been ignored for centuries.

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And perhaps explains some of the reluctance to address the issues at first hand. After all, examining this could detect *"the silence of complicit majorities and of subsequently complicit generations"*; and the impact of this on notions of national identity, which would then be seen as *"uneasily tethered"*.

Medical practice almost always focuses on the individual, and the disease is subjected to intense examination at every conceivable level, from the molecular to the social. At its core is a belief in universal humanism, and that these processes (of health and disease) are shared. This insight has been attained after centuries of progress. As psychiatrists and doctors, we are confronted daily by the similarities in people's brains, and to think of divided minds thus seems particularly unhelpful.

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